



# Real problems are bad enough. But artificial hopelessness is destructive and poisonous.

Ralph D. Winter



Dear Reader,

Why go into all this stuff about “unreached peoples” when most of them are actually oppressed minorities and as a result many are poor, fearful, frantic and maybe dangerous? Especially *if we can't really help them transform their conditions in this life?* What is actually true?

### What can we believe?

I am fascinated by a recent book, *Plagues of the Mind: The New Epidemic of False Knowledge*. This represents a crucial subject! Christian decisions are no better than the facts on which they are based. False knowledge is deadly.

This book is the research of a history professor at a California state university. Among many other things, he debunks some myths about U. S. history, specifically white contact with American Indian tribes.

A similar book, *Constant Battles: The Myth of the Peaceful Noble Savage*, says much the same thing – that our society has given us too rosy an idea of the “noble savage.” But this book includes far more than American Indians. It indicts the entire human race!

Coming closer to the present, I have also been acquainting myself with a new (November 2006) book, *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine*, drawn from recently-released Israeli

**If the articles I've recently read were the whole picture, all those thousands of Urbana students a few weeks ago at St. Louis might just as well forget Christian mission.**



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government documents – actually quoting Ben-Gurion's personal diary, for example. (It is too bad Jimmy Carter did not have this book available as a source when writing his much-criticized *Palestine: Peace Not Apartheid*.)

*Ethnic Cleansing*, if valid, drastically revises the popular slant on the conflicts in Palestine. Amazingly, it is the work of a reputable historian on the faculty of Haifa University in Israel. It begins by meticulously documenting the first six months of Israel's new lease on Palestinian territory in December 1947, when 800,000 Palestinians were violently forced out of 513 towns and villages, homes blown up in the middle of the night as people still slept in them, masses summarily shot, etc.

Whether all this will be further substantiated or not, the book is an example of the differences in conclusions that inevitably arise from differences of basic data. It is a warning not to blindly accept conventional views.

### That's Just Background

Recently I encountered two highly-reputed articles and one highly-acclaimed movie, all three presenting degrees of hopelessness, something people who believe in Christian mission ought to recognize as dangerously less than the full picture. I fear that readers and viewers are being poisoned by hopelessness. Half-truths seem to be rolling over us like huge, unstoppable tanks!

If these articles were the whole picture, all those thousands of Urbana students a few weeks ago at St. Louis might just as well forget Christian mission.

1. Consider the movie first (*Darwin's Nightmare*). Highly professional, amazingly detailed, it tells how an

alien perch was introduced into one of the largest lakes in the world, Lake Victoria, bordered by three countries. This fish is gobbling up and eliminating all other fish. It is a huge, edible fish, and so a robust industry has grown up to harvest, fillet, and air-ship 200,000 lbs per day to Japanese and European markets.

Understandably, this industry at the south end of the lake has been a magnet, drawing impoverished workers from rural areas into what looks something like the lawless, ramshackle Gold Rush camps in California in the middle of the nineteenth century. Many of the workers, living in terrible conditions, prostitution, etc., are killing themselves on alcohol gained by their comparatively high wages. The film also shows nearby congregations of African worshippers, but only in a pathetic, impotent role.

The upshot is that Europeans are stealing Africans blind, stripping them of their resources and creating nothing but woeful conditions. Hopelessness is the message.

2. A current article in *National Geographic* zooms in on the coast of Nigeria. It portrays thousands of oil wells, the attendant oil pipes, over 8,000 spills per year, land and water soaked by oil, and village populations without food, electricity, sanitation, or jobs. The spectacular oil income is mainly misused – portrayed as an absolutely hopeless situation. Read it and weep.

But churches abound, preachers are futilely trying to help. Armed gangs of disenfranchised youth are killing scores of foreign workers – really hopeless.

3. The January-February 2007 issue of *Foreign Affairs* contains a lengthy article, “The Challenge of Global Health”, which objectively, comprehensively and authoritatively presents detailed statistics of the grim realities of global health. It acknowledges a veritable explosion of interest, good will, and money from the West. A new concern for health is now virtually a fad in the Western world, providing totally unprecedented resources – the Gates Foundation, Bono's actions, Madonna's adopting an African child, etc.

**None of the many (and nowadays massive) infusions of Western aid has any chance of succeeding unless missions do, in fact, produce a new kind of truly transformed person. And they do!**

But the article deplores the harmful effect of donors demanding to guide at a distance what is to be done, the sporadic and unorganized efforts, and the virtual absence of an infrastructure of health workers in the most needy countries.

Worse still, astoundingly, the few nurses' programs and medical schools in poor countries are mainly producing workers who are whisked off to work in Europe or America as fast as they can be trained.

This is a picture even more hopeless than the others.

**Therefore?**

If these were not misleading glimpses, missions would be doing their work in the face of true hopelessness. But artificial hopelessness is destructive and poisonous. Real problems are bad enough. But I'm afraid that many of the 1.5 million annual short-term mis-

sionaries come home with a conscious or subconscious feeling of hopelessness. Their glimpses of *apparently ineffective churches* – whether in Nigeria, bordering Lake Victoria, or proliferating in other countries around the world – stunt and blunt all kinds of potential support for the absolutely crucial work of the gospel in the darkest situations.

What none of the popular media convey is the simple fact that none of the many (and nowadays massive) infusions of Western aid has any chance of succeeding unless missions do, in fact, produce a new kind of truly transformed person. And they do! They are the only type of agency in that business.

Secular projects are often launched on the basis of perspectives gained in Christianized countries. There a measure of honesty and good will is assumed. Working abroad with those assumptions is very unlikely to succeed.

I once asked a factory owner in Guatemala why he and others advertised in the newspapers for Evangelical workers. Without a split-second's hesitation he replied, "Well, they don't booze, they don't chase the women workers, and they come to work." Also, the mountain towns in Guatemala, though mainly Christo-pagan, invariably employ Evangelicals for their town treasurers.

Yes, there are exceptions, but the only hope of anything substantial coming out of these dark spots is the existence of transformed people. And secular interest focusing the searchlight today on these dark spots is largely unaware of this new element.

Unreached peoples would indeed be hopeless if there were not millions of renewed souls almost everywhere today. That crucial factor is missing from virtually all such reports. 🌐



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# Affinity Blocs and People Clusters:

## An Approach Toward Strategic Insight and Mission Partnership

Patrick Johnstone

### The Purpose of This Article

**T**he Great Commission is unequivocal: we are to disciple all the ethnic groups in the world! For 25 years we have struggled to define, classify and list the world's people groups. Only in the last six years have we had in our hands reasonably-complete, published lists of the people groups of the world. The results are extraordinary, but complex.

How does one get a handle on the 12,000 or so ethno-linguistic peoples in the 239 countries of the world? The 3-4 extant global lists are similar and related, but have significant differences which cause confusion and endless discussion about validity, nomenclature, level of reachedness, and related issues. This article proposes a two-level categorization and grouping of all the peoples of the world into 15 major blocs and 251 clusters within these blocs so that we may focus more clearly on the broad strategy and partnership necessary to evangelize, disciple and plant churches among every significant people group in every country in which they reside.

