

The ATA Annual Meetings: much to celebrate, much to look forward to

The Asia Theological Association (ATA) held its annual meeting last 23 to 26 January 2018 at the SIL Guesthouse, Quezon City, Metro Manila. Over the course of the four days, the following groups met: the Publications Committee, the AGST Council, the Commission on Accreditation and Educational Development (CAED), and the Executive Board. While the different meetings began on a melancholy note because of the passing of Dr. Takanori Kobayashi, ATA's beloved chairman, they did move towards brighter tunes as much has already been accomplished and as there is even so much more to look forward to.

Much has already been accomplished, much more reason to celebrate!

2017 was a very productive year for ATA and indeed, much has already been accomplished. For one, accreditation and re-accreditation visits hit an all-time high, with teams going to 62 schools (32 in India and 30 in different countries). Furthermore, there were also some preliminary and verification visits done. While the number of visits was rather challenging, it, on the other hand, allowed for schools in the same area/region to share in the travel expenses of the visiting evaluation team.

Secondly, 2017 has seen us put two books into publication. These books are: *Commentary on Matthew*, written by Dr. Samson Uytanlet and *Jesus Among the Nations*, a compilation of papers presented in the 2014 Theological Consultation in Korea, edited by Drs. Rico Villanueva and Steve Pardue.



Members of the Executive Board met last January 25 and 26.

Thirdly, 2017 has allowed us to see the first of a series of faculty development workshops done in partnership with Global Associates for Transformational Education or GATE, through a grant from a generous donor; and it was held in South Asia Institute for Leadership and Cultural Studies (SAILCS), Coimbatore, Tamilnadu, India. This workshop was attended by 50 participants from 7 schools and along with them were the staff of ATA India. This workshop was successfully facilitated by Drs. Theresa Lua and Joanna Soberano.

Fourthly, the "Telling the stories" project has taken flight and last year, we released a video that put forth what God has been doing through the ministry of ATA. This video has reached 10,675 people through Facebook alone, and it

was likewise sent to friends and members of ATA who then also forwarded it to their network. Dr. Theresa Lua has also used this video to introduce ATA in the special functions she had attended last year.

Fifthly, AGST is growing and there are now five regional AGSTs: AGST Philippines, AGST Japan, AGST Alliance, AGST Pacific, and AGST Nepal as the newest addition to the family.

And lastly, we now have a total of 326-member schools from 33 countries. Six of them are new members from Taiwan, Thailand, Hong Kong, Myanmar, and Nepal.

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Broadening horizons

ATA's horizons are expanding as more doors of opportunity have begun to open for its various ministries.

First, doors of opportunity are opening for the Publications ministry. While in the past, papers from the Theological Consultation have been compiled and published in a book, we are now looking towards publishing select papers in a special edition of JAET (Journal of Asian Evangelical Theology). JAET is indexed in ATLA (American Theological Library Association) which then allows for a wider readership. Additionally, efforts are now being made for JAET to be made available in other platforms.

In addition to the abovementioned, the publications arm will soon be coming out with a new book, a textbook more specifically, the first of its kind, the Companion to Evangelical Theology in Asia. While there are numerous textbooks on Systematic Theology out in the market, the Companion to Evangelical Theology in Asia is the only one written from an Evangelical Asian perspective. It was written towards the end of being a "companion" to the Systematic Theology textbooks already available and are currently being used, most of which, if not all, are from the West. Companion to Evangelical

Theology in Asia will be published in partnership with Langham Literature and will be released by May 2019, just in time for the triennial General Assembly.

Second, there is an ongoing dialogue with Servant Leaders International (SLI) which will hopefully move towards a collaboration between SLI and ATA on Vital Sustainability Initiative (VSI) project and related initiatives toward advancing the development of appropriate leaders and institutional capacity to sustain their mission and strengthen the witness of the church in society. This will allow for the strengthening of ATA's value added services and lead to more extensive learning and sharing among ATA member schools.

Third, ATA is collaborating with ICETE on several initiatives. ATA and ICETE will jointly offer a "Field Research Doctoral Supervisor's Seminar" on May 9-12, 2018 in Chiang Mai. Facilitators will be Dr. Kevin Lawson, Director of PhD and EdD programs at Talbot School of Theology and Co-chair of the ICETE Doctoral Initiative Steering Committee, and Dr. Jessy Jaison, Director of Research and Advancement at New India Bible Seminary. ATA is also collaborating with ICETE in developing a taxonomy of standards and guidelines for global evangelical theological education and in forming an ICETE Academy

which aims to provide training/resources for the ongoing professional development of seminary leaders and faculty.

Fourth, doors of opportunity for further collaboration among leaders and institutions within India are opening as ATA India will be having its first ever theological consultation which will be held on 23 June 2018. The theme of this one-day consultation is "One gospel, many cultures." One of the plenary speakers will be Dr. Darrell Bock, New Testament Scholar and author of several books. The ATA India Theological Consultation aims to address the need to increase the participation of institutions in India since only barely a handful can do so in the general Asia wide consultations due to financial and time constraints. Additionally, the consultation is being organized in hopes of having the Evangelical voice heard in India.

