

Mission and Migration

Issue 20 Editor: Jonathan Ingleby



I was having a celebratory lunch with some of my relatives this week and meeting for the first time the French husband of one of my wife's cousins. He proved to be a gentle, warm, intelligent sort of person but we had to work a little at the conversation as his English was not great and my French was even worse. I asked him whether he had voted for Sarkozy and he said he had, and this seemed to offer him permission to talk about something which really mattered to him - the issue of immigration. He lived in Grenoble and I said that I had never visited Grenoble, the nearest I had been was Marseilles. 'Ah', he said, 'Marseilles. That will tell you nothing about France. Marseilles is no longer a French city; it is an Arab city.' A little later he said: 'I am glad that I am old. The problems of my nation mostly lie in the future.'

I am not sure that I can altogether go along with this pessimism. Matters seem to me to be more ambivalent. Is migration a blessing or a curse? Is it a threat or an opportunity? Where does it fit into mission?

In this edition Dan Clark tries to answer these questions with an analysis of migration in Southall in West London and its impact on the church. Paul Woods raises similar issues within the context of the so-called 'diaspora ministries', and Darrell Jackson takes a Europe-wide perspective. Jonathan Ingleby links the whole issue to postcolonialism. All of them try to add a missiological perspective. Everywhere people are on the move and in every place something can be done on behalf of the Kingdom of God.

Whatever the issues, what is certain is that there is no turning back now. Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri in their influential book 'Empire' parody the Communist Manifesto in words that are both relevant and ominous. 'A spectre haunts the world and it is the spectre of migration. All the powers of the old world are allied in a merciless operation against it, but the movement is irresistible.'

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Samosa and black beans

Mission, culture and ethnicity in West London



Author: Daniel Clark, Associate Pastor at Southall Baptist Church.

It is Sunday Evening and I am at an engagement party, with an absent groom, at Southall Baptist Church. All of a sudden, my daughter starts to dance the *Aquarela Brasileira*, a famous Brazilian tune, set to Pakistani dance music! That the global church has hit us big time is illustrated not only in this curious cultural mix, but in the specific rituals of a Pakistani ceremony, being replicated in a British church.

In this article, rather than engage in academic reflection, we will seek to simply raise some of the issues that emerge from engaging in mission in the cultural melting pot that is West London.

Church in the Diaspora: The Southall Experiment

Talk concerning a “new Christendom” is no novelty. If at the turn of the 19th to the 20th century the “average” Christian was White, Western, ‘traditional’ and middle-class, at the turn of the 20th to the 21st century the average Christian is black, or Asian, Pentecostal and economically poor.

What may be more surprising is the way that this reality is no longer something out there in Asia or in Africa but has now hit the shores of Europe itself. Thriving churches are often those with a strong immigrant presence. As thousands flock to Kingsway International Christian Centre, more historical denominations struggle to adapt. At the inaugural Redcliffe Lectures in World Christianity Dr. Andrew Walls envisaged a future where Europeans would hear the gospel for the first time from the mouths of Ghanaian missionaries. If it has not already arrived that future is not far off.

At Southall Baptist Church this is something which is experienced firsthand. There are over 20 churches of different ethnic backgrounds which are linked with SBC. Many of them are Brazilian, benefiting from the fact that the senior pastor of the church, Boyd Williams, is a former missionary in Brazil. Nonetheless, there are also various churches from African, Sri Lankan, Kachin and Russian backgrounds. Ecclesologically, these churches range from different styles of Baptists to African Pentecostal churches, so that one has the situation that Pentecostal Bishops find themselves under the leadership of a Baptist Pastor!

Being Church in the Diaspora: The Challenges

A Post-Christian Culture

For many, the first great challenge is that of engaging with a post-Christian culture. Whereas many Christians from Latin America arrive with a prior knowledge of the state of the church in Europe, this is often a shock for Christians from Africa and Asia who may still arrive in the UK expecting to come to a Christian culture. It says something for the supposed tolerance of British society when some Indian Christians even went as far as to claim that they experienced greater religious freedom in their own country.

Hence, one of the first stages of being church in the Diaspora is often survival, enabling Christian faith to survive in an unfamiliar secularised context.

Where can we meet?

A pressing need of Diaspora churches is a place to meet. In London alone there are hundreds of Christian fellowships without a permanent home.

Some might claim that this is not a problem. The way ahead could be to organise the church around cells and home groups. Theological issues aside, this ignores the fact that for many Diaspora Christians the concept of a “home” is very distant. Very few have the luxury of being able to rent their own home, let alone own one. Rather, they share rooms and homes with many different people from many different backgrounds, Christian and non-Christian, making the concept of a “home” group much more complex.

What is most depressing is the attitude of many established “British” churches to this problem. Often these churches have unused premises and yet either deny access to their fellow Christians from other nations, or charge high, market-value rent. So many pounds an hour and if the Holy Spirit moves and the church service goes on for longer, overtime will be added. One cannot help but feel that there are established churches bankrolling their failure by exploiting their brothers and sisters in Christ who are more committed than they are.

The Home Office: The ever-present power

If one was to use the language popularised by Walter Wink, one could describe the Home Office as the ever present (fallen?) power in the lives of Diaspora Christians. On the whole it determines where they can live, how many hours they can work, the rights they are entitled to and those they are denied. It also means that many Diaspora Churches become churches in constant motion, whose members are in transit, rarely permanently committed.

It also raises an ethical question which is rarely the case for most British churches. How does one respond to Christians who are illegally in the country? Should they be allowed to be church members? Can they be members and not leaders? Is it right for a pastor to encourage his members to work and contribute financially to the church, if by doing so they will be breaking the law?

How does one begin to articulate an answer to these questions? Answers on a postcard please!

Mission in the Diaspora:

Mission to the Diaspora: The Homogeneous Unit Principle

In the pristine environment of academic studies, it was once easy to be radically against the Homogeneous Unit Principle popularised by McGavran, not least because it was endorsed by Peter Wagner! Church planting in Brazil encouraged this perception, as I saw the HUP being used to exclude the poor from richer churches and allow the veiled racism of Brazilian society to remain in churches.

