

## Crisis Containing Hospitality

By Dr. Richard Hart,  
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(MEATE) and Accreditation Coordinator of  
ATA West Asia



Random rocket falling brought damage to a church in Aleppo

Arab values promote hospitality, generosity and kindness. Exactly where or how these values developed is not part of recorded history. Arabs have a practice that says, "When someone comes to your tent and has a need, you as the welcoming host should give the person up to half of what you have."

Once I was a guest of a Jordanian and he had a visitor that came walking to him from the desert. The visitor asked his host if he or I had some gasoline to spare since he had run out of gas. I gave him some of mine. On my way home, I ran out of gas. I waited by the side of the road and a car stopped. The driver gave me some gas and drove away. I continued on my way home.

A few years later, in 1990, I observed Arab hospitality extended to a million refugees that fled to Jordan from the Arabian Gulf states after Iraq invaded Kuwait. His Majesty, the Late King Hussein, asked everyone in Jordan to provide help to the refugees. Public and private agencies, including churches, helped with lodging or food. Tens of thousands of meals were served.

In 2011, Syrians thought that the unrest in their country would play itself out quickly. As we all know, they were wrong. People began leaving their homes seeking safety in other places both inside and outside Syria. As the civil strife continued, Syrians at home faced shortages of food, water, electricity, medicine, gasoline, and cooking fuel.

Refugees that fled to other countries needed all these supplies too.

Helping Syrians became a worldwide campaign. Churches were one of the groups in collar countries like Lebanon and Jordan that tried to get aid into Syria and to cooperate with their governments to provide help for Syrians in border refugee camps.

In July, 2012 the Syrian Dean of the Program for Theological Education by Extension (PTEE) reported on the help that the relief committee at his church in Malkia, Syria was providing to refugees escaping the fighting in Syria's third largest city of Homs.

He shared that PTEE students at his church in 1999 had formed a relief committee for emergencies as a project for one of their PTEE courses. In the years since, during times of emergency need, the committee had become active. Now, he said the Committee was helping refugees who were fleeing to Malkia from other parts of the country by providing food and clothing.

In the fall of 2012 the PTEE Syria Committee began working with the PTEE office in Amman for receiving funds for buying food, clothing, medical supplies, and cooking fuel for the needy in several Syrian cities. Funds were transferred through money changers in Jordan and Syria. When reports were received on how grants were being used, additional funds

*Continued on page 2*



*Youth preparing food for distribution in Aleppo*

were sent to the leaders of the PTEE relief network. The assistance has continued ever since.

Where one from outside Syria sees the refugee crisis in staggering proportions, however, is on visiting the refugee camps in Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Turkey. Millions of Syrians are now living in camps and other places in these host countries.

In all the Arab nations close to Syria, church leaders and their members are playing important roles in refugee relief. Graduates of Bible colleges, seminaries and Extension Programs who now serve as pastors and church leaders are working with their congregations, denominations, non-government and government organizations to help Syrians in need.

The Dean of Christian Alliance Institute of Theology reports that in this context church members are spending time with Syrians in their encampments. Many of the Syrian families they are serving are made up of mothers and children. The husbands and fathers have been killed or are missing or were captured by Syrian government troops or by rebel fighters. In some places Syrian women are participating in Bible studies. Women and children who previously knew nothing about the Bible are hearing the stories of Jesus, discovering the love of God and beginning to sing the songs of faith.

The member institutions of the Middle East Association for Theological Education, an affiliate member of the ATA, are praying for and helping displaced Syrians as they are able. In local Arab churches in the region, intercessory prayer for Syrians continues. Arab believers invite you, the reader, to join with them in praying that God will comfort and encourage Syrian refugees, bring an end to the crisis and settle the people back into their land with peace.

