

Editorial

Why another journal on Christianity in Asia? The founding spirit of *Asian Christian Review*, as spelled out in the Mission Statement, is to promote a theological conversation “among Asians as well as between Asians and non-Asians” with regard to the issues concerning and surrounding Christianity in Asia, including its relation to other religions, society and Christianity in other parts of the world.

Theological discourse based on “contexts,” despite its historic significance, has tended to be self-enclosed and not able or willing to communicate with another context. Thus, ‘Asian theology,’ if such a thing is possible at all, appears to be a ‘local’ project with little or no relevance to the rest of the world. While the emphasis on “contexts” has (or should have) a humbling effect on the universalizing theological discourse, especially that which originates from the ‘West,’ it has in the end impeded ‘contextual theologies’ to come out from their own contexts and claim their inter-contextual values.

What does not leave us in peace with such many but isolated contextual voices is the issue of (in)justice. As the world becomes increasingly one, for better or for worse, an inter-contextual platform to address global (in)justice is an ever urgent necessity. It is my hope that *Asian Christian Review* serves as a *locus* for such inter-contextual (not to mention intra-contextual) conversations in our pursuit of the footsteps of Christ towards the Reign of God.

This issue begins with a featured interview with **Hope S. Antone**, CCA Executive Secretary. As a staff being in charge of theological activities and cooperation, she discusses the broad scope of CCA’s “wider ecumenism” and their efforts for its implementation. “The global church is looking towards us, Asians, for...special or unique contribution of theologizing in the midst of plurality, poverty and powerlessness,” says Antone, challenging her fellow Asian Christians to reflect on how to live out their faith and spirituality in the Asian context.

Virginia Saldanha in her article, “A Perspective on Women’s Spirituality,” contemplates the nurturing aspects of women’s spirituality, basing her reflections on female body experiences (particularly as a mother). She powerfully argues that such life-giving spirituality should not only permeate our patriarchal, male-oriented society, but is also to be shared (practiced) by men so that women and men together bring about transformation to the world dominated by the “civilization of greed.”

Peter C. Phan’s “World Christianity and Christian Mission: Are They Compatible?” gives us an illuminating overview of changing understanding/reality/praxis both of “world Christianity” and “Christian mission.” Sharing emerging views and faces of these two concepts/realities, he sketches a new “modality” of Christian mission in the age to come, drawing on insights from

Asian Catholicism.

Tackling a thorny issue of our day, **Michael Amaladoss, SJ**, seeks to understand fundamentalism in order to effectively counter it, in his “Responding to Fundamentalism.” Having surveyed fundamentalism in various religions, he addresses a diverse range of issues such as terrorism, justice, democracy, religion-politics relations and reconciliation, urging a multi-dimensional response to this “unmet challenge.”

The article “Mapping Postcolonial Theory” is a successful attempt by **Daniel F. Pilario, CM**, to introduce a new academic discipline—“postcolonial studies”—into theological discourse. Thoroughly discussing major theorists and issues in the field, and giving a brief yet panoramic view of theological engagement with postcolonial theories, Pilario seeks to pull back theological discourse from its angelic pretension to the “rough grounds” of human reality.

Lester Edwin J. Ruiz in his (not directly theological) article, “Nationalisms in Southeast Asia,” painstakingly demonstrates the historical plurality of nationalisms in the region as well as the changing matrix and diverse theoretical approaches in/through which nationalisms (and other struggles for liberation) are understood, articulated and enacted. Taking seriously the enormous complexity of the struggles for liberation today, he stresses the importance of understanding the limits such plurality of struggles poses to themselves as the key to the future of nationalist (or any other) pursuit of transformation.

Finally, *agape*, or divine love is the focus of **Young-Ho Chun’s** “Love as Redemptive and Creative Energy,” born out of his experience as a pastor. In an age characterized by an “inflation of love,” he reclaims and reaffirms the Christian doctrine of love, especially in relation to the triune God, expounding its basic characteristics as well as the wide range of human activities upon which such love brings about changes.

Before closing, I would like to personally thank Prof. Anselm K. Min of Claremont Graduate University, Fr. Tom Michel, SJ, of the Jesuit Curia in Rome, and Ms. Virginia Saldanha of FABC, who played in respective ways no small part in the founding process of *Asian Christian Review*.

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March, 2007