### The Origin of People Lists

The first ethnic listing in the world appears in Genesis 10! The second is inferred on the day of Pentecost, when there was an extraordinary occurrence: all the disciples praised God in different languages of the time, many being listed. What was the Holy Spirit wanting to say? He was showing that ethnicity and language are both God-created and vital to God's global plan. This Pentecost event was a challenge to the Church: **use local heart languages to communicate the Gospel!** This is in contrast to all the major religions of the world, which are based around a hub, "holy" language (Sanskrit for Hinduism, Arabic for Islam, Latin for Catholics, Greek for Orthodox, etc). Sadly, the Church did not pick up this challenge until the past two centuries of

expansion. Up to the year 1800 only 67 languages<sup>1</sup> had received any part of God's Word – and a number of these were either extinct (e.g., Gothic) or liturgical but little-understood (e.g., Coptic, Syriac, Latin). Yet by 2000 about 2,800 languages possessed at least some portion of God's Word.<sup>2</sup>

For several decades we have had a good listing of the languages of the world<sup>3</sup>, but not a comparable listing of all the ethnic groups and their spiritual state. We need such a listing if we are to make sure that all people groups are disciplined. What an astonishing delay of 1,980 years! Now that such a listing is available, what a privilege and responsibility for our generation. We have no excuse for delay! We must do our part to see that every tribe, language, people and nation<sup>4</sup> is represented before the Lamb's throne.

The intense effort to compile this global people group listing over the past three decades is a largely untold story. Many strands of research and many individuals have been involved. The two most important of these:

1. **Wycliffe Bible Translators** and the publication of successively more sophisticated volumes of the *Ethnologue* – the latest being the 15th. The *Ethnologue* contains the most authoritative listing of the world's languages and dialects. Ron Rowland of WBT sought to co-ordinate database holdings (including that of peoples) by developing the cross-referencing Harvest Information System<sup>5</sup> in the 1990s. This HIS system continues to this day, with appointed stewards for maintaining registries for people groups and other entities such as Geography, Languages and Religions.
2. **David Barrett** in what later became the *World Christian Encyclopedia* of 2001. The latter contained the first published, full list of the

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known ethno-linguistic people groups of the world, though earlier drafts had also become the basis of lists held by the International Mission Board of the Southern Baptists (for whom Barrett worked on contract for some years) and of Joshua Project, which developed during the lifetime of the AD2000 and Beyond Movement.

I decided that we would not develop a separate listing of the world's peoples along with the other major tables in the *Operation World* database. All my efforts in peoples research went into helping in the development of the *World Christian Encyclopedia* database from 1979, and then later from 1991, the strategy and development of the Joshua Project Peoples Listing.

Thus, today we have the World Christian Database, Southern Baptist, and Joshua Project people listings<sup>6</sup>, all with their specific assumptions, emphases, ministry foci and informant networks, and each aiming to develop and maintain a high degree of information-sharing and correlation. Each has approximately 12,000 largely ethno-linguistic people groups within countries and territories of the world<sup>7</sup> with a fairly good degree of commonality, but this number rises to 16,000 in the case of Joshua Project because of the inclusion of South Asian castes as people groups<sup>8</sup>.

For the first time in all history we now have a reasonably efficient listing of the world's people groups; let us now be efficient in discipling them! Let us also be strategic in our use of this list to mobilize the global Church and its resources to complete the task and see a viable church-planting movement in every one of these people groups.

### Bringing Strategic Order to These Lists

The long list of 12,000 people groups is hard to work with. Not only is it big, but there are no readily-apparent connectivities or groupings

that can give a more understandable overview of the spiritual needs and the efforts needed to meet those needs. Over the last few years I have sought to achieve this by categorizing all these peoples into a pragmatic two-tier hierarchy of 15 Affinity Blocs and 251 or more People Clusters<sup>9</sup>. The basic principle is that the categorization is not strictly "scientific", but rather what could be most helpful for practical purposes of mobilization and engagement. This hierarchy therefore retains the flexibility to make adjustments to people groups listed within them, or even create new clusters. We expect developments to be field-driven – that is, most affected by those closest to the action.

Here are some definitions:

**Affinity Bloc:** A large grouping of peoples related by language, history, and culture, and usually indigenous to a geographical location.

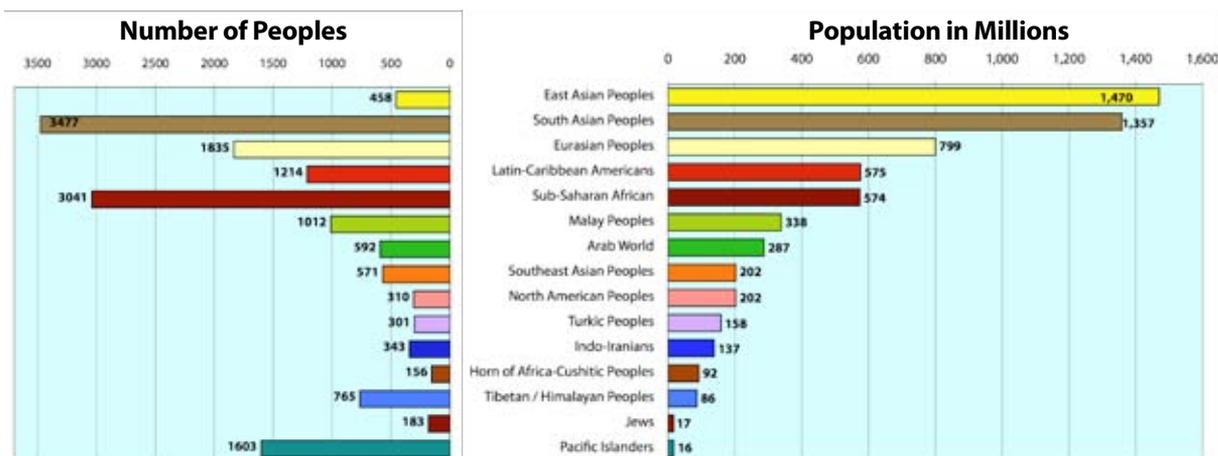
**People Cluster:** A smaller grouping of peoples within an affinity bloc, often with a common name or identity, but separated from one another by political boundaries, language or migration patterns.

