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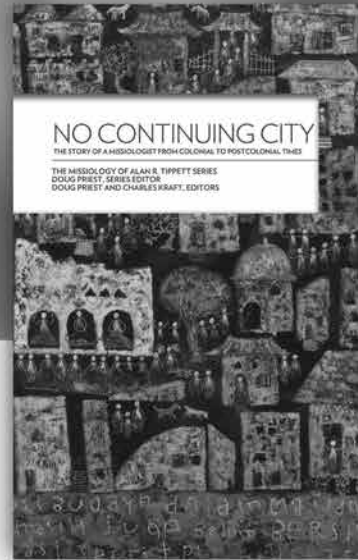
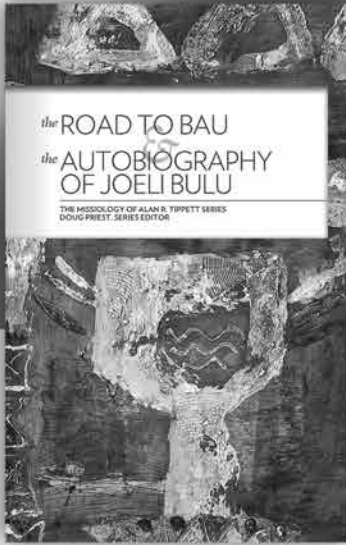
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July–September 2013



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Doug Priest and Charles Kraft, Editors

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Charles Kraft is Professor Emeritus of Anthropology at Fuller Seminary. He has taught there for forty-one years and authored thirty books and many articles dealing with the relationships between Christianity and culture and spiritual power. He was a colleague of Alan Tippett from 1969 to 1977.

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ISBN 978-0-87808-478-4 Alan R. Tippett
Doug Priest and Charles Kraft, Editors
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On the Tip of an Iceberg

Diaspora 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 Hofer, 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

Editorial Correspondence

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

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IJFM

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

Tel: (330) 626-3361

Fax: (626) 398-2263

Email: subscriptions@ijfm.org

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The freedom to probe an assumption can shake a paradigm. Right or wrong, things start to roll. Alan McMahan responded to Rynkiewich'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). 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.

ISFM 2013: Dancing with Diaspora

Mission from the Diaspora

by Chong H. Kim

Human migration is a reality that stretches back to the very dawn of history. Recent decades, however, have witnessed the unprecedented emigration of people from the global South to destinations often associated with former colonial relationships. In modern times, the largest migratory movement has been from the Asia-Pacific region to the USA and Canada. And it is here that diaspora and my own story intersect.¹

A few years ago I wrote a related article entitled, “Is There a Place for Biculturals in Missions?”² I do not intend to repeat that earlier paper, but rather will attempt to build and expand upon the make-up of diaspora with a particular emphasis on mission *from* the diaspora. I will also consider *why* and *how* self-awareness is critical as we reflect on and envision a maturing mission movement from the diaspora. Finally, I will draw at various points upon my personal journey as the son of an immigrant. Let me begin there.

Among the Diaspora

I came to the States from South Korea in 1977 at the tender age of 14, right in the middle of my teenage years. As was true for so many immigrants from Korea to the US at that time, economic considerations played heavily into my parents’ decision to finally move to this side of the Pacific. Despite pouring everything he had—and then some—into his new business, that venture failed spectacularly.

For nearly two years after coming to America, I went through culture shock—a term with which I was unfamiliar at the time. A teenager in a new country, my days were filled with wonder and wildness. What followed for me was a long period of profound confusion, specifically in the area of my identity. (I would argue, as an aside, that unless one has experienced a similar sense of confusion, one cannot claim to be a true bicultural.)

Editor’s Note: This is an edited version of a paper presented by the author to members of the International Society for Frontier Missiology on September 13, 2013 (Plano, TX).

Chong Kim founded the Korean American Center for World Mission in 1989 and served as its director from 1991 to 2003. He subsequently founded (and currently is co-director of) Band Barnabas, a structure that equips and sends biculturals to work among the least reached peoples of Asia. Finally, Chong serves as one of the three general directors of the Frontier Mission Fellowship.

At age 29, I had the opportunity to visit Korea for the first time since moving to the US some 15 years earlier. Even though I had lived my twenties in America, I always considered myself more Korean than American. As soon as I landed in Korea, I quickly discovered that I was far more American than Korean—and for this I was unprepared.

My eventual theological landing point—and my spiritual longing—can be summed up echoing Paul’s words: my “citizenship is in heaven.”³ I was to live my life as an alien and a stranger. To borrow a line from Michael Card’s song, “Joy in the Journey,” I was one “who belonged to eternity stranded in [human] time” and place, wrapped in my cultural identity.

The sociological application of the concept of “liminality,” which can be defined simply as the state of being in-between, is worth pondering as we try to understand the realities of diaspora. For example, what I see as our modern obsession with well-delineated boundaries does not help us to understand the ambiguous state of liminality. Yet it does exist. The field of depth psychology (which is admittedly outside my expertise) recognizes the need for this liminal state as a necessary step in the process of individuation and self-realization.

Since my first visit back to Korea at age 29 (and many subsequent visits), I have become “at home” with my confused, in-between state of liminality. At the same time, I feel right at home in both Korean and American cultures. The odd thing is that it is possible to feel *both* “in-between-ness” and “right-at-home-ness” within two cultures. One might even say that I “found myself” in the liminal application of depth psychology!

Assimilation and Identity among the Diaspora

Let us step back a moment and try to better understand the characteristics of diaspora. Although I am looking

at diaspora community through my Korean American lens, applications can be made to other diaspora communities. In this connection, I would like to cite the fine work of Kitano and Daniels.⁴ One observation that emerges from the diagram below (see figure 1) is that not all diasporas are the same—a wide spectrum exists. The distance between Cell A and Cell D can be as great as that between “white” Americans and Koreans who have just arrived in the United States.

This simple matrix helps us see how assimilation and ethnic identity interrelate across different segments of the diaspora. Assimilation would include:

- integration into schools, work places and social groupings of the majority culture
- identification with the majority
- marital assimilation.

Their use of ethnic identity simply focuses on the retention of ethnic ways.

Now, I usually like to do two things with this grid when I present to an audience. First, I try to apply it to a specific part of the diaspora so that we

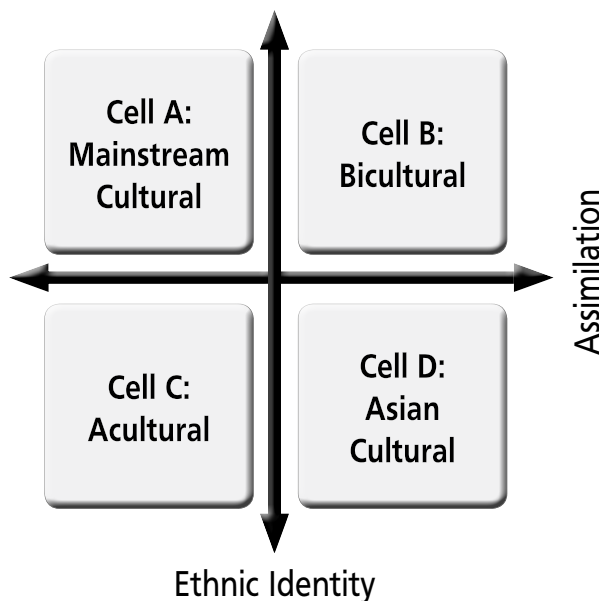
can get a better understanding of the range of assimilation and identities among that particular diaspora. Secondly, I like to break into small groups for discussion over a series of questions. At this juncture, I want to introduce the work of Jeanette Yep, who has done a great job of breaking down the different characteristics of the Asian-American diaspora.

Ethnic Identity/Assimilation Grid Applied to Asian Americans⁵

Cell A—High assimilation, low ethnic identity

- more (dominant culture) American than ethnic
- feel completely “at home” in the dominant culture
- are assimilated and accepted
- third+ generation of Asian Americans and also Asian Americans who may have grown up isolated from other Asians
- in friendship and social patterns, these people relate to a high number of non-Asians
- high rate of “out-marriage”

Figure 1. Ethnic Identity/Assimilation Grid



(From Harry Kitano and Roger Daniels, *Asian Americans: Emerging Minorities*, 2000)

Cell B—High assimilation, high ethnic identity

- in friendship patterns, membership in organizations etc., these people show a bicultural perspective
- move back and forth between American and Asian cultures easily
- are interested in keeping their ethnic heritage alive and are quite knowledgeable about it
- can serve as bridge people between cultures

Cell C—Low assimilation, low ethnic identity

- can feel estranged, disenchanted and disillusioned
- aren't at home in any of the two cultures in which they find themselves
- can include some Eurasian or mixed race people

Cell D—Low assimilation, high ethnic identity

- can include newly arrived immigrants
- identify more closely to the ethnic community than the American one and tend to live with fellow Cell D types
- are culturally more ethnic than American

Another way to look at this whole matter of assimilation and identity is to stretch it across a continuum, which is what Gail Law does in something she calls a “Dynamic Bicultural Continuum Model.”⁶ (see figure 2) Both this continuum and the cell model of Kitano and Daniels give us perspectives on diaspora, but their significance is hard to capture unless we have a good dose of interaction. So I usually recommend that we break into smaller groups to discuss a few questions that help us integrate these tools into our

thinking. Here are three questions I would have us consider:

1. Can you think of diaspora people around you and guess which quadrant they may belong to? Why do you place them there? What characterizes them?
2. Suppose you are trying to plant communities of believers among them. What strategies would you employ based on who they are and what they are like?
3. Suppose you are trying to mobilize from the diaspora communities around you. What strategies would you employ to prepare, equip, and send them to their own peoples back home and to the nations?

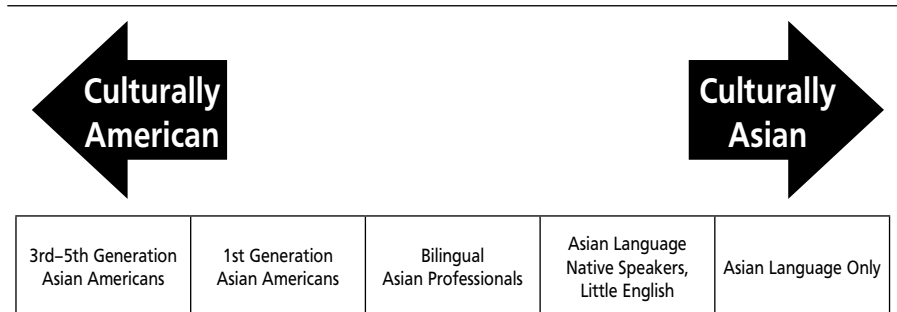
A Macroscopic Look at Mission from the Diaspora

This third question is a good segue into our subject of “mission from diaspora.” Note that I use the term “diaspora missiology” to include “mission to diaspora”, “mission from diaspora,” and “mission as diaspora”—all three combined.⁷ All three of these diaspora mission orientations require sensitivity to the ethnic identity/assimilation grid and the bicultural continuum model (above). However, depending on which *mission* you are looking at, you come out with different strategies and methodologies.

Mission *from* diaspora is fundamentally different from mission *as* diaspora.⁸ One of the best examples of mission *as* diaspora would be the Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs). According to the Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches, approximately seven percent of Filipinos working overseas are evangelical Christians.⁹ Seven percent of the total eight million Filipinos working outside of their homeland¹⁰ represents 560,000 workers who can potentially serve in “mission as diaspora.” Seizing the opportunity, the Filipino International Network (FIN) was launched in response to the need for a coordinated global effort to motivate, equip, and mobilize Christian OFWs to help fulfill the Great Commission.¹¹

When thinking about “mission from diaspora,” it is important to affirm that all diaspora people can be used by God to reach *those just like them and beyond*,¹² wherever they may be on the grid or across the continuum culturally. That people might have more potential to reach others who are most like them is an important missiological concept. Someone who has experienced refugee living firsthand in one country will most likely be able to gain a hearing from (and establish trust among) other refugees whom they are trying to reach. I see myself easily connecting with people who are like me, whether they are from here or some other part of the world. It is not uncommon for us to discover similar shared feelings and vocabulary. Diaspora creates resonance. I’ve heard numerous

Figure 2. Dynamic Bicultural Continuum



(See Marcia Wang et al., *Planting Asian American Chapters*, 2012)

Ethnic identities, when not idolized or taken to an extreme, are gifts from God to the body of Christ and to the lost world.

times that native American Indians naturally resonate with Koreans or Korean Americans who also understand what it means to be “ruled” by others.

One beautiful and strategic implication for all diaspora communities worldwide is that those who have left their home can become an effective *bridge and vehicle both for reaching their own people back home as well as elsewhere*. Although this is not a new concept, it does merit a brief mention. As Miriam Adeney reminds us:

Ethnic churches are a good place to begin global mission work too. We can partner with international Christians who live in our own cities—students, businessmen, temporary visitors, refugees, immigrants. Many represent relatively “unreached” peoples. Many regularly return to their homeland to help dig wells, set up clinics, teach in Bible schools, publish hymnbooks and training textbooks, etc. We can pray with them, help them grow to maturity as Christ’s disciples, and reach out together to their peoples.¹³

There are implications here both for mission *to* and *from* diaspora contexts. One can imagine a specific people proceeding through a full cycle, starting with mission *to* diaspora and finally resulting in mission *from* diaspora. Some mission agencies and some US churches have recognized the need and have begun to field teams to certain American cities and neighborhoods. They hope that these new disciples will in turn reach out to their own peoples who are still considered unreached back home. Yemeni Arabs in central California, Somalis in the Twin Cities, and the huge Muslim presence in Dearborn, Michigan all represent great potential case studies in how the vision and development of mission *to* diaspora might lead to mission *from* diaspora.

One other group, Korean Americans (of which I am a part) has had a different outcome. Mission to the Korean American diaspora flourished to the point that they became more Christianized (percentage-wise) than the Koreans in Korea. The Korean American diaspora community has seen a big surge in cross-cultural missions since the 1990s. One major difference between the Korean Americans and other diaspora communities (who were still considered unreached) was that the Korean Americans did not go back to their homeland; they went elsewhere.

Ethnic identities, when not idolized or taken to an extreme, are gifts from God to the body of Christ and to the lost world. Since there is no such thing as static ethnicity, we can accept that fast-changing diaspora ethnic identities are all within the boundary of God’s design and plan. God certainly isn’t “surprised” by changing ethnicity. He knew a Hebrew baby would enter the palace of the Pharaoh and grow up in Egypt for the first 40 years of his life. He knew that Jesus would appear in a Mediterranean world shaped by Hellenistic culture and Roman rule, a world teeming with ethnicities. In this sense, Acts 17:26 reflects our ongoing drama in a context of rapid change,

From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands.

I believe that our ethnic identity is, in some way, also part of what it means to bear God’s image. Who we are as human beings created in God’s image includes our own ethnic and cultural makeup *in its changing form*. Thus, there are no “accidents” in God’s eyes nor is one group superior to another. We cannot be naïve in thinking that the rest of the world believes this and

therefore will offer no resistance. Most cross-cultural problems in missions today might disappear if we really believed and practiced the truth that all are created in God’s image and that there are no “class” distinctions.

Self-Awareness

I want to suggest that self-awareness is crucial as we wrestle with the potential of mission from diaspora. Pursuing self-awareness in the context of changing ethnic identity and assimilation is a fundamental process that we can ill afford to ignore. How are we to understand who we are in the context of change? Knowing *whose* we are (or *to whom we belong*) becomes a crucial starting point for understanding *who we are*—knowing whose we are anchors us (and who we are) in the context of life’s furious changes. If we embrace St. Teresa of Avila’s assertion that “almost all problems in the spiritual life stem from a lack of self-knowledge,” one can imagine the missiological ramifications of this in the diaspora context. On a fundamental level, if we ourselves are not self-aware, it is unlikely that we can help others become self-aware. What’s likely to take place instead is that others will, with our (usually unintentional) help, become like us. We know that this is not what should happen. To the degree that we ourselves are self-aware,¹⁴ we will be in a better place to help fellow disciples of Jesus develop an awareness of who they are, and thus help them discover how to follow him authentically in their own cultural contexts. I believe that the more we become “self-aware,” the more we become “other-aware.”

