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From the Margins to the Centre

The Diaspora Effect

A Collection of Essays to Celebrate
the 20th Anniversary of the Tyndale Intercultural Ministry
Centre

*Edited by Michael Krause
with
Narry Santos and Robert Cousins*

From the Margins to the Centre: The Diaspora Effect

Edited by Michael Krause with
Narry Santos and Robert Cousins

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Table of Contents

Acknowledgement	v
Foreword	vi
Introduction	ix
Part I	What Have We Learned? The Vision & Biblical Theology of Intercultural Mission
Chapter 1	Reoriented Thinking in Disorienting Times <i>Gary Nelson</i> 23
Chapter 2	Blessed to be a Blessing: A Missional Biblical Theology for Intercultural Ministry <i>Robert Cousins</i> 38
Chapter 3	Biblical Models for Emerging Diaspora Leaders <i>Lisa Pak</i> 56
Chapter 4	Rethinking Mission In, To, and From Canada Today <i>Jon Fuller & Bob Morris</i> 69
Part II	What Have We Learned? Changing Missional Contexts
Chapter 5	Mission In A Post-Christian (<i>Or Never-Christian Or Newly-Christian Or Vaguely-Christian</i>) Canada: It's All About Context <i>Sam Chaise</i> 83
Chapter 6	Mapping our Community: Understanding Diversity, Change, and Neighbourliness <i>James Watson</i> 98
Chapter 7	A Mission, Migration, And Multiplying Movement <i>Narry Santos</i> 110
Chapter 8	Mission To, Through And Beyond The Diaspora <i>Tim Tang</i> 123
Chapter 9	Engaging World Religions with the Gospel <i>T.V. Thomas</i> 137

Part III	What Do We Do Now? Strategic Thinking and Application	
Chapter 10	The Global Campus <i>Alexander Best & Michelle Kwok</i>	153
Chapter 11	Ministry to Canadian Students and Youth - in all their Ethnic Diversity <i>Donna Dong</i>	170
Chapter 12	Surviving or Thriving? - Principles for a Church that Is Becoming <i>Chris Pullenayegum</i>	181
Chapter 13	Adjustment Required - Transitioning to a Multicultural Congregation <i>Dan Sheffield</i>	191
Chapter 14	From Displacement to Diaspora: Finding a Place for the Outsider Within the Mission of God <i>Rupen Das</i>	200
Conclusion	215
Appendix A	The TIM Centre Overview	223
Appendix B	TIM Centre's Diploma: Foundations in Missional Ministry & Church Leadership	225
Appendix C	New Canadian Church Planters (NCCP)	227
Appendix D	Intercultural Assessment, Coaching & Training .	229
Appendix E	The UreachToronto Prayer Guide	233

Acknowledgement

What a joy to see God weave our lives together at a significant time for a specific purpose! We saw God bring a team of partners and friends with one heart and mind to come up with a TIM Centre 20th anniversary book, with an extremely tight timeline. We sensed God's leading in clear ways: the conversation with three TIM Centre friends (Robert Cousins, Tim Tang, and Narry Santos) while in a car from Toronto to Ottawa and back in April 2018; a deeper exchange of ideas on the book concept in an Irish restaurant; the buy-in by the Tyndale University College and Seminary President (Gary Nelson); the support and encouragement of the Seminary Vice President Academic and Director of the Open Learning Centre (Janet Clark); the quick response of 14 chapter authors who believed in the mission and vision of the TIM Centre and who graciously submitted their chapter manuscripts in a short time (with very little prodding); the encouraging partnership with the Canadian Bible Society (Rupen Das, Lisa Pak, and Nelly Safari), and finally the willingness, commitment and hard work of the editing team. We thank God for all of you and your labour of love in helping to produce a book that can serve the Church in Canada during these changing and challenging times.

