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The Asia Journal of Theology is the organ of the Board of Theological Education of the Senate of Serampore College (university) and the Association for Theological Education in South East Asia. The purpose of the journal is to encourage Asian biblical scholarship and theological thinking; to relate the Gospel to our cultural, historical and religious situation in Asia; to study problems related to the teaching of theology and aims of theological education in Asia; to share news about member schools of the Associations and to maintain contact with theology and ministry beyond the region of Asia. Opinions expressed in the articles, book reviews, etc., are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the editors.

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 The Asia Journal of Theology supersedes the former *The East Asia Journal of Theology.*

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Editorial

It is not by design that this issue contains a number of articles on women. They reflect different local concerns. We begin with Maggie Low's intertextual reading of Eph 5:21-33and Gen 2:24. Low concludes that the focus of the Ephesian passage is not so much on husbands' headship of the household as the union of man and woman. The next two articles from Indonesia address rather painful issues. Yahya Wijaya issues a somber call to Asian churches which take a hardline stance on divorce to recognize their own brokenness. All too often, the church plays the part of the accusers of the woman caught in adultery rather than as a wounded healer. Wijaya's article needs to be read in light of Stefanus Christianto's. In some Asian countries (not just Indonesia), women usually emerge as victims in most divorce cases. But far worse is when, as victims of rape, they are blamed for provoking the attack.

At the same time, Asian Christians need to drink water from our own wells. The answer to female victimization is not to accept uncritically the narrative of Western feminists or adopt their *modus operandi*. Ikenna Okpaleke's piece on third wave feminism provides valuable lessons for Asians doing constructive theology. Okpaleke acknowledges the contributions of Western feminism, but also critiques and modifies it by drawing on African resources such as the principles of equity that emphasizes fairness and impartiality, and perhaps more importantly, the principle of communalism in which relationships are understood ontologically rather than merely functionally. Most Asian Christians will have no difficulty identifying with Okpaleke's proposals.

There is another side of the Asian woman. She is not just a docile victim but as James Ellis shows, she is robust and effective—sometimes more than her male counterpart—in the mission field. Ellis examines the critical but oft-neglected work of Bible women in China before the Revolution and rightly calls for a reevaluation of their roles as active agents of change.

For more than a century, the work of mission in China has riveted Western missionaries and more recently those from the Global South, especially the Chinese diaspora. Liu Yi traces this mission history which

culminates in the "Back to Jerusalem" movement spearheaded by the house churches and encouraged by others from outside. While some Christians romanticize BTJ as a spiritual movement, Liu points out that socio-political factors have also contributed to its renewed impetus.

The last two articles deal with global issues affecting Asia. Ricky Njoto addresses the youth problem in the Asia-Pacific by drawing insights from the eighteenth century American theologian Jonathan Edwards. This may come as a surprise, but good theology is often able to transcend space and time. It is not without good reason that Edwards is considered America's greatest theologian. The final article answers the secularist charge that religion, especially Christianity, contributes to the environmental crisis. While the issue itself has been well traversed, those seeking to probe further may find Sayem's literature review helpful.

Editor
Simon CHAN (schan@ttc.edu.sg)

Guidelines for Contributors

AJT is a peer-reviewed journal published twice yearly in April and October. Its primary focus is on Asian concerns. We welcome original manuscripts from any theological disciplines. The preferred length of articles is between 5,000 to 6,000 words. Manuscript should conform to Turabian, A Manual for Writers, 8th edition (Notes-Bibliography style). It should be double-spaced and submitted as a Word document using Times New Roman (12 point font) and US spelling. References should be given in footnotes with full bibliographical information in the first instance and short title in subsequent references. All Greek and Hebrew words should be transliterated. Include an abstract of 100-150 words and 5-6 keywords. For book reviews the preferred length is between 1,000 to 1,500 words. For more information, please refer to the AJT Style Sheet (http://atesea.net/publication/guidelines-for-journal-entries/). Send all submissions to: Simon Chan (ajt@atesea.net).

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An Egalitarian Marriage: Reading Ephesians 5:21-33 Intertextually with Genesis 2

Maggie LOW
Trinity Theological College, Singapore

Abstract
This article argues that Ephesians 5:21-33 is to be read intertextually with Genesis 2, since Ephesians 5:31 quotes Genesis 2:24, "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." Such a reading will show that Ephesians 5:21-33 is not a hierarchical but an egalitarian text because (1) Ephesians 5:21-22 is about mutual not patriarchal submission, with the wife as "a help corresponding" to the husband in Genesis 2; (2) "headship" in Ephesians 5:23 means "source" not "authority," since woman was taken from man's side in Genesis 2; (3) the grammar of Ephesians 5:22-23 makes better sense when read with Genesis 2; and (4) Ephesians 5:25-33 directs the husband to love rather than to submit because this echoes Christ's relationship with the church, which brings to fruition the marital union intended by God in Genesis 2:24.

Keywords
Head, source, authority, husband, wife, intertextuality

Introduction

Ephesians 5:22-23 is claimed as a cornerstone for marital hierarchy: "Wives, be subject to your husbands as you are to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife just as Christ is the head of the church, the body of which he is the Savior" (NRSV).[1] However, it is a stone that can cause both wives and husbands to stumble: women are suppressed and men are

1 All citations from the Bible are from the NRSV, unless otherwise stated.

Corresponding author
Maggie LOW: maggie@ttc.edu.sg

pressured to act as leaders, even if they are less spiritually mature than their wives. This text is also used to argue against women leadership in the church, for it is thought that as a man is the "head" of the family, so also a man ought to be the "head" of the church, lest a woman leader in the church might come into conflict with her husband at home.[2]

Such issues arise because readers fail to read Ephesians 5:21-33 in the light of Genesis 2, which is recalled in Ephesians 5:31: "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." My thesis is that Ephesians 5:21-33 is an egalitarian text when this citation of Genesis 2:24 is used as an interpretive key. My method is primarily an intertextual reading of the Ephesians text, which will have implications for whether "head" means "source" or "authority over" and whether "submission" implies a hierarchy. This thesis rests on two premises that I have established elsewhere and will only summarize here: First, that intertextual interpretation evokes the larger context of the cited text, which in this case is Genesis 2, and second, that Genesis 2 is an egalitarian text.[3]

Regarding the methodology for intertextual reading, the evoked text *as a whole* should be considered when making connections to the alluding text, for the later author would be well aware of the existence of the earlier composition. The writer may reuse the earlier text in different ways, such as reversal, reprediction, fulfillment, typological linkages, or merely as an echo.[4]

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2 The application of the Ephesians text to the issue of church leadership is problematic at several levels: The head of the church is neither a man nor a woman but Christ himself (Eph 4:15); women are to submit only to their own (*idios*) husbands, not to any man (so also Harold W. Hoehner, *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary* [Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002], 732); and even if one were to take a hierarchical view of marriage, the husband is responsible only with respect to family matters (so also William C. C. Fung, "An Interdependent View on Women in Leadership," *Asia Journal of Theology* 29, no. 1 [April 2015]: 117-138).

3 Maggie Low, *Mother Zion in Deutero-Isaiah: A Metaphor for Zion Theology*, Studies in Biblical Literature 155 (New York: Lang, 2013); Maggie Low, "Women in Ministry: An Interview with Theological and Sociological Perspectives," *Church and Society in Asia Today* 15, no. 1 (Apr 2012): 45-58.

4 Low, *Mother Zion*, 22-28. With respect to the New Testament use of the Old, another reuse would simply be the application of the Old Testament precedent. For example, 1 Corinthians 11 recalls Genesis 1 to 3 as a whole and reuses it in different ways: The "image of God" in 1 Corinthians 11:7 follows Genesis 1:26-27; woman being created

As for Genesis 2 and 3, it is an egalitarian text because the order of creation is not meant to confer authority, since humans were created *after* the creatures in Genesis 1, while in Genesis 2, man was created *after* the Garden, and woman was created *after* the animals. Fundamentally, the Genesis 2 narrative deals with the problem that it is not good for the human to be alone. It is not a text about marital hierarchy and authority. In any case, the rule of primogeniture (the right of the first-born) applies only to male siblings and not to marriage. Moreover, God himself did not hold strictly to the primogeniture rule, choosing to elevate Jacob over his older brother Esau as well as Ephraim over Manasseh.

The woman's role as *ezer kenegdo* ("a help corresponding to him") does not make her subordinate, because *ezer* (help) is most often used for God who helps his people.[5] *Kenegdo* (a hapax legomenon made up of the words for "like" and "in front of/opposite") is used in Mishnaic Hebrew to mean "equal."[6] Furthermore, the creation of woman from man's *tsela*, usually translated as "rib," does not imply subordination but equality. This is because all other Hebrew usage of *tsela* is translated as "side," whether of an object, building, or hill. Thus Genesis 2 pictures women as being built from half the side of the man to be his equal, to complete and support him.[7]

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for the sake of man in 1 Corinthians 11:8-9 appeals to Genesis 2:18-25; the unity of man and woman in Christ in 1 Corinthians 11:11 reverses man's rule over woman in Genesis 3:16; and man coming from woman in 1 Corinthians 11:12 picks up from Genesis 3:20 and 4:1. See also Philip B. Payne, *Man and Woman, One in Christ: An Exegetical and Theological Study of Paul's Letters* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009), 193-194.

5 Phyllis Trible, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality:* Overtures to Biblical Theology (Philadephia: Fortress, 1978), 90. George W. Ramsey, "Is Name-giving an Act of Domination in Genesis 2:23 and Elsewhere?" *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 50 (1988): 24-35, has made it clear that naming is not an act of authority. Among other things, he points out that Hagar was the first to name God as El-Roi (Gn 16:13).

6 R. David Freedman, "Woman, A Power Equal to Man," *BARev* 9, no. 1 (1983): 57, citing the Talmud that "The study of Torah is equal to all the other commandments," that is, the commandments of making various offerings.

7 John H. Walton, *Genesis*, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), 177, and Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis Chapters 1-17*, New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 178.

While the woman is often blamed for the fall because she was deceived, this does not exonerate the man, who was present and quietly acquiescing throughout the encounter with the snake (Genesis 3:6 "who was with her"). In fact, in Romans 5, Paul attributes the introduction of sin solely to Adam. The imposition of hierarchy in marriage is presented as the consequence of the fall: "And he shall rule over you" (Genesis 3:16), which reverses God's original intention for marriage in Genesis 2:24 that husband and wife were to become "one flesh."[8]

Therefore the citation of Genesis 2:24 in Ephesians 5:31 requires us to read the Ephesians text in an egalitarian light, for surely the gospel cannot be more discriminatory than the Torah. Indeed, what the writer of Ephesians points out in the end is that the unity between husband and wife in Genesis 2:24 can only be fulfilled christologically. The rest of this essay will establish two main points: that the wife submits in the context of mutual submission, as the outworking of being her husband's *ezer kenegdo*, and that Genesis 2:24 determines the meaning of the husband's headship as "source" rather than "authority over."

Submission (*Hypotassō*): Reading Ephesians 5:21-22 Intertextually with Genesis 2:24

Below I present a chiastic structure and literal translation of Ephesians 5:21-24, known as the wives' section:

21 submitting to one another in the fear of Christ,

22 A the wives to their own husbands as to the Lord

23 B because the husband is head of the wife

B' as Christ (is) head of the church, he (is) savior of the body

24 A' but as the church submits to Christ so also wives to husbands in everything.[9]

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8 The apparent dissonance with 1 Timothy 2:12-14 (that women cannot teach because Eve was deceived) has to do with correcting genealogical heresies related to the cult of Artemis in Ephesus and not with Paul laying down universal creation principles. See Low, "Women."

9 Gregory W. Dawes, *Body in Question: Metaphor & Meaning in the Interpretation of Ephesians 5:21-33* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 84, presents different chiastic arrangements, but mine is based on the use of parallel words shown underlined.

AA' is about the submission of wives to husbands, following the example of the church submitting to Christ. BB' gives the reason for submitting and compares the man as head of the wife to Christ as head of the church.

Most scholars recognize the influence of Genesis 2:24 but limit it to the later section regarding the husbands in Ephesians 5:25-33 because "flesh' in 5:31 is associated with "bodies" in 5:28, "flesh" in 5:29, and "body" in 5:30. On the other hand, Paul Sampley has pointed out that "flesh" in Ephesians 5:31 is also associated with references to "head" and "body" in 5:23 in the wives' section (Ephesians 5:22-24); nonetheless, he argues that the wives' subordination is still required by this appeal to the Torah.[10] Others, such as A. T. Lincoln, believe that Ephesians 5:31 and its "one flesh" unity is incompatible with the hierarchy assumed in the wives' submission. While it is true that *hypotassō* (submit) denotes a subordinate role of one individual to that of another, whether in a political, military, or social context,[11] this presumption is undermined and redefined in the immediate context of Ephesians 5 and also in the larger context of the New Testament epistles.

In the immediate context of Ephesians 5, v. 22, "the wives to their own husbands as to the Lord," is an ellipsis that does not contain a verb. The verb "submit" needs to be supplied from the preceding participle in v. 21, "*submitting* to one another in the fear of Christ." This ellipsis ties the two verses closely together, implying that such mutual submission is to be practiced in the household codes. It is usually recognized that v. 21 is a transitional verse that functions both as a conclusion to the preceding section on living in the Spirit (5:15-20) and as an introduction to

10 Andrew T. Lincoln, "The Use of the OT in Ephesians (Gen. 2.24; Ex. 20.12; Is. 57.19 & Ps. 68.18)," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 14 (1982): 16-57; Paul Sampley, *"And the Two Shall Become One Flesh": A Study of Tradition in Ephesians 5:21-33* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1971), 97-99. Sampley assumes that submission in this and other texts such as 1 Timothy 2:11-14, 1 Corinthians 11:8-9, and 1 Peter 3:5-6 implies a hierarchy. I have dealt with this erroneous assumption in his aforementioned texts: For 1 Timothy 2, see "Women in Ministry," 1 Corinthians 11 is discussed in n. 4 above, and 1 Peter 3 is addressed at the end of this section.

11 A. T. Lincoln, "Use of the OT," 36. Lincoln, *Ephesians*, Word Biblical Commentary 42 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014), 365-366, writes that the notion of submission in Pauline writing is used only for specific groups such as women (1 Cor 14:34; Col 3:18; 1 Tm 2:11), children (1 Tm 3:4), slaves (Ti 2:9), and believers in relation to the state (Rom 13:1, 5; Ti 3:1). Similarly, Clinton E. Arnold, *Ephesians: Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament*, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 356, 380; Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 734.

the household rules. The participle "submitting" is the culmination of a thought that begins in v. 18 with an imperative to be filled with the Spirit, followed by five particles ("speaking," "singing," "praising," "thanking," and "submitting"). These are acts directed at all the members of the church for the sake of unity, without any hint of hierarchy. Moreover, *phobos* (fear, reverence) for Christ appears in v. 21 and for the husband in v. 33 as an *inclusio*, thereby making mutual submission integral to the marriage section.[12]

In the larger context of the NT Epistles, there are two other occurrences of *hypotassō* where there is no idea of hierarchy: the spirits of prophets to themselves (1 Cor 14:32) and Corinthian believers to the household of Stephanas (1 Cor 16:15-16). Despite the common hierarchical implication of *hypotassō*, a New Testament writer can imbue it with a more Christian understanding. This is the case in 1 Corinthians 16:15-16 where believers are simply to submit to those who serve them. Philip Payne points out rightly that Stephanas's household would include women, slaves, and children.[13] Further, it is not clear that Stephanas is a leader of the church, as Paul equates him with other fellow workers and laborers. Therefore, since "submitting to one another" in Ephesians 5:21 does not imply an ecclesiological hierarchy, neither would 5:22 imply a patriarchal order in marriage.[14]

Despite the above nonhierarchical usage of *hypotassō* (submission) and its distinction from *hypakouō* (obedience) applied to children and slaves in Ephesians 6:1 and 5, some scholars argue that there is no distinction between submission and obedience when applied to wives. They argue that both words are used in 1 Peter 3:5-6 where Sarah obeyed (*hypakouō*)

12 Payne, *Man*, 278-279; Arnold, *Ephesians*, 356-357, 366, 380; Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 733; Dawes, *Body*, 215-216; Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 352, 365.

13 Payne, *Man*, 282.

14 Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 366, himself notes that Paul advocated for the idea of mutual submission in Galatians 5:13 and Philippians 2:3-4, which involves regarding others as better and ourselves as their slaves. It is also helpful to note that "submitting" in 5:21, 22 is probably used in the middle rather than passive voice with the former suggesting voluntary action, while the latter denotes an enforced action. Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 732, helpfully points out that in the previous context (5:18-21), four of the five participles dependent on the imperative "to be filled by the Spirit" are active, and thus the fifth participle, "submitting," should also be understood as the act of a free agent.

Abraham. Slaves are also called to submit (*hypotassō*) in the Pastoral Epistles (Ti 2:9; 1 Pt 2:18). Outside of the New Testament, *hypotassō* is used only two times of the wife's submission to her husband, whereas in Hellenistic Judaism, she is more commonly told to obey (*hypakouō*) or to serve.[15]

In response to these arguments, it can be pointed out that Peter was writing in a different context in which he was exhorting Christians to be a testimony to unbelievers even in the face of unjust treatment, and so called on wives to submit (and obey) even to husbands who do not obey the word that "they may be won over without a word by their wives' conduct" (1 Pt 3:1).[16] The literary context of Ephesians also differs from that of Titus and Peter, neither of whom address children in their household codes. Therefore, when applied to children and slaves in Ephesians 6:1 and 5, *hypakouō* (obey) is used in a clear context of parental and vocational hierarchies. In light of the Hellenistic codes, it stands out even more that the writer uses the less common *hypotassō* for wives, linking it directly to mutual submission in the church rather than to cultural patriarchy.[17]

Having put aside the idea of hierarchical submission in Ephesians 5:21-22, we may now read it in the light of Ephesians 5:31/Genesis 2:24. Submission is required not because of the husband's might or right but for the sake of supporting him in his need. After all, God was the one who declared that "It is not good that the man should be alone" and so made him a woman to be his help, a woman who was built out of his side to give him support. Such an idea of submission is no different from that in the New Testament in which Christians are exhorted to be of one mind

15 Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 734-735; Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 368.

16 Dawes, *Body*, 223, also recognizes the difference between Ephesians and the Pastoral Epistles (e.g., Ti 2:5) and 1 Peter. In Ephesians, Christians are not exhorted to behave in a manner acceptable to unbelievers; rather, the writer emphasizes the newness of the Christian life that should no longer be lived like the Gentiles (Eph 4:17). Arnold, *Ephesians*, 370-371, adds that a major difference with the Greco-Roman household codes is that the latter only address the male authority figure (the *paterfamilias*), while Ephesians first addresses wives, children, and slaves as independent moral agents.

17 Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 735-746, acknowledges Paul's teaching on equal conjugal rights in 1 Corinthians 7:2-4, an unheard-of concept in that day, but Hoehner writes that wives are subordinate with regard to the lines of authority though they are qualitatively equal to their husbands. However, Paul himself writes that the exercise of a conjugal right is a matter of having authority: "For the wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does; likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does" (1 Cor 7:4).

by regarding others as better than ourselves and to look to the interest of others (Phil 2:2-4). In fact, to love our neighbors is to become slaves to one another (Gal 5:13-14).

Both the Genesis and Ephesians texts never tell the husband to lead, instruct, or impose his authority on his wife; rather, it is the wife's God-given purpose to help the husband by supplying what he lacks or needs. Although Ephesians 5:22 uses the language of submit rather than that of help, this simply follows from Ephesians 5:21's call for mutual submission for the sake of communal growth. The author's choice to use "submit" may well be related to his emphasis of church unity throughout the Ephesians Epistle.[18]

Since we have established that Ephesians 5:31/Genesis 2:24 is applicable to the wives' section, we can now deal with the crux of *kephalē* (head) against the background of the creation narrative.

Head (kephalē): Reading Ephesians 5:23 Intertextually with Genesis 2

In Genesis 2, God built the woman from the rib/side that he took from the man, leading the man to exclaim, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; this one shall be called Woman, for out of Man this one was taken" (Gn 2:22-23). "Flesh and bone" is a traditional formula used in the Old Testament to indicate biological kinship.[19] The very next verse, Genesis 2:24, spells out the implication of the origin story for marriage: "Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh."

Traditional Israelite marriages are already patrilocal, so for a man to leave his parents indicates a change in priority. He is to cling to his wife, and they are to become "one flesh," that is, a new kinship unit independent of the man's family of origin.[20] This depiction of man as the source material for the creation of woman simply provides the basis for

18 Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 102-103, writes that one theme in Ephesians that most commentators agree on is that of unity.

19 Gordon Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, Word Biblical Commentary (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1987), 70.

20 Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 70-71.

marital commitment and union and precludes any notions of hierarchy or domination.

Thus, reading Ephesians 5:23 intertextually with Genesis 2 means that the husband's headship should be interpreted as "source" rather than "authority over" his wife. The traditional patriarchal view that *kephalē* (head) means "authority" was first questioned in a 1954 article by Stephen Bedale, who argued that "head" can mean "source." Wayne Grudem wrote an extensive article to dispute this in 1985, which was rebutted by Richard S. Cervin in 1989. Grudem continued his defense of head as "leader" in 1990 and 2001, but as Philip B. Payne writes in 2009, the majority view in recent scholarship acknowledges "source" as another meaning for "head" when used in 1 Corinthians 11 and Ephesians 5:22.[21] I will not reprise the debate exhaustively here, but it is fundamental to understand that the meaning of *kephalē* depends on the context in which the word is used.

For instance, Payne cites some texts from Artemidorus Daldiani (late second century CE) in his work *Oneirocritica* (or *The Interpretation of Dreams*): "A man who dreamt that his father was sick got pains in his head. You already know from the first book that the head symbolizes the father" (4.2), and "the head is the source of life and light for the whole body" (1.2). Grudem, however, rightfully points out that the text continues to explain that the "head" in the dream could also symbolize other things, such as money or master, but Grudem then insists that *kephalē* can only mean the literal physical head because "it would certainly be illegitimate to take this text and make a list of many new 'meanings' that the word *kephalē*

21 Stephen Bedale, "The Meaning of κεφαλή in the Pauline Epistles," *Journal of Theological Studies* 5 (1954): 211-215; Wayne Grudem, "Does *Kephalē* ('head') Mean 'Source' or 'Authority' in Greek Literature? A Survey of 2,336 Examples," in *The Role Relationship of Men & Women: New Testament Teaching*, ed. Wayne Grudem and George W. Knight III (Chicago: Moody, 1985), 49-80; Richard Cervin, "Does Κεφαλή Mean 'Source' or 'Authority Over' in Greek Literature? A Rebuttal," *Trinity Journal* 10 NS (1989): 85-112; Wayne Grudem, "The Meaning of Κεφαλή ("head"): A Response to Recent Studies," *Trinity Journal* 11 NS (1990): 3-72; Grudem, "The Meaning of κεφαλή ('head'): An Evaluation of New Evidence, Real and Alleged," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 44 no. 1 (March 2001): 25-65; Payne, *Man*, 117 n. 7, gives an extensive list of scholars who accept that "head" may mean "source." Payne, *Man*, 120 n. 13, points out that Cervin submitted his rejoinder in 1991 to *Trinity Journal*, but its editor, Douglas J. Moo, refused to publish it.

could take in Ancient Greek."[22] This is where Grudem's bias becomes obvious, because he refuses to acknowledge other metaphorical meanings of "head" that could include "source"; after all, father, money, or master can be understood as the "source" of one's life, living, or livelihood. In fact, "head" as a metaphor for "master" could also imply authority, showing that *kephalē* is capable of different meanings depending on how it is used.

This is precisely the point that Gregory W. Dawes makes when it comes to interpreting metaphors. He criticizes Grudem and his opponents for neglecting the fact that different metaphorical senses of a word are possible in different contexts. A metaphor creates meaning by making use of the literal sense of the words used, but "a living metaphor is by definition creative of meaning: it gives a new twist to the established sense of a word." Such a meaning is determined by context and may vary from place to place.[23]

Dawes then goes on to examine the use of "head" in Ephesians 1:22-23 and 4:15-16, arguing that the former means "authority over," while the latter means "source." Regarding Ephesians 1:22-23, "And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all," the allusion to Psalm 8:7 and the reference to all things being under "his feet" would give "head" the meaning of "authority over," but Dawes rightly points out that this is authority specifically over the cosmos rather than over the church.[24]

The metaphor for Christ as "head" over the church as his "body" is found in Ephesians 4:15-16, "But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body's growth in

22 Payne, *Man*, 122; Wayne, "Response," 51-52. Wayne, "Response," 16, was willing to concede that in a fifth-century-BCE saying, "Zeus the head, Zeus the middle, Zeus from whom all things are perfected," "head" could mean beginning/source/origin/cause. But he argues that "the ambiguity of the text makes it illegitimate to use as a clear example of κεφαλή meaning 'source.'" Again, this seems disingenuous because the ambiguity is not between "source" and "authority" but between the different ways of explaining "source."

23 Dawes, *Body*, 126-128.

24 Dawes, *Body*, 139-142.

building itself up in love." Here, Dawes points out that the terms "growth" and "supply" indicate that Christ is the source of the body's life and growth, an idea that is paralleled in 5:29 where Christ "nourishes" and "cares for" the church his body.[25] In Ephesians 1:22-23, it is clear that Paul uses "head" to signify Christ's authority, especially in contrast to everything being under his feet, whereas "head" in Ephesians 4:15 and 5:23 is simply used to depict two parts joined together, growing and functioning as one.

Commentators who argue for "head" as "authority over" also struggle to explain the appositional role of "savior" in v. 23. While this makes sense for the person of Christ, the closest parallel that such scholars can come up with for the husband is that he is the "protector" of the wife,[26] a role that falls short of the liberation wrought by Christ. The explanation of Christ's role as savior is usually referenced from Ephesians 2, and a careful reading of that chapter will show that there is no instruction to submit to Christ as savior. Rather, there are declarations that we are "created" in Christ Jesus (2:10) and that he "create[s]" in himself one new humanity (2:15). Thus, "savior" as the explanation for Christ's headship in Ephesians 5:23 highlights the aspect of "source" for the creation of the church rather than "authority over" the church. In like manner, man is the head of his wife, not because he is her "protector" to whom she is subordinate, but

25 Dawes, *Body*, 146-147. For Ephesians 5:23, however, Dawes, *Body*, 134-137, merely assumes that "head" means "authority over" because it is the basis for the subordination of the wives. He ignores 5:21, which calls for mutual submission. Similarly, Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 739-740.
Christ's headship as source for the church is also found in Colossians 1:18, "He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning (*archē*), the firstborn (*prōtotokos*) from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything." Stephen Francis Miletic, *"One Flesh": Eph.5,22-24, 5.31: Marriage and New Creation*, Analecta Biblica 115 (Rome, Italy: Gregorian & Biblical Press, 1988), 78, concedes that "head" is qualified by *archē* and *prōtotokos*, and refers to the creation of the church. Payne, *Man*, 286, writes that "head" in this context refers to Christ as the source of the church through his redemptive death and resurrection.
Another line of argument is offered by Martin Troy, "Performing the Head Role: Man is the Head of Woman (1 Cor 11:3 and Eph 5:23)," *Biblical Research* 57 (2012): 69-80, who points out that there were two views in the ancient medical texts regarding the center of intelligence and bodily control: the head or the heart. Troy argues that Paul followed the latter view, so if he meant for the husband to have authority, he would say that the husband should be the 'heart' of the wife. However, as argued by Dawes, a metaphor is best understood in its context.

26 Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 743; Arnold, *Ephesians*, 382.

rather because he is her "source" from whom she is created and to whom she is joined.

The Rest of the Wives' Section: Reading Ephesians 5:23-24 Intertextually with Genesis 2

I will now demonstrate that the rest of the verses in Ephesians 5:23-24 make better sense when read in the light of Genesis 2. For 5:23—"because *(hoti)* the husband is head of the wife as *(hōs)* Christ [is] head of the church, he [is] savior of the body"—some commentators take Paul as basing the marital pattern on the new covenant in Christ, but most recognize that the conjunction *hōs* (as) points to Christ as the example rather than the aetiology for the husband's role. Rather, the conjunction *hoti* (because) indicates where the writer is giving the basis for his injunction, and by referring to the husband as the head of the wife, he is appealing to the creation text. Indeed, Genesis 2:24 is often the biblical foundation for teachings about marriage: Jesus appealed to it in Mark 10:9 when opposing divorce, and the rabbis used it for a man's need to be reunited with "his other half."[27]

Another marker alluding to Genesis 2 may be indicated by the variations between plural and singular uses of wife and husband in 5:21-24. The AA' pair uses the plurals for wives and husbands, while B anomalously uses the singular "husband" and "wife." It may be that this is a better parallel for B' where Christ and church are in the singular, but at the same time, it also alludes to the original creation as expressed in Genesis 2:23 with its singular use of "man" and "woman" as well as "flesh": "Then the man said, 'This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh (*sarkos*); this one shall be called Woman (*gunē*), for out of Man (*andros*) this one was taken.'"

The goal of being "one flesh" also explains why wives are to submit "in all things" (v. 24b) to husbands, because it is only when the couple move in

27 Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 738 n. 4, points out that contrary to Markus Barth, *Ephesians 4-6: A New Translation and Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Bible 34A (New York: Doubleday, 1974), 613, *hōs* should not be understood causally but comparatively, which is how it consistently functions in the present context (so also Ernest Best, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Ephesians* [Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998], 535). Barth, *Ephesians*, 725 n. 446, lists references to rabbinic interpretations of Genesis 2:24; Moritz, *Mystery*, 129-130, discusses Genesis 2:24 in the New Testament (Mk 10:1-12; 1 Cor 6, 7) to show that it is the basis for marital commitment.

complete unity that they can be one. Such submission is not to whatever the husband demands, however, but to God's will, which is implicit in Genesis 2, since both are not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Similarly in Ephesians 5, the wives' submission to the husbands "in all things" in A' needs to be understood against its parallel in A, where wives are to submit to their own husbands "as to Christ" (Eph 5:22). Submitting to Christ is both the motivation and limitation for the wives.

Commentators also have difficulties with the strong adversative *alla* in Ephesians 5:24,

> as Christ [is] head of the church, he [is] savior of the body,
> but (*alla*) as the church submits to Christ, so also wives to husbands in everything.

If Christ is the authoritative head of the church, then it follows logically that the church should submit to Christ. Most, therefore, explain the adversative in relation to the immediately preceding line, "He is savior of the body," to emphasize that the husband is *not* the savior of the wife. Hoehner suggests that the line should be rendered, "but notwithstanding this difference (or "nevertheless") as the church submits to Christ...."[28] However, this is an awkward reading requiring one to read the disjunctive *alla* as an implied contrast between the husband and Christ rather than as its *prima facie* contrast between Christ's headship and the church's submission.

If one understands "head" as "source," however, then *alla* may be understood as indicating that the church is not merely a passive recipient of Christ's provision and saving grace but that she submits to him by actively "grow[ing] up in every way into him who is the head" (Eph 4:15-16). In the same way, wives are not merely to be dependent extensions of their husbands, but they are to be *ezer kenegdo*, which entails companionship and fulfilling the divine mandate to serve and keep the Garden of Eden (Gn

28 Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 744; so also Dawes, *Body*, 86; Barth, *Ephesians 4-6*, 619; Arnold, *Ephesians*, 382.
An alternative explanation for the use of *alla* in Ephesians 5:24 is found in *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 3rd ed., rev. and ed., Frederick William Danker (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 45, where it is used with an imperative to strengthen a command. This is on the basis that the verse is an ellipsis that includes a command to wives to be subject to the husband. However, the *alla* is directed at the church's submission (an indicative present verb) vis-à-vis Christ, not at the wives' submission. Thus, an explanation for *alla* is still necessary, which I offer above.

2:15).[29] Just as the church is to align herself with the purpose of her head (Eph 4:15-16), so also the wife is to employ her strengths, gifts, and abilities to enable the husband to fulfill God's calling. This leaves us with the final question regarding the husband's role.

The Husbands' Section: Reading Ephesians 5:25-33 Intertextually with Genesis 2

Even hierarchicalists recognize that the call for mutual submission qualifies the husbands' attitude in some way, but they argue that husbands are not called to submit to wives, just as Christ is never said to submit to the church. Why does the writer not use *hypotassō* for the husband if his intention was to emphasize mutual submission? Why does he instead command husbands to love their wives as Christ loves the church? I present the main part of the husband section below in Ephesians 5:25-33 and include some key words in Greek.

25 Husbands, love (*agapate*) your wives,
just as Christ loved (*ēgapēsen*) the church and gave himself up for her,
...
28 In the same way, husbands should love (*agapan*) their (*heautōn*) wives
as they do their own (*hōs ta heautōn*) bodies (*sōmata*).
He who loves (*ho agapōn*) his (*heautou*) wife loves himself (*heauton*).
29 For no one ever hates his own (*heautou*) flesh (*sarka*),
but he nourishes and tenderly cares for it,
just as Christ does for the church,
30 because we are members of his body (*sōmatos*).
31 "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother
and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one flesh (*sarka*)."
32 This is a great mystery, and I am applying it to Christ and the church.
33 Each of you, however,
should love (*agapatō*) his (*heautou*) wife as himself (*hōs heauton*)
and a wife should respect her husband.

29 Although David J. A. Clines, *What Does Eve Do to Help? And Other Readerly Questions* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1990), 25-48, argues that Eve merely helped in procreation, there is no reference to procreation in the non-Priestly account of Genesis 2 and 3 until after the fall.

The section begins with husbands being called to imitate Christ's love in 5:25, which is an echo of 5:2, "and live in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God." In fact, 5:25 repeats 5:2 almost exactly:

5:2 "as Christ loved (*kathōs kai ho Christos ēgapēsen*) us
and gave himself up for (*kai paredōken heautōn hyper*) us"
5:25 "as Christ loved (*kathōs kai ho Christos ēgapēsen*) the church
and gave himself up for (*kai heautōn paredōken hyper*) her"

It is this love by which complete unity between Christ and the church as his body can be attained (5:32),[30] and similarly, husbands are exhorted to love their wives as their own bodies (*sōmata*) in 5:28.

At the same time, keeping in mind the marital goal of being one flesh (*sarkos*) in Genesis 2:24, the author integrates the emulation of Christ's love with the Old Testament command in Leviticus 19:18, "You shall love (*agapēseis*) your neighbor as yourself (*hōs seauton*)" (cf. LXX). This command is alluded to in Ephesians 5:28 (and 33), where one is to love (*agapaō*) one's wife as oneself (*hōs heauton*).[31]

The link between bodies (*sōmata*) and self (*heauton*) in 5:28 leads to the idea of caring for one's flesh (*sarka*) in 5:29, which is the verbal link to being one flesh (*sarka*) in 5:31. The husband's wholehearted commitment (to cleave or cling) to his wife in Genesis 2:24 by loving her as he loves himself can now be achieved through Christ's enabling and example of love.

Therefore, husbands are directed to love rather than to submit to their wives, not for the social reason of preserving the hierarchical order, nor

30 Scholars debate whether "mystery" in Ephesians 5:32 refers to the union between husband and wife or to that between Christ and the church. While most takes it as referring to the latter (Dawes, *Body*, 183-185; Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 781), in view of the tight verbal connections in 5:29-32, Arnold, *Ephesians*, 396-397, argues that it could refer to both relationships in a typological way, with marriage finding its antitype in the union between Christ and the church.

31 Sampley, *Two*, 32-34, 139-142. Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 379, 384, agrees that Leviticus 19:18 is hinted at in Ephesians 5:33 but not in 5:28. Moritz, *Mystery*, 149-150, argues against a deliberate allusion but thinks that the writer simply had a strong Jewish background. Against these two views, it can be seen that 5:28 parallels 5:33 with the repetition of *agapaō* (love), *hōs* (as), and self (*heautou/seautou*), which are found in Leviticus 19:18 (LXX). Sampley points out that in the rabbinic tradition, a man is to love his wife as himself (Babylonian Talmud Yebamoth 62b), and she is to be regarded as he regards his body (Babylonian Talmud Berakoth 24a).

for the psychological reason of meeting different gender needs,[32] but for the more important theological reason of becoming "one flesh," a union rooted in Genesis 2:24 and brought to fruition in Christ.

Conclusion

Some might find that an egalitarian marriage is an oxymoron to a Greco-Roman mind, including the minds of the New Testament writers. However, this overlooks the radical nature of the gospel spelled out in Galatians 3:28: "There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus." This is not just a soteriological text but one that has practical, sociological implications—Greeks do not need circumcision, slaves like Onesimus are to be restored as brothers, women can be deacons and apostles (Rom 16:1, 7), and marriages are to be the one-flesh egalitarian marriage that God meant it to be. Many commentators still defend "love-patriarchalism," which holds to the practice of hierarchy albeit exercised in love. I. Howard Marshall believes that Paul did not go beyond love-patriarchalism, but he argues that following Paul's relationship will logically lead to egalitarian relationships in marriage.[33]

The advantages of reading Ephesians as promoting egalitarian marital unity, however, outweigh those of a hierarchical relationship, even if it is based on love. For one thing, it avoids the potential for spousal abuse; for another, it takes the burden off the husband to be the leader and gives him room to grow; and finally, it gives an active role to the wife for the husband's benefit—she is not merely to be a passive subordinate but a strong partner who seeks the welfare of the husband so that both can grow

32 Emerson Eggerichs, *Love and Respect: The Love She Most Desires; The Respect He Desperately Needs* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2004), argues that men need respect, while women need love, a notion that has been challenged by another psychological study by Shauna Springer, *Marriage, for Equals: The Successful Joint (Ad)Ventures of Well-Educated Couples* (Indianapolis: Dog Ear, 2012).

33 I. Howard Marshall, "Mutual Love and Submission in Marriage: Colossians 3:18-19 and Ephesians 5:21-33," in *Discovering Biblical Equality: Complementarity without Hierarchy*, ed. Ronald W. Pierce and Rebecca Merrill Groothuis (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2004), 194. The term "love patriarchalism" is attributed to Gerd Theissen, *The Social Setting of Pauline Christianity: Essays on Corinth*, ed. and trans. with an introduction by John H. Schütz (Philadelphia: Fortress. 1982).

into Christ and serve according to God's call. What Christian husband would not want that?

About author

Dr. Maggie Low is lecturer in Old Testament at Trinity Theological College, Singapore.

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Broken Church for Broken Couples: How the Divided Church Should Take Care of Divorced Persons

Yahya WIJAYA
Duta Wacana Christian University, Indonesia

Abstract
This article challenges the radical anti-divorce attitude embraced by most churches in Asia. Although such an attitude is based on Jesus's saying, it contradicts what Jesus really meant. Jesus resisted the Jewish tradition of easy divorce for the sake of the victimized, particularly the wife. It is, therefore, suggested that instead of falling into legalism, the church's approach regarding divorce should start from its own reality as a broken fellowship that yet still attempts to be a channel of the Good News.

