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Purpose: The *InSights Journal for Global Theological Education* provides a forum for scholars and practitioners to address issues broadly related to theological education. We are particularly interested in engaging non-Western voices in the global conversation. The Journal's audience includes faculty, administrators, resource and funding agencies, accrediting bodies, and other researchers in the field of theological education.

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Format: The *InSights Journal* is published semiannually online. Articles focus on matters related to the theory and practice of theological education, including but not limited to teaching, curriculum design, educational models, sustainability, administrative and organizational issues, and theological and societal engagement.

Each issue features four to five articles, editorial essays, and book reviews. The *Journal* is published digitally, with all articles available for download in .pdf format. In addition, the website provides space for conversations and resources pertinent to global theological education.

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2. Authors should follow the Chicago Manual of Style, 16th Edition, using one-inch margins, left justification, and in-text citations. Convert all footnote citations to parenthetical citations.
3. Write in the third person whenever possible.
4. Where appropriate, utilize headings to organize text, following the style dictated by the Chicago Manual of Style.
5. When quoting Scripture, include the Bible translation with each reference.
6. Include a one-paragraph abstract (100 words max.) at the beginning of the article.
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4. Direct quotations from the book should include only page numbers in parentheses. Do not include "p./pp." or the author's name.
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On the Shoulders of Giants: Traditioned Innovation and Leading Change

EVAN HUNTER

EDITOR, INSIGHTS JOURNAL

Leaders of theological schools in the Majority World stand on a rich heritage. The growth of theological education has followed the growth of the church, albeit more slowly. In most places, schools have benefitted from the investment of missionaries and the legacy of Western higher education. However, current contextual realities, as well as the educational and economic pressures facing schools today, require a new vision and courageous leadership to bring about necessary change.

The executive leader embraces the challenge to look to the horizon and chart a course toward the new destination. In doing so, she or he must often navigate the tension between the accepted historical approach and innovative ideas. Theological institutions, particularly those in the Majority World, feel these tensions acutely. They recognize that inherited models will not serve them well as they meet new challenges, but at the same time they strive for excellence and recognition within the Western systems.

Traditioned Innovation

In describing the tension faced by church leaders, L. Gregory Jones, then Dean at Duke Divinity School, now Provost at Baylor University, coined the phrase “traditioned innovation” to describe the call and responsibility Christian leaders have to both preserve tradition and lead change. Jones (2009) writes:

We are the carriers of that which has gone before us so we can bear witness faithfully to the future.... The task of transformative leadership is not simply to “lead change.” Transformative leaders know what to preserve as well as what to change. We need to conserve wisdom even as we explore risk-taking mission and service. Too much change creates chaos. Transformative change, rooted in tradition and the preservation of wisdom, cultivates the adaptive work that is crucial to the ongoing vitality and growth of any organism, Christian institutions included.

Traditioned innovation describes a helpful approach for theological schools, as it enables them to build on what has gone before while also enacting necessary changes that address the current set of contextual, educational, and economic realities. Many schools have inherited systems, structures, and even mission statements that are no longer adequate in the midst of a changing world. Through traditioned innovation, leaders can acknowledge that the past has brought them thus far but plot a new course of action that will serve the church within their contexts today.

Articulating a New Mission

Often established through missionary endeavors, many theological schools in the Majority World trace their roots to the need to train pastors for newly planted churches. That need continues as the church grows numerically and seeks to deepen in its understanding of God's word and its impact on contemporary society. However, theological schools in much of the world have seen shifts in student profiles and aspirations. Not all students intend to serve as pastors of local congregations. Graduates seek broader roles in vocational ministry such as teachers, counselors, or relief and development workers in Christian NGOs. Through engaging their local contexts, schools have initiated both formal and non-formal programs for laity such as Christian professionals who seek greater biblical understanding but intend to continue in careers in areas such as law, business, or practicing a trade. Pastoral training remains an integral part of a theological school's mission, but it is no longer the totality.

Recently, the senior leader of an influential theological school in central Africa has recommended a change in their mission statement from an original purpose to form pastors for Francophone Africa to a new, broader vision to contribute to the advancement of God's Kingdom in Francophone Africa through teaching and training. As this mission statement is refined and ratified, it indicates a new course, built upon and inclusive of the original calling of the school, but one that the leader believes will enable the school to do more for the Church in their region.

As a second example, a school in the Middle East has a long history of training denominational pastors. However, as the urban center has grown, they have established programs to help develop church leaders for new churches, often outside of their theological tradition, as well as Christian professionals who want to engage informal workplace ministry. Their identity as a school that trains pastors for rural denominational churches has changed as the context has changed. Their mission has expanded to meet the needs of the Christian population in their urban setting.

At several theological schools, enrollment in programs designed for non-

vocational Christian leadership has eclipsed the number of students on an ordination track. Whether non-formal certificate training offered through churches and extension sites, accredited online leadership programs, or evening residential courses, most theological schools train Christians for an array of Christian service that includes but exceeds the role of formal pastors. Most often, a change in the mission of the school seeks to align the stated purpose with their enacted reality. In each case, leaders guide the school in the fulfillment of God's calling on the institution as it addresses the needs of the Church today.

Developing Relevant Programs

For most evangelical schools in the Majority World, the current curriculum is a direct derivative of Western models. In some cases, the courses and requirements have remained significantly more stagnant than the original models, which have undergone multiple revisions in their Western contexts. Imported theology and structures continue to come under critique. However, the ability to innovate and develop new programs has come slowly. In many cases, contextualization takes place at the individual course level, but it is not always implemented more systematically in curricular and program offering changes that meet the needs of students who seek to serve the church within their contexts.

If students who come to theological schools have new and different vocational aspirations, it follows that many schools need to revise their curricula and programs to meet these needs. Most theological students seek to be prepared to fulfill God's calling on their lives. While a Bachelor of Theology or a Master of Divinity degree may be the solution, few Christian leaders seek the degree specifically for the requisite hours of Bible courses, theology sequences, and the like. Rather, they want to be equipped for service in God's Kingdom. Consequently, some schools have begun curriculum revisions to meet these expressed needs.

For example, one school in the Philippines has undertaken a significant program revision to orient their curriculum around vocations instead of degrees. Rather than depict their degree offerings based on the academic requirements, they have chosen to describe the preparation they provide for ministry as pastors, counselors, teachers, and NGO leaders. They will still have accredited advanced degrees and meet the course requirements in each of these areas. But the program design begins with the vocational aspirations of the student. From there, they determine the appropriate mix of Bible, theology, practical, and other courses that are needed to equip students for their particular calling.

Another school in Latin America continues a tradition of an annual review of their bachelor program designed to train pastors. In developing their three-year curriculum, they begin by determining the biblical knowledge, theological

understanding, and ministry skills pastors need in this particular context. From there, they have developed a three-year sequence that will teach their students how to read and exegete the scriptures, how to interpret the societal needs of their context, and then how to engage in guided ministry as a way to integrate practical skills and theological understanding.

Theological curricula have developed out of a long tradition of the systematic study of the Scriptures and preparation of students for service in the church. However, as contexts, theological questions, societal needs, and student objectives have changed, schools must continue to adapt and change their curricula as well. Theological education needs leaders who can help guide schools out of the inertia of inherited systems and toward effective new programs rooted in the tradition of quality biblical training in service to the Church.

Rethinking Financial Resources

The inherited financial structures of theological institutions increasingly show their inadequacies for future sustainability. Operating costs for schools have increased as well-trained local leaders have replaced missionary faculty members. Infrastructure and technology upgrades, library resources, and online access all require ongoing funding. Tuition rarely, if ever, covers the true costs of an individual student (Smith 2015). Even in instances where institutional revenue exceeds expenses, faculty often remain undercompensated, facilities have fallen into disrepair due to neglected maintenance, and schools do not hold reserves to handle future challenges or provide funding for future growth. Financial viability, therefore, requires additional income sources beyond what the students can pay.

As a revenue source, tuition has come under increasing pressure. Many students in the Majority World struggle to meet even modest tuition payments and usually lack access to student loans as found in the West. In many instances, schools have responded to competition from other schools and readily available online material by further reducing tuition as a way to attract more students. Furthermore, as student profiles have shifted, so have the sources of tuition revenue. Churches that sponsored aspiring pastors for training do not provide support for students seeking formation in other vocations. While recognized as important for the context, higher academic degrees – including research doctorates – do not receive funding support from local congregations who do not see the direct benefit of supporting these women and men in their studies.

Scholarships have provided subsidized direct tuition costs, but they remain in short supply. Only a handful of agencies (such as Overseas Council International, Langham Partnership International, and ScholarLeaders International) provide direct support for higher degrees. Theological institutions raise additional

scholarship funds from other donors such as foundations and church partners. However, as the number of programs has increased, the number of scholarship sources has not kept pace. In doctoral education alone, the number of evangelical schools offering PhD programs increased tenfold from 2000 to 2015. In the three years from 2012 to 2015, enrollment in those programs increased by more than 50% (Hunter 2016). When added to the proliferation of master's degrees, bachelor's degrees, and pastoral training programs, finding additional sources for scholarship support will remain a daunting challenge.

Therefore, the financial resourcing for theological education requires further innovation, especially in the Majority World. Setting tuition levels to match the real cost of education would help both students and the church fully grasp the required investment of quality theological training. Recognizing that students cannot afford the true cost of their education, the institution can reduce the expense transferred to enrolled students by offering subsidies and scholarships to reach realistic payment levels. Setting tuition closer to the actual cost will therefore not necessarily increase the amount that students pay to the school, but it will help all stakeholders better appreciate the value theological education represents.

One key to innovation will be increasing funding from local sources. Inherited models draw on resources accessed through expatriate missionaries. In many cases, these donors remain critical funding sources and important for the development of further global partnerships. However, the reliance on overseas funding has contributed historically to underdeveloped cultures of philanthropy, especially with regard to theological education. Therefore, schools have a larger challenge in mobilizing local donors who will give to their mission.

However, instances of creativity and success exist. One school in India recently chose to expand their use of technology-enabled learning not just because of an increased economic efficiency but also because they believe it will generate more Indian-sourced income. A school in Nigeria has built upon their rich tradition of holding a theology conference for pastors by mobilizing alumni giving to construct a large building on campus. Another school in Argentina has encouraged wealthy ranchers to contribute livestock, the sale of which helps fund student scholarships. In each instance, the innovation represents contextual approaches to mobilizing local funding.

On the Shoulders of Giants

Theological schools in the Majority World need to make adjustments to their inherited models. By invoking Jones's notion of traditioned innovation, they do so with an acknowledgment that they have reached this point through the investments of others. To invoke the phrase popularized by Newton, leaders

can see new vistas and cast new vision for theological education because they stand on the shoulders of the giants who have gone before them. By definition, institutions preserve tradition. And many institutions desire continuity with their heritage and Western counterparts. However, leaders can also see a need for innovation in response to changing context. From this vantage point, leaders can see new opportunities that will lead to greater effectiveness and sustainability in their call to serve the Church.