Michael Krause, Robert Cousins and Narry Santos

Foreword

Robert Cousins

At the very core of Christian identity lies an all-encompassing change of loyalty, from a given culture and its god's to the God of all cultures. (Volf 1996, 40)

There is a reality that is more important than the culture to which we belong. It is God and the new world he is creating, a world in which people from every nation, and every tribe with their cultural goods will gather around the triune God. (Volf 1996, 50)

The words of Miroslav Volf remind us that although we can celebrate our unique cultural identity, we must never turn it into an idol. Idolatry was at the heart of Jonah's unwillingness to declare God's blessing to the people of Nineveh – his belief that they were outsiders, unworthy of God's grace and salvation. Growing up in Northern Ireland during “the troubles,” I witnessed first-hand how one's cultural and religious identity can often lead to the exclusion of the other. As a young man God brought me out of the cultural/religious clashes of Ireland to Toronto, Canada. Here I began to learn and experience this new world God was creating where people from every nation would gather to worship the one true and living God in love and unity.

This book was written to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Tyndale Intercultural Ministry (TIM) Centre (1998-2018). The TIM Centre is one of the key pieces of the Open Learning Centre, a strategic part of the ministry of Tyndale Seminary, located in Toronto, one of the most multicultural cities in the world. What a privilege it has been to serve as Director of the TIM Centre (2005-2018) building on the vision and foundation laid by Dr. Irving Whitt and Dr. Bob Morris. For the first ten years, the focus of the TIM Centre's ministry was being a catalyst, helping the Canadian church engage more effectively in global mission. In 2008, the TIM Centre made a strategic change in its ministry focus.

Sensing that God was doing something new in bringing representatives of the nations of the world to Toronto, the TIM Centre launched its “diaspora initiative.” The vision of the TIM Centre became “the church from all nations, bringing Christ to all nations.”

Believing that mission is not one-directional, “the West to the rest,” the TIM Centre now sees missions as from everywhere to everywhere, beginning on our doorstep and going to the ends of the earth. The chapters of this book reflect the ministry themes of the TIM Centre’s diaspora initiative over the past 10 years. This diaspora ministry is based on three foundational principles; 1) God desires to bless the nations of this world, 2) God’s people must cross cultural boundaries to bless the nations, and 3) leaders will need to develop intercultural competency to be effective in serving God in a cross-cultural, multicultural ministry context.

As you read this book, one theme is constant throughout; we are living in a changing cultural context where the proven solutions of the past no longer relate to the questions being raised in the present. Yet in this changing context, like the Apostle Paul, we must grapple with the truths of scripture, discerning what the essential and unchanging principles are, and then learning to apply them to new and uncharted ministry contexts. This book challenges us to be aware of the assumptions we bring to our ministry context and to be willing to evaluate them as we engage the global community that now resides in our neighbourhoods. This will require a spirit of humility to listen and learn from people of different cultures that God has brought to our doorstep.

Each of the chapters of this book have been written by ministry partners of the TIM Centre. What a commitment we witnessed in seeing this book become a reality within a four-month time frame. Each chapter is written by a reflective practitioner engaged in ministry to, through and beyond the diaspora. They write, not as leaders who have all the answers, but as servants of God who are “building the bridge as they walk on it.” As you will learn in reading this book, there is no blueprint or five-year plan laid out to follow in diaspora ministry. What is needed is a humble heart, one which is willing to listen and learn, willing to experiment, and willing to make mistakes while learning from those mistakes.

It is our prayer that as you read this book, you will discover fellow

sojourners who, as the people of God, desire to see God's blessing for the nations. You will be more motivated to move out of the safety and security of your own ethnic or cultural enclave to cross the boundaries that have traditionally divided cultures. We trust that you will develop the self-awareness, knowledge and skills needed for the intercultural journey God has for you.

