

## **International Association of Mission Studies**

*Powers, Inequalities, and Vulnerabilities: Mission in a Wounded World*

### **Study Group: Interreligious Studies and Mission**

#### **Paper Proposal**

Title: *Inclusion of the Wounded: Interreligious Studies and the Adivasi People in India*

#### **Abstract**

The many contextual realities of India have provided sites, sources and stories to the discourse on interreligious studies and mission. Classified as world religions, the multiple religious traditions have engaged Christian mission rigorously. However, in the project of interreligious studies and mission, there is a relative neglect of a group of people and their religious history and experience. The *Adivasi* and their history of religious experiences are often neglected or subsumed within the dominant discourse. The experiences and practices of women among the *Adivasi*, in particular remain obscure.

The paper proposes to contribute a perspective from women and their experiences within the *Adivasi* religious cosmology. Two areas that mark the distinct religiosity of the *Adivasi* will be highlighted: practice of 'witchcraft' and the phenomenon of sacred groove. I will argue that *Adivasi* women encounter marginalization and victimization in the traditions and practices of the religiosity within the *Adivasi* religious cosmology.

In narrating the recorded experiences of women's marginalization, the proposed paper attempts to bring questions and insights to mission studies in its interreligious discourse. Recognition and inclusion of the vulnerable and neglected in interreligious studies continue to be a critical challenge in Christian mission. Women and their conditions and experiences within contextual realities present the praxis of inclusion as central agenda of interreligious studies. In the process of narrating the experiences of women, the proposed paper attempts to explore the question: in what ways can interreligious studies and mission be inclusive of the neglected and the vulnerable in India?

*Submitted by:*

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