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Becoming More Truly Christ's Followers and More Truly South Asian

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“Tell me to what you pay attention and I will tell you who you are”
— Jose Ortega y Gasset

A welter of challenges faces the church in South Asia. Some are daunting, but each is an opportunity the Christian community can engage and use. The key challenge concerns *identity*.

Over the last decade, South Asia Institute of Advanced Christian Studies (SAIACS), an evangelical mission-centered institute of theological studies in Bangalore, India, has every three years or so sought to discern the opportunities and threats in its sub-continental circumstances. These stakeholder consultations and faculty brainstorms have formed the prelude to the team setting its objectives.

Most recently, in September 2016, we brainstormed for two days about contemporary challenges facing SAIACS. My summary listed forty-one, including poverty, corruption, nominalism, the prosperity gospel, lack of cultural fit, and Hindutva religious fundamentalism. When we met again in April this year, we felt that recent political events had significantly raised the likelihood of persecution, and we adjusted our strategic plan accordingly. What could be seen from our list was that they came down to two main challenges: the church needed to live up to its calling, and the church needed a greater ability to contextualize the gospel without losing Christ.

In our strategic plan, we began to talk about how we needed to form students who were *“more truly Christian and more truly Indian.”* However, some colleagues pointed out several problems with this phrasing. SAIACS is a South Asian institution not just an Indian one. Furthermore, some of our constituency in Northeast India, where a secessionist insurgency has existed for several decades, don't feel Indian and would hardly resonate with the idea of “being truly

Indian.” With the first adjective, some pointed out that while some are coming to Christ, they remain within their cultural setting and don’t identify themselves as “Christian.” They perhaps see the traditions, political structure, and buildings of Christendom as colonial and oppressive, but they’re happy to be called Yesubaktha—devotees of Jesus. Many non-Christians in India count Christians as culturally alien, as those who have sold out on their nation. These various groups don’t resonate with the idea of “being truly Christian.” In view of these possible misunderstandings, for our strategic plan we have settled on the phrase, “***more truly Christ’s followers and more truly South Asian.***” It more closely captures what we are trying to do as an institution in forming students and guiding the church.

The key strategic goals in our strategic plan related to this phrase are:

1. Form leaders for the South Asian evangelical church, helping them become *more truly Christ’s followers and more truly South Asian.*
2. Guide the South Asian church, theologically and prophetically, towards confident South Asian Christian identity and humble missional engagement, addressing areas of minority complex, corruption, religious nationalism, and contextualization—and equipping the church for its ministry among Muslims and in emerging church growth.
3. Develop the faculty to be and form leaders to guide the church to be *more truly Christ’s followers and more truly South Asian.*

The following will unpack what we mean by this phrase and then give some examples of what it means in the life of our institution, SAIACS.

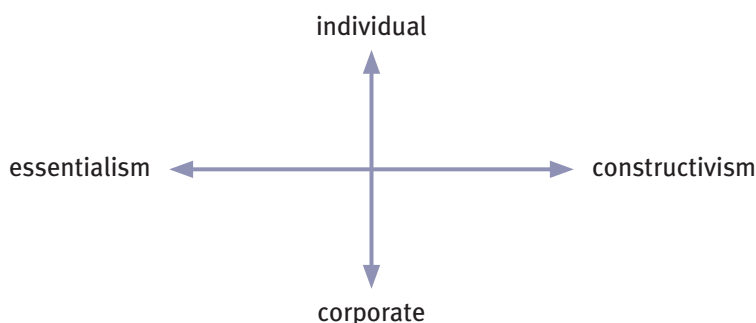
What does it mean?

“More truly Christ’s followers and more truly South Asian.” It is immediately clear from the words “more truly” that we are talking about an ideal. Unfortunately, as with all Christ’s followers everywhere, the reality is that all too often his followers in South Asia have let Jesus down and that they strike compatriots as culturally strange. The central issue is *identity*. We mean an identity that is shaped by Christ and by the culture of the region. Sounds easy, for there is so much that is positive in the region’s culture and history. But it is not as easy as it sounds. What happens when there is conflict? What does it mean to be true?

In this article, I will briefly describe some of the tensions regarding identity globally and in South Asia and explore a missiological view of Christian identity formation and culture. Then we will be in a position to articulate the implications

of being more truly Christ's followers and more truly South Asian at SAIACS.

Cultural roots of identity



There is much argument over how identity is formed and over its pliability and usefulness. Am I who I am because of what I am? Or am I who I am because of my aspirations and behavior? Am I who I am because of some essence? Or can I construct myself into some new identity? Is identity something to be simply accepted or does it empower change? Identity politics, for instance, seek to focus on a marginalized identity in order to provoke change.

Whether we are dealing with personal identity or social identity, there is a spectrum of approaches between *essentialism* and *constructivism*. Essentialism says “national identity is something more or less objective which is to be discovered or represented,” whereas constructivism sees national identity as “being actively and continuously produced by various agents” (Kaneva 2011, 129f).¹ Does my South Asian identity come from growing up or living in a particular geographic region? Or is it something that is fundamentally shaped by culturally distinctive behaviors? Am I Indian because of how I look? Or where I was born? Or because I have distinctive religious activities, sing “Vande Mataram,”² and vote in Indian elections? Is being Myanmar determined by my chanting Buddhist verses?

Certainly, in India, these are not merely theoretical questions. Two or three states harbor secessionist dreams. From their perspective, history has been unkind, even “unjust.” The result is some feel they are “accidental” Indians. Is the identity of Northeast Indians determined by this past and by their geographical origin? Or is it determined by their future, by their aspirations? Another challenge faces all religious minorities in India. Politicians in power who are committed to Hindutva ideology want to define citizenship of India on the basis of the location of one’s

¹ Kaneva reviewed the approaches of 186 articles on nation branding and discerns this tension in viewpoints.

² India's national song.

spiritual “motherland.” If that is Mecca or Jerusalem, you are by definition non-Indian, or at least second class. There are alarming parallels between this ultimately fascist politics and Nazism. How I understand my identity is immensely important!

The truth seems to be found at neither extreme. If we overemphasize essence³ we can become overly dogmatic and exclusive; or we can end up trapped with no possibility of change or improvement. If we overemphasize what we socially construct, we can lose our cohesion; or we can falter in the face of impossible aspirations.

Being true to my nation or region is more than balancing loyalty to origin and destiny. Identity is also colored by the cultural emphasis on the relative importance given to the group and the individual. Here, the contrast between the West and South Asia is rather clear. Stereotypically, in the West being true to your identity means being true to one’s self; in South Asia, it means being true to one’s family or tribe. Guilt in the West overshadows shame in South Asia. One of the strengths of South Asia is the high value it places on respect for one’s family and region. It is however also one of its weaknesses. In India, shame means a pregnant unmarried daughter or a handicapped son or a young widow is hidden from view. Loyalty to family and region often gives rise to nepotism and regionalism. This solidarity with the group even extends back into history. I was fascinated to learn from tribal students in my theology class of their concern about the salvation of their unbelieving ancestors—could it not be that the faith of the generation that welcomed the arrival of the gospel also benefits their ancestors who had no opportunity to hear the gospel? Still a part of the corporate identity, the ancestors were surely no more sinful than we.

The stereotypes are not entirely true if we scratch below the surface. Charles Taylor’s insightful analysis of late modernity in the West argues that “we are only individuals in so far as we are social.... Being authentic, being faithful to ourselves, is being faithful to something which was produced in collaboration with a lot of other people” (Rorty 1993, 3).⁴ Similarly, South Asian social solidarity still expects

³ In the West, essentialism stems from Plato, while constructivism is more Aristotelian. Since the rise of post-modernism, essentialism has been suspected of covert hegemony (Fuchs 2009). Artificial intelligence is a frequent theme in recent films because it raises the question of identity. The more a robot looks like and behaves like a human, the more we feel it belongs and has human rights—but does it, if it is different in essence? With human identity, Karl Barth (1946) acknowledges there is a hidden essence that makes us a human (as opposed to a tortoise), but more importantly, humans act and stand in relationship with God (88). That is, what is revealed to us is relational not essential.

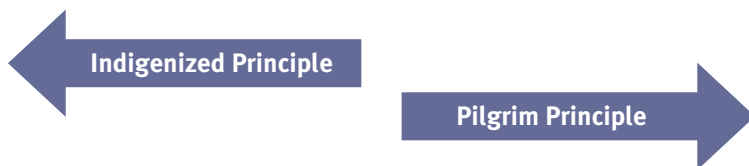
⁴ Rorty goes on to say, “The core of Taylor’s argument is a vigorous and entirely successful criticism of two intertwined bad ideas: that you are wonderful just because you are you, and that ‘respect for difference’ requires you to respect every human being, and every human culture—no matter how vicious or stupid.”

and respects individual action. For instance, in Tirunelveli Christian families a particular name is given to descendants to honor their first ancestor who converted to Christianity.

According to Taylor (1989), our identity depends on orientation within a framework. “My identity,” he says, “is defined by the commitments and identifications which provide the frame or horizon within which I can try to determine from case to case what is good, or valuable, or what ought to be done, or what I endorse or oppose. In other words, it is the horizon within which I am capable of taking a stand” (27). One of the tasks of education, then, is helping students learn and behave their way into lifelong commitments and identifications which orient them to what is good and valuable. But how do we discern what makes their framework Christian? How are the cultural roots of identity affected by the arrival of the gospel of Jesus Christ?

Christ and Identity

In his landmark 1982 essay, “The Gospel as Prisoner and Liberator of Culture,” missiologist Andrew Walls helpfully identifies two competing forces in the lives of people who have welcomed the gospel. This is a dialectic that comes from the gospel itself.



God takes people as they are, by grace. He doesn’t wait until they are good enough to save. They are accepted as they are, conditioned as they are in their particular culture, time, and place, including the various ways relatives and non-relatives are valued within their culture. This leads, he says, to “one unvarying feature in Christian history: the desire to ‘indigenize,’ to live as a Christian and also as a member of one’s society, to make the Church ... *A Place to Feel at Home*” (Walls 1996, 19f). Conversely, God takes people “in order to transform them into what He wants them to be.” This pilgrim principle “whispers to him that he has no abiding city and that warns him that to be faithful to Christ will put him out of step with his society” (21). There is no Christian culture, but Christ is Lord of all, and no culture is immune to his call to be transformed into his likeness.⁵

⁵ A quick biblical check in Galatians confirms these twin forces at work: Christian identity is God’s **gift** (the gospel is not earned, nor inherited [ch.1]; circumcision or non-circumcision don’t count [ch.2]; it is available by faith, and this relativizes all human categories [ch. 3]); and Christian identity is God’s **call** (we ought not live according to the flesh, we ought to walk like Christ by the Spirit [ch.5]).