Keywords
Divorce, remarriage, Christian realism, family, church

Introduction

Recent research on the family shows that the meanings and features of families in twenty-first-century Asia have undergone a significant shift from their traditional image. For example, Stella Quah's study of families in East and Southeast Asia covering seventeen countries indicates that the family structure in the region has undergone changes marked by, among other things, a higher percentage of divorce and an increase in the average age of marriage.[1] Many factors have been mentioned as the causes of

1 Stella Quah, "Major Trends Affecting Families in East and Southeast Asia" (New York: UN Programme on the Family Division for Social Policy and Development Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2013). See also Premchand Dommaraju and Gavin Jones, "Divorce Trends in Asia," *Asian Journal of Social Science* 39, no. 6

Corresponding author
Yahya WIJAYA: yahyawijaya@staff.ukdw.ac.id

divorce, including the weakening of patriarchal culture in which wives are expected to stay in unhappy marriages to avoid social pressure and negative economic consequences. Today's situation, with the number of women entering the professional world equal to that of men, makes wives less dependent on their husbands economically as well as socially, and thus the choice for independent living becomes more rational. Yang and Yen suggest that the nature of marriage in East Asian societies has shifted from primarily institutional to more personal and individual so that the aspects of emotion, companionship, gender egalitarianism, and self-actualization are given priority.[2] Studying the situation in Indonesia, Mark Cammack and Tim Heaton also find a similar phenomenon. Their research shows that modernization has affected Asian families in different ways. In the early stage, in the case of traditional families that previously practiced arranged marriages, the number of divorces was reduced as marriage became more love-based and therefore the bond between wife and husband was stronger than in arranged marriages. However, in the case of modern families more exposed to global media which promotes a flexible attitude toward divorce, the number of divorces increases.[3] The situation of today's Asian families, therefore, is becoming similar to that of their Western counterparts in terms of nuclearization, gender egalitarianism, and the wife's economic independence. The ideal of marriage has now changed from that of the traditional one, which allows little room for personal and individual interests, particularly that of the wife. An increase in divorce is a consequence of an increase in the sense of freedom from the constraints of the traditional community.

Traditionally the church upholds the principle of permanent monogamous marriage. In that principle there is no room for divorce. The Roman Catholic Church even considers marriage as a sacrament and, for that reason, applies the doctrine of "indissolubility."[4] Protestant churches

(2011): 725-750.

2 Yang Wen-Shan and Yen Pei-Chih, "A Comparative Study of Marital Dissolution in East Asian Societies: Gender Attitudes and Social Expectations towards Marriage in Taiwan, Korea and Japan," *Asian Journal of Social Science* 39, no. 6 (2011): 753.

3 Mark Cammack and Tim Heaton, "Explaining the Recent Upturn in Divorce in Indonesia: Developmental Idealism and the Effect of Political Change," *Asian Journal of Social Science* 39, no. 6 (2011): 777-778.

4 The term "indissolubility" was introduced by the Council of Trent in the sixteenth

are not much different in holding the principle of indivisible marriage, although they do not regard marriage as a sacrament.[5] Such a principle encourages the church to prepare Christian marriages carefully. Most churches set certain preconditions to ensure that the marriages of their members have been carefully considered and that no one has been harmed. Not all Christian couples survive, however. In the case of divorce, many churches in Asia tend to be passive if not negative, letting members facing divorce solve their own problem. Churches do offer pastoral care, but such ministry is not always effective because the situation of couples facing divorce has usually reached a serious stage when brought to the attention of the church.[6] Church ministers often face the dilemma between, on the one hand, the official doctrine of the church, which rejects divorce, and, on the other hand, pastoral considerations, which takes into account that divorce can offer a reasonable way out for particular couples who have been suffering for quite a long time.[7] Within the Roman Catholic Church, there is also a "disconnect" between the anti-divorce doctrine and what is called "*sensus fidelium*," that is, the belief of the majority of believers that

century. According to Himes and Corden, it was more a church legal term than a moral one. See Kenneth R. Himes and James A. Coriden, "The Indissolubility of Marriage: Reasons to Reconsider," *Theological Studies* 65, no. 3 (September 1, 2004): 453-499, https://doi.org/10.1177/004056390406500301. The rejection of divorce in Roman Catholic canon law is actually not absolute. Referring to 1 Cor 7:12-16 as an exception of the indissolubility principle, the Roman Catholic Church may approve certain cases of divorce by the so-called Pauline Privilege. See V. Indra Sanjaya, "Ketidakdapatceraian Perkawinan Dalam Ajaran Gereja Katolik," in *Perceraian Di Persimpangan Jalan: Menelisik Perjanjian Lama Dan Tradisi Abrahamik*, ed. Robert Setio and Daniel Listijabudi (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2015), 229. For Lawler and Salzman, the Pauline Privilege is based on Paul's contextual "re-reception" of Jesus's saying about divorce. See Michael G. Lawler and Todd A. Salzman, "Catholic Doctrine on Divorce and Remarriage: A Practical Theological Examination," *Theological Studies* 78, no. 2 (June 1, 2017): 341, https://doi.org/10.1177/0040563917698954.

5 The radical anti-divorce policy of Protestant churches is in fact inconsistent with Calvin, who accepted divorce for the reasons of adultery and faith difference. See Lauren F. Winner, "Lectio Divina and Divorce: Reflections in Twelve Parts about What Divorce Has to Teach the Church," *Anglican Theological Review* 97, no. 2 (April 1, 2015): 293, https://www.questia.com/library/journal/1P3-3681467071/lectio-divina-and-divorce-reflections-in-twelve-parts.

6 Robert Weise, "Marriage the Divine and Blessed Walk of Life," *Concordia Journal* 40, no. 1 (September 17, 2015): 46-57, https://scholar.csl.edu/cj/vol40/iss1/6.

7 Himes and Coriden, "The Indissolubility of Marriage": 455.

perceives divorce as not affecting the quality of faith.[8] Lawler and Salzman therefore call for the church to review its anti-divorce position, learning from the cases of usury, slavery, and religious freedom, in which a sort of realist approach is employed that would result in the revision of the church doctrines concerning those issues.[9]

This article examines the church's position concerning divorce not only by reviewing the biblical resources on which the principle of indivisible marriage is based, but also by departing from the reality of the church itself. Since the family and the church share an essential nature, namely, as a form of fellowship of faith, the church's attitude and policy concerning the family should be consistent with those regarding the reality of the church itself.

The Family as Small Church

Theologically, the family, just like the church, is a community of faith. Puritan theologian Jonathan Edwards accurately names the family the "small church."[10] In similar fashion, the Second Vatican Council of the Roman Catholic Church refers to the family as the "domestic church."[11] For the Puritans, every household is a fellowship of faith in which every father serves as the priest for his family. The Puritans followed Martin Luther, who refused to separate the sacred life and secular life. What is practiced in Sunday worship should be realized during the rest of the week in the family. In the Puritan tradition and many other Protestant groups, family worship is a daily activity. Luther himself referred to the family as the form of the kingdom of God on earth in which parents educate their children according to the Law of God.[12] The tradition of worship in the family is, in fact, not a new invention of the Puritans. The roots of that tradition

8 Lawler and Salzman, "Catholic Doctrine on Divorce and Remarriage."

9 Lawler and Salzman, "Catholic Doctrine on Divorce and Remarriage": 330.

10 Peter Beck, "The 'Little Church': Raising a Spiritual Family with Jonathan Edwards," *Puritan Reformed Journal* 2, no. 1 (2010): 342.

11 Vatican Council, *Lumen Gentium: Dogmatic Constitution on the Church* #11, http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19641121_lumen-gentium_en.html.

12 Jeffrey C. Robinson, "The Home Is an Earthly Kingdom: Family Discipleship among Reformers and Puritans," *Journal of Discipleship and Family Ministry* 3, no. 1 (2012): 18-21.

can actually be traced back to the people of the Old Testament. In ancient Hebrew society, family worship was an older tradition than that of public worship, which was then centered in the Temple. In later developments, both traditions affected each other in accordance with the dynamics of the relationship between the role of society and the role of the family.[13]

Today, such traditions are still preserved by many Christian communities. Daniel Frei's research shows that the concept of the family as small church is also present among Pentecostal churches in Chile.[14] Such an understanding is part of the contextual approach of the church to the local community, which is not much different from the Asian communities in term of prioritizing family. Thus, both the family and the church are the loci of the spiritual devotion based on God's covenant. In that sense, both institutions rely on the mercy and work of God's renewal.

Given the shared nature of the family and the church, the ideal picture of the family should be comparable to the ideal picture of the church. As a fellowship, the family is designed to be a united, just, joyful and peaceful community, as well as a place for the education and practice of the spirituality of its members, just as the church is meant to be a fellowship of God's children with Jesus Christ as its center.

The Family and the Church as a Reality

The peaceful, joyful, just, united, and holy community of God's children can only be understood eschatologically. Such an ideal fellowship is hard to find in the present world. Every form of fellowship encounters problems such as painful conflicts, injustices, quarrels, hypocrisy, and even violence. Some communities can solve their problems, yet many others are not able to survive without getting worse. The church is not spared such problems, and in fact the church also experiences divisions at the universal, denominational, and local levels.

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13 Robert Setio, "Keluarga Dalam Masyarakat Israel," in *Perceraian Di Persimpangan Jalan: Menelisik Perjanjian Lama Dan Tradisi Abrahamik*, ed. Robert Setio and Daniel Listijabudi (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2015), 10-11.

14 Daniel Frei, "The Pentecostal Church as a Family—the Pentecostal Family as Church," *PentecoStudies: An Interdisciplinary Journal for Research on the Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* 10, no. 2 (October 25, 2011): 239-57.

Just as the church was unable to avoid fragmentation, so many families have been unable to resist divorce. Christian families are no exception. A Barna Group's research finding indicates that the divorce rate among Christian couples from the evangelical tradition in America, which is known to uphold family values and therefore is strongly anti-divorce, is no less high than that of other Christian traditions.[15] Himes and Coriden's observation concerning divorce among Roman Catholics also demonstrates more or less the same result,[16] as does the research carried out by Lawler and Salzman.[17]

Because the family has an essential parallel with the church, the attitude toward divorce should be consistent with the attitude toward church disunity. Both divorce and division of the church are far from ideal, and therefore should be avoided wherever possible, but in certain cases they need to be accepted as an inevitable reality. A possible response to this reality is for the church to help the divorced couple re-form their relationship. If they can no longer love each other as husband and wife, they could still be encouraged to build a new respectful relationship less exclusive than marriage.

Christian Realism Approach

Such a realism attitude does not mean ignoring or forgetting the ideal picture. The ideal picture is necessary as an inspiration and vision. Yet, as Don Browning et al. note, Protestant theologians from Luther to Reinhold Niebuhr have warned not to use the ideal image as the basis for moralistic acts of violence and justification for spiritual pride.[18] Christian realism recognizes the dialectic between upholding the ideal image as an encouraging and inspiring vision, and accepting the present-day situation that is not ideal but still deserves to be an imperfect mirror (1 Cor 13:12) of that ideal image. Approaches that recognize such dialectics can be called

15 Bradley R.E Wright, C. Zozula, and W.B. Wilcox, "Bad News about the Good News: The Construction of the Christian-Failure Narrative," *Journal of Religion and Society* 14 (2012): 1-19.

16 Himes and Coriden, "The Indissolubility of Marriage": 415.

17 Lawler and Salzman, "Catholic Doctrine on Divorce and Remarriage": 339.

18 Don S. Browning et al., eds., *From Culture Wars to Common Ground: Religion and the American Family Debate*, 2nd ed. (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2000), 272.

realism approaches. Such an approach is evident in Jesus's ethical stance. On the one hand, he tells his disciples to be perfect "even as your Father in heaven is perfect" (Mt 5:48), but on the other hand, he affirms that "no one is good except God alone" (Lk 18:19). In term of Jesus's attitude concerning the family, he also uses a realism approach. Jesus reaffirms the Old Testament view that the family is part of God's creation. Hence, he regards the sacredness of family integrity and rejects the habit of divorcing wives easily (Mt 19:4-6). Jesus also celebrates a wedding at Cana and performs his first miracle there (Jn 2:1-11). In addition, wedding is also used as an image of the kingdom of God (Mt 22:1-14). Jesus also teaches, however, that in reality the family often becomes an obstacle for people who really want to work for the kingdom of God; thus he relativizes the family: "Whoever loves his father or mother more than me...and whoever loves his sons and daughters more than me, he is not worthy of me" (Mt 10:37). The relativization of the family in light of the kingdom is implicitly demonstrated in Jesus's own choice for singleness. The apostle Paul also employs a realism approach in his advice concerning family life. He values marriage and emphasizes the importance of maintaining loyalty in the family. However, he assumes that in the particular situation he is contemplating, single life is better for the persons who can tolerate it (1 Cor 7:1-16).

The realism approach in respect to the family can also be seen in the Old Testament. The family portraits in the Old Testament are, in fact, ambiguous. Biblical traditions are generally family-based.[19] Biblical stories show that the family is an integral part of human civilization. The creation narrative depicts God as the creator of the human family, and God makes the fellowship of the husband and the wife so intense, involving all dimensions of the human being,[20] that it is called "one flesh" (Gn 2:18-25). Nevertheless, the biblical portrait of a family that fulfills the ideal image of a fellowship is extremely rare. In contrast, most families described in the Bible are problematic. Even the first family experienced the killing of a younger brother by his own sibling (Gn 4:1-16). The first spouse has committed a fatal mistake that causes prolonged suffering (Gn 3:1-19).

19 Hugh Pyper, ed., *The Christian Family: A Concept in Crisis* (Norwich: The Canterbury Press, 1996), 15.

20 Richard P. Olson and C.D. Pia-Terry, *Ministry with Remarried Persons* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1984), 14.

The subsequent families face the problem of betrayal, infidelity, fraud, or other crimes. As Paula Cooey argues, the notion of an ideal family is a "nostalgic idealization of family life" based rather on eisegesis of the Christian conservative camp than on thoughtful biblical hermeneutics.[21] It should be noted that throughout those biblical stories, the themes are not the weaknesses and failings of the family, since the essence of the stories is the great mercy of God that enables the less than ideal families to experience God's forgiveness.

In short, the biblical picture of the family is more or less equal to that of the community of God's people. Both are created by God, affirmed by the covenant of God's steadfast love, and in that sense, both the family and the people of God are holy. In reality, however, families and the people of God on a whole fail to fulfill their part in the divine covenant. They repeatedly invite disasters and sufferings because of their failure to be faithful to the God who loves them. Yet, God always forgives them and gives them new opportunities. That is why the ideal future is not dependent on the perfection of the human side, but on the mercy of God alone.

Marriage and Divorce in the Bible

In terms of marriage and divorce, the Bible does not present a consistent picture. Bernard Jackson's study shows that, at least until the time of Ezra, marriage in Hebrew society was a purely social event and not included in the worship ceremony.[22] The law on marriage also places greater emphasis on economic considerations than what is now known as "the sanctity of marriage." Generally speaking, in both the Old and the New Testaments, divorce is not taken lightly but is not always forbidden. God approves of Abraham's divorce with Hagar (Gn 21:12); the law of Moses opens the possibility of divorce under certain conditions (Dt 24:1-4); Jesus also allows

21 Paula M. Cooey, *Family, Freedom, and Faith: Building Community Today*, 1st ed. (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996), 17.

22 Bernard S. Jackson, "The 'Institutions' of Marriage and Divorce in the Hebrew Bible," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 56, no. 2 (October 1, 2011): 221-251, https://doi.org/10.1093/jss/fgr002. See also Listijabudi's study stating that marriage at that time was a private contract signifying the inclusion of the wife into the husband's family: Daniel Listijabudi, "Perkawinan Dalam Kehidupan Israel Alkitab: Tinjauan Sosio-Teologis," in *Perceraian Di Persimpangan Jalan: Menelisik Perjanjian Lama Dan Tradisi Abrahamik*, ed. Robert Setio and Daniel Listijabudi (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2015), 35.

divorce for adultery (Mt 19:9); and Paul permits divorce of unbelieving spouses if initiated by the unbeliever (1 Cor 7:15). According to Jackson, the rule of divorce in the Bible, especially the Old Testament, is not intended to limit divorce itself, but rather to prevent the misuse of divorce.[23] In general, the permission for divorce in the Bible is always accompanied by efforts to make the parties concerned continue to experience blessings, peace, and justice. In the case of the divorce of Abraham and Hagar, God's approval of Sarah's demand for the divorce and God's promise to Hagar were an attempt to free Hagar from the prolonged suffering she experienced as a foreign woman and slave.[24] In the case of the divorce concession for the Corinthians (1 Cor 7:15), Paul's purpose was also for the peace of the parties concerned. From that case it becomes clear that Paul did not promote marriage to be preserved at all costs.[25] From the perspective of Paul's theology of salvation, living in peace is more important than maintaining a marriage without a mutually shared spiritual basis.

Although the biblical passages concerning divorce always permit divorce as an exception, many Asian churches tend to impose absolute denial of divorce. The basis of the church's rigid position is usually a quote from the words of Jesus that "what God has joined together, let no one separate" (Mt 19:6). It should be noted that the saying is part of Jesus's dialectic about divorce, on the one hand affirming his appreciation for marriage and, on the other hand, giving consent to divorce in the case of adultery, given the fact that there are families that have become so damaged by adultery. Richard Olson and C.D. Pia-Terry suggest an interpretation of the passage that recognizes the hyperbolic nature of Jesus's words, which were intended to challenge divorce as a common practice in his society.[26] They also believe that Jesus's criticism of the tradition of divorce in his society was based not on a concept of the family as a sacred institution, but rather on the concern for the fate of the weaker party, usually the woman,

23 Jackson, "The 'Institutions' of Marriage and Divorce in the Hebrew Bible": 241.

24 Monike Hukubun, "Abraham Menceraikan Hagar: Memahami Kejadian 21:8-21 Dari Perspektif Korban Kekerasan," in *Perceraian Di Persimpangan Jalan: Menelisik Perjanjian Lama Dan Tradisi Abrahamik*, ed. Robert Setio and Daniel Listijabudi (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2015), 69.

25 Ruth Schafer and A Freshia, *Bercerai Boleh Atau Tidak?: Tafsiran Teks-Teks Perjanjian Baru* (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2013), 180.

26 Olson and Pia-Terry, *Ministry with Remarried Persons*, 25.

which was the object of divorce in that patriarchal society.[27] Concurrently, Richard McCarty advises today's readers not to ignore the peculiarities of the cultural background of the time of Jesus. He points out that Jesus's saying in Matthew 19 was addressed to the patriarchal society that gave men the right to divorce their wives easily. On the contrary, the wife's chance to initiate divorce was very small because of the complexity of the prerequisites that they had to fulfill. The social context of Jesus's saying was also colored by the tradition of polygamy and the right of male ownership over his wive(s) and all family members.[28] In such a context, Jesus's saying can be understood as a criticism of the patriarchal tradition and an attempt to defend women as the weak and disadvantaged party in divorce cases. Furthermore, Richard McCarty states that the marriage ban for divorced men shows Jesus's rejection of a tradition that gives men a one-sided right of ownership over their wives.[29] With this prohibition, Jesus intended to claim the wife's ownership rights over her husband so that the right of ownership in the household would no longer be one-sided. Ruth Schafer and Freshia Ross even interpret the divorce prohibition in Matthew 19 as a statement of Jesus's nullifying, not just limiting, the privileges of husbands in the Jewish marriage system.[30] It should also be noted that Himes and Coriden's research suggests that although Jesus rejects the tradition of divorce, there is no passage in Scripture showing Jesus denouncing a divorced person in the same way as he condemns the hypocritical religious leaders.[31] Employing the historical-critical approach, Lawler and Salzman believe that the phrase pertaining to adultery in Matthew 19 is not originally from Jesus but Matthew's editorial addition intended as a contextual "reception" addressed to the Jewish community in which divorce was widely practiced. They believe that today's "re-reception" of the verse is needed in order for the text to remain contextual.[32] As Simon Joseph notes, Jesus's saying

27 Olson and Pia-Terry, *Ministry with Remarried Persons*, 25.

28 Richard W. McCarty, *Sexual Virtue: An Approach to Contemporary Christian Ethics* (N.Y: SUNY Press, 2015), 122-123.

29 McCarty, *Sexual Virtue*, 125.

30 Schafer and Freshia, *Bercerai Boleh Atau Tidak?: Tafsiran Teks-Teks Perjanjian Baru*, 147.

31 Himes and Coriden, "The Indissolubility of Marriage": 468.

32 Lawler and Salzman, "Catholic Doctrine on Divorce and Remarriage": 341-342.

forbidding divorce, which belongs to the Q source, is an eschatological statement. It was not intended as an alternative to the Mosaic law.[33]

Overall, Jesus's criticism of the common practice of divorce and remarriage as recorded in Matthew 19 was a part of his struggle for justice and compassion for those who were easily harmed in the society of his day. The pattern of marriage in today's society is undoubtedly not identical with that in the time of Jesus.[34] Yet, contemporary divorce carried out carelessly, abusing those in the weaker positions, still needs to be confronted with Jesus's ethical statements. Those statements, then, must not be employed as a theological reference for taking marriage lightly so as to support divorce for any reason. Divorce and remarriage disregarding the principle of justice and peace are an assault on family existence and a denial of the future kingdom of God. At the same time, the absolute denial of divorce and remarriage without mercy and empathy, much less simply because "it is written in the Bible," is also far from Jesus's intention when criticizing divorce. The literal and legalistic application of the biblical verse without considering the complexity of today's household problems does not reflect the gospel of Jesus Christ, which pictures God as a Father who, with his unlimited love, embraces his children, especially those facing a dilemma and difficult situation.

Bringing Good News for Divorced Persons

Pastoral policy, both in the case of pastoral care for the divorced and that of pastoral assistance for those considering divorce, should always be made with the spirit of bringing the Good News to the parties involved. Consistently, it is not always easy for pastors and church leaders to decide whether or not a particular case of divorce is worth supporting. They may need to go through fresh reflection as well as thoughtful theological consultation. They should not assume that the church's traditions and policies have always been consistent with the biblical witness. Reflecting on the situation of the Roman Catholic Church, Himes and Coriden state that

33 Simon J. Joseph, "'For Heaven and Earth to Pass Away?,'" *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 105, no. 2 (2014): 177, https://doi.org/10.1515/znw-2014-0011.

34 Cooey, *Family, Freedom, and Faith*, 16.

Jesus's teachings are not exactly the same as the teachings of the church, though this does not mean that the church teaching violates the biblical witness. What they emphasize is that the church's attitudes and policies should not be held to be the only position that is biblically justifiable. In the case of divorce, the compatibility between the doctrine of indissolubility and the New Testament's theology of marriage, including Jesus's resistance of the divorce tradition, should not be taken for granted.[35] In order to connect with the present reality, the church needs to take into account alternative views from biblical sources. Certainly, the church must not abandon its commitment to defend the weak and the victimized. In that case, a firm rejection of particular cases of divorce should be maintained. It should be noted that the injured party in today's divorce is not only the wife, but also the husband[36] and especially the children. Therefore, Julie Rubio suggests that marriage should be understood not just as "two being one flesh" but "three being one flesh" by putting children into it.[37] A recent research on divorce in Asia reveals that children of single-parent families tend to perform poorly in education, social relationship, and general wellbeing.[38]

What also needs to be explicitly rejected is the development of an "easy divorce" culture. Stephen Post distinguishes between divorce caused by high-level conflicts and divorce caused by low-level conflicts. He refers to a study showing that 70 percent of divorces in America are caused by low-level conflicts that can still actually be overcome.[39] Such a phenomenon is an indication of the rise of a divorce culture that is clearly contrary to the concept of the faithful family implied in Jesus's statement.

On the other hand, the church needs to reject equally firmly a culture that resists divorce even in situations of oppression, violence, gender discrimination, and humiliation in the family. The concern of the church should be addressed not primarily to marriage as an institution, but to

35 Himes and Coriden, "The Indissolubility of Marriage": 468-470.

36 Stephen Post shows the data indicating that divorced men make up a significant portion of the psychiatric patient list. See Stephen Garrard Post, *More Lasting Unions: Christianity, the Family, and Society* (Eerdmans, 2000), 14.

37 Julie H. Rubio, "Three-in-One Flesh: A Christian Appraisal of Divorce in Light of Recent Studies," *Journal for the Society of Christian Ethics* 23, no. 1 (2003): 53.

38 Dommaraju and Jones, "Divorce Trends in Asia": 746-747.

39 Post, *More Lasting Unions*, 14-15.

family members whose fate is affected by the church's attitudes and policies about divorce. In expressing its firm stance, the church needs first to realize that it is itself guilty of the "divorce" of the fellowship of Christ's disciples who should be holy and one. The church needs self-consciously to affirm that its approach is based not on its own perfection or superiority, but on the surrender, faith, and openness to God's love, forgiveness, and work of renewal. In determining a policy with regard to divorced members, the church needs to balance its biblical reference to the anti-divorce saying in Matthew 19 with Jesus's realism approach, such as in the case of a woman caught in adultery (Jn 8:1-11). When the scribes and Pharisees dragged before Jesus a woman caught in adultery, Jesus's response was not based on the ideal concept that was reflected in the prevailing traditions and laws. By tradition and law, it is clear that the woman had no hope of escaping punishment. All that Jesus did was to make the crowds who dragged the woman to question the state of their own lives. It became clear that no one had lived an ideal life without sin. The question of Jesus was actually to challenge the attitude of the crowd, who first acted like a flawless community in which there was no place for a sinner like that woman. With his question, Jesus shifted their attention from the ideal image of a sinless community to the imperfect reality in which they themselves belonged. Having made aware of imperfection in one's own self as the starting point, no one dared to carry out the death penalty for the woman accused of adultery.

Divorced people are often in a position similar to that of the woman. If the church's attitude toward them is merely for the preservation of a tradition and for the sake of church order, there will be no good news for them. A self-aware church should avoid misusing the ideal family image as a justification for being judgmental or spiritually abusive against people who are unable to avoid divorce. A proper attitude is to make the church itself an example of how a nonideal reality can still be a venue for the presence of "signs of the kingdom of God" that heal, promote peace, and fight for justice. As Paul notes, the presence of the kingdom of God in the contemporary situation can be likened to such a precious treasure in a cracked and fragile clay vessel (2 Cor 4:7). The same imagery can be used for divorced people. Divorced families, like church divisions, do not need to produce hostile and hateful relationships. Churches that are already

fragmented can build mutually respectful relationships, make peace with one another, and even work together on joint mission projects. Divorced people need to be helped to build similar relationships. For those who have children, the church can be a facilitator in order that, once they are no longer husband and wife, they are continuing their commitment to their parenting functions.[40]

At the same time, the church can learn a lot from divorce cases. Lauren Winner describes how experiences with divorced people can teach the church to live out in real life situations great themes in the teachings of the church itself. The themes include the fragility of humans, the grace of God, the difference between humans and God, resurrection, and loving the enemy. The divorced couples' experience can help the church to articulate its doctrines in grounded and optimistic ways without getting caught up in utopianism. Thus, the church can develop pastoral approaches that are more sensitive to the bitter realities of life.[41] Therefore, instead of acting like a judge behind his black gown that conceals his personal flaws, the church should be present as a faithful companion to divorced persons, with no arrogance, no punishing spirit, and no burden to protect its own reputation.

About author

Yahya Wijaya (PhD, University of Leeds) is associate professor of theological ethics at Duta Wacana Christian University, Yogyakarta, Indonesia, and affiliated faculty member of the Indonesian Consortium for Religious Studies (ICRS).

40 Rubio, "Three-in-One Flesh": 66.

41 Winner, "Lectio Divina and Divorce": 281-290.

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Women and Rape Case: Considering the Second Antithesis

Stefanus KRISTIANTO
Sekolah Tinggi Alkitab Surabaya, Indonesia

Abstract
The rape culture, especially the attitudes toward women that are connected with it, is quite pervasive in Indonesia. Women are popularly viewed as the primary cause of rape, whether the way they dress or the way they behave (*victim blaming*). In this article, I will investigate Jesus's stance on this issue. I will confine my study to the second antithesis (Matthew 5:27-30) and show that, for Jesus, sexual sins originate primarily from an internal problem rather than from external stimuli. Rape, then, happens chiefly because men do not properly deal with their desires, not because of the way women dress. Therefore, the most effective solution to decreasing instances of rape in Indonesia is not, for example, by requiring women to cover themselves up completely, but by teaching men to cope with their desires.

Keywords
Jesus, Gospel of Matthew, second antithesis, rape, Indonesia, women

Introduction

On Saturday, March 3, 2018, a large crowd gathered in Jakarta to attend an annual event called *Women's March*. During that event, some participants voiced eight pleas about women,[1] while others expressed dissatisfaction with the way women are treated. Among others, they feel uneasy with the attitude popular among many Indonesians that regards the woman as the primary instigator of rape. Those participants expressed their protest

1 "Aksi Women's March 2018 Indonesia: Soroti pembunuhan perempuan, kekerasan pada pekerja, pernikahan anak," http://www.bbc.com/indonesia/trensosial-43237965.

Corresponding author
Stefanus KRISTIANTO: apin_phd@yahoo.com

through posters. One proclaimed *"Bukan Baju Gue yang porno tapi Otak Lo*!," which means, "It is not my dress size that is pornographic, but your brain."[2] Another poster said, *"Baju Gue Lo Urusin, Birahi Lo Dibiarin"*—"You interfere with the way I dress, but you ignore your lust."[3] These were just two among several posters intended to protest against this attitude.[4]

This protest is completely understandable. Whether or not one realizes it, the rape culture is quite pervasive in Indonesia.[5] It assumes several forms,[6] the dominant form being the tendency to blame the victim. Many Indonesians believe that the way a woman dresses is the chief cause of rape. To avoid being raped, they say, women must dress properly—by "properly," they usually mean all covered up. Still others, however, believe that women's behavior is what chiefly causes rape.[7] In other words, people

2 This was photographed by Raisa Rifat and can be found in Anisha Saktian Putri, "260.000 Kasus Kekerasan terhadap perempuan yang Dilaporkan pada Tahun 2017," at https://www.vemale.com/ragam/112285-260-000-kasus-kekerasan-terhadap-perempuan-yang-dilaporkan-pada-tahun-2017.html.

3 This can be found at https://netz.id/gallery/2018/03/03/00516-01016/1002030318/melihat-aksi-women-s-march-2018-di-jakarta/6.

4 See documentation by Desiyusman Mendrofa, which can be found at https://www.femina.co.id/trending-topic/wanita-mendukung-wanita-di-women-s-march-jakarta-2018.

5 Cf. Aditya Aulia Wibowo, "Indonesia Punya Masalah Rape Culture," at https://jurnalkebenaran.com/sosial/indonesia-punya-masalah-rape-culture/.

6 E.g. trivializing rape, denial of widespread rape, etc. See Dianne F. Herman, "The Rape Culture," in Jo Freeman, ed., *Women: A Feminist Perspective* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1994), 45-53; see also a short article from Marshall University on this topic at https://www.marshall.edu/wcenter/sexual-assault/rape-culture/.

7 To mention a recent case: On November 5, 2018, Balairung Press reported a story of a female student of UGM (Gadjah Mada University), Yogyakarta, who was raped when doing an internship on Seram Island, Mollucas. The publication, entitled "Nalar Pincang UGM atas Kasus Perkosaan" ("Lame reason of UGM toward Rape Case"), is intended to be a protest against the unfair treatment of the university toward the victim. Instead of giving the security to the victim, the university sanctioned the victim and declared that *the rape was in some sense caused by the attitude of the victim herself* (my emphasis; see http://www.balairungpress.com/2018/11/nalar-pincang-ugm-atas-kasus-perkosaan/. This evoked protests from some elements. Some even began a petition at Change.Org, demanding that the university to take this problem seriously (see the petition at https://www.change.org/p/usut-tuntas-kasus-pemerkosaan-kkn-ugm; see also https://www.change.org/p/usut-tuntas-kasus-pemerkosaan-kkn-ugm/u/23652637). The university has now

actually consider women to be, in some sense, the cause of sexual sins. This simplistic view is expressed mainly in informal daily conversation, but, interestingly, we can find traces of it in the digital world as well.[8]

As a Christian, this problem led me to consider what Jesus would do or say in such a context. It is interesting to know that the canonical Gospels actually contain teachings of Jesus that are relevant to this problem. And I intend here to investigate what would likely have been Jesus's view of the problem. Among other texts, I will confine my study to the passages most relevant to this problem, namely the second antithesis (Matt. 5:27-30). It is interesting to observe that Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew expresses a highly positive view of women. That being said, Jesus would not agree with all of the protests in the Women's March,[9] but he would surely insist that women must not automatically be blamed as the primary cause of rape. Later, at the end of this article, I will offer my brief thoughts on the relevance of Jesus's teaching for Christians in Indonesia.

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taken this problem seriously: see https://republika.co.id/berita/pendidikan/dunia-kampus/18/11/15/pi8du0366-ugm-tunjuk-tujuh-dosen-masuk-tim-etik-tangani-pemerkosaan, though it was found that there are some flaws in their procedure (see, e.g,. https://news.detik.com/jawatengah/4314017/ombudsman-duga-ugm-salah-urus-kasus-dugaan-perkosaan-mahasiswi). I myself wonder whether the university would have taken this problem seriously if the case had not been widely publicized.

8 See, e.g., Elsa Mardianita, "Korelasi Antara Wanita Pakaian Terbuka dengan kasus Perkosaan (Pandangan Pribadi), at https://www.kompasiana.com/elsa_mardianita/korelasi-antara-wanita-pakaian-terbuka-dengan-kasus-perkosaan-pandangan-pribadi_551033f0a33311ca39ba7f78; Ahmad Sholahudin, "Zina, Bermula dari Perempuan," at https://www.kompasiana.com/sholahudin/zina-bermula-dari-perempuan_552ade82f17e619b4cd623a8; Hariyanto Imadha, "Logika: Hubungan Pakaian Seksi dengan Kasus Perkosaan," at https://ffugm.wordpress.com/2014/03/06/logika-hubungan-pakaian-seksi-dengan-kasus-perkosaan/. One may also check the Facebook fan pages of some Indonesian electronic newspapers, especially the comments section of some posts about rape news.

9 For instance, I find it hardly possible that Jesus, as a pious Jew, would agree with promoting the legality of gay marriage. Cf. Joel Willits, "A Biblical Interpretation Can't Take Away What It Gives: An Open Letter to Rev. Dan Collison and MF4i," at https://www.joelwillitts.com/blog/a-biblical-interpretation-cant-take-away-what-it-gives-an-open-letter-to-eccs-rev-dan-collison-in-response-to-his-sermon-why-we-gather-caring-for-others-through-social-transformation-lgbtq.

A Survey of Women in Jewish Culture

It has been a public secret that women occupied a marginal place in ancient Near Eastern cultures, which were usually highly patriarchal. This is equally true in the ancient Jewish culture in which Jesus lived. While the Old Testament records some positive passages about or toward women (such as Deborah, Yael, Ruth, Esther, *'esset hayil* in Proverbs 31), there are other passages that reflect the patriarchal spirit of that age.

From a narrative stand point, for instance, female figures are usually presented as flat or even functionary characters:[10] they are mentioned only when they contribute significantly to a story.[11] Socially, women were considered to be the property of their fathers or their husbands. Deuteronomy 22:28-29 is a fine example of this. It is said there that when a man rapes a virgin who is not engaged, the man should pay a fine to the father of the virgin, since he is her owner, and then marry her.[12] Because women are mere property, it is not surprising to discover that, in some cases, they could be sold as slaves by their fathers (Ex 21:7, but Deuteronomy 21:14 forbids a husband to sell his wife), given to another (as in Samson's story; Jgs 14:20), or even be divorced when her husband no longer likes her (but not vice versa;[13] Dt 24:1). In addition, the story of the daughters of Zelophehad in Numbers 27:1-11 indicates that a daughter does not inherit any possessions except when her father has no sons. The Old Testament also testifies that women actually have no authority over themselves. Numbers 30:1-8 illustrates this very well. It is written there that if a woman makes a vow before God, and her father or her husband,

10 I owe this term to Richard L. Pratt. See Ia *Berikan Kita Kisah-Nya— He Gave Us Stories* (trans. Hartanti Mulyani Notoprodjo; Surabaya: Momentum, 2005), 162-163.

11 Cf. Phyllis A. Bird, "Woman, Old Testament," in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, ed. David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1996), 6:951

12 Mary J. Evans. "Women," in *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch*, ed. T. Desmond Alexander and David W. Baker (Downers Grove, Il: IVP, 2003), 898.

13 Mark 10:12 hints that the wife also has the right to divorce her husband. Yet, Craig Keener explains that the verse actually represents the broader Greco-Roman culture, not Palestinian Jewish Law (*A Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999], 189 n. 87). McKnight refers to the text from Wadi Muraba'at as indicating that women can ask for the divorce (*Sermon on the Mount*. SGBC [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013], 98). But it is not certain whether it was a common practice or an anomaly. Thus, I think it still is reasonable to say that for Jews in general, divorce is a man's prerogative and no woman could ask for it.

hearing it, disapproves of the vow, the woman's vow is automatically nullified.

In the Second Temple Period, the situation did not improve. This period signified the emergence of a more negative view of women. Ruth Edwards argues that the growing freedom of women in Hellenism seemed to invoke a negative reaction from the Jews, including their negative attitude toward women.[14] One aspect of that attitude that is relevant to our discussion is the view of women as the source of lust or adultery. Much Second Temple literature testifies to this. Sirach 19:2, for instance, writes, "Wine and women make the heart lustful." Similarly, *m. Abot* 2.7 and *Pirke Aboth* 2.8 draw a connection between women and witchcraft and between *slave girls (or maidservants) and lust* (emphasis mine). Philo warns that "man may be caught by pleasure, and especially by such pleasure as proceeds from connections with women" (*On the Virtues* VII. 36). The author of the *Testament of Reuben* gives a sharper remark:

> For moreover, concerning them, the angel of the Lord told me, and taught me, that women are overcome by the spirit of fornication more than men, and in their heart they plot against men; and by means of their adornment they deceive first their minds, and by the glance of the eye instil the poison, and then through the accomplished act they take them captive. (5:3)

The author also advises that the way to avoid fornication is by guarding one's senses against every woman (6:1).[15]

In addition to this negative view, some of the Intertestamental writings also contend that women sometimes use their body and beauty to trick men and/or to get their way. *The Testament of Reuben* 5:1 reads "For evil are women, my children; and since they have no power or strength over man, they use wiles by outward attractions, that they may draw him to themselves."[16] Similarly, Philo explains that the reason why the Essenes do not have wives is because woman is "a selfish creature and one addicted to jealousy in an immoderate degree, and terribly calculated to agitate

14 Ruth B. Edwards, "Woman," in *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 4:1093.

15 "Beware, therefore, of fornication; and if you wish to be pure in mind, guard your senses from every woman."

16 Verse 2 gives a more shocking description: "And whom they cannot bewitch by outward attractions, him they overcome by craft."

and overturn the natural inclinations of a man, and to mislead him by her continual tricks" (*Hypotetica* 11.14).

