

Together in Action for Peace and Reconciliation



Asia Pacific Students & Youth Week 2004

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ASIA-PACIFIC STUDENTS & YOUTH GATHERING

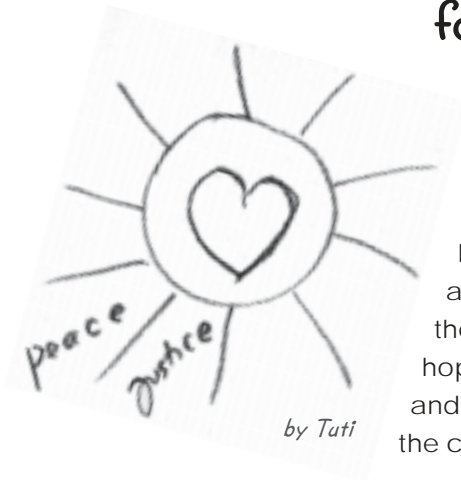
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Together in Action for Peace and Reconciliation



Amidst the deepening onslaught of the lopsided effects of globalisation on the economic, political and socio cultural lives on the majority of people from Asia Pacific, there is a great challenge for the Christian youth and youth of other faiths to critically study the signs of the times and to collectively raise our prophetic voice of hope and social change. Thus the Asia-Pacific Students and Youth Gathering (ASYG) 2004 that aims to respond to the crying signs of the time, is more than fitting and timely.

ASYG 2004 is more than just a national and regional gathering and event for youth from different denominations and faith, it is a coming together to collectively worship and celebrate the richness and diversity of our region. It is also an opportune time for us to study and reflect the current challenges to our faith and to our very own existence and survival.

The current crisis of a monopolised and hegemonic capital has given rise to many ill effects of globalisation is now resulting in wars, retaliations and armed conflicts that threaten the world's survival. The United States of America alone spends more than one billion dollars per day on their military machine, and there are still many billion-dollar defence budgets that have yet to be calculated on. This figure demonstrates how much money could be put into education, healthcare,



shelter and sufficient food for people around the world. The money needed to have a just world is available if only it were to be spent on saving rather than destroying life.

The breaking down of trade barriers as pushed by the World Trade Organisation (WTO) that brought forth the liberalisation and deregulation of many economies have caused the collapse of local industries and agriculture. Subsequently it creates unemployment, urban migration and lack of purchasing power further push many people in Asia Pacific down the poverty line. Educational institutions has lost its primary mission of advancing knowledge and personal development, but has come to be a major instrument of the MNCs and TNCs to advance their interests and maintain their supremacy in the sphere of economic, politico-military, and socio-culture in the world.

The theme for ASYG 2004, "Together in Action for Peace and Reconciliation" reflects the deep aspiration of the Christian students and youth for peace and harmony in this world, amidst exploitation and violence. More importantly, it is a call and a challenge for us to come together in peace and harmony to study and reflect on the world's situation and realities.



by Andrew

Isaiah 65: 17-23, gives us a framework

"Lo, I am about to create new heavens and a new earth; the things of the past shall not be remembered. Instead, there shall always be rejoicing and happiness in what I create. For I create Jerusalem to be a joy and its people to be a delight; I will rejoice in Jerusalem and exult in my people. No longer shall the sound of weeping be heard there, or the sound of crying. No longer

shall there be an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who does not round out his full lifetime. He dies a mere youth who reaches but a hundred years, and he who fails of a hundred shall be thought accursed. They shall live in the houses they build, and eat the fruit of the vineyards they plant; they shall not build houses for others to live in or plant for others to eat They shall not toil in vain nor beget children for sudden destruction”.

This Resource Book aims to give an impetuosity to the students and youth in EASY Net to study and reflect on some of the pertinent issues of the world at present. There are articles on Interfaith and Ecumenism, Just Peace, Feminism, Globalisation and Higher Education, as well as songs and biblical studies. With the deepening of knowledge, the students and youth could serve as agents of change to transform their own lives as well as others in order to work towards a world of peace and justice.



