

ATA Launches Three New Commentaries

By Rico Villanueva, ABC General Editor

We are pleased to announce the launching of three new commentaries on *Judges* by Athena Gorospe and Charles Ringma, *Psalms 1-72* by Federico Villanueva with Joseph Shao as Contextualization Consultant, and *Epistles of John* by Gilbert Soo Hoo with Pervaiz Sultan as Contextualization Consultant. The launching will be held during the ATA Triennial General Assembly on July 25-29, 2016 at the Chongshin University and Theological Seminary, South Korea.

The first series in Asia to publish

separate volumes for the books of the Bible, Asia Bible Commentary (ABC) seeks to serve the churches in Asia by providing expositions of the Bible from the different contexts of Asia. One of the aims of the commentary is to show the relevance of the Bible to Asian cultures. In many parts of Asia where Christianity is viewed as foreign or western, it is helpful to see that actually the Bible is at home in Asia. In fact, the Bible is Asian. Using our own varied resources as Asians we try to interpret the text as it engages with our own cultures. At the same time, the ABC series continues the

tradition of the Christian faith which views the Bible as the Word of God profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness (2 Timothy 3:16). These two – considerations of the Asian contexts and faithfulness to the Christian faith – are the marks of the ABC series.

Although there are already many commentaries written on each book of the Bible, there are very few written by Asians themselves from within our own contexts. Since every theology is contextual, it is important to read,

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ABC Judges



ATHENA GOROSPE, Ph.D. at the Fuller Theological Seminary, teaches Old Testament at Asian Theological Seminary. She is the author of *“Old Testament Narrative and Ethics: A Journey in Understanding.”* *In Conversation at the Edges of Things: Reflections for the Church in Honor of John Goldingay* and *“God’s Justice in the Book of Judges: Study Notes.”* *God’s Justice: NIV Study Bible* (forthcoming).



CHARLES RINGMA is Emeritus Professor at Regent College, an Honorary Research Associate Professor at University of Queensland, and Adjunct Faculty at the Asian Theological Seminary in Manila. He is author of several books, including *Hear the Ancient Wisdom* and *Seize the Day*.

ABC 1, 2, 3 John



GILBERT SOO HOO, Ph.D. at the Catholic University of America, teaches New Testament at Singapore Bible College. He is author of *The Pedagogy of the Johannine Jesus: A Comparative Study of Jesus’ Pedagogy to the World and to His Own* and *From Faith to Faith: Blindman’s Bluff*.

ABC Psalms 1-72



FEDERICO VILLANUEVA is Publications Secretary of ATA and General Editor of the Asia Bible Commentary series. He is a faculty member of Asia Graduate School of Theology and part-time consultant with Philippine Bible Society. Some of his publications include, *The Uncertainty of a Hearing: A Study of the Sudden Change of Mood in the Psalms of Lament* and *It’s OK to be Not OK*.

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interpret, and apply the text within our own contexts. Without losing our communion with our brothers and sisters in other parts of the world, it is also important that we do our own work of interpreting so that by God's grace we will be empowered to serve our sisters and brothers in Asia through the ministry of the Word. The Bible and theology should be for the service of the church and humanity. But in order for that to transpire, there needs to be a dynamic, dialogic interplay between Asian Christian interpreters and their respective contexts. Only as we listen to our particular cultural, historical locations will we be prepared to serve others, especially those in the

peripheries with the teachings drawn from the Scriptures.

Each commentary begins with an introduction which includes discussion on the relevance of the particular book for a particular Asian context. The exposition of the text combines exegesis and application. In many commentaries, application is relegated to the end, or in some cases left out. In the ABC, the application takes on a central role. We do not interpret and then we apply. The two go together. It is as we interpret that we apply. We already view the text from our particular situation. Yet at the same time, we allow the text to speak

anew to our own situations. There is thus a dynamic interweaving of exegesis and application. We are also not ashamed to include appropriate personal stories and experiences into our exposition. These are rich resources to the interpretation of the text. We have not properly understood the text until we have applied it for today. As Pope Benedict XVI has rightly put it: Biblical scholars "arrive at the true goal of their work only when they have explained the meaning of the biblical text as God's word for today." Our prayer is that the Lord will use these commentaries for the service of the church and the world, for His glory. ■

