

# In Others' Words

*Editor's Note: In this department, we highlight resources outside of the IJFM: other journals, print resources, DVDs, websites, blogs, videos, etc. 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.*

## Demography Clues Us In: Selective Abortions Lead to Cross-border "Bride" Kidnapping

["Give Us a Baby and We'll Let You Go."](#) This recent Human Rights Watch report reveals the trafficking of Myanmar Kachin women into the Yunnan province of China and the devastation many such overlooked populations face:

The armed conflict in Kachin and northern Shan States has largely escaped international attention, despite 2018 findings by the United Nations that the Myanmar military has committed war crimes and crimes against humanity there. The atrocities against the Rohingya people in Rakhine State deservedly seized headlines, but the women and girls of Kachin and northern Shan States remain largely invisible victims. Too many of them are trapped—by the collision of war and displacement in Myanmar and the fallout from the destructive denial of women's reproductive rights in China—in lives of unspeakable abuse.

For a summary of this HRW report, read the conclusions on [ReliefWeb](#) (March 21, 2019).

We can better understand this tragedy by considering the demographic consequences from the enormous gender gap in China. Four years ago, *Scientific American* reported that as many as 62 million women were "missing" in China due to selective female abortions, female infanticide, and female baby abandonment. See ["China's New Birth Rule Can't Restore Missing Women and Fix a Population"](#) (Nov 2, 2015).

## Religious Demography's Influence on Witness and Dialogue

*Christianity Today's* April 2019 issue ran this story: ["Making Missions Count: How a Major Database Tracked Thailand's Church-Planting Revival."](#) Thai pastors were moved to action when presented with data about the many sub-provinces without a single church—a marvelous example of how clear demographics can mobilize witnesses to Christ.

A February 2019 online blog looks at changing religious demographics worldwide (Christian and Muslim statistics in particular) and comments on the Pope's historic mass in the United Arab Emirates, a Muslim country. Before a crowd of 135,000, Pope Francis addressed the faithful—13% of the UAE are Catholics from Pakistan, India, and the Philippines. See Todd Johnson's ["The Global Religious Context of 'Human Fraternity.'"](#)

## Contextualization, Syncretism, or Eradication of Christianity in China?

When the Chinese government told churches to develop a five-year plan to become more Chinese, did that mean more *culturally* Chinese or more *socialist* Chinese? Don't miss *Christianity Today's* March 2019 article entitled ["China Tells Christianity to be More Chinese."](#) Jackson Wu responds to this same question in ["Sinicized Christianity is Not Christianity,"](#) published March 20 on Patheos:

Apparently, Sinicizing Christianity means removing Bibles and limiting access to the Bible. . . . Last year, China enforced the rule that children are banned from religious meetings. . . . How can Christianity become "Sinicized" when people are limited from learning about Christianity? In reality, the Sinicization of Christianity is a cunning long-term strategy that could just as well be called the "Eradication of Christianity."

Joanne Pittman's ["Red, Black and Grey: Mapping Religion in China,"](#) reviews Dr. Fenggang Yang's *Atlas of Religion in China: Social and Geographical Context*. Yang is a professor of Sociology at Purdue University and director of the Center on Religion and Chinese Society. Note especially where the Muslims and Buddhist peoples are in mainland China. What will it take to reach them? Who is best situated to do so given current government constraints?

## Uighur Whistleblower Arrested Abroad: China Calls in Its Chits

In a chilling new development, a noted Kazakh human rights defender (who has been chronicling the detention of Uighurs in Xinjiang province) has been placed under house arrest by the Kazakhstan government. Evidently Chinese Belt-and-Road infrastructure investment casts a long shadow. See the March 13, 2019 *New York Times* article, ["Critic Who Exposed China's Muslim Camps Arrested, Even Across the Border."](#)

## How the Internet Powers Vigilantism: A Pakistan Case Study

Are religious freedom and freedom of speech diminishing in most of the world? What roles do the internet and new technologies play in mass control, detentions, imprisonments, riots, torture and death? *Wired* magazine's ["What It's Like to Be Thrown in Jail for Posting on Facebook"](#) (March 20, 2019) details the tailwind that social media has given to Pakistan's blasphemy laws. False accusations of blasphemy are proliferating, leading to people being lynched, or having to flee overseas. Add to this China's facial recognition technology and social credit system, and twenty-first century dictatorships and Communist governments now have powerful new tools to control their populations. See Jackson Wu's compilation of links about China's social credit system in ["The Nitty Gritty of China's Social Credit System."](#) **IJFM.**