I fully recognize that instilling self-awareness can be a tricky endeavor, especially in the liminality and change of diaspora peoples. Unpacking and understanding self-awareness must take place in different (but related) contexts: ethnic, cultural, relational, as well as personal. In other words, we are a product of who we are based on our personalities, and our ethnic and

cultural make up, both in nature and nurture. Quite frankly, I've witnessed enough "self-unaware" Korean American cross-cultural workers who are experiencing hardships and difficulties on the field. Their struggle with ethnic and cultural issues has driven me to this important matter of self-awareness.

One of the interesting dynamics I experience personally when I travel overseas is that people don't see me as an "American." They are not "satisfied" until I tell them I was born in Korea. Seizing on this fact, they quickly point out that as far as they are concerned, I am Korean—a Korean living in America. I can insist that I am American and not Korean, but where does that get me? I've actually experienced that I can go farther and deeper in building a relationship with them as a Korean living in America than as an American. What is the missiological significance of this? For one, the gospel I live out and share won't be perceived as American or carry the baggage of American Christianity.

I need to make myself clear: I am not promoting the idea that all diaspora people need to move to Cell B and become bicultural. What I am promoting is the need for all diaspora people to understand where they are and who they are, and to feel at home in that understanding—even in the face of life's pressures and expectations. Wherever diaspora people are, I believe they need to come to a place where they are self-aware and secure enough to flex in who they need to become in order to win others to Christ.

I would like to borrow from Adrian Van Kaam's thinking at this point.¹⁵ Van Kaam talks about *initial* originality and *historical* originality. Initial originality is "like a unique mark each man receives at birth . . . It is his latent ability to be himself in his own way." He describes historical originality as "an originality which [each man has] developed during his life history up to this moment." In my mind, this historical originality relates directly to our discussion of diaspora peoples. There is a personal originality

Pursuing self-awareness is ultimately about loving ourselves as part of the Great Commandment.

that is shaped through time by changing cultural forces. Van Kaam makes the case that this "originality shines through not in *what* he does but in the *way* he does it, not in the customs he *has* but in the way he *lives* them." Van Kaam's phrase "the way he does it or the way he lives them" refers, I believe, to the combination of who you are culturally as well as who you are personally. I believe this originality is vital for mission from diaspora.

Pursuing self-awareness is ultimately about loving ourselves as part of the Great Commandment. When we love ourselves, we are in a better place to love our neighbor. Thus, the more we become "self-aware," the more we will become "other aware." What does it mean for us to love our neighbors as ourselves missiologically, more specifically in the context of diaspora missiology? My ongoing reflection leads me to think that loving others mean giving them freedom to be who they are created to be without forcing them to be like us and empowering them to love God in their own ways. Loving others is about empowering them to love God with *their* own heart, soul, mind, and strength.

I believe biblical faith can exist only as "translated" into a culture even if the particular culture, in this case diaspora cultures, is changing fast. Developing and equipping diaspora believers to be original, so that they in turn help other diaspora communities to be original, is an important task at hand. **IJFM**

Endnotes

¹ This is highlighted in chapter six of *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World* by Stephen Castles and Mark J. Miller, New York-London: Guildford Press, 2009.

² "Is There a Place for Biculturals in Missions?" in *International Journal for Frontier Missiology*, Winter 2006 (23:4).

³ See Philippians 3:20. Hebrews 11:13-16 is also a great supporting text that expresses the longing for a better country—a heavenly one.

⁴ Kitano, Harry and Roger Daniels, *Asian Americans: Emerging Minorities*.

⁵ Jeanette Yep, drawing on Kitano and Daniels. In Marcia J. Wang et al., *Planting Asian American Churches*, 2012. See <http://cms.intervarsity.org/mx/item/10362/download>.

⁶ Gail Law's chart is reproduced in Marcia Wang et al., *Planting Asian American Churches*, 2012. See <http://cms.intervarsity.org/mx/item/10362/download>.

⁷ Enoch Wan's approach in diaspora missiology is focused on mission to diaspora.

⁸ I am sticking with mission as diaspora terminology for consistency sake even though technically diaspora as mission captures it better.

⁹ Rev. Efraim Tendero, Bishop and General Secretary of the Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches (PCEC) reported during the FIN Global Consultation in Singapore (July 20, 2002) that approximately seven percent of the OFWs living outside their homeland are Evangelical Christians.

¹⁰ Enoch Wan and Sadiri Joy Tira. *The Filipino Experience In Diaspora Missions: A Case Study Of Mission Initiatives From The Majority World Churches*. Evangelical Missiological Society—Northwest, Portland, Oregon. (April 5, 2008)

¹¹ Wan and Tira.

¹² I say beyond, of course, because God can use anybody to impact anybody. But even in this context, people with a higher cultural sensitivity of diaspora communities will go farther than those who are largely from a mono-cultural background.

¹³ *Mission Frontiers*, May-June 2010 issue.

¹⁴ This is not to say that we will get to a place of full self-awareness.

¹⁵ Adrian Van Kaam was a Dutch Catholic priest, a college professor, and a prolific writer on formative spirituality. He also founded the Institute of Formative Spirituality at Duquesne University. I am referring to his book, *Living Creatively: How to Discover Your Sources of Originality and Self-Motivation*. Dimension Books: Denville, New Jersey. 1972.

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Mission in “the Present Time”: What about the People in Diaspora?

Michael A. Rynkiewich

He also said to the crowds, “When you see a cloud rising in the west, you immediately say, ‘It is going to rain’; and so it happens. And when you see the south wind blowing, you say, ‘There will be scorching heat’; and it happens. You hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of earth and sky, but why do you not know how to interpret the present time? (Luke 12:54-56 NRSV)

The present time” is changing,¹ and the world we thought we knew growing up no longer exists. How we see and understand the world is also changing. Our way of “figuring out the world” that we leaned on when we first started mission work now almost certainly explains less and less of what we see. As the world changes, so does our understanding. And so we face a challenge: either deal with these changes—which are neither good nor bad in themselves—or risk becoming increasingly out of touch with the world God has called us to love. But just how are we to perceive our changing world? How are we to understand rapidly changing *persons*,² *peoples*, *politics* and *economics* in light of our participation in God’s mission in the world?

Thomas and Susan: A Case Study in Diaspora Life

In 1977, Thomas finished his secondary education and a short diploma course in his home state of Kerala, India. While searching for work, his eye fell on a recruiting ad in a local newspaper for jobs in the construction industry in Saudi Arabia.

Although workers had been migrating to the Gulf States for years, Thomas was among the first cohort of foreign workers to migrate because of the oil boom. People with college degrees usually were offered office jobs, but he was given a construction job pushing a wheelbarrow. One day he showed his British foreman his diploma and convinced him that he had the skills for a desk job. Soon he was offered a contract for a job in an office.

About the same time, Susan, a practicing nurse, was recruited from Delhi to take employment in Saudi Arabia. After a few years in Saudi, she moved again to take a better paying job in Kuwait.

The migrant workers in our story were both committed to observing Indian custom regarding the proper way to find a spouse. Although they did not know each other, while each was vacationing back in Kerala, a marriage proposal

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Michael A. Rynkiewich, PhD, is retired from his roles as Professor of Anthropology and Director of Postgraduate Studies at Asbury Theological Seminary.

His most recent book, Soul, Self, and Society: A Postmodern Anthropology for Mission in a Postcolonial World (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2012) received Christianity Today’s Merit Award for New Book in Missions/Global Affairs in January 2013.

was made through their local pastors. They met briefly, married, then returned to the Middle East. Thomas left his job in Saudi and obtained a visitor’s visa to join Susan in Kuwait, eventually finding work with a shipping company. They began to build a life together.

Although they had migrated to the Gulf for jobs, their salaries were not their own. Like many migrants, Thomas and Susan shared what they earned, sending regular money transfers (remittances) back home to help care for younger siblings and elderly parents. They even sublet half the living room in their small apartment in the city just to pay the rent each month.

In 1981, a girl was born to Thomas and Susan. Once she was old enough, Priya went to school in Kuwait, that is, to an Indian school in Kuwait. Except for her three years in India (as a result of the 1990–91 Iraqi invasion) and her time in university, Priya never spent much time outside Kuwait growing up. Even after graduation, she did not stay in India, but returned to Kuwait to work. Priya is now married and lives in Sydney, Australia where she works as an engineer for an international energy corporation.

In 1984, a second daughter, Anita, was born; she too followed a similar path. Returning to India for secondary school was not easy for her. Her only friends had also returned from expat communities elsewhere and thus understood her experience. After university, she too returned to Kuwait since her parents were still there. But when a better-paying job opened up in the United Arab Emirates, a larger Middle Eastern country with a less restrictive vision for society, Anita jumped at the chance to move to the UAE, where she now lives and works.

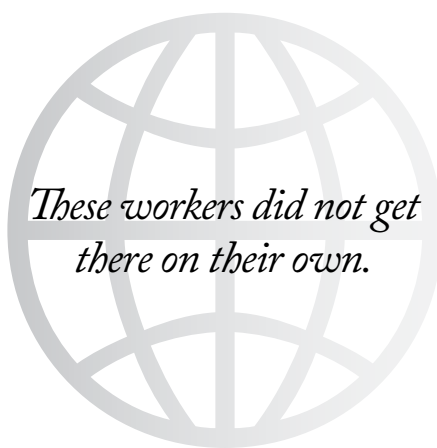
The third and last child, a boy, was born in 1985. Santhosh remembers life revolving around school and church (which had both weekly and daily services). Now a student in the United States, Santhosh is supported in part by his parents and sisters. He knows that this confirms his responsibility

as the youngest male child to care for his parents in their old age. For now, his parents are still finishing out their contracts in Kuwait, so that day has not yet come.³

This story, simple though it may seem, illustrates issues that any student of society—or any missionary wanting to reach people—must face. So, what does it take to understand this family’s story, and to locate them in time and space? What does this family’s story reveal about life in the second decade of the twenty-first century?

Globalization: The World has Changed

During the second half of the twentieth century—which saw the decoloni-



zation of Africa and Asia, and the fall of the USSR—the world moved from a two-centered to a multi-centered polity and economy. The Middle East nationalized its companies and then used its oil as an economic weapon. India insisted on going its own way and China emerged from the “Cultural Revolution” to rapidly become the economic engine of Asia. All this has shifted the center of the world economy, the center of world politics, and the center of attention (especially in the area of electronic communications) away from the United States and the West and toward the East and Global South. Like changes in gravity, all these things bend and shape global

concentrations and flows of people (refugees, labor migrants, tourists, international corporations and entrepreneurs), products (everything from money to raw materials to finished electronics), and ideas (everything from capitalism to Christianity to pornography).

The “global flows” of persons, products, and ideas are not simply a continuation of what we have seen in the past, but, as Arjun Appadurai argues, the number, speed, and force of the flows has overwhelmed local and regional systems to the point that new economic regimes, peoples, and histories are being shaped.⁴

Relevant to our story, the gradual nationalization of the oil companies, along with the successful oil embargo of 1973, made the Arab Gulf States⁵ flush with money and anxious for economic growth. Workers were needed to construct infrastructure, buildings for education and military use, and offices, warehouses, and ports for the oil business. At first, the Gulf States tended to import Arab Muslim workers. But then Palestinians took the lead in organizing strikes in the oil fields; Yemenis in Saudi Arabia were implicated in anti-regime activities; and some of those involved in the 1979 attack on Mecca were non-Saudi Arabs.⁶ Thereafter the Gulf States expelled many Arab workers and turned instead to South Asia, particularly India. By 1990, Saudi Arabia alone had 4.7 million foreign workers. That number grew to 5.1 million by the year 2000. By 2010, 7.3 million foreign workers were in Saudi Arabia, of which 1.3 million were Indian (see table 1, right).

These workers did not get there on their own. Most were recruited by an agency with transnational connections to the labor rich regions of South Asia, Southeast Asia and parts of the Middle East. The working visa required an individual sponsor (for private sector jobs) or a government

agency (for public sector jobs). The worker's legal status in the country was directly tied to this sponsor, or *kafil*. In this system, the state does not have to secure and monitor foreign laborers; the individual employer does that for them. Since the foreign laborer is dependent on his sponsor, the sponsor's power can lead to abuse. I know one medical doctor who was trapped in service because his sponsor took his passport and would not return it, thus denying him access to communication and travel. After his escape, he made his way to a seminary in the US and has now graduated. The world indeed has changed, and with that change comes opportunity as well as mischief.

Reasons for Migration

Most Indians working in the Gulf come from Kerala, a state in India's southwest region on the Malabar coast. This out-migration (emigration)—known as “the Kerala Gulf Boom”—took place over a ten-year period (1972–1983), when over 2 million Keralites moved to the Gulf for work. Within just a few years (by 1980), these laborers were sending home nearly \$7 million in remittances. Since 2007, India has—not surprisingly—been among the world's top three remittance-receiving countries, with over \$25 billion pouring in annually through formal channels.⁷ Throughout the globalized world as a whole, more than \$250 billion is sent home each year in the form of remittances.⁹

What do these movements—both internal and external—mean for mission? The question is admittedly complex.

Kerala has a population density of some 820 people per square mile, three times higher than the rest of India. The people are well-educated in Kerala, which enjoys a 94% literacy rate.¹⁰ Malayam-speaking people are in the majority, not necessarily an ethnic group), though there are hill tribes and internal migrants who speak other languages. The state is 56% Hindu, 25% Muslim, and 19% Christian. The economy depends mainly on agriculture (especially rubber, spices and rice) and fishing; thus “underemployment” has grown along with the population. Remittances (sent back from both internal and international migrant workers) make up the largest source of income. Given their long history of contact with the rest of the world,¹¹ people from Kerala were ready to move to seize new economic opportunities.

Migration within Country

But emigration between nations is not the only kind of population movement that has marked the globalization of the world. In India, internal migration—people moving to other states (e.g., Karnataka and Maharashtra) and especially to other cities (e.g., Delhi, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Chennai, and Bangaluru)—is higher than the flow of Indians to other countries.¹² Migration

and urbanization are intertwined forces that are changing societies.

Since 2000, China has witnessed the massive internal migration of nearly 100 million people. The reform era (*gaige kaifang*; 1979–present) has reduced the barriers to the movement of labor within China and has created Special Economic Zones (*nanshun*). Equally significant, in 1988 the practice of assigning jobs to university graduates was eliminated.¹³ While the Chinese government calls this internal migration “the transfer of surplus rural labor power,”¹⁴ it is the most educated and able-bodied who seem to be leaving the land and migrating to the coastal cities. This new reality is also the result of the “mutual choice” (*shuangxiang xuanze*)¹⁵ system that now both permits university graduates to find their own jobs and obligates corporations and urban administrations to find their own employees. The central provinces of Sichuan, Chongqing, Guizhou, Henan, and Hubei are rapidly losing population in this rural-to-urban migration.

What do these population movements—both internal and external—mean for mission?¹⁶ The question is admittedly complex. Some of these people on the move are Christians

Table 1. Gulf States (Gulf Cooperation Council countries) with Non-National Population⁸

	Total population in millions	Non-nationals in millions	% Non-nationals	Indians in millions	% Indian
Saudi Arabia	25.7	7.3	28%	1.3	5%
Kuwait	2.7	2.1	78%	0.6	22%
UAE	8.2	7.1	87%	2.2	27%
Qatar	2.0	1.6	80%	0.5	25%
Bahrain	1.3	0.7	54%	0.4	31%
Oman	2.8	0.8	29%	—	—
Totals	42.7	19.6	46%	5.0	11.7%

and take their churches with them. Others are not Christians, but have been cut loose from their family, clan, and caste ties that might impede their conversion. Others are at a crisis point in their lives, in special need of a new community and a new worldview. They may be more open to Christ, but they are also vulnerable to competing new ideologies and temptations.

Migrants Settling in Communities

The people who are leaving home finally arrive somewhere, whether another country or another region of their own country. The family we have been following ended up in Kuwait. Kuwait gained independence from Britain in the 1960s and, like Saudi Arabia, nationalized its oil industry in the 1970s. Richer per capita than Saudi Arabia, Kuwait needed even more laborers per capita since Kuwaitis themselves did not have to work. Today nearly 80 percent of Kuwait's 3 million people are non-nationals, almost 30 percent of whom are from India.