Relating with Diaspora Christians one becomes less certain. Going to a meeting of the Kachin Fellowship in our church, a group hated and despised by their own government,

marginalised within British society as unwanted immigrants, one can see how important their language, their customs, dress and culture are for their self identity. Should all this be sacrificed?

Maybe a more nuanced position is that articulated by a visiting lecturer from my Redcliffe student days, Tim Chester:

“Homogeneous churches of a socially powerful group are wrong - the church should be a reconciled community that includes all, especially the socially marginalised. But planting churches targeted at marginalised groups is legitimate in order to prevent that social marginalisation being replicated within the church. If there were a ‘level playing field’ the socially dominant culture would also dominate in the church.”

Mission by the Diaspora: The demons are very different around here!

In an attempt to pursue a healthier approach, at Southall Baptist Church those churches associated with us are encouraged to build towards reaching beyond their own culture to the various London cultures that surround them. If one was to think in terms of Ralph Winter’s typology, some success has been achieved in E-2 evangelism, that is reaching out to people from a different, and yet similar culture. Hence, there are many stories of Portuguese and Angolans being baptized into mainly Brazilian fellowships, facilitated by sharing a common language, Portuguese. However, what has been known as E-3 evangelism, engaging with people from a completely different culture, is much more difficult. Although there are some striking stories (e.g. a Pakistani family joining a Brazilian fellowship) progress has been difficult, especially in relating to those from a White, European background. After all, how can one sing the Lord’s songs in a strange land and a strange tongue?

The key issue is the extent to which Diaspora Christians can move beyond their natural concern for survival towards learning to relate to the culture(s) which surround them. Even those concerned for the spiritual welfare of the UK struggle when tried and tested methods in their homeland do not have success. Hence, I discover myself having long conversations with church leaders from other cultures seeking to help them understand the weirdness of (post)modern Western society. There are Brazilians wishing to comprehend why an offer for prayer, which in their country would be received with gratitude in almost any household irrespective of religion, may be seen as offensive. Or a Peruvian lady, perplexed at why, in the “liberal” Anglican Church she attends, the name of Jesus is rarely mentioned.

As some of the more spiritual warfare inclined tend to remark, “the demons are very different around here”.

Conclusion

If you read this article hoping for some answers on the issue of Mission and Diaspora, you are likely to be feeling disappointed. Maybe, there are no answers, no Diaspora Driven Church Manual™ that can be applied in 5 simple steps (thus, ending my fledging career as an airport hopping consultant). Instead, merely stories, joys, problems and questions as we seek to follow God in being faithful in an ever-changing world.

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God does not play dice, but does he play mahjong?

Author: Paul Woods has served with OMF both in the UK and in Asia. He is currently writing his PhD thesis on 'The alien among you: a theological response to Chinese migration'.

"So what *do* you do then?" a zealous local employee at OMF's headquarters in Singapore asked me a few years ago. She knew I was a member of OMF, then serving in the UK. But I was not a regional director or a mobiliser, or finance person or media specialist. So what else could I be?

When I described myself as a missionary she protested, "But you aren't based in East Asia". When I explained that I worked among East Asian students in the UK, and it was not health issues or aged parents that kept me in the West, I was able to introduce her to what OMF calls "Diaspora Ministry".

For a mission with a geographical focus such as OMF, Diaspora Ministry (DM) is a newer effort targeting people from some of our target countries who live in our home nations rather than in Asia. Ministry focuses on those known to us who remain culturally and linguistically distinct, or who come from nations where political, religious, or even cultural norms bring restrictions on ministry. Some mission groups carry out DM among Japanese, for example, as they may be more open to the gospel while in the West than when they are at home.

In recent years the profile of Diaspora Ministry in OMF and other mission agencies has been raised and its value acknowledged. But in too many people's minds, even among the informed and committed Christian public, DM remains somehow second-class, either a Cinderella yet to make it to the ball, or even a ministry ugly sister close to retirement. My wife and I served in DM for four years in the UK before moving to Asia in 2003. When we left home we saw an increase in financial and prayer support; in the eyes of at least some, getting on an aeroplane had made us 'real missionaries'.

We retain our interest in DM and still meet church people here and in East Asia who feel that a person is only a missionary if they have left their own country. *Missio* seems to have more to do with being sent *to a country* than with being sent *with a message*.

A little biblical input may be helpful. If mission is the transmission of the Good News from the haves to the have-nots, then the locus of gospel ministry is the interface of *faith* and *no-faith*, or *faith* and *other-faith*. This will resonate with classic mission texts such as Matt 28:18-20 or Acts 1:8. There is much *going* in missions, but the core of God's purpose is bringing people into the kingdom and discipling. Further, even the scope of Acts 1:8 includes ministry in a local context; you don't *have* to go to the ends of the earth. Paul's ministry combines reaching out to Jew and Gentile, and in the New Testament record we often encounter both in the same geographical context: without advocating an excessively narrow or prescriptive people group focus we can say that physical location was less significant than cross-cultural communication across a faith interface.

The same principle underlies God's purposes for His people in the Old Testament context. Chris Wright talks about Israel representing God on earth through worship and distinctive ethics which manifest His character. While there is no explicit *go mandate* in the OT law, one purpose of God's blueprint was that Israelite society

would attract outsiders and make Yahweh known to them. Such a notion is expressed clearly in the instructions to take care of foreigners within Israel. Lev 19:10 requires God's people to leave some of the grape harvest for the poor or the alien, and Lev 23:22 makes a similar prescription about grain harvesting. Simply put, if NT commands us to *go out*, then the OT seeks a society which invites people to *come in*. The outworking of this older principle can be seen for a number of OT characters, Ruth perhaps constituting the best example: "Your people will be my people and your God my God" (Ruth 1:16b). The overall thrust of the Bible's teaching is thus a proclamation of the message to those who have yet to hear and respond, accompanied by genuine social care and concern for aliens who have come to live within the physical locus of the community of faith. God says "If there are people in your midst who don't know me, take care of them and tell them about me". That's *missio*.