The first part of this collective product is a reflection of our young ecumenical leaders' and responses on our region's Peace situation and realities in the last EASY Net Creative Arts Workshop conducted in April 22-27, 2004 in the Presbyterian Bible College of Hsinchu, Taiwan. These creative expressions together with the articles are aiding instruments for students and youth to celebrate the National Students and Youth Gathering (NSYG), and bringing forward a time for reflection and action in their societies.

It is our hope that you find inspiration in reading and using this Resource Book, not only in our coming celebration of NSYG and ASYG 2004 but more importantly in our continuing journey as Peace Dreamers, Peace Lovers and Peace Makers.

Asia Pacific Students and Youth Week (APSYW) 2004

10-16 October

Youth Week Celebration is an important annual event for the Ecumenical Asia-Pacific Students and Youth Network (EASY Net). It is an opportune time for students and youth to gather, reflect and respond together to the several issues of our respective societies which are directly intertwined to the current regional and global socio-political and economic situation.

This year the Asia-Pacific Students and Youth Week (APSYW) which is traditionally celebrated on third week of October will be celebrated as an integral part of the Asia-Pacific Students and Youth Gathering (ASYG) 2004. Consequently, it carries the same theme of the ASYG 2004 which is "Together in Action for Peace and Reconciliation".

Our theme for this year's APSYW invites us to reflect on the rising violence in our societies. We need to critically analyse the causes of violence in our society from the perspective of a Christian youth, so we could participate meaningfully in the quest for Peace in our societies.

Nowadays, terrorism, as instigated by few and so called "terrorist networks", is highlighted as the main culprit of violence in the world. While, undeniably terrorism has created havoc to millions of people, let us not forget to critically review and respond to the structural violence such as extreme poverty, unemployment, migration, religious and ethnic discrimination which is by far victimising the majority of people in Asia Pacific. Likewise we need to study and respond to the "silent" violence employed by some of our national governments such as curtailment of civil rights to achieve economic progress.

As we gather for the coming APSYW, let the lives of thousands innocent and beautiful people who have been sacrificed in the altar of violence served as inspiration in our continuing journey for Peace based on Justice.

Asia-Pacific Students and Youth Gathering (ASYG) 2004

7-14 December

The world at present is witnessing a grave period of "un-peace". Wars, violence and conflicts are rampant in every corner of the world as the world's superpowers are racing to dominate the resources and markets outside of their own countries and national territories. Millions of people are suffering the effects of non-peace which poses a bleak uncertainty for their future. These violent impacts are especially apparent in pluralistic Asia Pacific where a conspicuous dose of economic imbalance is present, resulting in resentment between the haves and have-nots. Political maneuverings and alliances between some global "super powers" heightens a sense of distrust and apprehension between countries, while the acts of "fighting terrorism" by some governments prompt determined retaliation from groups of people who feel their existence threatened.

This era of "un-peace" gives a great impact on the lives of the many students and youth in Asia Pacific. The education process of many students and youth may be disrupted when violence occurs. Their future of a peaceful society where knowledge acquisition may be done is dashed as they need to respond to the urgency of life preservation. Their hopes of receiving a holistic education are ruined, as they are forced to perpetuate competitiveness and economic superiority. All these could lead to a possible vicious cycle of violence and "un-peace" as the future becomes an uncertainty and a disillusion for the students and youth.

It is time that the students and youth realise that they need to reclaim the peace and just world where co-existence is vital to lay the foundation of a future where lives are enhanced and to be lived in abundance. To start this process, students and youth must understand that they are the very ones whose actions, thoughts and perceptions of re-building peace, justice and harmony will make a difference to their future lives and to the lives of next generation. Particularly for students and youth who proclaim the spirituality of Jesus Christ as theirs, there is an urgent need to reflect and witness what is truly meant as life in abundance for

all. Hence, students and youth are potential peace builders who could mend the brokenness in their societies.