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FROM THE MARGINS TO THE CENTRE: THE DIASPORA EFFECT

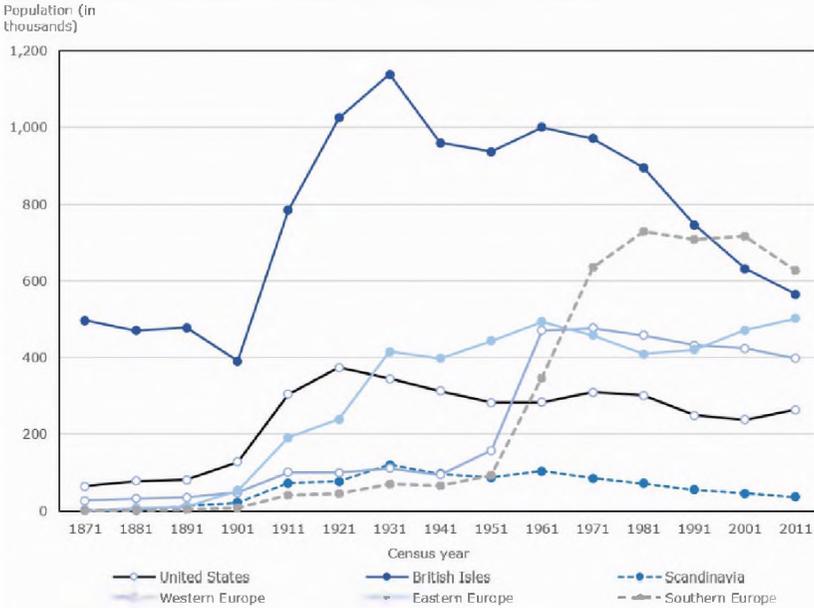
Introduction

Michael Krause

I grew up in Guelph, Ontario. In the Seventies, it was a smallish-sized city with a population of about 60,000, an hour or so west of Toronto. It was the height of the Baby Boom and my high school had almost 3000 students, and we weren't even the largest high school in town! We had one "black kid" in our whole school – or should I say "one student of colour?" We had never even heard of that term 45 years ago (Clark 1999, 17). On the other hand, we had many different ethnic groups: even students that had been born outside of Canada, including my older sister. The various ethnicities however, were almost all of European background: Italians, Germans, Ukrainians, Dutch, Greeks, etc. But most of the students were, well, um ... Canadians – third, fourth and fifth generation, most of British stock, whose forbearers came and settled Upper Canada as farmers, factory workers, shopkeepers and politicians. You can see the spike on the graph in Figure 1 representing the flood of immigrants from Britain just after World War I. I was a second generation young person myself; my parents emigrated from Germany to Canada a year before I was born. (Figure 1 also displays a spike of immigration from Western and Southern Europe after World War II.) Growing up in that environment, I often considered myself the "other," because I was different: English was my second language, my parents had strong accents and there were funny looking sandwiches in my lunch bag.

Canada has always been a nation of immigrants; and although it's a bit of a truism, every Canadian, aside from the indigenous peoples, can trace their origins to somewhere outside Canada. Even though I dealt with the feeling of being different from my peers while growing up, today's difference is more distinctive on so many levels. My classmates and I shared a common European background and a similar racial background. We were also visually similar.

Canadian population born in Europe and United States, 1871 to 2011



Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 1871 to 2001. National Household Survey, 2011.

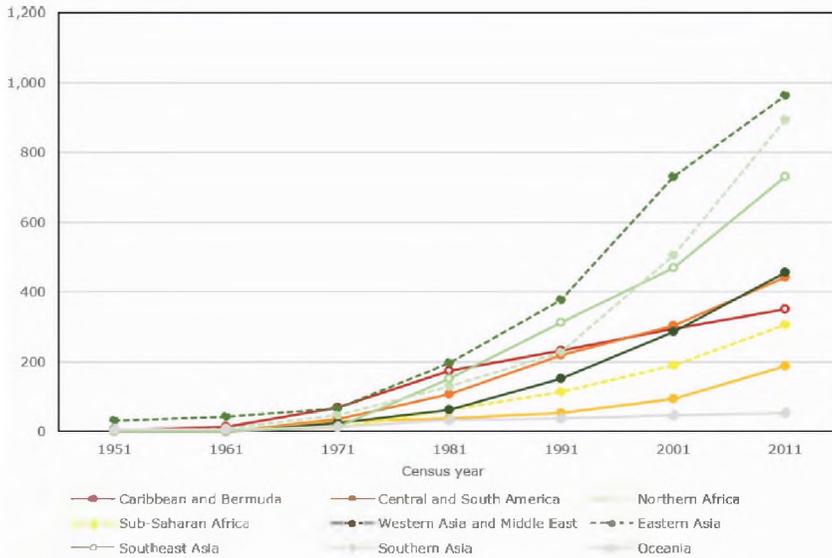
Figure 1: Canadians Born in USA and Europe, 1871-2011 (Statistics Canada 2016)

