

SOCIETY OF ASIAN BIBLICAL
STUDIES

16-19 JULY 2018

Sekolah Tinggi Filsafat Teologi Widya

Sasana

MALANG, INDONESIA

PROGRAM AND ABSTRACTS

16 JULY 2018

Arrivals and Registration

Registration Timings:

4:30-6:45 pm - @ *Postel Retreat House*;

8:00 -9:30 pm - @ SVD Hall

DINNER: 6:45 – 8:00 pm @ SVD Hall

17 JULY 2018

BREAKFAST: 7:15-8:15 am

PLENARY SESSION I: 8:15-9:30 am (Auditorium - Level 5)

Presiding, Monica Jyotsna MELANCHTHON, *Pilgrim Theological College, University of Divinity, Melbourne, Australia*; President, *Society of Asian Biblical Studies*

Welcome, Introductions, Announcements

MORNING COFFEE – 09:30 -10:00 am

PLENARY SESSION 2: 10:00 -11:00 am (Auditorium - Level 5)

Presiding, GOH, Elaine. *Seminari Teoloji Malaysia, Malaysia*

Keynote Presentation I

SETIO, Robert - *Duta Wacana Christian University, Yogyakarta, Indonesia*

Ancestral Veneration, A Dialogical Imagination with Empire

Ancestral Veneration is an old tradition in Asia that still survives today. But this tradition is critiqued by many. Like many Chinese Christians in Indonesia, I was raised with the teaching that prohibit ancestral veneration. Regardless it is a very important tradition for Chinese people. Even visiting a cemetery is suspected as performing a relationship with the spirit of the deceased, which is seen as unfaithful to God. Hostility to the tradition also comes from modernism. Many people think that ancestral veneration is outdated and not important to modern people. As we enter the digital age, ancestral veneration increasingly looks unfashionable. Difficulties in getting a burial site in big cities leaves cremation as the only plausible alternative to treat the corpse of the departed ones which contributes to the surrender of ancestral veneration. Despite all of the controversy, ancestral veneration is still practiced both overtly and covertly. The significance of the tradition should not be doubted. Even if it is not performed as a rite, ancestor veneration is still held in the form of the belief that the spirits of the deceased parents never leaves the living family. Contextual theologians who argue for the value of the local culture against the hegemony of Western culture would welcome ancestor veneration and probably see it as an expression of the genuine soul of Asians.

In biblical studies, especially the First Testament, there is growing evidence of ancestral veneration in ancient Israel. Based on archeological findings from Palestine many scholars presume that ancestral veneration was a common practice of the people who lived in that area including the Israelites. Using recent findings in this area, I would argue that the Bible does not actually completely attack ancestral veneration. Indeed, there is a voice against ancestral veneration in the Bible, but it is by no mean the only one there. I am going to approach the pros and cons of the ancestral veneration in the Bible with dialogical imagination, an approach introduced by Mikhail Bakhtin. This approach puts the two opposing voices together as dialogue partners who on the one hand are critical, on the other hand being confirmative. By so doing, I want to show that the best way to deal with empire, which in this case, is the propaganda of anti ancestral veneration - whether in the Bible or, in any phase and form of its reception - is not confrontational, but, dialogical.

I also want to relate this controversy with political issues in Indonesia. For a long time, Chinese descendants have been discriminated in Indonesia. The worst was during the Soeharto, New Order era (1967-1998), when the Chinese were prohibited to express their culture publicly. The regime started with massive assault on the communist party and its followers in the middle of the 1960s. The anti-communist propaganda is used throughout the reign of the retired General. Many Chinese suffered because of racial discrimination which was masterminded by the regime and accused of being communist followers. In the light of this political turmoil, the attempt to eradicate ancestral veneration can be read as a way to erase the suffering memory. However, to forget the suffering means to forget the existence of being Chinese. For Chinese Christians it may not be a problem since they can wear a new identity, that is, the Christian identity. Nevertheless, this attitude should be criticized, as Christianity should not allow ethnic obliteration happen in its name.

PLENARY SESSION 3: "Teaching the Bible: Goals and Purposes" (11:00 am -12:30 pm,) (Auditorium - Level 5)

Presiding, CHRISTIANI, Tabita Kartika – Duta Wacana Christian University, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Panelists:

Jayachitra Lalitha, CSI Synod, Department of Christian Education, India

Stephen Lim, Singapore

Yutaka Maekawa, Kwansei Gakuin University, Japan

Zhenhua Jeremiah Meng, Nanjing University, China

Yoon Jong Yoo, Pyeongtaek University, South Korea

LUNCH – 12:30 -1:45 pm @ SVD Hall

CONCURRENT SESSIONS I: 1.45 – 4:00 pm

Session I a: Reading Again? (Room # 3F – Level 3)

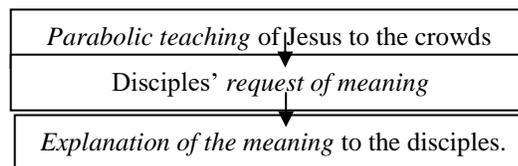
Presiding, LAYANG, Seng Ja, *Kachin Theological College and Seminary, Myanmar*

I. WANG, Xuesheng Nathanael - *Chung Yuan Christian University, Taiwan*
How Jewish is Jesus?

In the interreligious dialogue between Christianity and Judaism, historical Jesus is one of the key issues that the students must tackle. In the recent decades, historical Jesus research seems to be put into a new paradigm that Jesus Jewish context as well as his Jewishness is emphasized. Some scholars especially those of the Jewish origin come to “bringing home” of Jesus as a rabbi, and list him among the Pharisees. In consideration of this trend, this paper argues that the Jewish Jesus does not have so much strong Jewishness, or does not have that kind of Jewishness as they asserted.

2. SITANGGANG, Asigor P. – *Jakarta Theological Seminary, Jakarta, Indonesia*
Three-Stage Pattern in the Gospels: The Use of the Rule of Three in a Rhetorical Perspective

The narrative of Mark 4:10-12 has the pattern of parabolic teaching – request of meaning – explanation of the meaning:



This three stages pattern, teaching – request of meaning – explanation, of course beside this narrative's synoptic parallels, at least appears again in Mt. 13:24-43; 15:11-20; Mk. 7:14-23; 10:1-12; 13:1-4; Lk. 12:37-48. These appearances are of course cannot be easily ignored. Beside this pattern, it appears that there are two other similar three-stage patterns exist in the gospels. The first is the pattern that consists of Jesus' telling a parabolic teaching or a saying – Jesus' asking whether his disciples understand – Jesus' giving

explanation of the parable (e.g. in Mk. 8:14-21; Mt. 8:15-21; 13:44-53; 16:5-12; cf. Jn. 16:16-22). The second is a pattern consists of incomprehensible event or saying for the disciples – disciple’s question – Jesus’ answer (e.g. Mk. 9:25-29; Mt. 17:9-13; 14-20; Lk. 12:37-48; 18:24-27; 21:5-28; Jn. 3:1-21; 9:1-7; 16:16-22). In this article or presentation, I will investigate the canonic gospels’ use of the three-stage pattern in rhetorical criticism and it’s a special rhetorical role and function in the gospel. I will discuss first the concept of rhetorical criticism and it’s use in the NT criticism. I will compare the use of each of the three patterns to see the similarities and the differences. I will also see if there is/are significant difference(s) between each gospel. Lastly, I will analyze the scope and role of this three-stage pattern in the canonic gospels.

3. HAUW, Andreas – *SIT SAAT / Southeast Asian Bible Seminary, Indonesia*

The New Covenant at Qumran

This paper answers what the community at Qumran think about new covenant. It covers three manuscripts (*Temple Scroll* [11Q19], *Rule of the Community* [IQS, 4Q255-264a, 5Q11, 5Q13] and *Damascus Document* [4Q266-273, 5Q12, 6Q15]) because they use the phrase “new covenant” and present notions of the covenant. The proper contexts of the three aforementioned manuscripts, and the only one phrase “new covenant” found in the OT (Jer.31:31), including their theological, political and social issues are discussed. In addition, the emphasis of the concept of covenant in each manuscript and how it relates each other is explained. This paper concludes that the Qumran community reinterpreted the concept of covenant in a new way influenced by theological, political and social issues in its time.

Session I b - Bible, Land, and Resources (Room # 3 G – Level 3)

Presiding, HAVEA, Jione – *Trinity Theological College, New Zealand*

I. CHOI, Sik Ping - *Bible Seminary of Hong Kong, Hong Kong*

One Land Two Systems – The Ruling Ideology of Jeroboam as Opposed to that of King Solomon

Hong Kong had returned to China for more than twenty years. The ruling principle is so called one country two systems, a high degree of autonomy, Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong. Recently, this ruling principle has faced great challenge and created conflict. Actually, two systems reflected different core values and hence conflict is inevitable. Unfortunately, this conflict led Hong Kong to be misunderstood as proclaiming “independence”. However, what is the real request of the Hong Kong people? Are we anti-Chinese Government or just pursuing the right of self-determination? Jeroboam had led the ten northern tribes to rebel against King Rehoboam and put an end to the United Kingdom. The ten northern tribes established an independent kingdom called Israel and made Jeroboam their new king. Jeroboam intentionally tried to separate Israel from Judah in various ways, including the political and religious policies. Therefore, two kingdoms and two systems were established in one land. The differences in his ruling could be traced back in his conflict with King Solomon about the latter forced labor in Jerusalem and imposed high taxes in the United Kingdom monarchy. Would it be possible that he had an anti-imperialism in his mind during his ruling? Jeroboam was not only revolted against the United Kingdom’s monarchy but also denied the taxation and religious practices of the United Kingdom. He also expelled the priestly Levites and replaced them with appointed priests from the common people. Since he gathered the ten tribes and established an independent kingdom, would it be possible that he prefer to rule as a tribal community? What was the ideal ruling ideology of Jeroboam? In this study, I would argue that the ruling ideology of Jeroboam was not anti-imperialism but idealistic tribal league.

2. YOO, Yoon Jong - *Pyeongtaek University, South Korea*

The concept of Han in and through exilic prophetic literature

This paper pursues the historical, political, and theological issues during 598-586 BCE (Zedekiah period). During this period, there were very complex historical, political, and theological contexts. Historically, some Judeans were deported to Babylon. Politically, high officials in Judah were trying to escape from the Babylonian rule by alliances of neighboring countries. Theologically, there were many conflicts such as true and false prophecy. It implies that God's will was not clear. In the beginning of the sixth century, Judah entered in the turmoil of imperial order in ancient Near East. Historically in the national crisis, it is very common that many solutions were suggested for overcoming the crisis. The small Judah was striving to survive from the imperial expansion. There were three major groups: pro-Babylon, pro-Egypt, self-defenders. In the 21st century, Korea is also surrounded by China, Japan, Russia, and America. We have also different groups for overcoming the crisis. This paper aims to illustrate the political and theological implications of contemporary Korea through the analysis of historical, political, and theological issues during Zedekiah period (598-586 BCE).