The indigenizing principle affirms the particularity of any culture. The pilgrim principle affirms something more universal about the Church. The indigenizing principle reflects God's committedness to humans; the pilgrim principle reflects God's openness to them, his claim on their lives (for these categories, see Payne 2014). Every Christian thus has dual identity. In the vision of the vast crowd thronging the throne of the Lamb (Rev 7:9), our Christward ambitions are fulfilled, but our cultural particularity will remain. Strikingly, Walls (1992) shows how the Christian is given "an adoptive past" (21). The Christian is linked to the people of God in all generations; even the history of Israel and of Abraham becomes his/her own!

Christians from South Asian cultures will feel these twin forces at work. It means it is a Christian struggle and the fruit of the gospel that we be *truly Christ's followers and truly South Asian*. The close connection between the spread of Christianity and colonial domination requires significant examination in order to discern what is going on. In the last several centuries, India has been overrun by intruders, the Mughals and then the British. While a tiny Christian presence has existed since the early Christian centuries, today's Indian church stems primarily from colonial missionary efforts over the last 250 years. The frequent jibe that Christianity is alien to India suggests that the indigenizing principle has not yet been fully worked out.⁶

Kwame Bediako (1992) speaks for African Christians whose culture and past they felt was demeaned by the cultural arrogance of the colonizers and missionaries alike (cf. Ferdinando 2007).⁷ If the gospel is to be truly at home in African or South Asian culture then those Christians must discern what God has been doing in their history even prior to the coming of the gospel. Not everything is trashed.

Nevertheless, good as this cultural re-appropriation is, the Christian has been given an adoptive past. South Asian Christians, just as New Zealand Christians, ought to find themselves looking gratefully backwards beyond our national heroes

⁶ Timothy Tennent (2010) identifies three periods in relation to the arrival of the gospel and culture: preparation, reception, and assimilation. God is at work in the culture prior to the arrival of the missionaries to prepare for its reception.

⁷ I endorse Bediako's impulse to find value in his pre-Christian African culture and religion. However, like Ferdinando, I cannot agree with Bediako's implication that pre-Christian African religions might have been the source of salvation for some. On the vexed question about being exclusivist, inclusivist, or pluralist in regard to truth in other religions, I think the Bible is very clear: there is no salvation in any other name but Jesus. In terms of salvation, this is exclusivist. However, in terms of (non-salvific) knowledge of God I am inclusivist. God has not left himself without a witness in any culture. There is much to value in many cultures and religions, and we can discern that by the light of Scripture. This means there may be values, metaphors, and stories within South Asian cultures which can be bridges or windows for non-Christian South Asians. As Barth puts it: there can be many "creaturely lights" but only one Light of the world (1961, 136-65).

of the faith to the disciples of Jesus, to David, Moses, and Abraham himself. We are the people of God. We have been grafted into the vine (Rom 11). To complain about having lost one's pre-Christian culture leads to a legitimate enquiry, but to deny this adoptive past is to yield to a temptation. It is part of the "scandal of particularity": Jesus was not a South Asian. God chose Abraham not Ashoka.⁸

The task is not only to help South Asian students feel more at home in their cultural identity but also to equip them to confidently navigate cross-culturally with the gospel message. Sadhu Sundar Singh spoke of giving "the water of life in an Indian cup." One of my colleagues emphasizes the diversity of the more than 4,500 cultural communities that make up India—we need "the water of life in Indian cups" (Vedhamanickam 2011; cf. Bharati 2004).⁹ Finding "bridges" for the gospel and metaphors that are vivid in the new culture along with affirming aspects of culture—these are all consistent with the indigenizing principle. We will have to guard against simplistic solutions. Historically, Indian Christian theology has most often sought to appeal to the *advaitic* thinking of the Brahmins. However, metaphors which work for high-caste Indians may offend people from middle and low castes.

What does this mean at SAIACS?

How will we form leaders for the South Asian evangelical church, helping them become more truly Christ's followers and more truly South Asian? A few illustrative examples will have to do. We will strengthen our missions focus through the Centre for Inter-Cultural Studies (CICS), ensuring students engage with real contexts through field trips and have the ability to understand culture and contextualize the gospel faithfully. We will seek to expose students to visiting missional change agents who model a confident Christian approach. We will continue to emphasize worship as a community discipline and uphold South Asian styles. Bhajans and satsangs will find a place as well as Hillsong-inspired music.

How will we guide the Indian church, theologically and prophetically, towards confident Indian Christian identity and humble missional engagement? We will grow students' ability to contextualize the gospel by improving their understanding of a whole-Bible theology, pursuing a better understanding of anthropology and culture, and practicing skills of application and contextualization. Faculty will model engagement in the South Asian public square, and studies will address areas of minority complex, corruption, religious nationalism, and contextualization. We will also equip students for ministry among

⁸ King Ashoka was one of India's most remarkable kings, ruling almost all the sub-continent from 262 to 232 BCE.

⁹ Another important reason for recognizing the plurality of cultures in India today is to resist the idea of a hegemonic, homogenized "Hindu" India as envisaged by Hindu nationalists.

Muslims and for disciple making in contexts with emerging church growth. Our Centre for Islam Studies (CIS) and CICS will engage in research to strengthen knowledge of Hindu and Muslim communities and develop resources to spark motivation for mission.

How will we develop the faculty to model and form leaders to better guide the church to be more truly Christ-followers and more truly South Asian? We will continue to build a faculty team that mostly comprises South Asian doctoral degree holders with a passion for serving the church. One source of new faculty will be those developed from our faculty-in-training program, with a preference for split-site PhDs. Our faculty forays are aimed at keeping faculty in touch with the needs of field churches and ministry. Our annual faculty pedagogy workshops will keep us developing teaching skills for interactive and transformational learning, including online programs. We are encouraging some of our faculty who are writing for publication in ways that intentionally attempt to be Christian and South Asian. Some departments consciously encourage thesis-writing students to engage with South Asian realities, whether through field research or literary comparison.

In summary, then, SAIACS has set for itself the theologically coherent and biblical goal of graduating students who are more truly Christ's followers and more truly South Asian. It will involve confidently locating ourselves amidst the tensions, looking back and looking forward with Christian hope and prayer. We are God's children; we will be like Christ (1 Jn 3:1f). The aim is Christian worship and obedience at home in South Asia. The aim is also aspirational. Our identity is ultimately shaped by what we pay attention to. A night watching the stars doesn't make you an astronomer; but a lifetime does. So too, SAIACS's task is to embed for a lifetime the aspiration to grow more like Christ as his follower and grow more at home in South Asian culture. N. V. Tilak's hymn (quoted in Boyd 2011, 117) sums up what it will take:

“Of all I have, O Saviour sweet, —
All gifts, all skill, all thoughts of mine, —
A living garland I entwine,
And offer at Thy lotus feet.”

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Why Contextual Theology Matters for the Church

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Biblical Basis of Contextual Theology

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.
Colossians 1: 15–20

The passage cited above presents to us one of Paul's theological masterpieces. In this letter, Paul penetrates the heart of Asia Minor, where Colossae is located. He is confronted with a notoriously religious world that has diligently categorized the various pantheons known to them, as well as those unknown. Situated away from the Jewish cultural matrix, cross-cultural preaching is required. But since God is "the Lord of heaven and earth" (Acts 17:24), Paul makes a strong case for the place of Christ among the gods, and he is careful to locate him within that world as the one who made *everything* ("things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities") and as the one who "gives all men life and breath and everything else," as we know from Paul's encounter with Greek scholars in Athens (Acts 17:25). Even though to Gentiles Paul's is a "new teaching" which appears to a section of his hearers as "some strange ideas," he also seems to be "advocating foreign gods," a charge that in his time could be punishable by death (Acts 17:18b, 19b, 20). Indeed, preaching the Gospel is a life and death matter.

As the footprint of the Christian faith extended beyond the Jewish world, the

preaching of the gospel had to take into account the fact that its reception among the Gentiles remained at the mercy of its host and needed to find terms that could connect Jesus with that world and answer its spiritual questions. From the above example and other encounters in the historical movement and expansion of the Christian faith, Christianity may thus be seen to be “always a beggar seeking food and drink, cover and shelter from the cultures it encounters in its never-ending journeys and wanderings” (Mbiti 1970, 438). Likewise, it means that all true theology is necessarily contextual theology, addressing the quests for meaning and wholeness peculiar to each context. For us in our time, by extension, it means that Western theology too, which for a long time was held to be universal theology, is contextual theology, developed in response to Western questions and addressing Western issues. Like all other theologies, it too is open to cultural corruption.

Yet, this coming of the gospel into the world as a beggar may also be described as “the divine invasion of the world of man in the Incarnation,” bringing into unity all things, as had been intended right from the beginning of time when God walked on earth and communed with his creation face to face, and making possible “the mutual indwelling of God and man.” (K. Bediako 2014, 102). This unity of all things pertains also to everything that constitutes human cultures (language, religion, food, clothing, traditional customs, art, music, socio-political organization, etc.). For the fact that “from one man he [God] made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth” and that it is God who “determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live” (Acts 17:26f) implies that people cannot exist meaningfully without or outside their God-given cultures. In other words, it is in their religio-cultural setting that people relate both to God and to their fellow human beings as with the rest of creation, with culture understood as an attribute of the people, at the heart of which, as Kwame Bediako (2004) observes, is “the person, not objects or ritual observances.”

It is fascinating to think that it is God who intends that people, in their own respective God-determined cultural worlds, would “seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him.” That he is, after all, “not far from each one of us” is a matter that Paul advances further in his letter to the Romans, when he states that the gospel is “the power of God for the salvation of anyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentiles” (1:16). But if the people do not have to leave their world of self-apprehension in order to find God, how is the discovery made? Paul gives us the answer:

How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!”

The onus then is on the “sent ones” to relate the supremacy of Christ to the people in their worlds of meaning, without requiring them to be “circumcised,” or to remove their cultural clothing.

Importance of Contextual Theology for the Church

This brings us to the importance of contextual theology for the Church. So far I have avoided the complexities associated with the term contextualization. I have also chosen not to succumb to the temptation to define associated terms, such as inculturation, acculturation or enculturation (see Shorter 1988 for definitions; cf. Magesa 2004; Okure, Van Thiel, et al. 1990), and even “indigenization” (for instance, Idowu 1973), all of which can be contentious and confusing to many scholars, let alone ordinary believers. As far as the church is concerned, the discourse on contextualization must take a determinedly theological dimension. For, with regard to Christ and the whole creation, he remains the Lord over all.

Andrew F. Walls (1996), an acute observer of the history of Christian mission, remarks, “we are conditioned by a particular time and place, by our family and group and society, by ‘culture’ in fact” (7). The church is thus “a place to feel at home” (7). (Walls arrives at this understanding after surveying the phenomenon of Christianity in tropical Africa and while relating to the book by Welbourn and Ogot, *A Place to Feel at Home* [1966]). In other words, all theology and mission engagement must of necessity be contextual if it is to be effective in discipling the nations and enhancing the life and witness of the church.

