

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.

Hong Kong: Who's Stirring the Pot?

A proposed new law that would extradite Hong Kong citizens under arrest to the People's Republic of China has sparked massive demonstrations in Hong Kong. Hong Kong citizens, including the 10% who are Christians, have good reason to be concerned about extradition, loss of free speech and religious freedoms. The Chinese government has labeled the protests the doing of the CIA ("Why Chinese Officials Imagine America is Behind Unrest in Hong Kong" in *The Economist*, August 15, 2019, but the influence of Hong Kong Christians on these demonstrations is undeniable. See "With Hymns and Prayers, Christians Help Drive Hong Kong's Protests," *NYTimes*, June 19, 2019. For an excellent timeline of Hong Kong protests going back to February, see "How Months of Protests Have Unfolded in Hong Kong" (*Bloomberg*, Aug 23, 2019). For a more in-depth look at President Xi's hardline stances since 2012 and their impact on Hong Kong, read "China's Hong Kong Dilemma" in the *The New Yorker*, September 2, 2019.

Missionary Spies in WWII?

A new book has just been published about the religious professionals (missionaries, priests, and rabbis) who helped the US intelligence services during WWII. Entitled *Double Crossed: The Missionaries Who Spied for the United States During the Second World War* and written by Matthew Avery Sutton, it is reviewed in an article in the August 19th issue of *Christianity Today* called "America Needed Spies in World War II. Many Missionaries Were Ready and Willing." *CT* author Andrew Preston calls this a "magnificent" book written by a renowned historian of religion: "The result is not only a profound history of American Christian missions but also one of the most original and interesting histories of World War II in several decades." This is reminiscent of another book about the impact of Protestant missionaries and their adult children called *Protestants Abroad: How Missionaries Tried to Change the World but Changed America* by David Hollinger. See the excellent review by Dwight Baker in a prior issue of the *IJFM* 35 no. 2.

Religion in China: from the ZG Briefs

One of the best weekly sources of links about religion in China and the Far East (including many links about Hong Kong) is the [China Source ZGBriefs](#). Worth looking at

is a book review by Peregrine de Vigo, PhD (pseudonym) of *From Kuan Yin to Chairman Mao: The Essential Guide to Chinese Deities* in the July 31st blog. Eleven papers have been published online (Open Access) on the topic of Religiosity, Secularity, and Pluralism in the Global East: https://www.mdpi.com/journal/religions/special_issues/east#info. In particular, Daan F. Oostveen's article on "Religious Belonging in the East Asian Context" deals with religious hybridity and identity (*ZGBriefs*, August 8, [Links for Researchers](#)).

Global Free Speech and Privacy at Greater Risk

"The Global Gag on Free Speech is Tightening," a report on the status of free speech and government repression worldwide, was published August 17, 2019, in *The Economist*. This past year alone twenty-five governments have blacked out the internet from their citizens. And even in democracies like the US,

the 37% of American college students who told Gallup that it was fine to shout down speakers of whom they disapprove will be entering the adult world in their millions. So will the 10% who think it acceptable to use violence to silence speech they deem offensive. Such views are troubling to put it mildly. (*The Economist*, August 15, 2019: "As Societies Polarize, Free Speech is under Threat.")

In "Free Speech and Privacy on the Wane across the World," *The Guardian*, August 8, 2019, the authors summarize findings of a recent [human rights report](#) (Human Rights Outlook 2019):

China...home to one-fifth of the world's internet users, already faces the most severe internet restrictions. However, the study warns of the impact the 2020 rollout of the controversial [social credit system](#)—a mass surveillance and AI [Artificial Intelligence] programme that gives citizens a social credit score based on their social, political and economic behavior—could have, both within and beyond the country's borders.

Kashmir: Down the Rabbit Hole?

But by far the largest democracy to resort to a complete blackout of millions of its citizens is India. On August 5th, India abruptly stripped statehood and all semi-autonomy (guaranteed by the Indian constitution) from Jammu and Kashmir and instituted an all-encompassing internet, cellphone, landline, and postal blackout. Read "Inside Kashmir's Lockdown: Barbed Wire and a Sense of Loss" (August 14, *The Christian Science Monitor*). See also *The New Yorker* interview with Kashmiri novelist Mirza Waheed in which she describes shocking percentages: 1/6 of Kashmiris have been tortured in the last thirty years and 45% of the population suffers from some form of PTSD. ("A Kashmiri Novelist On a State Under Siege," August 16, 2019, *The New Yorker*.) The historical backdrop is presented in the *BBC's*: "Article 370: What Happened with Kashmir and Why It Matters."

Modi's Machiavellian Maneuvers

How could this happen?