3. CHALCRAFT, David - *Liverpool John Moores University, UK*

Reading Naboth's Vineyard in Imperial, Capitalist and Asian Postcolonial Contexts: The role of Context in the sociological meaning and use of texts

The paper explores the role of context (which thereby is further defined and illuminated to include political, economic and cultural dimensions of social arrangements that impact) in interpretation through a comparison of some Indian and some British readings and receptions of Naboth's Vineyard as found in I Kings, 21. The text has generally been read as an indictment of State or Landed Class illegal appropriations of tribal/ancestral and communal land. The comparison brings out the way in which the Bible has become part of western literary culture and in this way can lose its prophetic critical edge, as compared with Indian contexts where land grabbing practices, for example, keep the resonance of the text fully alive. The history of reception also shows the relative importance over time of individualistic and collective responses to biblical texts (including such shifts in British reception) and as an index of changing patterns of land ownership in the respective places. The three main English examples of reception range from the political radical William Cobbett in the early 19th century to the imperial literary treatment of the story by Rudyard Kipling (1886), in which a local homeless Indian character 'appropriates' the land of a colonial settler, and the ghost story written by E. F. Benson (1923) which paradoxically keep the supernatural present in an otherwise secular and capitalist setting. Indian examples to be compared, include Jeeva Ravela Kumar's recent study and other Dalit and North Eastern Indian tribal readings which foreground ecological and sociological concerns. With such alternative reception histories and contexts (sic), in what ways can mutual dialogue about biblical texts take places across cultures?

Session I c: Bible and Diaspora (Room # 3H – Level 3)

Presiding, NADELLA, Raj, *Columbia Theological Seminary, USA*

I. GOSALA, Varaprasad – *Andhra Christian Theological College, Hyderabad, India*

Jeremiah's Letter to the Exiles (Jer. 29: 1 – 7) – its significance and Relevance to the Refugees in Asia

One of the greatest challenges the world faces today is refugees. For instance, in Southeast Asia there is an ongoing refugee crisis. According to UNHCR's 2015 figures, Southeast Asia is home to more than 500,000 refugees and asylum-seekers. In May 2015, thousands of Rohingya refugees from the Rakhine State of

Myanmar and economic migrants from Bangladesh were found stranded in the Strait of Malacca off the coast of Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia. It was the beginning of Southeast Asia's refugee crisis (<https://thediplomat.com/2015/07/southeast-asia-refugees-in-crisis/> (Accessed on 10th January 2018)). And according to the BBC reports, more than half a million have fled to the neighboring Bangladesh since August 2017 after a military operation by Myanmar which is termed by the UN as a "textbook example of ethnic cleansing." <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-41566561> (Accessed on 10th January 2018)). Prophets of the Old Testament were always concerned about the ostracized section of the society. We can see that throughout the book of Jeremiah, the prophet was critical towards the hegemonic behavior of the empires and was concerned about the upliftment of the oppressed communities. In this context, Jeremiah's letter to the Exiles has been considered as relevant to the context of refugees. Jeremiah sent a letter to the exiles in Babylon which addresses their concerns and aspirations. It was traditionally considered as a text that inculcates hope and confidence in the minds of the exiles. In this letter, though on the one hand we can see that Jeremiah exhorts the people in exile to restore and rebuild their lives in a foreign nation. On the other hand we can also view this text as a way of resistance to the Babylonian empire in which the refugees were exhorted to uphold their identity and multiply their generations in a foreign land. Through this notion of resistance, the prophet is challenging the refugees to affirm their right to life. The hope and liberation provided in the biblical context can provide immense respite and inspiration for appropriate action that reinstates one's confidence that life begins anew despite the despair and challenges as God gives the wisdom, strength and direction for true liberation.

2. LEE, Lydia – *Northwestern University*, South Africa

Seeking a Way Forward: Reflections on the Scholarly Imaginations of Good and Evil in the Book of Esther

Set during the Jewish diaspora in the ancient Persian Empire, the book of Esther paints a host of Jewish and Gentile characters, who engages in a series of life-and-death struggles. From this ancient tale imbued with sex, intrigues, genocide, revenge, and salvation come modern attempts to grapple with moral issues about good and evil. The paper will first outline the European, especially the Protestant, commentators' ethical assessments of the book of Esther and its Jewish characters during the Enlightenment. For these commentators, the Esther story displays a low ethical standard and its Jewish characters display excessive vengefulness (e.g., Michaelis 1783; Bertheau 1870; Driver 1891; Paton 1908; Davies 1909; Bewer 1926; Eissfeldt 1934). The paper will then trace the gradual change of attitude induced by the Jewish and feminist critiques in the aftermath of the Second World War. These critiques generally go to great lengths to problematize the notion of evil defined by the previous commentators by defending the moral standing of Esther and Mordecai. They highlight the comic nature of the Purim festival to render the Esther story more palatable to its critics (e.g., Talmon 1963; Jones 1977; Greenstein 1987; White 1989; Levenson 1997; Zaeske 2000; Berlin 2001). Throughout the analysis of this intellectual development, attention will be given to the ways, in which social contexts and biblical hermeneutics inform each other. It will be argued that such interactions between social contexts and biblical hermeneutics can be understood to a certain extent by the theoretical framework of "Cross-Textual Hermeneutics" advocated by Archie Lee (1993). Suggestions will then be given as to how the Asian biblical scholars, with their different social contexts, can participate in the delineated line of intellectual development and further enrich the academic discussions about the problematic notion of good and evil in the book of Esther.

3. LIM, Chin Ming Stephen – Singapore

Ruth as Esperanza? An Inter (con)textual Reading with Foreign Domestic Helpers in Singapore

One of the salient features of globalization today is the establishing of transnational flow of low cost labour which in Asia tends to be from the poorer countries to their richer neighbors. In this essay, I attempt to bring 'home' this fraught dynamics of the present world order that Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri (2000)

poignantly calls 'Empire' together with its entanglements with such circuits of low-cost foreign labor. More specifically, I focus on what Sara Ahmed (2000) calls 'strange encounters' between locals and foreigners in the asymmetrical power relationship of home owner to foreign domestic worker within the intimate zone of what we call 'home' in my country of origin, Singapore. No longer situated as the colonized Other in empires past and having gained wealth and status, many Christians today in Singapore could well afford whom could be seen as the modern day slave. In this new state of internal colonization, I seek to distill biblical responses through an inter(con)textual reading of the Book of Ruth with a play produced in Singapore, *Esperanza* (Wong and Tay 1987) that centers on a Filipina domestic helper, Esperanza (which is Tagalog/Spanish for hope). Both protagonists, Ruth and Esperanza, share similar plights as women who find themselves relocating to a foreign land in hope of a better life. By comparing and more importantly, contrasting the stories of both women, I map out the possible discursive effects of the biblical text on Christian readers in Singapore. I argue that the narrative of Ruth in its seeming openness to the idea of inter-marriage ironically intensifies the alien nature of Moab so as to point to the underlying tensions of what it means to welcome a stranger into our very own homes.

TEA BREAK – 4:00 – 4:30 pm

CONCURRENT SESSION II: 4:30 - 6:45 pm

Session II a - Bible and Governmental Regimes (Room # 3 F – Level 3)

Presiding, HUANG, Wei - *Shanghai University, China*

I. HARUN, Martin - *STF Driyarkara Jakarta, Indonesia*

Let every person be subject to the governing authorities; A critical reading of Rom 13:1-7

After an introduction and general explanation of Romans 13:1-7, some abuses of this text by Christians as citizens will be illustrated. Because of the danger of misunderstanding this text as a theology of State and Church, during the last half century several scholars have tried to forward contextual explanations to Paul's exhortation to the Roman Christians to be subject to the authorities. No consensus about its specific background has been reached, but at least there is an increased awareness of this text as not being a Christian doctrine on State and Church, but being a pastoral exhortation for a specific urgent situation of which we do not know the details for certain.

2. AUNG, James H. T. – *Kor-In Theological College & Seminary, India*

Call for True Citizenship Under a Regime in Romans 13:1-7

The minorities in Myanmar (Burma) still are struggling to find their identity and true citizenship for decades now. This is not a recent issue but a long embedded issue even after the British' colonization of Myanmar. Even after its independence, ethnic groups in Myanmar hardly experienced true freedom and full rights of citizenship and hence some continue to struggle to gain their citizenship. In the context of Romans 13:1-7, the first readers, the minorities, were living under the Roman regime. Even the majority of the population in Roman Empire struggled to gain citizenship and even those citizens' rights were violated. In this text, Paul encourages the readers of Romans (official citizens or non-citizens) to subject to the authorities (*exousia*). This paper aims, first, to offer guidance for understanding the difficult experiences of becoming true citizens in Myanmar. It also highlights the suffering of minorities under the Roman Empire, particularly, Christians and Jews. Finally, it will explore Paul's concept of subjecting to a regime (*exousia*) in Romans 13:1-7, and

its implication to the Myanmar context. Especially, this paper will suggest the value of living in harmony and true citizens under *exousia*.

3. **GOH, Elaine W. F.** - *Seminari Theoloji Malaysia (Malaysia Theological Seminary)*, Malaysia
“Even If Not, We Will Not Serve Your Gods”: A Malaysian Christian Reflection from Daniel 3.

Christian witness is not easy in some part of the world. The exilic people of Judah was a subject of obedience under the Babylonian empire, where their practice of faith would cost them grave danger. The Book of Daniel narrates how the people of God was found in dilemma: they persisted to live out their faith under unfriendly regime on one hand, and to be obedient to the foreign power on the other. Amid such a dilemma, however, the people of God often thrive as faithful people, albeit at a cost. Similarly, God’s power would outdo earthly power in the midst of challenges and troubles. Under the suppressing ideology among certain insurgent Muslim groups in Malaysia, the Book of Daniel is a reminder to the threats and challenges confronting Christians, but also is a source of hope. Chapter 3 of the book of Daniel painted a vivid picture of how God’s people as a community, represented by Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, was not willing to follow the decree of the king blindly. This disobedience caused them grave danger – they have to face the furnace of blazing fire. “Who is the god that will deliver you out of my hands?” by Nebuchadnezzar (Dan 3:15) resounds the threats Christian received from the confronting Muslim group in Malaysia, who had openly burned down Holy Bible to taunt Christians’ retaliation. God’s people has hoped for God’s deliverance from the furnace of blazing fire and from the hand of the enemy. Nevertheless, their persistence - “Even If Not, We Will Not Serve Your Gods” - point us to a way of witness at all cost, that is, be firm and never fall off on our hope in God.

