

## Developing a Culture of Research for Delivering Postgraduate Courses



**R**esearch is integral to the flourishing of students pursuing higher education; but for the former to thrive, institutions of higher education must embrace a culture of research. For this reason, ATA, in partnership with International Council for Evangelical Theological Education (ICETE), conducted a seminar entitled “Developing a Culture of Research for

Delivering Postgraduate Courses.” The seminar was held in Manila last February 24-25 and was led by Dr. Ian Shaw, Associate International Director of Langham Scholars. This seminar which aimed at helping postgraduate faculty create an environment conducive for research to flourish in their respective institutions was attended by 21 participants from five countries. It

also featured an actual presentation of a paper by Dr. Rico Villanueva in a guided research seminar consisting of an evaluation. The seminar was carried out by laying down clear definitions for pertinent terms, recognizing the issues involved with research and the academe, thinking through different case studies, and by finally coming up with strategies for institutions to move toward that end.

So at this juncture, the natural question to ask is: What would it entail for an institution of higher education to develop a culture of research? Well, one can reckon from the seminar two important ingredients for the latter to happen: faculty and facility.

The first ingredient is faculty—faculty committed to making new discoveries, challenging the status quo, and inspiring students to learn more as they themselves are learning more. The research culture is cultivated when the faculty as one community embrace the benefits of research in their profession and see that one is not a substitute for the other and vice versa. The research culture flourishes when research compliments teaching and teaching compliments research. It prospers when both students and faculty embark on an ongoing process of learning and making new discoveries— a process motivated by something bigger than the joys that come with it and that is love for God and service to his church.

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The second ingredient is facility—and this is not merely an enormous accumulation of relevant and up-to-date library resources. While one cannot overemphasize the value of the latter, one must not discount the importance of creating that safe environment wherein ideas can be assessed and critiqued; a safe environment where iron sharpens iron and peers can evaluate each other. This is what the research seminar is for. A research seminar is where short research papers can be presented and gathered faculty and students can engage in a moderated discussion over the latter in

a way that builds up the researcher. In addition to all that has been mentioned, one other facility that is of great value to developing a culture of research is simply an area set apart for study—a designated space conducive for discovery and thought processes.

In conclusion, we have seen that developing a culture of research is a collaborative effort; but all our efforts in doing so must be undergirded by the strong desire to serve and equip his church. The ultimate motive behind developing a culture of research in postgraduate institutions is missional

in nature. When we see our efforts in light of the bigger picture, not only will the research culture be cultivated, but it will thrive. All our efforts in developing a culture of research and all our endeavors to further our knowledge through research should be viewed as our means of building his Kingdom, a means of bringing about restoration and redemption; a means of healing the brokenness that is so pervasive around us. That is what makes research truly rewarding. ■

-By Angelica de Vera,  
ATA Research and Communications Officer

## ATA VET Visits Jerusalem University College, Israel



The Jerusalem University College (JUC) was visited by the ATA VET consisting of Dr. Theresa Lua, ATA General Secretary; Dr. Rick Weymouth, e-Learning Director, PTEE (Jordan) and ATA CAED member; and Dr. Erez Soref, President, Israel College of the Bible on February 27-March 1, 2017.

Jerusalem University College is also known as the Institute of Holy Land Studies. The campus is located on the southwestern corner of Mount Zion, a short walk from the Old City of Jerusalem. JUC aims at subscribing to the historic Christian faith in the evangelical

and nondenominational tradition. The school offers Master of Arts in Biblical History and Geography; Master of Arts in Middle Eastern Cultures and Religions; and Master of Arts in Hebrew and Cognate Languages. It also offers credit and non-credit short-term study programs. Through these offerings, JUC cooperates with and facilitates the interests of its Consortium of Associated Schools. Around 86 accredited colleges, universities, and seminaries are members of the consortium. As part of their degree programs, students from these schools come to JUC for a semester or a year of studies, or for two or three weeks of intensive studies. JUC is an international affiliate of the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCU). ■

## ATA-Korea Elects New Officers and Leaders



On February 29, 2017, the presidents and professors of ATA-Korea member schools gathered at Baekseok Theological Seminary to elect new set of officers for this year. The new Executive Board of ATA-Korea is as follows:

Chairman: Dr. Jin-Sup Kim (President, Baekseok Theological Seminary)

Vice-Chairman: Dr. Young-Wood Kim (President, Chongshin University)

General Secretary: Dr. Dong-Chan Seo (Korea University of International Studies)

Secretary: Dr. Chris Kyungjik Lee (Baekseok Theological Seminary)

Treasurer: Dr. Sang-Hwa Han (Asian Center for Theological Studies and Missions)

Auditors: Dr. In-Sub Ahn (Chongshin University) and Dr. Choo-Sung Kim (Hapdong Theological Seminary)