Susan found Kuwaiti society less restrictive than Saudi society, so she was happy to have her family in Kuwait with more religious freedom. But like the other Gulf States, Kuwait offers no path to citizenship. She and her family will not be allowed to stay in the country indefinitely since, like the majority of foreign workers, she works under a labor contract that someday will not be renewed. Even though they have been in the Gulf for nearly forty years, Thomas and Susan have limited rights and no permanent place in Kuwaiti society.¹⁷ Still, she wonders what “returning home” will mean given that her three children are now scattered in countries outside India. Just who are these people now?

And how do we account for these new landscapes of migrant laborers, refugees, internal migrants, and “communities” of students, retirees, mail order brides, sex trade slaves, and so

on? These “peoples” bend and break our old categories, calling into question the whole process of categorization as well.

Social identity—the question of “peoples”—is an old question. The Old Testament, after the Flood, presents the descendants of Noah's children as being dispersed over the Old world, each with a concluding summary such as this one: “These are the descendants of Ham, by their families, their languages, their lands, and their nations” (Genesis 10:20 NRSV). This gives the impression that family, language, nation, and land overlap to create a “people.” If this is the case (and I doubt that it is), it is only a temporary phase in a larger narrative



of continuous change. Genesis chapter 10—which comes after a period of chaos—is followed by yet another period of chaos. And what seemed clear and long-lasting ends up in “confusion” in Chapter 11.

Out of this chaos, God begins to construct a “people.” I say *construct* because they were not a people, but by God's hand they *became* a people. God called a Chaldean and sent him into Canaan. His descendants in the fourth generation married Egyptians and Canaanites of various kinds. When God called this “people” out of Egypt, along with them came other people with other origins—people such as the Kenites (Genesis 15:19, Judges 4:11)—to which were

added later on such Canaanites as the family of Rahab of Jericho.¹⁸

When they became proud and thought themselves a *pure* people, God reminded them of their origins.

The word of the LORD came to me: Mortal, make known to Jerusalem her abominations, and say, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD to Jerusalem: Your origin and your birth were in the land of the Canaanites; your father was an Amorite, and your mother a Hittite.’ (Ezekiel 16:1-3; see also Ezekiel 16:45)

A mixed “people” with fuzzy boundaries, indeed.

By New Testament times, Jews lived not only in Jerusalem, but were scattered in the Diaspora across the Roman Empire, and as far away as Persia, India, and Ethiopia, along the trade routes of the time. At Pentecost, there were said to be in Jerusalem people from many lands, but in reality they were Jews from many lands, Jews who were part of the great Jewish Diaspora of the time. As the new “People of the Way” grew, they incorporated half-Jews (that is, Samaritans) and “Wanna-Be Jews” (such as the Ethiopian eunuch). The boundaries of these “groups” were sites of conflict because boundaries were not clear and had to be constantly maintained. And the Roman Empire had just as difficult a time defining who belonged to what group.

But our myth of “peoples”—of tribes, castes, nations, and empires—comes down to us from the Enlightenment through the colonial era. The quest for classification and enumeration has been part of the drive to control populations, and to incorporate them into the colonial project.¹⁹ Appadurai, in his seminal book *Modernity at Large* (1996), has shown that part of the colonial strategy in India was to classify peoples into enduring groups, and then to enumerate people, such as took place during the Great Indian census of 1870.²⁰ He further argues that this project was undertaken to justify expenditures in Parliament and to bring order and

discipline to colonial rule in India—that is, to guide economic projects as well as judge cases regarding ownership and inheritance of land, criminal activity, and other civil disputes.²¹

An early example of this is *The Joint Report of 1847*, subtitled *Measurement and Classification Rules of the Deccan, Gujarat, Konkan and Kamara Surveys*. Appadurai argues that:

It is, par excellence, a document of bureaucratic rationalization, which seeks to create and standardize revenue rules for all the land under East India Company jurisdiction in the Deccan region.... (as well as serve) larger purposes, such as assessment and dispute settlement. It is a quintessential document of cadastral politics.²²

While the colonial officers admitted that classification was difficult, they still claimed that “[t]hese results are of an absolute and invariable character, capable of being arrived at with equal certainty by many modes.”²³ In the minds of the British colonial administration, names and numbers brought order to the exotic—the Oriental “other,” as Edward Said has reminded us²⁴—through the process of transforming the landscape of difference into recognizable and manageable facts that fit the colonial model. This got played out on a large scale in the great All-India Census project carried out from 1870 through 1931.

Classification and enumeration are never neutral practices. In Scripture, such practices caused trouble for both Moses (Numbers 16-17) and David (I Chronicles 21). There was a time when anthropology thought it possible—and scientific—to separate the world into “cultures” and “languages.” Armed with terms such as “tribe,” “caste,” and “clan,” anthropologists sought to bring conceptual order to the world. But no sooner was one social strand tied up than another one came untangled.

In 1940, the notion of a “tribe” with a “chief” at the head came unraveled with Evans-Pritchard’s study of *The Nuer*,²⁵

There was a time when anthropology thought it possible—and scientific—to separate the world into “cultures” and “languages.”

which introduced the novel notion of an *acephalous* (headless) society. With Leach’s (1954) study of the Kachin in Burma²⁶ was born the notion of a society that was not stable, but rather oscillated between multiple-models. Barth’s (1959) study of the Pathans in the Swat Valley in Afghanistan²⁷ advanced the concept of a society in motion, constantly being negotiated by patrons and clients. By the 1960s, the idea that a few simple models would serve for categorizing cultures looked rather silly.

Then came the final assault on the concept of “tribe.” Reflecting the frustration of anthropologists who were trying to figure out what was going on in New Guinea, J. A. Barnes wrote the seminal (1962) article, “African Models in the New Guinea Highlands.”²⁸ In it he concluded that the anthropological constructs we thought worked so well in Africa clearly did not work in New Guinea. Simply put, there are no “tribes” (as we understood the term) on that island.²⁹ This, in turn, now raised the possibility that there might be more variation and complexity in Africa than anthropologists had imagined.

Barnes’ article was followed the next year by Marshall Sahlins’ influential “Rich Man, Poor Man, Big Man, Chief.”³⁰ Sahlins’ article demonstrated that, in Melanesia as a whole, few entities that we would call a tribe—or leaders that we might legitimately call a chief—actually exist.

It is this history of the colonial abuse of categories and numbers, as well as the deconstruction of anthropological concepts for describing “peoples,” that led Appadurai to restrict himself to the adjective “cultural” and to avoid the noun “culture.” Appadurai does not want to give the impression that social identity is rooted in primordial sentiments, or

that social groups are just family and kinship writ large.³¹

What is the take away for the missionary? Well, if you are in the field and confused about just what to call the people in the territory (village, neighborhood, ghetto, *favela*) where you work, you are exactly where you should be. Questions like this cannot be settled by recourse to disputable and corruptible categories. As Brian Howell ably argues:

by limiting the conversation to “ethnicity,” “ethnic group,” or “people group,” the tendency will be to exclude critical concerns of power, economics, gender, race, cultural change, and inequality that are so often at the heart of the immigration experience.³²

To represent the new realities of globalization, Appadurai offers the term “ethnoscape”—by analogy with the concept of “landscape”—a more neutral approach that forces observers to fill in the particulars with what they actually see at the present time. Here is Appadurai’s description:

By *ethnoscape* I mean the landscape of persons who constitute the shifting world in which we live: tourists, immigrants, refugees, exiles, guest workers, and other moving groups and individuals constitute an essential feature of the world and appear to affect the politics of (and between) nations to a hitherto unprecedented degree. This is not to say that there are no relatively stable communities and networks of kinship, friendship, work, and leisure, as well as of birth, residence, and other filial forms. But it is to say that the warp of these stabilities is everywhere shot through with the woof of human motion, as more persons and groups deal with the realities of having to move or the fantasies of wanting to move.³³

This means that missionaries are forced to look closely in order to discover exactly

who the people are that they have chosen to settle among. These people are all different, all particular to space and time. Many are ephemeral, on the move, and will not last long as a discernable group before they reassemble in another configuration. The missionary’s job is not to stop the people from moving and changing, but rather to offer them Christ along the way. “Planting churches”—if that is your strategy—means “establishing communities,” not “building buildings.”

The point here is that classification and enumeration are both constructive tasks; classification is not given in nature. While that has always been true, it is even more so in today’s globalized and urbanized world. When anthropologists or missionaries classify and number people, they do it for a reason, and those reasons should be transparent. In the colonial era, the reason was to rationalize the colonial project, to justify colonial policies, and to discipline, regulate, and exploit colonized people and land. So, it is worthwhile to ask: Why do anthropologists (and missionaries) want to classify and number today?

Diaspora: The First Generation

Thomas and Susan dream of going home. They are contract workers in Kuwait, not citizens or even migrants who could settle there with some sort of permanent legal standing in the country. Kuwait has homeland security. Already, as of this writing in 2013, nearly 4,000 Indians have been deported to India. So, by desire and by law, a day will come when they will return home; but that day is not yet.

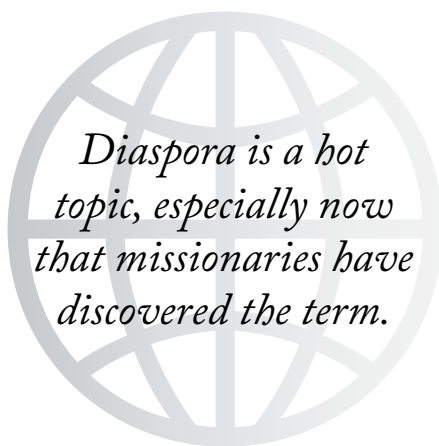
The community that Thomas and Susan belong to in Kuwait can be called a diaspora community. *Diaspora* is a hot topic, especially now that missionaries have discovered the term. But, once again, the classification is a slippery one. Anthropologists do not agree on what the term means or what happens in diaspora. In fact, there are lively debates about all the phenomena

grouped together under this term—so much so that a major review of the concept is a book titled *Diasporas*³⁴ (note the plural).

In a recent publication about Pacific Islands Diasporas, I have ventured this definition:

*Diaspora involves the dispersal of a people from a homeland to a host country or countries, the formation of a community within the host country that identifies with the homeland, and the maintenance of links between the diasporic community and the homeland and/or the maintenance of links among the diasporic communities themselves.*³⁵ (italics in original)

A good beginning, perhaps, but the definition does not clarify what the



term “community” means. Thus, the term diaspora is applied to the people from one island who settle in California, as well as to larger units who settle in multiple destinations, such as “the Chinese Diaspora,” or “the Muslim Diaspora.” The main attributes are migration, living together in community, and links with the homeland and/or other like diasporic communities.

The first generation often, but not always,³⁶ intends to work for a while and then return home. Thomas and Susan have been able to send enough money back to buy a small piece of land in Kerala and have a retirement home built for the day when they

leave Kuwait. The return is sometimes forced, sometimes driven by nostalgia or economics, when the fortunes of the host country turn for the worse.³⁷ Enduring diasporas occur when people consciously refuse to assimilate (or are prevented from assimilating) and/or when continual migration refreshes the community. The point is that the diaspora community or the host community—or both—find reasons to maintain the boundary of difference.

Maintaining the boundary of difference is not the same as remaining unchanged, though it is often portrayed that way. Long ago, Fredrik Barth³⁸ demonstrated that the crucial dynamic in ethnicity is boundary maintenance between one group and another. The defining characteristics of difference do shift as the perceptions and politics of either the host or the diasporic society—or both—change over time. This can be clearly seen in the differences between the first and subsequent generations of a diaspora, or when newly arrived migrants are compared with long-term members.

Diaspora and Global Flows

Relationships between diasporas and their home community differ. While the stereotype is that diaspora is composed of the poor, studies have shown otherwise. Those with some education and means emigrate first, not the poorest of the poor who, in any case, are not able to do so. In the case of the Gulf States, Indian migrants in the diaspora have competed well in the local economy. A recent report reveals that ten Indian billionaires and forty Indian millionaires are now living in the Gulf States. The fifty richest Indians in the Gulf are worth \$40.2 billion.³⁹

The economic success of overseas Indians is important for India not only because of remittances sent back with each paycheck, but also because the rich in the diaspora are able to invest back home. That is why the Indian government, for the second

time, is seeking a loan from diaspora Indians to make it through a “funding crunch.”⁴⁰ With a diaspora loan, the government does not have to deal with foreign debt markets nor with the IMF and its onerous demands for reforms.

The free movement of money across borders is what Appadurai calls a “financescape.” This movement of global capital is not anchored to a single country, bank, or “people.” As we all can attest, the sudden, overnight, hidden movement of capital is “deeply disjunctive and profoundly unpredictable,”⁴¹ as the flows are adjusted, constrained, or enhanced by seemingly unrelated flows of people, products, and information. What are the complexities of Al-Qaeda finances or the international trade in arms, and how do these affect the economy of the people with whom you are in mission?

Diaspora: The Second Generation and Beyond

In our story, the children of the second and subsequent generations in diaspora are not like the first generation.⁴² They were born in-country and thus do not have the experience of growing up “at home.” In Kuwait, the curriculum came straight from Delhi, but the classroom included the children of workers from throughout the Middle East and South Asia. Typically, the Indian children were sent back to India for secondary education.

The children did not stay in India, but initially returned to Kuwait. The second child, Anita, was not happy with her parents’ Pentecostal church. In that church, services were conducted in Malayalam. To Anita, this symbolized the limitations of the community: only insiders were welcome. There was no connection to the social setting of Kuwait and all the links were, for second generation Anita, a far away homeland. Anita was not “at home” anywhere—neither among Kuwaiti Arabs, nor back in Kerala, nor in her parents’ church.⁴³ In Bhabha’s famous phrase, children

Several indigenous denominations have for years followed a model of “reverse mission” from Nigeria to the United States.

like Anita are “unhomed.”⁴⁴ Still, there were few choices for Christian fellowship within her tradition since Kuwait recognizes only Roman Catholic, Coptic Orthodox, National Evangelical, Armenian Orthodox, Greek Orthodox, Greek Catholic (Melkite), and Anglican churches.⁴⁵

Eventually, Anita accepted a new job offer and moved to a city in the United Arab Emirates. There she avoided the Malayalee church and instead sought out fellowship in a multicultural church with other expat workers from Sri Lanka, the Philippines, Egypt, Australia, the United States, and several African countries. Her worship and sense of mission grew, as well as her personal goals; she is now pursuing an advanced degree in Finance and Banking at an Australian University with a campus in her city.

So, some migrants settle in, but then move again to a secondary diaspora community. This can create a *diaspora archipelago*, another kind of ethnoscape. The family in our story has ties in Kerala, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Australia, and the United States. Multiple centers are linked—not by geography—but by sentiment, that is, real or imagined “common origin, ethnicity, or religion that does not reduce one to being a subject of a host country.”⁴⁶

Transnationalism

Some people are constantly on the move, becoming part of regular transnational flows of people, products, and ideas. Santhosh remembers that pastors from India were common visitors and guests in the Pentecostal Church in Kuwait. Like the government, they were following the money, seeking support for their churches back home, their ministries, and sometimes their

personal needs, such as the cost of marrying off a daughter. The atmosphere in Kuwait is open enough that evangelists from India come and conduct revival meetings each year.

The transnational flow of persons, ideas, money, and products has intensified through the 1990s and 2000s, a situation that has had an important effect on mission. For example, several indigenous denominations have for years followed a model of “reverse mission” from Nigeria to the United States.⁴⁷ Nigerian migrants have settled in and around Atlanta, Houston, and the northeastern United States for education and work. Many of these migrants were already members of indigenous Nigerian denominations and so have been cast as “missionaries to America.” They have planted churches in great numbers. Because denominational control remains in Lagos, denominational leaders regularly travel back and forth to provide training and counseling, and pastors in America regularly travel to Lagos for meetings to report on the growth of their churches. This mission model is possible because of the ease of travel across national boundaries. The result is a church whose headquarters is in the Global South and whose mission outreach is in America.