The theme for ASYG 2004 thus hopes and aims to empower the strengths of the students and youths to become peace-builders as they study on the impacts and effects of the present economic socio-political realities, and help come to an action where a peace-building and healing process could be mutually and ecumenically done.

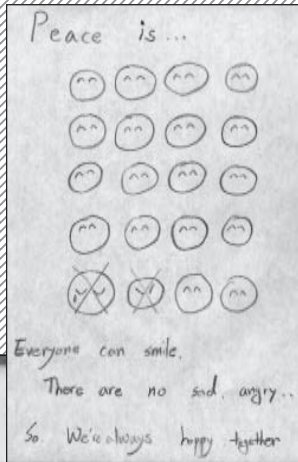
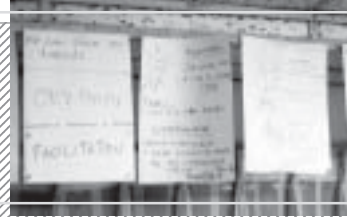
Objectives

1. To initiate a process of participatory study and to critically review the social, political, economic and cultural settings of the Asia-Pacific based on students and youth perspectives on the issue of Peace building in the context of Pluralistic Asia Pacific.
2. To articulate a theological and biblical perspective and facilitate a consolidated awareness-raising campaign among students and youth in the Asia Pacific on the said issues and concerns.
3. To enable students and youth to identify alternative paradigms which promote peace and affirm the fullness of life in the region.
4. To enable the participants of Ecumenical Asia-Pacific Students and Youth Network (EASY Net) to further strengthen ecumenical partnership and sharing efforts between and among themselves.
5. To enable EASY Net to come up with a clear follow up plan to be implemented on local, national and regional level.