Doing contextual theology is thus a cross-cultural as well as inter-cultural process that seeks, in Paul’s words, to “present the word of God in its fullness—the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations” and “to make known among the Gentiles [all nations or peoples] the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory” (Col. 1:25ff.).

Herein lies an even more fascinating thought, that those entrusted with the gospel, Gentile peoples, who might themselves be uninitiated into or unfamiliar with the biblical world of literature (Law, Prophets, and the Psalms/Holy Writings) as well as its customs and theological perspectives, also qualify as “agents” or operatives of the kingdom of God, having found the church a place to feel at home. He is, indeed, “God of the ‘heathens’ also” (Rom. 3:29; cited in Walls 1996, 56).

Because “all churches are culture churches, including our own,” theologizing in context is a task and a process that ends only with the attainment by the body of Christ of “unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining the whole measure of the fullness of Christ” (Eph. 4:13; cf. Lk. 2:52 and 1 Sam. 2:26). God’s testimony among the nations (Acts 14:16-17)

is only possible when the peoples of those nations are able, in their own deep thoroughgoing knowledge, relationships, and practical situations, to proclaim Christ as their Lord and Master!

Walls (1996) is right to insist that “no group of Christians has therefore any right to impose in the name of Christ upon another group of Christians a set of assumptions about life determined by another time and place” (8). Because “we all approach Scripture wearing cultural blinkers,” says Walls, “different things from those hidden in our own blind spots” will emerge in connection with our growth as believers (12).

This point on unity is particularly urgent in a time of societal polarization along tribal, political, religious, and nationalistic ideologies, which threaten to tear communities apart. Yet, since cursing of others is done only in the mother tongue, it is deep indigenous theology, emerging supremely from theologizing in the mother tongue and illuminated by the mother-tongue Scriptures, that will cleanse the cursing mind (K. Bediako 2007, 28).

Also, with the rise of secularism in many societies in Africa and with the attendant tendency of the advocates of secularism to dismiss religion in general and Christianity in particular, it is incumbent upon the church to seek to first understand the concerns raised but then respond in the light of the gospel. Three major areas are desperately in need of Christian voices and action: the mainstream media, international conflicts, and the arts. The disregard for the *truth* and traditional societal values in the leading media is a concern that the church cannot ignore. Similarly, the church appears to have nothing to say or do in relation to the relentless beating of war drums and military interventions in foreign lands. Within the domain of the arts, a cursory glance at the recent creative writings in Africa reveals a well-articulated resistance towards, and even to a great extent a concerted assault on, the Christian faith that needs to be addressed.

If Jesus’ coming represents the new ideal, a divine-human incarnational ideal, this in itself is a new creative stage upon which the “things of God” and the “things of humanity” converge, without leaving any area untouched, in the eschatological resolution of the human predicament. But in specific terms, human beings at different times and places are endowed not only with indigenous resources for comprehending afresh the supremacy of Jesus Christ over all cultures but also with new treasures of knowledge, wisdom, and (mutual) understanding. As Christ is revealed anew, unknown aspects of the gospel become the vital correctives that in turn revive and sustain our own self-understanding, for example, in the understanding of worldviews and the role of the Holy Spirit, or his role in the transformation of ways of knowing, worldviews, and the interpretation of life and its meaning. In the same light, Christian faith is even more deeply anchored in

human history as a whole (Walls 2004, 6). Since the Incarnation was a cultural event and continues to be so as we reflect on the impact of the gospel of Jesus Christ upon our own lives and that of others, our theological engagement with culturally rooted questions becomes a deeply satisfying experience. To the African, for instance, an African-looking Christ becomes the answer to African religious and cultural questions and religious expectations. This is truly liberating in terms of our self-understanding as well as in relation to others outside our cultural matrix. Paul's exhortation in Colossians 2:8, 16–17, and 3:11 speaks to us all:

See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ. ... Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ... Here there is no Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all.

Jesus' own admission that everything about him "must be fulfilled that is written in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms [Holy Writings]" (Lk. 24:44) presents to us a Hebrew canonical framework that is useful in our affirmation of his appointment as "the heir of all things" (Heb. 1:1-2). It is not a surprise that Jesus' preaching, like that of Paul, was critiqued from within the Jewish context. He was in the world, but he was not captured by that "world," something that applies to all Gentile cultures too in which he has been named.

— Theological Education, Christian Scholarship, and Indigenous Knowledge

Yet what of contextual theological education? Clearly, since the 19th century, the church has played a major role in the development of education in Africa, but Africa's scholarly credentials reach much further back than that, with the catechetical school founded in Alexandria by Pantaenus in the 2nd century and developed by his successors, Athanasius and then Origen (Walls 2006a, 19), constituting the first theological academy anywhere. Andrew Walls (2006a) reminds us how the church's role in scholarship has always been in line with Paul's vision in 2 Corinthians 10:5 to bring "every thought captive to make it obedient to Christ" (16). In the first century AD, the highest pursuit of the Jews, the Greeks, and the Romans may be summarized as light, knowledge, and glory respectively (2 Cor. 4:6), and it was with these aspirations that the church needed to engage in each context.

In terms of the acquisition of knowledge and understanding of all kinds of literature and learning, the university was set up to bring unity in diversity. From the oldest universities in Europe, we note that these were Christian institutions

with Christian, often biblical, mottoes and that theology was a pioneering discipline. Yet this history has been submerged in more recent times, with most modern academic institutions defining themselves as secular. In view of this historical development and the fact that culturally rooted questions for Christian scholarship arise whenever the gospel encounters people in their contexts, Christian scholarship becomes again a frontline vocation (Walls 2006b; Walls 2006c). It therefore remains the calling of the church, in the spirit that animated early Christian intellectuals such as Justin, Clement, and Origen, those exemplars whose task involved “thinking the Christian faith into the fabric of thought” (Walls 2006a, 21) of the societies they represented, to proclaim the supremacy of Christ in life and thought and to acquire the tools to do so.

In connection with Christian scholarship, the church must heed the warning that Andrew Walls (2006d) sounds: “We should be wary of using a particular period of Christian history as our main reference point, such as, for example, the Protestant Reformation of sixteenth-century Europe” (34). His assessment is that “the redemptive process of God is *cross-generational*” as well as cross-cultural (35), and the church must expand its theological horizons accordingly to meet contemporary challenges. In this way, the church would stand a chance of rescuing the academy from inevitable decay, just as it rescued the Greek academy in the early centuries (Walls 2006a, 19).

In specific terms, however, indigenous knowledge systems must be taken not only as intellectual resources but also as spiritual resources, for in these cultural treasures are to be found new perspectives for the propagation of the gospel. (For a European example of the way in which indigenous resources are drawn upon in the affirmation of Christ, see G. Bediako 2006.) This is so because, in the words of an Akan Christian scholar who followed in the footsteps of early Christian thinkers:

Ancient wisdom is the testimony of God’s presence in the culture, and therefore needs to find a place in the new dispensation in the continuing renewal of society. In other words, the renewal of society is not achieved by jettisoning the spiritual roots of ancient wisdom but by the redemption of the totality of culture and history and their application in new settings (Danquah 1927, 11; Danquah 1997; cf. K. Bediako 2006, 36).

Conclusion

If indeed in Christ are found the fullness of God and the glorious treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Col. 1:25, 2:3), this understanding ought to compel us all to reach out to others and in openness learn to share in their discoveries about Christ, even as we share with them our cultural treasures. This is the role that the Gentile culture played when the gospel crossed the Jewish frontier into

the culturally pluralistic Greco-Roman world and beyond and secured the faith for future generations. Contextual theology thus becomes a corrective to the tendency towards theological imperialism that has infected Christian affirmation for several centuries. It provides a valuable perspective for the Western church, for in addressing human issues that are culture-specific, it points the way for Western theology to reconnect with the church's witness to the cultures in which it is set and strengthen its prophetic voice. Because everybody's contextual theology matters, we must learn from one another.

Also, if incarnation is “the Scriptural paradigm of all cross-cultural transmission of the gospel, whereby Jesus is to become incarnate in all cultures,” as Gillian Bediako notes (2011, 2), all theological questions, then, must be rooted in the cultural context of the people. With as many valid ways of reflecting Christ as possible, the church is better equipped and empowered in knowledge, wisdom, and understanding to promote a fellowship and a unity among the faithful that defies all those things that point away from Christ. In other words, all the life-giving essences in creation are unleashed against any death-dealing aspects that threaten the wellbeing that Christ promises. Also, as the things that unite us continue to hold fast in Jesus, the influence of Christ increases among the nations, whilst the things that divide us diminish. All of this is in preparation for that New Jerusalem, where “a great multitude that no one would count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb” (Rev. 7:9), shall display “the glory and honour of the nations” (Rev. 21:26), singing the one song in honor of the Lamb.

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Faculty Research in Asian Seminaries

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Abstract: *Asian seminaries lag behind their western colleagues in scholarly output through research, writing, and publication. This article explores multiple factors that contribute to the challenge of developing a research culture among Asian seminaries, including the mission, academic systems, and resources within the school. Increasing scholarly output serves the mission of the school and provides opportunities for increased partnerships in service to the church.*

Introduction

In the U.S., “colleges and universities increasingly have focused on faculty research as a way to increase their institutional profiles and prestige. Over the last quarter of the twentieth century, many higher education institutions saw their missions expand to encompass graduate education and research endeavors” (Hamrick 2003, 791–92). While churches have faulted Western seminaries for placing too much emphasis on scholarship, to the point that for some people seminary is considered to be spiritual cemetery, Asian seminaries are often characterized by their lack of research.

Faculty research in Asian seminaries is critical for the development of contextual theological reflection and credibility. Therefore, the main questions addressed in this paper are: What makes it difficult for Asian seminaries’ faculty to do research, writing, and publishing? What needs to change and how can those changes take place?¹

¹ The main ideas for this paper came from a class presentation in the Higher Education Administration class at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Spring 2015, which was a collaborative work with another then PhD student, James Park. I owe him a lot of good ideas in this writing.

Some Preliminary Considerations

Theological Education in Asia

Asia cannot be conceived of as a monolithic entity. The continent has incredible diversity, not only geographically (including East Asia, South East Asia, South Asia, Central Asia, and the Middle East), but also socio-culturally and theologically, with influences from major world religions whose origins are on this continent (such as Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism if considered a religion). To a certain extent, those diverse backgrounds influence the variation of values and practices of education and theological education, which also affect faculty roles in the theological education. However, the lack of a research culture remains common in most Asian seminaries.