As Appadurai notes:

Globalization has shrunk the distance between elites, shifted key relations between producers and consumers, broken many links between labor and family life, (and) obscured the lines between temporary locales and imaginary national attachments.⁴⁸

Ideas are on the Move: Global Media

Appadurai has offered two more, interrelated, metaphors: mediascape and ideoscape. Not surprisingly, the

movement of ideas has been greatly accelerated by developments in media and technology. But whether these developments are actually for the better remains the subject of intense public debate.⁴⁹

For the second generation in diaspora in Kuwait, media options—such as Facebook, Twitter, and the Internet in general—are readily available. On websites like *IndiansinKuwait.com* and *AbroadIndians.com*, one can find a “Kuwait Forum,” which includes discussion threads, advertisements about schools and investment opportunities, as well as classifieds for jobs, automobiles, housing vacancies, etc.

This diaspora community has its own newspapers: *The Kuwait Times* (an online English-language paper produced by Kuwaitis with expat writers) and an English edition of the *Malayala Manorama*, the most widely read newspaper in Kerala.⁵⁰ People have many other media venues where they can share news, opinions, and dreams. Naturally, some posts valorize the Indian diaspora. For example, one news item trumpeted that

Indians are top foreign investors in Dubai’s real estate market, with transactions of over \$132.6 billion made by them during the first half of 2013, according to an official report.

Websites keep the diaspora archipelago in contact.

The same is true for many migrant communities.⁵¹ Take the case of Rotuma Island, one of the most remote islands in the Pacific. In this Polynesian island, which is part of the nation of Fiji, life is limited to gardening and fishing, and connections with the outside world are tenuous. Perhaps this is why 85% of people who identify as Rotuman now live either in Fiji, or in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, the United States, or England.⁵² While the island of Rotuma, its culture and way of life, are the center of discussion on the Internet, those who remain on Rotuma rarely are able to access the

Internet. Thus, the Rotuman diaspora archipelago—with a presence in Hawai’i, California, British Columbia, Alberta, England, Sweden, and Norway—only exists as a community in cyberspace.

In contrast to other Pacific Island websites,⁵³ the Rotuman Forum does not include much chatter about problems in adapting to host cultures, discussions about remittances or questions of a genealogical nature. Participants on this site are primarily interested in transportation and communication, a fact that reflects not only the isolation of the home island but also the dispersal of the diaspora.



Other concerns are environmental and developmental, both of which reflect the diaspora hope that the home island itself will not change or degrade, even if trips home are infrequent. Land issues are of interest because the desire to return someday cannot be fulfilled unless the returnee is able to maintain rights in land on the island. The longer people are away, the more land rights are diminished and then forgotten. Finally, the autonomy and sovereignty of Rotuma within the nation of Fiji generates much debate. Here again, those who deal with daily life on Rotuma and those who live in diaspora have different views on the value of independence. Those in diaspora tend to idealize life on the island. And that raises the issue of identity, which hangs over all of these debates.

In a changing world with a widely dispersed diaspora, what does it mean to be Rotuman?⁵⁴

From another angle, this case also raises the question of how people are organized in our globalizing world. Our Western sociology tells us that the world is made up of “persons,” and that persons gather together in “groups” according to certain affinities: kinship, territoriality, economics, politics, and/or religion. Sometimes these things seem to overlap, and we think that we have a people: a tribe, a kingdom, or a nation. But others would argue that this is a sociology of the past. In the present time—assuming the existence of “persons” for the moment⁵⁵—people tend to be organized into “networks” held together by the flow of information, money, and goods through various technologies, especially cell phones and various venues on the Internet.⁵⁶

The argument here is that the “groups” we have grown up with are not the only way to organize the world; indeed, great numbers of people organize their lives in other ways. The power of a social network—with many nodes but no center—can be seen in the difficulty that nations have in dealing with terrorist networks where nodes can operate independent of any central authority. Or that regimes have in dealing with rebellious citizens who, as in the “Arab Spring,” can appear in flash mobs and then disappear before the police can get to them. Or that any nation has in regulating cash flows or commodity flows in international finance. In this light, should mission agencies be organized as a hierarchical group or a decentralized network?

Paul Hopper draws this conclusion:

Hierarchical and bureaucratic institutions such as the nation-state cannot match the organizational efficiency, dynamism and flexibility of networks evident in the difficulties that countries face in dealing with international criminal networks.

Ironically, if governments want to tackle such networks, they will have to function as networks themselves, operating as nodal points, coordinating their activities and pooling their information, all of which entails power being shifted from political institutions to the flows and cultural codes embedded in networks.⁵⁷

Identity: Personal and Social

Indeed, if social identity (that is, the national, ethnic, or religious identity of a group) has become blurred and shifting in our globalized and urbanized world, then personal identity has become more problematic as well. (Or maybe it is only problematic for old missionaries and social scientists—like me—who think that having multiple personalities is a psychiatric disease.)

The youngest brother in our story, Santhosh, is negotiating his identity and his calling. Who is he? It all depends. Here are his words:

I do not hesitate to say that I am Indian—although sometimes I specify, saying, “I carry an Indian passport.” I look “Indian”—I am brown. I am culturally an Indian too—particularly a Malayalee (one from Kerala, who speaks Malayalam). I speak our local language and understand my people. I would self-identify as a Malayalee. But with several qualifications. Foremost of which is that I am a Malayalee who was born and raised in Kuwait. I do not have any affinity toward being Kuwaiti—(my community’s perception of) Kuwait is defined as ethnically Arab; religiously, Muslim; economically, well-off. But, I have also spent the last ten years, more than one-third of my life in the United States.

My response to people’s query on where I am from begins with attention to their underlying assumptions. Many in Christian/seminary/mision circles ask these questions with the presumption ... that I must return.... This expectation is sometimes cloaked in theological (language of) responsibility that is then imposed on the one being questioned. Many times, especially in the early days, I

Santhosh had to rethink his Indian identity when he learned from Indian students that caste was still a powerful marker in the church in India.

would answer, “My heart is committed to India” (a rather neutral statement about where I might “return” to). Nowadays, ... I’ll inform them that I was born and raised in Kuwait and that I would be open to going to Dubai/Doha/Kuwait if the Lord opened the door. Then, all of a sudden, they realize that they were too presumptuous. But this answer is still satisfying to them; they are appeased that I will move back to some place where I came from.⁵⁸

Four reflections about identity are in order. First, as in all presentations of self, much depends on the context, the time, and the “other” to whom one is presenting one’s “self.” While this has always been true, this era of globalization and urbanization vastly expands the range of contexts in which to present oneself. In Kerala, Santhosh does not present himself as Indian, of course, or even a Malayalee, since nearly everyone is and that would not distinguish him. Elsewhere in India, Santhosh might present himself as a Malayalee from Kerala. In Kuwait, and in the presence of Kuwaitis, Santhosh is Indian, but few there would be interested in further details of his identity. At school in the United States, Santhosh does not emphasize being from Kuwait, and certainly does not claim to be Kuwaiti, since he is neither Arab, nor Muslim, nor rich. But, if he presents himself as an Indian, then he has to negotiate his identity with other students who actually grew up in India.

Second, the reader should notice that “caste” is not mentioned even once in the story of this Indian family. While the category “Christian” has come to be treated as a “caste” in some regions, it is still significant that this category, once thought to be pervasive in structuring all Indian societies, is becoming less

relevant in the present time, at least among the Indian Diaspora. Indeed, Santhosh had to rethink his Indian identity when he learned from Indian students that caste was still a powerful marker in the church in India.

Third, Santhosh recognizes that all classifications are political. Behind every question and every presentation of self are hidden political assumptions and political statements. In academic settings, I too have noted a hint of xenophobia, even racism, in questions about where a student comes from and how soon they intend to return home. International students in a seminary context are hemmed in by assumptions that evangelism and church planting back in their home country are the only appropriate callings for them. When teachers, advisors, and sponsors make these assumptions, power is added to the complex mix of the presentation of self in everyday society.

Fourth, given different contexts, different generations, and power differentials, there is an endless variety of contested personal and social identities that might be owned or applied. Shifting now to a different setting for a moment, Juliet Uytanlet, a doctoral student, reports on the variety of names applied to the Chinese Diaspora in the Philippines over time.

The Spaniards called them Sangleys then Chinos. The Americans called them Chinamen, Coolies and Aliens. The Filipinos called them Tsino, Kabise, Tsekwa, Instik, Beho, Barok, Buchiki, Bulol, Singkit, Singkot, Tsinito or Tsinita, Chinky-eyed, Chinks, Tsino, or Chinoy. The social scientists categorized them as Huasang “merchants,” Huaquiao “sojourners,” and Huaren “Chinese people in diaspora.” They were also labeled as overseas Chinese, Jews of the East, immigrants, transnationals,

market-dominant minorities, flexible identities, cosmopolitans, cosmopolitan capitalists, or global cosmopolitans. In academics, proper reference to the Chinese in the Philippines has evolved as well from mere Chinese to Philippine Chinese to Filipino-Chinese to Chinese-Filipino to Chinese Filipino without the hyphen. The Chinese Filipinos today tend to call themselves *lanlang*, *Tiong Kok lang*, *Banlam lang*, or *Tsinoy*. There are still some who call themselves *Huana*.⁵⁹

If Chinese in the Philippines—whose families may have been there for two hundred years or just arrived—can sit around the tea shop and argue about identity; and if Chinese intellectuals in the Philippines can write books about ethnic identity; how do anthropologists and missionaries have the hubris to pretend that they can assign identity to the Chinese there?

If things are that complex, variable, and open to contestation in the Chinese Diaspora, things are no less clear-cut back in China. Throughout a turbulent century the meaning of “self” and the identity markers for “self” have changed significantly several times in China. From the imperial period at the beginning of the 1900s, through the Republic, the Civil War, and the various stages of the Communist era (including the emphasis on collectives), the Cultural Revolution, and then the Reform Era, personal identity and the relationship between self and society has undergone dramatic changes.

Some argue that, in the present time, the spread of capitalism and its careful adoption by the Chinese government will lead to the construction of a “person” similar to the individual that we imagine in Western societies. Lisa Hoffman considers this conjecture, then discards it. The rise of competitive capitalism in cities along the coast, the demise of rules regulating the movement of labor, and the shift to an open job market have led to changes in the perception and presentation of self. The result, however, is not what outsiders expected.

Although I argue that neoliberal techniques of governing, such as more autonomous decision making and the marketization of labor, have been adopted in China, I also argue that these neoliberal techniques of governing are being combined with non-liberal ways of governing the self and others—such as Maoist-era politics of social modernization and ethics of concern for the well-being of the nation. It thus does not make sense to describe the new urban professionals as “neoliberal subjects,” for that assumes too much about the ethics and politics of these young people. My analysis challenges more traditional understandings of neoliberalism as a particular combination of political, technical, and ideological elements that necessarily emerges as a “pack-



age” in disparate locations. I thus aim to contribute to understandings of changing urban life in China, anthropological studies of subject-formation in global city spaces, and analyses of neoliberalism itself.⁶⁰

Young Chinese do make their own decisions about jobs, housing, and marriage. But Hoffman argues that they do so with more than their own “good” in mind. They also consider the good of the family, the community, and the nation; thus emerges a different kind of “self” than one finds in the West: a “patriotic professional.”

From another angle, Yan Hairong follows the changing categories of domestic servants in China from the Qing dynasty through the ups

and downs of the Communist era. The concept of a *niangyi* “domestic servant” in Qing society fell out of favor during the People’s Republic, though high party officials did have *baomu* “protecting mother” or *ayi* “aunties.” Having any “servants” at all was frowned upon during the Cultural Revolution, but during the 1980s, the concept of *jiating fuwuyuan* “domestic-service personnel” emerged. In the present time, *baomu* has returned, though currently the preferred term is *dagongmei*, “young woman selling labor,” a reference today to young, single rural women who work in the city.⁶¹ Tellingly, Hairong found these workers constantly agonizing about their identity or status (*shenfen*) in society.⁶²

Social identity and personal identity, the sense of self, are not a given in any society, and make up a contested area in most. Missionaries must discover who they are talking to.

Final Thoughts

Migration, urbanization, diaspora, and identity are merely some of the forces flowing, swirling, and creating turbulence in the globalization project in which humanity is currently engaged. The effects are uneven. Cities like Bangalore and Dalian (“China’s Bangalore”⁶³) are nodes in the networks of information technology companies, labor migration, and factory production, while the rural states of India and provinces of China are losing their most mobile and educated cohorts, to the point that land itself is sometimes abandoned.⁶⁴ The world is definitely not flat.

But the world *is* lost. If people are on the move, then missionaries should be on the move. If people are adept at negotiating identities in emerging contexts, then missionaries should be also.⁶⁵ If people are suffering from global flows that leave them economically destitute and bereft of hope, then missionaries should enter into the situation, empathize with the pain, and

discover what a Christ-centered community looks like in that world.

There are missionaries doing just that. They are missionaries from the Global South who are already right in the middle of this mix: Indian Christians who have migrated to the Gulf; rural Chinese Christians who have migrated to coastal cities; Nigerian Pentecostals who have migrated to Atlanta for work and have founded churches; and Singaporean Christians who are living and working in Vietnam.⁶⁶ In this emerging stream of mission, what might the place of Western missionaries be? Stop, look, and listen,⁶⁷ at least for the moment.

Unfortunately, the response is often to try to find a way to take control of this movement of the Spirit by naming, numbering, and training.⁶⁸ Training too often means teaching migrant missionaries a particular Western model of mission. The emerging churches, the migrant, urban, diasporic churches, have their own ecclesiology⁶⁹ and homiletics,⁷⁰ as well as missiology. If we take only an instrumental or “strategic” view of them, we may miss the work of God in the present time.⁷¹ **IJFM**

Endnotes

¹ My thanks to Eunice Irwin, Stanley John, and Steve Ybarrola for critiquing previous drafts.

² I use “persons” here to draw attention to identity issues that become even more critical when people are moving and settling in a new land or city.

³ This is a true story. The names and some details have been changed to guard their privacy.

⁴ Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. (1996) Minneapolis, MN: The University of Minnesota Press. p. 2.

⁵ Specifically, “the Gulf Cooperation Council” made up of Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates.

⁶ Stephen Castles and Mark J. Miller, *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World*, Fourth Edition. (2009) New York: The Guildford Press. p. 165.

⁷ King et al., pp. 98-99. The other two countries receiving more than \$25 billion in remittances from their overseas workers are Mexico and China. Remittances are also sent through informal channels, but these cannot be counted.

⁸ These are estimates. Sources include: Russell King, et al. *People on the Move: An Atlas of Migration*. (2010) Berkeley: The University of California Press. pp. 40-41, 50-51; www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/ and www.wikipedia.org/, both accessed on 8-29-13. There are many sources for categories and numbers, and not all agree.

⁹ King et al., pp. 98-99.

¹⁰ Thus, Kerala is the only state in India ranked “very high” on the Human Development Index (2013).

¹¹ This is the west coast of India, a spice-producing area that was engaged in trade with the Roman Empire, and successive economic systems in Europe and the Middle East for the last 3000 years. This is where St. Thomas is reported to have planted churches and been martyred.

¹² King et al., pp. 54-55.

¹³ Lisa M. Hoffman, *Patriotic Professionalism in Urban China: Fostering Talent*. (2010) Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press. pp. 7-9.

¹⁴ Yan Hairong, *New Masters, New Servants: Migration, Development, and Women Workers in China*. (2008) Durham, NC: Duke University Press. p. 43.

¹⁵ Hairong, p. 62.

¹⁶ By some reports, 218 million people are living in a country other than where they were born, by others, 232 million. This is only 3% of the world population. However, when one includes undocumented immigrants, internal migrants, and the second generation in diaspora, the number could swell to half a billion. Consider all of those impacted by loss of emigrants, and by the receiving of remittances, and the impact of migration grows to one billion people.

¹⁷ This may be slowly changing as the mandatory age of retirement has recently been moved from 60 to 65 and there are provisions for requesting an extension.

¹⁸ Not to mention Tamar, Ruth, and Bathsheba—all Canaanites in the genealogy of Jesus.

¹⁹ Remember that, at the same time, local people were active in resisting and subverting the colonial project.

