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Abstract: "Transformational Mission among Asian and African Migrant Churches in Norway"

Based on field work among Asian and African migrant churches in Norway, this paper discusses how 'transformation' emerges as a common key theme and framework for understanding 'mission' within these contexts. For these, transformation is understood holistically, first in a spiritual sense as the active work of the Holy Spirit in conversion and as continual processes of change in the life of the believer. In parallel, transformation also represents an important frame of reference for societal change in various forms. God is involved with and can transform all aspects of life, from one's spiritual life, marriage and family, work and finances. Within this lifeworld, there are no clear spiritual-material, individual-communal, or private-public divides, making societal change also possible. One church, for example, states as their goal to "transform, not conform" in reference to their focus on individual transformation and the church' missional purpose within the Norwegian context. A common cry is also to bring "Norway back to God," desiring that people in Norway again will embrace Christian faith and values personally, in family life, politics. The agency of prayer is highlighted, but likewise the potent transformative power of demonstrated individual life change, as well as the communal witness of the congregation. The goal is then ultimately the 'conversion' of individuals, church, society, and the world. By drawing on insights from practice theory and theologies of mission, this 'transformational' missional outlook is attempted interpreted in light of transnational, migrational, and religious aspects tangential to the migrant church contexts examined.