by Nok

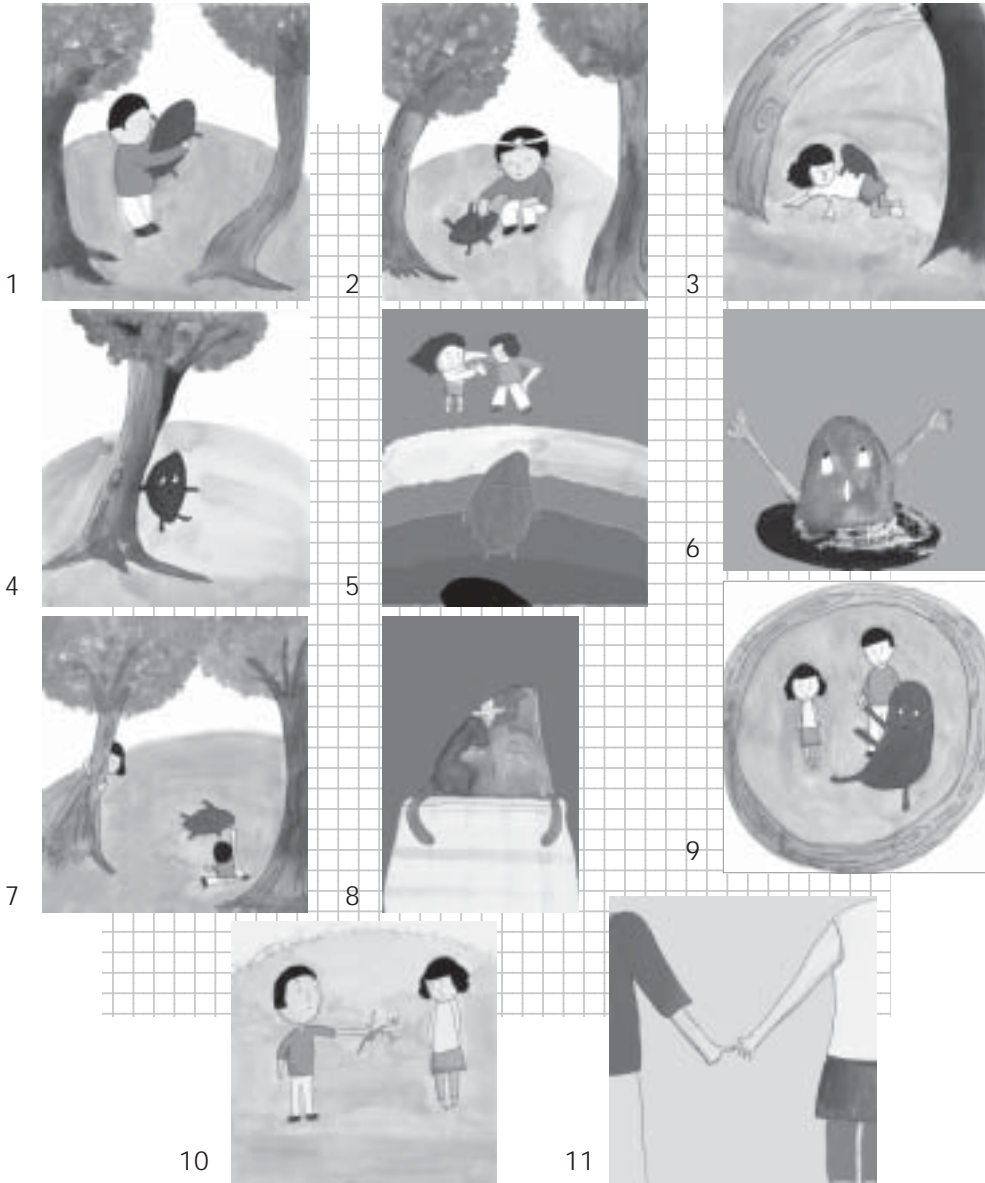
REFLECTION



& CREATIVE RESPONSE

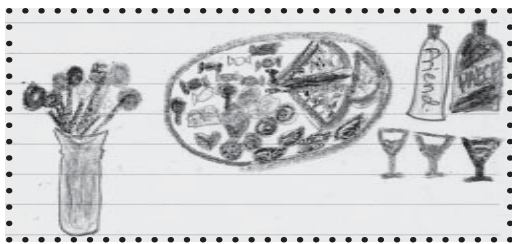
..... Story of Making Friends

by A-Ka, Christina Lin



Recipe of Making Friends

by Nok, Somchit Laosoe



Ingredients:

- flowers
- cookies
- candies
- pizza
- soft drinks
- smile (very important)
- spirit
- sincerity

Put flower in a vase. Prepare a tray; put all cookies, candies, and pizza. Prepare cups and soft drinks. If you have everything done, then, open the door and get out of the house. Walk straight to your neighbor that you ignored for sometime. Once you get to the door knock it. When someone open the door, **SMILE** and say "Hello".

Ask them if you could go inside and have a chat with them. Once they invited you, offer them cookies, candies and pizza sincerely and spiritually. When you leave the house, give them the flowers as a gift.





Tip: Do not pretend, do not shy. If you want to make friend with someone you have to start the conversation. You can not expect other people to talk to you first.