ATA Annual Meetings Discuss Various Ministries in Fulfilling God's Mission in Asia and Beyond

Around 20 ATA leaders gathered together at the Biblical Seminary of the Philippines (BSOP) for its annual meetings last January 19-22, 2016. The first day was committed to the Publications Committee that began with an inspiring devotional led by Dr. Richard Hart. The discussions during the meeting include updates on Asia Bible Commentary (ABC) series, journals, theological dictionary, and non-commentary books. It was followed by the finalization of the vision of Publications Department. The following vision statement was proposed to the Executive Board: "A maturing Asian church contributing to the fulfillment of God's mission in the world." The meeting concluded with a planning for the book launching of three commentaries to be held at the ATA Triennial General Assembly in Chongshin University and Seminary, South Korea on July 26, 2016.

In the afternoon of the same day, the AGST Council met to discuss the revision of the AGST Handbook and Policies. Reports from the Regional AGST (Japan, Alliance, Philippines, and Pacific) were also presented and accepted by the members. During the meeting Dr. Bruce Nicholls shared his forthcoming

travels to Pakistan, Nepal, and Sri Lanka, being his last year of ministry with ATA. The AGST Council members expressed their deep appreciation of Dr. Nicholls' contribution to ATA in the many capacities and roles he has played.

The second day was dedicated to the meeting of Commission on Accreditation and Educational Development (CAED). Dr. Theresa Lua, Accreditation Secretary reported that the revised ATA Manual of Accreditation has now been approved by the Board and can be uploaded to the ATA website and sent to member schools. CAED highlighted the accreditation visits, recommendation to appoint a new associate accreditation secretary, and other important matters such as Academic Credit for Previous Learning, the ATA Stakeholder Study (responses to recent ICETE conference), Th.M. thesis requirements, credit requirements for M.A., M.Div., D.Min., and crossover of ATA and Increase (Asia TEE programs).



Dr. Richard Hart leading the devotional at the start of Publications Committee meeting



The AGST Council members discussing about important revisions in the handbook and policies

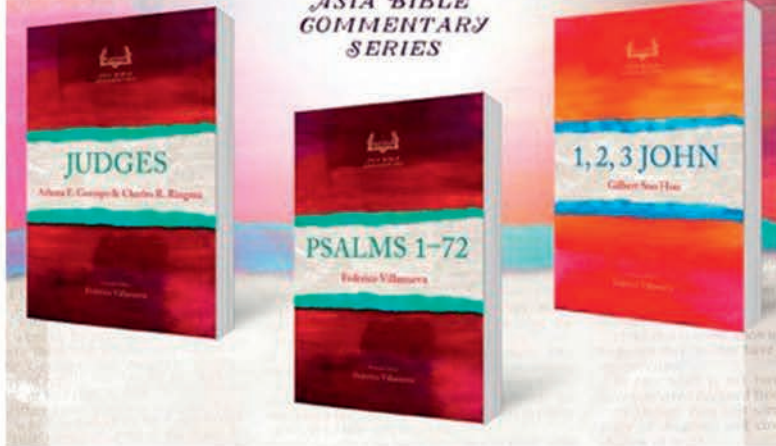
The last two days were devoted for the Executive Board meeting. The General Secretary's report focused on the ministry growth of ATA under his leadership for nine years. During the meeting, Dr. Joseph Shao (the outgoing General Secretary) thanked the chair of the Transition Committee for his guidance that led to Dr. Theresa Lua as

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Coming this July 2016



ASIA BIBLE
COMMENTARY
SERIES



Asia Bible Commentary Series

New volumes published
in partnership with Langham

Psalms 1-72
Federico Villanueva

Judges
Athena E. Gorospe and Charles R. Ringma

1, 2, 3 John
Gilbert Soo Hoo

The Asia Bible Commentary Series empowers Christian believers in Asia to read the Bible from within their respective contexts. Holistic in its approach in the text, each exposition of the biblical books combines exegesis and application. The ultimate goal is to strengthen the Body of Christ in Asia by providing pastoral and contextual exposition of every book of the Bible.