And lastly, we move forward with the GATE faculty workshop and this year, it will be held in more locations. Nepal has already begun with its first workshop last January. We will also be starting workshops in Mongolia on the 13th to the 15th of August and in Northern India on the 27th to the 29th of September. Moreover, we continue with Year 2 workshop in Southern India on the 4th to the 6th of October.



The Commission of Accreditation and Educational Development (CAED) met last 24 January 2018. Present were Drs. Seo Dong Chan, Graham Aylett, Rahmiati Tanudjaja, Ng Peh Cheng, Theresa Lua, Ronnie Poon, Kaiser Julius, Paul Cornelius, Rick Weymouth, Samuel Sidjabat, and Chiu Eng Tan (not in the photo).



The Publications Committee held its meeting last 23 January and present were Drs. Steve Pardue, Federico Villanueva, Theresa Lua, Ms. Bubbles Lactaen, Ms. Angelica de Vera, Ms. Marlene Riate, Mr. Alex Lactaw and Dr. Paul Cornelius; present also via Skype were Drs. Anne and George Harper, Andrew Spurgeon, and Finny Philip.



The AGST Council composed of Drs. Paul Cornelius, Luke Cheung, Sooi Ling Tan, Theresa Lua, Makito Masaki, Bong Rin Ro, Azriel Azarcon along with Dr. Abraham Saggi (via Skype) met in the afternoon of 23 January 2018.

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Aiming higher: ATA's priority goals

ATA envisions its member institutions effectively serving churches in fulfilling God's global mission. So, for the vision to become an ongoing reality, several measures were taken early last year—from conducting a survey to gather feedback from the ATA community, to having the Board and key leaders come together to think about how to make ATA more effective in its ministry and what would ATA ideally be like five years down the road. A task force was formed to summarize and analyze the data from this strategic planning process. Two sets of priority goals were proposed which the Board has approved at the 2018 annual meeting and they are as follows: building the capacity of ATA member institutions to equip for Asia's changing, challenging, and diverse contexts and building the capacity of ATA as an organization.

With regards to the former, ATA is aiming towards the following for its member institutions:

1. Enhance the effectiveness of the faculty in providing quality theological education.
2. Form "hermeneutical communities" of Asian evangelical scholars from different disciplines working together to provide a prophetic voice to the burning issues in Asia.
3. Develop more Asian scholars and writers for contextual textbooks and resources.
4. Establish research centers that will provide theological schools with relevant data to meet unique needs in the region.
5. Facilitate more cooperation among ATA member institutions.
6. Help in the development of healthy leadership models and organizational structure in ATA member institutions.
7. Maintain a vibrant spirituality in ATA and

the member institutions.

With regards to the latter, ATA aims for the following as an organization:

1. Have a more balanced and diverse representation in the ATA leadership.
2. Improve the quality of the accreditation process.
3. Increase ATA's financial and human resources.
4. Strengthen ATA's regional chapters.
5. Develop a central online repository of resources.
6. Build a database with information about members' strengths and resources.
7. Improve ATA's public relations and communications.

With these goals set, ATA is poised to move towards the ongoing fulfilment of its mission and vision.

REGISTER NOW!



ICETE 2018

THE SACRED/SECULAR DIVIDE AND
THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

The 2012 ICETE Global Triennial Consultation in Nairobi considered the theme Rooted in the Word, Engaged in the World. Three years later in Turkey, this Consultation responded critically to two fundamental questions: even if we are rooted and engaged, how do we know that we are effective in accomplishing our mission? How might we measure the impact of theological education on both Church and Society?

The ICETE Manifesto on the Renewal of Evangelical Theological Education affirms "Our theological programmes must become manifestly of the church, through the church and for the church." However, in many cases theological education empowers only an elite, and not all the people of God.

In reality, there remains a divide between those who serve in full-time or formal ministry, and those who seek to serve faithfully in "secular" positions. How should theological educators address this Sacred-Secular Divide? Are we equipping our students with the right worldview and tools in order for them to truly equip their church members for an effective service in all areas of life? What can we learn from one another as we share our global collective wisdom on bridging the Sacred-Secular Divide?

Join us as we seek to traverse the divide between the sacred and the secular on the 29th of October to the 3rd of November 2018 in **Westin Playa Bonita, Panama City, Panama.**

Taken from <http://www.icete-edu.org/panama/>

To register, please visit: <http://www.icete-edu.org/panama/>

Faculty Workshop in Nepal

ATA and the Global Associates for Transformational Education (GATE) held a faculty workshop last January 31-February 2, 2018 at the Nepal Evangelical Holiness Theological Seminary (NEHTS), Kathmandu. Though it was freezing cold, the participants enjoyed the beautiful location and the warm hospitality of the NEHTS community. It was the first time for the ATA member schools to come together for a joint faculty workshop. There were 62 participants from the following schools:

1. Nepal Baptist Bible College
2. Nepal Ebenezer Bible College
3. Nepal Evangelical Holiness Theological Seminary
4. Nepal Methodist Theological Seminary
5. Nepal Presbyterian Theological Seminary
6. Nepal Theological College
7. Kathmandu Institute of Theology
8. Reformed and Presbyterian Theological Seminary
9. Asia Graduate School of Theology (AGST)- Nepal

Facilitated by Drs. Joanna Soberano (GATE Associate) and Dr. Theresa Lua (ATA Gen. Sec.), the workshop focused on Theological and Philosophical Foundations for Transformational Education. This is Year 1 of the four-year GATE curriculum. Participants found the workshop to be stimulating and challenging alongside the following feedback:

My mind and my heart were challenged and encouraged!