It is thus not surprising to find that the Second Temple Literature reminds men to keep themselves from women or avoid them if necessary. The author of the *Testament of Judah*, for example, tells the reader not to love money or women's beauty, for he was once led astray by those things (17:1). Elsewhere, the author of the *Testament of Reuben* warns the reader, "Pay no heed to the face of a woman, Nor associate with another man's wife, Nor meddle with affairs of womankind" (3:10); and "Pay no heed, therefore, my children, to the beauty of women, nor set your mind on their affairs" (4:1); while *m. Abot* 1.5 warns men not to talk too much with women, because when he does, "(1) he brings trouble on himself, (2) wastes time better spent on studying Torah, and (3) ends up an heir of Gehenna."[17] Sirach 9:1-9 gives detailed advice on how to relate to women:

> Be not jealous of the wife of thy bosom,
> Lest she learn malice against thee.
> Give not thyself unto a woman,
> So as to let her trample down thy manhood.
> Meet not a strange woman,
> Lest thou fall into her nets.
> With a female singer have no converse,
> Lest thou be taken in her snares.
> On a maiden fix not thy gaze,
> Lest thou be entrapped in penalties with her.
> Give not thyself unto the harlot,
> Lest thou lose thine inheritance.
> Look not round about thee in the streets of a city,
> And wander not about in the broad places thereof.
> Hide thine eye from a lovely woman,
> And gaze not upon beauty which is not thine;
> By the comeliness of a woman many have been ruined,
> And this way passion flameth like fire.
> With a married woman sit not at table,
> And [mingle not] wine in her company;

17 The full text reads: "And don't talk too much with women." (He spoke of a man's wife, all the more so is the rule to be applied to the wife of one's fellow. In this regard did sages say, "So long as a man talks too much with a woman, (1) he brings trouble on himself, (2) wastes time better spent on studying Torah, and (3) ends up an heir of Gehenna."

> Lest thou incline thine heart towards her,
> And in thy blood [descendest] to the Pit.

Similar admonitions can also be found in Sirach 25:21; 26:29; Psalms of Solomon 16:7-8; and Josephus, *Antiquities* 1.7.7 §130.

While the above examples are by no means comprehensive, they are nevertheless more than enough to illuminate how Jewish people in Jesus's time viewed women. Women were considered as the source of lust and, if men wanted to avoid fornication, they must keep themselves from women or avoid them if necessary. Interestingly, in such a culture, Jesus gives a different perspective on women and lust.

Understanding the Second Antithesis

"Jesus's antitheses" refers to a set of Jesus's sayings found in Matthew 5:21-48, which is marked by the formula, "You have heard ... But I tell you that ..." By the antitheses, Jesus does not annul the Old Testament commands; rather, he challenges the popular (mis)understanding of his contemporaries on the Law and shows the true meaning of the Old Testament commands. As I have stated previously, a part of the antithesis contains Jesus's teaching that is relevant to our problem. And that part is the second antithesis.

In the second antithesis (Mt 5:27-30), Jesus begins by quoting a commandment of the Decalogue. The language used here is identical with the seventh commandment of the LXX version (*ou moicheuseis*; Ex 20:14; Dt 5:18). If we look at Jewish sources, it is clear that they limit this commandment only to stealing another person's wife. Adultery takes place when a man violates another man's marriage or betrothal. In *Psalms of Solomon* 8:11, for instance, adultery is explained as an affair between a man and his neighbor's wife. Similarly, *the Story of Ahikar* 2.6 (in Syriac) and 2.39 (in Armenian) relates adultery to an affair with the wife of a neighbor or the wife of a friend. In other words, the Jews understood that adultery involved sexual intercourse between a man (either married or not) and a married or betrothed woman.[18] As a corollary, sexual intercourse between

18 Similarly, Goodfriend writes, "[Adultery is] sexual intercourse between a married or betrothed woman and any man other than her husband. The marital status of the woman's partner is inconsequential since only the married or betrothed woman is bound to fidelity. The infidelity of a married man is not punishable by law but

a man and an unmarried woman could not be regarded as an adultery (for example, Ex 22:16-17; Dt 22:28-29).[19] This also explains why polygamy and having concubines are not regarded as adultery by the Jews.[20]

Jesus, however, gives the truest standard in verse 28. He says (emphatic; *egō legō*) that anyone who *blepōn gynaika pros epithymēsai autēn* (imagining or wanting to have sexual intercourse) has already committed adultery in his heart. What Jesus utters through this statement is not totally novel. It was expressed in the tenth commandment, when God forbade the Israelites to covet, including coveting another person's wife, as well as in the *Testament of Issachar* 7:2: "Except my wife I have not known any woman. I never committed fornication *by the uplifting of my eyes.*"[21] Davies and Allison also find similar ideas in some other writings, such as Jb 31:1; *Jubilee* 20:4; *Testament of Isaac* 4:53; *Testament of Benjamin* 8:2; and *Psalms of Solomon* 4:4-6 (as well as in the later writings, such as *Mekhilta of Rabbi Simeon* and *Leviticus Rabbah* 23:12; cf. also 1 Jn 2:16).[22]

There are two things to note as to this statement. First, what does Jesus mean by *gunaika*? Scholars are divided about what Jesus has in mind when

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is criticized (Mal 2:14-15; Prv 5:15-20)." See Elaine Adler Goodfriend, "Adultery," *ABD*, 1:82. Cf. also Francois P. Viljoen, "Jesus' Halakic Argumentation on the True Intention of the Law in Matthew 5:21-48," *Verbum et Ecclesia* 34, no. 1 (2013): 6. "In many societies of the ancient world it was acceptable for a man to have sexual relations with a woman other than his wife, as long as it did not involve another marriage, as it would then violate the rights of the woman's husband. The key for determining whether a sexual act was adultery or not depended on the woman's marital status."

19 In *Against Apion* 2.31 § 215, Josephus distinguishes between adultery and forcing a virgin. It seems that, for Josephus, forcing a virgin is placed in a different category from adultery.

20 If we refer to the story of Judah and Tamar (Gn 38), it seems that sexual activity with a prostitute is also not considered adultery.

21 Cf. also *Testament of Issachar* 4:4: "And the spirits of deceit have no power against him, For he looketh not on the beauty of women, Lest he should pollute his mind with corruption."

22 W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to Saint Matthew*, International Critical Commentary (London/New York: T&T Clark, 2004), 1: 522. Luz adds *B. Hallah* 1 and *Leviticus Rabbah* 23. See Ulrich Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007), 245. Nolland also lists *1QSerek Hayaḥad* 1:6; *Damascus Document* 2:16; cf. *1QPesher Habakkuk* 5:7; *Special Laws* 3.177; and Philo, *The Worse Attacks the Better*, 97. See John Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids/Bletchley: Eerdmans/Paternoster, 2005), 237 n. 162, 164.

he uses this word. Many scholars (for example, Luz, Nolland, Talbert, Betz, Strecker, Guelich)[23] argue that this word refers to "another man's wife," while others defend "any woman" as the translation of this word (such as Carson, Hagner, Turner, Garland).[24] In my opinion, the latter is probably correct because if Jesus really wants to stress the purity of heart and mind, it will be incomprehensible why he has to confine the application only to a married woman. I do not think that Jesus would have considered a man who looked lustfully at an unmarried woman as innocent. Furthermore, Hagner adds that if Jesus really has "another man's wife" in mind, it should have to be qualified with adjectives (e.g. *tou plēsiou sou*, your neighbor's).[25]

Second, scholars are also divided as to the translation of the phrase *to epithymēsai autēn*. Although most scholars translate the phrase "with lust after her," Carson, following Haacker, translates it "to make her lust."[26] The problem is caused by the occurrence of two *autēn*. Carson argues that the first *autēn* is grammatically unnecessary. It can only be understood if it is intended to be the subject of *epithymēsai*. But if "the woman" is intended to be the object of *epithymēsai*, it should be in the genitive. That is why, he contends, the phrase should be translated as "to make her lust."

In my opinion, Haacker's and Carson's proposal is grammatically more natural, since the accusative frequently functions as the subject for the infinitive.[27] However, I adhere to the widely accepted translation because

23 Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 244; Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 236; Charles H. Talbert, *Reading the Sermon on the Mount: Character Formation and Decision Making in Matthew 5-7* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2006), 74-75. Hans Dieter Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount: A Commentary on the Sermon on the Mount, Including the Sermon on the Plain (Matthew 5:3-7:27 and Luke 6:20-49)*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), 233; Georg Strecker, *The Sermon on the Mount: An Exegetical Commentary*, trans. O. Dean, Jr. (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998), 71; Robert A. Guelich, *The Sermon on the Mount: A Foundation for Understanding* (Waco: Word, 1982), 193.

24 D. A. Carson, *Matthew*, Expositor's Bible Commentary 8 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984), 151; Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, Word Biblical Commentary 33a (Dallas: Word, 2002), 120; David Turner, *Matthew*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008), 170; David Garland, *Reading Matthew: A Literary and Theological Commentary on the First Gospel* (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2001), 66.

25 See Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, 120.

26 See Carson, *Matthew*, 151. Carson is referring to Klaus Haacker, "Der Rechtsatz Jesu zum Thema Ehebruch," *Biblische Zeitschrift* 21 (1977): 113–116.

27 See Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the*

I think there is only one *autēn* in this verse. The first *autēn* is probably not original since it is not found in two important witnesses (א*, fourth century; P^{64}, around 200 AD), nor in two early church fathers (Clement, 215 AD and Tertullian, 220 AD). Thus, I think the later scribes plausibly copied the word twice unintentionally. This argument is supported by the alteration of *autēn* to *autēs* in א[1] and f^1, through which the redactor apparently wanted to clarify that "the woman" was intended to be the object.[28]

Jesus then gives two illustrations to illuminate his point. In the first illustration he tells people to gouge out their right eye if it causes them to sin (*skandalizei*). The use of present tense, *skandalizei*, here suggests that the eye frequently causes people to fall into sin. It is better, Jesus says, to lose *one part of the body* than having *the whole body* thrown into hell (*sympherei gar soi hina apolētai hen tōn melōn sou kai mē holon to sōma sou blēthē eis geenan*; v. 29. Notice the contrast!). In the second illustration, Jesus tells people to cut their right hand off and throw it away if it causes them to sin (also *skandalizei*). This second illustration repeats the point Jesus conveys in the first illustration. This is clear from the similarly written clause (Jesus changes the subjunctive verb *blēthē* to be *apelthē*).[29] Jesus, of course, does not intend these illustrations to be understood literally (contra Origen, see Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* 6.8[30]). In fact, people can still be lustful in spite of their

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New Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 192-197; William D. Mounce, *Basics of Biblical Greek: Grammar* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1993), 293-294; Jeremy Duff, *The Elements of New Testament* Greek (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 203.

28 Nolland seems to concur that the first αὐτην is not original. See his *The Gospel of Matthew*, 235.

29 Most manuscripts (e.g. L, W, θ, 02333, and Majority Text) change *apelthē* to *blēthē*. This reading is not original and was perhaps done either unintentionally (the scribes thought that this sentence was identical to the first) or intentionally (the scribes wanted to harmonize the sentences).

30 "At this time while Origen was conducting catechetical instruction at Alexandria, a deed was done by him which evidenced an immature and youthful mind, but at the same time gave the highest proof of faith and continence. For he took the words, "There are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake," in too literal and extreme a sense. And in order to fulfill the Savior's word, and at the same time to take away from the unbelievers all opportunity for scandal,—for, although young, he met for the study of divine things with women as well as men,—he carried out in action the word of the Savior."

blindness or their being crippled. What Jesus stresses here is the radical sacrifice to avoid the sin (cf. Col 3:5).

Jesus's illustrations in this antithesis are really interesting. As I discussed above, it was usual at that time to blame the woman as the cause of adultery. This might explain why in the additional story of John 8:1-11, it is only the woman who is brought to Jesus. Interestingly, this tendency later became stronger in Judaism. Garland gives an example from the *Babylonian Talmud Taʿanit* 24a, which tells the story of the beautiful daughter of Rabbi Jose from Yokrat. It was said that one day a man dug a hole in the ground in order to catch a glimpse of her beauty. When the man was caught by Rabbi Jose, he said, "My teacher, if I have not merited taking her in marriage, shall I not at least merit to look at her?" What was shocking is that Rabbi Jose then blamed his daughter and said, "You are a source of trouble to mankind; return to the dust so that men may not sin because of you."[31] A similar tendency can also be found in the writing of a church father, Tertullian. In *On the Apparel of Women* ii.2, he has women hide their beauty because it is dangerous for the beholder's eyes.[32]

In the midst of such a culture, however, Jesus provides an alternative view that stands against this unfairness. Through these two illustrations, he actually turns the tables by linking the transgression no longer to the victim (woman) but to the perpetrator (man). He explains that what causes them to commit sin is not the beauty of the woman but their own eyes and hands. In other words, Jesus states that adultery (and sexual sins in general) comes primarily from the internal problem of the subject, rather than from the stimulation of the object. And because it primarily comes from within, therefore, the way to prevent adultery is not by avoiding the object (women), but first and primarily by self-correction of the subject ("cutting off the right hand or gouging out the right eye"). Some men at the time might of course perceive Jesus's idea as offensive, but at the same time, it

31 See Garland, *Reading Matthew*, 67. This Talmud can be read online at https://www.sefaria.org/Taanit.24a.5?lang=en&with=all&lang2=en

32 Garland, *Reading Matthew*, 67. Tertullian writes, "Since, therefore, both our own interest and that of others is implicated in the studious pursuit of most perilous (outward) comeliness, it is time for you to know that not merely must the pageantry of fictitious and elaborate study be rejected by you; but that of even natural grace must be obliterated by concealment and negligence, as equally dangerous to the glance of (the beholder's) eyes."

might also elicit smiles for women, since Jesus removes an unnecessary burden from their shoulders.

To sum up our discussion above: in this antithesis, Jesus explains the true meaning of the seventh commandment. While his contemporaries defined it in a lower manner, Jesus states that the adultery they must avoid has to do not only with a certain kind of act (stealing another man's wife), but also with how men look at and think of women. This is not totally novel, however. What is surprising about Jesus's antithesis is that he shifts the burden of adultery from the victim to the perpetrator. When his contemporaries considered women as the source of lust, Jesus clarifies that lust, adultery, and sexual sins in general were induced mainly by an internal problem of the perpetrator. And because it is primarily an internal problem, the solution is not avoidance of the object, but self-correction of the subject. In other words, instead of blaming or accusing women, men must realize that they themselves are responsible for any sexual sin they commit.

Brief Thoughts for Christians in Indonesia

Jesus lived in a culture in which women were blamed as the source of adultery. And in modern Indonesia a similar tendency exists, that is, blaming women for rape. This being the case, Christians in Indonesia need to do what their Master would do or, at least, live in his spirit: they need to realize, and make others realize, that every kind of sexual sin, including rape, is caused primarily by an internal problem rather than by external temptation. The way women dress or behave, therefore, is not the primary problem—the way men deal with their desires, however, is. As a corollary, forcing women to dress or behave a certain way is not the primary solution to the problem of rape or any kind of sexual sin (which is not to say that it is not necessary, however); educating men to cope properly with their desires is.

This point is confirmed by at least two recent facts. First, if clothing or behavior is the real problem, then there should be few or no cases of rape in Arabic countries, where most women are completely covered and forced to behave "properly." And yet, cases of rape still occur there, even

at a high rate.[33] Second, in January 2018, there was a unique exhibition in Brussels, Belgium, in which the clothes worn by rape victims when they were assaulted were displayed. Most of the victims were dressed very properly when they were attacked; in fact, one woman was even wearing a police uniform![34]

Christians in Indonesia must show this truth both in discourse and in actions. They have to educate those who still adhere to the erroneous way of thinking. This is not enough, however. Christians in Indonesia must also take real action. They must not participate in blaming the victim or becoming an abuser for any reasons. Instead, they must show respect for women. Also, if necessary, it would be excellent if Christians in Indonesia could assist victims, in both moral and legal defense, so that they do not have to experience unnecessary punishment.

Conclusion

It must sadly be admitted that women in Indonesia are still experiencing many forms of injustice. One of these is the tendency to blame women as the primary cause of rape (*victim blaming*), a manifestation of Indonesia's pervasive rape culture. In the midst of this context, the voice of Jesus (which is recorded in the second antithesis) becomes relevant to this problem. Jesus states that sexual sin comes primarily from the wicked heart, not from the victim's behavior. This applies to rape as well. It is not a matter of compelling women to cover themselves completely in their dress but of teaching men to handle their desires properly. That is, men must realize that the real problem lies within themselves. This truth must guide how Christians in Indonesia live: by appreciating women, not becoming a violator, and, if possible, assisting rape victims, both morally and legally.

About author

Stefanus KRISTIANTO (MTh, Trinity Theological College) is a New Testament lecturer at Sekolah Tinggi Alkitab Surabaya (Surabaya Bible College), Indonesia.

33 E.g., Katie Beiter, "Rates of Rape and Sexual Violence High in Middle East," in http://www.themedialine.org/featured/rates-rape-sexual-violence-high-middle-east/.

34 See Chelsea Ritschel, "Rape Victim's Clothing Displayed to Prove Clothing Choice Doesn't Cause Rape," at https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/rape-victims-clothes-displayed-brussels-belgium-debunk-victim-blaming-myth-a8152481.html.

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Third-Wave Feminism and the Task of Critical Learning: A Theological Critique of Feminism from a Nigerian Perspective

Ikenna Paschal OKPALEKE
Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium

Abstract
There is so much going on in the area of feminist theology. Often the range of issues, approaches, methodologies, and goals is so complex that one finds it difficult to identify the main problems that are at stake. This essay reexamines the problem of patriarchy, which is often considered a central issue of feminist theology. By so doing, it questions the insufficiency of a critical theological attention to the feminist concern, for example in the Nigerian context. Drawing upon the various approaches to the problem as presented in both Western and Nigerian feminist discourse, the essay seeks, in both versions of feminism, a renewed hermeneutical resource for addressing the same problem. It argues for a focus on upturning all systems of domination beyond gender and class, through a cultural critique of both the past and present, without disrupting the communal setting of African society in particular. In this way, the article calls for bridging the gap between Western and non-Western feminism in what is today categorized as third-wave feminism.

Keywords
Feminist theology, Nigeria, hermeneutics, patriarchy, culture

Introduction

The main titles of most of the literature in Christian feminist theology reveal what the struggle is.[1] All areas of feminist studies challenge any

1 From Kathleen M. Sands's *Escape from Paradise* (1994), Ivone Gebara's *Longing for Running Water* (1999) and her *Out of the Depths* (2002), to Diana Hayes's *Standing in*

Corresponding author
Ikenna Paschal OKPALEKE: ikennapaschal.okpaleke@kuleuven.be

status quo that denies women their position of equality in society. In secular literature or theological works, the investigations are geared toward uncovering ideologies that seem to keep females away from the center of historical events. Feminism could thus be regarded as involving the liberation of women through a profound cultural critique, as Francis Martin puts it.[2] This is as true in the social or political sphere as it is in theological circles.

In line with what is today regarded as third-wave feminism, represented by attempts to recognize the plurality of feminism,[3] this essay examines the central problem of patriarchy by contrasting the predominantly Western perspective with that in an African context, and argues that theology should play a greater role in facilitating the mutual learning that ought to exist between both perspectives. To do this, I shall (1) reflect on the problem of patriarchy in feminism through the model of emancipatory methodology, (2) give a critical account of Nigerian feminism, (3) offer a comparative critique of both Nigerian and Western feminisms, and (4) argue for more critical theological attention on the basis of the resources that emanate *from* and *for* Nigerian feminism. The overall aim, therefore, is to open up discussions on the unexplored non-Western areas of feminist theology that might have some lessons for other contexts, including Asia.

Patriarchy, Christian Feminism, and Hermeneutics

Patriarchy, or male dominance in society, has always been at the heart of feminism, whether from a secular or theological point of view. The literature in sociology, philosophy, political studies, women's studies, and theology has offered significant attempts to resolve the riddle of patriarchy,

the Shoes My Mother Made (2011), what we find is largely a manifestation of, or the quest for, women's emancipation of some sort.

2 Francis Martin, *The Feminist Question: Feminist Theology in the Light of Christian Tradition* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), xi. Martin would also argue that feminism in some ways equally falls victim to the very problems it criticizes in culture.

3 Plurality in feminism points not only to the subjects that feminism addresses but also to the recognition of many non-Western voices in the feminist project. Hence, one can argue that there is no single "feminism"; rather, we have "feminisms." Apart from the simplistic description of the three waves of feminism that I have given below, a clarification on third-wave feminism can be found in Claire R. Snyder, "What Is Third-Wave Feminism? A New Directions Essay," *Signs* 34, no. 1 (2008): 175-196.

to demystify it, and even to dethrone it. Some have attempted to establish that the ubiquitous character of patriarchy was absent six thousand years ago, when most cultures were nomadic: hence the explanation that a cultural shift from nomadic egalitarian societies to more sedentary, agrarian urban communities accounts for the emergence of patriarchy, with its cognates of hierarchy and inequality.[4] The fact that patriarchy has persisted despite concerted action against it is probably underscored by the link between the structure of our society today and the element of inequality that marks patriarchy. While the ground for patriarchy is not the central focus of this essay, the connection here is important in an analysis that involves non-Western cultures, since sociological research has shown that nonpatriarchal societies that maintained certain forms of equality and equity eventually replaced them with inequality by virtue of extraneous cultural inventions.[5] These cultural inventions, for example in the Nigerian (African) context, may only be explained by contacts with slavery, colonialism, capitalism, and even globalization. The reality of cultural patriarchy, however, is evident in African contexts such as Nigeria, where women face untold hardship and have little or no voice to express their concerns.[6] The question remains whether all African societies have always been disproportionately patriarchal or whether they are victims of the alleged cultural shift that enthroned gender imbalance in most of these societies. I shall return to this idea later since it might prove a resource for theological insight into the feminist questions in non-Western contexts.

4 Lantz Fleming Miller, "Fine-tuning the Ontology of Patriarchy: A New Approach to Explaining and Responding to a Persisting Social Injustice," *Philosophy and Criticism* 9, no. 4 (2015): 885-906, at 892-894.

5 Miller, "Fine-tuning the Ontology of Patriarchy": 890-891.

6 Mercy Amba Oduyoye, *Daughters of Anowa: African Women and Patriarchy* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1995). Oduyoye argues that patriarchy has penetrated the African cultures and religion and that this is reflected in both patrilineal and matrilineal cultures. She demonstrates this claim by drawing on myths and folktales in both the Yoruba (Nigerian) and Akan (Ghanaian) cultures. What is perhaps clear from Oduyoye's works is that the precolonial African societies maintained some forms of balance of power between men and women, unlike the radical imbalance we find in Western culture. A critical assessment of feminism in Africa should therefore reckon with some continuities in the past for a purposeful reconstruction of the present in order to maintain the unique African emphasis on community in way that guarantees the harmonious coexistence of all.

Both men and women are resources for their societies, and the survival of societies cannot be premised on a system that devalues the worth of any human being. Hence, precisely because of the dominating power of patriarchy in which women are the immediate victims, the agenda of all forms of feminism has remained to challenge the patriarchal structure of the society. In this way, feminist thinking has offered Christian theologians resources for doing theology that enable them to investigate, from a theological perspective, the realities that adversely affect women today and that appear to have been neglected by black and liberation theologies.[7] In other words, feminist theology indicates for us "new forms of communities of equals, through which the faith can be transmitted away from perpetuating structural injustices and towards a greater human development in justice and peace."[8] It is interesting to note that the idea is more about a community of equals and not essentially of equality. It is possible to foster injustice in a society that is solely based on a structural understanding of equality rather than a society that is also built on the principles of equity. With its emphasis on fairness and impartiality, equity balances the deficiencies that might arise out of a strict understanding of equality.

Christian feminist theologians also express the concern that patriarchy takes advantage of biblical narratives to justify itself and that this is further facilitated by the interpretative resources of Greek metaphysics.[9] With such an interpretation, the glaring examples of courageous women in the Bible are glossed over and the activities of men are understood as superior in contrast to those of women. Men produce, women reproduce; "production was primary, reproduction was secondary."[10] Eventually, women were relegated to the domestic life in the family and community, and their right to an independent lifestyle is judged as abominable and therefore condemnable. Unwinding this narrative thus requires a new way of interpreting the same Bible, from the perspective of women. It needs a

7 Lisa Isherwood and Dorothea McEwan, *Introducing Feminist Theology* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 46.

8 Isherwood and McEwan, *Introducing Feminist Theology*, 41.

9 Isherwood and McEwan, *Introducing Feminist Theology*, 53.

10 Isherwood and McEwan, *Introducing Feminist Theology*, 54.

hermeneutic that accounts for balance in a system of domination created by cultural patriarchy using the same Bible.

Reading the Bible and interpreting it is, of course, a daunting task. It requires being conversant with the various genres that are woven into the composition of the books of the Bible. This challenge is taken up by some feminist theologians, such as Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, who have devised forms of biblical hermeneutics in upturning the dominant interpretations that perpetuate forms of domination against women in particular. The grand aim is to help women articulate their experiences of dehumanization and subjugation in light of the Scriptures. An overriding *hermeneutics of experience* grounds Schüssler Fiorenza's two-sided "hermeneutics of suspicion" and "hermeneutics of remembrance,"[11] in which, on the one hand, Scripture passages are interpreted with attention to suspected patriarchal structures of dominance, and on the other hand, solidarity is offered to silenced female figures in the Bible as counternarratives. This critical form of interpretation is also evident in the *hermeneutics of culture* by the Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians[12] as a way of critically engaging African culture in dialogue with the Scriptures. One

11 Schüssler Fiorenza equally treats other forms of hermeneutics and argues that these are not to be understood as step-by-step methods, but rather as a "hermeneutical circle" that is essentially ongoing. Other forms of hermeneutics explained by her include the following: *Hermeneutics of domination and social location, hermeneutics of critical evaluation, hermeneutics of creative imagination, hermeneutics of reconstruction, and hermeneutics of transformative action for change*. Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *Wisdom Ways: Introducing Feminist Biblical Interpretation* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2001), 165-189. These ideas are also reflected in her earlier works: *But She Said: Feminist Practices of Biblical Interpretation* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1992), 57-68; *Bread Not Stone: The Challenge of Feminist Biblical Interpretation* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1984), 15-20.

12 Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians (*Circle*), founded in 1989 by Mercy Oduyoye, has been at the forefront of theological response to issues concerning women in Africa. The agenda of the Circle resonates with the arguments in this essay in many ways, especially in its position on the hermeneutical approach. For some recent publications that articulate the central objectives of the Circle, see: Teresia M. Hinga, "African Feminist Theologies, the Global Village, and the Imperative of Solidarity across Borders: The Case of the Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians," *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 18, no. 1 (2002): 79-86; Rachel NyaGondwe Fiedler, *A History of the Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians* (1989-2007) (Malawi: Mzuni Press, 2017); Mercy Amba Oduyoye, *African Women's Theologies, Spirituality and Healing: Theological Perspectives from the Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians* (New York/Mahwah: Paulist Press, 2019, forthcoming)..

can rightly claim that what happens in all such interpretations are (a) the uncovering of the patriarchal structures of the biblical text, and (b) the recentering of marginalized characters, bringing them to the center and making them the interpretative key to the story. Interpretations founded on such principles, on the one hand, depose all forms of objectification of women discoverable in the Bible in which they are portrayed as passively present. Women are constructed as the subjects of the story. In doing this, it is important to avoid switching to objectifying the male character, lest feminism becomes self-contradictory. Perhaps a model of co-subjects best fits the goal, but it must be applied only where necessary. A story in which every character is a subject is also not realistic, except taken in subsets. On the other hand, the specific concerns of women are taken into account in the interpretation of scriptural texts, especially as it involves the structural dehumanization or subjugation of both women and men.

Rethinking Patriarchy and the Dialectic of Emancipatory Methodology

Questions arising from feminist concerns aim at uncovering the oppressive mechanism of cultural patriarchy. As already stated, its agenda is liberative, yet it is a complex task. But then, since it is a complex issue, methods that are employed should be careful not to suffer the same limitations of so-called patriarchy. Thus, although it operates from women's experience, its contextual nature should arise specifically from the experience of the subjugation of women and not just from the mere experience of women. Some experiences of women that are articulated in the Bible are factual and cannot become grounds for any conflict. For instance, the experiences of barrenness, of pregnancy, of love cannot be grounds for negative reactions to or counter-reading of the Bible except where these constitute grounds for any cultural oppression of women.

Negative reactions can also be counterproductive. An attempt to unmask patriarchal ideology might turn into a destruction of patriarchy and enthronement of matriarchy, both of which serve as tools of oppression and domination. Any deconstruction of patriarchy must therefore be critical enough to maintain a balance in the presentation of both males and females. In other words, theological feminism has a responsibility toward

men also. It can help in defusing the popular image of men as domineering, vindictive, violent, and so forth. Modelled to a true Christlike example of holy masculinity, men can also be gentle, loving, emotional, and caring. Anybody, male or female, can possess any of the above attributes, both the positive and the negative. Thus feminism is not just about "gender war"—it also addresses issues related to class, race, and imperialism of any form.

Consequently, negotiating the varied nature of its concerns, theological feminism must adopt a dialectical methodology. Such dialectics could be seen in Schüssler Fiorenza's hermeneutical dance, which involves a continuous rhythm "of deconstruction and reconstruction, of critique and retrieval"[13] that takes in the cultural and religious interpretations of feminist concerns. Of course, the issues are not as self-evident as one would assume, and perhaps it might be important to begin with a critical analysis of some feminist vocabularies. "Patriarchy," for instance, sets up an exclusive agenda of gender war. Variously defined, patriarchy constitutes a problem in itself. Rosemary Radford Reuther, in her own account, asserts: "By patriarchy we mean not only the subordination of females to males, but the whole structure of Father-ruled society: aristocracy over serfs, masters over slaves, king over subjects, racial overlords over colonized people."[14] On the other hand, Schüssler Fiorenza acknowledges that patriarchy as a male pyramid is "the governing dominance of elite propertied male heads of households."[15] Such definitions are contradicted by the agenda of feminism, which claims to be working in favor of liberating all "non-persons," irrespective of gender.[16] Since the goal involves both genders, addressing the opponent as male renders the concept of patriarchy meaningless unless one is able to specify whether the opponent is male or female patriarchalism.[17] In line with Scripture, domination against anybody, whether male or female, should be condemned.

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13 Schüssler Fiorenza, *Wisdom Ways*, 169.

14 Rosemary Radford Ruether, *Sexism and God-Talk* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1983), 61.

15 Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, "The Politics of Otherness: Biblical Interpretation as a Critical Praxis for Liberation," 311-325 In *The Future of Liberation Theology: Essays in Honor of Gustavo Gutierrez*, ed. Marc H. Ellis and Otto Maduro (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1989), 315.

16 Schüssler Fiorenza, "The Politics of Otherness": 315.

17 Martin, *The Feminist Question*, 215.

Mindful of the limitations of the word "patriarchy," Schüssler Fiorenza, in a recent work, suggests an alternative neologism, "kyriarchy," which is derived from Greek *kyrios* (lord, slave master) and *archein* (to rule or to dominate). According to her, "kyriarchy is best theorized as a complex pyramidal system of interlocking multiplicative social and religious structures of superordination and subordination, of ruling and oppression."[18] Though established on the male right to property in antiquity and the women's rule of obedience and submission, kyriarchy should be identified not with "the patriarchal and racial binary male over female, black over white, Western over colonized peoples,"[19] but in terms of the structures of domination and superiority that are still evident in the world today.

Therefore, biblical interpretation by feminist scholars is best understood as attempts by women to liberate themselves from kyriarchal domination and mentality. It represents struggles by women (but not limited to women) to become fully emancipated in society and religion. Apparently, as indicative of the "open" goal of feminist struggles in that it aims at the liberation of both women and men, some scholars now use such constructs as "wo/men" instead of "women." The aim is to indicate that though a female agenda, feminism's goal is not limited to the benefits of women. In what follows, I shall examine the feminist agenda in the local context of Nigeria in order to highlight the role that theologians should be concerned with if the agenda is to be properly addressed.

Method and Context: How and Where Feminism has worked in Nigeria

Until 2012, when the world-acclaimed Nigerian novelist Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie delivered her famous TED talk at the United Kingdom's TEDx Euston, *We Should All be Feminists*, which was later published in 2014 under the same title, the subject of feminism was hardly a matter of common discussion in Nigeria. Discussions on feminist issues happen with attendant uneasiness, presuppositions, and prejudgments in Nigeria today.

18 Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *Changing Horizons: Explorations in Feminist Interpretation* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2013), 7.

19 Schüssler Fiorenza, *Changing Horizons*, 8.

In the literary world, forebears such as Flora Nwapa, Buchi Emecheta, and Mabel Segun critiqued patriarchy by deploying strong feminist characters in their novels. Yet, in the political sphere, there are records of women in the past who had bravely challenged male dominance in the most populous black nation in the world.[20] It is thus clear that women's movements beyond the literary world dedicated to contemporary feminism are no strangers to Nigerian history, as is evident in traditional political structures.[21] The Aba women's riot of 1929 is a glaring example of feminine defiance of domination and intimidation, even in the face of colonial tyranny.[22] Though organized at the local cultural setting of the Igbo tribe as a pressure group against male dominance, there is no doubt that this cultural women's movement gave impetus to the first ever national women's movement in Nigeria, the National Council of Women's Societies (NCWS), founded in 1958.

Despite its limitations, the NCWS upheld advocacy for women and called for equality. However, its limitation lies in the fact that it was too cautious to challenge culture and tradition and thus did not do so much to address the problem of patriarchy. According to Bene Madunagu, the NCWS "essentially accepts what tradition has been and what religion sanctions."[23] The limitations of the NCWS were, however, to be overcome by a bolder feminist movement, Women in Nigeria (WIN), which was inaugurated in 1983. WIN stayed on the frontline of activism and policy advocacy with the objective of overturning the conditions of oppression

20 The list would include, but not be limited to, Funmilayo Ransome Kuti (1900-1978), Margaret Ekpo (1914-2006), and Hajiya Gambo Sawaba (1933-2011), who were active voices in colonial Nigeria. Their feminist position and political activism show that even though "feminism" might be considered a relatively new term, it is never a new idea in Nigeria or in Africa at large.

21 Cf. Ikenna P. Okpaleke, "The Emerging Feminine Genome: One African Writer's Opinion Piece," *The Voice* 17, no.4 (2014): 22. In this piece, I outlined some traditional political structures in Africa that give women a legitimate status, one that ensures equality in a sense. In the case of Nigeria, the *Umu-ada* structure in the Igbo traditional set-up ensures that women are not relegated to passive roles in the governance of the community.

22 Toyin Falola and Adam Paddock, *The Women's War of 1929: A History of Anti-Colonial Resistance in Eastern Nigeria*, African World Series (Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press, 2011).

23 Bene E. Madunagu, "The Nigerian Feminist Movement: Lessons from *Women in Nigeria*, WIN," *Review of African Political Economy* 38, no. 118 (2008): 666-669; 666.

in which women and other less privileged people find themselves. Despite having a broad perspective that includes oppressed men in their agenda, however, WIN was focused more on women, since they "suffer additional forms of exploitation and oppression—as women."[24] Theirs was indeed a double form of oppression and exploitation on the basis of gender and class. WIN would therefore set as its agenda the "struggle against both class and gender oppression through promoting the study of conditions of women, disseminating the outcome for policy formulation, defending the rights of women and taking actions to transform the conditions of women."[25] Today, WIN has metamorphosed into a clearer organization that addresses the fundamental concerns of feminism, namely, the Nigerian Feminist Forum (NFF, 2008).[26] Under its continental mother network, African Feminist Forum (AFF), NFF has become the face of feminist activism in Nigeria with support that extends beyond its shores. And this has considerable implications in its work against structures of domination in both Nigeria and on the continent.

Yet, there is still a lack of a critical and proper theological assessment of feminism in the Nigerian context. Such a theology would be ready to define feminism from the perspective of the unique Nigerian experience in the aftermath of colonialism. In other words, Nigerian feminist theology must be worked out in a postcolonial framework as a way of accounting for the political and cultural emancipation of a hitherto colonized people, which is evident in the evolution of feminism in Nigeria. The consciousness of the postcolonial nature of Nigerian feminism has already been pointed out by Amuluche-Greg Nnamani:

> As Nigerian feminists raised their awareness about class oppression, they saw the need to confront oppressive mechanisms whenever they are found, even within the rank and files of elite and middle-class women. This in turn made them to begin to conceive oppression much wider; not just in terms of gender, but as a class, racial, colonial and ecological issue, that need to be confronted much more holistically.[27]

24 Madunagu, "The Nigerian Feminist Movement": 667.

25 Madunagu, "The Nigerian Feminist Movement": 667.

26 Madunagu, "The Nigerian Feminist Movement": 667.

27 Amuluche-Greg Nnamani, "Women Struggle in the Pre-colonial and Colonial Nigeria: Lessons for Modern Feminism," 212-223 in George U. Ukaegbu, Obioma Des-Obi and Iks J. Nwankwor, eds., *The Kpim of Feminism: Issues and Women in a Changing*

This awareness could be seen in the evolution of Nigerian feminism from traditional organizations such as *Umu-ada* to NCWS, WIN and then NFF. Apparently in recognition of the broader context of oppression, the feminist movement in Nigeria had to broaden and sharpen its objectives.

One is left, however, with the question of whether the awareness of postcolonialism has not pushed Nigerian feminism into deeper contact with Marxism and the like. How unique is Nigerian feminism in the light of Western versions?

Comparative Critique of the Nigerian Brand of Feminism: In Search of a New Theological Hermeneutics

It is imperative that we pay attention to the ways in which Nigerian feminism differs from Western (US and European) feminism in order to avoid an uncritical transfer of concepts, methods, goals, and interpretations. Since the hermeneutical core of feminist theology is found in the experience of women, as we have discussed, it is a great disservice to treat Nigerian feminism by appealing exclusively to the Western paradigm. Indeed, while there may be areas of similarities between the experiences of women in Nigeria and those in the West, there are remarkable differences. Culture stands out as one locus of experience for the African woman. Her cultural experiences, when considered not only in themselves but also in the events that shaped (and continues to shape) them over time, are very pivotal in any theological discourse concerning her experiences. An automatic uncritical judgment about every African culture (or any culture in the developing countries) assumes that it is fundamentally patriarchal and oppressive of women. Yet, we must bear African heterogeneity in mind and thus maintain awareness that no single instance is enough to categorize the indigenous cultures. Nigerian feminist scholar and professor of sociology at Stony Brook University Oyeronke Oyewumi, in her work *The Invention of Women: Making an African Sense of Western Gender Discourse*,[28] argues that originally the Yoruba culture, for example, upheld a fair system of power between men and women. There existed both male and female chiefs as well as

World, Studies in African Philosophy, Culture and Development Empowerment: A Reader (Victoria, BC: Trafford Publishers, 2010), 220.

28 Oyeronke Oyewumi, *The Invention of Women: Making an African Sense of Western Gender Discourses* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014).

male and female priests. Against the prioritization of gender in Western feminist debates, the Yoruba was a culture in which social structure was fashioned on age difference rather than gender. Oyewumi thus argues that colonialism radically inverted the Yoruba dynamic of power by enthroning a male hierarchy. In a recent work, Oyewumi examines the Yoruba concept of motherhood that originally did not connote any gender but that later became genderized by the epistemic shift brought about by colonialists and missionaries.[29] A theological assessment of feminist concerns in Nigeria should therefore pay attention to the culture, but in the context of the precolonial and postcolonial periods in order to argue for a separation of the extraneous aspects of the present culture on the basis of a reconstructed past. This is not to suggest a return to the past but, rather, a critique of culture that seeks to emphasize the emancipatory dimensions of both the past and the present.