In the mid-1960s, significant changes were made to Canada's immigration legislation and as a result, immigration from Asia and other regions of the world increased and started to change the face of Canada. Refugees and migrants from diverse parts of the world began to flood into Canada. I remember the arrival of "boat people" from Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos (approximately 60,000 people) in the late 1970's. In the 1980's, 85,000 immigrants from the Caribbean and Bermuda (Jamaica, Haiti, and Trinidad and Tobago) came to Canada. The 10 years leading up to the return of Hong Kong to China by the British in 1997, precipitated the massive migration of over 225,000 immigrants to Canada: primarily to Vancouver and Toronto. More recently, in the first decades of the 21st Century, we've seen over 800,000 immigrants from the People's Republic of China, India and the Philippines (Statistics Canada 2016). The graph in Figure 2 clearly shows the rapid increase of immigration from the different regions of Asia starting in 1971. Earlier this year, Canada's population passed the 37 million mark. In the first quarter of 2018, the population increased by 103,157 - 78% of that growth (79,951) was through immigration (Statistics Canada 2018). For the first time since

Confederation (1867), China and India have surpassed the United Kingdom as the country of birth most frequently reported by foreign-born people (Statistics Canada 2016).

Foreign born population in Canada, by selected regions of birth, 1951 to 2011

Population (in thousands)



Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 1951 to 2001. National Household Survey, 2011

Figure 2: Foreign Born Population in Canada by Selected Regions (Statistics Canada 2016)

Who Is the Majority?

This has shifted our understanding of difference and what it means to be the “other.” Rural and smaller town Canada is still predominately “white” (or to use Statistics Canada’s awkward terminology, “not a visible minority”). Even now in Guelph, the fifth fastest growing city in Canada, only 18.8% of the population would identify as a visible minority (Statistics Canada 2017). The reality of our larger Canadian cities is very different. In 2016, the majority of people living in the city of Toronto identified themselves as visible minorities. This percentage is even higher in other portions of the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). The majority of respondents in Markham (77.9%), Brampton (73.3%), Richmond Hill (60%), Mississauga (57.2%), and Ajax (56.6%), also identified as belonging to a visible minority group. The Vancouver area returns similar

results (Vancouver 51.6%; Richmond 76.3%; Burnaby 63.6%; Surrey 58.5%; Coquitlam 50.2%) (Statistics Canada 2017). We will have to change our terminology. The visible minority has become the majority.

From the Margins to the Centre

If you've studied any church history, you know the Church began in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost and spread through the missionary efforts of Paul, and other Apostles, to Asia Minor (Turkey), Greece, North Africa, Rome, Spain and East to Persia, and even India. All of Europe was eventually Christianized. By the Middle Ages, Europe, and the Holy Roman Empire had become firmly entrenched as the centre of Western Christianity. But it wasn't until the dawn of the Protestant Reformation, that the modern missions movement influenced European Christians to begin sending unordained lay missionaries to other parts of the world. (That's not to say missionary activity had not already been happening. The Franciscans had already been sending missionaries to places like Mongolia in the year 1253, China (1294), and Borneo (1323) and the Dominicans to India (1321) and West Africa (1486) to say nothing of the Jesuits, Quakers and Lutherans.)

The Moravians sent their first Protestant lay missionaries to the Caribbean island of St Thomas in 1732, to Greenland in 1733 and among the Mohican Indian tribes near the British Colony of New York in 1740. In 1772 William Carey and his family travelled to India to share the gospel. As early as 1810 William Carey proposed a Missions Conference to mobilize the church for world evangelization. This missions movement caught on and dozens of missionary societies were formed to create awareness of the need, to recruit and train workers and to raise funds to send missionaries to unreached lands. Our understanding of missions has now moved from the centre: from Christian nations sending missionaries to the so-called heathen nations (from the West to the rest), to having the margins become the new centre of operations (the church from all nations bringing Christ to all nations).