So what of dice and mahjong? In response to developments in quantum mechanics Einstein complained that God does not play dice – the universe's physical functioning is not based on chance. Neither is its missiological functioning. A few years ago an OMF colleague and I were discussing the increasing numbers of Mainland Chinese who live abroad. With horizontal, rotary, sweeping motions of both hands, he told me "God is washing the (mahjong) tiles". Mahjong is the classic Chinese game similar to a combination of playing cards and dominoes, in which the tiles are shuffled or *washed* after each game. From this we derived the term *mahjong theology* to advocate DM. In His sovereignty, today God is shuffling the pack, and washing people from various ethnic groups and cultural backgrounds all over the planet. Just as God washed Ruth and Rahab into the community of faith, so now He is washing Chinese to the UK, for example. This is nothing new; Acts 17:26-27 tell us that God *made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us*.

For us, the migration phenomenon of the early 21st century ties together the Great Commission with the ethics of God-fearing community, and an acknowledgement of God's sovereignty in the affairs of men and women. Indeed, Christian ministry among migrants has been described as Acts 1:8 *in reverse*; God is bringing people from the ends of the earth right to our street. We are to respond to this challenge right where we live.

Some may perceive migration as a menace, but as citizens and Christians we should view it as ministry opportunity. Unprecedented numbers of people are on the move, looking for safety, freedom, or just a better life. The expansion of the EU and ASEAN, improved communication, and ever-cheaper travel have all shrunk our world. At the same time, poverty, conflict, and hardship in many regions have caused millions to cross borders to richer, more stable nations.

Migrants are often creative, proactive people looking for a better life. There is much anecdotal evidence that migrants are more open to new things than those who remain at home. Yet the same people are vulnerable and needy. Before leaving China, one student was told by non-believing relatives, "If you need help in Britain, go to a church. They will look after you". Our own Diaspora ministry showed us that

while apologetics and Bible study were important, the vital factor in the journey to faith was God's love manifest through His people, across a faith – non-faith interface.

Many foreigners in our midst stay long-term, while others return home after a college course or when they have gained money or work experience. The shrinking world which brought them to us may well take them away again. Improved communications and cheaper transport mean that traditional distinctions between overseas mission and student ministry are becoming blurred. These days UK-based Christians can easily travel overseas and follow up those who have returned home, or keep in touch through email and skype. Increasingly, we can view DM and overseas mission as two ends of a continuum. The exact nature of the continuum depends on the home country of the migrants. Where there is a restrictive regime or religion, maintaining contact or visiting may be difficult. Communicating across cultures always presents problems, and Christians in the West need to work with colleagues 'on the field' to gain useful insights and resource materials. For some peoples, open societies such as ours facilitate ministry which could not be undertaken in their home countries.

Migration exists within God's providence and promotes His purposes. To engage in challenging, highly significant cross-cultural ministry no longer needs hours on an aeroplane; just open your front door! God is washing the mahjong tiles and moving men and women around the planet. The presence of foreign migrants on our shores is a God-given opportunity which should be grasped. Diaspora Ministry is cross-cultural mission in the fullest sense and needs churches to provide people, prayer, and finance. Mission agencies need to advocate DM and actively recruit for it. Acts 1:8 paraphrased for Diaspora Ministry might read: *You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses to people from the ends of the earth, from Samaria and from all Judea; and you will do this right home here in Jerusalem.*

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‘Where do you come from?’

The impact of migration on European identity



Author: Revd Darrell Jackson, Tutor in European Studies and Director, Nova Research Centre, Redcliffe College.

It is typically claimed that European identity is rooted in its Christian heritage, Enlightenment civilisation, and Modernity.

Traditional definitions of the idea of Europe that identify our continent as the centre of civilisation, liberty and Christendom assume that all Europeans ascribe to those values, and that to be European you must ascribe to them. [1]

In a recent conversation with a senior Roman Catholic cleric in Europe I was taken aback by his insistence that Europe's experience of sixty years of peace, following the end of the Second World War, was something to be commended to other continents. In fact, he spoke of this as a gift to the wounded peoples of Africa. He and I were quite obviously reading different history books and watching different news stories. I also suspect that our evaluations of Constantine might have differed somewhat!

The concept of a European identity is notoriously slippery and the most optimistic of observers concedes that its development remains a project and a process. However, I happen to be convinced that Christians should care deeply about the development of a European identity. I believe this for no other reason than that it seems at times to have been too readily tied up with concepts of 'Fortress Europe'. A European identity that is solely identified with the European Union, the Schengen Agreement, the free movement of peoples only within the internal market, or the tightening of external border controls, is an identity that deepens an 'Us'/Other' dichotomy. Europe's historical and recent experience of nationalisms should be sufficient warning against the dangers of defining ourselves in opposition to who we are not.

All nationalisms tend to assume that members of the nation share certain essential commonalities. Many of these are mythological in character. A similar danger lurks in the corridors of Brussels and Strasbourg. Whether these are to be found in the comments of the same Roman Catholic interlocutor who stressed the importance of referring to Europe's 'Christian roots' or of the politician who speaks of Europe's Enlightenment commitment to civilisation and individual liberty. These essentialist understandings of Europe fail to take into account our own shared history of 'barbarism', restriction of civil liberties, or of an earlier version of Europe founded in Greece's classical version of democracy (which incidentally excluded women and slaves).