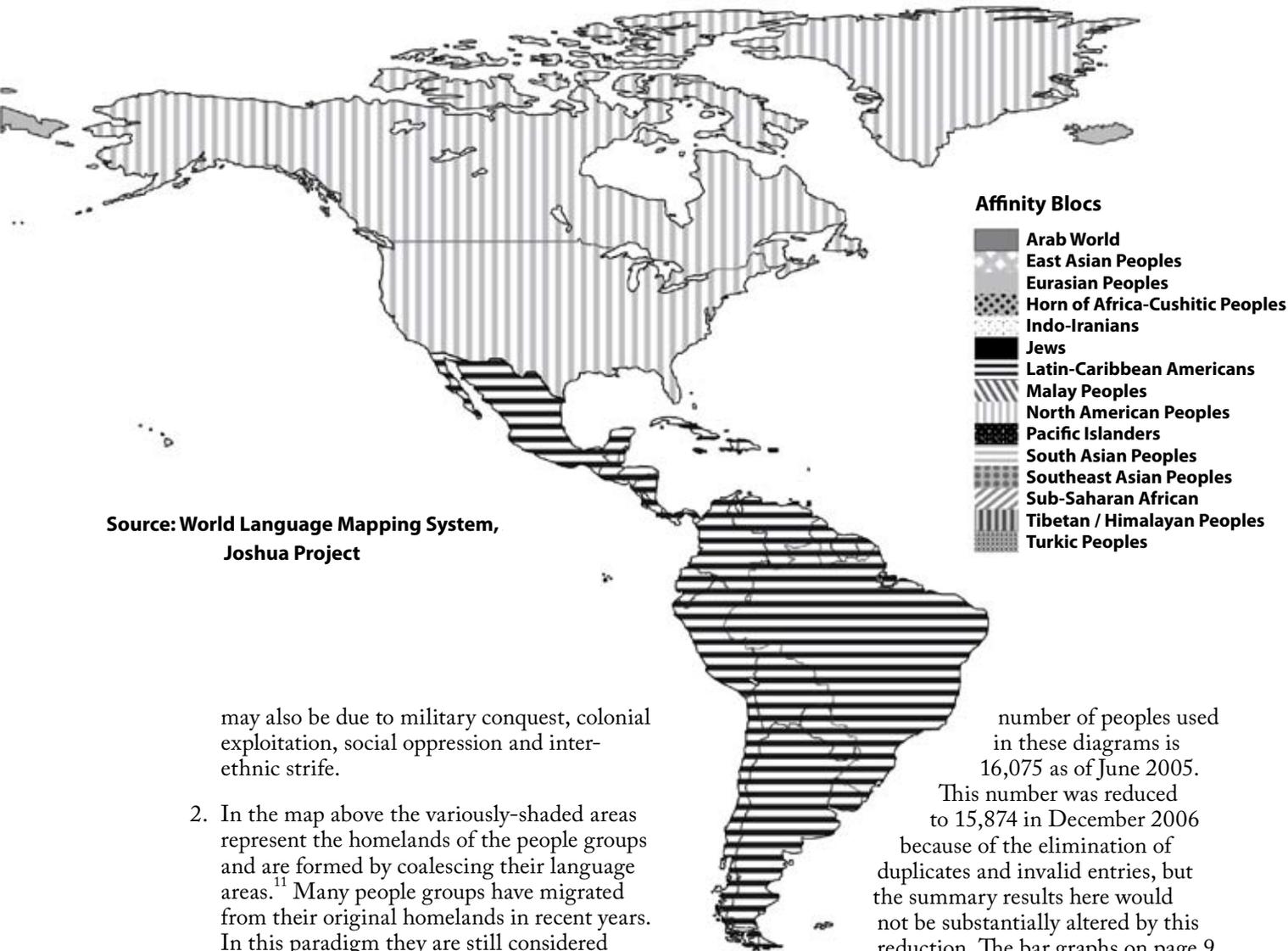
**People Group:** A significantly large sociological (predominantly ethno-linguistic) grouping of individuals who perceive themselves to have a common affinity with one another. From the viewpoint of evangelization, this is the largest possible group within which the gospel can be spread without encountering barriers of understanding or acceptance. This is the most helpful unit to use when considering church-planting.

**Population Segment<sup>10</sup>:** Any other sociological or incidental agglomeration of individuals for which evangelistic strategies may be effectively deployed.

Some cautionary notes:

1. "Affinity" does not imply compatibility or mutual attraction between the constituent peoples of an affinity bloc. Their associations





Source: World Language Mapping System, Joshua Project

may also be due to military conquest, colonial exploitation, social oppression and inter-ethnic strife.

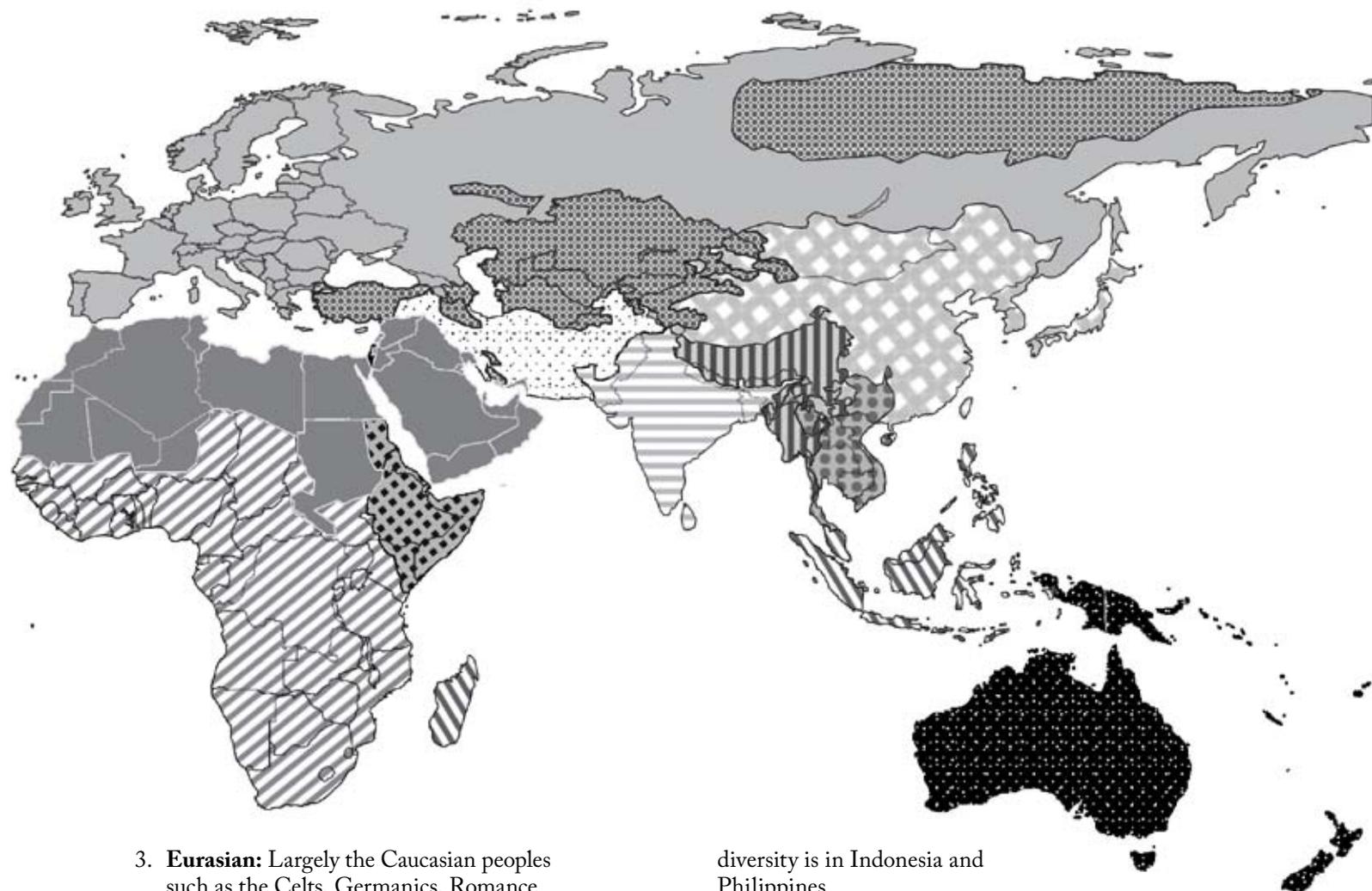
2. In the map above the variously-shaded areas represent the homelands of the people groups and are formed by coalescing their language areas.<sup>11</sup> Many people groups have migrated from their original homelands in recent years. In this paradigm they are still considered part of the original affinity bloc if they continue to retain their language and cultural origins, but because they do not really have a specific home area, they cannot be shown on such a map.
3. Eurasian settlers in the Americas now far outnumber the original indigenous populations, but they have been amalgamated into a single affinity bloc together with the indigenous peoples whose lands they seized and with whom they intermingled. By contrast, we considered it more practical to retain Australians and New Zealanders as part of the Eurasian bloc.