²⁰ Appadurai says: “I have been inspired by two essays: one by Benedict

Anderson (1991) and one by Sudipta Kaviraj (1994), which together suggest an important new agenda for a critique of European colonial rule. Taking the Indian colonial experience as my case, I shall try to elaborate the idea that we have paid a good deal of attention to the classificatory logic of colonial regimes, but less attention to the ways in which they employ quantification in censuses as well as in various other instruments like maps, agrarian surveys, racial studies, and in a variety of other productions of the colonial archive.” Appadurai p. 115.

²¹ “The role of numbers in complex information-gathering apparatuses such as the colonial one in India had two sides that in retrospect need to be distinguished. The one side may be described as justificatory and the other as disciplinary.” Appadurai, p. 115.

²² Appadurai, p. 121.

²³ Appadurai, p. 122.

²⁴ Edward W. Said, *Orientalism*. (1978) New York: Vintage Books.

²⁵ Edward Everett Evans-Pritchard, (1940) *The Nuer: A Description of the Modes of Livelihood and Political Institutions of a Nilotic People*. New York: Oxford University Press.

²⁶ Edmund Ronald Leach, (1954) *Political Systems of Highland Burma: A Study of Kachin Social Structure*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

²⁷ Fredrik Barth, (1959) *Political Leadership among Swat Pathans. Monographs on Social Anthropology 19*. London: Athlone.

²⁸ J. A. Barnes, (1962) “African Models in the New Guinea Highlands,” *Man* 62:5-9.

²⁹ To be sure, local people recognize groups and alliances, but they do not use the same criteria that we do to divide up the social world. In fact, Marilyn Strathern has opted for the concept “sociality” rather than “society” in order to begin fresh describing how New Guinea people negotiate relationship and groups. (1988) *The Gender of the Gift: Problems with Women and Problems with Society in Melanesia*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

³⁰ Marshall Sahlins, (1963) “Rich Man, Poor Man, Big Man, Chief: Political Types in Melanesia and Polynesia,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 5:285-303.

³¹ Appadurai, pp. 13-14.

³² Brian Howell, "Multiculturalism, Immigration and the North American Church," (2011) *Missiology* 39:1:79-85. p. 83.

³³ Appadurai, pp. 33-34.

³⁴ Stéphane Dufoix, (2008) *Diasporas*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

³⁵ Michael A. Rynkiewicz (2012) "Pacific Islands Diaspora Studies," *Pacific Studies, Special Issue, Pacific Islands Diaspora, Identity, and Incorporation*, edited by Alan Howard and Jan Rensel. 35:1/2:280-302. pp. 282-283.

³⁶ There are dispersed people who have no desire or intention to return home, some who have no home to return to (e.g., the Bikini Marshallese whose home atoll is radioactive and is missing some islets altogether), and some that go so far as to demonize "home" as a bad place to which no one would want to return.

³⁷ For example, when I was in Lithuania in 2008, many people talked about relatives who had migrated to Ireland because the economy was booming there. By 2010 that was not the case and some workers were returning home or moving on to wherever the boom was.

³⁸ Fredrik Barth, 1969, "Ethnic Groups and Boundaries," introduction to Fredrik Barth, editor, *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Culture Difference*. London: Allen and Unwin. pp. 9-37

³⁹ www.arabianbusiness.com/ "Gulf States' 50 Richest Indians worth 40.2 billion," Posted 10 Feb 2013; Accessed 04 Sept 2013.

⁴⁰ www.IndiansInKuwait.com/ "India Wants to Ask its Diaspora for a Loan to Ride Out a Funding Crunch," Posted 07 July 2013; Accessed 23 Aug 2013.

⁴¹ Appadurai, p. 35.

⁴² As Steve Ybarrola has pointed out, the interest of the first generation in working for their children and adapting when they need to, is not the interest of the second generation that often rejects the culture of origin in favor of fitting into the new culture, and this is not the interest of the third generation that often goes back to rediscover what was lost of the culture of origin. "Diasporas and Multiculturalism: Social Ideologies, Liminality, and Cultural Identity," in Sadiri Joy Tira, editor, *The Human Tidal Wave: Global Migration, Megacities, Multiculturalism, Pluralism, Diaspora Missiology*. Manilla: LifeChange Publishing, 2013.

⁴³ See helpful video about "not being at home." http://www.ted.com/talks/pico_ayer_where_is_home.html

⁴⁴ Homi Bhabha, (1994) *The Location of Culture*. New York: Routledge.

⁴⁵ They do meet, not in their own building but in the National Evangelical Church compound.

⁴⁶ Dufoix, *Diasporas*. p. 63.

⁴⁷ This story comes from: Udotong, William Effiong (2010) *Transnational Migration and the Reverse Mission of Nigerian-Led Pentecostal Churches in the United States of America: A Case Study of Selected Churches in Metro Atlanta*. Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Asbury Theological Seminary.

⁴⁸ Appadurai, pp. 9-10.

⁴⁹ Paul Hopper, (2007) *Understanding Cultural Globalization*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press. pp. 60-86; chapter on "Global Communication, Media and Technology."

⁵⁰ See: <http://gulf.manoramaonline.com/cgi-bin/MMOnline.dll/portal/ep/home.do?tabId=15>. See also: <http://www.theinternationalindian.com/index.php>.

⁵¹ Daniel Miller and Don Slater, (2007) *The Internet: An Ethnographic Approach*. New York: Berg.

⁵² This and the following story of Rotuma come from: Alan Howard and Jan Rensel, "Issues of Concern to Rotumans Abroad: A View from the Rotuma Website," *Pacific Studies, Special Issue, Pacific Islands Diaspora, Identity, and Incorporation*. (2012) 35:1/2:144-183.

⁵³ For example, Kava Bowl for Tongans, Samoalove for Samoans, and Kamehameha Roundtable for Hawaiians. (see Howard and Rensel, p. 149).

⁵⁴ Howard and Rensel, p. 176-178.

⁵⁵ I have elsewhere explored the possibility that a "person" is not constructed the same in every society, that the Western construction of a "person" is only one of many ways to construct persons, and thus the missionary cannot assume that the equivalent of a Western "person" is the subject of his or her evangelism practices. Michael A. Rynkiewicz, (2003) "Person in Mission: Social Theory and Sociality in Melanesia," *Missiology* 31:2:155-168.

⁵⁶ See discussion in Hopper, pp. 78-85; as well as M. Castells (2004) "Informationalism, Networks, and the Network Society: A Theoretical Blueprint," in M. Castells, editor, *The Network Society: A Cross-Cultural Perspective*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar, pp. 3-45.

⁵⁷ Hopper, p. 80.

⁵⁸ Santhosh (a pseudonym).

⁵⁹ Juliet Uytanlet, "The Hybrid Tsinoyos: Challenges of Hybridity and Homogeneity as Socio-cultural Constructs among the Chinese in the Philippines in the 21st

Century." Dissertation in progress at Asbury Theological Seminary, September 2013.

⁶⁰ Hoffman, p. 7.

⁶¹ Hairong, pp. 6, 17-21.

⁶² Hairong, p. 7.

⁶³ Hoffman, p. 5.

⁶⁴ Hairong, p. 43.

⁶⁵ As Brian Howell points out, this takes us way beyond "contextualization" of the Gospel to a particular culture, since a migrant community is not the same as a village back home, and most likely is composed of people from different languages anyway, as one would find in a "Hispanic" neighborhood in a city in the United States. p. 80.

⁶⁶ Robbie B. H. Goh, (2003) "Deus ex Machina: Evangelical Sites, Urbanism, and the Construction of Social Identities," in Ryan Bishop, John Phillips, and Wei Wei Yeo, editors, *Postcolonial Urbanism: Southeast Asian Cities and Global Processes*. New York: Routledge. pp. 305-322.

⁶⁷ Miriam Adeney argues that "the uncoordinated movement (ethnic mission outreach) is of interest because it may have the potential to revitalize North American mission at large," "Colorful Initiatives: North American Diaspora in Mission," in *Missiology* (2011) 39:1:5-23. p. 7.

⁶⁸ Adeney goes so far as to claim that "monocultural Christians from cocooned enclaves do not have the experience to lead." p. 7. This is just another way that the U.S. is a mission field.

⁶⁹ Enoch Wan points out that an "altered ecclesiology," not a replication of church back in the West, leads to a form of church as "community center for mutual aid" and thus something worth learning about. "The Phenomenon of Diaspora: Missiological Implications for Christian Missions," in Luis Pantoja, Jr., Sadiri Joy Tira, and Enoch Wan, editors, (2004) *Scattered: The Filipino Global Presence*. Manila: LifeChange Publishing. pp. 103-122.

⁷⁰ See Larry Caldwell, (1999) "Towards the New Discipline of Ethnohermeneutics: Questioning the Relevancy of Western Hermeneutical Methods in the Asian Context," *Journal of Asian Mission*, pp. 21-43.

⁷¹ Howell argues that "the goal of the missionary should always be to empower the local church to engage in mission, rather than train specialists or professionals for the task." p. 83.

Looking for the “Social Glue”: A Response to Michael Rynkiewich

by *Alan McMahan*

Thank you very much, Michael. I really appreciated your paper, and how in just a few pages you were able to bring out so many pertinent concepts that demand our attention. I actually can't think of a topic that might be more relevant, more significant, or a greater challenge for doing missions today. You have used this case study very effectively to personalize some of the dynamics that are in play among peoples stretched across the globe. It's a very thoughtful treatment on what it means to be a people and how identity and boundaries are rapidly fluctuating and evolving in ways that challenge some of our traditional assumptions.

Evolving Anthropology

I appreciated this study because it was done by an anthropologist. The discipline of anthropology sort of grew up in the village. It has typically used qualitative research methods to go deep with a few people over time, so the traditional ethnography took a year or more of data collection in order for the researcher to understand the worldview of the people they were working with. That slow approach now seems like a luxury. The world is changing so rapidly now with an evolving landscape fueled by urbanization, migration and globalization. We are seeing some challenges emerge that we haven't anticipated.

If you think back, our missiological strategies over the last several decades were based on a couple of key insights from certain eminent contributors. One was Donald McGavran, who talked about the homogeneous unit principle and how we needed to see the gospel manifested in every people group—every cultural group. And so we trained missionaries to go deep into the local languages of these unreached people groups and help plant a church that would be indigenous in that context. Then Ralph Winter comes along and refines this idea of the people group concept, and builds on it so that we began to identify and quantify all these remaining people groups that need

Editor's Note: This is a slightly edited version of the author's response to Michael Rynkiewich's paper entitled *Mission in "the Present Time": What about the People in Diaspora?* (see pp. 103-14), which was presented to members of the International Society for Frontier Missiology on September 13, 2013 (Plano, TX).

Alan McMahan, PhD, is associate professor of intercultural studies at Biola University and editor of the Great Commission Research Journal (biola.edu/gcr). A former missionary in Indonesia, Alan has worked with churches in North America and on the Pacific Rim, and has taught missiology, church growth, leadership, organizational development, and evangelism. He has also served as vice president of Alliance Theological Seminary in Nyack, New York and as academic dean at The King's College in Manhattan, New York.

to be reached. But, of course, your study, Michael, begins to ask the question of what these principles look like in a more modern landscape.

My Personal Context

First a little background on myself. I was a missionary in Indonesia and then spent a number of years in New York as well, working out of midtown Manhattan at the King’s College. Our campus building was the Empire State Building, so we used to say it was the tallest campus building in the world. But since being at Biola, I’ve taken students back to New York and into Los Angeles to do urban research. We’re looking specifically at immigrant people groups, where they’re locating, how they’re evolving, and how they’re influencing the American context. And it’s been fascinating, especially when I reflect back on my missionary experience in Indonesia. I was with the Christian and Missionary Alliance and they had been immensely successful in Indonesia. They had planted over 2000 churches mainly in the interior areas of Kalimantan, Sulawesi and Papua (although, they were not very successful in urban, Muslim Java). But that was a result of those decades of missionary preparation that prepared us to go into monocultural people groups to learn and understand their local ways.

Indonesia Morphing

So it was a bit of a shock to me a little over a year ago when a student knocks at my door at Biola and says, “We would like for you to speak at a church growth conference.”

“That’s great.” I said. “Where is it?”

“It’s in Surabaya, Indonesia,” he replied.

I thought, Wow, it’s not in Anaheim!

So I asked the first question you always ask: “Will you cover my airfare?”

And he said, “Oh yeah, sure; we’ll fly your wife, too.”

Sometime later in the conversation (after verifying that I could make those dates) I said, “So about how many people will be at this conference?”

“I don’t know, it’s hard to say. Maybe 25,000,” he replied. My mouth fell open. 25,000? I’m thinking, What kind of place is this?

Well, I ended up going to Surabaya and speaking at Bethany Church, which is running currently about 170,000 people, right in the middle of the world’s largest Muslim country. It just completely blew away my frame of reference. When I was there in earlier years, the church was fearful and hiding. Evangelism was illegal—it still



is—but it was a church that was in no way dominant on the landscape of that city. They were just trying to survive—and that’s still very much the case with many churches in Indonesia.

This experience really piqued my interest so when I had the opportunity to do a sabbatical study this last spring, I decided to go and explore the rapidly growing urban church movements in seven different global gateway cities in four countries spread across Asia. And I have to tell you the insights were very interesting. What we’re actually seeing occur is leading to a redefinition of mission: social and personal identity means something different in this kind of changing landscape.

Urban Migration

Michael talks about emigration with an “e” and immigration with an “i” with reference to internal and international migration flows. The United Nations now reports that worldwide, the total number of people immigrating internationally is greater than the size of Brazil. So migration is occurring at a rate unprecedented in world history.

And urbanization, of course, is going right along with all this international migration, so that they are now predicting that 90 percent of the population of the United States and Western Europe will be urban by the year 2050. And 70 percent of the world’s population will be urban by that same time. It was back around 2008 that we crossed the 50 percent mark in terms of how many peoples of the earth were urban. So urban migration is changing the landscape. We’re having to admit that immigration-migration patterns are probably doing more to alleviate global poverty than all the Christian charities combined (in terms of the flow of money going back home). And, of course, across international networks and those domestically within a country, we are not only seeing the flow of money but of ideas. And that was aptly identified in Michael’s paper, how ideas are flowing not only through the Internet but also through a reciprocal migratory pattern that’s taking place. So, in Beijing where I was in the spring, they are now estimating that there are 120,000 house churches that represent the face of evangelical Christianity in that city. That kind of phenomenon is changing the dialogue not only in the city, but in the government. And some see a softening of the government’s opposition to Christianity in China in the years to come.

Michael’s article made me think about the ways cities function. Cities have this powerful magnetism that draws people in. In Indonesia there’s a word called *ketinggalan*. Among the villagers in rural areas it means, “If we’re not careful, we’re going to be left behind.”

It has the idea that the world's moving on. So they move to the city in order to participate in the new opportunities, hoping for better days. Of course, they rarely find it, but often end up in slums on the periphery of the city; it's not quite as advertised.

High Density Environments

The massive power of cities pulls people together, creating a number of interesting factors that relate to the opportunities connected with diasporas. When cities draw people in, they compress them in high-density environments. So when I teach my class in urban research I find it much easier to get this point across in New York than I do in LA, because New York is more vertical. That high compression takes people that are very different from each other and puts them on the same subway train, and the close proximity of highly divergent worldviews generates new re-combinations, and it shifts reality for the urban dweller.

Cities slam people together in high compression environments, which results in "cultural explosions." Imagine something like a super collider that's taking particles and slamming them together at high speed and out of that comes all kinds of particles. Those particles represent new innovations taking place. That's what's happening in our cities with diverse people in high compression environments. They start to question worldview assumptions, and they begin to take on new ways of thinking and adopt new identities in the process.

Cities have a power not only to draw in, but also to send out again. So the city functions to create transmission and distribution networks that span large regions where the footprint of the city stretches out over a lot of other places. It's fascinating how all of this operates to shift the identities of people. And I think that is the crucial point where Michael's article really focused our attention: how are people(s) beginning to think of themselves differently?

In Jakarta, a number of massive churches now exist—40,000 people in one, 30,000 in another. They are not homogeneously-focused churches . . .