In this meeting, Dr. Jin-Sup Kim enjoined everyone for prayer, cooperation, and active participation to ATA so that they can contribute in the development of Asian theological education. It was an opportune time for Dr. Jung-Sook Lee (President of Torch Trinity Graduate University and Secretary of ATA Executive Board) to introduce ATA's project on collecting stories of how God has worked through its ministry. In addition, Dr. In-Sub Ahn (Dean of Global Reformed Theology, Chongshin University) explained the activity of ATA Development Commission during this meeting. ■

## Share Your ATA Story

For the past 47 years, ATA has been privileged to come alongside numerous theological institutions, assisting them in serving the Church in equipping the people of God for the mission of the Lord Jesus Christ. As we approach our 50th year, we are endeavoring to collect stories of how God has worked through the ministry of ATA. We would thus like to invite you to share with us a one page testimonial (not more than 500 words) of how ATA has impacted you and your institution. This testimonial should answer the following questions:

- How has ATA been of service to you/your institution?
- Why is the ministry of ATA important in your region?
- What particular issues/challenges are you/your institution facing in your context? How is ATA helping to address them?

We would highly appreciate it if you could send in your testimonial to: [ataasia.research@gmail.com](mailto:ataasia.research@gmail.com)



## The Calling of an Asian Biblical Scholar/Theologian: Challenges Facing Asian Evangelicals Today

### ATA Theological Consultation

July 18-20, 2017

South East Asia Bible Seminary

Malang, Indonesia

Our goal during this consultation is to listen to each other.

Our desired outcome is clarity on what we are being asked to do as scholars and what the church needs us to be. We hope this conversation will encourage integration across disciplines, building on Evangelical convictions to address the pressing questions raised by our various contexts in Asia.

Register now. Limited slots only.

Visit: [www.ataasia.com](http://www.ataasia.com)



## 2017 Annual Meetings Discuss ATA's Huge Task as It Nears the 50th Year



The ATA Chairman, Dr. Takanori Kobayashi opened the Executive Board Meeting on January 12 with an inspiring message: “Our task as theological educators is to prepare and strengthen men and women in this faith, to lead the churches to serve in this world.” According to him we may experience many challenges and hindrances but let us not grow weary in the great task that Christ has given to ATA. On the following day, this message was strengthened with the General Secretary’s reminder on Isaiah 40:28–31. Dr. Theresa Lua encouraged everyone saying that as we wait upon the Lord, “We need to be still, listen, and most of all, hope in the Lord. Let us not neglect spending quality time with God, enjoying him, and being renewed.” She continued on with this challenge: “ATA is now nearing 50. As we face the next 10-20 years, let’s continue to hope in the Lord. And may we indeed soar high for another 50 years for God’s purposes in Asia!”

significant venture is on “Telling the ATA Stories” which will feature testimonials of what the Lord is doing through the ministry of ATA. It will include collecting stories, creating tools for telling the stories, and communicating the stories. In addition, the various services of

ATA like publication, accreditation, and consultancy are helping member institutions address the issues and challenges that face them for the advancement of God’s kingdom in Asia and beyond.



ATA Executive Board

ATA is committed to serve the Church in equipping the people of God for the mission of the Lord Jesus Christ. Various faculty workshops in partnership with Global Associates for Transformational Education (GATE), an affiliate member of ICETE, to equip the equippers are set in 2017 and 2018. The workshops will be held in Indonesia, India, Nepal, and Myanmar. Part of the plan is to train more facilitators to extend the workshops to other countries. Another



Publications Committee



Commission on Accreditation and Educational Development



AGST Council meeting

Here are the highlights of the Annual Meetings held on January 10-13, 2017 at Lanna Palace Hotel, Chiang Mai, Thailand:

The ATA Publications Committee is continuing its collaboration with Langham International aiming to publish four or five new commentaries each year. Two or three previously published commentaries are added in its annual goal. Included in the publication plans are a one-volume theological book and a new series of monograph addressing contemporary theological issues in Asia.

The AGST Council focuses on suggestions about collaboration and cooperation among AGST chapters such as a regular colloquium for AGST graduates and other scholars in Asia on a theme that is relevant to the Asian context; facilitate faculty members teaching across AGST institutions; cross-enrolment in other AGST institutions for courses not offered by their institutions, but relevant to their area of research; and a reference library of Ph.D. dissertations and M.Th. theses (electronic or physical). Two levels are in this collaboration: the information level (faculty and module lists, archives)

and the research level (colloquium).

Several findings from the recent ATA Stakeholder Survey were presented bringing the group to some reflections and recommendations on the work of Commission on Accreditation and Educational Development (CAED). The group also discussed nominations for new CAED members. Dr. Qaiser Julius of Open Theological Seminary in Pakistan was unanimously recommended by the CAED and was later approved by the Board. Another important discussion was on a proposed study project by the Asia Forum for Theological Education (AFTE) on the Proliferation of Theological Education in Asia.