Session II b: Questioning Translations and Translation Questions (Room # 3G – Level 3)

Presiding, **WONG, Sonia Kwok** - *The Chinese University of Hong Kong*, Hong Kong

I. **LIM, Kar Yong** - *Seminari Theoloji Malaysia*, Malaysia

What’s in a Name? The “Allah” Controversy in Bible Translation and Political Discourse in Malaysia

Until recently, Malaysian Christians have used the word “Allah” in their Malay Language Bibles and publications without much complication. The use of “Allah” dates back to the first Malay Language translation of the Gospel of Matthew by A. C. Ruyl completed and published in 1612 and 1629 respectively. This long historical practice of using “Allah” by the minority Christians has come under siege in recent years as reflected in a number of court cases prohibiting the use of “Allah” by non-Muslims and the seizure of the Malay Language Bibles and other publications by the Muslim religious authorities and government agencies. The ruling government comprising Muslim majority has insisted that Bible translators and Christians should use alternative words in translating God. This paper argues that the debate surrounding the controversy goes beyond the linguistic and historical use of “Allah” but reflects deeper political and social issues where the intertwining of Islam with ethnic identity of the majority group becomes the dominant force in subordinating and eroding the rights of religious minority. This has far-reaching implications for future translation, printing, and distribution of the Malay Language Bibles.

2. SOESILO, Daud – *United Bible Societies*, Indonesia

The Empire Strikes Over and Over: The On-Going Struggle of Malaysian Christians with their Bible Translations.

In the 17th century we had the first Bible translation into Malay, the Gospel of Matthew that was translated by a Dutch Albert Cornelisz Ruyl, a junior trader of the multinational Dutch East Indies Company. This translation was completed in 1612 and printed in 1629. It is an example of the first ever translation of the complete book of the Bible outside Europe and Middle East.

Ruyl was both a pioneer and an innovator in using religious loanwords from Arabic, Portuguese and Sanskrit that were available in the Malay of the day. His decision to use the Arabic loan word *Allah* for God has set a precedent for later Bible translations into Malaysian and Indonesian. Relative to the Indonesian Christians, the minority Malaysian Christians have experienced more challenges by non-Christians as well as by some less informed or misinformed Christians on the use of Allah and related divine key terms in their Malay Bible translations. However, more and more challenges have come from the authorities in different formats and manifestations, the last one being an offer to prepare a supposedly more “correct” Bible translation prepared by non-Christians. Indeed the empire strikes over and over. This paper seeks to analyse and categorize the different challenges that the Malaysian Christians continue to face in holding on to their rights to have faithful and meaningful Bible translations in the national language.

3. TJEN, Anwar – *Indonesian Bible Society*, Indonesia

Ideologies and Conflicts of Interests in Bible Translation: A Study Case of “Pro-Arabic” and “Anti-Arabic” Bible Translations in Indonesian context

It is commonplace to say that translation never takes place in vacuum. It always involves processes of interpretation and reinterpretation, which in turn entail a complex negotiation of interests by translators, publishers and its target readers. In the case of translating the Bible into Indonesian language, it is only natural that one has to take into account the various layers of religious traditions that have contributed to the formation of Indonesian cultural and religious identities since the arrival of Hinduism and Buddhism in the third and fourth century to the arrival of Islam in the ninth century and Christianity in the sixteenth century respectively. In particular, Islamic heritage through its Arabic loanwords has exercised a dominant influence in the process of cross-linguistic transfer in Malay Bible translations in the archipelago, from the Gospel of Matthew translated by A.C. Ruyl (1629) to the so-called “Terjemahan Lama” („Old Translation“) that predates Alkitab Terjemahan Baru (Indonesian New Bible Version, 1974). Arabic loanwords such as “Allah” (“God“), “iman” („faith“), and “doa” („prayer“) have been adopted and used by Indonesian Christians in their Bible readings and devotions as an integral part of their religious heritage and identity.

However, some Christian communities under the influence of the Sacred Name Movement in US have endeavored to redefine Indonesian Christian identity in terms of its Hebraic heritage. In a movement that appears to be a reaction against Islamic pressures, they claim to have rediscovered their Hebraic roots, a pure form of Christianity that goes back to the earliest Jewish Christianity. As a consequence, a few Bibles in Indonesian language have been published and promoted recently to support the movements whose common denominator seems to „anti-Arabic“ stance. At the other end of the spectrum there are some Christian groups who are convinced that the best way to redefine Indonesian Christian identity is to embrace its Arabic heritage. Typical of their “missionary” approach is employment of Arabic loanwords that would be more appealing to their audience, either Moslems or Christians who came from that background. These groups, too, have published their “Arabizing” Bible or Bible portions. The main interest of this paper is therefore to explore the ideological twists that are at play in the contradicting approaches in Bible Translation. To start with, it is of interest to note that both are “Semitic” in its orientations. To what extent they also reflect their inter-religious dynamics in Indonesian society today?

Session II c: Postcolonializing the New Testament (Room # 3H – Level 3)

Presiding, LALITHA, Jayachitra – *CSI Synod, Department of Christian Education, India*

1. VARKEY, Mothy – *Marthoma Theological Seminary, Kerala, India*

Baptism, Temptation, and Empire: A Postcolonial Reading of Matt 3:13–4:11

From a postcolonial perspective, this paper aims to re-visit the Matthean anti-imperial agenda in positioning “Jesus’ baptism” (3:13–17) and his “temptation in the wilderness” (4:1–11) pericopes next to each other. John the Baptist, who envisions God’s reign (Matt 3:2), initiates a resistance movement of the people on the margins (wilderness) against Herod Antipas (4BCE–39CE), tetrarch of Galilee and agent of Roman imperialism, by consolidating the victims/marginalized of the empire through baptism, and thus forming an alternative community. Josephus attests that Herod executing the John because of fears that John’s popularity might incite insurrection (*Ant* 18.117–19). Matthew has Jesus join John’s anti-imperial wilderness movement by receiving baptism from John and takes on the mantle of leadership from John, which is endorsed by the heavens. This Matthew achieves by juxtaposing John’s baptism and Jesus’ temptation in the wilderness (3:13–4:11; cf. Luke 3:21–22; 4:1–13). While the empire which strikes back by killing John on the one hand (14:1–12), strategically negotiates with Jesus by “promising” him share in the “imperial power” on the other hand. After passing through water in their liberation from slavery (compare Jesus’ baptism in 3:13–17), the people of Israel were tested in the wilderness. But Jesus exposes the “fractures” in the staggering offers and imperial claims of sovereignty. While echoing the exodus story, the wilderness context further reinforces the continuity between Johannine and Jesuanic resistance movements. Like John, Matthew has Jesus also preach the reign of God wherein an alternative existence is possible (Matt 4:17b). Again God’s preferred location for the anti-imperial movement is the margins, outside and threatening to the centers of power.

2. CAILING, Rolex M - *FEBIAS College of Bible, Philippines*

Paul’s Ekklesia as an Alternative Society: An Exploration of I Corinthians

Paul lived under the political domination of the Roman Empire, and it is indispensable for the understanding of his letters to construe the political, social, and cultural nexus of imperial domination. Due attention, however, was not given to the imperial context of Paul’s life until recently. The investigation of the imperial cult and the patronage system in the Roman Empire illuminates how pervasively imperial power relations operated on political, religious, social, and economic domains in the first-century Mediterranean societies, and how consciously Paul engaged in anti-imperial agenda. Given this backdrop, this paper aims to make sense of Paul’s perception of the eschatological triumph of God as an anti-imperial alternative vision of the cosmos, especially in I Corinthians. It traces the ways Paul wanted to translate this vision into concrete reality in the life of the *ekklesia*. Paul’s enthusiasm to build faith assemblies can be viewed as an attempt to construct “an international anti-imperial alternative society based in local assemblies.” This paper further argues that Paul’s vision for his faith assemblies is revealed in his political teaching of Christian *ekklesia*. Paul’s vision therefore was not limited to religious ideas and teachings. Rather, Paul’s lifelong agenda is rooted in his attempt to construct an alternative assembly and alternative reality in its broader category.

3. LOW, U-Wen - *Alphacrucis College, Australia*

Towards a Pentecostal, Postcolonial Reading of the New Testament

Pentecostal expressions of Christianity flourish in Asia, as does the potential for postcolonial readings of the Biblical text. Although both Pentecostalism and postcolonial thought seem to stand poles apart, they have a remarkable amount in common. Pentecostal readings of the text are often “experiential” and focused on an

interpretation directly relevant to the reader, and postcolonial readings are similarly focused on the experiences of the colonized, who often stand at the margins of society. A closer look reveals that both Pentecostalism and postcolonialism involve what postcolonial thought calls “subalterns,” people groups marginalized by colonial power and dominant groups. Pentecostal expressions are popular among subaltern (and majority) groups throughout Asia, and it can therefore be argued that an Asian pentecostal reading of the text must therefore contain inherent postcolonial strains. Bringing together Pentecostalism and postcolonial thought is a complex task, but one that promises to yield positive results. Exploring the text through the twin lenses of postcolonial thought and the distinctive Pentecostal emphasis on pneumatology results in a fresh hermeneutical perspective: that the Holy Spirit might be understood as a postcolonial agent of change that empowers those who have experienced the baptism of the Holy Spirit to resist dominant structures of oppression. The New Testament text can therefore be understood as a “hidden transcript,” a disguised work of resistance composed by subaltern groups against dominance and oppression. This paper seeks to explore the theoretical underpinnings of a “pentecostal, postcolonial reading” of the New Testament, with a view towards constructing a hermeneutic that can speak into a 21st century Asian context.

DINNER – 6:45 – 8:00 pm @ SVD Hall

18 JULY 2018

BREAKFAST – 7:15 -8:15 am

PLENARY SESSION 4: 8:15 – 9:30 am (Auditorium – Level 5)

Presiding: HARUN, Martin. *STF Driyarkara*, Indonesia

Keynote Presentation 2

MELANCHTHON, Monica Jyotsna – *Pilgrim Theological College, University of Divinity*, Melbourne, Australia

Dinah and Asifa Bano – *Violence and Belongings: across “Fault Lines” of Gender, Caste and Religion*

An alleged plot to oust a nomadic Muslim tribe in Kathua, Kashmir by local Hindus included the rape of an 8-year-old girl Asifa Bano. Targeted for belonging to this tribe she was victim to days of rape and torture. Asifa is one example of many women and girls in Asia, who are victims of clashes in ‘social spaces’ characterized by asymmetrical relations of power, colonization, slavery, and their consequences, also understood as the “contact zone”. This presentation is an attempt to read Genesis 34 and the story of Dinah in conversation with the Kathua incident to discern and highlight the “fault lines” - gender, geographic, religion, ethnicity/caste (Alexander) in both texts and the implications they have for the identity of the postcolonial, Asian woman.