### Affinity Blocs – Their Populations and Number of Peoples

In this article I am leaning on the statistics from the Joshua Project List in which I have invested the most time in shaping and editing. The total

number of peoples used in these diagrams is 16,075 as of June 2005. This number was reduced to 15,874 in December 2006 because of the elimination of duplicates and invalid entries, but the summary results here would not be substantially altered by this reduction. The bar graphs on page 9 compare and contrast the number of peoples and their cumulative populations in the 15 affinity blocs.

1. **East Asian:** Peoples deeply affected by the Han Chinese in culture, religion, philosophies, etc. This includes the Japanese and Koreans. Note the relatively few people groups, but the very large population. This is due to the very large sizes of the constituent peoples.
2. **South Asian:** All peoples influenced by the Indo-Aryan cultures that entered the sub-continent four millennia ago and dominated the local Dravidian and Asian peoples already present. This is the source of the pervading caste system. The castes themselves are such that they function virtually like ethnic groups and thus affect church-planting strategies. This explains the high number of people groups and also the large population for the affinity bloc.



3. **Eurasian:** Largely the Caucasian peoples such as the Celts, Germanics, Romance groups, and Slavs. The high number of people groups is partly due to the fragmented politics of Europe and partly due to the high levels of emigration to other continents. This affinity bloc could also include most North and South Americans, but for reasons explained above most migrants (except the most recent) are included in the bloc of residence.
4. **Latin-Caribbean Americans:** The cultural commonalities bring together the multiple origins of the bloc – Hispanics, Caucasians, Indigenous Americans, Africans, etc. The large number of people groups is a reflection of the many, very small indigenous ethnic groups.
5. **Sub-Saharan Africans:** Africa's population is divided by the Sahara between the Arab-dominated North and the dark-skinned African people groups. This bloc has by far the largest linguistic diversity.
6. **Malay:** This diverse bloc is scattered in an equatorial belt across 45% of the world and its oceans from Hawaii to Madagascar. The greatest linguistic

diversity is in Indonesia and Philippines.

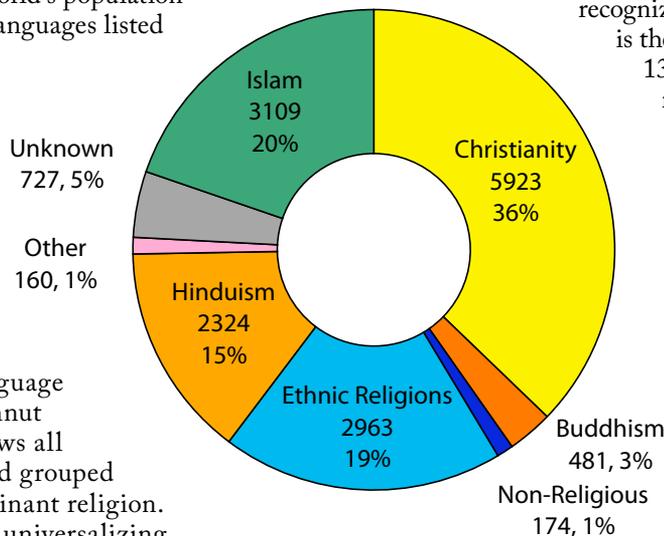
7. **Arab World:** This bloc straddles North Africa and West Asia. The Muslim Arab conquests led to Arab cultural dominance over the North African Berbers and people groups of northern Sudan, and thus these are included in a bloc which covers most of the areas where Arabic is the dominant language.
8. **South East Asian:** This bloc contains a medley of racial groups with a common history of political, cultural and religious influence from both India and China.
9. **North American:** This bloc includes the original indigenous people groups and the long-settled Caucasians and African-Americans, but not the recent immigrant groups and the many Hispanics – the latter still being retained in the Latin-Caribbean American bloc.
10. **Turkic:** A variety of related peoples stretching from Turkey in the West to the Bering Straits in Siberia, but divided by the Russian eastward expansion to the Pacific several centuries ago.

11. **Indo-Iranians:** A bloc of peoples stretching from Turkey to Pakistan which includes the Kurds, Persians, most Afghans and many Pakistanis.
12. **Horn of Africa:** This bloc includes the more Semitic Amhara, Tigre, Tigrinya and the more Cushitic Oromo, Afar, Beja and Somali.
13. **Tibetan / Himalayan:** This bloc covers most of the peoples of Tibet, Western China, Myanmar, Bhutan and much of Nepal.
14. **The Jews:** This is a unique bloc in that it is mainly religious, but with a fairly strong sense of ethnic descent in the midst of great diversity of appearance, countries of residence and languages.
15. **Pacific Islanders:** The Melanesian populations of Australia, Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu, New Caledonia, etc. are small, but speak an astonishing variety of languages. Thus 0.26% of the world's population speak 22.4% of the languages listed in the *Ethnologue!*

### Affinity Blocs and Major Religions

Religion is a fundamentally important factor in today's world and is often closely linked with language and culture. The doughnut graph on this page shows all the peoples of the world grouped according to their dominant religion. The emphasis is on the universalizing or missionary religions: Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism. We have placed religions such as Taoism, Shinto, Judaism, tribal systems, etc. in the category of Ethnic Religions. The number of peoples and the percentage of the total of peoples is indicated.

The bar graph on page 13 shows the dominant religions in the peoples of each of the 15 Affinity Blocs. This may be either cohesive as with Islam in the Arab World, or a cause of intense conflict as in countries where Islam is threatened by a non-Muslim majority as in the South Asian and Eurasian affinity blocs, or where Islam seeks to dominate Christian minorities in the Arab World or in Turkic and Malay peoples. This graph just records the number of peoples by largest religion in each affinity bloc.



Note:

1. The three affinity blocs that are almost entirely Muslim – Turkic, Indo-Iranian and Arab – many of these peoples once had large Christian populations in 1000AD.
2. The large number of Christian peoples in Africa and the Pacific – a change from ethnic religions in the past two centuries.
3. In this article I have not given the breakdown of affinity bloc by Christian megabloc or by Evangelicals. This I will do in my forthcoming book, *The Future of World Evangelization in the 21st Century*, scheduled to be published in late 2008.

### Affinity Blocs and People Clusters

Every affinity bloc can be broken down into a number of people clusters where there are more and closer commonalities. Peoples often form a cluster with a common name which is widely recognizable. An example of this is the Kurdish people cluster: 13 distinct people groups regard themselves as Kurdish, but they are scattered in identifiable communities in 35 countries, while Joshua Project lists 54 Kurdish groups-in-countries – all of which contribute to the total of least-reached peoples in the world.

A further series of examples can be seen in the Horn of Africa Affinity Bloc in Table 1 (on page 14). This complex affinity bloc contains both strongly Christian (Amhara, Tigrinya, and many in the Omotic and Oromo) people clusters and ardently Muslim (Somali, Afar, Beja) people clusters, yet their histories and cultures have been entwined for millennia – even if much has engendered hatred and warfare. This entangling has enormous implications for the spread of the Gospel in both a positive and negative way.

