

The second chapter of Michael Rynkiewich *Soul, Self, and Society* addresses the concepts of perception (sensing reality), cognition (thinking about reality), and emotion (feeling about reality). Rynkiewich explains that the human brain continuously interprets the world around us making sense out of the various stimuli. This process contributes to what makes us unique as humans, the ability to perceive our relation to the world and people around us. Anthropology is developed as a discipline to study the ways humans perceive, think, and feel about the world.

Rynkiewich outlines the emergence of anthropology and the importance of fieldwork in illuminating some of the mysteries connected to the groups of people being researched. Anthropologists used the term culture to describe a system of knowledge that people use to gain a worldview and interpret their experience, creating a social system in which people could learn from and interact with others. Culture drives human behavior and is learned, shared, and is continually shaped by those living within it. Cultures differ from one another not only because of global location and specific environments, but primarily because of the differences in people's perceptions.

Rynkiewich discusses how the Early Church had to consider the topic of culture as Gentiles responded to the gospel. The Jerusalem council set the precedent for allowing for other cultures. But Rynkiewich points out how the Roman church later dictated Roman theology and rites as mandatory across cultures. I fear that that many American Evangelical churches tend to lean in this direction, prescribing tradition and theology that leaves no room for other cultures to have a voice or contribute in worship and expression. What practical steps can ministry leaders take in helping to understand and relate to different cultures in their own backyard? How can church leaders help their congregations develop God's heart for all peoples, cultures, and generations?