Furthermore, Western feminism has, in a way, remained elitist in the absence of abject poverty as experienced in most parts of Africa, particularly in Nigeria. Often it is blinded by the Western lifestyle that might be tempted to dismiss the genuine struggles of many Nigerian women. This model of feminism, often referred to as First Wave Feminism, has been criticized heavily by so-called Second Wave Feminism as "being essentialist, monolithic, and ethnocentric."[30] Black feminists in the US, who were at the forefront of Second Wave Feminism, "refute the universalization of women's experience and recognize instead the difference among women from different social locations."[31] Female identity is therefore not constructed from a particular *locus* but rather involves a lot of complexities and differences that must be acknowledged. At present, we find ourselves in Third Wave Feminism, which, in recognizing the existence of multivalent perspectives, attempts to hold the tension between the universal concerns of feminism and the complexities of the multiple local contexts. In light of such an understanding, the Asian feminist scholar Yu Su-Lin argues that contemporary feminism should not be construed as "a border-restrictive

29 Oyenroke Oyewumi, *What Gender is Motherhood?: Changing Yoruba Ideals of Power, Procreation and Identity in the Age of Modernity* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 2.

30 Yu Su-Lin, "Third-Wave Feminism: A Transnational Perspective," *Asian Journal of Women's Studies* 15, no. 1 (2009): 7-25 at 14.

31 Yu, "Third-Wave Feminism": 11.

parameter, but rather a circumstantial point-of-departure from which one should be capable of articulating transnational connections among women."[32] The question remains whether the Nigerian feminist project is still caught up in First Wave Feminism, in which the Western homogenous definition still maintains a central position. In other words, how has Nigerian feminism tried to balance the universal conceptualizations with local concerns?

Indeed, the evolution of contemporary feminist groups in Nigeria as traced in our brief historical excursus seems to show a greater tendency to move away from unique roots towards a more westernized model of feminism. What initially began as the National Council of *Women's Societies* (NCWS) gradually changed into Nigerian *Feminist Forum* (NFF).[33] Conceptually, one could ask whether the word "feminism" is a necessary definition of what feminist concerns should be in all contexts. Is the concept of "woman" not more appealing to the Nigerian than "feminism"? Is the word "feminism" translatable into any Nigerian language? In fact, in the absence of such a linguistic parallel, feminism remains alien to many women and men in their struggles against oppression and dominance in Nigeria and becomes the concern of a few elites.[34] With such disconnection, the accounts of courageous local women in their communities would be regarded as insignificant only within the "mainstream" feminist discourses. Against such a historical evolution, Cheryl Johnson-Odim and Nina E. Mba provide us with a counternarrative in the life of Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti, one of the front liners in Nigerian feminism.[35] Ransome-

32 Yu, "Third-Wave Feminism": 12.

33 Emphasis mine. I raise the questions: Why shift from the concepts of "women" and "society" to those of "feminist" and "forum" when the latter group hardly connects with a typical African context? Further, none of these terms is translatable into any local language, and this is critical in addressing the issues with which feminism is concerned. Perhaps the shift was motivated by the need to identify with the global movement, yet it betrays the requirement of plurality.

34 Oyewumi has also argued that the Yoruba, like many African languages, have no vocabulary for gender pronouns. She observes, "Yorùbá do not need to invent a new language, new pronouns, or new names, because their language is not organized on the basis of gender categories; hence there are no gendered pronouns, no gendered names, or gendered kinship categories." Oyewumi, *What Gender is Motherhood?*, 6.

35 Cheryl Johnson-Odim and Nina Emma Mba, *For Women and the Nation: Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti of Nigeria* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997).

Kuti's Western education led her into feminist activism; however, her methods and strategies evolved as she became conscious of the threats of colonialism, and this involved the deepening of her local context. Hence, from originally founding her group as a ladies' club in the 1920s she would later rename it Nigerian Women's Union (NWU) by the end of 1949 in order to pay attention to her context and to register her disapproval of colonial oppression as it affects women. It is therefore imperative that in seeking some collaboration with the West, the Nigerian brand of feminism must not lose sight of its local context.

To achieve this (re)contextualization, a theology that is deeply rooted in African sociocultural consciousness must come to the rescue of Nigerian feminism. Such a theology must provide a sufficient account of the African principle of communalism according to which individuals are constituted and integrated into a harmonious community based on communal values. John Mbiti cryptically expresses it thus: "I am because we are, and since we are, therefore I am."[36] Expressed differently, whether as *Ubuntu* (Zulu) or *Ujamaa* (Nyerere), African communalism, with its emphasis on family, solidarity, and community, underscores the impossibility of a metaphysical conception of individual autonomy. In other words, the individual *cannot* exist outside the community; the community takes care of the individuals, and the individuals take care of the community.[37] In such a community, therefore, the emphasis on togetherness must be complemented by the respect of differences and individuality irrespective of gender or status. Against a Western paradigm that idealizes the individual above the community, an African model of community situates the individual within the society. Such a model guarantees the security of both the individual and the community. It protects the individual from isolation, alienation, and loneliness and safeguards the community from disintegration and rupture. To illustrate with the concept of "woman" over "feminism," one could easily associate the ideas of family, community, and embodiment with the concept of "woman," which is not the case with the abstract notion "feminism." On the contrary still, one might argue that the very elements of family and community have been deployed over the years in

36 John Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy* (Oxford: Heinemann Publications, 1969), 141.

37 Cf. Julius Nyerere, *Freedom and Unity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968), the section on "Ujamaa—The Basis of African Socialism," 165-166.

promoting the subjugation of women. Yet, insights from the Igbo dual-sex system of *male daughters* and *female husbands* can help challenge the gender-identity politics that seem to disconnect the individual from the community. Igbo anthropologist Ifi Amadiume has shown the flexibility of gender constructions in Igbo culture and the fact that women had access to wealth and power equal to that of their male counterparts in precolonial times.[38] Nevertheless, the questions remain: What is the status of women in comparison with men in the Nigerian context today? If gender plays no role, how, then, can we account for the many infractions against the rights of women in today's Nigeria? More still, should we talk about gender equality or gender complementarity in the Nigerian context? Which of these concepts better serves the community without devaluing the individual? How can we create a community in which there is no oppression or domination by any gender or class of individuals?

Reconstructing the Task of Theology

By paying attention to the operations of ideological trends in the West, theologians can offer a proper analysis for a unique Nigerian feminism, one that takes into consideration both the unique African and the biblical values. In that wise, one could ask whether the precolonial and colonial struggles of Nigerian women have something to teach modern Nigerian feminism. Should there not be a reappraisal of what was regarded as the limitations of the NCWS since it paid attention to the principle of African communalism? Can theology help modern Nigerian feminism to rediscover the values of African solidarity that might be destroyed by the Western brand of feminism with its excessive focus on the individual? As the mother of African feminist theology, Mercy Amba Oduyoye, points out, "the sense of community characterizes traditional life in Africa,"[39] and this community consciousness is founded on the ontology of relationships.

> In the African religious worldview, God, the Source Being, other-spirit beings ... and human beings are in constant communication and inter-

38 Ifi Amadiume, *Male Daughters, Female Husbands: Gender and Sex in an African Society* (London: Zed Books, 2015).

39 Mercy Amba Oduyoye, *Introducing African Women's Theology* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 34.

> relationship. This relatedness and inter-relationship controls and directs human actions and relationships. On the horizontal level, kinship and lineage descent, and political alliances between 'jural communities,' define relationships and relatedness.[40]

African ontology in this sense provides rich resources for Christian theological reflection on the experience of women in Africa. Community and interrelationships further open the debate on the concepts of hospitality, caring, sharing, and solidarity. It sheds light on the feminist concept of motherhood in a degendered form, and of mothering as a characteristic of divine hospitality. Motherliness becomes thus a form of godlikeness, namely, "a quality of relating which is found in God and is expected not only of women but of men because we are beings created in the image of God."[41] One discovers here a pathway toward reconciling the precolonial African conception of motherhood (as already seen in the Yoruba) with the fundamental tenets of Christian theology.

Another critical area is the tendency to deny or suppress femininity, which is often done "in pursuit of a male style of excellence."[42] We ask: Does theology not consider it a task to help Nigerian feminism rediscover and even repristinate the value of femininity? Indeed, there is a need to understand that femininity is an enrichment to humanity and not a form of weakness. Since a critique of patriarchy should not imply an oppression of one's unique self as a female, an acceptance of femininity would help in safeguarding the self-esteem of women in Nigeria and even elsewhere. In other words, attempts to apply "the strategy of coping by ploys and self-abasement"[43] by some women should be discouraged since it refrains

40 Oduyoye, *Introducing African Women's Theology*, 35. Oduyoye's understanding of the African ontology is well factored into her conception of feminism, a concept she applies cautiously. In one of her works, she explains that feminism "emphasizes the wholeness of the community as made up of male and female beings. It seeks to express what is not so obvious, that is, that male-humanity is a partner with female-humanity, and that both expressions of humanity are needed to shape a balanced community within which each will experience a fullness of Be-ing." Mercy Amba Oduyoye, *Hearing and Knowing: Theological Reflections on Christianity in Africa* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1986), 121. It is only within this ontology that the idea of gender complementarity could be best constructed in a just way.

41 Oduyoye, *Introducing African Women's Theology*, 48.

42 Nnamani, "Women Struggle": 223.

43 Mercy Amba Oduyoye, "Feminist Theology in an African Perspective," 166-181 in

from confronting the real issues of oppression. Theology's task would be to critique the sources that give rise to such ploys, whether in the African culture or Christianity as well as Islam, while at the same time preserving and emphasizing those aspects that are liberating.

Finally, theology in the Nigerian context should offer feminism the resources to transcend gender and patriarchy. This task is better undertaken by deploying the aforementioned *hermeneutics of culture*[44] as a specific means of experience for women and men in Africa (Nigeria). Theology should endeavor to speak in and through the African cultural experience and be able to evoke the "cultural heritage of women's strength" in Africa.[45] By unmasking the non–gender-specific pronouns in most Nigerian languages,[46] theologians should offer a critique for the construction of society on the parameters of gender. Notwithstanding the unique situation of women in Nigeria, the grand agenda of feminism should be the dethronement of all forms of domination and the dissolution of all forms of oppression, cutting across all genders and all classes. To do this effectively, theology should be ready to engage in critical dialogue with Nigerian society without doing violence to the fabric of communal relationships. In this way, Nigerian feminism would be better positioned to address some of the local challenges while yet offering some valuable insights into other contexts especially in Africa and Asia.

Conclusion

Feminist theology, as long as it is based on and draws from a proper biblical hermeneutics of every human experience, must not be limited to overturning the structures of domination that affect only a specific group of people. Despite its strong connection with women, and notwithstanding the terrible plight of women in a patriarchal society such as Nigeria, the fight to liberate the oppressed, irrespective of gender or class, should

Rosino Gibellini, ed., *Paths of African Theology* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1994), 177.

44 Oduyoye, *Introducing African Women's Theology*, 12.

45 Oduyoye, *Introducing African Women's Theology*, 127.

46 A clear example is found in the Igbo language, in which there is no linguistic difference between the pronouns "he" and "she": *"He said …"* means *"O kwuru …"*; *"She said …"* means *"O kwuru …"*. The same is the case in Yoruba: *"O tin bọ̀"* means *"He/she is coming."*

be the authentic goal of any Christian struggle that claims its mandate from the Word of God. Theology's role, therefore, is, through a cultural critique founded on the experiences of both the past and the present, to balance the various objectives of feminist movements by showing that the structures of dominance and the victims of oppression cut across genders and classes. This task is more urgent in Nigeria, where, at once, the structures of dominance appear to be getting stronger, the victims of oppression are steadily increasing in number, and the struggle against dominance appears to be skewed by narrow interests. Quite importantly, the precolonial African societies have proved themselves valuable resources for addressing the consequences of cultural patriarchy from theological perspectives.

About author

Ikenna Paschal Okpaleke is a PhD candidate at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium.

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Eastern Daughters in Western Missions: Bible Women and the Seeds of the Chinese Protestant Church

James W. ELLIS
Hong Kong Baptist University, Hong Kong

Abstract
Chinese Bible women served as Christian evangelists and educators in China and Hong Kong during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, alongside Protestant female missionaries from Europe and the United States. They helped disseminate the Christian message and functioned as cross-cultural intermediaries between missionaries and the Chinese women and girls they hoped to convert. Bible women were also pioneering activists, helping others who suffered from various social problems. Although many Bible women were impoverished and socially marginalized, collectively they made a crucial contribution to "one of the largest and longest-lasting cross-cultural encounters the world has experienced." Historians, however, have remained quiet about these "lowliest employees" on the missions' hierarchical ladder, treating Bible women as "missiological objects rather than historical subjects in the encounter between China and Christianity." This essay shines a light on the important roles of Bible women and helps resituate them into their proper place in mission history.

Keywords
Bible women, Protestant missions, China, Hong Kong, Christianity, cross-cultural

Introduction

Chinese Bible women served as Christian evangelists and educators in mainland China and Hong Kong during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, alongside Protestant female missionaries from Europe and the United States. They helped disseminate the Christian message and educated Western missionaries on the importance of Confucianism and folk religions

Corresponding author
James W. ELLIS: james.ellis@alum.cardozo.yu.edu

to the family expectations of mothers, wives, sisters, and daughters. At a time when poor Chinese girls and women had limited access to formal education, Bible women attended mission schools and opened their own schools in urban centers and rural villages. They were also pioneering social activists, helping other women who were victims of concubinage, prostitution, and human trafficking. Although many Bible women were impoverished and socially marginalized, they played a major role in "one of the largest and longest-lasting cross-cultural encounters the world has experienced."[1]

Bible women were intermediaries between missionaries and the Chinese women and girls they hoped to convert. They assumed roles in Protestant missions that were similar to those of female members of China's folk religious sects.[2] However, when Chinese women joined Protestant denominations, they defied social barriers and became targets of religious persecution.

The persecution could be minor. For instance, when Bible women passed by shops and temples on their way to Christian worship services, they were routinely "teased and ridiculed" with "abusive language."[3] The persecution could also be very severe. During the Boxer Uprising (1899-1901), hordes of Chinese farmers and laborers joined to eliminate foreign influences from mainland China. They killed approximately 180 Western missionaries who lived in cities, rural areas, and on the frontiers and were the most visible foreigners in China. The Boxers considered both missionaries and Bible women to be "running dogs of the imperialists,"[4] and Bible women suffered fierce public beatings. In fact, they were very sensitive to their own culture and were not agents of Western imperialist aggression, yet Bible women still endured abuse and social isolation.

1 Kathleen Lodwick, "Introduction," in *The Missionary Kaleidoscope: Portraits of Six China Missionaries*, ed. Kathleen Lodwick and W.K. Cheng (Norwalk: Eastbridge, 2005), 1.

2 Kwok Pui-lan, "Chinese Women and Protestant Christianity," in *Christianity in China: From the Eighteenth Century to the Present*, ed. Daniel H. Bays (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1996), 203.

3 Kwok Pui-lan, *Chinese Women and Christianity: 1860-1927* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992), 11-12. See also John Macgowen, "Chivalry to Women as Christian Sentiment," *The Chinese Recorder and Missionary Journal* 22 (1891): 266.

4 W. Harold Fuller, *Sun Like Thunder: Following Jesus on Asia's Spice Road* (Victoria: Friesen Press, 2015), 326.

Today, common stereotypes persist about participants in historical missions—even among scholars with otherwise liberal views of other people and cultures—because Western authors wrote histories of the mission era from ethnocentric and mission-centric viewpoints that ignored Chinese perspectives. Recently, writers have begun to analyze the complex motivations, social challenges, and special abilities of Western women in Eastern missions. See, for example, Jane Hunter's *The Gospel of Gentility*, Patricia Hill's *The World Their Household*, Clare Midgley's *Feminism and Empire*, and Rosemary Seton's *Western Daughters in Eastern Lands*.[5] Chinese Bible women, however, continue to be treated more as "passive recipients rather than active participants … missiological objects rather than historical subjects in the encounter between China and Christianity."[6]

Western missionaries discussed the roles of Bible women in autobiographies, letters, diaries, and other first-hand accounts. Missionaries also published tracts and submitted reports to the boards of foreign missions that outlined how best to utilize Bible women's skills in the mission field. The mission-focused Mandarin publications *Jiaohui xinbao* (教會新報), *Wanguo gongbao* (萬國公報), *Nüduobao* (女鐸報), *Zhonghua jidu jiaohui nianjian* (中華基督教會年鑒), and the long-running *Chinese Recorder and Missionary Journal* printed articles by and about Chinese Christian women. Additionally, a few Bible women wrote religious confessions and testimonies. Still, we know the names of very few Bible women, "the lowliest employees" on "the hierarchical ladder" of most Western missions.[7]

Methodology

This essay aims to shine a light on Bible women's crucial collective contributions to the growth of the Chinese church and to help resituate

5 Rosemary Seton's *Western Daughters in Eastern Lands* examined the experiences of female British missionaries in mainland China, India, and Africa from the early nineteenth century through the mid-twentieth century, including the "gendered nature of conflict on the mission field." Agnes Suk-man Pang, "Book Review," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 38, (2014): 212.

6 Kwok Pui-lan, "Claiming Our Heritage: Chinese Women and Christianity," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 16 (1992): 194.

7 R. Pierce Beaver, *American Protestant Women in World Mission: History of the First Feminist Movement in North America* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), 119.

them into their proper place within the Protestant mission movement. I begin by briefly reviewing the work of Western missionary women, particularly as school administrators and teachers. Many young Chinese women decided to devote their lives to Christian evangelism while studying at mission schools and special training schools. Next, I examine the challenges faced by Bible women living in Confucian communities that separated women and men into different social spheres. Finally, I present case studies highlighting the special skills that helped Chinese Bible women effectively spread the gospel message.

Women in the Early Missions

At its inception, the Protestant missionary movement in China was male-dominated. Robert Morrison, an Anglo-Scottish Presbyterian, became the first Protestant missionary to China when he arrived in the Portuguese port of Macau in 1807. Other male missionaries followed, but only with The Treaty of Nanking of 1842, which ended the First Opium War between the United Kingdom and the Qing dynasty, were wives permitted to live with their husbands in five official *treaty ports*: Shanghai, Canton [Guangzhou], Ningpo [Ningbo], Foochow [Fuzhou], and Amoy [Xiamen]. The *unequal treaties* of Tientsin (1858-1860) gave religious freedom to all Christians living in China and allowed male and female missionaries to travel throughout the country.

During Britain's conservative Victorian era (1837-1901) as well as in Victorian America,[8] males dominated the workforce while women concentrated on home and family life. In the early Chinese missions, husbands preached in chapels and distributed religious tracts on the streets while their wives held Bible classes or visited the homes of Chinese women.[9] Female missionaries were constrained from open-air evangelism on public streets. Although foreign missions became one of the few arenas sanctioned by Western societies for women outside the domestic sphere, many missionaries accepted a Victorian ideal of womanhood, reinforced

8 See Colleen McDannell, *The Christian Home in Victorian America, 1840-1900* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994) and Daniel Walker Howe, ed., *Victorian America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1976).

9 Kwok Pui-lan, *Chinese Women and Christianity: 1860-1927*, 15.

by a belief that God ordained women's place to be the home.[10] Chinese Confucian social attitudes regarding gender were similar.

Zealous Western women insisted that they would do women's work to further the goal of evangelizing the world.[11] This included supporting missionary husbands, caring for the sick, and other acts of benevolence. Southern Baptist women from the United States contended that they could make their greatest contributions to the mission cause by raising funds and teaching biblical principles to women and girls in foreign lands.[12] Women from many other denominations agreed.

Early Female Educators in the Eastern Missions

Protestant missionaries believed that "education as intellectual enlightenment would lead to rejection of idolatry, conversion to Christianity, and the eventual elimination of social evils."[13] The missions began setting up schools for boys and girls in China's ports and Hong Kong as soon as it was possible. Many Bible women were graduates of the mission schools.

Elijah Coleman Bridgman, the first American missionary to China, taught small groups of boys in the area around Canton beginning in the early 1830s. Bridgman later moved to Hong Kong, where he met and

10 Kwok Pui-lan, "Claiming Our Heritage": 151.

11 See Ian Welch, "Women's Work for Women: Women Missionaries in 19th Century China," presentation, the Eighth Women in Asia Conference 2005, Sydney, 2005, <http://www.google.com.hk/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwjz1vWl0uLXAhWMm5QKHcOuANsQFggkMAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fanglicanhistory.org%2Fasia%2Fchina%2Fwelch2005.pdf&usg=AOvVaw0Qryj_qLPNUbIEHFd5elwj> (accessed November 5, 2018). For a discussion of how "women's work" furthered Social Gospel goals, see Dana Robert, "Women in Mission: a Protestant Tradition," *The United Baptist Church: Global Ministries*, <http://www.umcmission.org/Find-Resources/New-World-Outlook-Magazine/New-World-Outlook-Archives/2014/March-April/0306womeninmission> (accessed November 5, 2018).

12 T. Laine Scales, *All That Fits a Woman: Training Southern Baptist Women for Charity and Mission 1907-1926* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 2000), 29.

13 Patricia P. K. Chiu, "Female Education and the Early Development of St. Stephen's Church, Hong Kong (1865-1900s)," in *Christian Encounters with Chinese Culture: Essays on Anglican and Episcopal History in China*, ed. Philip Wickeri (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2015), 47.

married Eliza Jane Gillett in 1843. When she met Bridgman, Gillett was one of only three unmarried female missionaries appointed by the Protestant Episcopal Church. Gillett had been principal of a girls' boarding school in the United States and was teaching a small group of Chinese girls. She later opened the first Protestant girls' school in Shanghai and, in 1864, founded the Bridgman Academy in Peking [Beijing], which educated many prominent residents of the Chinese capital and trained generations of Bible women.[14]

Henrietta Hall Shuck was America's first female missionary to China and the first Western woman to live in Hong Kong. In 1836, Shuck and her Baptist missionary husband, Jehu Lewis Shuck, came from Virginia to Macau and worked there for six years. Henrietta ran a small boarding school that served a handful of students. The Shucks then moved to Hong Kong in 1842, where they established the first Baptist congregation in the British colony. Henrietta set up a new boarding school for Chinese girls and boys, which in two years attracted thirty-two student-residents. Many of Shuck's female students went on to spread the Christian message among Hong Kong's Chinese community.[15]

British teacher Mary Ann Aldersey, who was associated with the London Missionary Society, opened a school for Chinese girls in 1837 in the port city of Surabaya, Dutch East Indies [Indonesia]. A few years later Aldersey became the first unmarried female missionary to serve in mainland China.[16] She founded a girls' school in Ningpo in the Zhejiang province, along China's north-central coast. Two young Christian converts from Surabaya, Ati (Ruth A-Tik) and Kit (Christiana A-Kit), assisted Aldersey in Ningpo. Ati and Kit adopted the customs of the Ningpo people and helped Aldersey gain the confidence of the local residents. Aldersey, Ati, and Kit successfully recruited and trained more Bible women in Ningpo.[17]

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14 Liu Xiaoyi, "The Rise of Women's Modern Schooling in Late Qing China (1840-1911)," *Education Journal* 37 (2009): 95.

15 See Brenda H. Cox, *Tethered: The Life of Henrietta Hall Shuck, the First American Woman Missionary to China* (Colorado Springs, CO: Crosslink Publishing, 2017).

16 Gerald H. Anderson, *Biographical Dictionary of Christian Missions* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 9.

17 See E. Aldersey White, *A Woman Pioneer in China: The Life of Mary Ann Aldersey* (London: Livingstone Press, 1932).

In China's traditional society, sons and daughters of wealthy families might have private tutors. However, poorer girls often received no formal education. Mission schools and boarding schools admitted girls from every social stratum and provided an education, food, and accommodations. Girls' schools aimed to attract and educate new converts and train students to teach their future husbands and children about Christianity.

The schools were also safe havens. The Anglican Church founded the Diocesan Native Female Training School in Hong Kong in 1860, which was attended by many Chinese and Eurasian girls. There was also an Anglican diocesan home for orphans. During the nineteenth century, many girls were kidnapped from their rural homes in China and sold to feed large markets in Hong Kong and California for domestic bond servants (in Cantonese *mui tsai*), concubines, and prostitutes.[18] The Anglican Female Education Society rescued some of the kidnapped girls and took them to the refuge of Fairlea Girls' School on Hong Kong Island.[19] The orphans received a Christian education and upon baptism took new names such as Love, Faith, and Grace. After graduation, a few of the girls went on to become Bible women and teachers in the missions.[20]

Bible Women

As the early mission era progressed, older, illiterate Chinese women began coming to the homes of missionaries or to mission schools to learn about Christianity. With the assistance of young local student-translators, female missionaries taught them a few Bible verses and hymns. The first priority was helping the older women attain a basic level of literacy, so they could better understand Christian theology, communicate more

18 See Carl T. Smith, "The Chinese Church, Labour and Elites and the Mui Tsai Question in the 1920's," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Hong Kong Branch* 21 (1981): 91-113, and Maria Jaschok, *Concubines and Bondservants: A Social History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988).

19 An 1897 Hong Kong guidebook described The Fairlea Girls School in this way: "Its work is first educational—with a large Boarding School for Chinese and Eurasian children, also a day school having an attendance of nearly 200 scholars. In addition its efforts are Evangelistic. It has its own little church and special school services with a number of Bible women visiting daily and having access to a considerable section of the native families in their homes." R. C. Hurley, *The Tourist's Guide to Hong Kong, with short trips to the Mainland of China* (Charleston, 1897).

20 Chiu, "Female Education," 57.

effectively, and read the Bible to others. Many developed a deep belief in the verity of the Bible and wanted to become evangelists and teachers. Missionaries referred to these women by various names: Bible women, women evangelists,[21] Bible readers, or simply native assistants. Missionaries also recruited members of their domestic staffs and girls' school graduates to become Bible women, and sometimes the wives or mothers of Chinese ministers studied to become Bible women.[22]

Ellen Henrietta Ranyard was an Englishwoman who served the poor in London during the mid- to late nineteenth century. Ranyard established a society she called Seven Dials to supply Bibles to people who could not afford them, and she published a journal named *Bible Work at Home and Abroad* (1865-1879) to support the project. Female volunteers distributed the Bibles and read them to large and small audiences. The public knew these volunteers, who numbered in the hundreds, as Bible women.[23] This was the first known usage of the term. A Bible woman was a mixture of missionary and social worker, "a working class woman drawn from the neighborhood ... [providing] the 'missing link' between the poorest families and their [benefactors]."[24] After being trained for three months in social work and Bible studies, Raynard's Bible women set out to improve the lives of people in need. The concept of compassionate female Bible readers and evangelists called Bible women spread to other mission endeavors around the world.[25]

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21 Mary Keng Mun Chung, *Chinese Women in Christian Ministry: An Intercultural Study* (Pieterlen: Peter Lang Inc., 2005), 116. Members of established Chinese congregations often called Bible women "women evangelists" because they led women's meetings, taught classes, visited homes, and sometimes in country districts preached at markets and on village streets. Mrs. W. B. Hamilton, *The Chinese Bible Woman* (New York: Women's Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church, ca. 1900), 5, <https://archive.org/details/chinesebiblewoma00hami> (accessed November 5, 2018). Mrs. Hamilton was a Presbyterian missionary in the Shandong province.

22 Harriet Newell Noyes, *History of the South China Mission of the American Presbyterian Church, 1845-1920* (Shanghai: Presbyterian Mission Press, 1927), 34.

23 See Ellen Henrietta Ranyard, *The Missing Link, or, Bible-women in the Homes of the London Poor* (New York: Robert Carter & Brothers Publisher, 1860).

24 Frank Prochaska, *The Voluntary Impulse: Philanthropy in Modern Britain* (London: Faber and Faber, 1988), 49.

25 For more information on Ellen Henrietta Raynard, see Mark K. Smith, "Ellen Ranyard: Bible Women and Informal Education," *The Encyclopaedia of Informal Education* (2001, 2003), <http://infed.org/mobi/ellen-ranyard-lnr-bible-women-

R. H. Graves, an American Southern Baptist who lived in Canton, was one of the first missionaries in China to use local women as evangelists and public readers.[26] Graves was an early advocate of the indigenization of Chinese Christianity, the idea that "the main work in the evangelization of a people must be done by that people themselves."[27] Graves helped Chinese women set up a Christian school and a "native" tract society, independent from the Canton mission. Female converts began teaching local assemblies in 1864.[28]

Methodist missionaries started using the term "deaconess" as early as 1871 in Foochow (Fujian province) to refer to Chinese women employed by the Women's Foreign Missionary Society to go to surrounding villages to evangelize and perform benevolent works. By 1885, the Foreign Missionary Society employed 182 Bible women around the world.[29] In an article entitled "Bible Women in Foochow" published by *Heathen Woman's Friend*, missionary wife Susan Moore Sites wrote,

> The introduction of "deaconesses," or Bible women, was a novel feature of missionary work to our native church in China; and it will still require some length of time to get the idea fully before our people. In beginning this work, we have not only to instruct these women more clearly in their knowledge of Christian doctrines, but often to teach them to read, beginning with the catechism, the gospels, and the hymns, as translated in their own "Chinese characters."[30]

While there is considerable debate concerning when the first deaconesses began serving Christian communities,[31] the designation saw a great

and-informal-education/> (accessed November 5, 2018).

26 Rosswell Hobart (R. H.) Graves, "Fifty Years Service in South China," *The Chinese Recorder and Missionary Journal* 38 (1907): 88. See also Rosswell Hobart Graves, *Forty Years in China or China in Transition* (Baltimore: R. H. Woodward Company, 1895).

27 Graves, *Forty Years in China*, 297.

28 For more information concerning R. H. Graves, including his brief marriage to a Bible woman, see William Loyd Allen, *You Are a Great People: Maryland/Delaware Baptists, 1742-1998* (Franklin: Providence House, 2000).

29 *Sixteenth Annual Report of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church* (Columbus: Ohio State Journal Printing Establishment, 1885), 8.

30 Mrs. S. Moore Sites, "Bible Women in Foochow," *Heathen Woman's Friend* 4 (November 1872): 359.

31 Debates over the qualifications of deacons and whether "deaconesses" were a part of

revival in the German states and the United States during the nineteenth century.[32] Lutheran minister Theodor Fliedner founded *Kaiserswerther Diakonie*, a hospital and deaconess training center, in Düsseldorf in 1836. The Methodist Episcopal Church was at the forefront of the "deaconess movement" in America.[33] Many Methodist Episcopal deaconesses went to China as missionaries and trained local women to become teachers, evangelists, and caregivers for the sick and poor. The Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church (USA) approved a new constitution in 1868, "for the purpose of engaging and uniting the efforts of the women of the Church in sending out and supporting female missionaries, native Christian teachers and Bible women in foreign lands."[34]

Two of the earliest training schools for Chinese Bible women were established in the southeastern Guangdong province. The Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions (USA) opened a boarding school for girls in Canton in 1852 that offered literacy classes and Bible instruction. In 1872, American Presbyterian missionary Harriet Newell Noyes oversaw a major expansion of the school, which was renamed the True Light Seminary. The Baptist mission in the Guangdong coastal city of Swatow [Shantou] was also training Bible women by 1874, soon after Swatow became an official treaty port and began allowing missionaries to live in the city.[35]

William Chalmers Burns and George Smith founded the English Presbyterian Church mission in the Fujian province. The mission had stations throughout China and in Singapore and Taiwan. The mission's training schools and boarding schools made effective use of lady agents

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the first-century church include varying interpretations of New Testament passages, primarily 1 Timothy 3:8-13 (KJV) and Romans 16:1-2 (KJV).

32 For a brief general overview of the historical institution of deaconess in the Catholic tradition and Protestant communions see Herbert Thurston, "Deaconesses," *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. 4 (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1908), <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/04651a.htm> (accessed November 5, 2018).

33 See Lucy Jane Meyer, *Deaconess: With an Account of the Origin of the Deaconess in the Methodist Episcopal Church of America* (Oak Park: The Deaconess Advocate, 1897), <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/001926069> (accessed November 5, 2018).

34 Barbara E. Campbell, "That Handful of Women," *United Methodist Women*, March 2, 2015, <https://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/news/that-handful-of-women> (accessed November 5, 2018).

35 R. G. Tiedemann, ed., *Handbook of Christianity in China*, vol. 2, *1800-Present* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 263.

from England and nonordained female native helpers. English Presbyterian missionaries arrived in Chinchew [Quanzhou, Fujian province—approximately ninety kilometers north of Xiamen] in 1862. They started a girls' school that grew into a large urban boarding school with eighty-five students in 1902. When older women, between sixteen and sixty years of age, wanted to join, a women's school was established. The older students studied verses in romanized colloquial and received a thorough grounding in basic Bible knowledge.[36] According to missionary Anne N. Duncan, "in the schoolroom elderly ladies with spectacles may be seen sitting conning their lessons alongside bright-faced young women, some just girl-brides."[37] Chinchew's schools spawned a large number of small day schools in surrounding villages led by younger and older female graduates.

The Methodist Episcopal Church's Women's Foreign Mission Society set up a "Training School" in Tientsin [Tianjin] in 1885, with the aim of furnishing "native women who will be efficient as Bible women to go into the homes." The Director, Miss Yates, wrote that among her ten pupils some were "partakers of rich fellowship and communion with Christ, while others are groping toward the light.... In their contact with the outside heathen I am most happy to note that they are not 'overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.'"[38]

The American Episcopal Church in China established a similar "Church Training-School for [Bible] Women" in Shanghai in 1896,[39] to prepare

36 Romanized colloquial refers to the use of letters from the Latin (or Roman) alphabet to translate Chinese spoken dialects. Faced with widespread illiteracy, Western missionaries romanized common spoken languages and translated the Bible and religious texts into more accessible forms. Although the process had mixed results, according to one female missionary in 1907, "in regions where romanised is used there is no doubt; if a woman has learned to read, she can read the whole Bible." Edith Benham, "Women's Work: General," *China Centenary Missionary Conference Records* (Shanghai: American Tract Society, 1907), 140.

37 Anne N. Duncan, *The City of Springs, or, Mission Work in Chinchew with preparatory note by Dr. Barbour* (Edinburgh and London: Oliphant Anderson and Ferrier, 1902), 93.

38 *Sixteenth Annual Report of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church* (Columbus: Ohio State Journal Printing Establishment, 1885), 33-34, <https://archive.org/details/sixteenthannualr01woma> (accessed November 5, 2018). Miss Yates's quotation referred to Romans 12:21 (KJV).

39 See Annette B. Richmond, *The American Episcopal Church in China* (New York: The Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society, 1907), <https://archive.org/stream/americanepiscop01richgoog/americanepiscop01richgoog_djvu.txt> (accessed

local women to help in various parishes and "for the uplifting of Chinese womanhood."[40] Students learned to read and write, studied the Bible, memorized hymns, and received vocational training in embroidery. The school devoted an hour every day to "practical work, for each senior in turn talks to the heathen women, who come to [the] dispensary, and each junior listens in turn, for independence comes slowly to a Chinese woman."[41] Graduates were qualified to be independent Bible women or assistants to foreign female missionaries.

By the early twentieth century, there were many similar schools in mainland China and Hong Kong, some with four-year curricula and dozens of full-time students. Bible women were usually trained by the wives of Chinese ministers and unmarried female missionaries rather than by missionary wives. According to China Mission scholar R. G. Tiedemann, missionary wives acquired fewer Chinese language skills than did their husbands or their unmarried colleagues, and male-dominated missionary societies frequently treated wives as mere assistant missionaries.[42] Bible women and other Chinese Christian women absorbed much more about Western culture than their non-Christian compatriots through church membership, attending mission schools, and related activities.

Separate Spheres

The mission movement provided exceptional opportunities for Western women living in the constrained Victorian age and for Chinese women living in a constrained Confucian society.[43] In general, men and women

November 5, 2018).

40 *Chinese Bible Women: How They Are Trained, What They Do* (New York: Louis F. Eggers, ca. 1900), 3, <https://ia800403.us.archive.org/26/items/chinesebiblewome00unse/chinesebiblewome00unse.pdf> (accessed November 5, 2018).

41 *Chinese Bible Women*, 3.

42 Tiedemann, ed., *Handbook of Christianity in China*, 263.

43 Confucianism developed from the teachings of the Chinese philosopher Confucius (551-479 BC) and went through various revivals, including a neo-Confucian stage during the late Tang dynasty (618-907 AD). It has been one of the primary guides for Chinese society throughout history, including the Protestant mission era. Scholars describe Confucianism in various ways: as a cultural tradition, philosophy, humanistic or rationalistic religion, political system, or lifestyle. One writer concluded, "Confucianism is a non-theistic, diffused religious tradition that regards the secular realm of human relations as sacred." Joseph A. Adler, "Confucianism as a Religious

still lived in separate spheres.[44] A long history of ideas provided justification for the separation of genders in China, beginning with the ancient *liji* (or *Record of Rites*), one of the *wu jing* (or *Five Classics*) of Chinese Confucian literature. According to the *liji*, males operated outside the home and wives operated inside the home, the ancient distinction of the interconnected forces of *yin* and *yang*. Men and women were to observe strict separation in society. Men were responsible for the family's dealings outside the home, such as business affairs and politics; women were responsible for family relations and housework inside the home.[45] Restrictions on free association of men and women strengthened during the Song dynasty. Influential neo-Confucian philosopher Zhu Xi (1130-1200) stressed the inferiority of women and advocated the separation of the sexes.[46]

The notion that men and women occupy separate spheres has also been part of Western social and religious thought since ancient times. The early Christian bishop Cyril of Jerusalem (ca. 313-386 AD) proclaimed, "If the Church is shut, and you are all inside, let there be a separation, men with men, and women with women, lest the pretext of salvation become an occasion of destruction. Even if there be a fair pretext for sitting near each other, let passions be put away."[47] Saint Augustine (ca. 354-430 AD) also praised congregations that observed the separation of the sexes, because the practice promoted modesty and focused attention on the liturgy.[48]

Tradition: Linguistic and Methodological Problems" (presentation, Institute for Advanced Studies in Humanities and Social Sciences, National Taiwan University, Taipei, and the Department of Philosophy, Tunghai University, Taichung, 2014), <http://www.academia.edu/25402539/Confucianism_as_a_Religious_Tradition_Linguistic_and_Methodological_Problems > (accessed November 5, 2018).

44 See Christopher Wells, "Separate Spheres," *Encyclopedia of Feminist Literary Theory* (London: Routledge, 2009), 519, and Cathy Ross, "Separate Spheres or Shared Dominions?" *Transformation* 23 (2006): 228-235.

45 See Li-Hsiang Rosenlee, *Confucianism and Women* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006).

46 Anders Hansson, *Chinese Outcasts: Discrimination and Emancipation in Late Imperial China*, vol. 37 of *Sinica Leidensia* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 46.

47 Cyril of Jerusalem, *Procatechesis* (Prologue), trans. Edwin Hamilton Gifford, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Second Series 7 (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1894), rev. and ed. for *New Advent* by Kevin Knight, <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/310100.htm> (accessed November 5, 2018).