It is hard to find comprehensive statistics about seminaries and theological colleges in Asia. But data from regional networks of theological education institutions in Asia can be helpful. More than 300 seminaries from 35 countries in Asia are accredited or associate members of ATA (Asian Theological Association), an expressly evangelical entity, with about half of those schools located in India. Approximately one hundred institutions and schools affiliate with the network of ATESEA (Association for Theological Education in South East Asia). Some seminaries register to both ATA and ATESEA. Also, another fifty accredited theological schools are registered within the network of SSC (Senate of Serampore College) in South Asia (Wongchar 2010). Additional seminaries in the Middle East and some other countries are not part of these regional accrediting bodies. While the exact number is difficult to determine, hundreds of schools in Asia have the backing of one or more of these networks.

Defining Research

Research is usually “associated with conducting empirical studies, whether confirmatory or exploratory, but in some academic disciplines research also encompasses highly theoretical work” (Hamrick 2003, 791).

Ernest Boyer (1990) helped us understand a broader picture of scholarship through his seminal work *Scholarship Reconsidered*. According to him, research is not limited to discovery of new knowledge and is not necessarily apart from teaching activities. There are four types of faculty scholarship:

- (1) discovery, consisting of original studies and creative works...;
- (2) integration, consisting of interdisciplinary inquiries, synthetic writing that connects information from multiple sources, and interpretive work that critiques existing research and suggests alternative explanations;
- (3)

application, consisting of creative uses of theoretical knowledge to solve problems...; (4) teaching, which is what research faculty do to instruct their classes, as well as their inquiries into the effectiveness of their instruction” (Lawrence 2003, 784).

Research is therefore a specific engagement in the broader work of scholarship with output in both writing and teaching.

The Role of Faculty in Higher Education Institutions

Faculty members in higher education institutions generally fall into three categories: “(1) research, which is the discovery or creation of knowledge through systematic inquiry; (2) teaching, which is the transmission of knowledge through class instruction and other learning-focused activities; and (3) service, meaning service to others through application of one’s special field of knowledge” (Favero 2003, 786). Thus, the faculty role is commonly conceptualized as a tripartite role of research, teaching, and service (Hendrickson et al. 2013, 312).²

These faculty roles are necessarily closely related to the general functions of colleges and universities “to promote inquiry and advance the sum of human knowledge, to provide general instruction to the students, and to develop experts for various branches of the public service” (Hamrick 2003, 790). Through each of these roles, faculty members “generate and disseminate knowledge to peers, students, and external audiences” (Hamrick 2003, 790). The balance of these roles differs widely across institutions and is influenced by various factors which will be explored further in this paper.

The Emergence of a Research Culture in Higher Education

Originally, universities were not research oriented. “Universities, since their origins in medieval Europe, have always been concerned with the transmission, preservation, and interpretation of knowledge” but not primarily with “the creation of new knowledge” (Altbach and Balan 2007, 4). The pursuit of research emerged later. In the 19th century, “a research tradition was emerging in Germany that emphasized scientific rationality and the pursuit of knowledge through experimentation” (Lawrence 2003, 783).

Wilhelm von Humboldt revolutionized German universities when the University of Berlin was established in 1818 as a pioneer of modern research university.

² Hendrickson et al. (2013, 313) add a fourth role, that of “boundary spanners” both within the institution and as a bridge between their institutions and their external environments. But this new category is not common and may be considered under the traditional three categories.

New German universities followed Humboldt's idea by harnessing science and scholarship together and thus contributed to the emergence of the modern research university. Half a century later, the United States and later on Japan quickly adopted the German model. According to Altbach and Balan (2007, 4), "Variations of the German, American, and Japanese research university concepts largely characterize today's research universities." However, unlike in Germany and North America, the strong research culture in Japanese universities did not have a significant impact on Asian seminaries. The fact that Christianity in Japan has not gained a wide following might be a reasonable explanation of why this is the case.

The Importance of Faculty Research

The question of the importance of the research role of faculty has been raised from time to time. For example, Sasse, Schwering, and Dochterman (2008) argue that the present shift to a Knowledge Age means that the traditional faculty role needs to be reexamined. They argue that the faculty focus should move from "upstream" to "downstream" (44) in the relationship between research and students. These authors take an example of a pharmaceutical company that decided to migrate "downstream towards the delivery end or customer focused part of the value chain since this has the most value right now" (44). They suggest that "fewer resources (e.g., faculty time) are needed to pursue academic research and relatively more resources spent on supporting faculty in creating positive learning experiences and engaging in scholarly inquiry related to those efforts" (44).

While this notion sounds more compelling from the business perspective, some serious problems emerge when implementing the concepts for faculty members who are charged to be a steward of the discipline.³ First, the pragmatic value-added approach may fit well within the business setting but not necessarily the educational setting, where returns on investment are measured differently than in the for-profit world. Second, this is not something new at all; for many years most pharmaceutical companies in third-world countries have practiced this approach because of its profitability and because lack of resources dictate less attention on research and a greater focus on distribution. Without the painful work of research by pharmaceutical companies in some countries (subsidized by larger profit margins), there would be no new antibiotics, which are desperately needed with the emergence of new bacteria, nor the newer and more effective medicines that we have now. Someone must do the work and bear the high cost of advancing the knowledge base and developing new applications from that research.

³ Even though this term is originally used for doctoral education (Walker et al. 2008), it fittingly applies to all faculty members.

Third, the faculty should not be limited to being “delivery agents” of what other people produced (books, thoughts, etc.), not limited to only participating at the “downstream” dissemination of ideas. In accordance with the higher education institutions’ mission, the teaching role of faculty members should not require the neglect of the research role.

Research is indispensable, and even crucial, for Asian Christianity. One of the main reasons is related with the issue of contextualization. With some exceptions, such as Orthodox Christianity, Asian churches have imported wholesale the thoughts and practices of Western churches. Without serious efforts to do their own theological reflection, Christianity in Asia will largely live with a Western Christian mindset, concern, and practices. Hence, many Christians risk living as strangers to their non-Christian neighbors, not because they live biblically, but because they live culturally inappropriately. Contextual theological reflection and education is a serious challenge to be answered by Asian and Majority World theologians and theological educators (Kim 2008; Ho 2010). Seminary faculties are among those who have the privilege of having more theological training to develop contextual theological reflections on a more theoretical level. Therefore, research and scholarship to develop contextual theological reflection are both privileges and tasks for Asian seminary faculties, to inspire and help pastors and church members in doing further contextual theological reflection in their daily Christian lives.

In addition to the issue of contextualization, James Park’s research also highlights the issue of credibility. According to his observation, Asian students perceive the faculty in Asia as pastors but the faculty in the U.S. as scholars (Park 2017, 97). This brings further implications such as: 1) Many Asian theological students, particularly graduate students, choose to study in the U.S. or U.K., where they will be able to learn from the primary sources who wrote their textbooks; 2) Asian churches tend to accept theologies and church ministries from the West without critical reflection. They perceive that what is produced in Asia is “second best” to the cutting edge work produced in the U.S.

Affirmations and Challenges from a Biblical Perspective

Scripture offers principles that help us to assess the importance of research from a biblical perspective:

1. The danger of being “simple” (Prov 1: 22, 32). There are four primary characters in the book of Proverbs: the wise, the fool, the simple, and the mocker. While the fools and the mockers clearly oppose God’s way, the simple have their own problem with their ignorance and uncommitted

attitude to embrace wisdom. They can be easily misled. Closely related with that is that they can easily have “zeal without knowledge” (Rm 10:1–3). This is also true with those who want to focus on “just doing ministry” at the practical level. They usually end up being influenced by any theological framework or philosophy of ministry predominant at the moment, varying from local trends or imported from influential scholars or pastors in the West.

2. A strong appeal in the Bible to search for wisdom (e.g., Prov 1–9). “Get wisdom. Though it cost all you have, get understanding” (Prov 4:7). Searching for wisdom (Heb. *hokma*) may be very costly, but it is worth it. Research does not guarantee wisdom, but it may help lead to deeper understandings and follows the pattern of investment in its acquisition.
3. Wisdom is highly contextual. That is why research is needed for a fresh perspective. The church needs theological reflection in every cultural context and in every generation. Indeed, contextual theological reflection and practice are biblical in nature. From generation to generation, God’s people in the Old Testament through to New Testament times need to keep rethinking how to live faithfully in various socio-cultural, religious, and political situations. Though they worship the same God, they need to do their homework by reflecting theologically within their own contexts to understand how the same God can work in a unique way in their own time. Contextualization, according to Shoki Coe (1976), a Taiwanese theologian who served as a director of the Theological Education Fund of the World Council of Churches in the early 1970s, is a way of incarnation. “As the catholicity of the gospel is given through the Word becoming flesh, so our task should be through our responsive contextualization, taking our own concrete, local contexts seriously” (Coe 1976, 23, quoted in Ho 2010, 124).

Factors Influencing Faculty Research and Role Emphasis

Austin (1994) identifies five cultural environments that significantly influence faculty members in their work: (1) the culture of the academic profession; (2) the culture of the academy as an organization; (3) the culture of the discipline; (4) the culture of the institution type; and (5) the culture of a particular department (Hendrickson et al. 2013, 311–12).

Hendrickson et al. (2013) highlight two factors influencing the conceptualization of faculty roles: institutional mission and academic culture. We will explore the two elements further.

Institutional Mission

The term “mission” here refers to “the purpose, philosophy, and educational aspirations of a college or a university” (Hendrickson et al. 2013, 9). The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, a widely used taxonomy of higher education institutions in the U.S., divides colleges and universities into various categories: (1) Research universities, which offer baccalaureate and graduate degrees and prioritize faculty scholarship; (2) Doctorate-granting universities, which offer the PhD degree but award fewer research grants; (3) Comprehensive universities and colleges, which offer baccalaureate and master’s degrees and tend to emphasize undergraduate education; (4) Liberal arts colleges, which focus primarily, if not exclusively, on undergraduate education; (5) Two-year-community, junior, and technical colleges, which offer certificates and associate degrees (Lawrence 2003, 783).