MORNING COFFEE – 9:30 – 10:00 am

CONCURRENT SESSION III: 10 am – 12:30 pm

Session III a. Cross-textual Readings – (Room 3F – Level 3)

Presiding, AUNG, James H. T. – *Kor-In Theological College & Seminary, India*

I. HUANG, Wei - Shanghai University, China

Wisdom in Solomon's Judgement: A Cross-textual Reading

The Solomon judgement story in I Kings 3:16-28 has been generally viewed as a story demonstrating Solomon's judicial wisdom. For the readers from Chinese context, the story of two women contending for a child in a judicial scene is quite familiar. In Chinese Buddhist scriptures, we find two versions of this story. The paper will discuss the two Buddhist versions by analyzing the mural paintings from Dunhuang Mogao cave and Kizil cave. It will be argued that the original version from India had been altered and adapted into a Chinese Buddhist story. Then this paper will analyze the different contexts of the biblical story and that of the Chinese versions. Through a cross-textual reading, the aim of the paper is to discuss the concept of biblical wisdom in Solomon's story. On the other hand, the paper will offer the Chinese reader a new version of the story.

2. LISTIJABUDI, Daniel K. - Duta Wacana Christian University, Jogjakarta, Indonesia

Engaging with Cross-textual Hermeneutics and Beyond

This article (which is the extraction of my dissertation, defended at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, June 2016 –not yet published-) underlines the importance of reflecting, evaluating (and then developing) practices of cross-textual reading of sacred texts (promoted by Archie Lee) in situations in which a variety of socio-religious hybridities is present. To demonstrate how this can be done, this article presents a reading of two texts, one from the cultural and religious tradition of Java referred to as *Kejawen* that was formed through layers of indigenous, Hindu, Buddhist, and Islamic influence (“the story of Dewa Ruci”) and one from the Hebrew scripture (“the story of Jacob at the Jabbok”) as read by and for the Christian minority in Indonesia. The aim is not to biblical hermeneutics for its own sake but to create mutual interactions that lead to more understanding, openness, and peace within the hybrid socio-cultural-religious realities of Asian religious life. The main objective of this study is to investigate how, as a method of reading texts in the context of social and cultural hybridity, Asian contextual hermeneutics through the *new revised methods* of cross-textual readings (as I offered to Lee's theory), may contribute to peace and reconciliation processes by promoting awareness of the mystical-spiritual quest through which individual transformation can take place. Through the inward journey, struggle and enmity become understanding, acceptance and openness to the other. Peacebuilding cannot be accomplished without the transformation of persons, including readers and believers, and hermeneutical standpoints, including perceptions of the sacred text of the other. In contexts of lived, socio-cultural- and religious hybridity, where people have read, listened to and/or are influenced by more than just one text, it is important to examine the differences between sacred texts in order to have beneficial insights that can lead to religious enrichments and more peaceful lives together.

Session III b: Readings for Life – (Room 3G – Level 3)

Presiding, KINUKAWA, Hisako, *Center for Feminist Theology and Ministry*, Japan

I. CHRISTIANI, Tabita Kartika – Duta Wacana Christian University, Jogjakarta, Indonesia
Jesus the Slaughtered Lamb: Revelation 5 from a Disability Perspective

This paper is about an interpretation of Jesus as the Lamb of God who is slaughtered in the book of Revelation chapter 5 from disability perspective. In the context of socio-political background of the book of Revelation, Jesus the slaughtered lamb was present in the midst of suffering and marginalized Christians in the first century. Ben Witherington III (2003), who interprets Revelation 5 using the socio-rhetorical hermeneutics, emphasizes that Jesus the slaughtered lamb is really in charge of the world. There are paradoxes in him: vulnerable and slain, yet strong, divine, and worthy. He is slaughtered as atoning sacrifice for the salvation of the world. Stephen Moore (2009), who interprets Revelation 5 using the postcolonial hermeneutics, emphasizes that Jesus the slaughtered lamb is related to the parody of sacrifice in front of the emperor. However, the sacrifice of Jesus is not for the sake of God, but for the sake of human beings who are oppressed by the dominant powers. J. Nelson Kraybill (2010), who interprets Revelation 5 using the political hermeneutics, emphasizes that Jesus' death is caused by the violence done by the dominant power, yet he triumphs over them through resurrection. In the Asian context, where many persons with disabilities suffering and marginalized in society, the presence of Jesus the slaughtered lamb in the midst of persons with disabilities is powerful and meaningful. When the empire of God replaces the empire of humans, Jesus is still the slaughtered lamb. Jesus does not change to be a "perfect" lamb, because the "perfect" lamb does not have any special meaning. The lamb becomes sacrifice only when it is slaughtered. This challenges the concept of "perfect and imperfect" or "normal and not normal" that is used to categorize people in society here and now, which causes persons with disabilities, who are recognized as imperfect and not normal, want to have perfect and normal bodies. Jesus the slaughtered lamb always reminds us of who we are, how to accept ourselves, how to be in solidarity with others, and how to experience God's presence in the midst of suffering, injustices, and marginalization.

2. LALITHA, Jayachitra – *CSI Synod, Department of Christian Education*, India
Is Death of Jesus, the Death of Roman imperial Nationalism? A Postcolonial Inquiry into the Book of Revelation

Does the book of Revelation visualize the conversion of the nations of the world to worship one true God (7:9-10)? Does really the conversion of all the nations take place? If so, how? Is the conversion of the nations of the world envisaged as end of nationalism that gives rise to hegemony and unaccountable authoritarianism? Does the Christology of slaughtered lamb ransoming every tribe, language, people and nation by his blood (5:9) provide a pointer to the death of Roman imperial nationalism? Does the vision of people from every tribe, language and nation worshipping before the throne of lamb in 7:9 indicate a counter-challenge to the Roman empire? This paper is an attempt to do a postcolonial inquiry into the early Christian churches in Asia Minor in the first century Palestine under Roman captivation that was struggling to negotiate with the structures of Roman imperial nationalism. This paper works on the presupposition that the death of Jesus marked the death of Roman imperial nationalism as far as the seer of the book of Revelation is concerned. The inhabitants of the earth possess the potential to hear the eternal Gospel towards repentance and worship of God. Therefore, they do not require to remain the worshippers of the Beast always, but can become God's worshippers too. This is evident from 14:6, where those who live on the earth are from "every nation and tribe and language and people" The shift from a collective "inhabitants of the earth" to specific attribution to nation, tribe, language and people indicates a universalistic approach, which

in turn ensures salvation accessed by all the nations posing a direct link to the end of particularity of Roman imperial nationalism. The theology of the Book of Revelation, as I propose to explain in this paper, also provides pointers to anti-nationalist nuances in the text. Endurance in the face of the deceit and the allure of civilization is required for pledging allegiance to God and his messiah. Further, radical monotheism and the cosmic rule of Christ point to theologising the reign of God beyond narrow national boundaries. The transformation of those who trust Jesus and of the Cosmos also go beyond the narrow nuances of particular nationalistic tendencies toward a universalistic reign of God.

**3. Ebojo, Edgar Battad - *United Bible Societies/Philippine Bible Society, Philippines*
*Empires and the Living Texts: Biblical Manuscripts as a Microcosmic Paradigm for Asian Eisegesis***

Many ancient manuscripts of the Bible exhibit Asian provenance. Ironically, it is surprisingly rare that Asian biblical scholarship and theology appeal to these ancient manuscripts in our pursuit of understanding Christianity better—originally an Asian faith (re-)transmitted through the West in Asia. The chief goal of this paper is to explore that untapped resource and hopefully generate interest in amalgamating historical biblical documents from Asia (and those they influenced) with current Asian interpretive models and approaches, which potentially can methodologically help in developing/affirming Asian theologies and hermeneutics. This proposed method operates on the assumption that ancient biblical manuscripts are a microcosmic hermeneutical paradigm of how early Christians (most of whom were “Asians”) might have actually practiced and (re-)interpreted their received dogma about Jesus Christ and his teachings, in order to keep the message of the Gospel relevant to their changing multifaceted contexts, including the growth and expansion of their faith within the Roman Empire and the “virtual empires” that were built as a consequence. As such, the textual, physical, and paratextual features of these manuscripts, together with the underlying socio-cultural milieus they silently embed in their transmission history, will be profiled, to serve as an interpretive foil in engaging and assessing some of the articulated characteristics of Asian theology and biblical scholarship thus far. A brief theological reflection will be offered ultimately on how this scientific methodology based on these “living texts” can alternatively and sensibly engage in the diverse socio-cultural issues and concerns that the contemporary churches of Christ in Asia face every day.

Session III c: Empire and the Hebrew Bible – (Room 3H – Level 3)

Presiding, SOESILO, Daud – *United Bible Societies, Indonesia*

**I. WONG, Sonia Kwok - *The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong*
*The Solomonic Kingdom as a Collective Narcissistic Discourse of the Imperialized Yehudites***

This paper argues that the Solomonic Kingdom (1 Kgs 1:1–12:24) is a collective narcissistic discourse of the imperialized Yehudites. The Solomonic Kingdom reflects their ambitious wish of ethnic grandeur and to take the place of the Persian imperializer as the dominator of all. The pericope contains literary devices, such as hyperbolic expressions, amplifying adjectives/adverbs, the formulae of comparison/incomparability, grossly exaggerated figures, and the formula of innumerability that are commonly found in the imperial aggrandizing discourse of ancient times. It conveys a sense of ethnic superiority through an image of a magnificent, extravagant, and unprecedented empire. The paper will show that the combined characterization of Solomon and Rehoboam, Solomon’s alter ego, bears all nine narcissistic traits of pathological narcissism listed in the DSM-V. As the metonymic Israel, Solomon and Rehoboam are semiotized and encapsulated in the Yehudites’ sense of collective identity. The narcissistic discourse of the Solomonic Kingdom allowed the imperialized readers/auditors to escape from the brutality and discriminatory reality of Persian imperialism, in order to temporarily sustain a sense of self-worthiness and ethnic worthiness through a subject-object

(imperialized-imperializer) displacement. The paper will trace back the psychic source of the collective narcissistic desires to the imperialism-rooted inferiority complex. It argues that the Solomon Kingdom reflects an attempt to resist a disintegration of ethnic integrity by portraying the ethnic collective to which one belongs as the “superior” and idealized other. The imperialized Yehudites’ wishful thinking of taking the place of the imperializer may have functioned to alleviate the psychological pain caused by real or perceived threats imposed by imperialism, allowing the imperialized readers/auditors to discharge the negative affects associated with the subjugated position.

2. **YOO, Yoon Jong** - *Pyeongtaek University*, South Korea

Reading Historical Zedekiah and Contemporary Korea with Anti-Imperialism

This paper pursues the historical, political, and theological issues during 598-586 BCE (Zedekiah period). During this period, there were very complex historical, political, and theological contexts. Historically, some Judeans were deported to Babylon. Politically, high officials in Judah were trying to escape from the Babylonian rule by alliances of neighboring countries. Theologically, there were many conflicts such as true and false prophecy. It implies that God’s will was not clear. In the beginning of the sixth century, Judah entered in the turmoil of imperial order in ancient Near East. Historically in the national crisis, it is very common that many solutions were suggested for overcoming the crisis. The small Judah was striving to survive from the imperial expansion. There were three major groups: pro-Babylon, pro-Egypt, self-defenders. In the 21st century, Korea is also surrounded by China, Japan, Russia, and America. We have also different groups for overcoming the crisis. This paper aims to illustrate the political and theological implications of contemporary Korea through the analysis of historical, political, and theological issues during Zedekiah period (598-586 BCE).