48 St. Augustine, *City of God and Christian Doctrine*, trans. Marcus Dods, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, First Series 2 (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co.,

Segregation of the genders was part of the design of mission chapels and church buildings, but exact practices evolved over time. In the English Presbyterian chapel in Chinchew, for example, a screen behind the preacher's pulpit initially cordoned off a small space "to accommodate the very few women who were bold enough to venture to attend service." According to missionary Anne N. Duncan, each successive movement of the dividing screen "marked a step in the development of [the mission's] work amongst women":

> The dingy shut-in little corner behind the preacher was scarcely conducive to intelligent worship.... [Women could only see the preacher's] red-knobbed hat, and a few inches of pigtail beneath it.... [Later] the women were accommodated in an adjoining room, with a window-shaped opening in the partition to allow of the preacher's voice reaching those unseen worshippers.... The dividing screen ... now runs down the center of the buildings, dividing the accommodation equally between men and women. All sit facing the speaker.... This change from a few aged and wonderfully ignorant old women lodged in the dingy recesses behind the pulpit, to an ordered gathering ... of elderly women [and] young women and girls comfortably seated in the body of the church, most of them bringing and using their Bibles, all this goes to make one of the best pictures of the real progress that has been made.[49]

Despite precautions to keep men and women apart, Chinese critics found the social practices of foreign missionaries scandalous. Even with strategically placed dividing screens, conservative Chinese elders thought sexual activity must be involved when large groups of men and women came together in the same room or chapel. Moreover, when newly arrived single female missionaries moved into the homes of married missionary couples, it seemed analogous to Chinese concubinage, which the missionaries condemned. Chinese tradition generally prohibited multiple wives but allowed concubines or multiple concubines, who produced children of lower rank than the children of official wives.[50] Chinese society did not consider concubinage immoral—the emperors had many

1887), Book II, Chapter 28, rev. and ed. for *New Advent* by Kevin Knight, <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/120102.htm> (accessed November 5, 2018).

49 Duncan, *The City of Springs*, 90-91.

50 The People's Republic of China's "New Marriage Law" (1950) made concubinage illegal, but there are signs of a contemporary revival.

concubines—but such conduct "certainly contradicted the high-minded teachings [of missionaries]."[51]

Confucianism and the Social Gospel

Fear that Christianity would disrupt the balance of male-female relations was a major reason for Chinese hostility to Christian evangelism and the missionary endeavor. The gentry saw the introduction of a new religious system as iconoclastic, endangering the social fabric of the traditional order. The Christian doctrine that all people are brothers and sisters before God, for example, had the power to undermine hierarchical relationships in the family and society specified in Confucian teachings.[52]

Christianity also threatened the teachings of China's traditional folk religions. Jonathon and Rosalind Goforth were a husband-wife team of Canadian Presbyterian missionaries working in the Shandong and northern Henan provinces during the last decade of the nineteenth century. On one itinerant journey, Rosalind Goforth visited an elderly woman at her home in a small Henan village. The woman allowed Goforth to teach about Christianity so long as she did not speak against her own folk gods, which were represented by drawings and paintings on the walls around the elderly woman's home. Goforth ultimately convinced the woman that the paintings and drawings had no power and could not see her by drawing her own lifelike image. According to Goforth, the woman converted to Christianity and later became an art connoisseur.[53]

Gender and age distinctions within Chinese society determined, in part, who could become a Bible woman. Middle-aged or older women faced fewer demands from husbands or other family members under Confucian notions of propriety. Household chores and other family responsibilities consumed a married woman's life, but older women could find time to participate in church and school activities. Older women also had "more

51 J. W. Flynt and G. W. Berkley, *Taking Christianity to China: Alabama Missionaries in the Middle Kingdom, 1850-1950* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1997), 96.

52 Kwok Pui-lan, *Chinese Women and Christianity*, 13.

53 Jonathan and Rosalind Goforth, *Miracle Lives of China* (Elkhart, IN: Bethel Publishing, 1988), 83-86.

freedom to explore new identities" because they were "situated somewhat at the margin of the family system."[54]

Chinese men apparently felt more threatened by the gospel message than did Chinese women, who converted in larger numbers.[55] Today in China, there are far more Christian women than Christian men; the ratio is perhaps more than five to one. Female missionaries frequently wrote that Chinese women were more receptive to Christianity and to foreigners in general than were men, who, missionaries reported, were more unfriendly to outsiders and foreign influences.[56]

After 1870, tensions increased dramatically between members of the missionary community (including Bible women) and unconverted Chinese people. One factor that may have contributed to the rising tension was the late nineteenth-century Social Gospel,[57] a reformist movement that took hold of the Episcopal and Congregational Churches in the United States, influential members of the Baptist denomination, and interdenominational groups including the Evangelical Alliance and Interdenominational Congress.[58] The Social Gospel movement spread to Protestant missions around the world. Western ministers began tightly tying together salvation

54 Kwok Pui-lan, *Chinese Women and Christianity*, 13; Kwok Pui-lan, "Claiming Our Heritage": 151.

55 Lu Kun, "The Problem of Gender Imbalance in Chinese City Churches: Part A," *ChinaSource* 29 (2011), <https://www.chinasource.org/resource-library/articles/the-problem-of-gender-imbalance-in-chinese-city-churches-part-a> (accessed November 5, 2018), G. Wright Doyle, "Gender Imbalance in the Chinese Church: Causes, Consequences, and Possible Cures," *Christianity in China* (October 19, 2005), <http://www.globalchinacenter.org/analysis/christianity-in-china/gender-imbalance-in-the-chinese-church-causes-consequences-and-possible-cures.php> (accessed November 5, 2018).

56 Sidney A. Forsythe, *An American Missionary Community in China, 1895-1905* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), 28.

57 For overviews of the myriad changing contexts that affected nineteenth- and twentieth-century mission strategies in China, see Daniel H. Bays, ed., *Christianity in China: From the Eighteenth Century to the Present* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1999), and Daniel H. Bays, *A New History of Christianity in China* (Hoboken: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011).

58 Washington Gladden outlined the foundations of the Social Gospel in *Applied Christianity: Moral Aspects of Social Questions* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1887).

and good works. The emphasis was on eliminating or minimizing the effects of personal vices and attacking perceived immorality.

Social Gospel advocates took aim at habits that were common in Chinese society. For instance, the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) sent representatives from the United States to China in 1886 to combat the rampant use of opium, alcohol, and tobacco.[59] The WCTU's female members could not march or sing in the streets or pray in the saloons, so they held temperance meetings in local WCTU chapters and they gave lectures and sang hymns about social morality in schools and churches.[60] Local women took leadership of the WCTU crusade in China around 1915.

To skeptics, Western missionaries may have seemed less concerned with evangelizing and more intent on permanently transforming Chinese society and traditional gender relations. Indeed, many missionaries *did* hope to change social customs in China. Dr. Ailie Gale, for example, joined the Chinese mission movement specifically to improve the general living conditions of Chinese women. Gale was educated at Cooper Medical College in San Francisco and was a medical missionary in China from 1908 to 1950. She saw herself as both a medical doctor and an evangelistic healer. Dr. Gale believed that Christianity could empower "a universal womanhood ... regardless of culture, class, or nationality" and that "the dynamic power of the gospel of Jesus" could liberate poor Chinese women (and middle-class American women) from the "constraints of domesticity." Gale and others hoped that Christianity, rather than legislative enactments, would change the way Chinese men treated Chinese women.[61]

59 See Kathleen Lodwick, *Crusaders against Opium: Protestant Missionaries in China, 1874-1917* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1996).

60 Temperance hymns were popular during the 1860s and 1870s. The WCTU produced hymnals, and the American songwriter Stephen Foster wrote songs about temperance, including "Comrades, Fill No Glass for Me." The Methodist Episcopal Mission Press in Foochow printed the hymnal *Tsung Choo She Chang* in the Foochow colloquial dialect (1891), which included nearly two hundred hymns. One was entitled "Hymn of Opium Prohibition" and listed the results of opium addiction in four stanzas: opium smokers will lose their health (stanza one), lose their money and possessions (stanza two), and lose their careers and families (stanza three). The hymn's conclusion encouraged business owners to stop selling opium for profit. Hsieh Fang-Lan, *A History of Chinese Christian Hymnody: From Its Missionary Origins to Contemporary Indigenous Productions* (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 2009), 43, 45.

61 M. Cristina Zaccarini, "Dr. Ailie Gale," in *The Missionary Kaleidoscope: Portraits of*

Bible Women's Ministry and Evangelism

Western female missionaries' limited fluency in Mandarin, Cantonese, and Chinese regional dialects reduced their ability to communicate effectively with Chinese people. Therefore, they trained Bible women to help them reach a larger audience. Bible women assisted in many ways. They led Sunday school classes and prayer groups for local congregants. They presented the gospel to crowds of people waiting to see missionary doctors at hospitals and daily health clinics.[62] Bible women were also instructors in mission classrooms filled with Chinese girls, each of whom was a prospective new Bible woman.

Western hymns were part of the curricula at Christian schools. Bible women led choirs at Sunday services and at special public recitals. Public concerts were a powerful way to disseminate Christian doctrine. For instance, the girl's school choir at the Foochow Methodist mission performed at very popular annual Easter choral festivals and gave a performance in 1902 that concluded with a rousing rendition of George Frideric Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus" before an audience of more than two thousand people.[63]

The quality of singing varied among mission choirs because of individual vocal abilities and Chinese unfamiliarity with Western musical forms.[64] However, that did not affect the performers' enthusiasm. Reverend John A. Davis, a Presbyterian missionary in Amoy, wrote, "All sang. In a Chinese audience of Christians, all sing. That all sing the same tune cannot be asserted, but all love to sing, and sing as well as they can. If they do not all sing on the same key, if some are a half octave too high and others as

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Six China Missionaries, ed. Kathleen Lodwick and W.K. Cheng (Norwalk: Eastbridge, 2005), 112, 113. See also M. Cristina Zaccarini, *The Sino-American Friendship as Tradition and Challenge: Dr. Ailie Gale in China, 1908-1950* (Bethlehem: Lehigh University Press, 2001).

62 Hamilton, *The Chinese Bible Woman*, 5. See also Ruth A. Tucker, "The Role of Bible Women in World Evangelism," *Missiology: An International Review* 13 (April 1985): 141.

63 Walter N. Lacy, *A Hundred Years of China Methodism* (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1948), 196.

64 Hsieh Fang-Lan, *A History of Chinese Christian Hymnody*, 23-27.

much too low, most of them seem to care very little for such variety, and enjoy the hymn."[65]

Missionaries and Chinese converts began translating hymns into vernacular Mandarin and various regional dialects (of Foochow, Amoy, Ningpo, Shanghai, and others) in the mid-nineteenth century and produced new indigenized hymnals. It was difficult, however, to find appropriate conversions to convey Christian meanings and there were problems accommodating radically different East Asian and English poetic rules, forms, and styles. According to Chinese hymnody specialist Hsieh Fang-Lan, many Chinese cultural scholars look down on these early hymnals, but they "achieved their goals of teaching doctrine to Chinese Christians and spreading the gospel to many parts of [China]."[66] In this regard, the indigenized hymnals were similar to Bible women, who were also looked down on but were effective in spreading the gospel message.

After sufficiently learning to read the romanized colloquial at mission stations and schools, Bible women "began to go about among the women to read the Bible and teach them the way of salvation."[67] Evangelizing outside mission stations was essential to infusing the Chinese populace with the gospel message. Dr. Gibson, an English Presbyterian missionary leader, wrote in 1917, "Evangelisation is not a thankless task of excavation done by a few foreigners in a solid mass of 'heathenism,' it is the permeating extensive force of Christian life working outwards from Christian communities, influencing by character and witness-bearing the society amidst which they live."[68]

The Western missionaries needed help; their evangelizing efforts relied greatly on new Chinese converts and Bible women. Chinese women's willingness to participate in religious meetings depended on personal relationships; they "would come to prayer meetings or station classes [only] if they knew the women missionaries or the Bible woman."[69] Missionaries

65 John A. Davis, *Leng Tso, The Chinese Bible-Woman* (Ulan Press, 2012; orig. pub. before 1923), 154-155.

66 Hsieh Fang-Lan, *A History of Chinese Christian Hymnody*, 29.

67 Davis, *Leng Tso, The Chinese Bible Woman*, 35.

68 Dr. Gibson is quoted in *Presbyterian Church of England: Report of the Foreign Missions China, Formosa, the Straits Settlements, and India* (London: Presbyterian Church of England, 1917), 4.

69 Kwok Pui-lan, *Chinese Women and Christianity: 1860-1927*, 79.

in Chinchew doubted whether "even one per cent" of the worshipers in their churches were there directly through the teaching of the foreign preachers. "One [Chinese] convert invites in [friends or neighbors], a relative comes to satisfy curiosity ... and very many of the women [come] through the work of faithful Bible-women."[70]

In the coastal cities, where the missions began, females faced many restrictions on their mobility and freedom of movement. For example, according to custom young women (after a certain age) were not to walk on public streets unaccompanied, and women of any age were not to proselytize publicly on the streets. Confucian traditions primarily relegated women to performing household duties, but this still allowed taking in a few students at one's own residence or visiting the homes of other women to teach.[71] Bible women often held regular weekly tutorials in neighborhood homes near mission stations. Home visits were particularly helpful for women with bound feet who had difficulty walking any distance.

Foot binding was the practice of tightly wrapping a girl's feet to modify their shape and usefulness.[72] From the Song dynasty (960-1279 AD) through the Qing dynasty (1636-1912 AD), bound feet symbolized social standing; women who did not need to work or walk very far could afford to have bound feet. Women in cities were far more likely to have bound feet than those living in rural areas. Female missionaries and Bible women led the fight against the practice through education, distributing tracts, and appeals to the Chinese court. The *Jie chanzu hui* ("Quit Binding Feet Society") began operating in Amoy in 1874. A group of missionary wives and other women formed the *Tian zu hui* ("Natural or Heavenly Foot Society") in 1895 and contracted with the Christian Literature Society for China to translate and publish articles in the Chinese language periodical *Wanguo gongbao* (very roughly translated as "A Review of the Times") calling for the abolition of foot binding.[73]

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70 Duncan, *The City of Springs*, 93.

71 Davis, *Leng Tso, The Chinese Bible Woman*, 111.

72 For an unapologetic description of the history and meanings of Chinese foot binding, see Dorothy Ko, *Cinderella's Sisters: A Revisionist History of Footbinding* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007).

73 Brent Whitefield, "The Tian Zu Hui (Natural Foot Society): Christian Women in China and the Fight against Footbinding," *Southeast Review of Asian Studies* 30, (2008): 203-212.

These and other efforts helped turn public sentiment. China's Empress Dowager Cixi issued an edict against footbinding in 1902, ending the millennial-long practice. Girls in mission schools and women in city churches had supported the campaign from its inception, and Bible women set examples by being the first to unbind their feet.[74]

Bible Women in the Country

Bible women had many responsibilities at urban mission stations, but they also spent considerable time on itinerant trips to surrounding villages to teach the Bible and to encourage attendance at Sunday worship services. During home visits in the villages, Bible women spoke to women and children directly and reached out indirectly to men.[75]

Missionary writings describe differences between Chinese women who lived in the cities and those living in the countryside. Chinchew Presbyterian missionary Anne N. Duncan wrote in 1902:

> City women, except a few very ancient ones, are conspicuous by their absence; but field women, who live in the villages round about, may often be seen in the streets of Chinchew. These field women form a class by themselves, and are allowed a wonderful amount of freedom. They have natural feet; work in the fields, planting rice, etc.; and carry loads to and from the city, just like men. They certainly have a hard life; yet their strapping gait, their healthy, open faces, tanned with exposure to sun and weather, are in striking contrast to the pitiful, hobbling walk and the sallow, unhealthy complexions of their shut-in city sisters.[76]

Some missionaries rarely left the safety of their mission communities, adopting a mission-centric view of their work in China and taking little note of matters outside the scope of their roles as city teachers and evangelists. It was easy for missionaries to build their lives around "the highly organized structure of the mission compound ... from the time they arrived in China until the time they left, [segregating themselves physically and psychologically from Chinese society, not wanting] to enter

74 Kwok Pui-lan, "Chinese Women and Protestant Christianity," 205.

75 C. E. Chittenden, "Mrs. Diong Ching-hoing, Bible Woman," *Life and Light* 32 (1902), 212.

76 Duncan, *The City of Springs*, 27.

the Chinese world any more than they had to. Their whole purpose was to get the Chinese to enter theirs."[77] Mission-centric tunnel vision was not always a mere reflection of commitment to evangelizing and it could have a counterproductive impact on spreading the gospel.

Female missionaries who were bold enough to venture outside the ports and cities into the countryside for itinerant outreach activities were particularly reliant on the assistance of Bible women. Because of the risks in traveling, female missionaries rarely conducted village evangelism alone; as a rule they took guides and assistants who were familiar with local geography, customs, and beliefs.[78] Western women were an unfamiliar presence in China, and Bible women helped them gain access to local women's homes, "circumventing women's seclusion and the traditional mission station approach."[79]

Women living in rural communities were generally more receptive to the Christian message. They were less tied to customary Confucian beliefs and less secluded from the surrounding society than were women in cities. It is important to remember that, in many instances, missionaries were the first Westerners that Chinese men and women had ever seen. The majority of Chinese villagers, especially women and children, had never interacted with people from the outside world when the first waves of missionaries began leaving the treaty ports for the interior. Nellie Saunders, an Australian missionary who served in the Fujian province, explained that "the men, who travel about a good deal, had seen foreigners before, and had heard the Jesus doctrine, but the women had not, so were very shy at first."[80]

People in remote provincial areas were very curious about the "pale skin, long noses, deep-set eyes, and furry hair" of missionary women.[81] They also attracted attention with their curious fashions, which in quite hot and humid climates might include high-necked bodices, bustles, and

77 Paul A. Cohen, foreword to Sidney A. Forsythe, *An American Missionary Community in China, 1895-1905* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), vii.

78 Tucker, "The Role of Bible Women in World Evangelism": 138.

79 Chung, *Chinese Women in Christian Ministry*, 117.

80 Nellie Saunders to Rev. E. J. Barnett, from Hwa Sang [Hua Shan], June 24, 1895, in *The Weekly Times*, Melbourne, August 10, 1895.

81 Jane Hunter, *The Gospel of Gentility: American Women Missionaries in Turn-of-the-Century China* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984), 28-29.

pith helmets.[82] Clever missionaries and Bible women used their unfamiliar traits to their advantage symbiotically. Once the novelty of a Western female missionary had attracted a sufficiently large and curious crowd, the unusually literate and remarkably articulate Bible woman, using the local dialect, stepped in to teach a Bible lesson. This bait-and-hook method is a classic business strategy and a well-known technique for fishermen (and "fishers of men" and women).[83]

Curiosity and the entertainment value of a foreign guest frequently prompted Chinese families to invite female missionaries into their village homes.[84] The quality of the missionary's interaction with the family often depended on a Bible woman's personality and her ability to translate and read. The literacy rate of China's general female population was far lower than the rate for Bible women,[85] making them novelties like Western missionaries. As the Bible woman gave reading tutorials to those who could not read (using religious tracts and Scriptures), her language skills aroused Chinese curiosity and elicited missionary pride.[86] The Bible woman's evangelizing, like the woman herself, was intentionally "plain and unpretending, but practical. She did not preach, but talked, and explained the gospel to those who had an opportunity to ask about the things not understood by them. Even the children could learn much from [her] simple language and plainly-put truths."[87] Before leaving a home the Bible woman helped tend to the sick or others in need, such as opium addicts, hopefully making friends with everyone, "disarming prejudice and giving encouragement and comfort wherever needed."[88]

The most effectual Bible women had special skills that were hard to attain. The Foreign Secretary of the Presbyterian Women's Board of Foreign Missions wrote in 1900 that a Bible woman was the female missionary's "most precious possession, next to her family." The missionary

82 Kwok Pui-lan, *Chinese Women and Christianity: 1860-1927*, 21.

83 See Matthew 4:19 (KJV).

84 Constance Frederica Gordon-Cumming, *Wanderings in China* (Edinburgh: Blackwood & Sons, 1886).

85 Kwok Pui-lan, "Claiming Our Heritage": 151.

86 Tiedemann, ed., *Handbook of Christianity in China*, 264.

87 Davis, *Leng Tso, The Chinese Bible Woman*, 214.

88 Hamilton, *The Chinese Bible Woman*, 6.

has an admiring love containing "a sort of envy ... as she watches the Bible woman do easily and naturally the things that the missionary has spent years in being trained to do."[89]

Bible women and female missionaries naturally bonded, as coworkers and friendly companions, "sharing the discomforts, disappointments, triumphs, despairs, adulations, persecutions, temptations, and all the ups and downs of an itinerating trip...a combination camping-trip, exploring expedition, preaching tour [and] social welfare adventure."[90] Missionary Willie Kelly arrived in Chinchew in 1893 and on itinerant journeys into the Fujian countryside she always took a Bible woman, her "Chinese coworker" and the greatest factor in her success. "Every missionary needs at least one congenial, wise, and spiritual Chinese helpmate," Kelly wrote. In times of personal distress, Kelly turned for comfort to her beloved Chinese friend, not to the other missionaries. Kelly lived, ate, prayed, and worked with Bible women "as sisters in the Lord.... None [of my fellow missionaries] has ever been more thoughtful, easy to live with, and helpful."[91]

Culture Clash

Despite their humanitarian ideals, missionaries frequently expressed disturbing cultural and racial opinions about Chinese people. Some female missionaries were ethnocentric and treated village women as if they were inferior and ignorant, acting especially harshly and impatiently when teaching literacy skills.[92] More altruistic female missionaries tended to view sympathetically the Chinese women who were attracted to Christianity, as victims of society and potential victims of their new religious beliefs. "Female missionaries laid stress on [Chinese] woman's possibilities as a 'leaven' in the whole Chinese society."[93] Bible women helped enlighten

89 Hamilton, *The Chinese Bible Woman*, 2-3.

90 Hamilton, *The Chinese Bible Woman*, 2.

91 Flynt and Berkley, *Taking Christianity to China*, 89.

92 Kwok Pui-lan, *Chinese Women and Christianity: 1860-1927*, 21. See also Sophia H. Chen, "A Non-Christian Estimate of Missionary Activities," *The Chinese Recorder and Missionary Journal* 65 (1934): 111.

93 Forsythe, *An American Missionary Community in China*, 28.

missionaries about the plight of such women with their insight into the lifestyles and idiosyncrasies of their ethnic communities.[94]

Missionaries who had the most success converting Chinese people to Christianity were those who best adapted to their new surroundings and found ways to effectively communicate with local people in their own language or dialect, frequently with the assistance of Bible women. According to H. A. Tupper, a late-nineteenth century leader of the Southern Baptist Convention (USA) Foreign Mission Board, Christian theology must become "indigenous" and develop "its own nomenclature and phraseology."[95] Chinese Christians, Tupper asserted, "would [naturally] develop their own interpretations of biblical teachings based on their own experiences, not the experiences of Westerners," not by acquiring theology secondhand from foreign missionaries.[96] Baptist missions led the way in employing Bible women in China. Baptist missionary Adele M. Fielde, for instance, personally trained over five hundred Bible women in Swatow, Guangdong province.[97]

Lottie Moon, one of H. A. Tupper's closest confidants, was a Southern Baptist missionary and fundraiser who lived in northern China for forty years (1873-1912). Moon shared Tupper's views on respecting foreign cultures. She dressed in Chinese attire, ate Chinese food, spoke Chinese, and developed a great admiration for Chinese society.[98] When Moon returned briefly to the United States in 1893 on furlough she spoke to Baptist women's groups and reprimanded others for using the term

94 Typically, Bible women worked among their own ethnic groups and in limited areas. However, a few went on to become "foreign missionaries" in their own right. Dana L. Robert, *Christian Mission: How Christianity Became a World Religion* (Hoboken: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 139. Dora Yu (1873-1931), for example, was a Presbyterian Bible woman in Hangzhou before attending medical school in Suzhou. Yu became one of China's first cross-cultural missionaries when she joined Josephine P. Campbell of the American Southern Methodist Episcopal Church's "Women's Overseas Evangelism" mission to Korea.

95 H. A. Tupper, *The Foreign Missions of the Southern Baptist Convention* (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1880), 133.

96 Tupper, *The Foreign Missions of the Southern Baptist Convention*, 133.

97 Boston University School of Theology, "Fielde, Adele M. (1839-1916)," *History of Missiology: Biographies*, < http://www.bu.edu/missiology/missionary-biography/e-f/fielde-adele-m-1839-1916/ ≥ (accessed December 12, 2018).

98 See Regina Sullivan, *Lottie Moon: A Southern Baptist Missionary to China in History and Legend* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2011).

"heathen Chinese."[99] Moon regretted using the disparaging term herself when she had arrived in China; it had negatively affected her missionary goals. Moon encouraged Christians to speak respectfully of non-Christians.

Methodist missionary Virginia Atkinson learned that the Chinese people admired certain qualities Westerners considered liabilities. Atkinson discovered that "her childhood timidity and self-deprecation, so much a liability back in [Alabama, USA], were an asset in China. [And] as she matured, her solid white hair, considered the badge of an aging spinster in her home state, earned her the appellation of 'Honorable Elderly Teacher of Teachers' among [her beloved Bible women and other residents of China] who venerated old age as much as Americans disparaged it."[100]

Respecting Chinese culture or emulating Chinese style, however, did not ensure a warm response to Christian evangelization. Pearl Buck, the Pulitzer Prize–winning American writer, spent her early years in Jiangsu province, the daughter of a Presbyterian missionary. Buck recalled that she usually wore a "Chinese jacket, trousers and cloth shoes," and her gangly father forced himself to dress in the same way "so as not to stand out more." Buck said that even though they wore local attire, "in places where no one had seen a white man before, people treated a missionary preaching in the teahouse as a one-man traveling freak show, or else set the dogs on him."[101] Even when missionaries traveled with a local Bible woman, there was no guarantee of better treatment.

Small groups of Chinese women came each day to the Shandong province home of the Canadian Presbyterian missionaries Jonathon and Rosalind Goforth. The Goforths desperately needed someone to help them preach to the Chinese women, and their prayers were answered when Mrs. Chang, a local woman who understood English, converted. Mrs. Chang became a Bible woman and the Goforths' missionary partner. According to Jonathon Goforth, for many years Mrs. Chang had been a "'woman

99 The modern term *heathen* comes from the Old English *haeden*, which can mean either non-Christian or non-Jew or a person from a race or nation that does not acknowledge the God of the Bible. Early medieval Englishmen used the term to refer specifically to Danes. The original source, however, was the Latin term *paganus*, denoting an (uneducated) rural peasant. Douglas Harper, "heathen," *Online Etymology Dictionary*, <https://www.etymonline.com/word/heathen> (accessed November 5, 2018).

100 Flynt and Berkley, *Taking Christianity to China*, 87-88.

101 Ms. Buck was quoted in Hilary Spurling. *Burying the Bones: Pearl Buck in China* (London: Profile Books, 2010), 16-17.

preacher' in the Buddhist sect which proved of great value to her when proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ."[102] During itinerant missions, the Goforths and Mrs. Chang often encountered opposition from people who viewed Christian teachings as a danger to China's established religious life and culture.[103] Village crowds regularly chased after them throwing clods of dirt. When this happened, the Goforths and Mrs. Chang tried to back up against a wall to weather the storm and prevent being chased completely out of the village. Jonathon Goforth claimed that they never "fail[ed] to overcome finally and get a hearing with the worst crowds when our backs were against the wall."[104] Goforth wrote that in spite of the difficulties Mrs. Chang's faith persevered.

> For years old Mrs. Chang worked faithfully through those hard pioneer years as our first Bible-woman. In 1900, when the fearful Boxer Persecution arose, the faithful old Christian stood firm even to possible death. She was [tied] up to a tree by her thumbs and would have died so, but under cover of darkness friendly neighbors, possibly secret believers, came and released her.[105]

Daily Challenges

To conclude, we turn to a Bible woman's rare personal record of her daily challenges. The Reformed Church of America had a prosperous mission that employed many Bible women in Changchow [Zhangzhou], along the southern Fujian coast near Amoy.[106] An American missionary named William Angus, Jr., arrived in China in 1925 and spent many years in Amoy and Changchow ministering and witnessing wars and social upheaval. Angus wrote about the lives of Fujian Christians and non-Christians in a straightforward reportorial style. He recorded an (anonymous) "Bible Women's Report." The Bible woman had spent months in a village two

102 Goforth and Goforth, *Miracle Lives of China*, 49-50.

103 Tucker, "The Role of Bible Women in World Evangelism": 142.

104 Goforth and Goforth, *Miracle Lives of China*, 51.

105 Goforth and Goforth, *Miracle Lives of China*, 51.

106 For a history of the Reformed Church's mission activity in Changchow and the Fujian province, see Gerald Francis De Jong, *The Reformed Church in China, 1842-1951* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992).

miles from the nearest mission church teaching the local women romanized colloquial Bible translations and leading nightly prayer meetings. However, ingrained folk religious beliefs and a group of rowdy boys who loved to tease her hindered the Bible woman's evangelizing efforts.

Bible Woman's Report

> When I first got there, she said, they gave me a room that was half full of brush and bracken stored for fuel. I wanted it out, but they said, "What harm does it do?" And I had to carry the whole of it out myself. Below the room where we used to have our meetings was the room where they had the idol and after dusk the men would sit there and talk. And people would come and ask the idol what medicine to use. Or if they'd get well again, or if the baby was going to be a boy. And Christian men would sit and talk and laugh and sometimes one would ask the idol a question. I didn't like it. It wasn't good for them to be sitting there, and I spoke to one of the older men about it. Then the boys decided to tease me, and one of the women said she heard one of them say that when we met he was going to pelt me with cow dung through the window. So I went and got his mother to come to the meeting and had her sit right beside me, and he didn't dare. But one day they put a big ant's nest in the doorway. We didn't notice but went right on with the meeting and soon we had big red ants over everything. So I went to see the clan elder. I didn't like them, but I spoke very carefully, said they were only teasing. And when I left they all wanted me to stay longer.[107]

Conclusion

The number of Chinese Bible women and the overall number of Chinese Protestant Christians grew at a similar pace. Statistics indicate that there were less than one hundred Chinese Bible women in 1876, but approximately 2,500 by 1949.[108] There were a few thousand Chinese Protestants in 1876, but more than half a million by 1949. Bible women contributed to the growth of the Chinese church. The year 1949 was a pivotal year for China and for Chinese Christianity. In that year, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) defeated nationalist forces in the Chinese Civil War and Mao Zedong declared the founding of the People's Republic of China. The government of the new People's Republic was officially atheist.

107 William Angus, *South Fukien: Missionary Poems 1925-1951*, ed. David Andrews (Portland: MerwinAsia, 2015), 81-82.

108 Chung, *Chinese Women in Christian Ministry*, 117.

The CCP soon expelled from China the last Western missionaries (Arthur Matthews and Rupert Clarke of the China Inland Mission), ending the foreign mission movement. Before the mission era ended, however, Bible women had been instrumental in propagating the Christian message to new audiences. Chinese Bible women were not the missions' "lowliest employees." On the contrary, they were vital cross-cultural intermediaries who helped plant the seeds of the Chinese Protestant Church.

About author

James W. Ellis, (PhD, Case Western Reserve University) is a research assistant professor at Hong Kong Baptist University

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Cross-cultural Encounters along the New Silk Road: The "Back to Jerusalem" Movement

LIU Yi
Shanghai University, China

Abstract
The "Belt and Road" initiative of the Chinese government has been accompanied by a counter-response from Chinese Christians: the "Back to Jerusalem" (BTJ) movement. Its history can be traced to the International Missionary Conference at Edinburgh in 1910, where it was first perceived as a burden of Western missionaries before becoming a movement of Chinese Christians. This vision has been resurrected in the current period due to the mixed impact of worldwide missionary movements, China's rise as a global power, and Christian revivals in China. However, this so-called "Great Commission" designated for Chinese Christians shares many imperial and aggressive characteristics of Western missions during colonial times, and it benefits financially and technically from their Korean predecessors and from Chinese diasporas. It provides an alternative version to the Chinese state's predominant ideology, but also inherits particular Western Christian discourses, with both cultural and political implications.

Keywords
Back to Jerusalem, New Silk Road, Chinese Christians, Muslim world

Historically, the Silk Road has been a pathway for transregional trade and cultural exchange. Moreover, the Silk Road does not simply imply cross-cultural encounter, but also adaptions and transformations of cultures themselves through exchanges. As Richard Foltz states in his classic, *Religions of the Silk Road*:

Corresponding author
LIU Yi: translation.liu@163.com

> The Silk Road was more than just a conduit along which religions hitched rides East; it constituted a formative and transformative rite of passage. No religion emerges unchanged at the end of that arduous journey. Key formative influences on the early development of the Mahayana and Pure Land movements, which became so much a part of East Asian civilization, are to be sought in Buddhism's earlier encounters along the Silk Road. Manichaeism, driven underground in the West, appears in the eighth century as a powerful political force in East Turkestan, then gradually blends into the amorphous mass of Chinese popular religion. Nestorian Christianity, expelled as a heresy from the Byzantine realm, moves eastward, touches hundreds of thousands among the Eurasian steppe peoples, and appears centuries later like a bad dream to the first Catholic missionaries in China who find it comfortably entrenched there as the recognized resident Christianity of the East.[1]

Islam arose later, first in Arab lands, and then adapted itself to cultures of the Persians, Turks, Indians, and Chinese. New characteristics developed during this process.

In the post-Cold War era, the New Silk Road was revived as an international strategy in Central Asia.[2] In particular, Chinese President Xi Jinping proposed the "Belt and Road" initiative along with the rise of China as a new global power.[3] While it focuses mainly on trade and economy, cultural exchanges occur simultaneously. Some are in accordance with state policy, such as the Confucius Institutes in Central Asian countries; but there are also others that diverge from the dominant state discourse, such as the conversion of Chinese migrant workers to Islam in Saudi Arabia. In this context, the BTJ movement constitutes a nexus of different interests and cultures. It benefits from China's global economic expansion but departs from China's predominant ideology and interests. While Chinese Christians consider it exclusively as their own "Great Commission," it in fact inherits from Western missionaries in the modern period and

1 Richard Foltz, *Religions of the Silk Road: Premodern Patterns of Globalization*, 2nd ed. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1999; 2010), 9.

2 Regarding the historical Silk Road and Central Asia, see Liu Xinru, *The Silk Road in World History* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2010); Peter B. Golden, *Central Asia in World History* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

3 See Wang Yiwei, *Yidai yilu: jiyu yu tiaozhan* ("One-Belt-One-Road": Opportunities and Challenges) (Beijing: People's Press, 2015).

learns from their Korean predecessors. It started in mainland China but is supported financially and technically by Chinese Christians overseas. It has both a global vision and a eurocentric bias. Due to its complexity and distinctiveness, it attracts attention from academics, religious activists, and even government agencies.[4]

This article provides a historical account of the movement. Starting with the 1910 World Missionary Conference at Edinburgh as a landmark, I will trace the origins of the BTJ vision and describe how it developed from a missionary initiative to a movement of Chinese Christians. I will then focus on its new development around 2000, especially in the "house churches" based in the "Galilee of China." Finally, I will offer a general review from the perspectives of religious studies and the social sciences. I argue that the "Back to Jerusalem" movement is a counterpart to China's state initiative of "Belt and Road," with both historical legacies and international influence, and that it provides a new example of cross-cultural encounters along the Silk Road.

Historical Legacy: From Western Missionaries to Chinese Christians

Mission to Muslims was part of the nineteenth-century evangelical movement. Islam was considered a challenge to Christianity and a heathen world to be converted. In China, it also became a topic of the missionary work.[5]

In 1910, in reference to the World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh, Marshall Broomhall from the China Inland Mission (CIM) wrote: "Speaking generally, the Chinese Moslem, throughout the whole of the Empire, is accessible to the missionary and in some respects is more disposed to be

4 For a general review, see Gu Mengfei, "Xin sichou zhilu shang chuanhui yelu saleng yundong de xingsi" (A Reflection of the "Back to Jerusalem Movement" along the New Silk Road), in *Yidai yilu zhanlue yu zongjiao duiwai jiaoliu* ("One-Belt-One-Road" Strategy and International Exchanges of Religions), ed. Zhuo Xinping and Jiang Jianyong (Beijing: Social Science Academic Press, 2016), 257-266.

5 Jane I. Smith, "Christian Missionary Views of Islam in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 9, no. 3 (1998): 357-373; Xu Bingsan, "Wanqing xinjiao chuanjiaoshi dui zhongguo musilin de chuanjiao huodong tanxi" (A Study of the Protestant Missionary Work to Chinese Muslims in Later Qing Dynasty), *Jindaishi xuekan* (Journal of Chinese Modern History) 13 (2015): 15-29.

friendly than the purely native Chinese."[6] Shortly before this, in 1906, the First Missionary Conference on Behalf of the Mohammedan World had just been held in Cairo. While Islam was regarded as the most serious problem facing Christianity, Muslim evangelization became one of the main items on the agenda at the Edinburgh conference.[7] China in particular was included in this project.

Samuel Zwemer (1867-1952)[8] from the Reformed Church of America was largely responsible for the general plan of Muslim evangelization, as a vice-chairman of the Edinburgh Conference and the Chair of the Lucknow Conference on the Missions to Muslims in 1911. His interest in Muslim evangelization was piqued from his first trip to China in 1917. A Special Committee for Muslim Work was established under the umbrella of the China Continuation Committee (CCC), a corresponding organization of the Edinburgh Conference. It had three main goals: 1) the investigation and mapping of the Muslim population and area, 2) issuing Christian tracts and books in Chinese and Arabic especially for Muslims, including the translation of the Qur'an into Chinese, 3) attracting attention to the importance of this project.[9]

In 1926, when the National Christian Council (NCC) succeeded the CCC, a new society was also to inherit the Committee for Muslim Work. It was the Society of the Friends of Moslems in China (FOM). Zwemer's son-in-law, Claude Pickens (1900-1985), was appointed as secretary of the society, and his daughter, Elizabeth Zwemer (1899-1986), was the editor of

6 Marshall Broomhall, *Islam in China: A Neglected Problem* (New York: Paragon, 1966 [1910]), 273. China Inland Mission was founded by James Hudson Taylor in 1865. It is characteristic of the faith mission to focus on evangelistic work in the hinterland of China. In 1964, it was renamed the Overseas Missionary Fellowship, based in Singapore. For the founder and the organization, see Howard Taylor and Geraldine Taylor, *Biography of James Hudson Taylor* (London: OMF Books, 1965); Marshall Broomhall, *The Jubilee Story of the China Inland Mission* (San Francisco: Chinese Materials Center, 1977).

7 Charles Watson, "The World Missionary Conference at Edinburgh and Islam," *The Moslem World* 1 (1911): 59-66.

8 John Hubers, "Samuel Zwemer and the Challenge of Islam: From Polemic to a Hint of Dialogue," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 28, no. 3 (July 2004): 117-121.

