

### On the Tip of an Iceberg

**D**iaspora has certainly forced its way into frontier missiology. Just look out the window. The startling proximity of once distant peoples—who've become the warp and woof of our cities—compels us to address this global dispersion of peoples. ISFM 2013 took it on with the theme, "Global Peoples: Gates, Bridges and Connections across the Frontiers," and the articles herein highlight some of the contributions from our day together. We got a deep and penetrating look at certain aspects of diaspora, but we found ourselves on the tip of an iceberg. We consider it a bonus that the Evangelical Missiological Society (EMS) will continue the theme of "Diaspora Missiology" in their regional and national meetings during 2014 (see ad back cover). Their breadth of contributions promises to encompass the vast cornucopia of issues that emerge from the diaspora.

### A New Anthropology?

One had the sense that ISFM 2013 opened Pandora's box. And some were a little surprised that Michael Rynkiewicz punched so hard at the idea of "ethnic group" in his anthropological observations of the diaspora (p. 103). It seemed paradoxical to our theme of "global peoples," and there was some polite resistance during those meetings. But his vivid case study approach cut through a lot of the rhetoric and grounded us in empirical realities very quickly. We found that Michael's provocative analysis forced us to unpack our assumptions about "peoples," no matter how biblical we might think they are.

One of the results has been the uncoupling of the singular idea of "ethnic group." This concept actually represents a duality of ethnicity and "groupness" (see my editorial reflections on the insights of Brubaker, p. 124) We ought to have recognized that a loss of social cohesion in the diaspora doesn't necessarily entail a corresponding loss of ethnic identity. The strength of ethnic custom or religious tradition is sometimes maintained without holding to its original groupness, and this latent solidarity also carries the potential for new and original social institutions and organizational life. The common assumption is that a group's sense of identity dissipates in the second and third diasporic generations; but, the increase in the solidarity of Muslim religious identity that arose on the heels of 9/11 gives us pause. Might other forms of ethnic and religious cohesion also lie latent across the diaspora?

Editorial *continued on p. 96*

---

The views expressed in **IJFM** are those of the various authors and not necessarily those of the journal's editors, the International Society for Frontier Missiology or the society's executive committee.

---

---

#### Editor

Brad Gill

#### Editor-at-Large

Rory Clark

#### Consulting Editors

Rick Brown, Gavriel Gefen, Herbert Hoefler, Rebecca Lewis, H. L. Richard, Steve Saint

#### Layout

Marjorie Clark

#### Secretary

Lois Carey

#### Publisher

Bradley Gill, representing the student-level meeting at Edinburgh 1980.

#### 2013 ISFM Executive Committee

Greg Parsons, Brad Gill, Rory Clark, Darrell Dorr

---

#### Web Site

[www.ijfm.org](http://www.ijfm.org)

---

#### Editorial Correspondence

1605 E. Elizabeth Street  
Pasadena, CA 91104  
(734) 765-0368, [editors@ijfm.org](mailto:editors@ijfm.org)

---

#### Subscriptions

One year (four issues) \$18.00  
Two years (eight issues) \$34.00  
Three years (twelve issues) \$48.00  
Single copies \$4.00, multiple copies \$3.00

Payment must be enclosed with orders.

Please supply us with current address and change of address when necessary.

Send all subscription correspondence to:

#### **IJFM**

**1605 E. Elizabeth Street  
Pasadena, CA 91104**

**Tel:** (330) 626-3361

**Fax:** (626) 398-2263

**Email:** [subscriptions@ijfm.org](mailto:subscriptions@ijfm.org)

---

**IJFM** (ISSN #2161-3354) was established in 1984 by the International Student Leaders Coalition for Frontier Missions. It is published quarterly.

**COPYRIGHT ©2013 International Student Leaders Coalition for Frontier Missions.**

PRINTED in the USA

The freedom to probe an assumption can shake a paradigm. Right or wrong, things start to roll. Alan McMahan responded to Rynkiewicz's anthropological analysis of ethnic groups and suggested that we might be seeing another type of "social glue" holding together urban churches in majority world settings (p. 115). And, although not part of ISFM meetings, H. L. Richard's hefty book review on Indian caste and religion in this issue adds further insight to what marks identity for a people (p. 126). All to say, poking at our concept of "peoples" in the diaspora opens us up to fruitful exchange.

### The Vital Role of Awareness

ISFM 2013 touched on a spectrum of diaspora concerns which emerged from the Lausanne Global Diaspora Network. We gave sessions to diaspora as both "mission field" (mission *to* diaspora) and as "mission sending base" (mission *from* diaspora). Two participants addressed the latter theme, and both pointed to the vital need for awareness. Chong Kim, who came to America from Korea as a teenager and now leads a bicultural mission sending agency, spoke from his experience of

biculturalism and mission. He offered a grid for understanding ethnic identity and assimilation and weighed in on the critical place of "self-awareness" in any emerging mission force from the diaspora (p. 97).

A second type of awareness was addressed: the alertness of Western mission sending agencies concerning their role among the diaspora. We interviewed John Baxter (Lausanne Global Diaspora Network), who participated with us at ISFM 2013 (p. 119). In this IJFM interview, John addresses Western mission agencies who might wish to explore the organizational adjustments necessary in assisting majority world churches. What kind of help do the global South churches and sending agencies need or want? They are mobilizing and training thousands of overseas Christians who happen to be already working in some very restricted-access countries and among major unreached populations. He's convinced a partnership based on humility and service could be vital.

Again, we do hope the EMS meetings in 2014 will extend this modest inquiry of ISFM 2013. We can't overdo any study of the opportunities that surround the global diaspora in our day.

We think some of you might want to "cut into this dance" with diaspora and share your candid reactions to these ISFM (and other) articles. Let us hear from you so that a dynamic frontier missiology can flourish (send your responses to [editors@ijfm.org](mailto:editors@ijfm.org)). We'll put as many as we can in *Letters to the Editor*. We look forward to hearing from you.

In Him,



Brad Gill  
Senior Editor, *IJFM*

---

The **IJFM** is published in the name of the International Student Leaders Coalition for Frontier Missions, a fellowship of younger leaders committed to the purposes of the twin consultations of Edinburgh 1980: The World Consultation on Frontier Missions and the International Student Consultation on Frontier Missions. As an expression of the ongoing concerns of Edinburgh 1980, the **IJFM** seeks to:

- ☞ promote intergenerational dialogue between senior and junior mission leaders;
- ☞ cultivate an international fraternity of thought in the development of frontier missiology;
- ☞ highlight the need to maintain, renew, and create mission agencies as vehicles for frontier missions;
- ☞ encourage multidimensional and interdisciplinary studies;
- ☞ foster spiritual devotion as well as intellectual growth; and
- ☞ advocate "A Church for Every People."

Mission frontiers, like other frontiers, represent boundaries or barriers beyond which we must go yet beyond which we may not be able to see clearly and boundaries which may even be disputed or denied. Their study involves the discovery and evaluation of the unknown or even the reevaluation of the known. But unlike other frontiers, mission frontiers is a subject specifically concerned to explore and exposit areas and ideas and insights related to the glorification of God in all the nations (peoples) of the world, "to open their eyes, to turn them from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God." (Acts 26:18)

Subscribers and other readers of the **IJFM** (due to ongoing promotion) come from a wide variety of backgrounds. Mission professors, field missionaries, young adult mission mobilizers, college librarians, mission executives, and mission researchers all look to the **IJFM** for the latest thinking in frontier missiology.