Let me give you an example. In Jakarta a number of massive churches now exist—40,000 people in one, 30,000 in another. And it's interesting that these large churches are drawing in all kinds of people like giant vacuum cleaners. They are not homogeneously-focused churches, but are drawing in a large diversity of people. And among their population are people groups, unreached people groups, which are present by the hundreds or even the thousands. It forces us to think about our normal missionary deployment strategy of sending a missionary to a village area to work with a monocultural unreached people group. That progress has been slow. And often in those rural places that receptivity has been low because they represent very traditional societies reinforced by generations of a prescribe way of thinking. But in the city this begins to break down because identities start to change.

The Professional

Here's another interesting urban profile. In Jakarta we are finding Muslim girls who live in a *kampung*, a traditional Muslim "neighborhood," but who also have a job in the business district downtown. When they leave home in the morning, they're wearing the head coverings and the traditional Muslim garb. But on the bus they take that off, stick it in their purse, and simply wear their business suit (which they had on underneath), so as to look more mainstream in that the urban context. In the business world, in their professional lives, they have a different kind of identity, or the opportunity to forge one.

So what we are finding is that the churches that are really growing most rapidly in Jakarta are churches that speak to that professional identity.

In these large churches especially, you'll find that often over half of the church staff are tech people. I found one church that had something like sixty-nine paid staff, half of them tech people (lighting tech, media tech, sound tech, social network tech, etc.). The worship services are very contemporary, and often done in English, or the Indonesian language, both of which function as trade languages that cut across ethnic divides and mother tongues to unite these people together. These churches deliver a very high-powered, media-driven "light and sound" show that you might find in many contemporary churches here in the United States.

As I try to work this through my missionary brain, I ask myself how this work compares to our traditional mission strategy of reaching these people. And I've realized that they're communicating on a new wavelength, or at least a different wavelength. These folk from unreached people groups will attend out of curiosity, hear the message, then go back out to the traditional neighborhoods, where they begin to share their faith in their *aikos* networks. Kinship and neighborhood networks are most powerful in uniting people together in the village, but in the urban contexts it is more often the professional network, or affinity groups based on hobbies (or special interests or faith) that pull people together from diverse groups. These re-combinations are generating a lot of opportunity.

A New Social Glue

Let me just say a couple of things that I think you're pointing to in your article, Michael, things that we ought to think about. First, I think we've got to rethink exactly what the frequency is that we are broadcasting on. And we've got to determine what the "social glue"

is that is holding people together. It’s not necessarily ethnicity or language anymore, since we’re often operating in these trade languages. There’s a new glue holding people together. I’d like to suggest we need to be “glue sniffers.” We need to train our personnel to sniff the glue that’s holding people together. Now that doesn’t look like what we are used to doing and thinking about.

Secondly, the other interesting development is this idea of the multiethnic church. Gary McIntosh and I wrote a book that came out in 2012 entitled *Being the Church in a Multiethnic Community: Why It Matters and How It Works*. In it we looked at some of the new opportunities for ministry that are emerging from those churches. The multiethnic church cuts across these ethnic divides, and plays to this different glue that’s holding people together. It might be based on the amount of

education a person has (or the socioeconomic level that they’ve got) more than on ethnicity.

What happens in these multiethnic churches is that they’re able to create a certain ambiguity, where it’s not one culture or the other, but it’s all of our cultures together. If I don’t quite fit the monocultural church nearby, I can probably find a place in this new world and the big multiethnic church. As missionaries then we can look for existing multiethnic churches in the city (or create them if none are found) and then leverage that opportunity to equip new believers to take the good news back into the mother tongue peoples through the networks that these people already have. So they are able to do E1 or E2 evangelism instead of being held back by the E3 distance of traditional missionaries. We need to use the critical mass developed in the multiethnic church to reach the

unreached people groups that are present and distributed throughout these urban environments.

So this was a great paper, Michael. I appreciate that you’ve done it and the way you’ve provoked our thinking. **IJFM**

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Western Agency, Meet the Diaspora

A Conversation with John Baxter

A few months ago, the IJFM sat down with John Baxter of the Lausanne Movement's Global Diaspora Network to discuss the role of mission agencies in the context of the global diaspora. The following is the fruit of that interaction.

IJFM: *What is it about diaspora mission that is challenging our mission structures today?*

There are essentially two mission realities that have been with us a while, but are now intensifying and growing in importance. First, I'd say that diaspora missions is refining the people group mission focus. It recognizes that increasingly large numbers of people from unreached people groups are now outside of their homelands. The experience of migration affects not only the identity of those within people groups but also our strategies for reaching them. It makes a people group focus more complicated in that migration mixes groups in their new locales. Overall this begins to diminish the singular importance agencies have traditionally given to a specific geographical location in reaching a particular people. It pushes mission agencies out of their more sedentary focus to a more mobile focus on peoples. Diaspora mission also represents a second mission reality, perhaps even a new missions era, in the way it respects and harnesses the rising missionary energy of the majority world. It takes seriously the fact that a significant percentage of majority world missionaries will be informal workers. These Christians within the global diaspora reflect this demographic trend in Christianity worldwide.

So, it comes down to two mission realities. Agencies that work in the global diaspora find themselves having to shift from a narrow geographical focus and more fully embrace an affinity focus when targeting UPGs in migration. They're also having to determine how to connect their mission resources with a growing number of informal mission workers who do not fit into their present structures.

IJFM: *So, John, give us a sense for where you enter this whole challenge of diaspora.*

My concerns are very practical. Sending agencies around the world are presently engaged with migrating people groups, and I believe they're presented with a kairos moment. I want to see our mission agencies more able to

John Baxter, DMin, and his wife, Jan, are missionaries with Converge Worldwide. They have served in the central Philippines, training pastors and missionaries at the Cebu Graduate School of Theology. They also have worked with the Philippines Missions Mobilization Movement, providing training for Overseas Filipino Workers. John now serves as the Director of Converge Worldwide Diaspora Ministries, and as International Catalyst for the Global Diaspora Network of the Lausanne Movement.

empower local churches in the global south to lead in diaspora missions. The global diaspora is creating a distinctly lay movement in the global south, but most of our Western training structures and systems are structured for full-time Christian workers. So we must ask: How do we empower the local global south church to recruit, train, and provide on-going mentoring for global south Christians finding employment in the 10/40 Window? This is where I enter this whole conversation on diaspora.

IJFM: We've heard you use the words "effective engagement" in speaking of Western sending agency involvement in the global diaspora. Can you unpack this a little more?

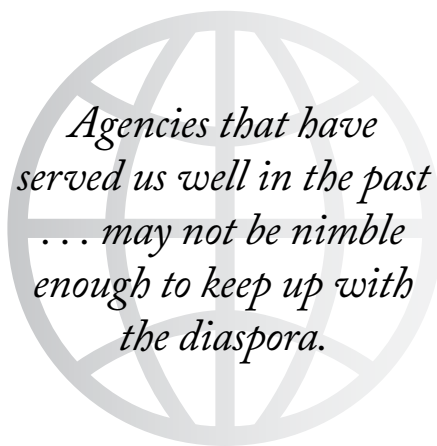
My concern is that our involvement as agencies, denominations and church networks be appropriate and contextually sensitive, so we don't harm a movement in progress. We need to get alongside this movement, and to do this effectively I believe three things are required: vision, structure and philosophy.

The first change is conceptual, a matter of vision. Do we as Western agencies see the diaspora both as a mission force and as a legitimate mission field? Diaspora as a global reality complicates matters and we may be reticent to study this issue and see through this complexity.

Let me elaborate this in a few ways. First, it can be disheartening to achieve success in reaching a UPG only to discover that the work is not finished because a large percentage of the people group is scattered globally, and that our outreach strategies may need to be significantly adapted in many of these diaspora contexts. Secondly, we can be so single-focused on a UPG in a mission field that we are blind to the other migrating UPGs that God is sending among us. Thirdly, we can be blind to the resources in the form of migrating majority world Christians that God is sending to our established fields. Some agencies continue sending missionaries

to re-evangelize Europe, but have yet to seriously investigate the potential roles of global south Christians living in Europe who are resources themselves.

It reminds me of one Sunday morning when my wife and I were riding the trains through Paris, going from the airport to the town of Evry, thirty kilometers to the south. We passed through neighborhoods inhabited by immigrants from North and Sub-Saharan Africa. On that early Sunday morning (while most native French were still at home), the train was filled with Francophone Africans dressed in Sunday attire and carrying Bibles. These believers—from places such as Côte d'Ivoire or Congo-DRC—were on their way to church.



As we rode along I wondered why my own agency, which works in France, has never investigated working with these immigrant Christians. While recognizing the social and economic barriers that separate them from the native French, and to a lesser degree from other immigrant groups, we remain ignorant of their potential for evangelizing their neighbors.

What can they do? What are their real limitations? Is there anything we can do to help remove some of these limitations? This is a conceptual shift. Do we see the Christian Francophone Africans living in France as a resource for reaching both the native French and other migrant groups there? We

will not really know what they may be able to do until someone has been tasked with finding out.

IJFM: And we assume this brings us to the structure of our mission agencies?

Yes. I am asking my agency to send personnel to France to work with these immigrant groups as a resource for missions, not a target for church planting or evangelism. Most likely our agency missionary will come from Francophone Africa (and not North America), thereby creating a wonderful mess of our present geographic mission structure.

If agencies are to have a role here, we must address the change required in our structures. Do our systems hinder our ability to work with the global diaspora? Can Western agencies remodel to fit an affinity focus? Are we flexible enough for this strategic vision?

It is far easier to adopt the motto, "From everywhere to everywhere," than to actually do it as a mission agency. When an affinity focus is adopted, the organizational structures of geographically-based agencies become cumbersome. For example, if we are no longer sending missionaries to Japan but to the Japanese, how can the old field structure based in Tokyo oversee and resource work in Brazil? How does the Japanese team in Brazil interact with the agency missionaries to the majority Brazilian population? What if they don't speak the same language? Which field provides resources, oversight and funding? Are turf wars inevitable?

Flexibility is a key issue. People on the move tend to stay on the move. A thriving immigrant community may quickly shift to a new location, even a new country, if political and economic conditions change. Agencies that have served us well in the past where we can expect a stable situation may not be nimble enough to keep up with the diaspora.

So, agencies that take on diaspora missions will face personnel issues. North American sending agencies need

to deploy missionaries from within the diaspora to work both in North America and globally. If it is true that the diaspora is best at reaching the diaspora, then recruitment, funding, and deployment by North American agencies becomes a priority. The best missionary to work among a diaspora community may be from an immigrant background or may not even be from America. Unfortunately, most North American agencies have a poor track record in this area.

IJFM: We've heard you talk a lot about the role of agencies in training. What's happening in this area?

The delivery of mission resources changes in diaspora missions. Most agencies are structured to deliver their training and personnel resources in contexts more suited to those whose primary and full-time focus is ministry. Going to a seminary or gathering for regular training meetings in a central location are traditional examples. But the diaspora does not connect in this manner. Resources must be delivered to people who are focused on secular work and who will not attend a Bible college or seminary. Most of them do not see themselves as missionaries and will not initially be seeking training anyway. Agencies must re-envision the content and delivery of training resources. The two most important contact points with such people are in their local church before they leave and in their new diaspora community in their new country. Can we shift our resources to those points?

For example, North American denominations typically center their systems for leadership development in theological schools in which students have the necessary background, time, and financial resources to be trained. Overseas secular workers in these countries find it very difficult to connect with our training venues. If an agency wishes to provide leadership training for Christians in the global diaspora, it must adjust its delivery systems to

Most of them do not see themselves as missionaries and will not initially be seeking training anyway.

the academic levels and interests of the diaspora and find new access points to deliver this training.

The church in the Philippines is a prime example. They have recognized the importance of diaspora missions for many years, and have begun to create pre-departure training for Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs). Some of the evangelical churches in the Manila area have created their own programs. The Philippines Mission Association has created the Philippines Missions Mobilization Movement (PM3) to help local churches train and care for their OFWs. The PM3 format is four one-day seminars that typically involve several churches. While this is a good start, more can be done.

The best venue for pre-departure training of OFWs is in the local church through a mentoring relationship. Returnee OFWs can mentor potential OFWs concerning family and financial matters, discipleship training, cross-cultural communication training, and on-going accountability relationships with the sending church. Overseas accountability is possible through the Internet and cell phones.

IJFM: So is the Western agency more of a broker for training in this diaspora mission?

Yes. This need for training is a possible link between the Western mission agency and the diaspora. Agencies continue to play an important role in the training of pastors in many of these majority world countries that are sending secular workers into the 10/40 Window. Western agencies can help equip pastors to begin a diaspora missions ministry in the local church. This training can be either formal or informal. It should be seen as part of the practical theology curriculum and not

just a missions topic. Just as we help train pastors to start churches, preach, counsel, and have small group ministry, we can also help ensure that when they finish their training program they are able to set up a diaspora missions ministry in the local church.

IJFM: What kind of responsiveness are we expecting from the Filipino churches?

One of the positives of this local church training approach is that a large impact is possible even if there is limited buy-in from local churches and denominational partners. There are at least 700,000 evangelical Filipinos in the global diaspora, hundreds of thousands in the 10/40 Window. If only 10 percent of the sending Filipino churches created training and accountability programs, it would result in tens of thousands of equipped Filipino disciples entering into least-reached areas. Add to this all the other majority world countries sending overseas workers in the 10/40 Window and Europe, and you can see that the potential for more trained workers numbers in the tens of thousands.

IJFM: So what would you say are the important elements to what you call a philosophy of diaspora mission?

Vision and structure work from an informed philosophy, and our philosophy will determine our effective engagement with the diaspora. There's one crucial (and very often ignored) ingredient in an effective philosophy: vulnerability.

We have to ask whether Western agencies can learn to work from weakness instead of technological and methodological strength. The global diaspora arises out of poverty and those involved are usually in a place of vulnerability. Can Western agencies learn how to serve and not lead a missions endeavor? This is a majority world movement,

and Western agencies are not in charge of it, so we must adopt the posture of a servant as we work in partnership with these majority world churches.

IJFM: Can you expand on this idea of weakness?

Caring for those in the diaspora has to be a part of our agenda. The global diaspora has arisen in a context of fallenness, weakness, and sorrow. People are on the move because of war, natural calamity and poverty. The context of diaspora missions is not only a place of weakness, it is a place of pain. A great deal of psychological dysfunction exists among those who have left home and those who have stayed behind. Most of the workers we hope to see in fruitful ministry are dealing with the pain and guilt of family separation. They have left spouses and children behind to earn a living or to escape intolerable conditions. A profound sense of dislocation accompanies those who are scattered. Agencies are well advised to care for the whole person when working in the diaspora. Can we love them instead of just using them for our mission strategy? I believe this is where the national sending churches play such a pivotal role.

IJFM: You talked earlier about issues of deployment. Is there anything else you'd like to add?

I will add a couple other elements. We should understand that all these diaspora ramifications in mission are part of a transition from an "Anglo" to a multi-cultural North American sending profile. This is a pragmatic question for me. The growing edge of the church in North America is no longer Anglo. If we do not learn how to mobilize and empower this "growing edge" for cross-cultural missions, we may find ourselves out of the game.

Diaspora missions also offers an opportunity to move from paternalism to partnership. I was eating a sandwich at a Tim Hortons restaurant in Toronto. Next to me were four young Chinese men talking about spiritual things. I

introduced myself and inquired about their conversation. Two of the young men were Mormon missionaries from China evangelizing the other two. Both missionaries became Mormons in their hometown in China and were sent to evangelize Chinese in Canada. Notice: China to Canada. East to West. We can ask for help from our overseas church partners in evangelizing the nations among us in North America. We can recruit from diasporic groups within North America to reach the UPGs within our borders. The diaspora is best at reaching the diaspora.

IJFM: Any concluding thoughts?