The title of this book came from that idea. The "West," once deemed the centre of power in the world, is increasingly becoming less influential and has been slowly pushed to the margins. Once the source of missionaries, theology, culture, technology and colonialism, the Western world has lost much of its luster and control. We were the explorers and inventors. We arrogantly saw ourselves as the purveyors of "civilization"

and “democracy.” Now, things have been turned upside down. The Global South – India, China, Africa, Southeast Asia, Latin America – once depicted as the poor, “uncivilized” regions of the world, have now become the centres of economics, technology, wealth, manufacturing, cyber-commerce – and missions. Thus the historic centre has been pushed to the side, and the margin has become the new centre; our world is now fundamentally different.

In the mid-Nineties, when the idea of the Tyndale Intercultural Ministries (TIM) Centre was birthed in the mind of Dr. Irving Whitt, Professor of Missions at Tyndale Seminary, it was initially conceived of as a neutral space where the various Canadian stakeholders participating in missions efforts could meet, interact and collaborate. The primary focus of the TIM Centre was engaging in global missions. In 2008, the leadership of the TIM Centre recognized that God was bringing representatives of the nations to live in our Canadian urban centres and in response strategized our mission to include a “Diaspora” initiative. Sensing God at work, the vision of the TIM Centre became “The Church from all nations bringing Christ to all nations.” The TIM Centre affirmed that missions was no longer “the West to the rest,” but rather, was now “from everywhere to everywhere,” beginning at our doorstep and going to the ends of the earth (Cousins 2018).

The mission of the TIM Centre is *to act as a catalyst to mobilize the intercultural Christian faith community towards a more intentional and effective engagement in local and global missions.* The vision statement puts it more succinctly; we want to *see the church from all nations bringing Christ to all nations.* In 2018, the TIM Centre celebrates its twentieth anniversary. In these 20 years, it has moved from its focus of preparing missionaries for overseas work, to mobilizing the international and intercultural missions force that God has brought to our doors and equipping them for missions globally and in our local Canadian neighbourhoods through theological training, church planting and leadership development. As people are reached, discipled and equipped, they often sense a call to other mission fields in the nations of the world – sometimes going back to their countries of origin to reach, disciple and equip others.

Authors and Chapters

Canada has changed. That is the basic theme of the book you’re holding in your hand. The two questions this book is trying to answer

that reflect the ministry of TIM Centre are: “Given this change, can we make sense of the new reality around us (or, how do we understand it)?” and, “How do we respond to this new reality (or, what do we do about it)?” As we journey through the chapters of this book, the various authors will present more specific information and insight about these changes and suggest responses that the church and individual Christians should consider as we navigate these unpredictable waters. The chapters are organized under these two questions and arranged in three sections. Under “how do we understand it?” the first four chapters will look at theological foundations and vision. The next five chapters will examine our changing context. The final five chapters will provide some strategy as we attempt to answer the “what do we do about it” question. At the end of each chapter will be a series of reflection questions. These can be merely for your own reflection and deeper understanding or they can be used in a small group or classroom context

All our authors have some kind of connection with the TIM Centre and they all have hands-on experience in dealing with the diaspora populations we see around us. Our authors also reflect the ministry partnerships of “The Assembly (Church), The Agency (mission) and the Academy.” In Chapter One, Dr. Gary Nelson, Tyndale’s President, reflects on how the pace of change is faster than the pace of learning. We are having a hard time keeping up. The rules have changed. We all face globalism and its impact, but it’s harder now – particularly because we in the West are no longer in charge of it. There is a sort of reverse impact happening as the economic and demographic power is shifting to the East and to the Global South. Dr. Narry Santos (Chapter 7) describes that another result of this change is “reverse missions,” where missionaries from Korea, China, India, Africa and the Philippines are now coming to Canada’s urban centres to evangelize and plant new, vibrant multicultural churches.