In theory, changing this part of India's constitution requires a two-thirds parliamentary majority, which the BJP does not quite have. So the party devised an easier way: . . . annulling Kashmir's special status. That should have required assent from Jammu & Kashmir, too. But since June 2018 . . . the state had been under direct rule from Delhi. So the rest of India assented on Kashmir's behalf. That allowed parliament to abolish the state, and split it into two new "union territories" under the centre's direct rule. . . . The ease with which the state was dissolved will spook some of India's other regional governments. A challenge has already been filed with the Supreme Court. But there is considerable popular support for Mr Modi's sleight of hand. (See "[India Abruptly Ends the Last Special Protections Enjoyed by Kashmir](#)" in *The Economist*, August 8, 2019.)

See also "[Why Modi's Kashmiri Move is Widely Supported in India](#)" (*BBC*, August 15, 2019,) the haunting five-minute video on the *New York Times* website called "[Kashmir: Life on Lockdown](#)," and the opinion piece "The Silence is the Loudest Sound" (*NY Times*, Aug 15, 2019) by the well-known Indian writer, Arundhati Roy.

South Asia's Water Crises: Long Droughts and Late Monsoons

Severe water shortages in the rest of South Asia are very much a destabilizing factor for Kashmir. The waters of the Indus River which rise in Kashmir have been meticulously shared by Pakistan and India along the [Indus Water Treaty](#) lines since 1960. Ninety percent of Pakistan's fresh water comes from the Indus and Pakistan is projected to run out of water by 2025 (*Deutsche Welle* "[Water Crisis: Why is Pakistan Running Dry?](#)") Twenty-one cities in India will also run out of groundwater by 2020 including New Delhi. (See "[India Faces Worst Water Crisis](#)," in *The Hindu*, June 2018.) Water shortages in both countries, critics say, are not just from climate change but from human mismanagement. See "[Thirsty Indian Cities Have a Management Problem Not a Water Problem](#)," *The Economist*, July 6, 2019. See also the *National Geographic* article, "[India's Water Crisis Could be Helped by Better Building, Planning](#)," (July 15, 2019). Finally, here is an opinion piece in the *New York Times* by an Indian environmentalist suggesting local solutions to the water crisis: "[India's Terrifying Water Crisis](#)" (July 15, 2019).

Islam: Margins and Misinterpretations

For a perceptive book review of *Margins of Islam* (William Carey Publishers, 2018) by Warrick Farah and Gene Daniels, see the UK magazine *Affinity*, Spring 2019 online issue (<http://www.affinity.org.uk/foundations-issues/issue-76-review-article>). For a concise summary of this review, see Farah's blog "Circumpolar" (<http://muslimministry.blogspot.com/>).

Also on Farah's blog is his detailed introduction to the contents of his colleague Professor Martin Accad's new book *Sacred Misinterpretation: Reaching Across the Christian-Muslim Divide* (Eerdmans, 2019). Professor Accad will be the ISFM 2019 plenary speaker.

Christian Muslim Encounters Enriched by Medieval Thought

Transformation: An International Journal of Holistic Mission Studies just released a special issue on "Christian Reflections in Diverse Contexts of Islam." Included are two articles about historic Christian-Muslim encounters; both bring in 7th–8th century thought. The first is "Christian Defence of Free Will in Debate with Muslims in the Early Islamic Period," and the second is a fresh look at understanding the nature of God: "Allah: Internalized Relationality: Awwad Sim'an on the Trinitarian Nature of God." Kuhn does the English-speaking world a huge service by commenting on the Egyptian intellectual Awwad Sim'an's heretofore untranslated scholarly Arabic works. The third article of great interest is "Saint-Making' in a South Asian Tradition of Islam." David Emmanuel Singh examines how saints emerged in a South Asian Muslim sect, the Mahdawiyya or the Mahdavi. At the end of the article, he draws some fascinating parallels between his own South Asian Pentecostal rituals and traditions, and those of the Mahdawiyya.

Scholarly Papers on Prayer and Worship

Six of the papers that were presented last year at the June, 2018 conference, "Scripture, Prayer and Worship in the History of Missions and World Christianity," hosted by the Yale-Edinburgh Group on the History of the Missionary Movement and World Christianity have just been published in the journal *Studies in World Christianity*. (See the titles below and the abstracts at: <http://www.cswc.div.ed.ac.uk/2019/07/studies-in-world-christianity-issue-25-2/>.) Unfortunately, to access these articles you have to subscribe—but that might be worth your while! The articles include one on Ghazals, Bhajans, and Hymns in North India; one on the function of prayer in the Student Volunteer Movement; and one on the narrative history of the Lisu Bible in Southeast China. This journal is offering twenty-five other articles for free in honor of the 25th anniversary of publication as a journal, including one by Andrew Walls and another by Brian Stanley. Click here to access those: <https://www.eupublishing.com/doi/story/10.3366/news.2019.02.08.500307?> Also, on the same website is a link to a tribute to the recently deceased but greatly missed Professor Lamin Sanneh written by his long-standing friend and colleague, Professor Andrew F. Walls: "[In Memoriam: Professor Lamin O. Sanneh \(1942–2019\)](#)." **IJFM**