## Visit to Union Bible Theological College



*The VET with UBTC Board members*

The Union Bible Theological College (UBTC) was visited by ATA Visiting Evaluation Team (VET) consisting of Dr. Theresa Lua, CAED Secretary and Dean of AGST-Philippines; Dr. Ng Peh Cheng, CAED Associate Secretary, Singapore; and Dr. Pieter Theron, Director of Christian Leadership Training Center, Mongolia on May 19-21, 2014.

The vision of UBTC is to prepare leaders who will serve the people and churches of the Mongolian world and beyond with God's love in words and action. Its purpose is to provide a spiritual study environment in the context of discipline and integrity, for the training and equipping of leaders who are Christ-like, biblically literate, and able to teach others and committed to the gospel.

The gospel of Jesus Christ came to Mongolia in 1990. The need for trained Christian workers and leaders led to the establishment of the Ulaanbaatar Bible School (UBS) that offered short-term training sessions in 1992. The pioneers were the late Daniel Lam, Dr. Douglas Webster and Rev. Dr. Roy Thompson. UBS joined the Union Bible Training Centre (UBTC) in 1995 to offer a full-time training programme for church leaders. The Centre developed its own constitution with an elected Board of Directors. In 2007, the Union Bible Training Centre was changed to Union Bible Theological College (UBTC) to identify itself as an



*The VET with UBTC leaders and faculty*

accredited theological college by ATA in Mongolia. Rev. Purevdorj Jamsran is the 7th Principal and the first Mongolian national appointed for the position in 2008.

UBTC offers Certificate in Church Ministry (Day Programme, full-time studies), Certificate in Christian Ministry (Day Special, Evening and Modular programmes, part-time studies), Diploma in Ministry, Bachelor of Theology in Biblical and Pastoral Studies, Bachelor of Arts in Social Work Studies, Master of Arts in Mission Studies, and Master of Divinity in Biblical Studies.

## Visit to Mongolia Theological Education by Extension



*The VET with MTEE leaders and staff*

The Visiting Evaluation Team (VET) consisting of Dr. Theresa Lua, CAED Secretary; Dr. Ng Peh Cheng, CAED Associate Secretary; and Dr. Pieter Theron, Director of Christian Leadership Training Center (Mongolia), visited Mongolia Theological Education by Extension (MTEE) in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia on May 21-23, 2014.

MTEE seeks to develop theological training at all levels that is contextually relevant and accredited among the scattered Mongolian people, and to deliver this training through TEE groups so that local churches are strengthened,



The VET with MTEE Students

society is transformed, and God is glorified.

MTEE was founded in 1995 as a partnership venture between Joint Christian Services International (JCS International) and World Vision, Mongolia. JCS provided a leader in the person of Hugh Kemp, a New Zealander, and World Vision provided funding. Initially, MTEE operated under its own Board, but in 2000 the work came directly under the management of World Vision, Mongolia as a project of World Vision. In 2008 MTEE became operationally distinct from World Vision, with a Director appointed by the Governing Body. In March 2011 MTEE was officially registered as an NGO with the Mongolian Government.

The Certificate in Christian Ministry program was launched on September 7, 2004, although some of the courses that comprise the program had been in use since 1999. From 1995-2000 the main Theological Education by Extension (TEE) user churches were in Ulaanbaatar but with the expansion of the Mongolian church, user churches are now found in many provinces of Mongolia. In 2007 local representatives were appointed in three provinces. In 2010 a significant change happened when groups of students from different churches in the city began to study the program in the MTEE office. These groups are referred to as “cross-church membership groups” in contrast to other groups whose members are from one local church.

MTEE became an Associate member of ATA in 2003 and an Accredited member in 2009. It is a member of the Mongolian Evangelical Alliance, and the Mongolian Union Bible Society. MTEE has also signed a translation and publication agreement with SEAN International, and TEE-TEXT-Asia. MTEE offers Certificate in Christian Ministry.