Dr. Sam Chaise uses the term “multiplicity” in Chapter 5 to describe our current environment. There is no one missions strategy that will work for all of Canada because there is no one Canada. The Canadian mosaic is composed of many different fragments. There are multiple Canadas and multiple missions contexts. New Canadians who are Christians, find that the missions methods they used in their home country don’t work in Canada. Therefore, we must try new approaches in each context. In Chapter 6, Dr. James Watson refines this idea of fragmentation by using the term kaleidoscope, rather than mosaic, to describe our current situation

– because a mosaic is static. But every time one looks at a kaleidoscope, it's different, and it continues to change as one twists or spins it. We adjust ourselves to the change by being in relationship with the people in our communities and by recognizing the patterns or networks of relationships around us. In Chapter 4, Jon Fuller and Bob Morris speak of “transcending mission” to change the way we think about our missions practice. They propose that new models for missions are required as well as new funding approaches for missionaries. It requires a radical reconfiguration of the Western missionary movement, a cleansing of the temple in order to reclaim missions from the power structures of capitalism.

Chris Pullenayegem, in Chapter 12, writes a provocative chapter on how churches must learn how to change and welcome new Canadians as the new realities of immigration and culture shift affect their neighbourhoods. Dan Sheffield speaks of the need to transition from a monocultural church to a multicultural and multiethnic congregation in Chapter 13. This requires vision, courage, patience and intercultural competence. Tim Tang writes about the challenges of ethnic churches as they mature (Chapter 8). In their attempt to manage parallel or aggregate church structures (Cantonese language Ministry, Mandarin Ministry, English ministry, youth ministry, etc.), how do they relate to one another, stay vibrant and make transitions to continue to have an effective missional approach?

Dr. Robert Cousins provides a solid biblical foundation of diaspora ministry in Chapter 2 saying that if we are to fulfil God's missional mandate of blessing the nations (Gen12), we will need to be intentional in crossing cultural boundaries with the gospel. To do this the church will need to develop intercultural competence and embrace diversity just as God does. Lisa Pak also gives us three case studies of biblical characters for the next generation in Chapter 3. They are all young diaspora leaders who achieved significant impact in a new land facing multiple challenges.

Tyndale also hosts many international students, as do most post-secondary institutions in Canada. The opportunities for friendship and evangelism are unprecedented. Students come for an education but many want to stay in Canada as permanent residents. Donna Dong writes of her experience connecting with visible minority students through her work at InterVarsity in Chapter 11. In Chapter 10, Alexander Best and Michelle Kwok also describe their efforts at connecting with international students at Pearson Airport through a program called Welcome Airport. T.V. Thomas outlines a number of principles to help us share the Gospel

with people who follow other religions in Chapter 9. Rupen Das wraps up the book (Chapter 14) with a great explanation of the different ways people from the global South understand conversion and why it's so important for us to change our evangelistic methods. He says: Ministering to migrants and the displaced involves more than assisting with physical needs, housing, school, language, and jobs. Disconnected from their ancestral land and the community they grew up in, their understanding of who they are is often undermined. Lacking roots in their new land, most struggle with developing a new identity and a sense of belonging. This is where the church needs to be most active.

I've described the chapters in a rather haphazard way. That's because, even though there are commonalities, the authors weave their material together in such a way that doesn't easily sort into neat piles. Maybe a tapestry is the best metaphor to use as we see the various topics woven together in a way that reveals the passion of the authors and the conviction of the Holy Spirit. As we designed the book we had the front image of the tapestry clearly in mind. As we compiled the chapters and sorted through the information and the many ministries, organizations and projects people were involved in, we realized that we were looking at the back of the tapestry where the threads seemed to crisscross with one another. At the same time it was obvious many of the authors were using many of the same colours to weave together their stories. We've arranged the chapters in a way that makes sense to us, but they can be read in any order and as you read, we hope you'll discover new things and be challenged to action.