3. **Brett, Mark G** – *Whitley College, University of Divinity*, Melbourne, Australia

Postcolonial Interpretation of Isaiah 40–66

The mixture of prophetic poetry in second part of the scroll of Isaiah simultaneously resists and mimics imperial power. For example, the divine response to the servant’s lament in Isa 49:4 suggests that the mission of this figure is not only to restore Jacob’s tribes, but also to offer 'light to the nations' (49:5–6). This recalls the first statement of the servant’s mission to bring 'justice to the nations' in Isa 42:1–4. A number of scholars have argued that these 'servant songs' reflect Persian legal ideology, and postcolonial interpretation could characterize these texts as examples of mimicry. This paper will suggest that Isaiah 40–66 envisages a restored Zion that includes reconciliation with *gōlāh* kinship groups, but also invites the nations to be part of a recreated earth, all on condition that Yhwh’s sovereignty is duly recognized. There is no final submission to Persian interests, as some have suggested, in spite of the overt celebration of Cyrus’ messianic status in 44:28–45:5.

Session III d: Textual negotiations – (Room 4E – Level 4)

Presiding, **LEE, Lydia** – *Northwestern University*, South Africa

I. **KIM, Koowon** - *Reformed Graduate University*, South Korea

‘Three Kingdoms’ and David’s Rise to Kingship

This paper tries to expound several episodes in the story of David (I Samuel 16-31) by comparison with relevant episodes from *Three Kingdoms*, a medieval Chinese novel, just as biblical scholars often do so with

ancient Near Eastern parallels. *Three Kingdoms* portrays a turbulent period at the end of the Han dynasty (206 BC—220 AD), when heroes and warlords competed for the future of China, changing alliances. Its convoluted plot is full of “drama and suspense, valor and cowardice, loyalty and betrayal, power and subtlety, chivalry and statecraft the obligations of ruler and subject, conflicts in the basic ties of brotherhood and lineage” (quote from Forward by John S. Service in Moss Roberts trans., *Three Kingdoms: A Historical Novel* Attributed to Luo Guanzhong (Berkeley, LA: University of California Press, 1994). It still influences the ways that Chinese, Koreans, Japanese, and Vietnamese think of politics, war, and human relations. Koreans like to say, “one is not worthy of conversation until he reads *Three Kingdoms* three times.” The story of David recalls many episodes in *Three Kingdoms*, in that both are in the essence of the plot removing chaos in the country and establishing a kingdom or a dynasty that ushered in a period of peace. I hope that my paper will serve as a catalyst for other similar efforts to contextualize the Bible for Asian Christians.

2. MENG, Zenhua (Jeremiah) - *Nanjing University, China*

Stockholm Syndrome of the Oppressed? Biblical and Modern Asian Fans of Oppressive Empires

Scholars have shown great interest in the issue of the relations between Israelites and the ancient empires they actively or passively dealt with, with special focus on the situation of the Restoration period. When Yehud became a relatively unimportant part of the Persian regime, the Achaemenids shaped and formulated their policy on Yehud for the Empire’s own interest and showed no more mercy than their predecessors. However, the biblical authors, many of whom were favored and supported by the Persians, endeavored to venerate the foreign rulers in their work and depicted Cyrus as a generous and benevolent Savior of the Israelites. The typical brutal, evil and wicked character of foreign monarch does not apply to Persian kings. And modern readers are interested to find out explanations for this unusual phenomenon.

Such stories also took place in Asia, where most countries or regions used to be colonized by foreign empires. For example, Taiwan, which was ceded in full sovereignty to the Empire of Japan by the Treaty of Shimonoseki in 1895, was then under Japanese colonial rule for half a century and suffered from the tyrannical control. Despite the many anti-Japanese risings, it is noteworthy that a number of Taiwanese did express their disgusting praise to the Japanese colonists and even identified themselves as real Japanese, both during the colonial period and after. This seems to be typical Stockholm syndrome, that the above-mentioned Israelites and Taiwanese have developed “hostage’s positive feelings towards their captor” and believed in the humanity of the perpetrators. However, if we carefully analyze the context of the fans of the foreign empires, there may be more complicated reasons for their ideas and behaviors. A cross-textual reading of the two stories will shed light on each other and help understand the complexity of this phenomenon.

3. LI, Kwan-Hung Leo - *Divinity School of Chung Chi College, CUHK, Hong Kong*

Nurturing Dialogue in Asian Context: Bakhtinian Perspective on Dialogizing the Decalogue and the Dialogic Authority of the Hebrew Bible

Many commentators view the Decalogue as a universal and absolute Divine commandment, thus taken as an authoritative command in the Hebrew Bible. However, the two narratives in the book of Exodus and Deuteronomy which give rise to the two different versions of the Decalogue suggest that the reception of the Decalogue is also dependent on its context. The Decalogue does not necessary to be taken as universal or absolute. Putting the Decalogue back into its literary and historical context, this paper will use Bakhtin’s concept of “dialogized heteroglossia” to explore the different voices in the proclamation of the Decalogue. It is hope that such novelization reading of the law-giving in the Hebrew Bible can create the possibility of understanding the Divine authority as a kind of dialogic authority. In conclusion, this paper will propose how in the Asian pluralistic context one can engage in constructive dialogue with the Decalogue and other

laws in the Pentateuch, but without accepting an uncritical authoritarian coercion (or Imperialistic) reception of the Hebrew Bible.

GROUP PHOTO and LUNCH – 12:30 – 1:45 pm @ SVD Hall

CONCURRENT SESSION IV: 1:45 - 4:00 pm

Session IV a - Bible, Empire, and Japan I - (Room 3F – Level 3)

Presiding, CLARKSON, Shannon – *Yale Divinity School, USA*

1. KINUKAWA, Hisako - Center for Feminist Theology and Ministry, Japan

Resistance and Resilience Shown by Women against Japanese Imperialism (Mark 16:1-8)

I would like to pay attention to the Japanese women who stood against the military government during the time of imperial Japan. It is very unusual to find such women living under the ultra-patriarchal and subjugated situation of women during that period. I see a parallel phenomenon taking place when Jesus was hung and all the males fled away fearful of the imperial power and in danger of losing their lives.

2. VANDERBILT, Gregory - *Gadjah Mada University – Indonesia*

Romans 13:1-7 in Imperial Japan and the Making of a Postwar Conscientious Christian Citizen: Miyata Mitsuo at 90

The Japanese Christian public intellectual (one of the few remaining) and scholar of political thought Miyata Mitsuo (1928-) turns ninety in June. Miyata encountered Christian faith as a seventeen-year old student in summer 1945 and went on to study in the liberal modernist school of thought at Tokyo University before beginning a long career at Tohoku University where he studied the history of twentieth-century German political thought and theology in order to understand his own Japan, a striking intellectual effort. He became a particular devotee of both Bonhoeffer and Barth and visited the latter once during his student days. Miyata and his wife also devoted themselves to student evangelism in the form of the famously rigorous Miyata Bible Study which continued for several decades, though he has not been a regular church participant. In 2003 he published what he called his most significant book and his "personal prehistory," a history of Japanese interpretations of Roman 13:1-7 from the relegalization of Christianity in 1873 through the Asia-Pacific War, considering how Japanese Christians, as a minority always suspect in their loyalties, interpreted this text--about submission to authority and conscience--in imperial Japan, which requires us to think about both the theocratic Emperor system and the Empire of colonization in Asia. (My translation was published in 2009 as *Authority and Obedience: Romans 13:1-7 in Modern Japan* (Peter Lang). This paper examines Miyata's career as a public theologian (without a theology degree, in a country sometimes enamored with theology but without many Christians) and spiritual citizen grappling with the after-effects of the Japanese Empire and the importance of his contribution to the current moment of danger Prime Minister Abe presents for Japan and its constitution.

3. MAEKAWA, Yutaka - *Kwansei Gakuin University, Japan*

Jesus' word overcame imperialistic power (John 4:21)

This study examines the context in John 4:21 and therein the parallels found in 20th century East Asia. In Jesus' time, the Jews and the Samaritans hated each other. Jesus was a Jew and thus prioritized Jewish beliefs (John 4:22). Accordingly, Jesus did not acknowledge worship that took place at "this mountain" or Mount

Gerizim. Jesus stated that the hour was coming when they would not worship at the mountain or in Jerusalem. one may ask what the implication of this verse is. In the 1st century, Judaea was oppressed by the Roman emperor. Though troubled by the Romans, the Jews who themselves suppressed the Samaritans were in a sense their compatriots. The Jews passed on their own customs to them. This situation in Judaea resembled Japan during the first half of the 20th century. Oppressed by the great western powers, Japan developed itself and dominated Asian countries by severely pressurizing them. Although there were a variety of cultures in the oppressed countries, Japan forced the Japanese lifestyle on every aspect of the lives of the oppressed. One may ask what the Bible says about such conditions. Jesus expected *basileia tou theou*, the rule of God Himself who would intervene in this world. Jesus hated the earthly temple because it did not save people. This, in essence, explains the context that they will worship “neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem” (John 4:21). The verse criticizes both “suppressed people who suppress others,” such as the Judeans, Japanese, and rulers with superpowers like the Roman Empire and the great western powers. The self-styled God-given power of the rulers does not prove their justice. In John 4:21, Jesus recommended transcendental power; thus, the verse can be understood as overcoming imperialistic power.

Session IV b: Bible and Power – (Room 3G - Level 3)

Presiding, LISTIJABUDI, Daniel K. - *Duta Wacana Christian University*, Jogjakarta, Indonesia

I. BHASKER, Gregory – The United Theological College, India

Ochloi, Ethnoi, and Barbaroi in The Acts of the Apostles: “Orientalist” Tendencies?

This paper is an attempt to foster discussions on the “orientalist” tendencies in the Acts of the Apostles. The way the words *ochloi*, *ethnoi* and *barbaroi* have been used in the Acts of the Apostles calls for critical enquiry. What was the role of the redactor, or the author in engaging these terms? Do these terms merely refer to indigenous peoples, as in the case of the people of Malta, for instance, or do they reveal a ‘naming’ of the inferior ‘other’? My study proceeds from Edward Said’s view that the presentation of the oriental by the occidental from a superior standpoint is essentially racist, imperialist and ethnocentric. Using this yardstick, several words, including *ochloi*, *ethnoi* and *barbaroi* in the Acts of the Apostles seem to betray a sense of complacency in the mind-set of the composer/redactor/author of this text. I believe, that a postcolonial reading of the Acts of the Apostles, particularly of texts that contain the above mentioned terms, could uncover “orientalist” tendencies in this ancient literature. Such a reading would illustrate how these nomenclatures mostly depict ignorance, juvenility, gullibility and inferiority of the subject concerned. In this exercise, the questions I wish to pose are: is there a similarity between the use of the words *ochloi/ethnoi/barbaroi* in Acts and “oriental” in the colonial context? Could the redactor/author or even major characters like Peter and Paul be considered as “orientalists”, in the sense of Said? Can a postcolonial reading of the Acts of the Apostles help to identify imperialistic perspectives of the early church?