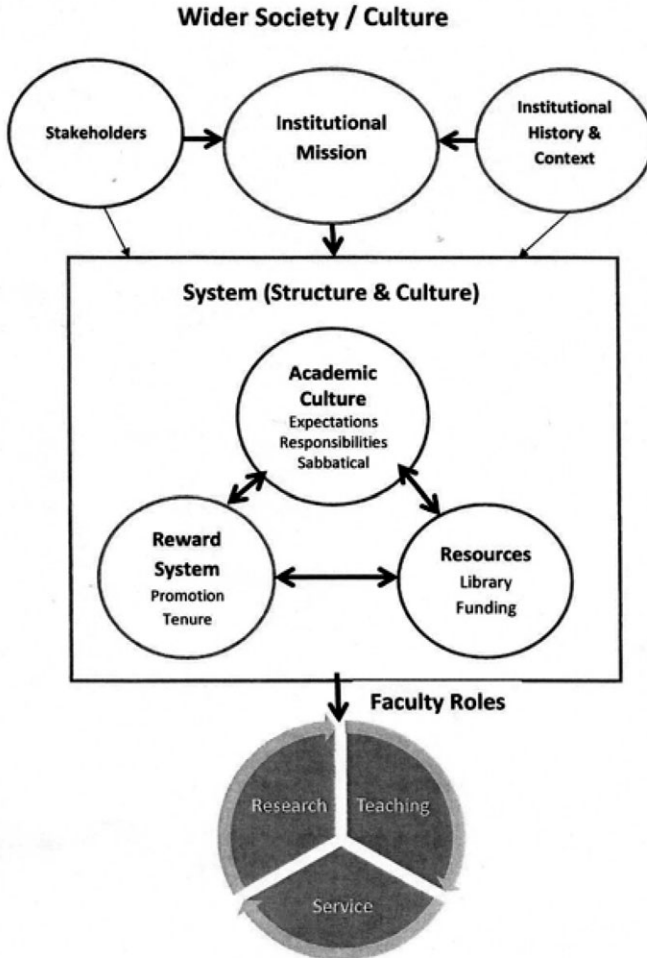
The institutional mission influences its faculty members in defining their roles of research, teaching, and service. Studies indicate that at research universities the main emphasis of faculty is on the research role. This is supported by the availability of resources and the faculty reward system in favor of research. In contrast, at other institutions whose mission focuses on undergraduate teaching and learning (such as liberal arts colleges and community colleges), greater emphasis is placed on the teaching role (Hendrickson et al. 2013, 314; Lawrence 2003, 785; Hamrick 2003, 791).

Academic disciplines

The understanding of the faculty role varies across academic disciplines. The differences affect their scholarly performance, including their research focus, assumptions, methodology, funding, and productivity (Hendrickson et al. 2013, 313; Lawrence 2003, 783). However, academic disciplines do not create different emphases between research and teaching as significant as the institutional mission does.

Factors Influencing Faculty Research in a Seminary

Having explored factors that affect faculty research in higher education institutions in general, we shall now focus more on faculty research in a theological education context. Below is a model that hopefully will be helpful for this purpose.⁴



⁴ This diagram was originally created by the author in collaboration with another PhD student, James Park, for a joint class presentation in the Higher Education Administration class at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in March 2015

— Institutional System (Structure and Culture) Influencing Faculty Research

The institutional system, which is mainly shaped by its mission, influences faculty roles. “The employing institution affects responsibilities, opportunities and rewards available to faculty. In particular, the type of institution in which a faculty member is employed affects his or her relationship to the discipline and its culture, how the new faculty member is socialized, what work is viewed as important and what standards of excellence are used.” (Hendrickson et al. 2013, 312), referencing Austin (1994, 50). This means that faculty research performance in a theological education institution is largely influenced by the respective institutional structure and culture.

There are three components of the system that influence faculty research culture and productivity:

1. Academic culture

Almost all contemporary universities worldwide are based on Western models, either imposed by colonial rulers in the past or adopted voluntarily to catch up with scientific development in the West. However, the research function in universities in many parts of the world is often not as well developed (Altbach and Balan 2007, 4). This is also true with the present higher education in Asia, with exceptions in some countries such as Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore (Altbach and Umakoshi, 2004).

To a certain extent, the broader context of a weak research culture in Asia is reflected in the culture of research in seminaries in Asia. Allan Harkness, in *Tending the Seedbeds: Educational Perspectives on Theological Education in Asia*, identifies four main categories of theological education in Asia:

- “Theological studies in a (usually) secular university. The studies are open to anyone for serious inquiry, similar to any other course of studies in the humanities or social sciences” (2010, 8).
- “Theological education in a theological college, seminary, or divinity school. These institutions exist primarily to train people for some form of leadership in churches or church agencies” (2010, 8).
- “Institutions established primarily to equip laypersons for ministry and mission. These are situated in a wide range of both church and non-church settings. They may be a Bible school or college, some form of lay training institution, or an extension/distance learning program” (2010, 9).
- “‘Non-campus attendance’ theological education” (2010, 9).

Harkness observes that “Protestant theological education in Asia tends to be in the second and third settings above” (2010, 9). This means that teaching and training, not research, are the main concern of most theological education in Asia.

Graduate education is crucial to prepare qualified researchers. The fact that doctoral education and doctoral degree holders are still limited in Asian seminaries⁵ may contribute to the weak research culture among faculty members. But this may not be the main issue. Another significant issue is that most Asian faculty members do not have time for research and writing. The main expectation for faculty members is in their teaching role. Perhaps closely related with that is the expectation toward their pastoral role in helping their students as future pastors. Second in the priority list would be the expectation to serve the church either with their teaching ministry or by holding leadership roles in church or other ministry organizations. Research is the least expected output from faculty members, as a reflection of academic culture in broader society.

Within this academic culture, Asian faculty members will be typically assigned many more responsibilities related to teaching and service, and they do not have sufficient time for their research role in their routine activities. Further, due to limited human and financial resources, their workload often exceeds those of professors in the West (Hunter 2012, 49). Many faculty members therefore have low expectations for publication (Starcher 2004). The sabbatical system in Asian seminaries is also not as generous as in the West. This again limits the opportunity for Asian faculty seminaries to do research and writing.

2. Reward System

In research universities, faculty rewards “often are based on faculty members’ contribution to their disciplines through publishing articles and books, presenting research findings, giving performances and exhibits, or disseminating their work to external audiences in other ways” (Hamrick 2003, 791). This is not the case in most Asian seminary settings, in which expectations toward faculty members are often focused primarily on their teaching role and perhaps an administrative role in the school leadership. “Performance evaluations and tenure are not as closely tied to publication as they are in the West” (Hunter 2012, 49).

Therefore, to encourage faculty members in fulfilling their research role, it would be important to allocate a significant proportion of the research role into the performance evaluation system, including in promotion and tenure.

⁵ See, for example, data highlighting theological education in different parts of Asia presented by the authors collected in section 20, “Theological Education in Asia,” of Dietrich Werner et al., eds., *Handbook of Theological Education in World Christianity* (2010).

3. Resources

One of the challenges for Asian scholars who return from their doctoral study in the West is to find a conducive research environment (including a library, laboratory, and funding for their research in general higher education institutions). As a result, their research productivity tends to be low when they return to their home country. An empirical study of faculty members in South Korea, Hong Kong, and Malaysia who are foreign doctoral degree holders provides evidence of this situation (Shin et al. 2014).

There are two types of resources which can significantly influence research productivity in a seminary context: libraries and funding. An adequate library is a crucial issue when we talk about research in Asian seminaries. Keeping up with new books and having access to academic journals, currently predominantly produced by Western publishers, are not affordable for most Majority World seminaries. Even institutions conducting doctoral programs in Asia often send their students for three to six months to Western universities at a certain stage of their dissertation research in order to give them access to larger library holdings and engage a more globally diverse intellectual community (Hunter 2016, 54). This need indicates the insufficiency of the libraries in many Asian seminaries to support the development of a research culture.

Partnership among seminaries can be seen as an answer to this situation. In South Asia, there are advanced research centers such as SATHRI (South Asia Theological Research Institute) and SAIACS (South Asia Institute of Advanced Christian Studies). Both are located in India, with SAIACS hosting the Center for South Asian Research (CSAR) as a resource for writing sabbaticals to promote more publication from within the region. Trinity Theological College Singapore is another example in South East Asia where researchers from neighboring countries can gain better library access. Developing research centers in various regions or countries with sufficient library access would be crucial hardware to develop a research culture among Asian seminary faculties.

Another issue related to research productivity is funding. In a society where a research culture is well appreciated such as in the West, faculty members may enjoy relatively generous funding for their research, both from their own institution and from external resources. This is not the case for Asian seminaries' faculty members. Since a research culture is not so common, getting funding for research projects would be a significant challenge to overcome. For example, even when the sabbatical leave opportunity has been secured, conducting the field research or doing literature research and writing in an adequate research center or library will require a significant amount of funding. Therefore, to encourage a research culture among faculty members, a

good research funding system also needs to be developed, in partnership with churches and Christian organizations, local and abroad.

Factors Influencing Institutional Mission

There are three main components that influence the purpose, philosophy, and aspirations of a theological seminary: 1) The stakeholders (churches, board members, leadership, and perhaps donors). Their expectations of a seminary (whether this is to be a research center, or teaching institution, or something else) will directly and indirectly shape the system. 2) Institutional history is also important. A seminary structure may be changed overnight. However, considerable time and energy are required to change its academic culture that has been rooted in its long history. 3) The current context, particularly the academic culture of the wider society, also has significant influence. As an educational institution, a seminary also feels pressure from this influence, whether through government policies, common practices in higher education institutions, or the broader availability of resources to support faculty research (such as funding and library networks outside the seminary). These components may influence the faculty research directly through shaping the institutional mission or indirectly through the culture they created that influence the academic culture within the seminary. It may be hard to influence the academic culture in the wider society, particularly in many places where Christians are a minority. What might be much more strategic for developing faculty research in Asian seminaries is helping the stakeholders to see the crucial role of research in Asian Christianity and Asian seminaries. We cannot change the past, but we can create the future.

Concluding Remarks

Faculty research performance in Asian seminaries is influenced largely by the institutional mission of the respective institution. This institutional mission shapes the institutional system, which influences the faculty research culture by determining the academic culture, reward system, and availability of resources. On the other hand, this institutional mission is also influenced by its stakeholders, institutional history, and the present context, particularly the academic culture in the wider society.

Research, together with teaching and service, is an important role for seminary faculty members. To be able to promote a research culture among Asian faculty members, Asian seminaries need to review and reshape their institutional system, so that their academic culture, reward system, and resources will enable faculty members to overcome significant hindrances, such as time constraints, library access, and funding, in pursuing research productivity.

Partnership is an important aspect to overcome the limitations of human resources and other resources. Therefore, partnership among local seminaries and local churches is needed to develop a viable support structure for research, including doctoral programs to equip future teaching faculties and advanced research centers. Partnership among seminaries and churches within the same region represents another form of cooperation that would be beneficial, particularly for countries with fewer resources. Finally, partnership between Asian seminaries and Western seminaries would be another helpful possibility at the present time, so that resources for research can be shared for the benefit of both parties.

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International Partnerships from a U.S. Perspective

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Abstract: *The number of collaborations between U.S. and international theological institutions may double in the next few years. Two Association of Theological Schools peer groups have recently completed a dialogue concerning global partnership practices. Their suggestions to the Association highlighted the practicalities of reciprocity and the value of attention to formation while imagining an international organization to facilitate accreditation and other academic logistics. As the number of majority world Ph.D. programs also increases, the arrangements between institutions will take on a more robust peer-to-peer quality.*

Introduction

A recent report from Michigan State University's Alliance for African Partnership observes that 1.8 billion of the world's population are between the ages of ten and twenty-four, with 87% living in less-developed countries (Effiong 2017, 40). For those of us interested in graduate and post-graduate education, the U.S. Census Bureau reports there are 2.25 billion people in the world between the ages of twenty-five and forty-five (U.S. Census Bureau 2017). If the same 87% ratio were to apply, then almost 1.9 billion people in this age group live in developing countries. Given the present realities of Christian faith saturation in these regions, the market for theological education in developing countries far outstrips current institutional capacity.