Working our way down the hierarchy of this affinity bloc, let's look at the Somali people cluster. Table 2 (on page 14) provides its listing from the Joshua Project Website.

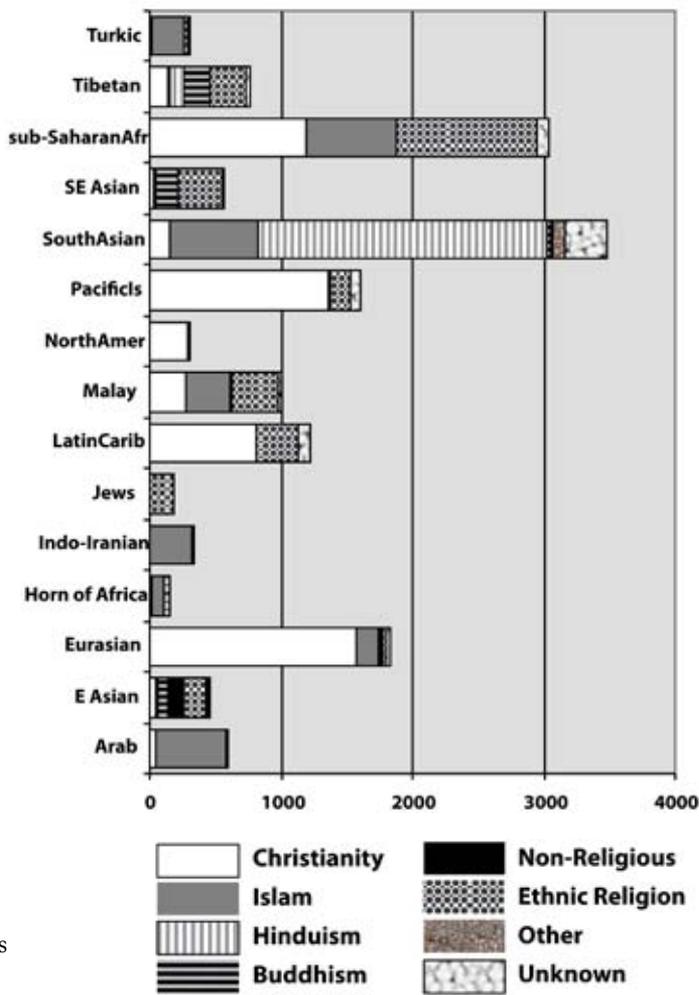
Note the ethnic code in the final column; those peoples listed as NAB57j<sup>12</sup> are actually racially distinct Bantu peoples who have adopted the

Somali language and aspects of Somali culture even though they are often despised farmers as contrasted with the nomadic, herding Somali. The Somali cluster comprise 14 million people in 12 people groups, but about 3-4 million have fled from war-ravaged Somalia to other parts of the world. Note, too, that “Somali” is both the name of this cluster and the name of one of its constituent people groups. Working our way further down the hierarchy, we can see the Somali people group by country of residence in Table 3.

Table 3 (on page 15) graphically demonstrates the value of listing a people group as a people (as in the previous table) and here by country of residence. Note the following:

1. Much of the fighting among Somalis springs from deep clan divisions within the Somali ethnic group – indicating a level of complexity beyond that shown in the Joshua Project database. Should Somalia open up for the gospel, clan divisions among the Dir, Hawiye, Isaaq, Darod and others may be revealed as barriers which prevent the free spread of the gospel across clan or sub-clan boundaries, and that therefore these sub-divisions should be considered as separate peoples for church-planting.
2. A high proportion of Somalis live in what is today Ethiopia (a majority in the Ogaden Province) and Djibouti (where they are the largest ethnic group).
3. The population of Somalia hides a reality of great significance: in colonial history the British ruled the north and the Italians the south of the country. At independence the colonies were united as a single nation-state, but because of the chaos in the south, the north declared its independence as Somaliland, yet this independence is not recognized by the United Nations. The south remains a collapsed state with a raging civil war between clans and between warlords and Islamists, but the north is relatively peaceful and with more possibility at present for Christian outreach.
4. The migrant communities of Somalis in other countries have been swollen far beyond the above obsolete figures because

of the massive refugee population – there may be now 200,000 in the UK, 300,000 in the USA, and increases not yet listed. A high proportion of these refugees have moved secretly, and the true numbers are not possible to obtain. This indicates the problems of needing to continually update information and illustrates why the different people group lists vary. It also shows how a global strategy is required for bringing



the gospel to the Somali people. Language learning, Christian ministry and even church-planting may be feasible in more open lands, and this, in turn, becomes part of the strategy of the evangelization of the presently-inaccessible Somali heartlands.

The previous illustrations have pointed to the value of the classification of the world's people groups into affinity blocs and people clusters. In conclusion, let us summarize some of the advantages of this approach.

**Table 1** *Horn of Africa Affinity Bloc ([http://www.joshuaproject.net/affinity\\_bloc.php?rop1=A004](http://www.joshuaproject.net/affinity_bloc.php?rop1=A004))*

▲People Cluster	Population	# Peoples-by-Country	# Least-Reached Peoples-by-Country	% Peoples Least-Reached	Population in Least-Reached	% Population in Least-Reached
Afar	2,098,000	6	6	100.0 %	2,098,000	100.0 %
Beja	2,846,000	5	5	100.0 %	2,846,000	100.0 %
Ethiopian	36,668,000	39	12	30.8 %	2,686,000	7.3 %
Omoti	10,902,000	56	17	30.4 %	644,000	5.9 %
Oromo	24,076,000	18	9	50.0 %	8,763,000	36.4 %
Somali	14,039,000	33	31	93.9 %	13,980,000	99.6 %
<b>Totals: 6 People Clusters</b>	<b>90,629,000</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>51.0 %</b>	<b>31,017,000</b>	<b>34.2 %</b>

**The Value of Affinity Blocs and People Clusters**

1. The mind-numbing list of 16,000 peoples is broken down into a smaller number of identifiable and understandable entities. For example, the Kurds are a high-profile, news-rich people cluster, but the general public would not understand the relationship of constituent peoples (such as the Surani, Dimili or Herki) to the wider Kurdish cluster.
2. The lack of such a classification has been a major factor in the measure of disappointment in Adopt-A-People programs for prayer or ministry over the past 25 years
3. This approach makes possible comparisons between more closely-related peoples, thereby indicating likely conditions and compensating for imperfect or missing data for a specific people.
4. The focus is moved away from endless discussions about details and levels of accuracy for specific peoples and to the more strategic challenges for ministry. The separate listing of some “people groups” which have no clear cultural uniqueness (such as the

“Arabized Berbers” of Algeria) may have validity scientifically, but often frustrate those who set out to engage peoples for ministry purposes.

5. Grouping similar peoples in this way helps to identify duplicate people groups listed separately under alternative names, or reveals spurious entries. These arise because there are constantly new people group candidates proposed from a wide range of sources.
6. The least-reached are least-reached because the very existence of a “bloc” hints at a potential “block” for the gospel. For example, to reach the Riff Berber in Morocco, you cannot ignore the dominance of the Arabic language even as you seek to learn the culture and languages of the Riff.
7. It provides the basis for developing regional and global strategies for engaging in ministry with trans-national peoples. Least-reached peoples cannot be engaged for ministry without a clear understanding of the wider inter-people group relationships and the broader scope of local politics, logistics, etc. Without such understanding, adoptions of peoples from a long list and by means of a “parachute” arrival are rarely successful.