As globalised citizens living in the Europe of today, we may be facing a unique pressure. In the encounter with the 'other' we discover that there is something of the 'other' in 'us'. The cultural and social pot-pourri that is contemporary Europe, makes it possible for me to buy a packet of Czech dumpling mix here in Gloucester for 99p and it means that far from experiencing European integration as a harmonising, homogenising tendency, I am able to celebrate a new emerging diversity and 'otherness' that even allows me to practice a few words of 'shopping' Czech. Citizens of the European Union enjoy the right to relocate to any of its member States for the purposes of employment or education. Many of us would be reluctant to describe a British citizen who moved from Glasgow to London for the same purposes as a 'migrant'. Were one of us to move from London to go and work in Paris we might equally feel uncomfortable were others to impose that label on us. Yet, when a Polish

young person moves from Gdansk to find employment in Gloucester, they are likely to be described as a migrant. Worse, they might be described as one of a 'wave' or 'horde' of migrants about to 'flood' the UK. The discourse of migration can be used in this way to underline the 'us'/ 'other' dichotomy and reinforce a view of Europe as culturally monochrome, civilised and differentiated from the non-European migrant hordes. Unless, that is, they are the educated or economic elites who work in European hospitals or buy its football clubs!

The time may be overdue for Christians to think more carefully about the applicability of the Old Testament vision of a just society and the teaching of Jesus (for example in Luke 4) to the current political processes that are building a temporal, fortress-like kingdom totally lacking any eschatology that offers a bolder vision of how the lion and the lamb can share the same feeding trough and the same bed of hay.

The presence of migrant peoples is an opportunity to reflect on the nature of European identity.

It is currently estimated that 1.5 million migrants arrive and settle in the EU each year. The same estimates also suggest that seven million migrants within the EU have irregular status with a further half a million of these arriving each year. In total, 4% of the EU population, or 18.5 million people, is made up of non-EU citizens

This is clearly a challenge for the political leaders of the European Union and the other European Institutions. It would be politically and economically naïve to simply open Europe's external borders to everybody who comes knocking. Equally, it is historically naïve to believe that Europe is essentially a Christian club (that can exclude Turkey solely on the grounds that its citizens are Muslims) and that Europe's historical development has taken place without any reference to, dialogue with, or borrowing from, other non-European cultures.

Philip Putnam recently wrote that, "In the short to medium run... immigration and ethnic diversity challenge social solidarity and inhibit social capital." [2] Yet he goes on to describe the social capital that develops in communities where social and cultural diversities have stimulated mutual enrichment and more encompassing identities. I feel less a stranger in a globalised world because I can turn to Russian, Italian, Spanish, and Lithuanian-speaking friends when I come across something written in a language I could not otherwise do anything with. Not everything of importance on the internet is written in English.

The political emphases of the European Union seem to stress a different approach, however. EU home affairs commissioner Franco Frattini takes the view that, "There can be no immigration without integration", a point he reiterated at a Potsdam meeting in May 2007 of the EU's integration ministers. [3] Intriguingly the meeting had been called to discuss integration with reference to inter-cultural and inter-religious problems in some of the EU states. Yet despite his apparent insistence on integration, Mr. Frattini is sufficiently pragmatic to understand that Europe's workplaces and pension funds will increasingly rely on economically productive young people from the new EU member states as well as those from Africa and Asia. "It is up to me - up to Europe - to promote and encourage highly-skilled migrants to come, if needed and where needed".

A January 2007 report in the EU Observer stated that migration from ex-communist EU states to the UK and Ireland showed no sign of slowing down, with Romanians and Bulgarians testing their new EU travel freedoms. Ninety thousand Poles registered to work in Ireland in 2006 compared with 65,000 in 2005 according to the Irish national insurance office, with over 250,000 new workers settling in Ireland since 2004. Net migration to the UK hit 400,000 in 2005 - almost double the level in 2004 and 215,000 more than officially stated by the British government.

During September 2007, Mr. Frattini unveiled his plans for the EU's own version of America's Green Card, dubbed the 'Blue Card'. Brussels is set to issue an EU-wide work permit allowing employment to non-Europeans, in any country within the 27-nation bloc. He expressed his hope that it would make Europe a more attractive work destination than the US, Canada or Australia and cut down on the severe labour shortages facing the bloc due to its aging population and declining birth rates.

I simply want to stress here that the discourse of integration fails to address the question of the lack of internal integration. With what does a person of African origin integrate in Belgium, for example; the Flemish peoples and their (diverse) customs, the Walloon-speaking peoples, or the French speaking peoples? Is Belgium sufficiently integrated internally for it to expect others to integrate into it? The issue is no less complicated for non-Federal States that nevertheless demonstrate wide regional variations and local distinctives. My American wife had to swear a monarchist oath to become a British citizen. I could not do such a thing, even though I am born a British citizen. A BBC survey in September 2006 showed that only 8% percent of migrant Poles had claimed any state benefit during the two years that on average they had been in the UK. They are, it seems, well integrated in employment and economic terms. However, 66% of them could not say who David Cameron was. Would either of these, contrasting indicators, really prove useful in determining levels of integration? Integration may be a politically useful discourse but its logic is deeply flawed and, I would suggest, susceptible to theological investigation.

In 2004 the Conference of Protestant Churches of Europe issued the Liebfrauenberg Declaration, addressing a wide range of issues relating to the phenomena of Migration in Europe. In a section titled, 'The biblical message and responsibility of the churches' the Declaration states,

"The biblical message calls the churches to responsibility for refugees and migrants in a particularly prominent way. Love of strangers and the consequent ethic are essential features of the people of God in the world. There are very few biblical commands that have the same weight and clarity as the instruction to protect strangers. When a stranger resides with you in your land, you shall not oppress the stranger; you shall love the stranger as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt (Leviticus 19:33). The New Testament raises love of the neighbour to a command overcoming the borders of difference (Luke 10:25-37). Since God does not look at a person's status, calling people of all nations and societal groups into the Kingdom (Acts 10:34f; Romans 2:10f), the community of Christians sends a signal around the world, embracing those who were strangers and overcoming any narrow, nationalist thinking and action."

Christian migrant peoples raise similar, as well as different, questions about the project of European identity.

European media seem transfixed by the image of the Islamic fanatic who lives and works in the heartlands of Europe breathing threats against the 'Western infidel'. There is doubtless a germ of truth in such a stereotype, yet it remains a crude and unrepresentative satire of the greater majority of Muslims living in Europe. Philip Jenkins' latest offering, *God's Continent: Christianity, Islam, and Europe's Religious Crisis*, [4] is commendable in this respect. He refuses to fall into the same trap of demonising all Muslims living in Europe or of characterising them as religious 'fifth columnists'.