## Visit to University of Holy Land



The VET with UHL leaders and faculty

The VET consisting of Dr. Theresa Lua, ATA CAED Secretary; Dr. Joseph Shao, General Secretary of ATA and President of Biblical Seminary of the Philippines (BSOP); and Dr. Erez Soref, President of Israel College of the Bible, visited the University of Holy Land (UHL) on June 24-27, 2014.

UHL aims to provide an environment in which a student can explore the foundations of their faith, particularly with regard to the Jewish backgrounds of Christianity. Its goal is to equip students to be better teachers, pastors, and communicators of the Scriptures. UHL felt that this is only possible through understanding the Bible in its context—historical, geographical, and cultural.

The Center for the Study of Early Christianity (CSEC) from which the University of the Holy Land evolved begun in Israel in 1986 and was founded by Dr. Stephen Pfann and his wife, Claire. It was incorporated as a non-profit organization with a constitution and board in California, USA in 1987. In 1988 the CSEC took on the responsibility of research and publishing and created the University of the Holy Land to be the educational wing. The UHL began its own Master of Theological Studies degree in 1989. Then in 1992 UHL began a relationship with the Rothberg International School of the Hebrew University. In the same year the UHL began to receive graduate and undergraduate students from the University of Kent at Canterbury for one year experience of study abroad. Further Master degree emphases were added between 1992 and 1999. The Department of English and Applied Linguistics was established in 2000. The Department created a preparatory English program to equip students for graduate study.

In 2000 a doctoral study program started to enable students to develop research skills and generate a document that makes “an original and significant contribution to the advancement of



The VET with the UHL Registrar, Business Manager, and Admin Staff

science and which is written in accordance with the rules of structure, terminology and style customary in the literature of the field.”

In 2009 the UHL received accreditation from ATA. In 2011 the M. Div. Program was added to cater Korean students. In 2012 UHL became a member of KAICAM (Korean Association of Churches and Ministries). Koreans comprise one half of the student body.

UHL offers Master of Arts in Archaeology, Intercultural Studies, Intertestamental Studies, New Testament and Early Christianity, Old Testament and Culture of Ancient Israel; Master of Theological Studies; Master of Divinity; and Doctor of Philosophy (Research).

## ATA LEADERS VISIT NEW BUILDING OF JETS



On their way to VET visit in Israel, the ATA General Secretary Dr. Joseph Shao and Accreditation Secretary Dr. Theresa Lua visited the newly-built Academic building of the Jordan Evangelical Theological Seminary (JETS) in Amman, Jordan on June 23, 2014. Under the leadership of Dr. Imad Shehadeh, Founder and President, JETS reaches out to twenty-two Arabic-speaking countries of the Middle East, Arab Peninsula, and North Africa for Christ. Dr. Shehadeh greatly appreciated the ministries of ATA.

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## Global Gathering of Key Theological Educators Influencers Strategize on South-East-West-North Partnerships



*The participants to the Lausanne Consultation on Theological Education*



*Participants from Asia with Drs. Sam Logan, Chris Wright and Ian Shaw*

Invited leaders to this unprecedented event were several leaders of ATA member institutions namely Dr. Joseph Shao (Biblical Seminary of the Philippines), Timoteo Gener (Asian Theological Seminary), Jung Sook Lee (representing Dr. Sang-Bok David Kim of Torch Trinity Graduate University), Dr. Stephen Lee (China Graduate School of Theology), Dr. Theresa Lua (Asia Graduate School of Theology-Philippines), Dr. Tham Wan Yee (Asia Pacific Theological Seminary), and Dr. Pravinkumar Israel (South Asia Bible College).

The following was taken from Lausanne's official press release on the Consultation.