The first main finding from the World Council of Churches' Global Survey on Theological Education 2011-2013 confirms the trend: "There are not enough theological schools in the regions of the world where Christianity is growing rapidly (Africa, Latin America, and parts of Asia). In Europe and North America there is a much better match between the need for theological education and the number of institutions and programs" (Esterline 2013, 2). Formal theological education is not keeping pace in many of the regions where Christianity is growing

the fastest. Additionally, depending on one’s definition of “developing,” many of the countries gaining the most attention from U.S. higher education partners (all types, not just theological education institutions) are not those identified in the Michigan State University report.

Top countries for international partnerships (2016)

Existing Activity	Targeted for Expanded Activity
China	China
Japan	India
United Kingdom	Brazil
Germany	Mexico
France	Vietnam
South Korea	South Korea

(Helms et al. 2017, 34)

Organizations like Langham Partners, Overseas Council, Inc., and ScholarLeaders are at the forefront of preparing theological faculty to meet the need. At the same time, a significant number of U.S. seminaries and divinity schools are collaborating with international schools. Over a quarter of U.S. member institutions currently have international partners, and another 20 percent are earnestly considering alliances. “If the explorations are fruitful, half of ATS [Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada] member schools soon could have international partnerships” (Graham 2017, 1). International partnerships and raising up indigenous scholars will provide the major portion of the need for theological educators. Open source initiatives like biblicaltraining.org will be key contributors as well.

Serving the Church Universal

The nature of theological education in regions of emerging Christianity differs from Western models. Partnerships must represent the cultures they serve. Dr. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, Professor of Contemporary African Christianity and Pentecostal/Charismatic Theology at Trinity Theological Seminary, Accra, Ghana, points to the preternatural contexts and how one must frame partnerships to match.

First is the partnership with God in Christ through the Holy Spirit because, as the Spirit of Truth, He is our Advocate and Teacher. Second is the recognition of the shift in Christian presence from the paradigmatic centers of theological education to new centers, or new heartlands, in the South and partnering with

those people among whom the Spirit is at work. It does not mean that the Christianity of the Global North ceases to matter but that in the South the faith exuberantly engages with new religious worldviews sensitive to supernatural realities (Asamoah-Gyadu 2014).

Collaborations with majority world institutions seek to honor the unique qualities of each setting. A U.S. school possibly less likely to experience signs and wonders enters into the world of an international school where miracles are “normal.” The former may offer new courses or degrees while the latter invites the partner into the power and mystery of the Spirit at work in their midst. Scholars from both regions bring their academic expertise and worldviews. Two geographical expressions of the Church universal come together in mission.

The International Council for Evangelical Theological Education, in its 2010 Doctoral Consultation, echoes these values in the “Beirut Benchmarks.” “Doctoral study, therefore, pursued on such a foundation, will be confessional, rational and missional. For a Christian, doctoral study is one dimension of what it means to ‘love the LORD your God with all your heart and mind and soul and strength’” (ICETE 2010, 1). Doctoral students will be nurtured in biblical and confessional faith, trained in the best of the academic disciplines, and sent for missional purposes. They are expected to “promote the kingdom of God and advance the mission of the church (both local and global), through Christ-like and transformational service, to the glory of God” (ibid).

A Broad Theological Enterprise

Any relationship between a U.S. institution and another school, whether domestic or international, attends to the theological, cultural, and political differences of the exchange. Many international partnerships are between schools from the evangelical stream of the Church universal. At the same time, other streams of the church provide theological education for their leaders around the world. The Association of Theological Schools, as a mediator between multiple traditions, proposes it “would continue cultivating relationships with partners that reflect the ecclesial families of ATS member schools. These include the World Council of Churches program in Ecumenical Theological Education (WCC/ETE), organizations like the World Evangelical Association and its connection with the International Council for Evangelical Theological Education (ICETE), the Lausanne Network, and accreditation agencies and associations outside North America (e.g., The Association for Theological Education in South East Asia [ATESEA], Asia Theological Association [ATA])” (Ruiz 2014). International accredited theological education will reflect the breadth of the church as well.

As part of ATS’s efforts to raise global awareness and engagement in its member

schools, its accrediting standards speak of seeking interconnectedness and interdependence with international partners. Among other goals, member institutions should ensure that their instructional methods are attentive to cultural assumptions and that course design addresses global complexity. They should advance their institutional culture toward a globalized learning environment and encourage teaching, learning, and research that result in global awareness and responsiveness (ATS Self-Study Handbook).

Current Practices

In a survey of a subset of its membership, the ATS Director of Research and Faculty Development, Deborah H. C. Gin, learned that more than half of the responding schools offer courses and programs in international contexts. Eighty-two percent of responding schools collaborate with international institutions in international contexts. About 90 percent have faculty teaching in international settings. All of them have faculty with prior experiences overseas. Nearly all have international students at their schools. About three-fourths have students studying abroad. Over a third offer courses in North America in languages other than English. About one-fifth offer courses internationally in languages other than English (Gin 2017, 1).

This research was conducted for one of the Global Partnerships Peer Groups convened by ATS for its Educational Models and Practice in Theological Education initiative. The various groups serving the initiative, two of which addressed global partnerships, met during 2016–17. As noted above, not all of the ATS institutions are engaged in global collaborations. The ratio of those who do may approach 50 percent in the next few years.

Critical Issues

The Global Partnership Peer Group I was privileged to join represented five schools active in international collaborations. As the group dialogued over the months, three critical issues persisted. The first centered on the theological value of reciprocity. Using a Trinitarian framework, partnership embodies a bi-directional relationship, a type of “Spirited dance” calling participants to mutuality and trust. Differences become gift, and the good of the other takes priority. The relationship becomes increasingly missional. To the extent that each party senses the partnership to be aligned with God’s purposes, the collaboration moves forward.

Living out that theological value challenges systems, particularly in implementation. How do partners honor differing learning styles and approaches to education? How do stakeholders account for power and privilege dynamics? Which ethical standards prevail, for example, around the definition of plagiarism? How do the relationships leaven each institution (Bullock 2017, 3)?

A second area examined formational aspects of the collaboration.

Pedagogically, the perennial issues involve how best to create experiences, even though short-term, in which students will undergo the formative experiences, especially intercultural competency, self-knowledge, spiritual formation, and increased sensitivity to the *Missio Dei*, for which the programs are designed (ibid).

Key questions in this area include: How will each partner’s students be transformed by the collaboration? What educational benefits will the partnership offer that would not be available without it?

The final critical issue has been alluded to earlier in this article. Most institutions across the world value accreditation. Yet, collaboration among accrediting agencies can be spotty at best. How might course credits be transferred between partners? How is residency defined? What competencies aggregate to validate a theological degree? How will outcomes be assessed? In what languages will the courses be taught? How will resources “such as libraries, faculties, finances, administrative processes, personnel, information technology, and other resources” be shared by the partners, especially when there may be financial disparities between them (ibid)?

Might there emerge an international agency or guild that can help members collaborate? If so, it would need to:

recognize, foster, and hold in common best practices (assessment rubrics, credit hours, degree compositions, teaching, curriculum, learning, and research models appropriate to each region, culture, and people group). This body would, by necessity, need to be collegial, dialogical, reciprocal, and model cultural diversity and contextualization within its own constituency (Bullock 2017, 3-4).

Eschatological Unity

Any relationship between a U.S. institution and another school, whether domestic or international, attends to the theological, cultural, and political differences of the exchange. Many international partnerships are between schools from the evangelical stream of the Church universal. At the same time, other streams of the church provide theological education for their leaders around the world. The Association of Theological Schools, as a mediator between multiple traditions, proposes it “would continue cultivating relationships with partners that reflect the ecclesial families of ATS member schools. These include the World Council of Churches program in Ecumenical Theological Education (WCC/ETE), organizations like the World Evangelical Association and its connection with the International Council for Evangelical Theological Education (ICETE), the Lausanne Network,

and accreditation agencies and associations outside North America (e.g., The Association for Theological Education in South East Asia [ATESEA], Asia Theological Association [ATA])” (Ruiz 2014). International accredited theological education will reflect the breadth of the church as well.

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Book Review: *Taking Up the Mantle: Latin American Evangelical Theology in the 20th Century*

**By J. Daniel Salinas. Carlisle, Cumbria, UK:
Langham Global Library,
2017. Pp. xiii + 200. £11.99 paperback.**

JONATAN C. SIMONS
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In *Taking Up the Mantle*, J. Daniel Salinas weaves together complex threads of a Latin American Evangelicalism that has roots in religious divisions in Europe in the 17th century, reached Latin America in the missionary movements of the 19th century, and remains somewhat fragmented today. Despite theological conflicts between what Salinas refers to as the three main wings of Latin American Protestantism (Pentecostalism, dispensationalism, and denominationalism), and despite the violence that has long plagued many Spanish-speaking countries, the Latin American church has still seen tremendous theological growth. There has also been significant progress toward a more ecumenical expression of Christianity in Latin America. This book uncovers relatively unexplored chapters of Latin American theological history. It should spur us to further recognize and explore the unique place of Latin American Evangelicalism in the context of global Christian theologies.

Taking Up the Mantle takes a chronological and institutional approach to the story of Latin American evangelical theology in the twentieth century. Thus Salinas begins his narrative with the Panama Congress of 1916 and ends with a slew of theological meetings and conferences in the late seventies and eighties. This provides readers with a coherent snapshot of Latin American evangelical theology in the twentieth century but by no means a complete picture. In any case,

chapter one sets the stage by introducing readers to the political and theological climate of Latin America around the turn of the century, focusing especially on what strategic meetings and their publications reveal about evangelical thought in these early years. Much of their discussion centered on how Latin American evangelicals ought to relate to Roman Catholics, Social Gospellers, and North American missionaries.

Salinas then identifies three distinct generations of Latin American evangelicals, which roughly correspond to chapters two, three, and four of his book. The first generation, according to Salinas, lasted from Panama 1916 to the Primera Conferencia Evangélica Latinoamericana (CELA I) at Buenos Aires in 1949. It included theological leaders such as Scottish Presbyterian missionary John A. Mackay, Argentinian pastor Gabino Rodríguez, and Mexican Methodist journalist Gonzalo Báez-Camargo. Báez-Camargo's magazine *Luminar* aimed to see Protestantism "Latinized" and made into a "native plant," and Mackay's 1932 book *The Other Spanish Christ* became an oft-quoted classic for future Latin American theologians (43). Then came the second generation, which lasted from CELA I to the founding of the *Fraternidad Teológica Latinoamericana* (FTL) at Cochabamba, Bolivia, in 1970. This generation, which included ecumenical leaders such as Argentinian René Padilla and Peruvian Samuel Escobar, faced an urgent need for sound theological responses to the growing radicalism of the 1960s. According to Salinas, most "ecclesiastical leaders were not prepared to deal with the situation" (56). However, a few emerged with a contextualized theology that allowed Latin American evangelicals to mediate between the two extremes of capitalism and collectivism by casting aside what Padilla called their "Anglo-Saxon clothing" (92). But the unity and consolidation ushered in by the formation of the FTL did not endure in the third generation. Liberation theology led to fragmentation in the Latin American theological community. The late seventies and eighties were "a rocky decade" marked by rifts between *Confraternidad Evangélica Latinoamericana* (CONELA), which aligned itself with the more theologically conservative Lausanne Movement, and *Consejo Latinoamericano de Iglesias* (CLAI), which aligned itself with the more theologically liberal World Council of Churches (141). The fifth and final chapter ties up loose ends by outlining Latin American evangelicals' search for definition and maturity—their relationship with other Third World theologies, ongoing conversation with the rapidly growing Pentecostal movement, and the role of female theologians in Latin American thought.