2. VANGURI, Manikya Rao – *Andhra Christian Theological College*, India

Bible and Empire in Asia: Indian Christians and Religion and Power in India

In the Acts of the Apostles the author Luke narrates the socio-religious position of the nascent Church in the Roman world. After Paul’s encounter with Roman officials at Philippi, Luke narrates Paul’s preaching of the gospel in Jewish synagogue in Thessalonica and its results. Paul spoke about the gospel of Christ based on the Scriptures. As a result, some Jews and a great multitude of Greeks and some prominent women believed in Jesus. But the jealous Jewish opponents stirred up the crowds to attack on Paul and Silas. When they did not find Paul and Silas in synagogue, they dragged Jason and some brothers to the city officials.

Jason and the others are not imprisoned but must put a bond. This was designed to support their position and loyal to Rome. Paul and Silas were accused of disrupting the Roman Empire and Jews presented them as a general threat to Roman society. They also charged Paul and Silas with sedition for these trouble makers reject the Caesar's rule and decrees by supporting another king named Jesus (Acts 17:7). Acts 17:5 Jews attacked Jason's house. Acts 17:6 The Jews dragged Jason and some believers before the city authorities. Acts 17:7 The Jews claimed that the missionaries are acting contrary to the decrees of the Emperor. Thus Luke gives a various pictures of the Jewish opponents from Jewish societies in all towns and cities and of the Roman officials who administered the Roman society and the nations were not favored to the Christians during first Century world in the Acts of the Apostles. **Unity in Diversity among Christians is dire need:** Though there are many and regular attacks on Christians in India, none of the states as well as National Political parties and Central Government did not condemn the brutal attacks of fundamental Hindus. One important thing to notice is, if any denomination was attacked by any fundamental Hindu group, the other denominations of Christians could not respond and condemn the incidents that occurred. So, this paper is an attempt to explore the factors for disunity among Christians and to give some kind of direction to the Christians for unity.

3. LATUMETEN, Nyssa Janice - *Jakarta Theological Seminary, Jakarta, Indonesia*
Wounds That Still Remain: Looking at cases of violence against Papuan women and Tamar (2Sam.13) through the lens of trauma

Patriarchy still a hold on our present world by appreciating violence against women. Underlying this reality is a belief system which assumes that the role of women is to support men, prepare food, bear children, and behave in ways subordinate to men run smoothly and attractively in many cultures. This paper aims to look up the horrible stories from Papuan women with the similar stories inside the bible, the story of "The rape of Tamar" (2Sam.13). Tamar remained in the unending suffering until her death. The title of this paper "Wounds that still remain" points to the ongoing suffering of Papuan women victims that resonates with the wound of Tamar. Hierarchical, patriarchal society that makes some women to be more vulnerable to carry unrelieved suffering in their lives because they are women. The Bible, who contained so many unjust stories of violence against women, in some cases used to legitimate violence against women. This paper details the violence its bases in indigenous and religious structures and a way of it through scriptural renewal. The introduction outlines the character and impact of domestic violence. Part one consists of facts about violence against women in Papua, the vulnerability women endure as potential victims of domestic violence. This part shows data from previous research, and analysis of the causes. Part two consists of a critique of the patriarchal structure of Papua culture and of how its traits are enhanced or justified by Christian narratives drawing upon feminist theories to elaborate my critique. Part three considers the story of Tamar, which is often used as a way to justify violence against women, but which can be read different reading and so offers a way out of this oppressive system through the sacred texts.

Session IV c: Bible in Korea – (Room 3H – Level 3)

Presiding, LEE, Won - *Calvin College, Grand Rapids, MI, USA*

I. PARK, Hye Kyung - *Chang Jung Christian University, Taiwan*
Minjung Mothers' Prayer: The Hermeneutical Encounters among Hannah, Mary, and Lee So-Seon
 Jeon Tai Il's self-immolation in protest in working conditions of the Korean labors on Nov. 13th, 1970 motivated the Korean Theologians to initiate the studies on Minjung Theology. They were awakened by Jeon's sacrifice and became Minjung Theologians. They highlighted this historical marker in the academic

areas, and developed their own theologies by criticizing and challenging the oppressions in the Korean society. In addition, they hermeneutically read and study the Bible in the Korean contexts, and dedicated their life to develop Minjung Theology. However, the Christian research of Minjung women has been overlooked in the Minjung Theology studies. Before focusing on Jeon Tai Il's monumental influence on Minjung Theology, I would like to suggest the life and belief of Mrs. Lee So-Seon (1929-2011), the mother of Jeon Tae Il. Most of all, she was the most faithful Christian who followed her son's last will for the Korean Minjung. Even though she did not graduate from an academic institution, she definitely analyzed the situation of Minjung in Korea and participated in social movements for 41 years. Thus, she symbolically became a mother of Minjung. Her prayer for hope and strength encourage people to look forward to a better future in Korea, and seek the Kingdom of God in the world. Her prayers are able to do away the yoke of oppression, and intensify the oppressed people's cry for justice. In this paper, I will demonstrate that the theological and hermeneutical interpretation of the mothers' prayers—Hannah (1 Samuel 2:1-10) and Mary (Luke 1:46-55)—which can be intertwined with the pray and life of Lee So-Seon. This analytical study enables us to understand how we read the biblical texts of mother's prayer in the Korean women contexts, empowering women for wise life.

2. **CHO, Jaechon** - *Jeon Ju University*, Hanam City, Korea

Both Cherished and Neglected - A Critical Assessment of the Biblical Exposition in Korean Pulpits

Since its nascent stages the Korean church has kept the scripture at the center of its liturgy and life. The Bible-centered nature of the worship is attributed partly to Confucianism, the dominant philosophical stream in the Korean culture and partly to the denominational background of the majority of the Western missionaries in Korea. The heavy presence of the reformed or presbyterian tradition is manifest in the order and content of all worship services including the Sunday worship. The centrality of the Bible and the keen interest in Biblical exposition is presumed to contribute to the growth and strength of the Korean church. Indeed, the level of Bible literacy and the zeal for the study of the Bible among average members of the church is remarkable. Yet, it is equally notable how easily and frequently the Bible is abused or used in disguise for propagandas so nonbiblical in nature in the Korean pulpits. The paper attempts first to observe the ways in which the Bible is used in the overall life of the church in Korea, then to analyze the dominant theological or hermeneutical assumptions at work in the sermons of popular preachers in Korea in the light of the standard exegetical procedures taught in the Korean seminaries. This study also sketches the overall characters of Korean biblical scholarship, for it must have affected the unique nature of the Biblical exposition employed by Korean pastors in one way or another.

3. **YANG, Guen Seok Yang** - *SungKongHoe University*, Seoul, Korea

An Intertextual Experiment in the Late 18th Century Korea

The establishment of the first Korean Christian Church at the end of 18th century was the result of a kind of intertextual encounter between Korean Confucianism and Chinese books about Christianity. Here, Korean Confucianism signifies a contextualized type of Confucianism, named Sir-hak. Sir-hak was a distinctive Confucian academic movement or development started in the 17th century. Its purpose was to reformulate Confucianism in the light of the socio-political reality of Chosun. On the other hand, the Chinese books about Christianity were books written by Jesuit missionaries and Chinese Confucian Christians in the process of cross-cultural encounter between them, which began at the end of the 16th century in China. The theology of Jesuit missionaries of that time was known as Thomistic Catholicism. All those books, therefore, were written in the Chinese context of intertextual encounters between Confucianism and the Thomistic Catholicism. This Thomistic Catholicism, which had been intertextually restated in the Chinese context of

Confucianism, was introduced into Korea. Thus, the distinctive intertextual hermeneutical context in Korea was made up of the ‘Thomistic Catholicism restated in China’ and Sir-hak, a contextualized Confucianism of Korea. This distinctive intertextual encounter continued for more than one century without any direct intervention from missionaries. Finally, a group of Sir-hak Confucians came to the decision to establish the first Christian Church in Korea in 1784. My main concern is to examine the biblical hermeneutics related to this intertextual process. What distinctive hermeneutical system to appropriate Christianity and the Bible was developed in the intertextual encounter? What were the hermeneutical characteristics of the distinctive Korean theology which was developed in the intertextual process? Finally, what was the distinctive method or strategy of biblical reading involved in the theology of the first Christian Church in Korea? These are questions to be asked in my paper.

TEA BREAK – 4:00 – 4:30 pm

CONCURRENT SESSION V: 4:30-6:45 pm

Session V a: Textual Politics and Political Wrestles – (Room 3F – Level 3)

Presiding, GOH, Elaine - *Seminari Theoloji Malaysia (Malaysia Theological Seminary)*, Malaysia

I. NADELLA, Raj, Columbia Theological Seminary, Atlanta, USA

To Each Its Own Strategy: Engaging the Empire Disparately

This paper analyzes the disparate depictions of British officials in the South Indian state of Andhra Pradesh in the 19th and 20th centuries, as seen in the vernacular Telugu literature as well as in arts and statues. Highlighting how communities and caste groups at various ends of the social ladder engaged the British in their own ways, it argues that the variegated portrayals of the British reflect not just contrasting perceptions of the consequences of the British rule, many of which were characterized by ambivalence, but also the creative strategies some communities employed to deal with the realities of empire within their political and social contexts. The paper argues that such diverse portrayals parallel the varying depictions of Pontius Pilate, and other Roman officials, in the synoptic gospels. What were the factors—social, political, economic, etc—that potentially influenced various communities to respond to the reality of empire in such different ways—in the first century Roman context and in Andhra Pradesh in the 19th and 20th centuries? How might the two contexts be similar to and, at the same time, distinct from each other? How can the two contexts illuminate each other and offer a more nuanced study of both?