Nok - Nok Joke

by Nok Sanchit Laosae



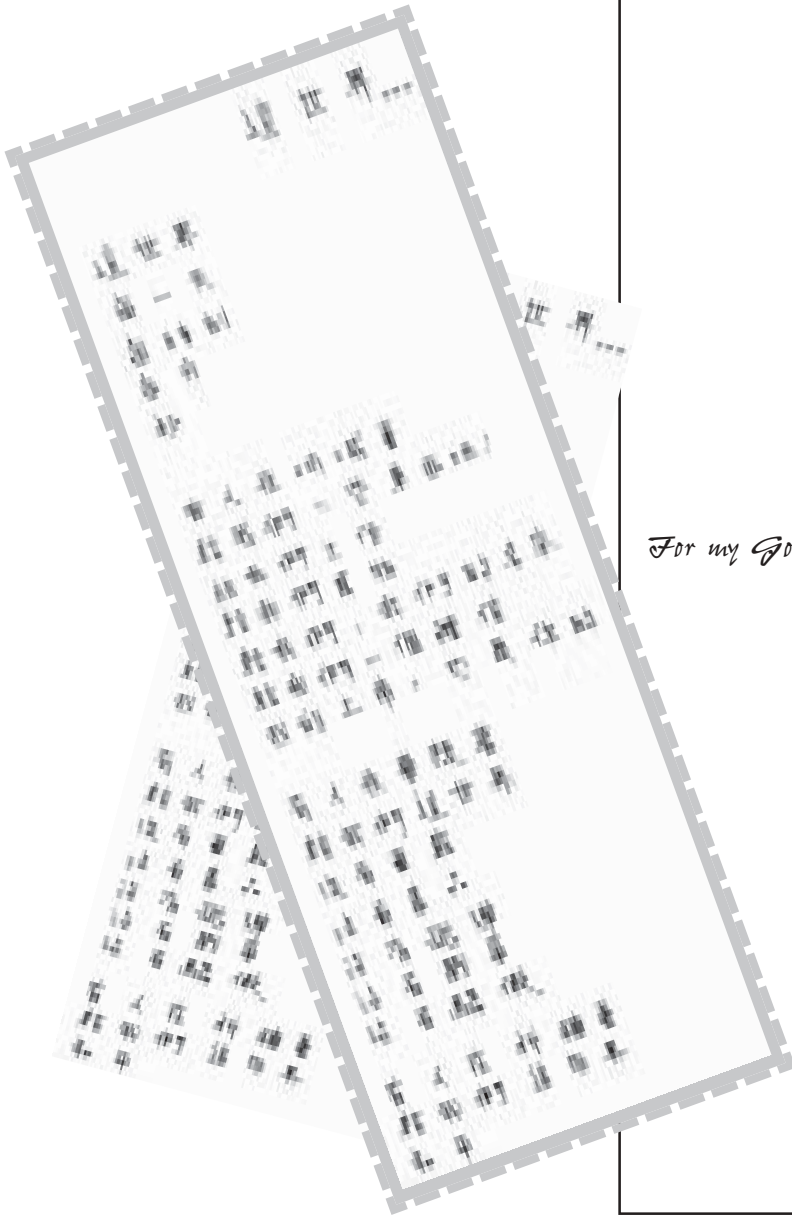
EASY NEWS 24 April 2004		CLASSIFIED POST
<p>Republic of Love </p> <p><u>President</u></p> <p>We are seeking a good leader who :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has good sight to see the need of people . • has fine ear to listen to different voices . • has open mind to respect diverse beliefs, • is option for the poor. <p>Send your resume to : justice@love.org</p>	<p><u>Engineer Wanted</u></p> <p>We are looking for engineers all over the world to help destroy all kinds of weapons</p> <p>Email : no_arms@peace.or</p>	<p>Are you looking for just peace?</p> <p>Try our Classified ads .</p>
		<p> Smiling Boat</p> <p>CAPTAIN to spread good news of peace .</p> <p>Call : 234432</p>

by Wong Yick Ching

1. Share an issue of injustice or conflict in your country with others.
2. Identify people involved, such as:
 - a. Decision-makers,
 - b. People holding power, and
 - c. People being affected, etc.
3. Discuss qualities that these people can have to improve the above mentioned situation.