My Connection to the TIM Centre

As we celebrate the 20th anniversary of the TIM Centre, we could have filled a number of books with descriptions of what the TIM Centre has accomplished. I became involved in the TIM Centre because I was a church planter and I was wondering how to process the change I saw happening around me. How should I reach out to my neighbours – most of whom were from a different culture and different religion than my own? I was introduced to Robert Cousins at a regional leaders' prayer meeting as he was networking and creating partnerships. As we began talking, he invited me to a meeting at Tyndale. The purpose of the meeting was to brainstorm a new website idea the TIM Centre was dreaming up called UReachToronto.ca. He recruited me to help research and provide information for the website so that new Canadians, and

those working with them, could easily find the kind of information they needed. The homepage describes the goal of UReachToronto as providing

an accessible vehicle for receiving and sharing tools, information, expertise, and resources related to engaging and embracing the diverse peoples of the Greater Toronto Area. We aim to be a comprehensive resource centre for Christians engaged in intercultural ministry. Our objective is to connect people with one another to collectively develop a strategic vision for, and to learn the skills necessary to reach our multicultural communities. (UReachToronto 2010).

UReachToronto is now becoming UReachCanada with city-specific websites for communities across Canada that have large diaspora populations.

My next involvement with the TIM Centre was to teach the first course in the two-year certificate and diploma program that Robert Cousins and Dr. Narry Santos had designed called, Foundations of Missional Ministry & Church Leadership. This training was initiated in response to requests from the Diaspora church for lay leadership training and is a testimony to Tyndale's vision and flexibility in serving the whole church. On October 14th, 2010, the first class of twenty-five students straggled into one of the classrooms at the new Tyndale campus on Bayview Avenue ready to begin our experiment. The content of the class wasn't experimental – Bible Interpretation is pretty standard fare for most Seminary programs. It was the context that was unique. The course was designed exclusively for new Canadians – to train them for missional ministry in their own ethnic church and to make it possible for them to gain accreditation with Canadian denominations. All but one of the students in the class were born outside of Canada, they were all lay people and they were being trained to assume leadership in new church plants in the GTA. We have now trained hundreds of people with these courses and have seen many students continue to pursue more formal education at the seminary level. Dr. Santos writes more about this partnership in his chapter.

In 2010, the TIM Centre, World Vision, and the Centre for Community Based Research partnered together in a project called, Beyond the Welcome: Churches Responding to the Immigrant Reality in Canada which looks at how Canadian churches are welcoming new Canadians and

makes practical suggestions for improving the relationship. TIM Centre was a strategic partner in a national research project focusing on, “The Role of Churches in Immigrant Settlement and Integration.” One of the key researchers and a catalyst for this project was Dr. Mark Chapman, who is now the director of Tyndale’s Doctor of Ministry program. The goal of this project was to better equip church groups across Canada (whether congregations or denominations) to help immigrants and refugees settle and integrate into Canadian society. The TIM Centre has also brought together new Canadian church planters and connected them with denominational leaders for mutual accountability and the development of best practices.

Conclusion

When considering the first 20 years of the TIM Centre’s existence, we can see the vision was somewhat prophetic. Still we only see through a glass dimly. What we saw then only helped get us ready for what is coming now. As we move forward with new vision for the future we will continue to do some of the things we have already been doing. We will need to continue to network with others and create partnerships. We will need to research what is happening in Canada and the world. We will need to continue to convene events, bring people together, facilitate conversations and develop relationships. We must continue to train and disciple others, providing them with resources, like UReachCanada.ca and Intercultural Competency training, that will make them more effective and equip them to lead others. Finally, we must continue to love others and pray, to ask for mercy and grace to help us in our time of need and to hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

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Michael Krause is the R.J. Bernardo Family Assistant Professor of Leadership and Ministry, the director of the internship program and coordinator of the leadership track of Doctor of Ministry program at Tyndale Seminary. He has a broad range of ministerial experience in an urban context in churches, social service agencies and educational institutions. He was a part-time researcher for UReachToronto and has been teaching courses with the TIM Centre Diploma program since its inception in 2010.