ATA PUBLICATIONS

www.ataasia.com/atapublications



Producing resources for pastors, Christian leaders, cross-cultural workers, and students in Asia that are biblical, pastoral, contextual, missional, and prophetic.

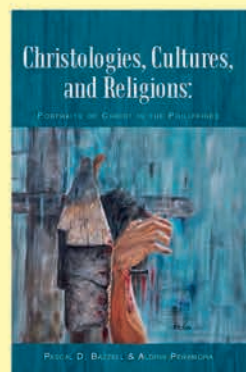
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monographs and journals
will be available during the 2016
ATA Triennial General Assembly

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New!

**Christologies, Cultures, and Religions:
Portraits of Christ in the Philippines**

Edited by
Pascal Bazzell & Aldrin Peñamora

Papers presented at the First Theological Forum of Mindanao (2014). Inter-religious and inter-cultural perspectives on how we view and understand Christ.



/atapublications



2016 ATA Triennial General Assembly

Fixing our Eyes on Jesus: Asian Churches Pressing On (Hebrews 12:1-2)

Date: July 25-29, 2016

Location: Chongshin University & Theological Seminary
110, Hakchon-ro, Yangji-myeon, Cheoin-gu, Yongin-si,
Gyeonggi-do, 17157, Rep. of Korea

Registration Fee:

(Includes food and *accommodation for 4 nights)

Option A: Chongshin Dormitory

Single room – USD 270

Twin sharing – USD 190

Triple sharing – USD 140

Option B: Pine Resort Hotel

Single room – USD 600

Twin sharing – USD 360

Schedule

Time/Date	Mon 25 July	Tue 26 July	Wed 27 July	Thur 28 July	Fri 29 July
7:30-8:30	BREAKFAST				
8:30-9:15	Devotions and Prayer Time				
9:15-10:45	CAED Meeting	Session One: God's Abundant Grace in Asia	Business Meeting	Session Three: Christianity in Asia: Missions Perspective	Session Five: TE: Responding to Global and Local Challenges
10:45-11:15	TEA BREAK				
11:15-12:30	AGST Council Meeting	Session Two: Christianity in Asia: Historical Perspective	Business Meeting Academic Societies	Session Four: Challenges in Asia	Panel Discussion (10:45-11:30) Closing & Communion
12:30-2:00	Board Meeting	LUNCH			
2:00-3:30	Arrival and Registration	Interest Groups	Tour (1:30 onwards)	Interest Groups	DEPARTURE Tour
3:30-4:00		TEA BREAK		TEA BREAK	
4:00-5:30		Interest Groups		Interest Groups	
6:00-7:00	DINNER	DINNER		DINNER	
7:00-8:30	Opening Night Welcome Address Keynote Address	Book Launching Regional Updates & Prayer Time		Installation Service ATA Night	

***Accommodations**

Option A: Chongshin Dormitory

The school dormitory is within the campus. There are shared toilets and bathrooms in each floor. Airconditioned rooms.

Option B: Pine Resort Hotel

Pine Resort Hotel is about 30 minutes away from the venue. Transportation service will be provided to and from Pine Resort Hotel.

Visa

Those who will be needing visa assistance, pls. send your request to: ataasia@gmail.com

For more info and to register, visit:

www.ataasia.com



ATA and ICETE Equip Faculty in Preparing Students for Doctoral Studies



ATA and ICETE (International Council for Evangelical Theological Education) offered a seminar on “Developing Research and Thinking Skills at Masters Level in Preparation for Doctoral Studies” on February 26-27 held at the beautiful campus of South East Asia Bible Seminary (SEABS) in Malang, Indonesia. Dr. Ian Shaw, Associate International Director of Langham Scholars Programme and Honorary Fellow, School of Divinity, New College, University of Edinburgh, Scotland facilitated the seminar. Thirty participants came from Australia, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, and various parts of Indonesia.