**Table 2** *Somali People Cluster (<http://www.joshuaproject.net/peopcluster.php?rop2=C0198>)*

▲People Group	Population	# Peoples-by-Country	# Least-Reached Peoples-by-Country	% Peoples Least-Reached	Population in Least-Reached	% Population in Least-Reached	Ethnic Code
Digil-Rahawiin	720,000	1	1	100.0 %	720,000	100.0 %	CMT33e
Garre	65,000	1	1	100.0 %	65,000	100.0 %	CMT33
Goraa	57,000	1	0	0.0 %	-	- %	CMT33e
Jiddu	36,000	1	1	100.0 %	36,000	100.0 %	CMT33e
Juba Somali	351,000	1	1	100.0 %	351,000	100.0 %	CMT33e
Mirifle	32,000	1	1	100.0 %	32,000	100.0 %	CMT33e
Mushungulu	46,000	1	1	100.0 %	46,000	100.0 %	NAB57j
Shabelle	17,000	2	2	100.0 %	17,000	100.0 %	NAB57j
Somali	12,667,000	21	20	95.2 %	12,665,000	100.0 %	CMT33e
Somali Ajuran	9,600	1	1	100.0 %	9,600	100.0 %	CMT33e
Somali-Sab	1,700	1	1	100.0 %	1,700	100.0 %	CMT33e
Tunni	36,000	1	1	100.0 %	36,000	100.0 %	CMT33e
<b>Totals: 12 People Groups</b>	<b>14,039,000</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>93.9 %</b>	<b>13,980,000</b>	<b>99.6 %</b>	

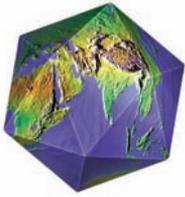
**Table 3***Somali People Group (<http://www.joshuaproject.net/peoples.php?rop3=109392>)*

Peoples-by-Country (click name for profile)	Population	% Evangel	% Adherent	Least Reached	Primary Religion	Primary Language
Canada	35,000	0.07 %	0.07 %	Y	Islam	Somali
Denmark	16,000			Y	Islam	Somali
Djibouti	329,000	0.01 %	1.30 %	Y	Islam	Somali
Eritrea	61,000			Y	Islam	Somali
Ethiopia	3,487,000	0.00 %	0.05 %	Y	Islam	Somali
Finland	3,100			Y	Islam	Somali
Italy	50,000	0.01 %		Y	Islam	Somali
Kenya	481,000	0.01 %	0.01 %	Y	Islam	Somali
Netherlands	1,600	0.02 %		Y	Islam	Somali
New Zealand	2,000				Islam	Somali
Norway	5,900			Y	Islam	Somali
Saudi Arabia	51,000	0.00 %	0.00 %	Y	Islam	Somali
Somalia	7,150,000	0.00 %	0.01 %	Y	Islam	Somali
Sri Lanka	30			Y	Islam	Somali
Sudan	1,400	0.00 %	0.00 %	Y	Islam	Somali
Sweden	12,000			Y	Islam	Somali
Tanzania	40,000	0.00 %	0.50 %	Y	Islam	Somali
United Arab Emirates	51,000	0.00 %	0.00 %	Y	Islam	Somali
United Kingdom	7,700	0.05 %	0.10 %	Y	Islam	Somali
United States	24,000			Y	Islam	Somali
Yemen	858,000	0.00 %	0.00 %	Y	Islam	Somali
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>21 Countries</b>	<b>12,667,000</b>		<b>20</b>		

8. It gives a level of focus at either an Affinity Bloc or People Cluster level for promoting strategic inter-agency partnerships. In fact, since the late 1990s the people cluster approach has shown its value to partnership-brokering by key agencies such as InterDev and visionSynergy.
9. It helps churches and agencies to develop a ministry for a presently inaccessible people by concentrating first on the diaspora of that people.
10. It helps locate possible nearby Christian resources which could be more easily deployed to less-reached people groups within the same affinity bloc or people cluster. 🌐

### Endnotes

- 1 A full listing of these languages is embedded in the "Cosmochronology" section of the third volume of the *World Christian Encyclopedia – World Christian Trends* published by the William Carey Library in 2001, and also in my forthcoming book, *The Future of World Evangelization*.
- 2 Anything from 1,000 to 4,000 languages might still require the considerable investment of time, resources and skilled personnel to translate the New Testament, but much research will be needed to clarify the viability and need of such beforehand. This is the vision of WBT's Vision 2025.
- 3 The *Ethnologue*: <http://www.ethnologue.com/>
- 4 Revelation 5:9
- 5 <http://www.missionfrontiers.org/2000/01/his.htm>; <http://www.harvestinformationsystem.info/Overview.htm>
- 6 CPPI: <http://imb.org/globalresearch/acronyms.asp>, JPL: <http://www.joshuaproject.net/>, WCD: <http://www.worldchristiandatabase.org/wcd/>
- 7 The 12,000 includes multiple entries of the same people group living in different countries or territories.
- 8 For a helpful and fuller discussion on the numbers see : <http://www.joshuaproject.net/numbers.php>
- 9 The emphasis is on a flexible pragmatism – we want to categorize in a way that facilitates planning and engagement. For instance, at present we have not adequately further categorized the present Bantu People Cluster – partly because the majority of these peoples are in more evangelized parts of Africa.
- 10 During the 1980s many used the term "people group" to cover any identifiable social, linguistic, or ethnic entity. During the 1990s we sought to distinguish between ethno-linguistic peoples (into which every person on earth is uniquely classified) and people groups (into which any person may have multiple social classifications). There is now wide consensus to term the former "people group" and the latter "population segment".
- 11 The fundamental distinctive of a people group is language. Language polygons were compiled by GMI International using the information of the *Ethnologue*. This left a patchwork of small polygons with frequent uncovered areas, so in the mapping program a sub-layer of color was added based on the national or regional majority affinity bloc present.
- 12 The Ethnic code has been developed for use in *World Christian Encyclopedia*, Vol. 2.



# What's Happening in the Global

## Perspectives Family?

**Bruce Koch**

**H**ave you ever met distant relatives for the first time and were astounded by how you are very much alike? Yet this is no mystery, for we share DNA with family members.

In Amsterdam in April 2003 some of us working to mobilize the Church – using *Perspectives* and courses inspired by it – recognized that we share the same missiological “DNA”, so we began to refer to ourselves as the *Perspectives* family. In December 2003 we met again in Pasadena to build upon and expand the network of relationships begun in Amsterdam. We agreed to extend the “family” motif to formally recognize a “*Perspectives Family*” of curricula that also share the same missiological DNA.

Since occasional face-to-face gatherings are necessary to maintain a sense of identity in any extended family, the *Perspectives* Roundtable (our partners in the United Kingdom) offered to serve the rest of us by hosting a *Perspectives Family* “Global Huddle” in High Wycombe December 10-13, 2006. The 27 participants in this huddle represented 21 ministries, 12 countries of ministry, eight languages, and seven *Perspectives Family* curricula.

### Program Reports

We received reports from established programs in Indonesia, India, Australia, New Zealand, Nigeria, Romania, Korea, North America, and the United Kingdom. We heard representatives from Thailand and Brazil share their vision of what they hope to do in their contexts. Each program is unique because

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*Bruce Koch is the associate editor for Perspectives and is currently helping launch Perspectives movements in strategic settings worldwide.*



each context is unique; there should be little surprise that a course that emphasizes contextualized ministry is itself the object of significant contextualization. For instance, in Korea the focus is on mobilizing students who are potential missionary candidates, but in Nigeria the target audience is church and mission leaders.