2. SUNDARAM, Sobanaraj, *Madras Theological Seminary & College*, Chennai, India

Rereading Paul’s Concept of Nationalism in the RSS-BJP Era in India Today

Both the Old and New Testaments justify the existence of nations as a God-ordained part of human existence. According to Rowland Croucher, “when the Bible speaks of ‘nations’ it is primarily referring to people groups defined not so much by artificial political boundaries, as by ethnic origin, language, group loyalty, custom and religion.” However, as the postcolonial theory point out, colonial powers use “various social and ideological mechanisms” “to maintain hegemony over the minds and bodies of colonized peoples.” Nationalism has evolved over the centuries as an ideology (belief system) which claims supreme loyalty from individuals for the nation and the state that represents it. A closer look at Pauline passages show that Paul’s

religiosity is closely tied up with his Jewish nationalism. Before his near Damascus religious experience, Paul's religiously charged nationalistic impulses are overtly present in his antagonism against Christians; Paul the Pharisee "violently persecuted" the followers of Jesus and demonstrated more zeal "for the traditions of [his] ancestors" (Gal 1:13–14; cf. Phil 3:4–6). However, Paul's nationalism does not weaken even after his new religious experience. While retaining his Jewish nationalistic impulses Paul moves toward polycentric nationalism. Paul's new religious experience enabled him to toe in line with the biblical notion of nationalism which considers the existence of multiple nations as God's plan for humanity on the planet earth. Today we Indians are faced with the reality of religiously manufactured nationalism designed and promoted by centric Hindutva forces. BJP-RSS brand of Hindutva nationalism is aggressively and vehemently exploiting the majority Hindu religious sentiments to promote a mono-culture and monocentric nationalism at the cost of long cherished ancient cultures and minority people groups. The Hindutva brand of religious nationalism is dangerous which will not only destroy the diverse cultures of the great nation India it will also curtail the freedom of the minority communities and other weaker sections of Indian polity. Hence this paper seeks to advocate polycentric nationalism drawing hints from Paul's nationalistic impulses and his shift from monocentric nationalism to polycentric nationalism to address the concerns of minority people groups who struggle to retain their ethnic, linguistic, social, and religious identities in our great mother land India.

3. SENG JA, Layang, *Kachin Theological College and Seminary, Myanmar*

Compassion as an imperative tackle in establishing harmonious Empire in Myanmar

First century Judaism was highly fractionalized. The elite was divided between groups such as the Pharisees, Saducees, Sicarii, Zealots, Essenes, Priests and Scribes. Social differences were huge and compassion for the weaker had largely disappeared. Thus, the majority of Jews at this time were like a flock of sheep without a shepherd. Moved by sympathy for the marginalised, the poor, sick and needy, Jesus provides us with a liberation program in which each of us can fulfill our true humanity and live together in harmony. This presents a challenge to Kachin leaders, the so-called Democratic government of Aung San Su Kyi and the military regime, who each in their various ways promote self-interest at the expense of the majority of Citizens of Myanmar, who still live in misery

Session V b: Yesterday's Texts and Today's Problems – Room 3G – Level 3)

Presiding, BHASKER, Gregory – *The United Theological College, India*

I. MONIRAJ, Aravind Jeyakumar – University of Hamburg, Germany

Creation" in Deutero-Isaiah a Syntactic and Semantic Analysis of Isaiah 41:17-20 with Eco-Theological Implications

Creation" is one of the significant themes in the Hebrew Bible and this appears essentially in three literary genres, namely, as a mythical narrative in Genesis 1 and 2, as hymns in the book of Psalms; and in the wisdom literature (for example in the book of Job and Proverbs) and in the prophetic books. The assertion that Yahweh, the God of Israel, created everything in the cosmos is expressed throughout the Hebrew Bible in a multi-dimensional fashion. However, the creation language in Deutero-Isaiah, which refers to Yahweh as the sole creator of the universe and His ability to create, re-create and renew the whole of creation, or to transform the nature, is one of the most distinctive features which is specifically found in Isaiah (esp. in chaps. 40-48) when it is compared with the other books of the Hebrew Bible. Therefore, the researcher opines that the significant usage of the creation language and the presentation of Yahweh as Creator demands a deeper investigation in order to understand the role and function of the creation-theme. Isaiah 41:17-20 is one such passage where creation imageries are used to emphasize that Yahweh, who is the

creator can transform the economic conditions by converting the dry land into a fertile land like transforming a barren desert into a cultivable land. With this background the researcher attempts to analyze the above mentioned passage and the presentation is divided into the following way: Translation of the passage is followed by analyzing the structure, form and historical setting which is further developed into a detailed exposition of the passage which finally leads to the ecological implications of the exegeted verses in the context of global ecological crisis.

2. SOO HOO, Gilbert – *Singapore Bible College, Singapore*

Loving Sister Creation in Her Suffering: I am My Sister's Keeper in SE Asia (Rom 8:17-25)

A reading of Rom 8:17-25 expands the scope of our relationships to regard creation as a sister, fellow sufferer and heir. Ecologically, she is hurting with her vast natural resources vanishing in SE Asia. Paul personifies nature as groaning and waiting eagerly for future glory as we do. Jesus commanded his disciples to love one another so that all may know that they were his disciples (John 13:34-35). If I may paraphrase our Lord, how will the world know that we are Jesus' disciples except through our love for one another, for humanity, and for nature? But as Jesus called for mutual love, nature is to love us in return, fostering an interdependent relationship. I believe nature—although hampered by the curse and the effects of human exploitation and pollution-inducing practices—still has the capacity to “love” us in the sense of providing us pleasure through its beauty and recreational opportunities and sustenance. In return, we love our sister through nurturing her back to ecological health.

3. HUR, Joomee - *Johannes Gutenberg University, Germany*

Modern Slavery in Asia, the Colonial Ideology in the Bible and Radical Engagement beyond Connivance

Musa W. Dube has detected double standards in the story of the Exodus within the Hebrew Bible. One can see both a hermeneutics of liberation from the empire of Egypt and a hermeneutics of colonization in the land of Canaan. The ambivalent attitudes of the Bible with regard to the issues of race, ethnicity, gender and class undermine the authority of the bible as a book of truth and demand that Christians read the text critically and apply the hermeneutics of suspicion. In the Asian context, some formerly colonized nations have been transformed into economically advanced industrialized nations. Today, it is often reported that they are exploiting the people and the natural resources of developing nations. In a postcolonial context, Asia faces the more complicated situation to struggle not only against the former colonizers but also against the newly emerged internal opponents, as new neocolonial powers and Asia's emerging economies should examine their two-fold postcolonial identity- the formerly colonized but the present colonizer. In an epidemic of modern slavery in Asia, e.g. domestic workers and migrant workers, do Churches raise their prophetic voice of social justice? Do they practice their political pietism and Christian quietism (Allan Boesak and Cutiss Paul Deyoung) based on the controversial scriptures without condemnation of the institution of slavery that is originally designed to uphold the imperial order? This paper will focus on the ideology of slavery as a method of colonization in the biblical texts and encourage more Asian Christian communities to leave their connivance and to join the radical engagement of the social justice in its fight against modern slavery.

Session V c: Queer Readings in and for Asia – (Room 3H – Level 3)

Presiding, LIEW, Tat-siong Benny – *College of the Holy Cross, USA*

1. SULEEMAN, Stephen - *Jakarta Theological Seminary, Indonesia*

Queer themes in the Indonesian tradition

To many people in Indonesia, LGBT is a foreign idea. Many believe that it is a concept imported from abroad, or it is a subversive effort initiated by western countries to destroy Indonesia. However, if we study Indonesian culture more carefully, we would be able to see that LGBT has always been present in Indonesia. The study of *bissu* among the Bugis people in South Sulawesi, the concept of *Srikandi* in the Javanese wayang, the carvings on the wall of some remaining Hindu temples in Indonesia, etc. are proof that queer has always been at home in Indonesia. The coming of monotheistic religions (Islam and Christianity) has marginalized and erased this concept. That is why it is important to recover these cultural ideas so that we can see that humans are not a simple binary of man and woman, and that we will be enabled to accept differences in sexual orientation and gender identity and expression

2. WONG, Pearl – *Queer Theology Academy, Hong Kong*

Liberating the Bible: Queer Biblical Interpretation in Asian context

This paper demonstrates how queer (LGBTQI+) Christians (from Hong Kong, Taiwan and China) "reclaim" the Bible by creative and constructive interpretation from their own perspectives. By affirming queer experience, they not only liberate themselves from scriptures that are traditionally oppressive to LGBTQI+ people, but also liberate the Bible from homophobia, transphobia, oppression, misogyny, and hetero/binary gender system. In contemporary biblical interpretation, we can no longer ignore interpretations from the perspectives of marginalized, feminist, womanist, black, gay and lesbian, postcolonial, Asian, African Diaspora, in other words, interpreting the Bible is no longer dominated by a particular group of people traditionally white heterosexual males. For the past thirty years, queer theologies and queer biblical interpretation have gradually come of age as a result of many courageous lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex people who come out to challenge the essentialist notions of sex, gender identity and sexuality. The development of queer theologies and queer biblical interpretation in the context of Hong Kong is in existence for less than ten years, and since 2014 to now, LGBTQI theologians, biblical scholars and pastors from Hong Kong, Taiwan and China met together to explore theology and interpret the Bible from their own queer experiences. As a result of the collaboration between these three regions, a book comprises of eighteen articles on queer interpretation of the Bible in Chinese language will be published this year. This paper will offer a review of the book in which the authors engage in a proactive approach with issues such as family diversity, intersectionality, polyamory, intersex in the Creation Story, sex workers and queer sexual ethics.

3. LEE, Yeong Mee – *Hanshin University, South Korea*

Reading the Book of Ruth as a story of queer family

The book of Ruth, as entitled, is a story of a woman who crossed boundaries of the traditional values, including values of the society(nation), patriarchal family institution, and heterosexuality. She was a Moabite woman who married to a Judahite man twice, once in her own country and then, in a foreign country. She was a widow without children but intentionally formed a single family of two women with her mother-in-law and later her own family through Boaz. She committed her love loyalty to another woman and was called as the woman like a man ('issat chail), designating her role as the head of household, supporting the living of her family, and as the ancestor of queer woman. The multi-layers of Ruth's identity allow the book to be read from various perspectives. This paper particularly focuses on Ruth as an unconventional woman who represents those who do not fit into the boxes of heterosexual patriarchal family system. It perceives that the

book of Ruth introduces a queer family, which is not based on the bond of heterosexual partnership and patrilineal blood line. It also suggests that the book shows a biblical model for an alternative love community, a new kind of family, that supports the outcasts from traditional heterosexual patriarchal family institution legally. For this purpose, the paper will first briefly overview the interpretations of the book from different perspectives. Then it will examine the book chapter by chapter to show how Ruth crossed the boundaries of heterosexual patriarchal institutional norms and form a queer family of two women along with a man of go'el. The Septuagint translated the Hebrew term, 'issat chail, to "woman like a man" in Proverbs 31:10.

4. HAVEA, Jione – Trinity Theological College, New Zealand
God did not let Jonah die?

This presentation sets off from the sexualizing of "death" by Derrida, Foucault et al (le petit-mort) in an exploration of reasons for why God did not let Jonah die. Who is the indecent character in Jonah 4? Jonah (assumed to be upright, moral, and pro-Judahite) raving over the sparing of Nineveh? The beast-mindful (4:11) God (also assumed to be upright, moral and pro-Judahite), not wanting Jonah to "die"? Were they indecent in different ways? And the obvious consequence: Why don't believers want/allow God to "die"?

