Preface

Beyond its rather encyclopaedic preliminary considerations, a preface offers the opportunity for personal remarks. First and foremost are our thanks. We would like to thank our publisher De Gruyter, namely Albrecht Döhnert, who believed in this project from the outset and supported us over the years with advice going beyond the publishing side of things.

The cultural plurality of our discipline presents formidable challenges for bibliographical compilations. We would like to thank the students and research assistants who have worked hard to standardize the contributions and references without making them uniform. Of these we mention only a few names from the Tübingen community Dr. Katharina Krause, Lea Stolz and Marcel Brenner whilst recognizing the many others in different countries without whom this volume would not have been compiled.

We would like to heartily thank all the authors who embarked on this venture offering their texts. We are especially grateful that all authors adopted English as the common language. Not writing in one’s native language is fraught with uncertainties, unpredictable connotations, and ambiguities not always under an author’s control. While we offered English language editing, which many authors were happy to make use of, we accepted a wide range of English usage, bearing in mind that we, as editors, are not all native English speakers ourselves.

Through the generous support of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD), and the Calwer Verlag-Stiftung we are fortunate to be able to make the contributions of this book available to readers for free on the publisher’s website. We are convinced that access to knowledge resources should not depend on the funds of individuals or educational institutions.

Finally, a personal word about our motivation as editors. We would like the conceptual work of the Handbook to contribute to the debate on the decolonization of practical theology. With the global approach this Handbook pursues, our hope is to be able to show how much the culturally situated religious practices and discourses which are subject of the book’s chapters are shaped by international, intercultural, and interreligious processes of exchange.

May the readers also enjoy being part of such an exchange.

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