9 Matsumoto Masumi, "Protestant Christian Missions to Muslims in China and Islamic Reformist Movement," *Annals of Japan Association for Middle East Studies* no. 21-1 (2005): 147-171.

the bulletin *Friends of Moslems* (confidential, 1927-1952). In contrast to the Chinese orientation of NCC, FOM attracted only Western missionaries who were interested in this program. Until 1936, there were 425 members, with CIM as a clear majority (101 persons).[10]

An inspiring story took place between 1923 and 1936, when three CIM women missionaries traveled across the Gobi Desert five times to do mission work; the "trio" included Mildred Cable and Eva and Francesca French. In fact, they did not focus only on converting Muslims; it was a journey of cross-cultural encounters, from the most common family to hamlets, from Taoist priests to Confucian scholars, from Lamas to Imams. As they wrote in their journal:

> Whenever we heard of some side-track which led to a hamlet, or even an isolated home, far from the main roads, there we went to deliver our message.... In every Gobi temple which we had touched the priests now owned a copy of the Scriptures, and in some of the most remote places the schoolmaster would show his respect for Christianity by marching the boys to the preaching tent, where he ordered them to listen attentively, and never forgot a word of what was said.[11]

Their progress was halted by the coming Sino-Japanese war (1937-1945), but their stories continue to inspire visitors even today.[12] Their gender

10 Han Yongjing, "Xifang chuanjiaoshi zai zhongguo musilin zhongde chuanjiao huodong yanjiu (1917-1936)" (A Study on Western Missionaries' Work among Chinese Muslims (1917-1936)), *Beifang minzu daxue xuebao* (Journal of Beifang University of Nationalities) no. 5 (2012): 111-119. For the history from the China Continuation Committee to the National Christian Council, see Yamamoto Sumiko, *History of Protestantism in China: The Indigenization of Christianity* (Tokyo: The Institute of Eastern Culture, 2000).

11 Mildred Cable and Francesca French, *The Gobi Desert: The Adventures of Three Women Travelling across the Gobi Desert in the 1920s* (Coventry, UK: Trotamundas Press, 2008 [Hodder and Stoughton, 1942]), 276.

12 For the influence of the "trio," see Linda K. Benson, *Across China's Gobi: The Lives of Evangeline French, Mildred Cable, and Francesca French of the China Inland Mission* (Norwalk, CT: EastBridge, 2008); Kate James, *Women of the Gobi: Journeys on the Silk Road* (North Melbourne: Pluto Press, 2006). The Sino-Japanese War from 1937 to 1945 deeply changed the structure of Christianity in China. When missionary work was stopped in the main field, especially after the Pacific War of 1942, an indigenous Chinese church developed in inland and rural regions. See Timothy Brook, "Toward Independence: Christianity in China under the Japanese Occupation, 1937-1945," in *Christianity in China: From the Eighteenth Century to the Present*, ed. Daniel H. Bays

identity also added to the romantic imagination of their journey, though in reality it might have brought them troubles and difficulties. Their mission was first followed by indigenous Chinese Christians and denominations. One of the first followers was Mark Ma and the Back to Jerusalem Evangelistic Band. It started in the Northwest Bible Institute founded by James Hudson Taylor II (the grandson of the founder of CIM), of which Mark Ma was a vice-principal. In 1942, during prayer, Ma received a vision from the Lord about missionary work in the Muslim world; Xinjiang was the destination. Then during Easter service in 1943, several students joined his call, which became the genesis for a chain of events. After a prayer meeting, they decided to establish Bianchuan Fuyin Tuan (literally "Preach Everywhere Gospel Band"), known among the missionaries as the "Back to Jerusalem Evangelistic Band."[13]

In 1944, three women and two men were sent to Lanzhou, the capital city of Gansu Province, for a short-term service; in 1945, two men were sent to preach among the Hui Muslims in Ningxia; in 1946, another two men, Mecca Chao and Timothy Tai, went to Xinjiang for a longer-term service. The Band was formally established at a business meeting on May 15, 1946, during which a constitution was accepted and officers elected. Their work was to involve seven provinces along the borders of China—Xinjiang, Inner Mongolia, Tibet, Xikang (now the Tibetan area in the west of Sichuan Province), Qinghai, Gansu, and Ningxia—and seven countries along the borders of Asia: Afghanistan, Iran, Arabia, Iraq, Syria, Turkey, and Palestine. Ma was considered the leader of the Band.[14]

In March 1947, a group of two men and five women set off on their long journey westward to Xinjiang. The three women were Ho En Cheng (Grace Ho), who planned to go to Kashgar to study Turkish and Arabic languages and then leave for Central Asia and the Middle East; Lu Teh (Ruth Lu), who also hoped to go to Kashgar to learn languages, but whose goal was Afghanistan; and Lin Chin Chuan, who was born in a Muslim family. The two men were Chang Moxie (Moses Chang) and Mecca Chao. They traveled continually to Tulan (now Ulan), "the last outpost of Chinese

(Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 317-337.

13 *The Chinese Back-To-Jerusalem Evangelistic Band: A Prayer Call to Christian Friends of the Chinese Church* (a booklet with no author credited, most likely published in 1947).

14 Alice Hayes Taylor, *Back to Jerusalem Evangelistic Band* (unpublished, 1948).

civilization" and a communication hub between China and Central Asian countries. But just as they entered the Taklimakan desert, they were stopped in their tracks by local officials.[15]

Another group was the Northwest Spiritual Movement, which was said to originate from the Jesus Family, an indigenous denomination founded in 1921.[16] This group arose in the 1930s, with Simon Zhao (originally named Zhao Haizhen) as the leader of preaching and evangelism. Later, Zhao received a vision related to Xinjiang during a prayer meeting. He joined some fellow workers in Nanjing who shared his vision; among them was a lady named Wen Muling who became his wife. Three teams were sent out, with Zhao in the second group. They traveled from Shaanxi to Xinjiang and spent most of their journey on foot. Zhao first arrived in Hami on the eastern edge of Xinjiang, where he met members of the Northwest Spiritual Movement; then he headed south with five fellow workers to Hetian in the far south of Xinjiang, to explore these unknown lands; later they were forced to move further west to Kashgar. In 1950, all members of the Northwest Spiritual Movement were imprisoned; among the five leaders, Zhao was the only one to come out of his sentence alive. During his thirty-one years in prison he endured beatings, was transferred from a coal mining camp to a chemical factory, and was at last released in 1981. In the 1990s, Zhao got in touch with the "house churches" in Henan and held fellowship with them, which facilitated the resurrection of the Back to Jerusalem vision.[17]

15 A detailed story, see: Wang Ruizhen, *Shenguo xialu: xiyu xuanjiao chuanqi* (Silk Route Mission: Story of a Heroic Couple) (Taipei: Campus Books, 2003).

16 The Jesus Family is an indigenous Chinese Christian denomination with pentecostal characteristics and family structure. For its history, see Tao Feiya, *Zhongguo de jidujiao wutuobang: yesu jiating (1921-1952)* (A Christian Utopia in China: The Jesus Family [1921-1952]) (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 2004).

17 Huang Jianbo, "Zidong erxi: xibei linggongtuan shishu ji sikao" (From East to West: History and Reflection of the Northwest Spiritual Movement), *Jidu shibao [Christian Times] on the Web* June 1, 2012, http://www.christiantimes.cn/news/5818/ (accessed 31 October 2017).

The "Galilee of China" and the "Back to Jerusalem" Vision

Henan province is situated in central China. The Yellow River crosses through it, nurturing the fertile land that contributed to Chinese agrarian culture, but also bringing famines and misfortune with frequent floods.[18] Historically, the Jews in the capital city of Kaifeng attracted the curiosity of many foreigners.[19] Catholicism entered in the seventeenth century and developed in part due to the efforts of an official who was a descendant of the well-known Catholic family of Xu Guangqi (Paulo, 1562-1633); a small town near Nanyang city was later called the "Eastern Vatican" due to its Catholic heritage. Protestant missionaries, including the China Inland Mission and the Norwegian Lutherans, arrived in the nineteenth century.[20] Evangelists such as Jonathan Goforth (1859-1936) and Marie Monsen (1878-1962) brought great revivals in the 1920s and 1930s, with a strong orientation toward born-again experiences, which also sowed the seeds for another revival in the 1980s and 1990s. Marie Monsen was called the mother of the house churches in Henan.[21] Throughout the 1940s, missionaries underwent the difficult days of famine and war together with Chinese locals, a story told through the memories of the missionaries' children, who themselves continued the vision of their parents.[22]

As one of the most populous provinces in China, Henan has also had the largest and fastest-growing Christian population since the 1980s. Among its nearly 100 million people, the Christian population is estimated to be

18 A classic about the life in Henan, see Cao Jinqing, *Huanghe bian de zhongguo: yige xuezhe dui xiangcun shehui de guancha yu sikao* (China by the Yellow River: A Scholar's Observation and Reflection of the Rural Society) (Shanghai: Shanghai Literature & Arts Press, 2000).

19 Alexander Wylie, "Israelites in China," *China Researchers* (1897): 1-23.

20 For the history of Christianity in Henan, see Liu Zhiqing and Shang Haili, *Henan tianzhujiao biannianshi* (A Chronicle of Catholicism in Henan) (Beijing: Religious Cultural Press, 2012); Dong Yanshou, *Jidu xinjiao zai henan de chuanbo yu fazhan yanjiu* (A Study of the Propagation and Development of Protestantism in Henan) (Beijing: People's Press, 2014).

21 See Rosalind Goforth, *Goforth of China* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1937); Marie Monsen, *The Awakening: Revival in China, a Work of the Holy Spirit*, trans. Joy Guinness (London: China Inland Mission, 1961).

22 Erleen J. Christensen, *In War and Famine: Missionaries in China's Honan Province in the 1940s* (Montreal and Ithaca: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005).

5 to 10 million, a much higher percentage than China as a whole. More importantly, it is a nest of house churches. The three largest networks, the "Born-Again Movement" (World of Life Church) led by Peter Xu Yongze, the Fangcheng Church (China for Christ) led by Zhang Rongliang, and the Tanghe Church (China Gospel Fellowship), are all based in Nanyang prefecture, which constitutes "the revival triangle." With missionaries sent out across China and even abroad, it earned its title as "the Galilee of China," the place from which the disciples came.[23]

Brother Yun (Liu Zhenying) came from this place and became well-known in the Christian world as "the Heavenly Man." He gained fame due to his passion for evangelization and his courage through thirty arrests and three lengthy prison sentences. Yun converted to Christianity in 1974, during the so-called Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), due to his father's sickness. Later, he received a vision of going to "the west and south" for evangelistic work. In 1984, when facing police enquiry, he answered, "I am a heavenly man! My home is in heaven!" Hence his nickname. In prison, he miraculously survived a seventy-four-day fast. In 1997, he encountered another miracle: escaping from a prison with his crippled legs, eluding the guards. In 2001, together with his family he fled to Germany for asylum. In 2002, *The Heavenly Man* was published, becoming a bestseller and raising his profile in the Christian world. Brother Yun not only became a symbol of persecuted Christians in China, but also a symbol of the BTJ movement.[24]

In 1989, an American Protestant evangelist, Luis Bush, coined the term "the 10/40 window"—the latitudinal band of the globe covering 10 degrees above the equator and 40 degrees below it, an area containing the majority of ethnic and religious communities and nations that have not converted to Christianity. In the early 1990s, Bush launched the AD2000 movement, an effort to promote global evangelism. In 2002, Bush, together with a group of Koreans and Americans, held a meeting with some Chinese Christian leaders in Beijing, later known as "the Beijing Forum." One of the topics

23 Paul Hattaway, *Henan: The Galilee of China* (Carlisle, UK: Piquant, 2009), 153-162.

24 Brother Yun and Paul Hattaway, *The Heavenly Man: The Remarkable True Story of Chinese Christian Brother Yun* (Manila: OMF, 2003 [2002]); Brother Yun, Peter Xu Yongze, Enoch Wang, and Paul Hattaway, *Back to Jerusalem: Three Chinese House Church Leaders Share Their Vision to Complete the Great Commission* (Atlanta, London, and Hyderabad: Authentic, 2003); Tim Stafford, "A Captivating Vision: Why Chinese House Churches May Just End Up Fulfilling the Great Commission, an Interview with Paul Hattaway," *Christianity Today* 48 no. 4 (April 2004): 84-86.

covered was how to help Chinese Christians realize their BTJ dream. During the meeting, one Chinese Christian leader proposed that "China would like to raise 100,000 Christian missionaries to send out to the world, and would like to do so in honor of the Morrison bicentennial in 2007."[25]

Symbolically, the Silk Road was considered the main route. As they put it:

> Today, the nations along the ancient Silk Road are the most unevangelized in the world. The three great religious strongholds that have refused to yield to the advance of the gospel—Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism—have their heart here. More than ninety percent of the remaining unreached people groups in the world live along the Silk Road and in the nations surrounding China. Two billion of the earth's inhabitants live and die in this area, completely oblivious to the good news that Jesus died for their sins and is the only way to heaven![26]

They clearly knew that the Chinese church was not strong and wealthy enough to carry out this mission, comparing Chinese evangelists to "an army of little ants, worms, and termites." These evangelists knew well how to work underground, diligently and patiently, to lead to "the collapse of the house of Buddha, the house of Hinduism, and the house of Mohammed."[27]

This can be seen as the new beginning of the BTJ vision in the contemporary period. In fact, in 2000, a group of house churches had already held a BTJ meeting in Southeast Asia.[28] That year, the first thirty-nine workers were sent out, most of whom had been house church leaders for more than ten years, undergoing both suffering and fruitful experiences. Though thirty-six of this first group were arrested just as they began their missionary work, strategies were designed for future developments. In 2003, hundreds of Chinese pastors, leaders, and lay workers from ten different European countries gathered in Paris for the first conference on

25 David Aikman, *Jesus in Beijing: How Christianity Is Transforming China and Changing the Global Balance of Power* (Washington, DC: Regnery Publishing, 2003), 193-195. The first Protestant missionary, Robert Morrison (1782-1834), came to China in 1807.

26 Yun, *Back*, 80.

27 Yun, *Back*, 90-91.

28 Yun, *Back*, 96.

"Bringing the Gospel Back to Jerusalem," with Brother Yun as the keynote speaker.[29]

They stressed the distinctive role of hardship and suffering in the context of Chinese churches. As they argued,

> The Lord has been training the Chinese house churches for the past fifty years through imprisonment, torture, suffering, and hardship. Thousands have been treated brutally in prison; thousands more have been sent out across the country as evangelists with nobody to rely on except God himself. They have seen numerous miracles and have come to a deep trust in Jesus that could not have been learned in any other way than through hardship and suffering. We are not saying we are better than anyone else! That is not the issue. But we do believe the Lord has put the Chinese church through these experiences to train us to complete this specific task of taking the gospel back to Jerusalem. We have become soldiers of steel, tempered in the furnace of affliction. We do not fear what people can do to us.[30]

Later, however, they qualified their position: "the task of completing the Great Commission is not only for the Chinese church"; rather, it was given by Jesus to Christians of all generations and from all nations. "Back to Jerusalem truly belongs to the worldwide church."[31]

Currently, Brother Yun and his family are based in Europe, and his frequent travels to churches in the West can be followed on their website.[32] In addition to Germany, they also have offices in the USA, UK, and Canada. They organize international meetings to promote this vision and take online donations. One initiative is to be connected with the Lausanne Movement. In July 2004, the first international conference of BTJ was held in San Francisco, and the second was held in Hong Kong two years later. In the third conference of 2009, with participants from China, Korea, overseas Chinese, and world mission agencies, an action manifesto was proclaimed and a BTJ coordination center was established. They formed four working groups, including recruitment, professional training, cooperative mission, and field partnership. Five mission schools from China, one from Korea, and two from overseas Chinese expressed their support for this project.

29 Yun, *Back*, 98.

30 Yun, *Back*, 106.

31 Yun, *Back*, 109-110.

32 https://backtojerusalem.com/ (accessed 15 May 2018).

Twelve mission agencies promised to be partners in the field. In particular, the Koreans wanted to send missionaries together.[33]

The New Silk Road: An Alternative View from Chinese Christians

At the centennial conference of Edinburgh in 2010, Chan Kim-kwong from the Hong Kong Christian Council presented a paper about the BTJ movement. As he said, "It is the first major mission initiative among the Chinese Christian community in China to do cross-cultural and overseas mission work." And this great commission corresponds to China's rise as a global power, both economically and politically. "Such nationalistic aspiration with global concern and global responsibility may easily translate into the evangelistic concern of Global Mission among the Christians in China, a form of nationalism in the Christian context." Chan also pointed out some problems, such as the shortage of professional qualifications and funding, issues of legality, conflicts between China's economic benefits and religious enthusiasm. Moreover, the movement also reflected the aggressive and imperialist aspects of Europe and America. As he argued, "It appears that the current BTJ Movement is founded more on enthusiastic desires of Western mission groups, nationalistic aspirations of the Chinese, opportunistic mission leaders, the threat from the global expanding Islamic influence, and the mythologized Christian community in China, with the political hedge on the rising of China as the new global power."[34]

There is also a popular article on the internet by Wen Mu, originally written in Chinese. The BTJ movement, he pointed out, is a "common vision, shared by many," as God has revealed the same message to different groups in different places. And "this vision should not be fulfilled only by the Chinese"; it is a "faith movement." The Chinese first received it from the Western missionaries, and they took the challenge by faith. He summarized the different opinions of the Chinese church: an enthusiastic response from

33 "Disanjie 'chuanhui yelu saleng' guoji zishang huiyi" (The Third "Back to Jerusalem" International Consultation Conference), http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog_5247a5db01009wys.html (accessed 12 February 2019).

34 Chan Kim-kwong, "Mission Movement of the Christian Community in Mainland China: The Back to Jerusalem Movement," paper presented at the 2010 Edinburgh Conference, http://www.edinburgh2010.org/fileadmin/files/edinburgh2010/files/pdf/Kim-Kwong%20Chan%202009-2-28.pdf (accessed 24 November 2016).

the charismatics; a noncommittal response from Evangelicals; opposition from conservative fundamentalists; a cold response from the Three-Self churches. He also listed the shortcomings of the movement, including emotionalism, jumping on the bandwagon, overspiritualizing missionary service, the fast-track approach, comity territorialism, claiming another's credit, fund raising, and so forth. Finally, he concluded with three points: 1) house churches in China will observe this movement carefully, 2) a generation of young Chinese ministers will take up this mission, 3) overseas Chinese churches will continue to hold meetings and training sessions both large and small.[35]

In 2015, the Chinese official daily, *Global Times*, published an article on the BTJ movement. The title, "Dangerous Mission," attracted attention from the public, and the article was reprinted by another organ, *People's Daily*. This can be seen as the first public reply from the Chinese government. The BTJ is said to be a spontaneous initiative from the house churches, with the Zion Church in Beijing as a key example. According to one expert's view, "China's central and local governments do not encourage cross-cultural evangelism, and government-authorized churches have never engaged in such cross-cultural evangelization." China's mission work lagged behind South Korea and other Southeastern Asian countries, but this new phenomenon benefited from China's increasing economic and commercial connections with the world. The Chinese also had a less antagonist image in the Islamic world in comparison to Europeans and Americans. However, evangelization in Muslim-majority countries is "risky and taxing," due to the influence of terrorism, as well as language and cultural barriers. Furthermore, it "could negatively influence bilateral relationships between China and these countries."[36]

In 2017, two Chinese hostages were killed by an ISIS group in Pakistan, and later they were discovered to have been Christian missionaries working for a South Korean agency. When the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor became a model program of the "Belt and Road" initiative, this incident provided a counterexample of China-Pakistan friendship. It also reminded

35 Wen Mu, "The Present and Future of the BTJ Movement," http://www.chinasource.org/resource-library/articles/the-present-and-future-of-the-btj-movement-a-view-from-the-church-in-china (accessed 24 November 2016).

36 Liang Chen, "Dangerous Mission: Chinese Missionaries Working in Muslim World Cause Safety Concerns," *Global Times*, February 9, 2015; reprinted on *People's Daily*, February 10, 2015.

the audience what happened to the South Korean Christian hostages held by the Taliban in 2007.[37] The spokespersons of China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs condemned the terrorists for this unfortunate event and thanked the Pakistan government for help and cooperation, without mentioning the victims' Christian identity in public.[38] But in fact, the religious aspect really alarmed the relevant departments to handle this urgent issue. Citing foreign news agencies, both the *Global Times* (huanqiu wang) and the *Phoenix News* (fenghuang wang) reported this incident in Chinese, stating publicly that these two Chinese victims were Christians working for Korean missionary organizations.[39]

American journalist David Aikman gave a different perspective. In his controversial book, *Jesus in Beijing*, he proposed a "Christianized China" that would be an emerging global power in the future. His argument started with the mission in the Muslim world:

> The vast majority of China's Protestant house church Christians, it turns out, are deeply pro-American and determined to evangelize the Muslim world, something Americans generally have been too frightened to do with much boldness. Among Chinese Christians themselves is the belief—indeed some Chinese Christians refer to it as a divine calling—for Christian believers from China to bring the Gospel to the Muslim nations of the world. [40]

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37 Jennifer Veale, "Korean Missionaries under Fire," *Time Magazine* on Web July 27, 2007, http://content.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1647646,00.html (accessed 12 November 2017).

38 "Waijiaobu: bajisitan wei zuizhong queren erming zhongguo gongmin yuhai" (Foreign Ministry: Pakistan Did Not Finally Confirm the Death of Two Chinese Citizens), http://www.chinanews.com/gn/2017/06-13/8249931.shtml (accessed 13 June 2017); "Waijiaobu zhengshi zai bajisitan bei bangjia zhongguo gongmin yi yuhai" (The Foreign Ministry Confirmed the Death of the Two Chinese Hostages in Pakistan), http://www.xinhuanet.com/world/2017-10/31/c_1121886326.htm (accessed 31 October 2017).

39 "Waimei: bajisitan fangmian queren bei bangjia liangming zhongguoren yi yuhai xi 'chuanjiaoshi'" (Foreign Media: Pakistan Confirmed that the Two Chinese Hostages Who Have Been Killed Are "Missionaries"), http://world.huanqiu.com/exclusive/2017-06/10827213.html (accessed 12 June 2017); "Jiemi: zhongguo renzhi bajisitan beihai beihou shi hanguoren fengkuang jingwai chuanjiao" (Secret Uncovering: Behind the Death of Chinese Hostages in Pakistan is the Crazy Missionary Work Abroad of South Koreans), http://news.ifeng.com/a/20170622/51299597_0.shtml (accessed 22 June 2017).

40 Aikman, *Jesus*, 12.

He goes on to say that this Christian version of China will change not only the Muslim world but also China herself as a global power. Implicitly, the Anglo-American dominance of the world will end with a Chinese face:

> Just as the U.S. emerged into a benevolent global imperial role after World War II and the decline of the British Empire, it is not implausible that a Christianized China, now an emergent global power, might find itself wanting to take on some of the burdens that the U.S. has carried for the past five decades. It is also possible that, for a period of time, the U.S. and China might find themselves sharing a common worldview on many thorny questions of international affairs, and in some ways cooperating closely to resolve them.[41]

In a post-9/11 world, Aikman's argument is a counterpoint to Samuel P. Huntington's thesis of the "clash of civilizations."[42] While Huntington thought that a united power of Confucianism and Islam would be antagonistic to Christendom, Aikman suggested that a "Christianized China" would conquer the Muslim world as the last agent, and finish the "Great Commission" of Christendom. Therefore, China would cooperate with the U.S. as global powers to dominate the future world. This vision echoes the views of Carol Hamrin and Christina Lin, who worked in the U.S. government system as China experts.[43] But obviously this is a vision expected by Americans, but not the Chinese. Considering that most of these "house churches" are illegal in the Chinese context, and that China herself had a bad experience of Christian missionaries as agents of Western imperialism, it is understandable that such an approach is not welcomed by the Chinese leadership. This alternative version of China's global expansion reflects the dream of a passing power that many people think China will replace. But it attributes too much political significance to the religious movement itself.

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41 Aikman, *Jesus*, 286-287.

42 Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1997).

43 Carol Hamrin, "The Global Chinese: Rethinking Kingdom-Building and Nation-Building," *Mission Frontiers* (November-December 2003): 10-11; Christina Lin, "China's Back to Jerusalem Movement," *The Times of Israel*, March 8, 2015.

Conclusion

The romantic vision of the Silk Road goes hand in hand with a history of blood and suffering. Cultural encounters and exchanges are never peaceful but move together with military, political, and economic competitions. The BTJ movement provides an alternative to China's "Belt and Road" initiative. However, as a cross-cultural vision, it inherits the aggressive ways of nineteenth-century Western missionaries and imperialism. It is not only contrary to the inclusive way of the Confucian tradition, but also lags behind the new theories of world missions.[44] This determines its marginalized status both in China and in the Christian world.

At the same time, while the Chinese authorities began promoting the sinicization of Christianity,[45] the universal dimension of the global Christian movement is relatively overlooked. "Globalization of Chinese Christianity" is not a concern of the Chinese leadership;[46] rather, it is considered a domestic problem to be solved. Therefore, the BTJ movement just coincided with the "Belt and Road" initiative. It may share the convenience of China's rise as a global power, but is not accepted as an integral part of China's globalization project. Christianity continues to be an alien factor in China.

About author

LIU Yi (PhD, Chinese University of Hong Kong) is professor of history at Shanghai University, China.

44 See Andrew F. Walls, *The Missionary Movement in Christian History: Studies in Transmission of Faith* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1996); Dana L. Robert, *Christian Mission: How Christianity Became a World Religion* (Malden, USA and Oxford, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009).

45 "Tuijin woguo jidujiao zhongguohua wunian gongzuo guihua gangyao (2018-2022)" (Five-Year Plan of Pushing Forward the Sinicization of Christianity in China [2018-2022]), http://www.ccctspm.org/cppccinfo/10283 (accessed 2 August 2018). Also, Zhang Zhigang, "Three-fold Thinking on the Sinicization of Christianity," *Evangelische Theologie* 75, no. 5 (2015): 385-394.

46 Liu Yi, "Globalization of Chinese Christianity: A Study of Watchman Nee and Witness Lee's Ministry," *Asia Journal of Theology* 30 no. 1 (April 2016): 96-114.

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Progressive but Conservative: Jonathan Edwards's Approaches to Youth Ministry for Today's Evangelical Churches in Asia Pacific

Ricky F. NJOTO
Church on the Corner, Australia

Abstract
Cultural changes in the Asia Pacific region are posing some challenges for evangelical churches. The trend of individualism is rampant, creating a youth culture that is rebellious, proud, and uncontrollably sexual. This essay outlines this new cultural contour in Asia Pacific and draws parallels to eighteenth-century New England. Jonathan Edwards, as a leading figure in the early evangelical movement, is the main study of this essay. His strategies and methods in approaching the youth culture were remarkable in his day and probably even now. This essay encourages evangelical churches in Asia Pacific to take Edwards as a model for exemplary cultural engagement.

Keywords
Jonathan Edwards, youth ministry, Asia Pacific, Evangelicalism, individualism

Introduction

Asia Pacific is changing, and churches are struggling to keep up. The older generation in evangelical churches is voicing their concern against such changes. They are toiling to keep up with the youth culture while the younger generation sees them as backward.

In this article I will endeavor to assist the evangelical churches in the Asia Pacific region (the Asian region that touches the Pacific Ocean, that is, East and South East Asia) in being relevant to the culture without abandoning biblical conservatism by looking at Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758). I will

Corresponding author
Ricky F. NJOTO: rickynjoto@gmail.com

attempt to take some of his methodologies in ministering to the youth of his day, applying them to today's Asia Pacific as the different contexts allow. But first, a thorough but concise evaluation on these changes, both in today's Asia Pacific and in eighteenth-century New England, needs to be presented before one can see the contribution that Edwards can make. Afterward, Edwards's methodologies in approaching the youth culture, youth religion, and the youth themselves are laid out, making occasional references back to Asia Pacific societies.

Pride, Sex, and Subjectivity: Cultural Changes in Today's Asia Pacific and Eighteenth-Century New England

It is never easy to parallel a moral situation in one society to that of another, especially across different times. Asia has never been a Christendom, so it is difficult to assess either the improvement or degradation of its morality based on Christian standards. Nonetheless, although the change of era in twenty-first-century Asia is not completely the same with that in eighteenth-century New England, there are discernable similarities that could perhaps enable Asian evangelical churches to apply Edwards's methodologies to youth ministry.

Between the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, New England underwent major sociocultural changes. One factor that played a big role in these changes was an economic boom. Because of the economic expansion after 1690 in which the British Atlantic colonies grew eight times in population,[1] New England inhabitants were prone to "an increased desire for material wealth."[2] The second but not lesser contributing factor was obviously the Enlightenment idea of individualism. Of course, the Enlightenment as a movement cannot be reduced to mere individualism. Nonetheless, the movement did promote subjectivism by inviting the populace to have personal knowledge and be critical toward authority, to establish individual freedom by removing "abuses in church and state."[3] These factors point to one fundamental change in the contour

1 See T. H. Breen and Timothy Hall, *Colonial America in an Atlantic World: A Story of Creative Interaction* (New York: Pearson/Longman, 2004), 257.

2 Richard L. Bushman, *From Puritan to Yankee: Character and the Social Order in Connecticut, 1690-1765* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967), 188-190.

3 Dorinda Outram, *Panorama of the Enlightenment* (Oxford: Oxford University Press,

of authority, power, and hierarchy, causing a shift in ideology from the traditional, kinship-based, and communal culture to the more modern, industrial, and individual one.[4] It was mostly the youth who were affected by these changes.

Of late, there has been a major adoption in the Asia Pacific of this Enlightenment concept of the self.[5] Psychologists have documented that increases in socioeconomic developments in the Asia Pacific boost individualistic values and practices.[6] And indeed, Asia Pacific nations are now characterized by "emerging market economies and established centers of capitalism," emerging from the position of "the other" in the previously Western-centered world.[7] In conjunction with socioeconomic developments, the increase of individualism is also caused by cultural exchange. As globalization enables people from around the world to interact with the non-kin, they influence one another's culture, becoming more independent of their own kin.[8]

The manifestation of this individualism in Asia is multifaceted. Research has discovered that over the last two decades, individualistic factors such as employment status, personal health, and freedom of choice have been

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2006), 29.

4 William G. McLoughlin, *Revivals, Awakenings, and Reform* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), 52-55.

5 For example, see Henri C. Santos, Michael E. W. Varnum, and Igor Grossmann, "Global Increases in Individualism," *PS* 28, no. 9 (2017): 1228-1239. Santos et al. documented the rise of individualism from the psychological perspective. Trudpert Schelb, the head of strategic foresight activities at Siemens AG, has also published his analysis on the rise of individualism in the world, especially in developing countries. See Trudpert Schelb, "The Next Stage of Individualization: Rethinking Our Growing Dependence on Digital Infrastructure with Significant Monopolistic Power," *World Economic Forum* (January 18, 2015), accessed May 14, 2018, available at https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2015/01/could-our-growing-individualism-lead-to-greater-dependence/.

6 Santos et al., "Global Increases in Individualism": 1234-1235.

7 Belinda Smaill, "Asia Pacific Modernities: Thinking Through Youth Media Locales," in *Youth, Media and Culture in the Asia Pacific Region*, ed. Usha M. Rodrigues and Belinda Smaill (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars, 2008), 1-2.

8 Internet plays a big role in this. See Ian Weber, "Youth and Online Morality: Negotiating Social Differentiation and Civic Engagement in China," in *Youth, Media and Culture in the Asia Pacific Region*, 55-58. Also see Santos et al., "Global Increases in Individualism": 1237.

more important in China for an individual's subjective well-being than collectivist forces such as national pride and support for societal laws.[9] For such highly communal culture as China, this is a significant change. Interestingly, the rise of individualism always means that sexual culture is also changing, and along with it, domestic structures and values. In China, more people now (more than 70 percent in 2012) have had sex before marriage, more people lose their virginity earlier, and more people live together before marriage.[10] Although major studies have been conducted on China, the rise of individualism is not peculiar to that country. In Japan, for example, the increase of individualism is even more pronounced than that in the US. The average Japanese household in 2006 only consisted of half the number of people it did in 1950, with more people leaving their homes and migrating to big cities. In 2006, the rate of divorce was double that of 1950. Moreover, despite the increase in the youth's desire to contribute to the society and the decrease in the perceived importance of individual rights, more children are nurtured to be individualized, and following tradition is increasingly considered less important.[11] An article in the *Asian Journal of Social Science* has documented that divorce rates in *all* countries in the Asia Pacific region have been increasing since the 1980s.[12]

9 Liza G. Steele and Scott M. Lynch, "The Pursuit of Happiness in China: Individualism, Collectivism, and Subjective Well-Being during China's Economic and Social Transformation," *SIC* 114, no. 2 (2013): 446-447. Also see Xi Jou and Huajian Cai, "Charting China's Rising Individualism in Names, Songs, and Attitudes," *Harvard Business Review* (March 11, 2016), accessed May 8, 2018 on https://hbr.org/2016/03/charting-chinas-rising-individualism-in-names-songs-and-attitudes. Xou and Cai also chart the rising individualism in the increase of unique baby names and song themes, saying that the increase in individualism in China is observable even on such a level as this.

10 "A Nation of Individuals," *The Economist* (July 7, 2016), accessed on May 14, 2018 on https://www.economist.com/news/special-report/21701650-chinese-people-increasingly-do-what-they-want-not-what-they-are-told-nation.

11 Takeshi Hamamura, "Are Cultures Becoming Individualistic? A Cross-Temporal Comparison of Individualism-Collectivism in the United States and Japan," *PSPR* 16, no. 1 (2012): 13.

12 Premchand Dommaraju and Gavin Jones, "Divorce Trends in Asia," *AJSS* 39 (2011): 729-734. Interestingly, although there is a steady increase in divorce rates in non-Muslim countries, there has been a decline in divorce rates in the Islamic SEA region, though this might be only a decline in the number of divorces based on "traditional factors" such as dissatisfaction with arranged marriages, but there might be an increase in "modern divorce" rates (divorces for the same reasons as in the West); see

New England also suffered similar changes two hundred years ago. This period was plagued by two common socioethical problems: pride and uncontrolled sexuality.[13] Pride manifested itself in youthful rebellion against parents[14] and it also promoted freer sexuality, which resulted in the increase of sexual immorality: increase in premarital pregnancies, "company keeping" (socializing with a negative connotation), and "frolicking." In a sermon in 1741, Jonathan Edwards referred to frolicking: "Customs used by young people and those liberties…: that shameful lascivious custom of handling women's breasts, and the different sexes lying in beds together—the custom of frolicking, as it is called."[15] Marsden provides a good picture of how harmful this culture was: "Even in well-churched Northampton, where premarital pregnancies were rarer than in some parts of the region, the figure had recently risen to one in ten first children born within eight months of marriage."[16]

Amidst these problematic changes, the Awakening was needed not only as a responsive, polemical movement, but also as a search for new guidance from God in the new cultural setting.[17] The product was the Evangelical Awakening, a spontaneous, individualistic "religion of the heart" that would later also become a new problem to some in New England churches.

The influence of this modern religion is apparent in today's Asia in the increasing tendency of youth to seek fulfillment for the individual's subjective pleasure. Judy Foo, the director of Youth with a Mission (YWAM) in Singapore, gives four characteristics of what is regarded as a successful

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pp. 734-741.

13 Ava Chamberlain, "Bad Books and Bad Boys: The Transformation of Gender in Eighteenth-Century Northampton, Massachusetts," in *Jonathan Edwards at Home and Abroad: Historical Memories, Cultural Movements, Global Horizons*, ed. David W. Kling and Douglas A. Sweeney (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2003), 64.

14 Catherine A. Brekus, "Children of Wrath, Children of Grace: Jonathan Edwards and the Puritan Culture of Child Rearing," in *The Child in Christian Thought*, ed. Marcia J. Bunge (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2001), 307-308.

15 Jonathan Edwards, "Youth Is Like a Flower That Is Cut Down," No. 593 (February 1741; Feb 1748), in *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, vol. 22, *Sermons and Discourses, 1739-1742*, ed. Harry S. Stout (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 324.

16 George M. Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards: A Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 131.

17 McLoughlin, *Revivals, Awakenings, and Reform*, 58.

youth ministry in Asia: emotional music with full band, theatrical (I would add, entertaining) preaching, fun activities to "replace" worldly attractions, and structured active social groups.[18] Though I am by no means opposing these elements, it needs to be admitted that, in providing these, the church is unintentionally affirming the youth's individualistic pursuit of subjective entertainment.[19]

This essay will *not* attempt to undo the changes made by the absorption of the Enlightenment's value of individualism to solve the problems that they might cause for the church or for the society. But these cultural changes present a growing gap between the younger and older generations, leaving many churches unable to understand today's culture and, therefore, making it difficult for them to minister to the youth that so enthusiastically embraces such culture. My essay, therefore, seeks to help evangelical churches, with their ministers, elders, and older congregation, to serve the youth through considering Jonathan Edwards's approaches.

Enlightened but Humble: Edwards's Approach to Youth Culture

In 1744, a major case involving the youth in Northampton was the Bad Book case. Several young boys in Northampton kept several medical books, which they called the "young folks' bible," containing such topics as reproduction, female anatomy, childbirth, methods of attaining sexual satisfaction, and the effects of sexual abstinence in women. They circulated these books among themselves, treating them as pornography.

This case was a sign of the cultural shift that sought to reject established authority. The fact that the youth of the day called it the "young folks' bible" suggests an intent to undermine the authority not only of the society,

18 Judy Foo, "What Does Youth Ministry Look Like in Asia?," in *Global Youth Ministry: Reaching Adolescents Around the World*, ed. Terry Linhart and David Livermore (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), 202.

19 It perhaps needs to be clarified that I am not opposing the provision of modern music or entertaining sermons. The "problem" outlined in the paragraph is not the church's action per se, but the culture that always seeks individual pleasure. The question that remains, therefore, is not whether the church should refrain from providing these elements, but how it could provide such culturally sensitive elements without affirming the pleasure-centered aspect of culture.

but also of the principal book upon which the whole society was founded.[20] When the Northampton church committee called the witnesses and perpetrators to come to Edwards's house for questioning, some responded with contempt toward authority, saying, "I don't care a turd, or I don't care a fart, for any of them."[21] Inherent in this case was the youth pride that was starting to grow uncontrollably, becoming worse than in the previous generation. Very close to this social development, or perhaps even the cause of it, was the new cultural understanding of the self that centered on human goodness and prosperity, caused by the liberation of individual thinking and the market economy's enticement of prosperity.

During the days when the Enlightenment was new and pervasive, when the idea that the self was good, trustworthy, and capable of achieving prosperity was embraced, and when the doctrine that God would send people to hell was rejected,[22] Edwards's instinct was to be a conservative and bring the youth back to the realization of the broken nature of the self, and then to the constant need for grace. One way in which Edwards pursued this vision was through terror preaching. He wanted to bring the youth back into submission, into the fear of God, and to the realization of the horrific nature of sin. This terror news, however, was always followed by a sense of joy from knowing that one could be saved when the grace of God came to them. Through this strategy, Edwards aimed to bring the youth back not only under the moral authority of the church, but also to the enjoyment of God's grace.

This strategy is most obvious in his sermon entitled "Youth is Like a Flower That is Cut Down." In February 1741, Edwards delivered this sermon as a commemoration of the unexpected death of a youth called Billy Sheldon. Edwards seized this moment to remind his young congregation of the short-lived prosperity of the self; that "death puts an end" to all the "hopes and promises ... of the good and prosperity that they

20 Even the practice of reading the books closely resembled the communal practice of Bible reading in New England. Chamberlain, "Bad Books and Bad Boys," 67-68.

21 "Papers Concerning Young Men's Reading Midwives' Books, Their Contempt of the Church, Etc.," in *Documents Relating to the "Bad Book" Case, Works of Jonathan Edwards Online*, vol. 2, *Church and Pastoral Documents* (Jonathan Edwards Center, Yale University, 2008).