DINNER – 6:45 – 8:00 pm @ SATI

19 JULY 2018

PLENARY SESSION 5: 8:15 – 9:30 AM (Auditorium – Level 5)

Presiding, BRETT, Mark - Whitley Theological College, University of Divinity, Melbourne, Australia

Keynote Presentation 3

CHOI, Jin Young - Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School, NY, USA.

Telling Our Own Stories in the Peripheries

People living in Asia and in diaspora face different, but often interrelated, challenges. In addition to the shared task of decolonization, Asian peoples have endured their own national, social, and ecological crises. On the other hand, Asian diasporas and their descendants residing in the peripheries of empire are not fully accepted by both their home countries and host countries and struggle against both cultural nationalism and racism. Joining in these transnational struggles, I read Matthew's story of Jesus, who at an early age experienced multiple displacements due to political causes, and the ensuing massacre of innocent children. The mothers' wailing for their lost children resonates with Asian peoples' struggles and their cries demonstrate not only their suffering and pains but also their subjectivity. Attending to these cries leads us to continue to work toward decolonization of biblical studies and beyond through telling our own stories and reclaiming our histories.

MORNING COFFEE – 9:30 – 10:00 am

PLENARY SESSION 6: "Teaching the Bible: Strategies and Tactics" – 10:00 - 11:30AM

Presiding, SITANGGANG, Asigor P. – *Jakarta Theological Seminary*, Indonesia

Panelists:

BHASKER, Gregory, *The United Theological College*, India

GOH, Elaine, *Seminari Teoloji Malaysia (Malaysia Theological Seminary)*, Malaysia

SOO HOO, Gilbert, *Singapore Bible College*, Singapore

LAYANG, Seng Ja, *Kachin Theological College and Seminary*, Myanmar

LISTIJABUDI, Daniel K., *Duta Wacana Christian University*, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

ZHANG, Cathy, *Renmin University*, China

PLENARY SESSION 7: 11:30 – 12:30 am - BUSINESS MEETING – (Auditorium - Level 5)

LUNCH – 12: 30 – 1: 45 pm @ SAAT

CONCURRENT SESSION VI – 1:45 -4:00 pm

Session VI a: Reading and Resistance: (Room 3F – Level 3)

Presiding, TJEN, Anwar. Indonesian Bible Society, Jakarta. Indonesia

I. KUNZ-LÜBCKE, Andreas - University of Applied Sciences for Intercultural Theology, Germany
Female resistance against the empire: Two Vietnamese and one Biblical female figures as symbols for anti-imperial resistance

Historiography presents a number of examples from Asia in which resistance against an empire is represented by heroines. Some prominent examples of female heroism belong to the two Vietnamese sisters Trung Trac and Trung Nhi, from the first century A.D. For their importance in the struggle against Chinese colonialism, both figures are considered as national heroes and identity-forming figures in collective Vietnamese memory. Similarly, the book of Judges provides us with the figure of Yael, a person who could also be interpreted as a symbol of female resistance against the empire. Jdc. 5 deals, in an ambivalent way, with the theme "woman and violence". On the one hand, the text discusses the issue of male sexual violence against women. On the other hand, the figure of Jael appears as a person who represents female activism and violence herself. This article tries to read Jdc. 5 in a postcolonial perspective. The text should be interpreted as an answer to the experiences of Ancient Near Eastern Colonialism and Imperialism. This includes also the appearance of motives which were used by the Ancient Near Eastern propaganda and ideology of war. The poem in Jdc. 5 represents imperialism and the resistance against it by two figures. While the figure of Sisera's mother represents imperialism and oppression, the figure of Jael represents resistance and justified violence. Jdc. 5 demonstrates the viewpoint of the oppressed who are confronted with (the ancient versions of) colonialism and imperialism. It also states that resistance sometimes may come from unexpected places, from a tent outside of one's

2. WILSON, Lindsay – *Ridley College*, Melbourne, Australia

Empire and the Joseph Narrative

While Genesis 37-50 is set in the context of the Egyptian empire, this paper will explore whether Empire and its concerns are in the driver's seat in the narrative. The institutions of empire (e.g. slavery, prison, centralised food storage, the court, Pharaoh) both restrict and drive much of the first half of the story dealing with Joseph's rise to power. Indeed his new position of imperial power both enables him to preserve life in time of famine, and to implement his plan for reconciliation within his family. But the goals of Joseph and of the narrative as a whole stretch far beyond imperial concerns. While empire in the setting in which Joseph and others must take action, the twin drives in the narrative of family reconciliation and survival of the line of promise, become more prominent than empire itself. The trappings of empire are used to further these goals, but the goals themselves become more prominent as the story progresses leaving empire to fade into the background. Furthermore, the rise of both Joseph and Judah—reflected in their words and (transformed) character, and in the family blessings they receive—pushes the thrust of the narrative to God's wider concerns, rather than to the status quo and preservation of imperial privilege. The narrative as a whole announces that empire must be engaged with, but that empire is not allowed to set the agenda for the people of God.

3. MONIRAJ, Aravind Jeyakumar – *University of Hamburg*, Germany

Counter-Narratives as Stories of Resistance A Juxtaposed Reading of Selected Texts from Enûma Eliš and Isaiah 40-48

The constant usage of the “creation theme” in Isaiah 40-48 which upholds Yahweh as the unique creator and incomparable God, appears to be a counternarrative against the Babylonian epic *Enûma Eliš*. Therefore, this research attempts to understand the necessity – why the creation theme has been strongly used in these chapters (Isa. 40-48) and also the influence of the environment which initiated this counter-narrative in the milieu in which these chapters were uttered or composed. With this purview, the researcher tries to present this short analysis in the following way: the counter-narrative approach will be introduced, in order to demonstrate that counter-narratives emerged in various contexts to counter the grand narratives for which the “creation theme” in Isaiah 40-48 is an appropriate example; further, the formation of Deutero-Isaiah with special reference to chapters 40-48 will be presented; added to that, the significance of the “creation theme” in Isaiah 40-48 will be explored and finally selected verses from *Enûma Eliš* and Isaiah 40-48 will be juxtaposed to cognize the reason why Deutero-Isaiah penned this counter-narrative against the Babylonian religious and political ideologies in order to elevate Yahweh as creator and incomparable God.

Session VI b: Review of Sugirtharajah's 'Jesus in Asia' (Room 3G – Level 3)

Presiding, LEE, Yeong Mee – *Hanshin University*, South Korea

Panelists:

CHOI, Jin Young Choi, *Colgate Rochester Theological School*, NY, USA

KINUKAWA, Hisako, *Center for Feminist Theology and Ministry*, Japan

LIEW, Tat-siong Benny, *College of the Holy Cross*, USA

MELANCHTHON, Monica Jyotsna, *Pilgrim Theological College*, Melbourne, Australia

VEDHANAYAGAM, Vethakani, *Tamilnadu Theological Seminary*, Madurai, India

Respondent: SUGIRTHARAJAH, R. S., *University of Birmingham*, UK

Session VI c: Bible, Empire, and Japan II – (Room 3H - Level 3)

Presiding, CLARKSON, Shannon – *Yale Divinity School, USA*

1. KAWASE, Mai - *Rikkyo University, Japan*

Imperialism and the Hymns published during W. W. 2: a Hymnological Approach with an Emphasis on use of the word “MIKUNI” (Nation)

During W. W. 2, some hymns containing nationalistic and militaristic hymns were published in Japan. In these hymns, the words “KUNI (Nation)” or “MIKUNI (an honorific expression of a Nation)” were used for different context from the context of Christianity. In this research, I will argue about the expression of “KUNI” or “MIKUNI” from some viewpoints like below. 1. The usage of Kanji (Chinese character) / Hiragana (the Japanese cursive syllabary). In ordinary Japanese, the words ‘*み国*’ or ‘*御国*’ were used for “MIKUNI” in the context of Christianity, and ‘*皇国*’ is used for the meaning of “the nation of emperor”. Even though, 「*皇国*」 is used in some hymns. I will indicate the transition of this usage through the hymnal published before W. W. 2 to the hymnal published immediately after W. W. 2. 2. Bound meanings of “the Kingdom of God” and “real nation on the earth”. The word “MIKUNI” often had two meanings at once in these hymns. I will discuss about this kind of expression which we can understand as both of “the Kingdom of God” and “the real nation on the earth”. 3. Geographical expansion of the area of “MIKUNI”. In some hymns, “MIKUNI” indicates real territory of Japan. I will notice the change of these hymns in several hymnals published before / during / immediately after W. W. 2. This research will provide some unique viewpoints about congregational mind in the Japanese Imperialism through the hymns which sung by them.

2. SONNTAG, Mira - *Rikkyo University, Tokyo, Japan*

The re-invention of foreign traditions—“God’s Kingdom” as foundation for the Great Japanese Empire

This paper analyzes Japanese interpretations of the Christian notion of “God’s Kingdom” as found in Protestant journals of the early Meiji period. Lately, the established opinion that the Christian minority (approx. 1 % of the population) held little political influence and could not but submit to the outside pressure of the emerging nation state has been challenged. Among others Emily Anderson’s *Christianity and Imperialism in Modern Japan: Empire for God* (2014) highlights the central role of Christian arguments in the imagination, negotiation and subsequent self-affirmation of Japan as a modern empire in the early 20th century (i.e. the late Meiji, Taisho and early Showa periods). Yet, most studies in this direction still focus on Protestant discourses after 1891, that is, after the so-called clash of religion and education, which led to a setback of Christian development. In contrast to these studies, this paper looks at journals from 1875 to 1891 (from the *Collection of Christian Journals in Modern Japan*) and shows how early Protestants appropriated the foreign notion of in order to establish themselves in the global arena as a nation with a divine mission.

3. CHANG, Hee Won - *Charles Sturt University, Sydney, Australia*

Bible in occupied space; reading colonial Korea from (post)-colonial Australia

How do the colonized read the Bible? What biblical narratives appeal to them? How do I/we read the same biblical text in another occupied space? This paper aims to answer these questions by looking at some of the sermons produced from colonial Korea in 1920s, when Korea was under Japanese occupation. By taking a closer look at these sermons we are able to see how occupied Koreans actually used/read/heard/interpreted the Bible in times of occupation/colonization. At the same time this paper is an “interested reading” that

takes place in (post) colonial space of Australia by a migrant woman who is cautious about how I/we occupy space. So how are the biblical texts from colonial Korea interpreted in (post) colonial Australia?

TEA BREAK – 4:00 – 4:30 pm

FREE TIME: 4:30 – 7:00 pm

CLOSING FORMALITIES & DINNER – 7:00 - 9:00 pm - @ SAVANA

20 JULY 2018

BREAKFAST – 7:15-8:00 am

DEPARTURES – TRAVEL WELL! SEE YOU IN 2020!