São Paulo, Brazil – 16 June 2014 – Fifty-six key influencers of global theological education, representing every continent, gathered 2-6 June in São Paulo, Brazil, for the Lausanne Consultation on Theological Education: Toward Biblical Partnership in Global Theological Education. The group included seminary presidents, institutional principals, heads of accreditation bodies, and leaders in theological education supporting agencies. In addition to The

Lausanne Movement, the consultation was sponsored by The World Reformed Fellowship, World Evangelical Alliance, Overseas Council, Fellowship of Evangelical Seminary Presidents, Langham Partnership, and International Council of Evangelical Theological Education, and was hosted by Mackenzie Presbyterian University.

Chaired by Sam Logan, President of the World Reformed Fellowship, and hosted by Davi Gomes, chancellor of Mackenzie Presbyterian University, the consultation was intended to explore The Cape Town Commitment's call (section IIF.4) to the world's theological education institutions to have an active partnership with other theological institutes, with the church, and with the work of evangelism and church planting.

The consultation also served as a follow-up to the first Lausanne Consultation on Global Theological Education in 2012 where 63 key decision makers and leaders of organizations that provide, support, or accredit theological education, from 31 countries, gathered on the campus of Gordon-Conwell

Theological Seminary in South Hamilton, MA, USA. At that gathering, it was clear that the challenges and opportunities for theological education in the 21st century required the intentional building, and continued working, of a global community. To that end, this consultation in São Paulo was a strategic gathering which allowed for exploration and emphasis on practical steps forward which would enhance South-East-West-North partnerships.

The consultation was organized around a tri-partite structure of: Our Roots, Our Dreams, Our Challenges. Participants had their roots in looking toward Scripture and reflection on the biblical and missional foundation for theological education. Envisioning the unrealized opportunities and possibilities that biblical partnerships could achieve gave space for dreams. Finally, case studies and focus groups were utilized to examine challenges—critical topics such as models of institutional partnerships, partnership in the digital age, the role that accreditation plays in facilitating or hindering partnerships, the sharing of resources, and partnership between formal and informal theological education. Videos of the presentations will soon be available.

## China Evangelical Seminary Installs a New President



*Dr. Shao with Dr. Peter Chow (outgoing president) and Dr. Anne Tsai (incoming president)*

On June 21, 2014, the largest Chinese seminary in Taiwan, the China Evangelical Seminary (CES) installed its 7th President during its commencement exercises, Dr. Anne Tsai Lee-Chen. ATA General Secretary, Dr. Joseph Shao was the speaker on that special event. Dr. Tsai is the first lady president of the seminary and has faithfully taught at CES since 1989. The outgoing president, Dr. Peter Chow, has served as the 6th president of the seminary, and is also an active Board member (2012-2014) of ATA.

## ATA Publications In Progress

Friends, we are pleased to share with you some updates from ATA Publications:

### Partnership with Langham

• We are in the process of establishing partnership with Langham so that our commentaries will be made more available worldwide in all formats, including ebooks. Please pray for the Lord's guidance and blessing on this plan.

### Asia Bible Commentary Series

• We have now identified writers for the 33 books needing authors. Three more books to go! These books are: 1 and 2 Chronicles, Amos, and Micah. Please pray that the Lord will give us writers for these books. You can also recommend writers. We need two writers for each volume—one to focus on the exposition and one for the contextualization.

• Our goal is to publish all volumes by 2024. Eighteen volumes have already been published. The volume on Judges by Dr. Athena Gorospe and Dr. Charles Ringma is now in its final stage of writing. God willing, we hope to publish 3-4 volumes next year.

• Let us ask for the Lord's guidance and wisdom on all our writers, project editor, consulting editors, and general editor. Sometimes, we do not realize how much spiritual battle we are involved in pursuits like this. This project has the potential of a lasting impact long after we are gone. This is the first major commentary series written by Asian Christian scholars. Most commentaries are written in the West by western scholars.

### ATA Books Team

• Through the initiative of Dr. Steve Pardue, our coordinator for the books outside of the commentary, we were able to form a team who will work together for our monographs and other ATA book projects.

• The first major project of the team is a one-volume Asian Theological Dictionary.