22 See Kenneth P. Minkema, "Terror Preaching," in *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, vol. 14, *Sermons and Discourses, 1723-1729*, ed. Kenneth P. Minkema (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), 29.

shall see in the world."[23] Through a consideration of the terror and close reality of mortality, Edwards asked for haste in considering spirituality and not just material self-fulfillment. When he was eventually dismissed by the church because of their growing disagreement with his high standard of spirituality, Edwards still insisted in his farewell sermon that "ordinarily those whom God intended mercy for were brought to fear and love him in their youth."[24] This is why Edwards endeavored to plant fear into the younger generation. It was not ultimately fear of his own authority that he wanted to assert, but fear of God, because this was a sign of God's mercy to them.

Edwards was not completely against the idea of self-love, however. In his *Ethical Writings*, Edwards argues, "It is not a thing contrary to Christianity that a man should love himself; or what is the same thing, that he should love his own happiness."[25] But he distinguished between self-love and selfishness, saying that self-love could be channeled through "pursuing the good of others as well as their own."[26] For Edwards, the ideal Christian love is a "disinterested" self-love: that is, it is disinterested in or indifferent toward self-will. The self is loved only because of its relationship with God, and thus self-love must make way for God's will, not self-will. For Edwards, selfish love is not only sinful but also illogical; for if one is not a child of God, one is an utter sinner. One can only love oneself when one finds one's worth as a child of God, and therefore the self-love therein shall be derived from God's love toward his children, which extends to other children.[27] Edwards wanted the youth to embrace what he called the "superior principle of disinterested general benevolence"—the selfless love of self that springs out of the love of God and love of others.[28]

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23 Edwards, "Youth Is Like a Flower That Is Cut Down," No. 593 (February 1741; Feb 1748), *WJE* 22:324-325.

24 Jonathan Edwards, "A Farewell Sermon" (June 1750), in *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, vol. 25, *Sermons and Discourses, 1743-1758*, ed. W. H. Kimnach (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 482.

25 Jonathan Edwards, "Sermon Seven: Charity Contrary to a Selfish Spirit," in *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, vol. 8, *Ethical Writings*, ed. Paul Ramsey (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 254.

26 Edwards, "Sermon Seven," *WJE* 8:255-257.

27 Edwards, "Sermon Seven," *WJE* 8:255-257.

28 Jonathan Edwards, "The Nature of True Virtue," *WJE* 8:617.

Not surprisingly, therefore, another way in which Edwards broke the youth's pride was through the reassertion of social authority. Considering Edwards's understanding of "disinterested benevolence," this made sense. If the only legitimate self-love that one could have was the love for the children of God, then the only way the proud self could be killed was through the prioritization of society. Eight months after the Bad Book case, Edwards delivered a sermon called "The Beauty of Piety in Youth," through which he exhorted the youth to live holy lives for the sake of the "interest" of the town, parents, friends, and God before living "for your own sake."[29]

Nonetheless, in considering Edwards's attitude toward the Enlightenment culture, we need to be careful not to see him as an unrealistic idealist. Edwards was a progressive as much as he was a conservative. Although he rejected the Enlightenment's idea of the proud self, he embraced the realism that it pursued in both science and economy. In his letter to his daughter Esther, for example, when she was ill and homesick during his early stage of marriage, although he started with a spiritual reminder that sickness and suffering in this world were normal and to be expected, and that these things shall make her always look toward heaven, which he did prioritize over worldly issues, he closed it with a sudden change of tone, saying, "regarding your health concerns," and enclosed medicine for his daughter, showing that he was realistic about the world albeit also spiritually directed.[30] In the sermon at his daughter Jerusha's funeral, Edwards detailed how they had consulted a physician "from day to day while she lived," highlighting that he embraced "all means that could be used" and did not rely on blind spirituality against science.[31] Nonetheless, at the end of the sermon, he exhorted the young people to "[not] set your heart on youthful pleasures and other vain enjoyments of this world, nor employ yourself mainly in pursuit of them."[32]

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29 Jonathan Edwards, "The Beauty of Piety in Youth," No. 761 (November 1744), *WJE* 25:109. Also in Edwards, "A Farewell Sermon," (June 1750), *WJE* 25:482.

30 Jonathan Edwards, "Letter to Esther Edwards Burr," in *Works of Jonathan Edwards*, vol. 16, *Letters and Personal Writings*, ed. George S. Claghorn (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 576-578.

31 Edwards, "Youth Is Like a Flower That Is Cut Down," No. 593 (February 1741; Feb 1748), *WJE* 22:330.

32 Edwards, "Youth Is Like a Flower That Is Cut Down," *WJE* 22:336.

What Edwards saw as a problem in the Enlightenment worldview, therefore, was not the humanistic realism or science that it embraced. After all, Edwards himself was a great science enthusiast. He started taking notes on any scientific observation that he could make when he was a child and wrote an academic article "Of Insects" when he was only sixteen. Edwards made a problem out of the new culture because it was replacing the old worldview, which saw *both* the spiritual and material as mutual, with the new worldview, which saw *only* the importance of the material,[33] which in turn viewed humanity too highly.

Asian societies hastily embrace the exaltation of the self because many indigenous traditions in Asia teach that humans are innately good.[34] Edwards approached this assertion differently. Though he embraced the idea of self-love that was in the form of "disinterested benevolence," he entirely rejected the pride of youth. And although he embraced the scientific rigor and the concern for worldly prosperity promoted by the Enlightenment, he saw that it was more important to have more of heaven without abandoning earth.

Subjective but Orderly: Edwards's Approach to Youth Religion

The Great Awakening affected young people the most, but not always in a godly way. Inherent in the Awakening was a conflict between its opponents (the Old Lights), who fought for rational religion, and its proponents (the New Lights), who fought for subjective experience of the Spirit and for "emotional religion" that was embraced by the younger generation.[35] It must be understood, however, that both the Old Lights and the New Lights

33 Charles Pierce, "Jonathan Edwards, Children, and Young People: Less of Earth and More of Heaven," in *The Contribution of Jonathan Edwards to American Culture and Society: Essays on America's Spiritual Founding Father (The Northampton Tercentenary Celebration, 1703-2003)*, ed. Richard A. S. Hall (New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 2008), 313.

34 Jackson Wu, *Saving God's Face: A Chinese Contextualization of Salvation through Honor and Shame*, EMS Dissertation Series (Pasadena: WCIU Press, 2013), 72. Also see Zhao Dunhua, "The Goodness of Human Nature and Original Sin: A Point of Convergence in Chinese and Western Cultures," in *Christianity and Chinese Culture*, ed. Miikka Ruokanen and Paulos Huang (Grand Rapids, MI: W. B. Eerdmans, 2010), 3-11.

35 Bushman, *From Puritan to Yankee*, 197-201.

came from the same tradition, which understood the soul in terms of hierarchy: reason came first before the heart.[36] Therefore, they both agreed on the existence of both faculties. The conflict lay on the emphasis. The Old Lights understood the hierarchy in terms of levels: reason was higher and more noble than affection. The New Lights understood it in terms of depth: reason was only the surface whereas affection the depth.[37] The Old Lights argued that a rational understanding of the gospel was needed for grace to work in conversion.[38] Therefore, a rational teaching was to be preferred over ecstatic, disorderly, violent experience of the Spirit. The New Lights denied that the Spirit worked through the formal structure of the church as they emphasized individual encounter with the Spirit.

Indeed, in practice, the New Lights' emphasis on the subjective did at times become too disorderly and violent, as it was powered by the rebellious concept of the self from the general culture. They rejected rational preachers, calling them "unconverted," and their sermons were publicly judged dead.[39] Students rebelled against their tutors, children against their parents, congregations against their pastors, all based on a judgment made on a person's subjective experience.[40] Of course, these experiences were often real. In Northampton during the revivals, illness seemed almost to disappear.[41] But these revivals also threatened to overthrow the hierarchy on which the whole society operated.

Edwards's approach is worth imitating. He defended the Old Lights while supporting the New Lights' practice. In his address at Yale, Edwards openly condemned those who opposed the revivals, saying that they opposed the work of the Holy Spirit, but he also condemned those who pronounced judgments on the Old Lights.[42] He tried to convince the Old Lights of the necessity of the new experience that might inevitably lead to confusion, rebuking them for being unrealistic by rejecting the progression

36 E. Brooks Holifield, *A History of Pastoral Care in America: From Salvation to Self-Realization* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1983), 73-75.

37 Holifield, *A History of Pastoral Care in America*, 80.

38 Holifield, *A History of Pastoral Care in America*, 205-206.

39 Bushman, *From Puritan to Yankee*, 203.

40 Charles Chauncy, *Seasonable Thoughts on the State of Religion in New England* (Boston: Rogers and Fowle, 1743), 168-169.

41 Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, 160.

42 See Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, 237.

of culture, but at the same time he agreed that the New Lights' piety had at times become intolerable when it threatened to overthrow order by excessively embracing the new culture.[43]

This approach was possible because Edwards embraced a distinctive understanding of the soul that "would have struck as many revivalists as antirevivalists."[44] His use of language was different, as he led a more moderate New Lights group. He proposed an understanding of holistic affection. For Edwards, affection was the movement or tendency of the "soul," and by "soul" he meant the whole personhood that combined understanding, emotions, and will.[45] Edwards did not believe that the faculties of the soul could operate one at a time separately. He believed in the "sensible knowledge" in which reason, emotions, and will went together to move the heart as it was touched by an understanding of the beauty of divine things.[46] In contrast to the Old Lights who argued that God's work in human conversion was "only moral, suggesting ideas to the understanding," Edwards believed that God's work was "physical," affecting the whole being.[47] In this case, Edwards was a progressive, leaning toward the New Lights. He stated that a true religious experience had to "penetrate" the heart, underneath the level of "mere rational convictions."[48] But one can also sense the conservatism in his argument. Edwards argued alongside the Old Lights that the true work of the Spirit had to be discernible not first and foremost through the subjective "heart," but through objective "signs" or fruits.[49] It was precisely because he thought that God's work was "physical," touching the whole soul, and that affections included the

43 See McLoughlin, *Revivals, Awakenings, and Reform*, 19-20. See also Rhys S. Bezzant, "Church Discipline," in *The Jonathan Edwards Encyclopedia*, ed. Harry S. Stout, Kenneth P. Minkema, and Adriaan C. Neele (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2017), 96.

44 Holifield, *A History of Pastoral Care in America*, 79.

45 Michael J. McClymond and Gerald R. McDermott, *The Theology of Jonathan Edwards* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 311-313.

46 Holifield, *A History of Pastoral Care in America*, 75-76.

47 Holifield, *A History of Pastoral Care in America*, 79.

48 Jonathan Edwards, "Some Thoughts Concerning the Revival," *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, vol. 4, *The Great Awakening*, ed. C. C. Goen (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972), 298.

49 Holifield, *A History of Pastoral Care in America*, 86-88.

will of actions, that he insisted that a truly converted person would show "signs" of actions.

Edwards also added a whole new concept to the argument. While the New Lights would judge a convert based on subjective experience and the Old Lights on objective understanding, Edwards would judge them on their ability to "open [their] eyes" and "see" God's beauty more profoundly.[50] This is precisely why Edwards always started his evangelism toward the youth with the terror of sin but always ended with the joy and beauty of God.

Therefore, although Edwards embraced conversion of the heart, he also followed it up with methods of discerning a true conversion by using orderly, rational assessments. In his *Distinguishing Marks*, Edwards presented a list of signs that a person was converted. An important distinguishing mark of the work of God for Edwards was not the increase of mere knowledge of higher things or ecstatic experiences of them, but the "esteemed" love for them. [51] And although he was open to subjective signs, saying that "any effects on the bodies of men; such as tears, trembling, groans, loud outcries, agonies of body, or the failing of bodily strength" could be a sign of conversion,[52] he also listed such signs as being discouraged to sin, having greater love for Scripture, being led to truth, and having more love toward God and humans.[53] All of the latter signs have less to do with the subjective than with the objective.

A remarkable way that Edwards took to ensure these objective changes was through the administration of a church covenant, thus sealing the deal of subjective conversion during the Awakening with practical discipleship. Covenants were methodological practices to assure accountability in fighting immoral behaviors communally.[54] Perhaps they could be called, in modern terms, highly theologized accountability programs. Through this covenant, Edwards encouraged young people to form religious groups

50 For example, see Edwards, "A Farewell Sermon" *WJE* 25:481.

51 Jonathan Edwards, "The Distinguishing Marks," *WJE* 4:249.

52 Edwards, "The Distinguishing Marks," *WJE* 4:228-230.

53 Edwards, "The Distinguishing Marks," *WJE* 4:250-258.

54 Also see Edmund S. Morgan, *The Puritan Family: Religion and Domestic Relations in Seventeenth-Century New England*, 2nd ed. (Boston: Public Library, 1966), 9.

and prayer meetings.[55] His vision in the establishment of the covenant was not first and foremost to see the youth fall under the authority of the church nor to ensure that the subjective experience of the revivals would stay burning forever, but to nourish them in further "seeing" God's beauty through conversations in religious groups and prayer meetings.[56]

It is important to note, however, that Edwards did not establish the covenant before the Awakening. He did not establish the covenant to control the youth's liberation of the self. Instead, he brought the youth to the necessity of grace *first*, through terror preaching, which would bring them to the realization of their sin, which was followed by conversion. The covenant, therefore, came after conversion to ensure that the "distinguishing marks" were present.

I have presented how Edwards approached the new "religion of the heart" that so many young people in his era embraced, sometimes with too much enthusiasm. As what he did with the individualist culture, Edwards chose to embrace the virtuous elements while rejecting the harmful. He was much more concerned to see the younger generation affected by the gospel "physically," that the subjective love for spiritual beauty would magnify in objective actions. Edwards was a progressive in embracing the new subjective spiritual culture, but a conservative in preserving traditional authority and the objective truth that it defended.

Independent but Nurtured: Edwards's Approach to the Youth

The decline of youth morality during Edwards's era was precipitous, as I have demonstrated above. However, as Bezzant says, "Edwards' response to this declension was remarkable for its day: he would target the demographic that needed a timely word. He began a new 'service' that included preaching to address specific issues for the youth, organized neighborhood meetings of parents to discuss the matter, and encouraged those same heads of families to assert once again coordinated discipline."[57]

55 Pierce, "Jonathan Edwards, Children, and Young People," 310.

56 See Jonathan Edwards, "To the Reverend Thomas Prince," No. 45 (December 12, 1743), *WJE* 16:116-117.

57 Rhys S. Bezzant, *Jonathan Edwards and the Church* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 73.

Herein lies the two-edged sword that Edwards used in approaching the youth: he faced the youth on their own terms but also asked their parents to nurture them.

In New England, family hierarchy assumed that the wiser and the more spiritual would have authority over the less.[58] This implies that children were always considered less spiritual than their parents; but Edwards denied this concept. His emphasis on "seeing" the beauty of God in the conversion of the whole soul instead of in the mind alone had made his assertion of spiritual equality possible. Taking as an example Phebe Bartlett, a four-year old who was recently converted, Edwards argued that even very young children could experience Christ's love without understanding the complex doctrine of salvation.[59] He also allowed children and teenagers to partake in communion, treating them with the same respect as adults as they repented, a practice contrary to that adopted by his predecessors.[60] In ministering to the youth, therefore, rather than seeing them as "miniature adults," Edwards "believed their faith had to be carefully nurtured" through careful tailoring of the Bible in plain language.[61] He decided to fight the youth's lofty cultural understanding of the self by giving them what they wanted—the recognition as a person separate from their parents.

Edwards's strategy is observable in his sermons to children. The unpublished sermon "Children Must Hearken to the Call," for example, is very brief, occupying only one leaf, which shows Edwards's contextual sensitivity in treating children appropriately according to their age.[62] Edwards also preached "Children Ought to Love the Lord Jesus Christ Above All," which was directed entirely to children, ages one to fourteen, with only a nod to the rest of the congregation.[63] This strategy of dedicating an entire sermon to children despite the presence of adults shows that

58 William J. Sheick, *The Writings of Jonathan Edwards: Theme, Motif, and Style* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1975), 41.

59 See Jonathan Edwards, "A Faithful Narrative," *WJE* 4:202-203.

60 See Kenneth P. Minkema, "Old Age and Religion in the Writings and Life of Jonathan Edwards," *CH* 70, no. 4 (2001): 688-689. Also see Brekus, "Children of Wrath, Children of Grace," 318.

61 Brekus, "Children of Wrath, Children of Grace," 303.

62 Jonathan Edwards, "Children Must Hearken to the Call," No. 622 (July 1741), unpublished.

63 Edwards, "Children Ought to Love the Lord Jesus Christ Above All," *WJE* 22:167.

he saw the youth as spiritual equals, equally in need of the gospel and salvation. Even more controversially, in the opening of this sermon, Edwards warned children that if their parents threatened to disown them when they professed faith in Christ, dissent against their parents would thus be allowed for the sake of Christ.[64] Edwards said this in front of the children's parents. Because of Edwards's strategy in taking the youth on their own terms, they in turn felt free "to express anxieties that other adults—even their own parents—impatiently dismissed as 'childish.'"[65]

Despite his progressive insistence on taking the younger generation on their own terms, however, Edwards also put this generation in their own place—that is, under the nurturing care of their parents. Edwards always saw nurturing parental government as a crucial cornerstone for the development of youth morality.[66] In his sermon on Psalm 139:23-24, he reminded parents not to "live in [Eli's sin] in that you live in the neglect of instructing [your children]...1 Sam 3.12."[67] Edwards reminded parents that they were the means through whom God brought their children into being; thus if they cared about their children's material fulfillment, then they should care "infinitely more" about "the wellfare [*sic*] of their souls."[68]

The failure of parental guidance that resulted in declining youth morality is obvious in the Bad Book case. After the Bad Book controversy, which ended with the parents' reluctance to exercise discipline toward the perpetrators, Edwards's authority was "weakened" in the church, "especially among young people...and stupidity and worldly-mindedness were greatly increased among them."[69] On the other hand, Edwards provided a model of good parental guidance in his own life as a father. He required obedience from his children, but with love. This made his children

64 Edwards, "Children Ought to Love the Lord Jesus Christ Above All," *WJE* 22:170.

65 Brekus, "Children of Wrath, Children of Grace," 319.

66 Edwards, "A Faithful Narrative," *WJE* 4:146.

67 Jonathan Edwards, Sermon on Psalm 139:23-24, No. 297 (September 1733), in *Works of Jonathan Edwards Online*, vol. 66, *Sermons, Series II, 1733* (Jonathan Edwards Center, Yale University, 2008).

68 Jonathan Edwards, Sermon on Eph 6:4, No. 891 (February 1747/1748), in *Works of Jonathan Edwards Online*, vol. 48, *Sermons, Series II, 1748* (Jonathan Edwards Center, Yale University, 2008).

69 Sereno E. Dwight, *The Life of President Edwards*, Vol. 1 of *The Works of President Edwards* (New York: Converse, 1830), 300.

love him and admire him as a guide, as they were able to have conversations with him "about the state of their souls."[70] And indeed, "Edwards believed that children and young people should be given assistance along the road to salvation and that they also should have a chance to have their voices heard."[71] Edwards's success in ministering to the youth, therefore, should be seen in his children, from whom great figures in early American history came.

Conclusion

In approaching the youth culture, "[Edwards] should be seen as a Janus-faced figure, looking back as well as forward."[72] Edwards was not frightened by the younger generation, its rebellious culture, or its subjective religion; but he was a progressive while being a conservative.

I think evangelical ministers in the changing Asia Pacific should imitate this. This means that ministers should not always expect the younger generation to maintain the old, established culture, but rather they should guard them in any cultural context, teaching them to embrace the virtues of every new culture that brings them into maturity in Christ while rejecting the temptation to feed their souls with self-centered poison. Asian evangelical churches should embrace the digital capitalist culture without abandoning the vision of God's society in which truth and "disinterested" love abound and in which sin is purged. How this vision is realized may vary depending on different contexts.

The evangelical movement started with an acceptance, albeit a careful one, of cultural changes. It is an irony that many Asian evangelical churches today have become resistant to cultural progress.

About author

Ricky F. NJOTO (MDiv, Australian College of Theology) is the lead pastor at Church on the Corner, Camberwell, Australia.

70 Stuart Piggin, "Domestic Spirituality: Jonathan Edwards on Love, Marriage and Family Life," in *The Bible and the Business of Life*, ed. Simon Holt and Gordon Preece (Hindmarsh: ATF Press, 2004), 152-153.

71 Pierce, "Jonathan Edwards, Children, and Young People," 310.

72 McLoughlin, *Revivals, Awakenings, and Reform*, 71.

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Environmental Crisis as a Religious Issue: Assessing Some Relevant Works in the Field[1]

Md. Abu SAYEM
Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong

Abstract
Studies have shown that religions can play a vital role in mitigating the current environmental degradation. The present paper surveys the literature in the field and seeks to show how religiously based environmental teachings, moral guidance or ecotheological ethics are potential agents for environmental sustainability. It endeavors to relate the present environmental crisis with religious traditions so that faith communities can discern this problem more seriously as their own problem.

Keywords
Ecology, ecotheology, environmental ethics, faith communities, interfaith dialogue, stewardship

Introduction: Religion and the Environment

Uncontrolled human activities have rapidly degraded our natural environment. Modern humans continue to exploit the natural world for their own comfort and benefit at the expense of the world as a whole.[2] In the present capitalistic-consumeristic world, humans are interested in short-term benefits rather than long-term benefits in terms of cost-benefit

1 This article is based on my ongoing Ph.D. dissertation project, "Religious Perspectives on Environmental Issues: A Comparative Study of John B. Cobb, Jr. and Seyyed Hossein Nasr."

2 Arnold Toynbee, "The Religious Background of the Present Environmental Crisis: A Viewpoint," *International Journal of Environmental Studies* 3, nos.1-4, (1972): 141-146.

Corresponding author
Md. Abu SAYEM: sayemwrcdu@gmail.com

analysis.[3] Needless to say, if the environment is destroyed, can we continue with our comfortable lifestyle and economic affluence? Why can't we change our treatment of nature? Such human behavior cannot be reformed unless there is a deep feeling for nature. Ironically, modern science and technology are both the means of destroying the environment and the source of information on how to save it. But science and technology cannot provide the ethical or moral basis on which to save the environment. Some scientists have asked religious scholars and faith communities[4] to retrieve or construct or reconstruct religious moral teachings in order to develop the inner consciousness needed for the sustainability of the environment. Secular scientists and scholars confess that without the cooperation of the world religions it is not possible to work for a sustainable environment. The environment has always been an issue for religions. Even religious beliefs and practices have a deep relationship with natural phenomena. No religion supports the destruction of the natural world; rather, all religions teach humans to treat the environment with respect.

Human supremacy over other creatures is recognized by religions in a very balanced way such that the natural world is not harmed by human activities, although many scholars, such as Lynn White,[5] have criticized religions, especially Christianity, for its teaching on human supremacy as a reason for the current ecological crisis. It gives humans the license to exploit the natural environment for human interests. Some other scholars, such as Arnold Toynbee, blame monotheistic religions for eliminating the traditional veneration of the natural world, which was common practice in polytheistic and pantheistic religions.[6] Both White and Toynbee prefer pantheism for environmental sustainability. White, however, wants to see a reformed Christianity based on St. Francis's ecological view. Contrary to White, Toynbee seems uncompromising toward the monotheistic religions.

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3 Stephen B Scharper, *Redeeming the Time: A Political Theology of the Environment* (New York: Continuum, 1997).

4 Mary Evelyn Tucker and John A. Grim, "Introduction: The Emerging Alliance of Religion and Ecology," *Daedalus* 130, no. 4 (Religion and Ecology: Can the Climate Change?) (Fall 2001): 9-10; See also Mary Evelyn Tucker, "The Emerging Alliance of Religion and Ecology," *Worldviews: Environment, Culture, Religion* 1 (1997): 13.

5 Lynn Townsend White, Jr., "The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis," *Science* 155, no. 3767 (1967): 1203-1207.

6 Toynbee, "Religious": 141-146.

Instead, he proposes that monotheism should be replaced by pantheism for the sake of environmental preservation. Both scholars are criticized for their superficial treatment of religions on the environmental issue.[7] In their works, neither White nor Toynbee has made any attempt to articulate the religious concept of stewardship. Consequently, their judgment about monotheistic religions seems one-sided and inadequate. Perhaps their questions might be answered in what they have overlooked in respect to religious stewardship. Apart from White and Toynbee, ecofeminist theologians such as Sally McFague[8] have also criticized traditional Christian faith for its anthropocentric and hierarchical position. Secular environmental ethicists and activists have also voiced similar criticisms.

In response to such criticisms, religious scholars such as Seyyed Hossein Nasr,[9] John B. Cobb,[10] the late Pope John Paul II,[11] and the current Pope

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7 See Lewis W. Moncrief, "The Cultural Basis for Our Environmental Crisis," *Science* 170, no. 3957 (October 30, 1970): 508-512; Paul Santmire, *Nature Reborn: The Ecological and Cosmic Promise of Christian Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000), 1; Kyle S. Van Houtan and Stuart L. Pimm, "The Various Christian Ethics of Species Conservation," in *Religion and the New Ecology: Environmental Responsibility in a World of Flux*, ed. David M. Lodge and Christopher Hamlin (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 2006), 131-132.

8 See Sallie McFague, *Speaking in Parables: A Study in Metaphor and Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press,1975); Sallie McFague, *Modes of God: Theology for an Ecological, Nuclear Age* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press,1987); Sallie McFague, *The Body of God: An Ecological Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press,1993); Sallie McFague, *Super, Natural Christians: How We Should Love Nature* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press,1997); Sallie McFague, *A New Climate for Theology: God, the World, and Global Warming* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2008).

9 See Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Man, and Nature: The Spiritual Crisis of Modern Man* (London: Unwin Paperbacks, 1968/1976); Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *The Need for a Sacred Science* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1993); Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Religion and the Order of Nature* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996).

10 See John B. Cobb, Jr., *Is It Too Late? A Theology of Ecology* (Texas: Environmental Ethics Book, 1972); John B. Cobb, Jr., and Charles Birch, *The Liberation of Life: From the Cell to the Community* (Texas: Environmental Ethics Book,1982); John B. Cobb, Jr., *Sustainability: Economics, Ecology and Justice* (Wipf and Stock, 2007); John B. Cobb, Jr., *Spiritual Bankruptcy: A Prophetic Call to Action* (Abingdon Press, 2010); Herman E. Daly, John B. Cobb, Jr., and Clifford W. Cobb, *For the Common Good: Redirecting the Economy Toward Community, the Environment, and a Sustainable Future* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1989/1994).

11 Pope John Paul II, "The Ecological Crisis: A Common Responsibility," *Message of His Holiness Pope John Paul II for the Celebration of the World Day of Peace 1 January 1990*

Francis,[12] among others, are trying to present religion as an influential and supportive agent and power to work for environmental sustainability. Their common response to the critics is that religions did not generate an anthropocentric view of nature; rather, it was created by European renaissance humanism and secular ideology and further strengthened by modern science and technology. Religions present a theocentric rather than anthropocentric view. In the theocentric view, humans and other creatures are seen equally as agents of God to play a specific role assigned by God himself. In this sense, humans are fellow creatures alongside nonhuman creatures of the same God. God is the center for all. But there is a certain hierarchy approved by God: humans are granted some privileges over other creatures, but this does not give humans the right to devalue and exploit the world. Religions should not be blamed for an attitude that they did not create.

From the outset of the environmental movement religious scholars, leaders, and representatives of faith-based communities have been involved in many ways,[13] all of which bring religion into dialogue with environmental issues. Their works are very significant in regard to ecological ethics, and they should be reread and reassessed by both secular and religious environmental scholars. The present article aims to assess some of these recent works in order to justify why a rereading of some important works is crucial for the discussions at hand.

(Vatican City; Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference, 1989).

12 Pope Francis, *Encyclical Letter "Laudato Si" of the Holy Father Francis* (Vatican City, 2015), available at http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html.

13 For example, Daniel Maguire, Thomas Berry, Lynn White, Hans Küng, Tu Weiming, Eugene Hargrove, Charlene Spretnak, Steven Rockefeller, John Elder, Peter Marshal, J. Baird Collicott, David Kinsley, Roger S. Gottlieb, Harold Coward, Willis J. Jenkins, Jame Schaefer, Richard C. Foltz, Stephanie Kaza, Kenneth Kraft, David E. Cooper, Pragati Sahni, Simon P. James, Vandana Shiva, Ramachandra Guha, Emms Tomalin, Christopher Key Chapple, Jacobsend Lidke, Cornell, David Frawley, Georg Feuerstein, Brenda Feuerstein, LIewellyn Voughan-Lee, J.L. Gutt, John B. Cobb Jr., Ibrahim Ozdemir, Fazlun Khalid, and Seyyed Hossein Nasr are well known among others in researching on environment issue from faith perspectives.

Religions as Promoter of a Pro-environmental Stance

Aimee Hope and Christopher Jones have argued that religions can be instrumental in promoting an environmentally conscious ethic by reducing consumerism and creating a balanced relationship between humankind and nature.[14] Their study demonstrates the necessity of interfaith dialogue and the role of religions in forming a positive attitude toward nature and the environment.[15] In their report, Muslim-Christian participants believe that they have religious obligations of stewardship to the natural world and are therefore obliged to treat creatures responsibly; otherwise, they will be accountable to God.[16] The study shows that religious participants refer to nature as the creation of God, and thus it is a moral and religious duty to act as guardian for the environment. On the other hand, secular participants consider nature in the process of evolution, and thus they maintain that humans have a responsibility to coexist peacefully with other species.[17] This case study states that cooperation between religions and secular institutions is necessary for creating a sustainable environment.

But the question arises: How is the cooperation between religions and secularism possible when these two ideologies are in opposition to each another? Hope and Jones do not answer this question. However, their study is partially supported by Jenkins and Chapple[18] and Lai Pan-Chiu,[19] who argue for the need for cooperation. Jenkins and Chapple contend that without a clear understanding of the religious dimensions in integrating ecology and society, it is not possible to properly recognize the in-depth interaction between humans and the environmental system.[20] In their view,

14 Aimie L.B. Hope and Christopher R. Jones, "The Impact of Religious Faith on Attitudes to Environmental Issues and Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) Technologies: A Mixed Methods Study", *Technology in Society* 38 (2014): 57.

15 Hope and Jones, "The Impact": 57.

16 Hope and Jones, "The Impact": 57.

17 Hope and Jones, "The Impact": 58.

18 Willis J. Jenkins and C. K. Chapple, "Religion and Environment," *Annual Review of Environment and Resources* 36 (2011):441-463.

19 Lai Pan-Chiu, "Interreligious Dialogue and Social Justice: Cobb's Wesleyan Process Theology in East Asian Perspective," *Asia Journal of Theology* 25, no.1 (April 2011): 82-102.

20 Jenkins and Chapple, "Religion": 441-463.

humans need a proper understanding of the equilibrium between humans and the environment. Lai, in his works on environmental ethics, argues for diversified and contextual ecological ethics. He maintains that religions are diverse and different in their own ways; thus religious institutes and scholars should think through and work out their own ecological ethics.[21]

Religions as Partner of Ecological Initiatives and Movements

Tucker and Grim have surveyed some recent initiatives between religions and ecological movements.[22] They present religions as shapers of ancient cultures and potential resources for the present discourses on environmental conservation. In their view, the religious concept of stewardship can serve as an ethical foundation of managing the earth. They propose the planetary environment as a common ground for all religions to hold interfaith dialogue.[23] They note, as promoters of such initiatives, Donald Brown and McElroy, who state that the moral teachings of the world religions are crucial for persuading humans to restrain from harmful actions in the environment.[24] Both Tucker and Grim appreciate J. Baird Callicott's proposal to incorporate the diverse ethical foundations of different religions into environmental ethics.[25] In their view, therefore, religions can contribute significantly to the present environmental movement.

As the current environmental problem is so vast, it cannot be solved by any single effort; rather, it requires multidisciplinary approaches and action plans in which religions can play a significant role. This truth is reflected in some international organizations that deal with environmental problems. Tucker and Grim mention a statement released by scientists from a Global Forum held in Moscow in 1990 that requests religious leaders to

21 Lai Pan-Chiu, "God of Life and Ecological Theology: A Chinese Christian Perspective," *Ecumenical Review* 65, no.1 ((2013): 67; Pan-Chiu Lai, "Interreligious Dialogue and Environmental Ethics," *Studies in Interreligious Dialogue* 21, no.1 (2011): 5-7.

22 Tucker and Grim, "Introduction," 1-22.

23 Tucker and Grim, "Introduction," 21-22.

24 Tucker and Grim, "Introduction," 2.

25 Tucker and Grim, "Introduction," 2.

work with scientists for the cause of environmental sustainability.[26] In this statement, scientists declared uncontrolled human actions to be "crimes against creation."[27] Two years after this conference, another statement, signed by two thousand scientists and issued by the Union of Concerned Scientists, called for immediate action to protect the environment. In this letter, scientists also asked faith communities to focus on their religious perception of nature and to highlight moral teachings that generate sympathetic attitudes toward nature.

Tucker and Grim note that religious leaders have been working on environmental issues since 1972 with the initiatives taken by United Nations and faith communities.[28] Initially, they were slow to respond, but later they responded swiftly. Religious leaders took part in the first environmental conference in 1972 in Stockholm organized by the United Nations. In 1975, the World Council of Churches (WCC) convened a conference in Nairobi to discuss environmental issues from a faith perspective. The Nairobi conference was followed by others: at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1979, the Vancouver Assembly in 1983, and in Canberra in 1991. Religious leaders attended the UN's Earth Summit in Rio in 1992 and called for their respective religious communities to be concerned about ecological justice and to work with others for the same purpose. Several interfaith meetings have also been organized on the same issue. Perhaps the first meeting of this kind was convened in Assisi in 1984, and another interreligious gathering took place in Vatican City in 1986. Interfaith meeting is a good way of discussing the different religious foundations of environmental ethics. With this view, the United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP) has such a sub-branch known as the Interfaith Partnership for the Environment (IPE). The Parliament of World Religions, held in 1993 and 1999, issued major statements by the world religions on the ecological crisis and called for a global approach to address the issue from a religious perspective. The Global Forum of Spiritual and Parliamentary Leaders (GFSPL) arranged some international meetings in Oxford in 1988, Moscow in 1990, Rio in 1992, and Kyoto in 1993, and discussed how to minimize ecological problems. An international organization called the

26 Tucker and Grim, "Introduction," 9.

27 Tucker and Grim, "Introduction," 9.

28 Tucker and Grim, "Introduction," 11-19.

Alliance of Religion and Conservation (ARC) has been working since 1995 by embracing religions and science. As an academic discipline, religions are becoming more involved with ecological issues. For instance, Harvard Divinity School's Center for the Study of Religions has published a three-year (1996 to 1998) conference series, "Religions of the World and Ecology," in *Daedalus*, which eventually produced a series of edited volumes on ecology from the perspectives of different religions (for instance, *Buddhism and Ecology: The Interconnection of Dharma and Deeds*; *Christianity and Ecology: Seeking the Well-Being of Earth and Humans*; *Confucianism and Ecology: The Interrelation of Heaven, Earth, and Humans*; *Daoism and Ecology: Ways within a Cosmic Landscape*; *Hinduism and Ecology: The Intersection of Earth, Sky, and Water*; *Indigenous Traditions and Ecology: The Interbeing of Cosmology and Community*; *Islam and Ecology*; and *Islam and Ecology: A Bestowed Trust*). Since 1998 the Forum on Religion and Ecology has done similar work by organizing seminars, rallies, and workshops.

Faith-based communities are engaging themselves with the present discourses on environmental ethics and the earth charter to protect the planetary environment. An international professional organization, the International Society for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture (ISSRNC), came into being in 2005 under the leadership of Bron Taylor. The Alliance of Religions and Conservation (ARC) was a direct result of the WWF's initiatives. Among religious leaders and scholars, the Dalai Lama, Rabbi Ishmar, Archbishop Bartholomew, Seyyed Hossein Nasr, John B. Cobb, the late Pope John Paul II, and the present Pope Francis are credited with religious initiatives for environmental sustainability. All these faith leaders and scholars urge world leaders to take steps necessary for reducing ecological problems. Their voices are also echoed in former UN secretary general Kofi Annan's call for a new ethics of planetary stewardship and Ban Ki Moon's agenda for "The Road to Dignity by 2030."

All these events reveal that religions have been making significant contributions in association with mainstream organizations. But problems lie in the attitude of those who are secular-minded who fail to understand religions from inside. Their misunderstanding of religions has been an obstacle to the potential of religious and secular organizations working together. Similarly, faith communities need to become more open to

working with people who are not like them. If there is a compromise between both groups, it may be possible for future collaboration.

Ecological Issues in Multireligious to Interreligious Approaches

As seen earlier, since 1986 scholars of world religions have been working collectively to address environmental issues from their own religious perspectives.[29] The Assisi conference actually worked for an international platform of religious dialogue on the ecological crisis. Religious scholars got an opportunity to hear from scientists and environmentalists about the human-caused loss of ecological equilibrium. On the other hand, scientists and environmentalists also heard religious views of nature. Religious leaders from Christianity, Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism, and Judaism participated in discussions and shared their religious knowledge on environmental ethics.[30] Ten years after the Assisi conference, a follow-up conference of religious dialogue was held at Windsor Castle in England in 1995. This time some statements from Bahai, Jainism, Sikhism, and Daoism were included. In the same year another meeting on religious dialogue was organized in Ohito, Japan, at which the participants of Shintoism and Zoroastrianism delivered the statements from their respective religious traditions. In 2011 the Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs organized an "Interfaith Dialogue on a Shared Response to the Environmental Crisis" in cooperation with the United States Embassy to the Holy See and the World Faiths Development Dialogue. All these conferences, activities, and research works emphasize religious initiatives to create awareness of ecological equilibrium through a religious understanding of nature. However, if we consider 1986 as the starting point for work on environmental issues from multireligious and interreligious perspectives, we will find many scholarly works in such interrelated fields. The following discussions will survey some selected works in this field.

Eugene C. Hargrove's edited volume *Religion and Environmental Crisis* (1986) connects religious traditions' ecological teachings with the goals

29 Leslie Sponsel, "Lynn White Jr., One Catalyst in the Historical Development of Spiritual Ecology," in *Religion and Ecological Crisis: The "Lynn White Thesis" at Fifty*, ed. Todd LeVasseur and Anna Peterson (New York: Routledge, 2017), 95-96.

30 Sponsel, "Lynn White," 95-96.

of environmental ethics. This volume is a collection of eleven papers presented at a colloquium held at the University of Denver. The central thesis of this collection is that religious worldviews can contribute to the formation of environmental ethics.[31] The contributors consider their own religious communities as environmentally friendly according to the moral teachings of their respective religious traditions. Though most of the contributions deal with the Jewish and Christian traditions, others discuss Eastern religious traditions and native religious cultures. In most cases, contributors question White's (1967) thesis; but some regard White's accusation as partially true. Hargrove's volume is a useful resource in evaluating the significant role of religions in environmental ethics. As he argues in his editorial note, while the philosophical task is analytical, religions promote revised perceptions.[32] But other scholars have doubts about its implementation.[33]

Nature in Asian Traditions of Thought: Essays in Environmental philosophy (1989), edited by J. Baird Callicott and Roger T. Ames, is a philosophical analysis of major Asian religious and cultural traditions dealing with the relations between humans and the natural world. This anthology covers four worldviews: Chinese, Japanese, Buddhist, and Indian. The editors and contributors highlight the importance that these Asian traditions place on a harmonious relationship with nature. As modern Western societies miss this pivotal point of relationship, they suggest transplanting Asian views of nature into the Western world.[34] In their editorial note, Callicott and Ames expect that humans can reduce their destructive behavior toward nature by awareness of their place in the environment. Saito sees *Nature in Asian Traditions of Thought* as a successful rebuttal to White's thesis because this work is one of a few works on Asian wisdom traditions that seek to rebuild the human-nature relationship.[35] Some may raise the question: If the claims

31 Eugene C. Hargrove, ed., *Religion and Environmental Ethics* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1986), xii.