This World

by A-Ka, Christina Lin



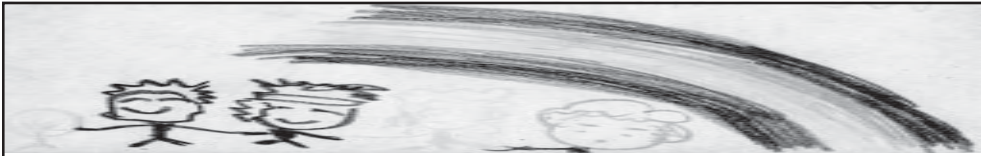
*This world
Every day
Every hour
Every minute
Every second*

*People crying
Give us something
Give us jobs
Give us food
Give us our name
Give us certainty*

For my God and your God is one

*People dreaming
Give us a world with
No poverty
No drugs
No missiles
No wars
No arrogance*

*People praying
Give us world
Peace*



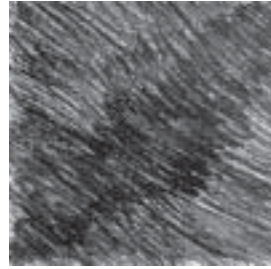
by Chiu Fu-Yi

*You come from European,
I come from Asia;
You believe Allah,
I believe Christ;
You say you love boy,
I still say I love you!
We admire each other!*



by Nok, Somchit Laosoe

by Nok



Knock knock!!

Who is it??

Tom the Riddle!!

Tom the Riddle, who??

Tom comes to make friend with you

Welcome Tom!!

Knock knock!!

Who is it??

Pinky the Pooh!!

Pinky the Pooh, who??

Pinky brings you cookies!!

Thank you Pinky!!

Knock knock!!

Who is it??

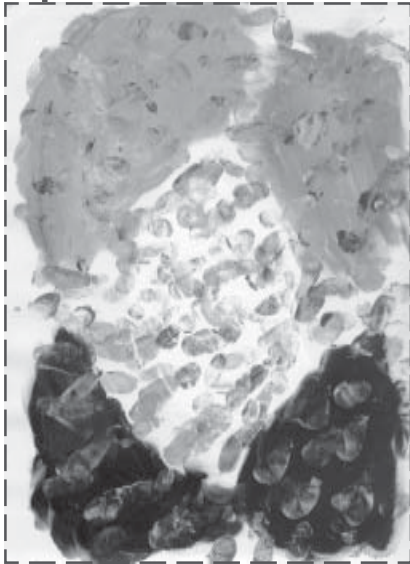
Paul the Neighbor!!