### One-volume Asian Theological Dictionary

• We are all excited to announce that the Publications Committee has approved to begin the Asian Theological Dictionary—a dictionary written by Asians for Asia and beyond, from an evangelical perspective.

• Dr. Steve Pardue will serve as the project coordinator.

### Partnership with Other Publishers in the Philippines

• New Day Publishers and APTS Press have both agreed to carry our titles. APTS Press will help us distribute our commentaries in Baguio area, among other places. We are grateful for these partnerships.

## ATA Endorses 2014 Asia Summit and Conference on Christian Counseling



There were 600 participants coming from 16 countries with Indonesia, Philippines and Malaysia forming the largest contingents overseas, attended the Asia Summit and Conference on Christian Counseling 2014 held in Petaling Jaya, Selangor, Malaysia on May 29-31. It was organized by the National Association of Christian Counselors, Malaysia in partnership with the National Christian Counseling Associations of Singapore, Indonesia, Philippines, China, India and Taiwan. It also involved several other ministry agencies such as the Asia Graduate School of Theology-Philippines, Care and Counsel International, American Association of Christian Counselors, and Interserve. This event was endorsed by the Asia Theological Association.

This year's summit with the theme, "Culturally-sensitive Christian Counseling in Asia: Towards Integrating Psychology and Theology as Care and Counsel in Mission for Christ," presented significant issues to shape Christian Counseling in ways authentic to the Asian culture. Some Counseling professors of ATA member schools in the Philippines such as Asian Theological Seminary (ATS) and Biblical Seminary of the Philippines (BSOP) participated in the plenary session and workshop.

A compendium edited by Dr. Edmund Ng (President of NACC Malaysia) contains the papers presented in this summit.

## ATA Theological Consultation on Christology "The Lordship of Jesus Christ in the 21st Century Asia"

August 11-14, 2014  
ACTS Yang Pyung Campus,  
South Korea

**DAY 1 AUGUST 11, MONDAY**  
4:00 – 6:00 PM REGISTRATION  
6:00 – 7:00 DINNER  
7:00 – 8:00 OPENING NIGHT

**DAY 2 AUGUST 12, TUESDAY**  
8:00 – 9:00 BREAKFAST  
9:00 – 10:00 REGISTRATION  
10:00 – 11:00 MORNING WORSHIP  
11:00 – 12:30 PLENARY SESSION  
12:30 – 2:00 LUNCH  
2:00 – 3:00 INTEREST GROUPS  
3:00 – 3:30 TEA BREAK  
3:30 – 5:00 PLENARY SESSION  
5:00 – 5:10 MOVE TO SMALL ROOM  
5:10 – 6:00 INTEREST GROUPS  
6:00 – 7:00 BUFFET DINNER  
7:00 – 8:30 FELLOWSHIP (CULTURAL NIGHT)

**DAY 3 AUGUST 13, WEDNESDAY**  
8:00 – 9:00 BREAKFAST  
9:00 – 10:00 MORNING WORSHIP  
10:00 – 11:30 PLENARY SESSION  
11:30 – 11:40 MOVE TO SMALL ROOM  
11:40 – 12:30 INTEREST GROUPS  
12:30 – 2:00 LUNCH  
2:00 – 3:30 PLENARY MEETING  
3:30 – 3:40 MOVE TO SMALL ROOM  
3:40 – 4:30 INTEREST GROUPS  
4:30 – 5:00 TEA BREAK  
5:00 – 6:00 CLOSING WORSHIP  
6:00 – 7:00 DINNER

**DAY 4 AUGUST 14, THURSDAY**  
TOUR (SEOUL) AND DEPARTURE

For more information and registration, please email: [ataasia@gmail.com](mailto:ataasia@gmail.com) / go to [www.ataasia.com](http://www.ataasia.com)

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**ATA news**

is a quarterly publication of the Asia Theological Association  
[www.ataasia.com](http://www.ataasia.com)

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