32 Hargrove, "Religion," xiii.

33 Harry Yeide, Jr., Review of *Religion and Environmental Ethics*, ed. Eugene C. Hargrove, *Environmental Review* 11, no. 3 (Autumn 1987): 240-242.

34 J. Baird Callicott and Roger T. Ames, eds., *Nature in Asian Traditions of Thought: Essays in Environmental Philosophy* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1989).

35 Yuriko Satio, review of *Nature in Asian Traditions of Thought: Essays in Environmental Philosophy*, ed. J. Baird Callicott and Roger T. Ames, *Journal of Asian Studies* 49, no.1

of *Nature in Asian Traditions of Thought* are correct, why are some of the most polluted countries and cities found in Asia? In response, the authors argue that Asian countries are now facing a global environmental problem due to the intellectual colonialization of Asia by the Western world. Despite their advocacy for the Eastern religious and cultural traditions, it seems impractical and not feasible to transplant the Eastern approaches into Western societies. Rather, they should focus on how Eastern religious and cultural traditions can help Western religious and cultural traditions to reform their approaches in favor of the humanity-nature relationship.

Ethics of Environment and Development: Global Challenge and International Response (1990), edited by J. Ronald Engel and Joan Gibb Engel, suggests adopting ethics and religious moral teachings in environmental policies. This book is a collection of papers presented at a workshop in 1986 by participants from different religious and scientific affiliations. The contributors deal with diverse approaches to environmental ethics. Most contributors show how their respective religious traditions support an environmental ethics. Others deal with a humanistic philosophical approach to environmental problems. By focusing on the environment as a global issue, *Ethics of Environment and Development* calls for a meaningful dialogue among people of different religious traditions and secular institutions to mitigate the earth's degradation.[36] It is a thought-provoking attempt to present a complementary vision for a "new holistic ethic."

Charlene Spretnak's *States of Grace: The Recovery of Meaning in the Postmodern Age* (1991) connects the wisdom of the past with modern scientific knowledge in terms of ecological sustainability.[37] In her work, Spretnak discusses Buddhism, goddess worship, Native American spirituality, and the Abrahamic faith traditions in order to retrieve cosmological foundations for a creative transformation among followers of these religious and cultural traditions. She emphasizes a consciousness of unity among all religious and cultural traditions. For this reason, she proposes cross-cultural spiritual guidelines and frameworks to illuminate the present state of understanding in regard to the humanity-nature

(February 1990): 98-99.

36 J. Ronald Engel and John Gibb Engel, *Ethics of Environment and Development: Global Challenge and International Response* (London: Belhaven Press, 1990).

37 Charlene Spretnak, *State of Grace: The Recovery of Meaning in the Postmodern Age* (San Francisco: Harper, 1991).

relationship. *States of Grace* adopts a particular method: connectedness and transformation. In Spretnak's view, humans should be connected first through revitalizing the "wisdom traditions"; then their attitudes toward the natural world would be transformed to a positive and sympathetic view of the environment. She suggests transformation from the local to the global level, but she argues that any transformation should begin by taking a personal step. In *States of Grace*, Spretnak advocates "green politics" for substantial reformation in policy-making decisions to favor environmental sustainability. She also suggests decentralizing economic power so that any economic pressure can gradually be reduced by adjusting to the local environment and ecosystem. Spretnak is optimistic about an "ecological postmodernism."

Spirit and Nature: Why the Environment is a Religious Issue—An Interfaith Dialogue (1992), edited by Stephen Rockefeller and John Elder, states that the environmental crisis is a moral, religious and spiritual problem.[38] This work is a collection of papers presented at a 1990 Middlebury College symposium on "Spirit and Nature: Religion, Ethics, and Environmental Crisis." Principal speakers were from Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Native American, and the liberal democratic tradition. Connecting the present environmental issues with their respective religious traditions and social commitments, all participants advocate the restoration of the relationship between humankind and the natural environment. By considering the environmental crisis as their respective religious or moral responsibility, the speakers propose interfaith dialogue on environmental problems. Their common goal implies that interfaith dialogue on environmental issues is necessary to revitalize the feeling and deep love for nature. In their editorial note, Rockefeller and Elder argue that the environmental crisis cannot be addressed without a clear understanding of humanity's spiritual crisis, and the spiritual transformation of humanity cannot be achieved without establishing a deep relationship between humanity and nature. World religious traditions are needed to rebuild this relationship between nature and humanity. In their view, it is possible to maintain faith and life together. Their claim, however, is criticized by Steven Bouma-Prediger, who argues that not all religious beliefs and practices are supportive of all

38 Stephen C. Rockefeller and John C. Elder, eds., *Spirit and Nature: Why the Environment Is a Religious Issue: An Interfaith Dialogue*, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1992), 14.

living forms.[39] Both Rockefeller and Elder are also somewhat critical of the roles of some institutional religions. Referring to some historical evidence, they recognize that present environmental values were shaped by the belief systems of organized religious and cultural traditions. The central focus of *Spirit and Nature* is to identify religions as a positive agent for environmental sustainability. For Rockefeller and Elder, although religious imperatives are in favor of environmental preservation, these may also create problems for the environment if they are not directed toward building the humanity-nature relationship. This task is, in their view, a great challenge for theologians and religious scholars. Michael Branch appraises *Spirit and Nature* as representing "a new cultural ethos of ecological sustainability and intergenerational responsibility,"[40] but he, too, is critical of its vision due to some religious views that are not environmentally friendly. It may be difficult but not impossible to utilize religious or theological cosmologies for ecological justice. Undoubtedly, *Spirit and Nature* connects scientific understanding of life-affirming values with religious virtues through an interfaith discussion on ecology.

Peter Marshall's *Nature's Web: Rethinking Our Place on Earth* (1994) examines contemporary ecological discussions. Marshall, who is critical of the previous studies, searches for alternative approaches in the Eastern religious and cultural traditions in order to mitigate the present environmental problem.[41] His *Nature's Web* also focuses on ancient religious beliefs found in Egypt, Greece, Babylon, and other places to emphasize the humanity-nature relationship. Steven Simpson criticizes Marshall for not explicitly interpreting any specific religious view of nature.[42] Simpson argues that *Nature's Web* covers a general orientation of some Eastern religious traditions, including the Greek and Egyptian, but he fails to tease out the insights from religious philosophy in dealing with the current

39 Steven Bouma-Prediger, review of *Spirit and Nature: Why the Environment is a Religious Issue: An Interfaith Dialogue*, ed. Stephen C. Rockefeller and John C. Elder, *Journal of Religion* 73, no. 2 (April 1993): 278.

40 Michael Branch, review of *Spirit and Nature: Why the Environment is a Religious Issue: An Interfaith Dialogue*, ed. Stephen C. Rockefeller and John C. Elder, *Environmental Historical Review* 12, no.2 (Summer 1993): 90.

41 Peter H. Marshall, *Nature's Web: Rethinking Our Place on Earth* (New York: Paragon House, 1994).

42 Steven Simpson, review of Peter H. Marshall, *Nature's Web: Rethinking Our Place on Earth, Environmental History* 1, no. 1 (January 1996): 106-108.

ecological issue. Marshall promotes a unified theory of environmentalism, but it seems impossible to implement in light of the differing religious worldviews. It might be better to consider contextual and community-based approaches to the environment, something that Marshall overlooks.

J. Baird Callicott's *Earth's Insights* (1994) brings out the moral guidelines of the world religious traditions for a comprehensive ecological ethics.[43] In Callicott's view, the ecological teachings of traditional or spiritual worldviews should be included in the current discussions of environmental ethics. *Earth's Insights* examines the intellectual resources of the sacred texts of Islam, Hinduism, Jainism, Zen Buddhism, Confucianism, and Daoism. Similarly, he also explores the oral traditions of Polynesia, North and South America, and Australia in order to search their understanding of the environment. *Earth's Insights* also shows how people of various cultures and traditions respond to the environmental crisis in their own ways, and how they put their ecological ethics into practice. By so doing, Callicott attempts to bring diverse environmental views to complement the current discussions of environmental ethics. Callicott proposes the postmodern scientific worldview on the basis of the scientific theory of relativity and ecology. He expects that a postmodern scientific approach can reduce the destructive activities of the mechanistic worldview. *Earth's Insights* predicts a paradigm shift toward ecological equilibrium. He argues that a postmodern scientific worldview will push humans to regard themselves as a part of nature or fellow creatures with others. It transforms the cocreatorship of the mechanistic scientific worldview to the cocreatureship of the postmodern scientific worldview. Callicott promotes a "global environmental ethics," although teachings found in various traditions of the world may differ. To justify his unified environmental ethics, he draws an analogy from humankind, which is unified as a species and yet diverse in its cultures.[44] His ethical understanding is also related to human relationship; thus, if materialistic and mechanistic worldviews are replaced by a postmodern scientific worldview, ethical guidelines should logically be formed in a unified way.

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43 J. Baird Callicott, *Earth's Insights: A Survey of Ecological Ethics from the Mediterranean Basin to the Australian Outback* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).

44 Callicott, *Earth's Insights*, 5.

Harold Coward's edited volume *Population, Consumption, and the Environment: Religious and Secular Perspectives* (1995) attempts to explore how the major world religious traditions view overpopulation and its consumption on the environment, and how faith traditions and secular institutes can work for a possible solution to this environmental problem.[45] Coward traces some practical teachings from aboriginal spirituality, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Chinese religions. As for secular ethical attitudes toward the natural world, he includes secular state policies, North-South relations, market force, status of women, and international law. The volume identifies the compatibility and inconsistency between religious and secular responses to worldwide environmental problems. In one reviewer's assessment, the contributors cannot identify a reciprocal relationship between faith traditions and secular philosophies, and Coward's conclusion also lacks the expectation of the conference's objectives.[46] The work identifies some cultural resources to shape a future of an environmentally friendly world. Contributors and the editor should be appreciated for identifying environmental crisis as a moral issue.

David Kinsley's *Ecology and Religion: Ecological Spirituality in a Cross-Cultural Perspective* (1995) examines the religious dimension of the environment in connection with contemporary environmentalism.[47] Kinsley adopts a holistic view of life. Kinsley's ecological spirituality refers to the interconnectedness of biological lives and processes. Humans are an inevitable part of this natural system; they are only part of it, not master of it. The author reiterates humanity's complete dependency on all other living forms. Referring to Hinduism, he argues that such a realization requires deep contemplation using religion as a guide; otherwise, it is difficult to have such a sense of belongingness. Knut Jacobsen, however, criticizes Kinsley for not focusing on the contribution of religions to the environmental problem.[48] In Jacobsen's view, *Ecology and Religion* overlooks

45 Harold Coward, *Population, Consumption, and the Environment: Religious and Secular Responses* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1995).

46 Iain Wallace, review of *Population, Consumption, and the Environment: Religious and Secular Responses*, ed. Harold Coward, *Canadian Geographer* 40, no. 4 (Winter 1996): 389.

47 David Kinsley, *Ecology and Religion: Ecological Spirituality in a Cross-Cultural Perspective* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1995).

48 Knut A. Jacobsen, review of David Kinsley, *Ecology and Religion: Ecological Spirituality*

religious views of human supremacy over nonhuman creatures. However, Kinsley's work illuminates some human spiritual attitudes toward the nonhuman world in a way that can work for reforming the current human perception in favour of ecological sustainability.

Roger S. Gottlieb's *This Sacred Earth: Religion, Nature, Environment* (2004) points out the complex relationship between religion and the environment. Gottlieb examines the variety of spiritual responses from traditional world religions such as Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism to new forms of ecology-based spiritual movements—for example, deep ecology and ecofeminism. Gottlieb emphasizes a common platform shared by religionists and secular humanists for working together on a very common concern.[49] He sees "caring for nature" in religious moral teachings. His work is thought-provoking and ecumenical in the field of religion and ecology.

Environmental Ethics: Intercultural Perspectives (2009), edited by Ip King-Tak, gives an account of environmental ethics from different religious and cultural perspectives.[50] The volume comprises a collection of papers presented at a conference on "Environmental Ethics: An Interreligious Dialogue" held at Hong Kong Baptist University in 2005. In nine chapters the book deals with environmental ethics from Christian, Islamic, Buddhist, and Daoist perspectives as well as from a philosophical point of view. Robert Elliot discusses deontological theories to promote the intrinsic value of nature, arguing that a sense of profound dutifulness to the nonhuman can reduce human destructive attitudes toward nature. Gerhold Becker's primary focus is the ethics of respect for nature because nature has a moral status to be respected by humans. Ingmar Persson connects environmental ethics with consequentialist and aesthetical approaches. Y.S. Lo talks about non-egocentric and non-anthropocentric values and virtues in order to tighten environmental ethics. Relating biogeochemistry with Christian environmental ethics, Michael Northcott proposes respect for God and his creation as the foundation of environmental ethics. From an Islamic

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in Cross-Cultural Perspective, Journal of the American Academy of Religion 64, no. 4 (Winter 1996): 907-909.

49 Roger S. Gottlieb, *This Sacred Earth: Religion, Nature and Environment* (New York: Routledge, 2004).

50 Ip King-Tak, *Environmental Ethics: Intercultural Perspective* (Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi, 2009): 9.

point of view, Anis Ahmad emphasizes a balanced and simple lifestyle as an essential condition for a sustainable environment. Having focused on the cleanliness of the human mind, Pragati Sahni advocates a more progressive shape for Buddhist environmental ethics. Referring to the naturalness of Daoism, Jonathan Chan connects the Daoist humanity-nature relationship with environmental ethics. In his editorial note, Ip explores the present environmental problem as a burning issue on whose solution the survival of humankind is completely dependent.

In an article for the *International Journal of Buddhist Thought and Culture* entitled "Interreligious Dialogue toward Overcoming the Eco-crisis," Choi Hyun Min supports Hans Küng's Global Ethic project to address environmental problems through interfaith dialogue. In line with Hermann Dembowski and J.B. Callicott, Choi sees the present ecological issue as a crisis of perception about the environment;[51] thus he emphasizes reforming these perceptions. After a brief survey of Lynn White's analysis of the Judeo-Christian position, J. A. Passmore's Greco-Christian tradition as the root of ecological crisis, and M. Northcott's identification of the agricultural revolution, market-based economic systems, and modern science and technology as contributing causes to environmental degradation, Choi locates the cause of the problem in anthropocentrism and the humanity-nature dualism. As human perception plays a pivotal role in the ecological crisis, there is an urgent need to change the present perception about nature. Choi examines the ecocentric view of nature in Aldo Leopold's land ethics and Arne Naess's deep ecology. He also criticizes ecocentric ethics for assessing the human position merely as an element of the environment and preferring a metaphysical ground to an ethical understanding to complement self-realization with intimacy with nature. However, he relates an ecocentric understanding with the Buddhist notion of no-self and Buddha-nature. Identifying some deficiencies in the Buddhist position for environmental ethics, Choi supports Bryan Norton's weak anthropocentrism, arguing that it will not be an obstacle to build a harmonious relationship with nature. Referring to Christian stewardship ethics as a responsibility that goes with being human, and the image of God as a public personality, Choi associates humans with the God-earth

51 Choi Hyun Min, "Interreligious Dialogue toward Overcoming the Eco-crisis," *International Journal of Buddhist Thought and Culture* 12 (February 2009): 160.

relationship. Choi's analysis promotes dialogue between Buddhism and Christianity.

An article by Elyse Rider, "Intercultural Eco-theology: Integral Vision of Healing" supports multireligious and multicultural dialogues on the ecological crisis.[52] Referring to Tucker, Rider notes that no single religious or cultural tradition is sufficient to present a comprehensive global environmental ethics.[53] So, Rider argues that it would be unwise to work in isolation. It is timely and urgent to continue cooperation among academic scholars, religious leaders, community leaders, practitioners of different cultures, public agencies, members of civil societies, and so forth, in order to reduce the current environmental degradation. Noting Callicott's argument, Rider suggests that a dialogue can foster a more practical knowledge among participants to address the issue being faced by the whole world. Diversity in religions and cultures should be accepted first as a central feature of ecotheological discussions for proceeding further to environmental ethics.

An Amman-based initiative led by the Royal Aal Al-Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought (RABIIT) conducted an interfaith dialogue among scholars of Islam and Christianity on the ecological crisis and published a booklet in 2011 entitled *Islam, Christianity and the Environment*, which explores the environmental problem from Islamic and Christian perspectives. This work is an outcome of the symposium on "Islam, Christianity and the Environment" held in September 2010 at the Baptism Site in Jordan. The symposium brought four scholars—two from Islam and other two from Christianity—to discuss how both religious traditions can contribute to the present discussions on environmental sustainability. Islamic scholar Ingrid Mattson emphasizes "the spiritual and ethical potential of Muslim people to respond to the environmental challenge."[54] As for controlling the present state of consumption, she suggests manufacturers should bear the cost of the environmental damage created by the way they produce and

52 Elyse Rider, "Intercultural Eco-theology: Integral Vision of Healing," *Australian eJournal of Theology* 15, no. 1 (2010): 11.

53 Rider, "Intercultural Eco-theology": 1.

54 Ingrid Mattson, "The Islamic View on Consumption & Material Development in Light of Environmental Pollution," in *Islam, Christianity and the Environment* (Amman: Royal Aal Al-Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought, 2011), 17.

dispose of their goods.[55] Referring to some Quranic verses, another Islamic scholar, Murad Wilfried Hofman, focuses on the human relationship with animals.[56] Christian scholar Martin Arneth identifies the role of humans on earth as a shepherd over God's creatures.[57] Connecting God's creatures with salvation history, another Christian scholar, Dietmar Mieth, suggests adopting a self-limiting strategy both at the individual and the social level in order to promote respect for all forms of life.[58] Mieth relates the biblical creation story to the dynamic metaphysics of process theology to highlight the interconnectedness among God, humanity, and nature. In Mieth's view, "a creative self-realization of the human being" is essential for adopting as an environmentally friendly stance.[59] Noting the joint statement of the Uppsala Interfaith Climate Manifesto 2008 in the appendix, the RABIIT booklet considers climate change as a spiritual question, and so calls for a collective effort of religious communities to protect the environment.

In his recent work "Ecological Theology as Public Theology: A Chinese Perspective," Lai considers ecological theology as public theology. He argues that ecological issues are public issues and are also covered by those theologians who have already dealt with some other public issues.[60] Agreeing with White's criticism to some extent, Lai also sees Christianity as a part of the historical root of ecological crisis.[61] That is why he suggests adopting an apologetic approach to clarify some misunderstandings.[62] Similarly, he invites us to consider a secular approach to ecotheological

55 Mattson, "The Islamic," 12.

56 Murad Wilfried Hofman, "The Protection of Animals in Islam," in *Islam, Christianity and the Environment* (Amman: Royal Aal Al-Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought, 2011), 19-24.

57 Martin Arneth, "Basic Demands Established in the Christian Bible to Assume Responsibility for the World," in *Islam, Christianity and the Environment* (Amman: Royal Aal Al-Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought, 2011), 25-38.

58 Dietmar Mieth, "Christian Conceptions of Creation, Environmental Ethics, and the Ecological Challenge Today," in *Islam, Christianity and the Environment* (Amman: Royal Aal Al-Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought, 2011), 39-86.

59 Mieth, "Christian," 82.

60 Lai Pan-Chiu, "Ecological Theology as Public Theology: A Chinese Perspective," *International Journal of Public Theology* 11 (2017): 478.

61 Lai, "Ecological": 488.

62 Lai, "Ecological": 488.

discourse.[63] Lai has been involved in the study of interfaith dialogue on ecological concerns for more than two decades. He is, therefore, quite familiar with different methodological approaches: exploratory, reflective, correlational, dialogical or integrating, pluralistic, and contextual approaches.[64] He appreciates the contextual approach and criticizes the monistic or universal approach to environmental ethics. Lai suggests integrating Christian ecotheology with Confucian moral teachings on nature.[65] He prefers to adopt the reconciliation method in dealing with environmental ethics based on interfaith dialogue and promotes a more cosmic and inclusive understanding of salvation. Like Tillich, Moltmann, and Cobb, Lai reinterprets the biblical creation story in an inclusive way and includes all creatures in the cosmic salvation process. Thus, he advocates the transformation of God's love of nature into humanity's love of nature. His approach to ecological ethics is well recognized and highly appreciated by other scholars. For instance, Sun Xiangchen, in his article "A New Approach to Ecological Theology in the Frame of Confucian-Christian Dialogue: On Confucian-Christian Dialogue and Ecological Concern," describes Lai's methodological approach "as an innovative contribution" to the discourse of ecotheological ethics.[66]

Conclusion: The Necessity of Cooperation

The preceding survey shows that religions are deeply involved in environmental issues. As the environmental problem is so vast, it is wise to see how religious moral teachings and faith communities can cooperate with others to address it. We see such approach in the work of Hope and Jones. Through their case studies, they have shown how religions can promote environmentally conscious living. They have shown that every religion has its own specific ethical foundation through which it is possible to develop inner consciousness about human responsibility in the world. All

63 Lai, "Ecological": 488.

64 Lai, "Ecological": 492-494.

65 Lai, "Ecological": 495.

66 Xiangchen Sun, "A New Approach to Ecological Theology in the Frame of Confucian-Christian Dialogue: On Confucian-Christian Dialogue and Ecological Concern," *Ching Feng (New Series)* 10, nos.1-2 (2010-2011): 179-188.

religions call for protection of the environment. Even the moral teachings of ancient religions, local faith traditions, and traditional wisdom can affect human attitudes in favor of ecological equilibrium. Religion may not have the power directly to enforce its moral teachings in society, but it can influence the human mind to act appropriately.

Faith leaders and communities, therefore, should be included in any national and international bodies concerned with ecological issues. In this regard, the work of Tucker and Grim deserves special mention. They show how religions are involved in the worldwide ecological movements initiated by the United Nations and other international bodies. In their view, radical change in public policy and individual behavior is needed since religions have a crucial role to play. They have shown that religious teachings can influence personal behavior to change a society. No one can deny that the world religions can play and are playing a positive role in inculcating a sympathetic attitude to the natural world.

As the environmental crisis poses a challenge to religion, faith communities are responding to this challenge by articulating the religious foundations of environmental ethics. Admittedly, the contributions of religion to address the ecological crisis may not be sufficient in proportion to the seriousness of the crisis. Religions alone cannot provide all the solutions; nonreligious or secular institutions alone cannot solve these problems. Collaboration and combined efforts are needed. Without a concerted response, we cannot properly address the current unprecedented ecological crisis.

About author

Md. Abu SAYEM is a PhD candidate in Religious Studies at the Chinese University of Hong Kong; Ernst Mach-Fellow (as a Visiting PhD Student) in Religious Studies at the University of Vienna; and Faculty Member of World Religions & Culture Department at the University of Dhaka.

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Book Reviews

The Spirit over the Earth: Pneumatology in the Majority World, ed. Gene L. Green, Stephen T. Pardue, and K. K. Yeo, vol. 4, Majority World Theology, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016, vi + 195 pp., $22.00, ISBN 978-0-8028-7273-9, paperback.

To attempt to summarize an anthology covering more than two-thirds of the world inhabited by peoples from different social locations with vastly differing religious worldviews will not do justice to this volume. What I will do is highlight some salient features of each essay and a few recurring motifs.

The first essay, by Amos Yong, provides a wide-ranging discussion of contemporary pneumatologies drawing from both ancient (particularly the early Eastern and Syriac pneumatologies) and modern movements, especially the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements. Yong shows how the Third Article of the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed could be read in light of contemporary global concerns. His essay serves as an appropriate introduction to the subsequent ones.

Ivan Satyavrata's essay seeks to address a major problem whereby the Christian conception of the Holy Spirit as person conflicts with the advaitic (non-dualistic) view of reality. He rightly questions the works of some Catholic theologians such as Jules Monchanin, Swami Abhishiktananda (Henri Le Saux), and Raimundo Panikkar, who tend to identify the Holy Spirit with advaitic philosophy (45), which results in pneumatomonism: spirit becomes everything (50). The basic failure of these theologians is divorcing the Spirit from the Son. Apart from the Son, the Spirit becomes nebulous (52-53). In contrast to the nondualistic worldview, Satyavrata finds the bhakti tradition more promising, since it makes the distinction between the deity worshipped and the worshipper: a "duality" absent in advaita Hinduism. This was the approach of A. J. Appasamy (42). Its supreme expression is found in the *Bhagavadgita*, which was preparatory for Sundar Singh's reception of the gospel (54-55). The "living inward Christ" found in bhakti religion is fulfilled in the historical Jesus of Nazareth (56).

In the Majority World, personal relations are at the center of the theological agenda. Zakali Shohe's essay, "Redefining Relationships," based on a study of Romans 8:14-17, shows how the Spirit forges relationship between disparate groups. On this premise, Shohe addresses the context in northeast India, where factionalism and tribalism continues to divide the Christian state of Nagaland.

Wei Hua's "Pauline Pneumatology and the Chinese Rites" argues that while Paul's doctrine of the Spirit deconstructs Jewish laws as far as salvation in Christ is concerned, it does not deconstruct Jewish ethnic identity. Just as "law" for Jewish Christians acquires a new significance as fulfilled in Christ and epitomized in love, the same can be said of Chinese rites for Chinese Christians. If the transforming work of the Spirit redefines a people's social, cultural, ethnic, and religious identities, would it not help Christians to view ancestral veneration in a different light from the way it used to be understood before they became Christians (91-93)? Confucian rites would have the same function as the law has for Jewish Christians. For those unfamiliar with the Chinese situation, it should be added that Hua is addressing the issue of Confucian *ancestral* rites, not Chinese *religious* rites as seen in popular Taoism. But this implied distinction is itself a problem: In "shenism"—a term used by sociologists to describe popular "Chinese religion" in which Confucian, Buddhist, and Taoist beliefs and practices are so syncretized as to become virtually inseparable—it is almost impossible to distinguish ancestral veneration from worship of the gods (*shen*). This is the conundrum that confronts most diaspora Chinese Christians, which Hua does not address. Hua's approach may be compared to that of the seventeenth-century Jesuits whose view of ancestral rites was largely dependent on the Chinese intelligentsia, whose understanding differed considerably from the "Confucianism" practiced by the common people. Modern interpreters of the Rites Controversy have tended to side with the Jesuits against the Dominicans. But this is failing to take into consideration the views at the grassroots level with which the Dominicans were familiar.

David Tonghou Ngong's essay, "Who is the Holy Spirit in Contemporary African Christianity?," is, in my estimation, one of the richest in the collection. His sympathetic account of Kimpa Vita, a late seventeenth-century female Catholic "charismatic," is intriguing. Vita claimed to be possessed by the spirit of St. Anthony of Padua, a thirteenth-century

Doctor of the Church known for his fervent evangelical preaching and miracles. Ngong's interpretation is that since the spirit of a saint "participates in the divine Spirit," the spirit of St. Anthony could be seen "as shorthand for the Holy Spirit" (131). Its possession of Vita led her to saintly actions. I suspect that a modern Catholic would more likely see it as a contextualized expression of the communion of saints. To the credit of Ngong (contra much Western evangelical thinking), the "democratization of charisma" does not abrogate clergy-laity distinction (133). Ngong highlights a number of distinctively African features, such as the prophet as essentially a seer "akin to African traditional seers or medicine men and women" (134); a common misperception that the presence of the Spirit ipso facto excludes traditional religions, which "are often seen as avenues for demonic blockages" (134); the healing ministry "mediated through holy people...holy places, and holy things" (134). Here is an *implicit* sacramental worldview highlighted by Harold Turner and others. But Ngong also notes the lack of a sacramental *theology* to make sense of the Spirit working through holy objects and things (135). Ngong's three concluding proposals are worth noting: the need to relate the "spiritual" and scientific worldviews, which implies a pneumatology that recognizes the Spirit's working in ordinary as well as extraordinary ways (138); the need to address interreligious conflicts between fundamentalist Christians and Muslims and between Christians of different persuasions; and the need to give more attention to the person of the Spirit. Ngong complains that much of African pneumatology is functional, but believes that the Augustinian conception of the Spirit of the eschaton and as the bond of love is one way to overcome the pneumatological deficits in Africa.

Oscar García-Johnson's essay, "In Search of Indigenous Pneumatologies in the Americas," also makes for another fascinating read, as the subject is less frequently discussed in the Americas compared to Africa and Asia. For example, William Dryness's case studies of indigenous religions (*The Insider Jesus: Theological Reflections on New Christian Movements*, IVP, 2016) devotes considerably more space to Africa and Asia than to Latin America. García-Johnson has helped us understand why: indigenous religions in the Americas have suffered far more damage from colonialism compared to Asia and Africa. They were effectively reduced to myths and not regarded as religions proper. He rigorously critiques the way indigenous religions were interpreted from a eurocentric perspective. He notes that indigenous religious beliefs are conveyed through "images on paper, stones, and

pottery, hieroglyphics, temples and pyramids," but these don't count as records of their religion and are even destroyed (150). He draws attention to indigenous religions that reveal traces of the Spirit of God working outside the strictures imposed by the dominant Western tradition: the concept of the Supreme Being with characteristics similar to the God of the Bible; the implicit "theology" of folk Catholicism, which shows certain continuities with indigenous religion; a kind of *sensus fidelium* that shapes pentecostal theology; and so forth.

The final essay by C. René Padilla, "The Holy Spirit: Power for Life and Hope," offers a typical evangelical understanding but takes cognizance of the predominance of pentecostal influence. It focuses on the work of the Spirit in creation and history, Jesus's mission, and the life and mission of the church (167). The main contextual emphasis is that in the midst of poverty and oppression, the experience of the Spirit gives hope to the hopeless.

Despite the diverse contextual issues addressed in this volume, there are recurring motifs. One is the transformative and healing work of the Spirit (Shohe, Hua, and Ngong). In strife-riven Nagaland, the Spirit is bringing reconciliation across tribal boundaries (Shohe). In the Chinese context, where rites take pride of place, the Spirit is the transforming agent of traditional rites (Hua); in situations of interreligious conflict in Africa, the Spirit is the source of reconciliation and healing (Ngong). Another is the role that indigenous cultures and religions play in shaping Christian theology in the Majority World. Gone are the days when contextual theologies are done almost exclusively in relation to the socioeconomic and political contexts, as seen, for example, in Asian and Latin American liberation theologies. The contributions of ethnographers and anthropologists are increasingly recognized, as seen in the essays by Ngong and García-Johnson.

My only complaint is that the size of the book does not quite do justice to the subject matter or the sheer diversity in the Majority World. Several themes surfaced in Yong's essay deserve separate treatment. Just to mention one: each part of the doctrine of the Spirit in the Nicene Creed (25) has important ramifications in the Majority World. There is also a general lack of interaction with older Christian traditions. Still, the book has certainly widened the reader's pneumatological perspective.

Simon CHAN (schan@ttc.edu.sg)
Editor Asia Journal of Theology, Trinity Theological College, Singapore

The Philokalia: *A Classic Text of Orthodox Spirituality*, ed. Brock Bingaman and Bradley Nassif, foreword by Kallistos Ware, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012, xvi + 349 pp., ISBN: 978-0-19-539026-1—ISBN 978-0-19-539027-8, $125.00 (hardcover), $42.95 (paperback), $31.91 (Kindle).

The term *philokalia* means "love of the beautiful." The corpus is a five-volume collection of ascetical writings assembled in the eighteenth century by Sts. Nikodimos of the Holy Mountain (Athos) and Makarios of Corinth. It includes thirty-six authors from the fourth to the fifteenth centuries. Four volumes have appeared in English with a fifth, already translated by Metropolitan Kallistos Ware, in the final stages of revision. *The* Philokalia: *A Classic Text* is a groundbreaking collection of scholarly and introductory essays to the history, theology, and practices of this classic collection of Orthodox spiritual writings.

A stellar cast of international scholars from Orthodox, Catholic, and Protestant backgrounds have contributed on important themes. The book has eighteen chapters and is divided into three parts: historical, theological foundations, and spiritual practices. The historical part has chapters that deal with St. Nikodimos, the manuscript tradition of the monks, the influence of the *Philokalia*, and the Romanian edition. Part Two includes chapters on Scripture in the *Philokalia*, the subject of justification, "The Gospel According to St. Mark—the Monk," the theology of *Philokalia*, tradition and creativity in reading, theological anthropology, and ecclesiology. The third part, on spiritual practices, deals with the theme of the Jesus Prayer, the use and abuse of spiritual authority, human passions, healing and psychotherapy, virtue epistemology, women, solitude, silence and stillness. Authors include Kallistos Ware ("St. Nikodemos and the *Philokalia*"), Andrew Louth ("The Influence of the *Philokalia* in the Orthodox World"), John McGuckin ("The Making of the *Philokalia*: The Tale of Monks and Manuscripts"), Rowan Williams ("The Theological World of the *Philokalia*"), Mihail Neamtu ("Fr. Dimitru Staniloae and the Romanian Edition of the *Philokalia*), Julia Konstantinovksy ("Evagrius in the Philokalia of Sts. Macarius and Nikodemus"), and further interesting titles by Paul Blowers, Verna Harrison, John Chryssavgis, and others.

Gospel-centered spirituality is embodied in this commentary on the *Philokalia*. "The gospel of grace is the governing hermeneutic of the Christian life and, indeed, the entire collection of writing contained in the Philokalia" (4). Chapter 6 by Bradley Nassif—"Concerning Those Who Imagine That They Are Justified by Works: The Gospel According to St. Mark—the Monk"— pointedly reclaims the centrality of the gospel in the *Philokalia*. This particular chapter provides an interpretation of a particular writing of St. Mark in the *Philokalia*. The author provides the context of the monk's writing, which opposes the Syrian Messalianism (the Pelagianism of the East), the title, literary style, and structure. While Pelagianism appeals to the human will, Messalianism favors ascetic practices as a means toward salvation. Nassif argues that this text should be interpreted according to the anti-Messalian intent of the writing (100). He also summarizes the proposal of Mark the Monk as "spiritual labors can benefit one's life only by God's grace" (97). Nassif interprets and summarizes the gospel-centeredness of St. Mark's treatise as follows: "First, good works are a response of gratitude rooted in 'the spiritual law' or 'the law of freedom'; second, grace is secretly hidden in the heart of the baptized but requires keeping the commandments in order for that grace to be consciously revealed in the heart of the believer; third, ascetical labors are the duties of sonship and faithful service to Christ" (98). This has a practical implication for modern ecumenism through bringing the Christian family together with the common theological theme of grace.

The aim of this book is to enable readers read the text of the *Philokalia* with deeper understanding. Thus, the book provides historical insights, theological framework, and perspectives on healthy spiritual practices. The systematized doctrinal framework and hermeneutical suggestions provide tools on how to read, interpret, and practice the age-old spiritual wisdom of the *Philokalia*. Since the collection of the *Philokalia* is for all Christians, not simply for the monks and the Orthodox alone, the reflections in this work follow the same pattern—all-inclusive and ecumenical. The scope of this book is not intended to be comprehensive but rather to address the scholarly lacunae on the studies of the *philokalia* and thereby to initiate further studies (4). Since *The* Philokalia*: A Classic Text* is not exhaustive, it would be desirable to envision another volume with further critical essays. Thus, this book should be welcomed as a pioneering work that invites

further investigation both for spiritual enrichment and academic research, without separating the two. The contributors recommend areas that need further scholarly investigation. These include reflection on the *Philokalia* as theological *ressourcement* that encompasses both heart and mind as well as devotion and rigorous reflection, and the reception of the *Philokalia* outside the monastery. Particular suggestions are offered on St. Paisy's manuscripts at Neamt and elsewhere in Romania. A number of contributors raised the need for developing a hermeneutical approach on how to read the *Philokalia*. Perhaps further investigations are needed on the Jesus Prayer to sort out differences that exist among the writers of the *Philokalia*, despite their apparent unity and the writers' view of the theological implications of the mystical experience (200–201). The adoption of prayer beads among Christians, particularly in the East, also requires further study (31).

The Philokalia*: A Classic Text* gives special attention to the original editors who collected the *Philokalia*, particularly to St. Nikodimos (chapter 1), as well as to prominent patristic figures whose works are included in the *Philokalia*, such as St. Maximus the Confessor (chapters 9 and 16), St. Mark the Monk (chapter 6), and Evagrius (chapter 11). The book gives due attention to the "Evagrian-Maximian" spiritual orientation present throughout the entire *Philokalia* tradition. The dominant theological and spiritual themes mirror trinitarian and christological groundings. *Philokalia's* theological anthropology embraces the body, soul, mind (102–121), Scripture, prayer of the heart/ prayer without ceasing/the Jesus prayer, *hesychia*, passion and dispassion, psychotherapy and women—these are all relevant themes for modern readers, particularly theology students and professors. Chapter 15, on "Healing, Psychotherapy, and the *Philokalia*" by Christopher C. H. Cook is stimulating further interdisciplinary research on the practical and therapeutic implications of philokalic spirituality and mental health for the Christian professional counseling ministry. The *Philokalia* fosters a theocentric or christocentric view of healing and spiritual well-being as a fundamental perspective for Christian psychotherapy, as well as the wisdom of the "praying cure" that is not available in secular "talking cure" psychotherapy (237–238). Researchers who are interested in the interdisciplinary approach that combines theology, spirituality, and neurosciences may profit enormously by exploring different perspectives, including theological anthropology and hope for transfiguration.

Kallistos Ware describes the recovery of the *Philokalia* as a spiritual "time bomb" (34). Indeed, the *Philokalia* is "a *ressourcement*: a going back to the golden era of the great spiritual fathers" (45). The idea of *ressourcement* is relevant for seekers of deeper spirituality that is also rooted in Christian tradition. Also, as a historical, theological, and practical commentary on the texts of *Philokalia*, this work offers fresh perspectives on prayer and spirituality. Such *ressourcement* is relevant for the post-Enlightenment and post-Christian West, where spirituality and theology have been fragmented. For contemporary world Christianity, where Christians are growing numerically, this anthology may drive readers to the original texts, which encourage gospel-centered spiritual practices and lead them toward the love of and meditation on divine beauty!

The Philokalia*: A Classic Text* is available in hardcover, paperback, and kindle editions. Besides being the best guide for those who are interested in reading the *Philokalia* itself, it is also an indispensable textbook for advanced and graduate courses as well as a treasure for theologians and interdisciplinary researchers and scholars and theological libraries. Every chapter includes endnotes with important bibliographic information, but only selected chapters include separate bibliographic suggestions. There are few typographical errors. Besides the endnotes, the name and subject indices provide helpful tools for further research. Since there are several references to Scripture, a Scripture index would have been helpful. *The* Philokalia*: A Classic Text* is a truly pioneering and scholarly work that invites further reflection on the practices of love, of what is beautiful, which in turn transfigures inner spirituality and the cosmos.

Tekletsadik BELACHEW (teklebelachew@gmail.com)
PhD candidate in Patristics at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, MO., USA and researcher at the Capuchin Franciscan Research and Retreat Centre in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

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