We brainstormed on how to advance the movement in different contexts – for example, how to simplify

materials originally written for well-educated, native speakers of English so that they are easier to understand and translate. We readily acknowledged that the history section of *Perspectives* needs to be adapted to include more detail about mission to and from each region, and we reviewed a working document to further that purpose.

### Curriculum Reports

We received updates on the development of standard curricula in Chinese, Spanish, Russian and Arabic. (Standard curricula are the dynamic equivalent of the *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement* as we know it in North America.) One of the highlights was laying hands on one of the newly-printed Chinese *Perspectives* books and praying for the development of study guides and programs to utilize this resource within diverse Chinese contexts.

In addition, we received reports from five specialized curricula of the *Perspectives Family*. (Specialized curricula are inspired by and/or complementary to standard curricula.)

- ◆ *Kairos* is an eight-lesson curriculum formerly known as the *Condensed World Mission Course*. *Kairos* is used in 17 countries and eight languages to introduce church leaders and laypeople to the foundational ideas found in the *Perspectives* course.

- ◆ *Blessed to be a Blessing* is an Indonesian course similar in weight to the Kairos course, but contextualized for predominantly oral learners.
- ◆ *Encountering the World of Islam* is similar in size and weight to a standard *Perspectives* course, but is focused on understanding and engaging Muslim peoples.
- ◆ *God's Heart for the Nations* is an eight-lesson Bible study designed to walk believers through the Bible to discover God's global purpose for themselves.
- ◆ *God's Heart for the Muslims* is an eight-lesson study that uses the Bible to help participants to reflect on how to share the love of Jesus with Muslims more effectively.

### Keeping our Courses on Course

Many forces in global mission today are working against the frontier mission movement's focus on reaching the unreached. Jason Mandryk, the current editor of *Operation World*, summarized for us the arguments against frontier mission that he encounters as he travels the world gathering fuel for prayer, and Jason encouraged us to stay the course. Steve Hawthorne also helped us to re-examine the biblical foundations of the paradigm of "mobilization by hope."

We explored ways to use the Internet to extend the value of our face-to-face gatherings and to give further opportunity for interaction within this extended family.

To learn more about the *Perspectives Family*, see [www.perspectivesfamily.org](http://www.perspectivesfamily.org). 

### Remembering Jodie Van Loon



Following a fall, our co-worker, Jodie Van Loon, went to be with the Lord October 21, 2006. For 27 years Jodie was a key asset to the USCWM. Her gift of hospitality touched our community and campus in many ways. Jodie was an extraordinary networker, a persistent prayer warrior and a mentor to younger women. She had an unusual grasp of mission information and a strong commitment to unreached peoples. Her most recent contribution was the creation of displays of international artifacts all over the campus. Jodie will be dearly missed by the USCWM community and friends all over the world.

# Why the Rest Hates the West: Understanding the Roots of Global Rage

**Meic Pearse**

What follows is an excerpt from a featured "Book of the Day" at the Urbana '06 Student Mission Convention in St. Louis. To learn more about Urbana and to order copies of this book, see [www.urbana.org](http://www.urbana.org) and [www.ivpress.com](http://www.ivpress.com).

**T**he truth is that Westerners are perceived by non-Westerners (if we can make such a huge generalization about a truly global phenomenon) as rich, technologically sophisticated, economically and politically dominant, morally contemptible barbarians. That is a hateful combination of feelings and assessments, in the sense that the one who makes them will, as often as not, be filled with hatred for the objects of such contemplation.

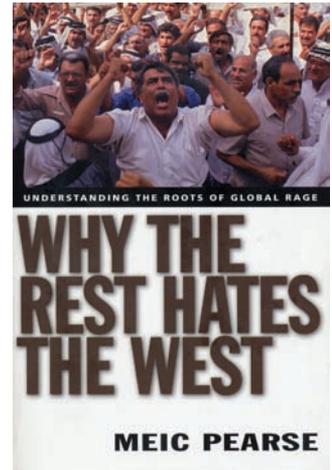
Why barbarians? For despising tradition, the ancestors and the dead. For despising religion, or at least for treating it lightly. For the shallowness and triviality of their culture. For their sexual shamelessness. For their loose adherence to family and, sometimes, also to tribe. For their absence of any sense of honor. These are massive charges, of course, and it will be necessary, in what follows, to say something about each in turn.

For the moment we simply note that they do, in point of fact, generate resentment – a resentment that can, as with the man driving the truck-bomb, amount to hatred. That is not to deny that many Western attributes and trappings are found desirable by non-Westerners. But precisely that desirability compounds the problem. Western culture, the very source of offense to traditional cultural sensibilities, has a habit of finding out the weak spots of the guardians of tradition and undermining them from within. The allure of heightened sexuality; or of status clothing, furnishings and possessions; or of personal independence: one would have to be superhuman not to feel the pull of these things or to be tempted by them. That is why many anti-Western movements, notably Islamists, wish to banish the very presence of the Western temptations, to take a separatist line, or at least to limit contacts with Western people and institutions to what can be dictated on their own cultural terms. As one Iranian leader of Ansare Hezbollah put it, "When you see some people here dressed in American-style clothes, you are seeing the bullets of the West."

Far more people than just Islamists, however, wish to modernize their countries without at the same time Westernizing them. Samuel Huntington has argued at length that that is the task in which much or most of the non-West is now engaged. The extreme difficulty of such an enterprise lies in the fact that the West is the historic source of modernization and its principal present agent. Modernizing without Westernizing is a near impossible task of extrication. The Internet (to take only the most obvious example) knows no boundaries. To accept the technology is to accept the presence of pornography, advertising, commercial values and freedom of speech. In response, the Taliban in Afghanistan (admittedly one of the most extreme cases) did not shy away from banning virtually all aspects of modernity in their determination to sweep their collective house clean of Western contamination.

Very many, especially Third World, people have the sensation that everything they hold dear and sacred is being rolled over by an economic and cultural juggernaut that doesn't even know it's doing it ... and wouldn't understand why what it's destroying is important or of value. That is why the defenders of traditionalism and advocates of cultural retrenchment in the non-West are perceived by Westerners as "fanatics," "fundamentalists" – the epithets that express a refusal to understand. Why? Because they fly in the face of what, to Westerners, is "common sense."

And the worst of it is that Westerners themselves are hardly aware of what they are doing, or of the very existence of the things they are destroying. Many non-Westerners feel that they have some understanding of Western culture; with television and pop music, to say nothing of the high-status



artifacts on sale to those who can afford them, it would be strange indeed if they did not. But if the amount of understanding transmitted through those channels is likely to be superficial (life in the West being construed as somehow effortlessly prosperous), the level of understanding in the reverse direction – that is, of others by Westerners themselves – is almost negligible. After almost a decade of coverage of the Balkan wars on television, most Westerners are still unsure of the identities of the principal protagonists, and even news announcers occasionally betray the fact that they do not understand the meaning of the term “the former Yugoslavia.” Survey after survey shows the embarrassing ignorance of even educated Americans about the most fundamental features of the world outside their own country. Supporters of tradition in the non-West have the sensation that they are being rolled over by a juggernaut that does not even know they exist.