Salinas's background in theology and familiarity with the culture of Latin American Evangelicalism clearly shine through in his narrative. He links Latin American political unrest with the emotive eschatological hope found in Spanish-speaking liturgy. Additionally, his emphasis on Pentecostalism is consistent with demographic trends in which, according to Salinas, one in four evangelicals

were Pentecostals by 1940. Lastly, he returns again and again to the topic of Christology, highlighting the evangelical tendency to de-emphasize Christ's humanity (Docetism), which fueled the rhetoric of liberation theology. As René Padilla observed: “[Latin American evangelical theology] affirms Christ's transforming power in relation to the individual, but is totally unable to relate the gospel to social ethics and social life” (141–42). This was clearly not the case in liberation theology, though the weight with which they embraced Christ's humanity resulted in an equally imbalanced negligence of Christ's divinity, and an occasional endorsement of violent revolution. The contemporary result of these parallel conversations, however, is a widespread evangelical misunderstanding of the Incarnation and passion of Christ, which in turn led to a poor theology of suffering, a tendency which has culminated in today's prosperity gospel. These theological deficiencies lead Salinas to his hortatory conclusion: he calls for additional theological education and theological texts written in (not just translated into) Spanish. This is fitting for a scholar who has dedicated his life to this very endeavor.

Salinas should be applauded for his hard work in the archives. This is a rich book with helpful footnotes and a thorough bibliography, and it is anchored in primary source testimony (much of which Salinas has presumably translated from Spanish to English for his readers). From the outset, Salinas makes his approach clear: “The aim here is to let the voices be heard as they were originally expressed without allowing more recent views to taint our approach to the subject matter” (1). However, this approach has drawbacks. With a block quote on nearly every other page, the narrative can be difficult to follow at times. Though there is great value in reading these long quotes, it would have been helpful for Salinas to shorten the quotes, limit the number of them, or provide more of his own commentary to help readers extract the most understanding from each primary source citation.

In any case, *Taking Up the Mantle* is an excellent launching pad for future inquiry on Latin American evangelical theology in the twentieth century. It introduces us to a choir of Latin American voices that deserve more attention. For too long have erudite theologians like Samuel Escobar and René Padilla been overshadowed by liberationists. For too long have academics assumed that Latin American theology begins with Gustavo Gutiérrez. Salinas brings to light a deeper history in *Taking Up the Mantle*—in this account Gutiérrez does not arrive until chapter four. Salinas demonstrates that Latin American theology is older and more historically varied than many might think.



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Reseña bibliográfica: *Taking Up the Mantle: Latin American Evangelical Theology in the 20th Century*

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En *Taking up the Mantle*, Daniel Salinas teje la complejidad de los hilos de la fe evangélica en Latinoamérica. Los hilos divididos en Europa en el siglo XVII, llegaron a América Latina en los movimientos misioneros del siglo XIX y permanecen divididos hasta hoy día. A pesar de que existen conflictos teológicos entre los tres mayores grupos del protestantismo de Latinoamérica (Pentecostalismo, dispensacionalismo y denominacionalismo— según la perspectiva de Salinas) y a pesar de la violencia que ha plagado los países de habla español, existe un crecimiento teológico asombroso en la iglesia latinoamericana. Además, ha ocurrido un avance importante hacia una expresión ecuménica en la historia de Latinoamérica. Este libro descubre secciones de la historia latinoamericana que no se han explorado hasta ahora. Este estudio debe estimular la iglesia latinoamericana con el conocimiento de que también están parados sobre los hombros de gigantes.

Taking up the Mantle usa un acercamiento cronológico e institucional para contar la historia de la teología latinoamericana en el siglo XX. Salinas empieza su narrativa con el Congreso de Panamá en 1916 y termina con varias reuniones y conferencias teológicas en las décadas de 1970 y 1980. Esto provee al lector una perspectiva coherente de la teología evangélica en Latinoamérica en el siglo XX, aunque no es una imagen completa. Sin embargo, capítulo uno prepara el

escenario e introduce al lector con el clima político y teológico de Latinoamérica para el cambio del siglo, enfocándose en cómo reuniones estratégicas y sus publicaciones revelan el pensamiento evangélico en esos años tempranos. Muchas discusiones en estas reuniones se centraron en cómo evangélicos deben relacionarse con católicos romanos, con los del Evangelio Social, y con misioneros de Norte América. Salinas identifica tres generaciones distintas de evangélicos latinoamericanos, las cuales corresponden a capítulos dos, tres y cuatro de su libro. La primera generación, según Salinas, duró desde el Congreso de Panamá en 1916 hasta la Primera Conferencia Evangélica Latinoamericana (CELA I) en Buenos Aires en 1949. Incluyó líderes políticos como el misionero Presbiteriano de Escocia John A. Mackay, el pastor Argentino Gabino Rodríguez, y el periodista Mexicano y Metodista Gonzalo Báez-Camargo. La revista de Báez-Camargo, *Lunimar*, quería ver a Protestantes “Latinizados” y hechos más como una “planta nativa,” y el libro de Makay de 1932 *The Other Spanish Christ* (El Otro Cristo Español) llegó a ser el clásico más citado en el futuro teológico de Latinoamérica (43). Después vino la segunda generación, la cual duró desde CELA I hasta la fundación de la Fraternidad Teológica Latinoamericana (FTL) en Cochabamba, Bolivia en 1970. Esta generación, que incluye líderes ecuménicos como el Argentino Rene Padilla y el Peruano Samuel Escobar, se vio enfrentada con una necesidad urgente para repuestas teológicamente sanas hacia el radicalismo creciente en la década de 1960. Según Salinas, la mayoría, “de líderes eclesiales no estaban preparados para manejar esta situación” (56). Sin embargo, unos pocos surgieron una teología contextualizada que permitió que evangélicos latinoamericanos fueran mediadores entre los extremos de capitalismo y colectivismo. Esto ocurrió cuando desecharon sus “vestiduras anglosajonas,” como Padilla los llama (92). Pero la unidad y consolidación que trajo la formación de FTL no permaneció. La Teología de Liberación llevó a una división en la comunidad teológica de Latinoamérica. Los años 1970 a 1980 fueron “una década inestable” marcada por una grieta entre la Confraternidad Evangélica Latinoamericana (CONELA), la cual se alineaba con el Movimiento Lausanne que era más conservador teológicamente, y el Consejo Latinoamericano de Iglesias (CLAI), el cual se alineaba más con el Concilio Mundial de Iglesias (World Council of Churches), el cual era más liberal teológicamente (141). Capítulo cinco finaliza con un bosquejo de las exploraciones de los evangélicos latinoamericanos en la búsqueda por una definición propia y madura—su relación con otras teologías del Tercer Mundo, conversaciones continuas con el movimiento Pentecostal (que seguía creciendo rápidamente), y el rol de teólogos en el pensamiento teológico Latinoamericano.

El trasfondo de Salinas en teología y su familiaridad con la cultura Evangélica de Latinoamérica brilla en una forma clara a través de su narrativa, él une los conflictos políticos con la esperanza escatológica que se encuentra en la liturgia de habla español. Adicionalmente, su énfasis en el pentecostalismo es consistente

con las tendencias demográficas, como muestra Salinas, 1 en 4 evangélicos eran pentecostales en 1940. Por último, él regresa vez tras vez al tópico de Cristología, subrayando la tendencia evangélica a desenfatizar la humanidad de Cristo (Docetismo), la cual actualmente alimentó la retórica de la Teología de Liberación. Rene Padilla afirma: “[Teología de evangélicos latinoamericanos] afirma el poder transformador de Cristo con relación al individuo, pero es completamente incapaz de aplicar el evangelio a la ética social y la vida social” (141-42). Esta tendencia no se ve en la teología de la Liberación, la cual desenfatiza la deidad de Cristo, y que en ocasiones llevó a la violencia. El resultado contemporáneo de estas dos conversaciones paralelas fue una perspectiva errada de la Encarnación y pasión de Cristo, lo cual lleva a una teología incorrecta de sufrimiento que hoy en día se ha vuelto la Teología de la Prosperidad. Estas deficiencias teológicas permiten que Salinas concluya en una forma exhortatoria en su conclusión: clama por más educación teológica y textos teológicos escritos en (no traducidos al) español. Es adecuado que esto venga de un académico que ha dedicado su vida a este esfuerzo.

Salinas debe ser aplaudido por su arduo trabajo en los archivos históricos. Este libro está llenísimo de notas a pie de página y una bibliografía muy completa, y es fiel al testimonio de las fuentes primarias (las cuales, uno presume, que Salinas mismo tradujo de español a inglés para sus lectores). Desde el comienzo, Salinas claramente muestra su metodología: “el propósito aquí es dejar que se oigan las voces como se expresaron originalmente sin dejar que las perspectivas más recientes manchen nuestro acercamiento al material” (1). Sin embargo, esta metodología tiene sus desventajas. Con citas de bloque en casi cada dos páginas, la narrativa es difícil de seguir en ciertos momentos. Aunque hay mucho valor en leer estas citas largas, sería más de ayuda si Salinas hubieran acortado estas citas, limitando su número, o si hubiera provisto más de su propio comentario para ayudar al lector a sacar el máximo de entendimiento de cada cita de fuentes primarias. En todo caso, *Taking the Mantle* es un excelente comienzo para investigaciones futuras enfocadas en la teología evangélica latinoamericana del siglo XX. Nos introduce a un coro de voces latinoamericanas que merecen más atención. Por mucho tiempo los teólogos eruditos como Samuel Escobar y Rene Padilla han sido escondidos tras los teólogos de liberación. Por mucho tiempo los académicos han asumido que la teología latinoamericana empieza con Gustavo Gutiérrez. Salinas saca a la luz una historia mucho más profunda en *Taking up the Mantle*—en este texto Gutiérrez no llega hasta el capítulo cuatro. Resulta que la historia de la teología evangélica en Latinoamérica está más establecida y es mucho más diversa de lo que muchos han pensado.



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