Plans and proposals for the Development Commission were deliberated extensively. The Board decided that a group of four members will prepare a clear statement of the purpose of Development Commission this year. In its inception, this Commission was intended to be a Resource Development Commission generating financial support. According to the Chair, Dr. In-Sub Ahn, concrete proposals to attract funding are in the pipeline.

### Strategic Planning on the Last Day of the Meeting

The General Secretary led the Board members, office holders, and guests through a participative process asking:

1. Who are we?  
What are the characteristics of the ATA?  
Is the current statement of the mission of the ATA accurate and adequate?

2. Where are we?  
What are the important trends and issues in Asia today, and how do they impact the ATA?

3. What are the Strengths & Weaknesses of the ATA, and the Opportunities and Threats/Challenges that ATA faces? A SWOT analysis.

4. Where are we going?  
What is the best future we could envision for the ATA in five year's time?

Prior to the meeting, a Stakeholder Survey was done to get feedback from the ATA community. Their responses were helpful in doing the environmental analysis, SWOT analysis, and envisioning the future direction of the ATA. The group found the process to be engaging and invigorating. The feedback from the member schools and the group discussions inspired them to pursue God's calling for ATA with renewed vision and passion.

A committee composed of Drs. Theresa Lua, Paul Cornelius, Rico Villanueva, Teresa Chai, and Graham Aylett was tasked to reflect on the data, identify common themes, and summarize the goals and strategic priorities for further deliberation by the Board.



Lively discussions during Strategic Planning

## The Continuing Ministry of ATA Publications in Asia

### Asia Bible Commentary Series

We are happy to announce that the commentaries on Matthew written by Samson Uytanlet and Micah by Johan Ferreira are now finished. These will be launched during the ATA Theological Consultation in Malang, Indonesia this coming July 18-20. In addition, three other commentaries are in their final stages of editing: Leviticus by Ming Him Ko; 1 & 2 Thessalonians by Winston Reyes; and James by Luke Cheung, Helen Siu May Leung, and Andrew Spurgeon. We are grateful to the Lord for his guidance and provision, especially for our writers. This would not have been possible without the support of our institutions. As shown in a recently published study by Yesan Sellan, the number one factor that enables scholars working in theological institutions to produce scholarly works is the support of their institutions. The title of the research is "Factors Associated with Scholarly Productivity among Theological Faculty Members in Karnataka." About 80 institutions in Karnataka India participated in the survey.

What a difference it makes when institutions support research! We all know that research does not happen in a vacuum. It arises from a culture of research. That culture has to be promoted and encouraged if we want Asian evangelical scholarly works to flourish. We are therefore grateful that we have partners in ATA who support those who are into writing. Our commentary writers would not have been able to finish their projects had it not been for the encouragement of their own institutions and those which support ATA's vision. We thank Asbury Theological Seminary for giving research grants. Just recently, three of our writers – Samson Uytanlet, Winston Reyes, and Jesudason Bascar Jeyaraj have spent time in Asbury to finish their commentaries. We also thank Langham Partnership International for publishing the commentaries.

### Books Needing Writers

ATA continues to provide opportunities for our Asian scholars to write. We have the ongoing Asia Bible Commentary series. We still have the following books needing writers: *Exodus* and *Haggai/Obadiah*. Those who are interested can email our Project Editor, Bubbles Lactaen at [pe.atapublications@gmail.com](mailto:pe.atapublications@gmail.com).

### Journal Articles Needed

For those who may be overwhelmed with writing Bible commentaries, ATA is looking for journal articles in theology and missions. Our two journals—Journal of Asian Evangelical Theology (JAET) and Journal of Asian Mission (JAM) are now in American Theological Library Association (ATLA) so what we write can be accessed worldwide. You may submit your journal articles to our editors—George and Anne Harper: [gharper@alum.mit.edu](mailto:gharper@alum.mit.edu).

### Theological Consultation Books

We also have non-commentary books. This includes the publication of our theological consultations. This year, we will be launching our consultation book from our previous theological consultation held in Korea with a theme on Christology.

This July, we will start a series of consultation on the theme, "The Calling of an Asian Biblical Scholar/Theologian." It is important as we near ATA's golden anniversary that we reflect on what it means for us to do our tasks. During this consultation, there will be speakers from the different regions. We pray that this will be an enriching time of listening and sharing with one another as we try to discern where the Lord is calling us in the next 50 years. May our Lord continue to bless his church in Asia. ■

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### Enjoying Treats in Chiang Mai



The leaders, officers, and staff were very grateful to our generous host, Bangkok Bible Seminary (BBS), who treated us in a distinct restaurant serving flavorful Thai food and entertaining us with lovely cultural dances. Thank you also, BBS, for letting us enjoy God's wonderful creation at the Safari Night. ■

## TO ALL ATA MEMBER SCHOOLS

We are constantly updating the information found on our website to offer a more informative visit.

Please help us update your information in the ATA website.

Send in the name of your principal, president, dean, contact numbers, mailing, email and website addresses to:  
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