Very thoughtful and eye-opening sessions, it has helped us to rethink our ways of teaching.

It challenged my assumptions. Helped me to rethink our school curriculum.

The workshop helps me think about my students, my teaching methods, and how I can teach so that we can see the transformation in their lives.

It was helpful in reviewing the mission, vision and curriculum of our institution.

Personally, it helped me to think of the change I should make.

Wonderful time learning together.

Thank you so much for such an organized and well-designed workshop bringing the Nepali seminaries in one place to be encouraged and challenged to prepare good servants of God for Nepali churches.

As the GATE workshop has now begun in Nepal, equipping educators to become transformational in their teaching, we can look forward to seeing an even more vibrant Nepalese church equipped to make transformation happen and in effect making a difference in the world.



The workshop participants.



The facilitators with the leaders, faculty, and volunteer staff of the host school, Nepal Evangelical Holiness Theological Seminary.



Participants in group discussion.



The Chairperson's seat is filled

Since the passing of Dr. Kobayashi last October 24, 2017, the Chairman's seat has been left vacant; and during the annual meeting, the ATA Board recognized the Vice-Chairman, Dr. Andreas Himawan, as Acting Chairperson. He will serve this role up until the 2019 General Assembly. With Dr. Himawan taking on the role and the responsibilities as Acting Chairperson, Dr. Jung Sook Lee will be taking on a double role, serving both as ATA's Secretary and Vice Chairperson. Dr. Andreas Himawan is the past President of Amanat

Theological Seminary in Indonesia and Dr. Jung Sook Lee serves as the President of Torch Trinity Graduate University in South Korea.

Moving toward the golden year

The excitement continues to build up as ATA moves toward its 50th anniversary. Over the next few years, we can expect to see ATA reach for several goals and organize gatherings that move toward the end of encouraging greater collaboration among member institutions in order to better serve the Asian Church.

To begin with, this year, 2018, the Publications arm aims to finish and put into publication 6 commentaries. These are commentaries on the following books of the Bible: Thessalonians, 1 Samuel, Ruth, Esther, James, and Philippians. This will once again be published in partnership with Langham Literature. In addition to finishing up the commentaries for each of the aforementioned books, the Publications arm is likewise making efforts towards the revising of the commentaries on the books of Ezra-Nehemiah and Psalms 73-150.

Also, this year, we can look forward to a couple of gatherings, the first of which is the

ATA Theological Consultation with the theme: "Responding to the Call: Interdisciplinary approaches to doing theology in Asia." This year's consultation will be held in conjunction to that of last year which had the theme, "The Calling of an Asian Biblical Scholar/Theologian: Challenges facing Asian Evangelicals today." It will be held in Manila, Philippines at the BSA Twin Towers Hotel. The objective of this consultation is to see how interdisciplinary theologizing can and has in fact already been done. The examples and models presented in this consultation should encourage even more collaborative efforts to move further in the manifestation of His Kingdom on earth.

The excitement further builds up as we prepare for the 2019 ATA Triennial General Assembly to be held in Singapore and will be hosted by the Theological College of Asia (TCA). This General Assembly will be a springboard launching the celebrations for the 50th anniversary of ATA.

Finally, in 2020 ATA turns 50! Again, plans are under way, beginning with coming up with a book that not only serves as a memoir looking back at ATA's 50-year history, but also a voice which prophetically speaks forth into the future of theological education. This forward-looking aspect will likewise be reflected in the



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theme of the 2019 General Assembly and the 2020 Theological Consultation.

Moving toward the ongoing fulfillment of a vision

While there is much work to be done across Asia, we celebrate the many that has already been accomplished and look forward to the many things already under way. We can rejoice in the big and small steps that move us forward to the ongoing fulfillment of ATA's vision "to see member institutions effectively serving churches in fulfilling God's global mission."



Responding to the call: Interdisciplinary approaches to doing theology in Asia

This year's theological consultation is in conjunction to last year's consultation "The Calling of an Asian Biblical Scholar/ Theologian: Challenges facing Asian Evangelicals today." Our aim is to see models of how interdisciplinary theologizing can be made possible.

Main speakers:
Dr. Simon Chan
Dr. Melba Maggay
Dr. Havilah Dharamraj

31 July - 02 August 2018

BSA Twin Towers Hotel
Bank Drive, Ortigas Center
Mandaluyong, Metro Manila

Registration fee (inclusive of meals and accommodation):
USD 360 (1 bedroom suite) USD260 (twin sharing studio deluxe);
stay out guests: PHP6,500, includes buffet dinner (July 31), am & pm snacks, buffet lunch (August 1&2)

for more information, please visit: www.ataasia.com

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