Jenkins also shines the spotlight on the presence of many Christians among those who have made their way to Europe from Africa, Asia, or Latin America. Some of these intentionally carry their Christian faith back to the mission-sending countries that have historically planted the seed of the Gospel in those countries. In March 2006 the Reverends Hmar Sangkhuma and John Colney, from the Mizoram synod of the Presbyterian Church of India, began

operating as "mission enablers" for the Indian denomination's counterpart in Wales. Sangkhuma, aged 49, said that he saw his task as helping to remedy a "spiritual void". Others have relocated for purposes of employment or education and have revitalised almost redundant causes. Romanian migrants revived the ghost town of Aguaviva in Spain where over 100 have settled, prompting the opening of a new Orthodox worshipping community. Aguaviva's Romanian population is only a miniscule percentage of nearly two million Romanians, a tenth of the country's population, who had already emigrated to Spain and Italy before Romania's accession to the EU. In 2006 Romanians sent home more than £2bn in remittances to family members still living in Romania. In Bradford, an American branch of the Romanian Orthodox Church established a congregation in 2005 and Roman Catholic Parishes across the UK have been revitalised by migrant Roman Catholics from Poland.

In March 2007, Ross on Wye Baptist Church, in the heart of rural Herefordshire, commissioned a Ukrainian pastor to investigate the spiritual needs of the nearly 8,000 Ukrainian seasonal workers in the area. For an England vs. Russia football match, screened live at the Church, there were just under 50 Eastern Europeans from the Ukraine, Russia, Belarus, Moldova, Macedonia, Serbia & Montenegro, and Slovakia.

However, the indigenous churches of Europe should take careful note of research conducted by Vitoria University in Spain during March 2005. The results were based on more than 500 interviews with immigrants from over 30 different countries. 85% said they believed in God, but this was a decrease from 99% for those who said that they had believed in God when they first arrived in Spain. Of those interviewed, some 15% had abandoned belief in God and a further 10% were in the process of losing it. Only a small percentage, 5.8%, reported experiencing their faith grow. [5]

Understanding the complexity of the religious beliefs and practices of migrants in Europe is certainly important for Europe's policy makers but it is also highly relevant to the missionary task of the Church among and with these people. The European Union is, not surprisingly, paying close scrutiny to Islamic leaders arriving with little higher education or awareness of Europe's social and cultural traditions. An EU programme, worth €4million, offers a brand-new multi-faith approach trying to counter the exclusion of migrant communities by "familiarising religious leaders", including Islamic preachers, with the core of European values and the multicultural and multi-faith environment in the EU. Both the Council of Europe and the EU are investing heavily in programmes that will emphasise inter-cultural dialogue and encounter during 2008. However, during consultation with European churches with regard to this programme, the secular policy makers adopt a characteristic default position. Unprepared to abandon the public space to the controlling influence of the forces of Christendom, secular policy makers fail consistently to understand adequately the nature of religious belief and conviction. The desire to bring different religious leaders into religious dialogue has so far been unable to break through the iron cage of secular assumptions that are perceived by those who hold them as the only way to offer the 'value-free' space within which dialogue can take place. The value-free nature of secular assumptions is certainly contestable, but these also fail to recognise the implicit (or explicit) claims of religionists to be able to provide a more compelling vision for framing the public space. Is the superior utility of the secular framework, that presently frames inter-cultural and inter-religious dialogue, really so self-evident?

In 2001, the European Values Survey conducted an extensive set of national surveys across many European countries. Questions were asked about attitudes to migrants. The results make interesting reading. What emerges quite clearly, is that more regular church attendance tends to correlate with more positive attitudes towards migrant peoples. Cross tabulations of the data carried out by me in 2005 revealed this intriguing phenomenon. This tends to run counter to the view of the media and Europe's politicians that religious belief and practice tends to serve the cause of fundamentalism and extremism, often allied with subtle

forms of nationalism. The EVS data at least casts some doubt on the truth of such allegations.

In 2004, the Church of England's General Synod, February 2004, requested the Mission and Public Affairs Council, "to consider how the contributions and needs of minority ethnic people relate to an inclusive theology in changing models of church; consider the growing contribution of minority ethnic people to mission and parish renewal; and draw upon the experience of minority ethnic clergy and laity at looking at new ways of being church".

If we can extend this discussion of ethnic minorities to include migrant, refugee, and other displaced peoples, it is entirely possible to imagine the future churches of Europe reflecting more adequately the rainbow character of the triune God, who exists in diversity, and who brings blessing to all the followers of Jesus by redeeming and transforming 'us-ness' and 'otherness' into the 'we-ness' that characterises the heavenly host.

Footnotes

1. Guerrina, R., Europe History, Ideas, Ideologies, Hodder Arnold, London, 2002, p6.
2. Putnam, P., 'E Pluribus Unum: Diversity and Community in the Twenty-first Century', in Scandinavian Political Studies, Vol. 30, No. 2, 2007, p138.
3. 'No immigration without integration says EU Minister', in EU Observer, 11 May 2007.
4. Oxford University Press, 2007.
5. 'Immigrants losing their faith in Spain', in ACPress.net, Madrid, April 5th, 2006.

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Postcolonialism, globalisation, migration and diaspora: some implications for mission



Author: Jonathan Ingleby, co-editor of Encounters and Postgraduate lecturer in mission, Redcliffe College.

Postcolonialism and migration

In many instances, migration is a postcolonial phenomenon, which continues to link the colonising and colonised nations. The presence in Europe, for example, of people whose not-too-distant origins were in Africa or Asia or Latin America reflects the bonds (in more than one sense) created by the Spanish, Portuguese, French, Dutch and British empires. Difficult postcolonial issues such as multiculturalism (ethnic differences), language barriers, uneven development, inter-generational strife, identity crises and the like stem from this movement of peoples. In the same way Europe has become the testing ground for a number of new missiological issues such as monoethnic churches in a multiethnic society and witness to the gospel in a post Christian society (often by Christians who have no experience of a post Christian society!). (See the article in this issue by Dan Clark.)