Designed to equip faculty in preparing Masters students for doctoral studies, Dr. Shaw

facilitated interactive sessions with practical exercises on the following areas:

- The Need for Critical Thinking Skills
- Progression in Building Learning Skills
- Building Critical Skills into Teaching Methods
- Reading and Interpreting Primary and Secondary Texts
- Developing Research Instruments and Handling Research Data
- Encouraging Academic Writing at the Right Level
- Building Masters Level Skills into Course Syllabus and Learning Outcomes
- Developing Research Questions and Appropriate Assessments

An email from a participant expresses the common feedback from the group:

Thank you for leading us through this workshop and giving us insight on the kind of skills required for different levels of academic degrees. The exercises during the workshop helped me to learn the specifics. The exercise on course learning outcomes was extremely useful to me.

ATA is grateful to Dr. Ian Shaw for sharing his expertise and to SEABS for generously hosting the seminar. ■

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the next General Secretary. The Transition Committee recommended that Dr. Lua

should continue as the Accreditation Secretary of the CAED, with the assistance

of additional Associate Secretary, when she becomes the new General Secretary



The CAED members listening to reports and updates on accreditation visits



The ATA leaders planning for the 2016 Triennial General Assembly

in July. The Board has appointed Dr. Teresa Chai as part-time Associate CAED Secretary. Dr. Chai was former president of Alpha Omega International College in Malaysia and now serves as Missions professor at Asia

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“Moving Forward” – BTESSC and ATA India



The Board of Theological Education of the Senate of Serampore College (BTESSC) and Asia Theological Association, India came together in a landmark meeting on September 11-12, 2015 to discuss issues of quality assurance in Theological Education in India. This was the culmination of several earlier meetings, especially the meeting held under the auspices of the Asian Forum on Theological Education (AFTE) in Serampore in February of 2015, where Drs. Takanori Kobayashi and Joseph Shao were also present.

A 20-member group met at the CSI Synod Center in Chennai which highlighted the two different approaches to Theological Education

(TE) in India. Dr. H. S. Wilson of AFTE; Dr. Gnana Patrick, HOD, Dept. of Christian Studies, Madras University; Dr. Wati Longchar, Dean, SCETR; Dr. Brian Wintle; Dr. Paul Cornelius, Regional Secretary-ATA India; and Dr. Santanu Patro, Registrar of SSC presented papers. The result was the nomination of a smaller group consisting of four representatives from either side which considered more carefully the issues of equivalency and exchanged views on collaboration and partnership.

A working committee met again on October 30, 2015 at SAIACS where equivalencies issues were discussed. While nothing conclusive about mutual recognition was decided, the group felt that

regular meeting must continue and consider also how TE in India can be strengthened. The group agreed to come out with a joint statement against dubious and fake theological degrees in India.

As one of the outcomes of these meetings, Dr. Paul Cornelius was invited as a guest at the BTESSC Board Meetings and also at the Senate Council meetings held at the Andhra Christian Theological College, Hyderabad on February 3-5, 2016. This was an eye opener into the functioning of the BTESSC and Senate. We are sure that this engagement will strengthen the life of the Church in India and her mission and ministry in the days to come. ■

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Pacific Theological Seminary in Baguio, Philippines. Dr. Shao updated the Board on the meeting held in Bangkok for the revision of the ATA Constitution and the planning for the ATA Triennial General Assembly in Korea. The Board thanked Dr. Shao for his many years of service to ATA and discussed his continued involvement in ATA specially in international relations with other global bodies.

The Board spent time reviewing the proposed vision statement of the Publications Committee, the revised ATA Constitution, the proposed increase in ATA fees, and the program for the ATA General Assembly. In support to Chongshin Seminary's celebration of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation in 2017, one Interest Group will focus on paper presentations on the significance of Reformation in the Asian context. These papers will be published by a distinguished German Publisher after

undergoing review by a committee.

The Program Officer of Cornerstone Trust, Dr. Jason Ferenczi, graced the last day of the annual meeting. He was invited to help in a strategic planning for the financial sustainability of ATA. Everyone generously shared their creative ideas to enhance the ministry and work of ATA in Asia and beyond. ■



The ATA board and officers with the staff during the dinner treat of the Board Chairman at the Manila Hotel.

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