

In Others' Words

Editor's note: In this department, we highlight resources outside of the IJFM: other journals, print resources, DVDs, web sites, 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. Finally, please note that this July–September 2014 issue is partly composed of material created later in 2014. We apologize in advance for any inconvenience caused by such anachronisms.

Global Oppression and Martyrdom

The Center for the Study of Global Christianity (CSGC) puts its latest estimates of the numbers of Christian martyrs at 100,000 per year in the early 21st century. In that light, here is a must-read article, a hard-hitting review by Mark Noll of two books, in *Books & Culture* July/Aug 2014: *The Global War on Christians: Dispatches from the Front Lines of Anti-Christian Persecution* by John Allen, Jr., Senior Correspondent for *The National Catholic Reporter*; and *Christianophobia: A Faith Under Attack* by Rupert Schortt, Religion Editor for *The Times Literary Supplement*. Also don't miss *Christianity Today's* cover story in November 2014 by Philip Jenkins on "The Lost Christians of the Middle East" (This is posted in its entirety on Baylor's Institute for the Studies of Religion website). No one speaks with more authority on the subject of the persecuted Christians in the Middle East than Canon Andrew White, known as the Vicar of Baghdad. There is a poignant interview with him Nov. 18, 2014 in *The Huffington Post UK*. Another clergyman remaining in Syria at great personal risk is the Chaldean Bishop Audo from Aleppo, Syria. Mindy Belz interviewed him for the second time in an article entitled "Forgotten Survivors" in the November 2014 issue of *WORLD* magazine.

The Syrian Circle, a 30-day prayer initiative was launched in December 2014, and called upon people everywhere to pray for the Syrian people. Check out their website for the amazing details of what transpired: <http://thesyriancircle.com/next-chapter/>. Don't miss the moving true story "I Kill People in the Name of Religion; You Pray for People in the Name of Jesus."

Ebola

Mike Soderling, M.D., Director of the Center for Health in Mission at the William Carey International University, takes a look at the clash of worldviews that contributed to the sudden leap from virus to epidemic which has characterized the spread of Ebola in West Africa (<http://darrowmillerandfriends.com/2014/10/20/ebola-crisis-worldview/>). Check out GMI's striking missiographic, "Breaking the

Ebola Cycle," on p. 162. See also *Time* magazine's "Person of the Year 2014" featuring the Ebola Fighters, including Dr. Brantley, a medical doctor with Samaritan's Purse. And in a web-exclusive article in *Books and Culture* Dec. 2014 looking back at this year's Global Medical Missions and Health Conference, resident Matthew Loftus reviews Dr. Kenneth Brantley's reflections on Ebola presented to a crowd of medical doctors and medical students who are headed overseas.

The Salvation Army's Historic Holism

Some critics have charged past generations of missionaries with a truncated focus on evangelism only. In *IBMR* (October 2014), there is a fascinating article on the missiology of William Booth, founder of The Salvation Army. Written by Andrew Eason, a professor of religion and author of the 2003 book *Women in God's Army: Gender and Equality in the Early Salvation Army*, this article is entitled "The Strategy of a Missionary Evangelist: How William Booth Shaped the Salvation Army's Earliest Work at Home and Abroad." Nowadays, Salvationists are held up as proponents of kingdom theology, a gospel that is holistic and transformational. This article is a great example of how a focus on evangelism first, but contextualized for its different arenas, led naturally into holistic ministry (<http://www.internationalbulletin.org/system/files/2014-04-183-eason.html>). To read this and all other *IBMR* articles for free, register on their website today.

World Religions

Missiologists everywhere should welcome a brand new *Norton Anthology of World Religions*, published in late 2014. Edited by the Jesuit scholar Jack Miles, professor of English and Religious Studies at UC Irvine, this anthology has one distinguishing characteristic which will make it invaluable to serious scholars of world religions. Each of the world's "six major, living, international religions"—Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—deliver their wisdom "in their own words." Jennifer Schuessler, writing in *The New York Times*, noted the larger controversy in the academy over just what "religion" means:

But it also comes at a moment when religious studies is caught up in a continuing debate about its fundamental premises, starting with the term "religion" itself. In his introduction, Mr. Miles cites an anecdote about a forum hosted by the American Academy of Religion, where an effort to define the term—is it a matter of belief? practice? cultural and ethnic identity?—sent half the participants stomping out.