Westerners are so accustomed to this effortless superiority that the real nature of its origins is lost on them. As Huntington points out, “The West won the world not by the superiority of its ideas or values or religion ... but rather by its superiority in applying organized violence. Westerners often forget this fact; non-Westerners never do.” Indeed, this obliviousness to reality persists, even when considering the present nature of international relationships. What to Westerners appears as “control of terrorism” or “maintaining free trade” bears quite a different face from the other side of the prosperity-poverty fence. Actions that, seen from a Western perspective, seem commonsensically altruistic – or at least neutral – appear riddled with double standards....

[T]he point is to see how these “justifiable” actions by Western powers look very different from a non-Western – that is, from a majority – point of view. From that standpoint, the continued exertion of Western power across the world – cultural, economic, military – appears to be transparently self-seeking. “Human rights” and “free trade” appear to be no more than mantras bearing no connection with disinterested altruism, let alone with an ethical foreign policy....

Violence is an unsurprising response to this predicament, a predicament that is experienced by many non-Westerners as humiliation. Quite obviously, violence is the only way to get the West’s attention....

Islamist movements were on the rise before the end of the Cold War. With the demise

*(Continued on page 20)*



(Continued from page 19)

of communism, however, their accelerated growth could have been predicted. The appeal of Marxist guerrilla movements across much of the non-Western world during the 1950s to 1980s had never lain in the nature of the Marxist creed itself. That had been, if anything, a handicap. Those in the know could see that it did not work; those not in the know (mostly Third World peasants) could hardly be expected to understand the full intricacies of its philosophy. The appeal had rested in the nature of antithesis: it was a weapon against the Western juggernaut. By the end of the 1980s, the socialist project was everywhere in ruins. Islamist movements have become the partial inheritors of Marxism's cachet. Obviously, this hardly applies in Latin America; in parts of Asia and sub-Saharan Africa – or among urban blacks in America itself – it has nevertheless become the ideological vehicle for anti-Westernism.

Terrorism has been called the weapon of the weak; the weak can be relied upon to use such weapons as they have. Terrorism has the advantage of using the West's own distinctive features against it: an open society (to aid infiltration and hiding); instant and full news coverage (to maximize the political effect); a horror of death or of sustaining even small numbers of casualties (resulting from the absence of any deep-rooted sense of transcendence and also from the sheer comfort of Westerners' lives). After any action, the rule of law can make prosecution difficult, keeps sentencing mild and mostly rules out any kind of blanket retribution (though the September 11 attacks put that last point under pressure). Viewed in that light, the man driving the truck-bomb becomes easier to understand.

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- ◎ Joshua Project now offers an "Unreached People of the Day" feed that provides a photograph and basic statistics for a different unreached people group each day. There is no cost, and the feed can easily be added to any website in a few minutes. For more information, see [www.joshuaproject.net/upgotdfeed.php](http://www.joshuaproject.net/upgotdfeed.php).
- ◎ "Selecting, Sending and Caring: A Training Seminar for Churches and Agencies" is slated for September 27-29, 2007 at the USCWM in Pasadena. Co-sponsored by Member Care International, Church Resource Ministries and Frontiers, this conference will ask, "Who is prepared to go as a cross cultural worker? How will we care for those we send?" Models and tools presented will include the Frontiers Church-Based Team Initiative, the Intercultural Readiness Assessment, and the CernySmith Adjustment Index. For further information on this event, contact

Michal Kras-selt at [michal.krasselt@gracetogo.org](mailto:michal.krasselt@gracetogo.org)

- ◎ The Knoxville Consultation on Ministry to Hindu Students (held November 14-15, 2006) has resulted in the formation of the Hindu Student Friendship Network. The inaugural training conference of the new network will be held in conjunction with the June 22-25, 2007 Rethinking Forum meetings in Portland. For more information, write to [his-friends@uscibs.com](mailto:his-friends@uscibs.com).
- ◎ In addition, the Institute of Hindu Studies and the Rethinking Forum will present "The Hindu-Christian Interface" May 10-12, 2007 at the USCWM in Pasadena. Presenters will offer insights toward the birthing of Christ-centered movements among Hindus. To learn more, write to [info@rethinkingforum.com](mailto:info@rethinkingforum.com).



# Root Canals and “Real” Ministry

Greg H. Parsons



Recently a friend of mine, a businessman in India – we’ll call him “Bill” – needed a root canal. One advantage to living in this region and needing this kind of work is the price: US\$30!

If you were the dental patient in this instance, would you ask yourself, “Does this oral surgeon really know what he is doing? Was he in the top or bottom of his class? Was that school at the top or bottom of all dental schools?”

You might also ask, “Is this oral surgeon a Christian?” Actually, reflecting on this later, Bill hoped he was not! Why?

**Somehow many have lost the idea of the priesthood of all believers during Monday through Saturday.**

Bill has worked with those from a Christian background in this area. Somehow in this area – and in some other areas – Christians have a mentality that says, in effect, “Work is a means to an end, it is of little value to God, it is a necessary evil. If you are really spiritual, if you want to make the greatest impact, you will get into the ‘ministry’ – perhaps even ‘full-time.’”

Such a way of thinking is pretty sad. Somehow many have lost the idea of the priesthood of all believers during Monday through Saturday. Yet others remind us that quality, faithful, diligent, honest work is something that has value in itself. (One such reminder comes from *Your Work Matters to God*, by Sherman and Hendricks, NavPress, 1987.) That kind of work points to God and allows our words to be heard.

The reality is that those of us in “full-time ministry” will never have as much impact as those in the workplace, in your neighborhoods, in your schools. Pastors and missionaries don’t normally live on your street or go to your workplace. The words of a full-time worker or pastor may not carry much influence because many believe they are paid to say the right words.

Statistics show that we will never reach the world through full-time workers alone. We will continue to see only small gains in many of the difficult places until we see the whole Body of Christ engaged and seeing

themselves as active, everyday, servants of the Lord to those they can impact.

Back to Bill and his root canal: the procedure turned out just fine, and Bill never learned if his surgeon was a Christian or not. But Bill found himself reflecting on this question because – in more than one business – Bill had provided jobs for Christians in a region where (a) there aren’t many and (b) people aren’t accustomed to working hard. Furthermore, Bill had discovered that Christians would not work as hard or as long. They might arrive late or leave early. They might have other priorities for their time and mental energy. And a pastor who desires for them to be in “real” ministry might encourage this way of thinking and working.

Bill had needed to terminate the employment of many of these Christians. It has been very hard for him to process these issues, but he couldn’t operate successful businesses with employees whose hearts were not in their work.

How do we view work? Business books will tell you that the goal of any business is to maximize profits. But it should *also* be to *do good* both to those who work for you and in what you are actually doing! Dennis Bakke notes in *Joy at Work* (2005, PVG): “The purpose of business is not to maximize profits for shareholders but to steward our resources to serve the world in an economically sustainable way.” Bakke goes beyond personal honesty and faithfulness to the collective good in wider impact.

Do we believe and teach that in our churches? Do we live it out during our workday and in our work? As Ralph Winter reiterates in his editorial in this issue of *Mission Frontiers*, in many places in the world evangelicals are the trusted ones. I hope and pray that this will become true in more places so that the witness of true believers will shine through in every aspect of life. 🌐

**Statistics show that we will never reach the world through full-time workers alone.**



Rev. Greg Parsons is General Director of the U.S. Center for World Mission.