While it may seem strange to place this as a final point, I need to say it:



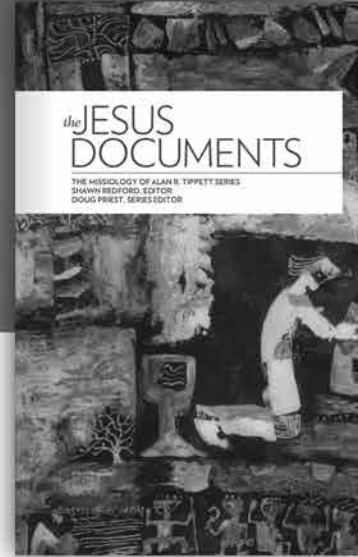
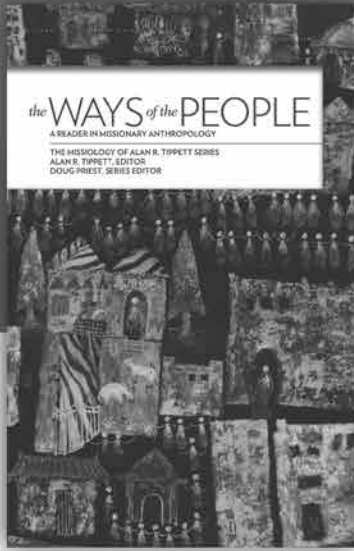
Diaspora missions is a God thing. We did not create the global diaspora. Our focus should simply be where is God working, and we should be ready to come alongside. After we are engaged we can better ask what we might expect. Can the evangelistic opportunities afforded to Christians in the diaspora be leveraged into church planting, or even church planting movements?

The truth is that we do not know at this time what diaspora missions can accomplish. We are just beginning to study this emerging strategy. We will not know what God can do through the diaspora unless we take the risk of restructuring our work to intentionally and actively engage with people on the

move. We must collaborate as agencies to learn from each other. We must become knowledgeable practitioners by fusing academic studies and on-going experimentation in order to define fruitful practices for the diaspora.

What we do know is that we did not create it. No agency put the millions of the majority world in motion, bringing millions from UPGs into contact with the gospel as they move to lands with an evangelical church, and sending millions of majority world Christians into unreached lands as secular workers. It appears to be a God thing. Henry Blackaby would ask us to see where God is already working and seek to join him; this is the essence of diaspora missions.

These are the issues I hope to work on in the days ahead. There are other important issues, such as returnee problems, that need to be addressed. I want to push Western agencies to assist the global south church to solve these problems. But this is their story; we can't write it for them. **IJFM**



The Ways of the People A Reader in Missionary Anthropology

Alan R. Tippet
Doug Priest, Series Editor

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Editorial Reflections

Let a Thousand Diasporas Bloom?

In a seminal 2005 article,¹ UCLA Professor of Sociology Rogers Brubaker provided a summary of the developing field of “diaspora” studies. Apparently, diaspora is one of those traveling terms. Its meaning is stretching semantically and conceptually to accommodate different academic and political agendas “in a veritable explosion of interest since the late 1980’s” (1). His concern is the dispersion of meaning to diaspora, what he calls “a ‘diaspora’ diaspora”:

The problem with this latitudinarian “let-a-thousand-diasporas-bloom” approach is that the category becomes stretched to the point of uselessness. If everyone is diasporic, then no one is distinctively so. The term loses its discriminating power—its ability to pick out phenomena, to make distinctions. The universalization of diaspora, paradoxically, means the disappearance of diaspora. (3)

Brubaker sees that diaspora is treated as a collectivity, a condition, a process, or a field of inquiry. So he decides to respond to all this proliferation with an assessment that includes a series of perspectives on “diaspora.” Each of these perspectives provides a valuable compass for our understanding of diaspora in the field of missiology.

First, Brubaker analyzes three core elements that continue to be constitutive of diaspora: 1) dispersion in space; 2) orientation to homeland; and 3) boundary maintenance. Dispersion is the most widely accepted criterion, and the orientation to homeland was an original exemplar. The classical diasporas held “a real or imagined ‘homeland’ as an authoritative source of value, identity and loyalty” (5). But then the proliferation set in. Brubaker quotes Tololyan (1991, p. 4):

The term that once described, Jewish, Greek, and Armenian dispersion now shares meanings with a larger semantic domain that includes words like immigrant,

expatriate, refugee, guestworker, exile community, overseas community, ethnic community.² (3)

Brubaker, drawing on Clifford (1994),³ indicates that more recent discussions have de-emphasized the “continuous cultural connections to a single source.” (5) They would not see diaspora as a desire for return to the homeland as much as lateral connections and the “ability to recreate a culture in diverse locations.”⁴ (6) Amidst all these tensions, Brubaker says these three core elements

remain widely understood to be constitutive of diaspora. Some subset, or combination of these, variously weighted, underlies most definitions and discussions of the phenomenon. (5)

We might ask if we do not witness this latitudinarian tendency in our “diaspora missiology.” Our open and inclusive tendency to embrace all forms of global dispersion may make it difficult for us to exercise a discerning eye to the particularities of a certain demographic. If dispersion is the single criterion for diaspora, then we can expect any legacy with the homeland to get lost in all the migration. Might we feel less compelled to notice that traditional values still play an unconscious, taken-for-granted role in the global diaspora? If everything is diaspora, then nothing is diaspora.

Secondly, it’s Brubaker’s treatment of the third criterion of “boundary maintenance” that has tremendous relevance for our missiological discussion of diaspora. This criterion “involves the preservation of a distinctive identity vis-à-vis a host society (or societies)” (6), and seems to be an “indispensable criterion” in most accounts. It can involve deliberate resistance to assimilation, self-enforced endogamy, active solidarity, and dense social relationships. But this aspect also generates ambivalence, for “a strong counter current emphasizes hybridity, fluidity, creolization and syncretism.” (6) Brubaker notes the tension here between boundary-maintenance and boundary-erosion, a tension that often appears as the axis of our missiological debate over “ethnic groups.” This criterion certainly applies to second and third generations who manage bicultural identities, and Chong

WE MIGHT ASK IF WE DO NOT WITNESS this latitudinarian tendency in our “diaspora missiology.” Our inclusive tendency to embrace all forms of global dispersion may make it difficult to exercise a discerning eye.

BRUBAKER IS MAKING AN IMPORTANT DISTINCTION for missiology to consider: that in our idea of “ethnic groups” there is actually a dual capacity for ethnicity and for groupness. The two are not the same.

Kim has examined this whole reality in his article included in this issue (97–101). We also see this hybridity in Michael Rynkiewicz’s case study, also in this issue (103–14).

Thirdly, Brubaker asks whether we are seeing “the dawning of an age of diaspora (or) simply the proliferation of diaspora talk” (7). Does this proliferation of diasporas in the world constitute a radical break? And is that break a fundamental transformation in the social world or simply a shift in our perspective? Brubaker reminds us of Glazer and Moynihan’s observation in the sixties that “the point about the melting pot...is that it did not happen” (8). Culture did not go away. We can add that the accompanying “secularization thesis” which predicted the demise of religion was dead wrong as well. Somehow more primal values and orientations can persist through what would seem dissipating circumstances.

The epochal shift just isn’t so radical, for as Brubaker observes, there’s usually two sides to the coin. While there is an “unprecedented ‘porosity of borders’” (8), Brubaker notes that states have gained a greater capacity to monitor and control their populations. He adds that “while contemporary migrations worldwide are more geographically extensive... they are on balance slightly less intensive” (9). And “distance eclipsing technologies” now allow migrants a new means to sustain ties to the homeland. So, Brubaker tends to see more continuity than radical discontinuity in the diaspora.

Finally, Brubaker sees a problem when any diaspora is characterized as an “entity” that possesses quantifiable memberships (and this is certainly the concern of Michael Rynkiewicz on p. 107ff.).

Rather than speak of “a diaspora” of “the diaspora” as an entity, a bounded group, an ethnodemographic or ethnocultural fact, it may be more fruitful, and certainly more precise, to speak of diasporic stances, projects, claims, idioms, practices and so on. We can then study empirically the degree and form of support for a diasporic project among members...” (13)

In his book *Ethnicity Without Groups*,⁵ Brubaker speaks to the assumption he calls “groupism.” While he recognizes the potential solidarity of ethnicity and its capacity for groupness at any time, he wants to overcome the automatic assumption of

groupness among the diaspora. He insists that there has to be a way to emphasize hybridity, fluidity and biculturalism as an alternative to quantifiable bounded entities. Brubaker is making an important distinction for missiology to consider: that in our idea of “ethnic groups” there is actually a dual capacity for ethnicity and for groupness. The two are not the same, and as Brubaker indicates in his book, the latter has gone relatively unexamined (at least until the publication of this article).

I would suggest that frontier missiology needs to absorb and use Brubaker’s important distinction. The apparent loss of groupness across the diaspora can be deceptive. One might think their assimilation of a host culture (America) automatically erodes socio-religious identity, but often it’s the opposite. A latent ethnic solidarity, which can surface as religious defensiveness, can be even greater in the diaspora than in their home countries. It makes ministry unpredictable and complex and confounds any notion that easier access means easier ministry. And it can require unforeseen costs, the kind we see throughout the pages of Acts. Brubaker carries no missiological purpose whatsoever, but his sociological insights belong in the tool belt of those who minister among the diaspora. **IJFM**

Endnotes

¹ Brubaker, Rogers. “The ‘Diaspora’ Diaspora.” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 28, no. 1 (2005): 1–19. This article can be downloaded at http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/soc/faculty/brubaker/Publications/29_Diaspora_diaspora_ERS.pdf.

² Tololyan, Kachig. “The Nation-State and Its Others: In Lieu of a Preface.” *Diaspora*, vol. 11 no. 1 (1991): 3–7 1991.

³ Clifford, James. “Diasporas.” *Cultural Anthropology* vol. 9, no. 3 (1994): 302–38.

⁴ Ibid. 304–6.

⁵ Brubaker, Rogers. *Ethnicity without Groups*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2004.

Book Reviews

The Saint in the Banyan Tree: Christianity and Caste Society in India, by David Mosse (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012, pp. 385)

—Reviewed by H. L. Richard



This study of caste and Tamil Nadu Roman Catholicism over the past 400 years bristles with insights and often challenges received wisdom about Christianity in India. Mosse focuses on the pseudonymous village of Alapuram, located in Tamil Nadu's Ramnad District near the eastern coast across from Sri Lanka. I will

introduce the main argument of the book and highlight particular concepts that might call into question generally accepted paradigms of caste.

In his preface, David Mosse sets forth his project:

The Saint in the Banyan Tree is concerned with the relationship between the Christian religion and Tamil culture, but its more fundamental objective is to show how and with what consequences the very categories of "religion" and "culture" are produced in historically and locally specific ways. (xi)

I will return to this statement and its implications for "global Christianity" at the end of this review.

The roots of Catholicism in Ramnad District lie in the pioneering missiological approach of seventeenth century Italian Jesuit missionary Robert de Nobili. As Mosse explains,

Catholicism spread in Tamil south India through its flexible capacity simultaneously to "Brahmanize," to popularize in cultic form, to attract royal patronage, and to enact systems of caste ranking. Rather than disrupting existing authority and social investments, Christianity provided another means for their reproduction. (16)

Mosse does an admirable job of documenting and demonstrating the outworking of de Nobili's approach. In the end, the picture that emerges amounts to a rather radical reinterpretation of the de Nobili project. Mosse turns the emphasis from Christianity as an understood entity and how it engages a new and definable context (namely rural Tamil Nadu) to the dynamism of that context and how it absorbed Christianity into its own unique framework.

Christianity on the Tamil plains was not faith "assimilating" to some stable Brahmanic social order. Christian affiliation had

become *part of* a set of political-religious relations and was being drawn into a globalizing economic system in the late precolonial context of instability, warfare, and large-scale internal displacements. (38, italics original)

In other words, local Tamil culture absorbed Roman Catholic Christianity (Protestantism and Pentecostalism appear later in the book) and made it part of itself, transforming it into something quite different than it had been or would be in other cultural contexts. This is not what de Nobili had in mind. Indeed, one of the lessons of this study is that what actually happens in the mission encounter is often well beyond what anyone expects.

The Saint in the Banyan Tree is a book about caste, so Mosse wrestles with this complex construct, which continues to defy definition. Mosse shows that "a century or more" of study has "not produced any widely accepted theory" (96). His introductory discussion includes the framework developed during the years of research behind this book.

What is taken as caste or *jāti* (Tamil *cāti*) defies both structural definition as "caste system" and revisionist characterization as "colonial invention." It is regionally variable and has been profoundly shaped by ideological currents and social-political (and religious) movements. Caste reappears in modern institutions (such as the Catholic priesthood) in the absence of any of its putative ideological underpinnings, and is subject to endless creative elaborations, manipulations, and reassociations. Indeed, caste is often best understood as attachment, performance, or "composition" rather than as a *sui generis* entity, the caste names that recur in this book as networks of attachments bringing about action—"actor networks"—rather than essential or substantial identities. (96, referencing Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory*, 2005, p. 217)

Mosse's carefully documented study is clear: caste—despite its shifting contours—is a far more basic identity marker in Tamil society than religion. When push comes to shove, rural Tamilians will often break religious ranks and align with fellow caste members who profess a different faith. While this will come as no shock to those familiar with the casteism of Tamil Christianity, seeing caste in this way needs to cause a broader reappraisal of the assumption that "religious" identity is most fundamental to all peoples in all places. As a result of his engagement with Tamil society and its realities, Mosse developed a different angle on caste and Christianity.

Instead of viewing caste as a cultural residuum undissolved by Christian conversion, I ask how Christian ritual contexts have become part of the way in which an indigenous social order is produced and changed. (98)

Alapuram was far on the periphery of Brahmanic influence, so it was royal power that dominated in questions of caste hierarchy. A remarkable shift occurred from traditional practice as Roman Catholicism became established.

While Protestants saw caste as spiritual slavery, Catholics dichotomized society with the Christian message as spiritual and caste as cultural.

The concluding night of a Temple festival is commonly sponsored by political leaders, who act as temple trustees and receive the first honors. As chief donors they represent the *yajamana* (Sanskrit) or "sacrificiant," paradigmatically the king. The old Jesuit mission encouraged rajas and chiefs into this role at their centers, where, as principle donors and holders of the final *mantakappati* [honorary payment for the ritual procession], they received first honors. The new Madurai mission Jesuit fathers who settled in the Tamil countryside [after the 1814 restitution of the Jesuit order and the 1836 return of this mission field to Jesuit control], however, construed *themselves* as rulers (rather than renouncer teachers [that is, typical holy men in the old Madurai mission rooted in *de Nobili*]). They took over this patron role and its first respects in what became referred to as the *cāmiyār* (priest's) *mantakappati*. (142, italics original)

This was far from the last or even the most significant transformation to be introduced to this part of Tamil rural society. By the time the new Madurai missionaries reentered Tamil society and redefined their role and standing they were also faced with

their opposite in the highly visible Protestant missions, whose approach to Indian religion and society could not have been more different than their own. Evangelical Protestants generally regarded Brahmanic Hinduism and its spawn, the caste system, as the principal obstacle rather than the means to Christian conversion. To create a space for Tamil Christianity they set out not to emulate but to break the hold they imagined the Brahman priesthood had on Indian society. (51)

Interestingly, both Catholic and Protestant approaches were successful, albeit with two different dalit caste groups, as noted below. Mosse concludes that their approaches were similar in that both spiritualized the socio-economic-political reality of caste problems as spiritual struggles (58). But while Protestants saw caste as spiritual slavery, Catholics dichotomized society with the Christian message as spiritual and caste as cultural (59).

This Catholic attitude toward caste had massive and unforeseen consequences in the long run. In the short term, caste distinctions were rather routinely brought into the institutional church, sometimes the very architecture reflecting the uncleanness of some castes. At festivals and in normal worship services the dalit castes were treated as untouchable and received no honor. Yet Mosse shows that a change had occurred:

Two hundred years of Catholicism had desacralized caste for Christian actors, making it an outer thing, an explicit structure, a public form of knowledge, a display of honor in public rituals that

offered a model of society subject to deliberate contest, something that could be objectified, named, discussed, criticized, or studied. Caste was denaturalized and more about power than person—enacting control, not maintaining moral condition....