As a result, today we see societies which are 'mixed-up' in ways that are quite unique. Migration itself is not a recent phenomenon, of course. It has been going on for centuries. The United States, Australia, and Canada – just to make a selection – have experienced huge waves of immigration for two hundred years or more, indeed are nations largely made up of immigrants. But their initial approach, speaking generally, was to handle the situation by promoting a sense of new-found oneness among their people. They were greatly aided in this by the way that immigrants were able to forge a new life for themselves without the presence of a settled population. (Sometimes the land was genuinely unoccupied, sometimes the original inhabitants were eliminated.) Immigrants today, however, encounter centuries' old civilisations and even more importantly, they remain the minority. On the whole, too, they form a diaspora, that is to say that retain strong links with their place of origin. (See below.) Another difference might be the relative isolation of past generations of immigrants. The original settlers of countries like the US and Australia had little opportunity to return to their homeland, even if they had wanted to. Partly this had to do with the fact that they were often escaping from the old to the new, and partly because transport systems were comparatively slower and more expensive – return to the homeland and regular visits were not easy to manage for people who had 'sold up' to make the move in the first place. I suspect that the vast majority of immigrants nowadays can afford the (relatively cheap) air fares to visit friends and relatives at home. People are 'on the move' more than ever before today and in all directions

Globalisation – people on the move

Postcolonialism links with globalisation. The global culture demands and then favours those who are prepared to be mobile or at least to plug into the communications revolution at some level. By one description most people in the affluent world are economic migrants. Very few people stay at home when it comes to finding a job. The difference is that globalisation has made it both easier and (often) more necessary to make that move. Not equally easy, however. Unequal development within globalisation means job mobility and open frontiers for some, but forced migration and hostile frontiers for others. (Postcolonial migrants, for example, are more often in this second category.) 'Economic migrants' is a loaded term, nowadays, because they come in a number of varieties. They may be people who simply want to earn a better living, and have marketable skills for which they can get a better price

away from home. Then there are those who need to make new arrangements for their families as a matter of survival. They simply cannot provide for their own by staying at home. Globalisation in its revolutionary communications mode has made these movements possible where they have not always been an option before. Also, sometimes global economics are the cause of this process. The way in which multi-nationals can now choose where their manufacturing and service base is, means that for many people the work which was traditionally associated with their locality has gone elsewhere and they simply have to travel away from home in order to move to a new job. (All this does not take into account the refugees from war and from religious and political persecution.)

Diaspora

The name 'diaspora' may have behind it the simple idea of dispersion, but it has now become something of a technical term, with a number of features. First of all, it involves a dispersion from one place or 'centre' from which all the dispersed take their identity, though there can be a variety of foreign destinations. All share in a common memory or myth of this 'homeland' (even if they are born somewhere else!), something which is so important that there is no likelihood that it will be forgotten. The fact that they remain 'strangers', a perpetual minority in their host nation, keeps the myth alive. If, by chance they are assimilated to such an extent that they disown or forget their place of origin, to that extent they are ceasing to be part of the diaspora. Many hope to return to their homeland, and even if this is not the long term plan they are often keen to visit from time to time if they are able to do so. They are also often very willing to take part in enterprises that benefit their homeland, whether this is to their individual advantage or not. All this means that the ongoing connections with their homeland are an important aspect of their self-identity.

Typically, diaspora communities are both needy and open. Many diaspora communities give the impression that they are doing very well! People who leave their own countries to work somewhere else (if it is voluntary) are often the most go-ahead and successful. Think of the way that members of the Indian diaspora have prospered in areas such as business and information technology. But the reverse is also true. Immigrant communities often fall behind in terms of education, securing jobs and business success. Natural disadvantages to do with language and culture (I mean that they are different from those of the majority) hold them back. So do the prejudices of the host nation. Some are lonely and isolated. They need help to cope with a challenging new situation. The openness of diaspora communities is also an ambiguous concept. Often the sense that they are being discriminated against, the feeling that they are in a foreign land, the all-prevailing newness of their situation leads to a very understandable 'closed' or defensive mentality. There is evidence, for example, that diaspora communities are more likely to emphasise their religious commitments – if they are different from those of the host population – than they did back at home. Being religious is now part of their identity that they need to emphasise if that identity is going to survive. (In this respect Christians who are concerned about the growing militancy of Muslims in the West should remember Aesop's fable about the wind and the sun. The contest was about who could get a man to remove his cloak. The more the wind blew the more the man clutched his cloak around him. However, when the sun shone he took it off!) On the other hand people do 'open up' when they are in new circumstances. They try new things. The fact that they are not being observed by what was likely a close knit community at home frees them up to do this. When moving to a new place they expect it to be different and expect to have to adapt to it. Some of the new arrangements suit them better than the old ones.

Mission

There are a number of missiological conclusions that we need to come to here. It is fair to assume that needy people are the church's opportunity, and that it is neither exploitive nor patronising to offer people friendship and help in these circumstances. Moving into a new culture, far away from familiar friends and family, can be a difficult process, and leaving people just to 'get on with it' is certainly not an appropriate response. Diaspora communities can live with a constant sense of being under threat, and Christians in their dealings with threatened minorities have a responsibility to do everything they can to alleviate that sense of threat, whatever its source. On the other hand diaspora people are usually hoping for something new. They have not come such a long distance only to remain the same people that they were before. In a very profound way the gospel offers people a new start, and maybe that is the newness they have been looking for all their lives.

Among Christians in particular it is unacceptable that people arriving as guests should end up in exclusive ethnic groups – even if this is in the name of dynamic evangelistic methods! I am not in favour of homogenous churches, for example. The cutting edge of evangelism in any church may have to have a cultural element in it. – young people evangelising young people, employing someone from an ethnic minority group as an evangelist to reach his or her fellows and so on – but one of the essential witnesses of the gospel is still that we are all 'one in Christ Jesus' and that as far as 'the world' is concerned we are all aliens and there is every reason for us to stick together.