More specifically, some scholars have questioned the notion of "world religions" as a Western construct originated by European scholars who "discovered" the East, transforming its dizzyingly complex practices into monolithic, text-based "isms" resembling Christianity. Even today, such scholars argue, the field is haunted by an "undead Christian absolutism," as Tomoko Masuzawa put it in her influential book *The Invention of World Religions* (2005).

Ms. Masuzawa, as it happens, is married to Donald S. Lopez Jr., the editor of the anthology's Buddhism section.

The full review can be found at nytimes.com/2014/11/03/arts/nortons-latest-anthology-explores-world-religion.html.

Global Trends

From the Oct-Dec *EMQ* 2014 comes an article by Samuel Chiang on a "Quintet of Issues" he sees as vital in the going forward of mission:

There are five trends which have achieved 'critical mass' as we write: (1) multiplicative development of screens and devices impacting worldview and contextualization; (2) Business as Mission providing 'wholeness' in discipleship going forward; (3) orality speaking into matters of stewardship of our resources, learning, and communications; (4) online education as distribution of theological knowledge; and (5) the incarnate Church taking responsibility to translate scripture. Chiang says, 'Could this quintet drive the agenda of missions for the next decade? What magnitude of factors will they enact on planting churches and making disciples? What are some things the Church must address and align in order to work to minister globally?'

Nomads and Mobile Ministry

As the *IJFM* reported in 2010 ("The Little Engine that Could: Mobile-Empowered Ministry"), nomads now pick their camps by the location of cell phone towers instead of wells (*IJFM* 27:4, 2010). Mobile phone usage is rising steeply around the world. According to *e-Marketer*, 4.55 billion people are using mobile phones in 2014 and this number is projected to reach 5.13 billion by 2017. Last May 2014 *Mission Frontiers* took an entire issue to consider "From Gutenberg to Zuckerberg." The editors looked at the orality movement and new technologies impacting it, including mobile phones. Here is a more recent compilation of further mobile ministry resources, courtesy of Sabeel Media. First and foremost, they recommend *Mobile Ministry Made Easy - 2014* by IMB (Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board), a comprehensive introduction to the use of mobile devices in ministry. If you are new to mobile ministry, this is a great place to start.

The Preference for Mobile Phone Viewing

To illustrate the rise in cell phone usage, Sabeel Media offered the *IJFM* some raw data. They tracked the views of their most popular short online video clip "The Wisdom of Solomon" in Bedouin Arabic which has a total running time of 3:38 minutes. With 319,000 views on Youtube alone, this video clip can also be found on Ikbis, Vimeo, and Facebook. In January 2013, when device analytics on this clip began to be gathered by Youtube, 58% of the views came from computers and only 33% from mobile phones. But in 2014, mobile phone views rose to 40% and in the past three months, mobile phone views have surged past computer views bringing them to 52% of all views for this single video! Further-

more, in terms of audience retention, the average length of view increased from 1:28 minutes to 1:41 minutes in just the last 90 days (when mobile phone use was even higher), leading some to speculate that length of viewing increases on mobile phones as opposed to computers.

General Links about Mobile Ministries:

The Mobile Ministry Forum has also posted details about its upcoming annual conference, this time in the Netherlands. In case you missed T. Wayne Dye and Tim Hatcher's outstanding article looking at the impact of Bible translation as it moves in a video format from the printed page to mobile devices, see their January 2014 article originally published in *Global Missiology*: "Video Translation: Opportunity and Challenge." There is a fascinating article documenting the use of Facebook across North Africa and the Middle East which highlights especially how many are accessing it through mobile phones (Google "Facebook Cashing in on Video Ads as MENA Users Reach 74m"). And check out this Pakistani mullah who is posting daily sermon notes on Facebook via his mobile phone: "Afghan mullah offers ancient wisdom to youths on Facebook." Finally, there are some statistics you can find online about Twitter usage all across the Arab World: "Twitter in the Arab Region - Arab Social Media Report." **IJFM**