Missionaries also relativized and subordinated the codes of caste by introducing alternative ones: Eucharistic unity of the Communion, congregational worship, being addressed by the priest as a Christian collective, caste-free interactions with missionary priests, or in the godparent-child relationship. Participating in the church pointed to a different order within the realm of Catholic religion, which ultimately denied difference and rank and gave no reality to matters of purity and pollution. (272)

While this reality acted as a ferment in minds and hearts and society as a whole, a significant ritual change occurred in 1936. Instead of a missionary priest presiding over the main annual festival, a Tamil forward caste (Vellalar) priest was in charge and decided it was not appropriate to honor Hindu political leaders inside the church. "The village festival had become a Christian festival and Santiyakappar [St. James, or the Saint in the Banyan Tree] a Christian saint rather than the village deity" (155).

This seemingly innocuous transition would have far-reaching ramifications. It brought a previously unknown level of division between Hindus and Christians, and turned caste conflicts from being broadly social matters to matters where internal church relations came into focus.

The most important effect of the disembedding of church from village after 1936 was not, however, to sharpen religious boundaries or to set Christian and Hindu against each other, but rather to create the space within which dalit public protest would develop. (274)

And so Mosse's study becomes a fascinating outline of the development of dalit activism and dalit theology. First as a protest movement within the Catholic church (which can only be termed highly successful), then as a broader social movement (which also must be considered much more successful than is usually recognized), dalit activism has brought about transformation.

Rather than continue to follow Mosse's historical trajectory, I will highlight some of the paradoxical developments noted in his impressive presentation and documentation. The Pallar dalit caste is central in all the Roman Catholic dalit developments, but as they gained in social standing they became fiercely oppressive towards other dalit groups. This paved the way for the dalit Paraiyars (whose name led to the English word *pariah*) into Protestantism (178). Ironically, as the hold of caste was weakening in the latter

decades of the twentieth century and barriers between forward castes evaporated, barriers between dalit castes increased significantly (188).

Education was key to dalit uplift. In 1925, the Catholics opened a school in Alapuram village. Access to education expanded horizons and led to improved economic opportunities. Dalit Catholic Pallars emigrated for work in Sri Lanka or Burma, or entered the military or police force, and made enough money to improve their social status in Alapuram. Economic factors fueled transformation and eventually the old social order where ritual services had to be performed by particular caste groups (constantly reestablishing the lowly status of the dalits) was entirely replaced by market-based services for cash payment. Thus, better off dalits no longer performed tasks deemed degrading, and a sense of dignity with a measure of contractual equality emerged even regarding undignified labor. In Mosse's words,

The replacement of a "moral economy" of service with market-based integration, education, independence, and individual free will is a pervasive narrative of social change among those I have known over twenty-five years. (251)

Yet for all this, "caste" (not the old idea, but as "actor networks") has become stronger than ever. "It seems indisputable that the cultural politics of the Church and the state has in recent decades produced a sharpening of religious and caste identities in Tamil Nadu" (231; the strengthening of caste is mainly because "village society is such that any dispute can escalate, and without group support a person is vulnerable" (261)). The opposition to caste, which began in the church as an issue of Christian equality, developed an entirely new basis when it emerged from the church into wider society as a human rights campaign (168, 196, 226, etc.). Then in dalit theology, the entire dalit struggle became redefined as anti-Brahmanism.

Even those whose experience of caste subordination bore little or no relation to priestly models of purity-impurity—those from regions like Ramnad, where royal-feudal models of caste articulated poorly with the Hindu theory of caste or *varnashrama dharma* and whose experience of caste was the political and economical domination of "Backward Caste" Maravars, Kallars, or Utaiyars rather than of Brahmins... were encouraged to articulate dalit dissent as the rejection of Brahmanic Hindu ideology and to reimagine caste as a Hindu religious institution. In short, dalit ideologies began to elaborate the "other" as the Hindu Brahman, and this in turn gave new significance to "dalit Christian" as a countercultural identity. The point is that Christianity was *made* culturally disjunctive through a particular traceable politics of caste; it was not inherently so. (194, italics original)

Mosse has clearly documented the massive shifts in the meaning and practice of caste, particularly how caste as lived in rural Tamil Nadu had little to do with Brahmins or their ideology of ritual purity. And yet dalit theology

managed to sweep away that reality with a new paradigm of caste as an evil, religious, Brahminical structure (even though this would be directly contradicted by a later political agitation, as noted below).

It is not possible to outline in detail all the twists and turns in developments related to caste and Christianity, which Mosse traces right up to the present time. Protestant and Pentecostal interactions with caste realities appear at various points, and it is in this field that two mistakes in Mosse's work should be noted. He misidentifies the dalit Protestant theologian Dyanchand Carr as "Dayananda Carr" (316). More significantly, in his concluding summary he claims that

As missionaries of all denominations well understood, being Christian or threatening conversion offered a means to negotiate or modify but never to substitute for caste belonging. (276)

That may be true of the Roman Catholic missionaries that Mosse had in focus, and perhaps of some traditional Protestants, but it is certainly not true of missionaries of evangelical and Pentecostal persuasion, unless the latter are seen as entirely disingenuous in their private knowledge and public professions.

Mosse introduces the striking phrase "dual discursive competence" to describe dalit interaction in a society in transition. A shift in dalit activism from the church—where it focused on religious equality—to wider society where it spoke of human rights has already been noted. When and where dalits should discuss caste as human rights and when it will be more productive to frame it in religious freedom discourse is an example of dual discursive competence (259). This is central to the lived reality of caste where rights and responsibilities are constantly being negotiated (Mosse destroys the idea that a "caste system" as a static reality in Indian society exists or, indeed, has ever existed). Having identified the practice of dual discursive competence Mosse is able to notice the far-reaching practical utility of this skill, particularly for preventing caste, religious and political disputes from turning violent (although there has been violence, as in 1968; 172f.). Mosse rightly commends the "historically acquired social capacity to retain flexibility and context" that marks the people of India.

Considerable intellectual energy currently goes into trying to explain the causes of ethicized conflict and violence, but perhaps rather less into understanding the normal processes that refuse orientaling alterity, prevent polarization, and inhibit the aggregation and amplification of local conflicts; into examining the historically acquired social capacity to retain flexibility and context... and explaining, against the trend, why India's religious diversity is not always fragile. (264-65)

Indeed, it is rather striking that, with all her astonishing variety and complexity, "India's religious diversity is not always fragile." Rather than studying extremism and

Mosse warns us against thinking that all of India has experienced the social leveling enjoyed in Alapuram. The developments there are “unlike much of rural India, and in striking contrast to some nearby villages.”

violence (and seeking to account for them), why not seek to account for stability and peace? In this connection, Mosse attributes the flexibility and social understanding evident in India to her people’s fundamental dual discursive competence, a skill learned over many centuries, not least from the engagement of local peoples with Christianity.

My point is that the dual discursive competencies that now allow engagement with polarizing absolutist communalist, caste, and religious discourses while preserving flexibility and negotiability in social life are embedded in the long history of reconciling Christian universalism and the particularism of caste that this book has traced. (265)

So currently in rural Ramnad in south India there is no longer caste in Christianity (238, 283). Socially, “in the simplest terms there is a paradox: caste inequality among Christians and Hindus is evidently receding as an aspect of village life (less practiced, less spoken), and yet caste is asserted and more visible than ever” (242). Here again, the paradox lies in shifts in the meaning and practice of caste. Caste has moved from being about *hierarchy* to being about *political networks*. Yet Mosse himself warns us against thinking that all of India has experienced the social leveling enjoyed in Alapuram. The developments there, he notes, are “unlike much of rural India, and in striking contrast to some nearby villages” (248). And even in Alapuram, “dalit Christian activists actively perpetuate the mobilizing memory of caste discrimination in Catholic worship” (319) for their own political purposes. Similarly, a complicated piece of local history continues to be paraded for dalit political ends in the commemoration of radical Pallar leader John Pandian who in the 1990s served as “a symbol of caste power, conflict, and violent retaliation—everything, in fact, that no longer characterized *actual* caste relations in the village” (255, italics original). Dalit activism hardly exists in Alapuram at present, the term *dalit* itself “an unfamiliar concept” (322).

What does it mean to be Christian in a world with this particular variety of complexity? Indian Christians are offended by the injustice that denies dalit Christians economic privileges afforded to Hindu and Buddhist dalits, but Mosse identifies the internal contradiction.

The campaign to have Christian dalits included in the list of Scheduled Castes (SC) . . . [and thus] eligible for state benefits and protections alongside Hindu dalits precisely contradicted the conversion discourse of dalit struggle against caste as a *Hindu* institution. (206, italics original)

Christian concerns are no longer central in the struggle for dalit rights, although Christianity is being promoted by

some as necessarily involved in wider dalit rights campaigns (224, 283). At the least, “Christianity today is a vehicle for the internationalization of dalit human rights” (278). But despite being “entirely devoid of evangelistic intention” (again Mosse is not in touch with Evangelical and Pentecostal approaches), dalit activists “have to contend with a persistent Hindu nationalist delegitimation of dalit activism as a Western-inspired antinational vehicle for Christian proselytism and cultural appropriation” (227).

At the local level,

It is fair to say that while Christianity is “dalitized” in the seminary, it appears “globalized” in the village. Christian practice is disembedded from structures of caste or separated (like the newly glass-encased statues) from the grime of cultic worship, and diversified into religious styles reflecting various streams of global Christianity, whether Catholic or Pentecostal. . . . The environment of Hindu nationalism or Christian fundamentalism has not fostered Christian political identification, not least because caste identity remains the structural basis of religious coexistence. (279; nowadays the global Pentecostal style of worship is also *within* the Catholic church, 94)

Regrettably, I conclude my long review without reference to Mosse’s insights on spirit possession and sin confession as similar activities; or form and meaning in Christian adaptation to Hindu forms and Hindu adaptation to Christian; or further development of insights related to Protestantism and Pentecostalism and Hindutva; or many other insightful comments related to caste-ism and dalitism.

In the end, as Mosse himself points out, his study demonstrates that

Catholic religion is not a transhistorical global phenomenon introduced into “local cultures” by missionary agents, but a contingent and at times unstable category of thought and action—wrought in ways that need to be discovered—that does not, however, fail to point beyond itself to transcendent truth. (269)

Such is global “Christianity”—so many, so very different entities that to even attempt to reify what is “essential” does violence against diverse local realities. Mosse’s historical and sociological analysis of Tamil Catholicism is enlightening, humbling, inspiring, and intimidating. May it find a wide readership and produce paradigm shifts in the understanding of south Indian Roman Catholicism, as well as stimulate fresh perspectives on the Protestant and Pentecostal worlds that are far from Mosse’s central focus. **IJFM**

In Others' Words

In this department, we highlight resources outside of the IJFM: other journals, print resources, DVDs, web sites, blogs, videos, etc. We welcome suggestions, but cannot promise to publish each one. Standard disclaimers on content apply. Due to the length of many web addresses, we sometimes give just the title of the resource, the main web address, or a suggested search phrase.

Reclaiming the M-Word Revisited

While not “new news,” *Christianity Today's* first cover story of 2014* is explosive. Based largely on the meticulous research of sociologist Robert D. Woodberry, Andrea Palpant Dilley's “The World the Missionaries Made” examines the impact Protestant missionaries have had on the health of nations. *Warning: Woodberry's thesis is as counter-cultural as it is politically-incorrect.* Her article will definitely whet your appetite to read Woodberry. We recommend his “Reclaiming the M-Word: The Legacy of Mission in Non-Western Societies”—reprinted in *IJFM* in 2008, it originally appeared in *The Review of Faith and International Affairs* in 2006—or the condensed version in your 2009 *Perspectives Reader*. Audio of a very accessible talk he gave on this crucial topic is available on the Hill Country Institute's website (hillcountryinstitute.org), as are all 31 pages of his extremely well-documented “The Missionary Roots of Liberal Democracy,” published in the prestigious *American Political Science Review* in 2012. Enjoy!

Syria, Iraq and Laos Lead Bible Distribution Surge

ChristianityToday.com summarizes the latest encouraging statistics on Bible distribution from UBS in “Countries that are Bad for Christians are Good for Distributing Bibles.” The article is also disturbing, especially if you're an American.

Joke by “Mipsterz” Provokes Reaction and Discussion

What started as a joke by some Mipsterz (Muslim Hipsters) sparked some serious discussion on NPR's Code Switch blog. Check out the video, but especially the comment section.

Doctoral Dissertations on Mission: Ten-Year Update

For something really different (from the previous item anyway), check out *IBMR's* “Doctoral Dissertations on Mission: Ten-Year Update, 2002–2011 (Revised)” by Robert Priest and Robert DeGeorge. Don't expect to hear Jay-Z rapping in the background as you begin to read, but the content is no joke. Priest and DeGeorge conclude from their survey that “the fields of missiology, of mission studies, and of world Christianity are in transition.” Many trends warrant discussion, but here's one: only 3% of the dissertations focused on countries in World A (World B, 43%; World C, 54%). See internationalbulletin.org/files/html/diss-list-2002-2011/2013-04-195-priest.pdf. Our thanks to Cody Lorange for the tip and our next entry.

From the Realm of the Non-Traditional

Cody Lorange (who spoke at ISFM 2013) lists his favorite missiological blogs at codylorance.blogspot.com/2014/01/on-muslims-coming-to-christ.html. The names alone—Circumpolar, Indigenous Jesus, TallSkinnyKiwi, The Long View, The World is Our Neighborhood, Acrossculture, Faithful Witness and Missiologically Thinking—almost demand investigation. (As an aside, is it time for *IJFM* to change its name? *ijfm* is the best we could come up with for now. Should that stick, you can expect more *mipster* “missiological hipster” material.) Back to more serious discussion, Cody raises in his blog the question of “traditional missiology publishers” in a digital age. He says:

By the way, if you haven't noticed, there is a tremendous amount of really great missiology that is being done in the non-traditional realms of blogs and other social media outlets. As traditional missiology publishers struggle to transition from print to digital/online formats to keep up with the times, a solid cadre of excellent missiologists have produced and are producing truly top-notch resources that are being heavily consumed by all manner of missionary practitioners.

Reactions? Read the blogs and let us know what you think.

A Wind in the House of Islam

David Garrison's *A Wind in the House of Islam* is now available (February 2014). In it he shows that something unprecedented has happened in our lifetime. While 1400 years of Muslim-Christian encounter have seen Christians by the millions assimilated into the “House of Islam,”

[d]uring this same time period, we can document only 82 Muslim movements to Christ. By movements, I'm referring to at least 1,000 baptisms over a two-decade period, or 100 church starts among a Muslim people over a two-decade period. Now here's what's remarkable about what's happening today: 69 of history's 82 movements have occurred in the past two decades alone!

Garrison logged over 250,000 miles over a three-year period and interviewed over a thousand people in their homelands about why they turned to faith in Christ and what they actually believe. See windinthehouse.org for more. **IJFM**

**Editor's Note: The careful reader will notice that this July–September 2013 issue is partly composed of material created in late 2013, early 2014. While we strive to be forward looking, such anachronisms are due to production delays, not to special prophetic giftings possessed by our staff. We apologize in advance for any inconvenience.*

Finally, our thanks to Leith and Andrea Gray for alerting us to some of the material here. Found an item worthy of mention in *In Others Words*? Please contact us at editors@ijfm.org.

IJFM & Perspectives

On the World Christian Movement

Whether you're a Perspectives instructor, student, or coordinator, you can continue to explore issues raised in the course reader and study guide in greater depth in **IJFM**. For ease of reference, each **IJFM** article in the table below is tied thematically to one or more of the 15 Perspectives lessons, divided into four sections: Biblical (B), Historical (H), Cultural (C) and Strategic (S). *Disclaimer: The table below shows where the content of a given article might fit; it does not imply endorsement of a particular article by the editors of the Perspectives materials.* For sake of space, the table only includes lessons related to the articles in a given **IJFM** issue. To learn more about the Perspectives course, visit www.perspectives.org.

Related Perspectives Lesson and Section

	Lesson 9: The Task Remaining (H)	Lesson 10: How Shall They Hear? (C)	Lesson 11: Building Bridges of Love (C)	Lesson 15: World Christian Discipleship (S)
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Mission in "the Present Time": What about the People in Diaspora? Michael A. Rynkiewicz (pp. 103–14)	X	X	X	
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Mission from the Diaspora Chong H. Kim (pp. 97–101)	X		X	X
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Flushing, NY

Southwest
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Biola
La Mirada, CA

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