Diaspora people are often keen to do something for their home country. This can have missiological significance, too. The organisation South Asian Concern is a good example here. Its 'concern' is primarily for the Asian diaspora in the UK, but Asian diaspora Christians are also warmly encouraged to take responsibility for the South Asian sub-continent and its need of the gospel. Notice that it is in a good position to do so. Because a diaspora never loses contact with 'home', because of the network effect, there is constant traffic between those at home and those in exile, so to speak. The gospel can be part of that traffic. This is one of the great joys of the postcolonial situation. Postcolonialism reminds us that we are living in a world that has been profoundly shaped by the colonial experience. There are so many bad outcomes of that, it becomes a dispiriting task to catalogue them. Yet the continued connection between, say, Britain and India seems, from the point of view of the gospel, an example of redemption. Not that it excuses the history of British imperialism, but it takes something which had much that was evil and exploitive and uses it for blessing – a process at which, if the irreverence may be pardoned, God is very good.

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Freud and the Non-European



by Edward Said

Review by Jonathan Ingleby, Postgraduate Lecturer in Mission, Redcliffe College.

This book is made up of the record of an address given by the late Edward Said at the Freud Museum in London and the reply to it by Jacqueline Rose. Though Freud certainly makes an appearance, so to speak, both Rose, a Jew, and Said, a Palestinian, seem more concerned with issues to do with the holocaust and the State of Israel. Within that, the key issue is always to do with Jewish identity as an 'irremediably, diasporic, unhoused' community, looking for a safe homeland. Both writers – friends, each deeply appreciative of the other's stance – are disturbed at the post-holocaust transition of the Jewish people from victims to victimisers, particularly as exhibited by contemporary Israeli state policy. Both believe that the way forward is the way back, to a diasporic identity in which Israelis can join in a single state with Palestinians, themselves the inheritors of exile and dispersion. Said speaks about 'a politics of diaspora life' and wonders whether it could 'ever become the not-so-precarious foundation in the land of Jews and Palestinians of a bi-national state in which Israel and Palestine are parts, rather than antagonists of each other's history and underlying reality' (p.55). Rose affirms this, quoting Marc Ellis, Professor of American and Jewish Studies at Baylor University, 'what if the centre of contemporary Jerusalem was seen as broken rather than salvific, and shared in that brokenness, rather than divided by victory and defeat?' (p. 68). (Rose goes on to admit that this is a difficult pathway. She questions whether trauma does in fact lead to this sort of openness, or only to more trauma.)

Both Rose and Said, it seems to me, hold forth a profoundly Christ-like vision, the idea that the kingdom of God invites us to a common experience of dispersion and brokenness. On the whole we find this too difficult. We generally prefer to live together as victor and vanquished, either triumphalistically or as victims, though, in our better moments, we know that such attitudes can never 'inherit the kingdom'.

The quality and profundity of these two non-Christian writers is mostly way beyond anything we might normally find in the Christian bookshop. I am not sure what that tells us.

Buy *Freud and the Non-European* from [St Andrew's Bookshop](http://www.standrewsbookshop.co.uk).

Author: Edward Said
Publisher: Verso
ISBN: 1844675114

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SCM Studyguide to Christian Mission: Historic Types and Contemporary Expressions

by Stephen Spencer

Review by Chris Ducker, working with Breadline in Moldova.



This volume introduces the undergraduate-level student to different theoretical forms of Christian mission, with each "type" representing one of six distinct paradigms that Christianity has historically expressed. Spencer, a tutor in mission studies and historical theology, is in his element here, combining an appreciation of Christianity's historical contexts with a sound understanding of two millennia's developments in Christian theology and mission practice.

This book owes a large (and acknowledged) debt to Hans Küng's elucidation of six stages of Christianity – from the early Christian apocalyptic to today's postmodern pluralist paradigm, via the Greek-influenced early church, medieval Roman Catholicism, the Reformation, and the Enlightenment. Spencer follows David Bosch's argument that each paradigm was typified by a particular form of mission. He successively describes each type: setting its cultural and religious background, exploring its distinctive characteristics and providing case studies.

What sets this book apart from history of mission textbooks is that Spencer then shows how each historic type is continued into the present, even if his examples of contemporary expressions are sometimes doubtful. Chapters also contain a summary of each form of mission, which will certainly benefit those encountering these types for the first time. They can be summarised as: filling the Ark; radiating eternal truth; establishing Christendom; conversion of souls; building the kingdom on earth; and finding hope in local communities.

Many authors would be content to merely identify and describe the various types of Christian mission, but Spencer (quite rightly) wants to evaluate them too. He establishes five criteria for continuing the mission of Christ derived, somewhat arbitrarily, from his exegesis of Mark 1. These "Galilean principles of the *missio Christi*" are: contemplative listening; addressing society as a whole; pointing to the inaugurated yet still awaited kingdom; calling for a personal response; and collaboration.

Each paradigm is judged against these five criteria – for example, apostolic mission underperformed on the second and third principles, deemed by Spencer as insufficiently political or concerned with society's needs. On the other hand, mission during the Enlightenment performed well in these areas but placed insufficient emphasis on a personal response to the Gospel. Significantly, this is also regarded as the greatest weakness of our own postmodern mission type.

Spencer is at pains to stress that such evaluation is intended to help the reader appreciate the relative strengths and weaknesses of each mission type. There is no one type that is "better" than the others; rather, each will be the most appropriate response in specific situations. His own recommendation is that, rather than being split between different mission types, each church should focus on a single type, based on their local context, needs and opportunities – and with an alertness to how God is already at work.

