

Rynkiewich Chapter 11 Interaction Paper

1. With the advent of easy travel and technology that enables connectedness by the likes which have not been seen in past generations, our assumptions of the causes of migration, diaspora, and transnationalism must adjust to new trends if missional work amongst moving people is to be fruitful.

2. Rynkiewich examines the different models westerners have used to categorize who migrates, what new trends suggest evidence in opposition of these models, and what are the missional implications of this information? The reasons for migration are complex and difficult to pinpoint as migrant communities are in constant flux. This is especially true of refugees and diaspora people who are affected by “Armed conflict, revolution, genocide, and war... (pp. 203)” As these outside influences continue to drive people from their lands Rynkiewich suggests, “... refugees and other migrants will change the complexion and character of the world’s societies for a long time to come. (pp. 204)” This is relevant for missionaries as they will need to invest more time in “... listening to the stories of migrants, refugees, and people in diaspora, discovering where God has been at work and where they themselves might contribute to that work. (pp. 213)”

3. Though I have never experienced working in the California produce fields or leaving my home country to settle somewhere else, I am the son of a migrant worker who has done those things and fought hard to distance himself from that part of his life. This chapter made me think of my father who whole heartedly adopted American culture both to elevate his own status among people with power and to enjoy a better quality of life, yet he still maintained some connection to Mexico and seemed to straddle both of those worlds (though he relished in being perceived a higher status than migrant workers).

The content on page 202 resonated with my experience of my father who demonstrated the “multiple identities” model of migration. Indeed, I am a second-generation immigrant who had very loose connections to my Mexican heritage. My children are the third generation who have no connection at all to Mexico and no one in our household speaks Spanish. Interestingly, my wife is Czech and a naturalized US citizen and our children have more connection with our Czech relatives than their Mexican side. I am also drawn to my wife’s culture more than my own. These identities are fascinating to me.

4. Questions:

- a) How do we convey to our churches the importance of witnessing to the migrant and refugee?
- b) What does ministry to migrant and refugee people look like and how can we be sensitive to the complexity of their identities?