First-year university students – especially those without the experience (or stamina!) to work through Bosch's authoritative *Transforming Mission* – would benefit most from this book. It is a useful corrective to history of mission courses that tend to commence with William Carey or the Moravians. Whilst "stages of history" models are nowadays somewhat unfashionable, the

typology presented here has the twin benefits of having theoretical coherence and being demonstrably relevant. This book is aimed squarely at the university student, for whom the modular nature of degree courses tends to fragment or compartmentalise their understanding of both history and theology. Against this background, it is refreshing to see a framework attempting to cover the entire history of Christian mission and to consolidate its major forms.

As Spencer himself admits, however, by utilising Küng's model he inherits its weaknesses. Do we sincerely believe that there are only the six major types of mission outlined above? Is it reasonable to define one type as lasting a single century, whilst another lasted a millennium? The types presented are distilled generalisations, and there comes a point when the insight gained by observing commonalities fails to outweigh the insight that would be gained by observing more tightly-defined, geographically-distinct or time-restricted phenomena. This last point should remind us of the value of local and specific mission case studies – not for how they 'prove' or 'represent' a type, but for what they uniquely demonstrate.

Other weaknesses of the book are Spencer's own. He seems unaware that his five stated criteria for authentic, Christlike mission are themselves rooted in a historical, social and theological context: they are his choice of criteria, not Christ's. It may well be, therefore, that subsequent generations (or missiologists in other contexts) will choose different criteria – and consequently vindicate forms of mission he finds wanting, or criticise types he seemingly favours. A second criticism is that, despite writing extensively on the *missio Dei* since the creation of the universe, Spencer restricts himself to a specifically Christian history of mission, when the introduction of an Old Testament 'type' or understanding of mission (e.g. as light to the Gentiles) would have been a helpful addition.

Despite these quibbles, I would recommend this book to anyone wishing to develop a broad understanding of mission. By outlining six historical types of Christian mission, this 'Studyguide' provides us with a sense of perspective, as well as a comparative framework. By relating those types to contemporary expressions, Spencer avoids the trap of historicizing what is an ongoing and vital plurality of mission forms around the world. Along the way, he encourages us to ask: which mission types, based on Jesus' example, are the most appropriate? – a question the missionary must unfailingly pose in each new context he finds himself in.

Buy *SCM Studyguide to Christian Mission* from [St Andrew's Bookshop](#).

Author: Stephen Spencer
Publisher: SCM Press, 2007
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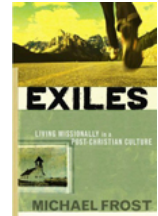
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Exiles: Living Missionally in a Post-Christian Culture

Edited by C. René Padilla



Review by Revd Darrell Jackson, Tutor in European Studies and Director of the Nova Research Centre, Redcliffe College.

Michael Frost casts Jesus of Nazareth as The Exile, living among those who were his own flesh and blood yet who refused to acknowledge his public ministry. Inspired by the life and mission of Jesus, Frost draws upon Brueggemann's characterisation of biblical exiles who share dangerous memories, pledge dangerous promises, provide dangerous criticism, and sing dangerous songs. His development of these four themes is compelling and convincing and couples theological reflection with a comprehensive treatment of what living missionally means without descending into prescriptive pragmatism.

Frost is writing for those of us living in a globalised context typified by post-Christendom assumptions, one that wrestles with the consequences of colonial histories, one that seems transfixed by hyper-reality, and one in which large Corporations dominate or manipulate global marketplaces in ways that often mask deep injustices. Frost is most familiar with the English-speaking part of this world and gathers material from the UK, North America, Australia and New Zealand. Few people have the capacity of Castells to summarise and synthesise at a truly global level. However, despite the necessary limitation in scope, little attention is paid to how the Roman Catholic and/or the Orthodox Churches fit into the missional landscape. These beg the question as to whether the contextual and ecclesial phenomena Frost is describing are present beyond the anglophone Protestant world. A more accurate title might have been 'Living missionally in a post-Protestant anglophone culture'. However, this is a minor quibble and probably reflects a personal frustration that much writing about missional ecclesiology is overly focussed on Protestant developments of it.

At the heart of his missional vision is an interweaving of the 'third place', 'communitas', and the place of hospitality. The third place is neither the home nor the workplace but a place where individuals are able to socialise and meet others away from inauthentic social spaces dominated by hyper-reality. In such places one can realise the potential of moving beyond the futile search for community and on to its alternative, communitas. This experience of intense interconnectedness is associated with the stress and ordeal of sharing a common missional task, often outside of, or in the face of, the mainstream. The shared liminal experience may then serve to enrich the mainstream. Frost ties this to his own, unsatisfying, experience of searching for community in the emerging churches of the '80s and '90s. More important than the search for community is the quest for missional engagement with the world around, motivated by the desire to alleviate the brokenness that is common to all.

I welcomed his rejection of the dualism that sunders the sacred and the secular. I was intrigued to read his dietary advice (though its inclusion certainly boosts his reputation as a writer with a holistic concern!). I was challenged by the need to see and assess 'Church' as a four day (or longer) activity. I was grateful for his careful and passionate attention to issues of injustice, his critique of short-term relief, his treatment of persecution and religious freedoms, and his trenchant critique of romantic imagery in worship addressed to Jesus. I appreciated his exposition of the worship of God as (at least) a four-fold activity.

However, I was not persuaded that Frost had moved much beyond a typical aversion to the evangelistic task that is common to many in the various missional church movements. His extended and detailed sections on justice were not quite matched by an equal attention to a missional treatment of how one offers verbal witness to Jesus, and personal faith, in ways that create the space and opportunity for personal, corporate and social transformation. Frost

certainly addresses this but I did not have my mind changed that too many emergent church leaders and enthusiasts are practical universalists.

Despite this, Frost writes from an obvious desire to see the people of God become what they are called out of the mainstream to be - exiles. His clear vision and theological perception commends this book to all those who cynically dismiss missional church as overly pragmatic and descriptive and too little concerned with theological reflection. This book is a welcome addition to the increasing volume of literature that addresses these deficiencies.

Buy *Exiles: Living missionally in a post-Christian culture* from [St Andrew's Bookshop](#).

Author: Michael Frost

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