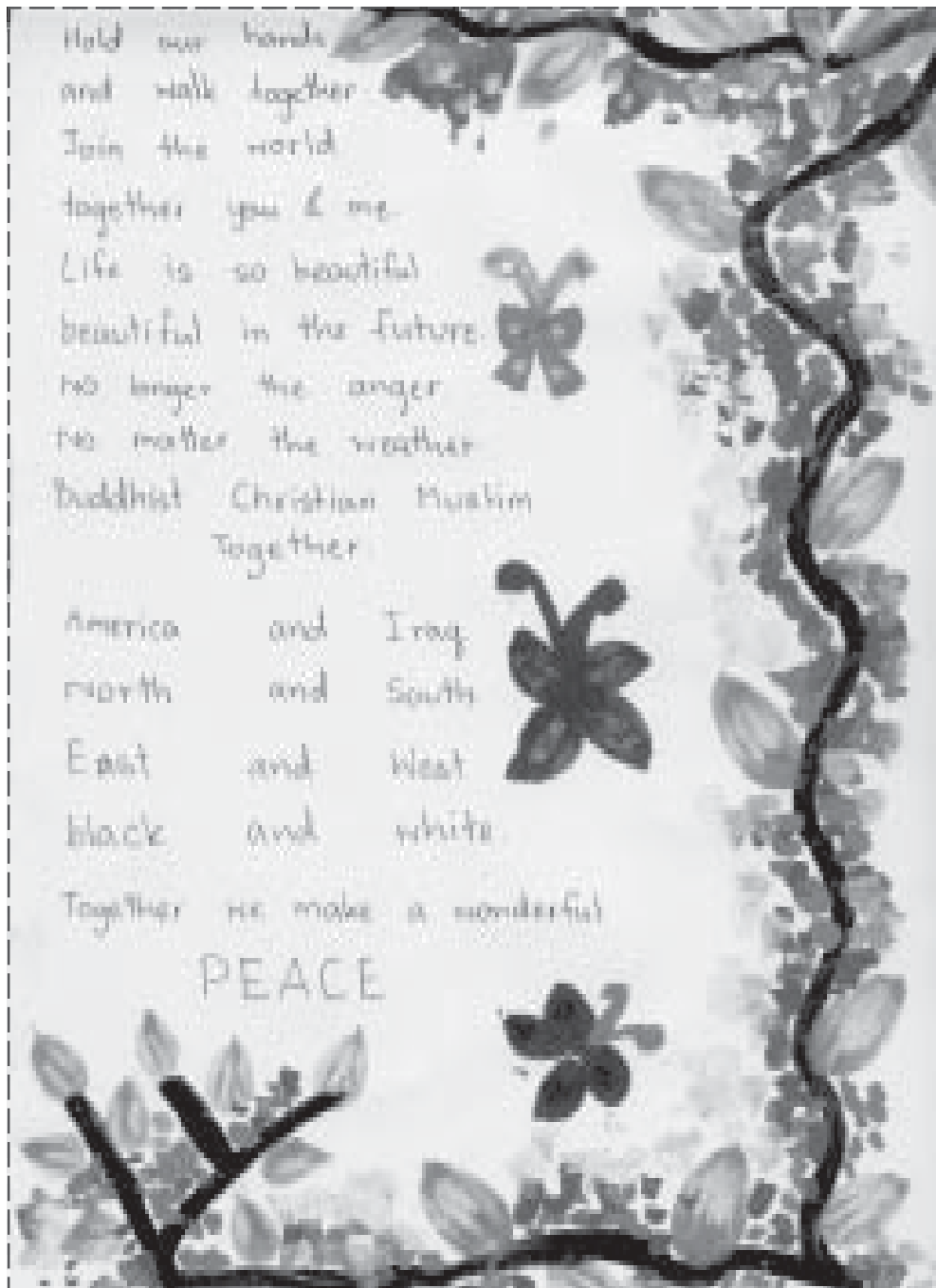
Paul the Neighbor, who??

Paul brings you Peace!!

That's kind of you Paul!!

by Nok





Hold our hands
and walk together
Join the world
together you & me

Life is so beautiful
beautiful in the future
no longer the anger
no matter the weather

Buddhist Christian Muslim
Together

America and Iraq
north and South
East and West
black and white

Together we make a wonderful

PEACE

by Nok, Samchit Laosoc



*Dream is a gift
Dream is full of wonder
Set from above
If you have a dream
Your dreams can come true
A whole world is wonder
Is waiting for you
Life's an adventure
There as much to do
If you have a dream
Your dream can come true
So, dream on...*

by Tuti Aritonang

Shalom, Asia

by Tuti Aritonang

Peace,

*I have been looking for you all around
In the silence of those people who inflict pain
In the suffering of countless people's hunger
In the harassment and humiliations
even in the midst of justice
Let me feel your air...*

Peace,

*I long to stand to have you
And lay my hope within you
I reach my hands to touch you
With all my hearts invite you
Let me hear your voice...*



*Around the world
America, Europe, Africa, Australia
Especially in Asia
Transform, everyone's life
Fill-up with your great atmosphere
PEACE...
Shalom to you, Asia*

Power for Peace

Let us realize we use power over other human beings, animals and the planet.

Let us realize we have conflict within our hearts.

Let us realize we often become self-centered.

~~But,~~

We also have power to find alternative solutions.

We also have power within our heart.

We also have power to cooperate with others.

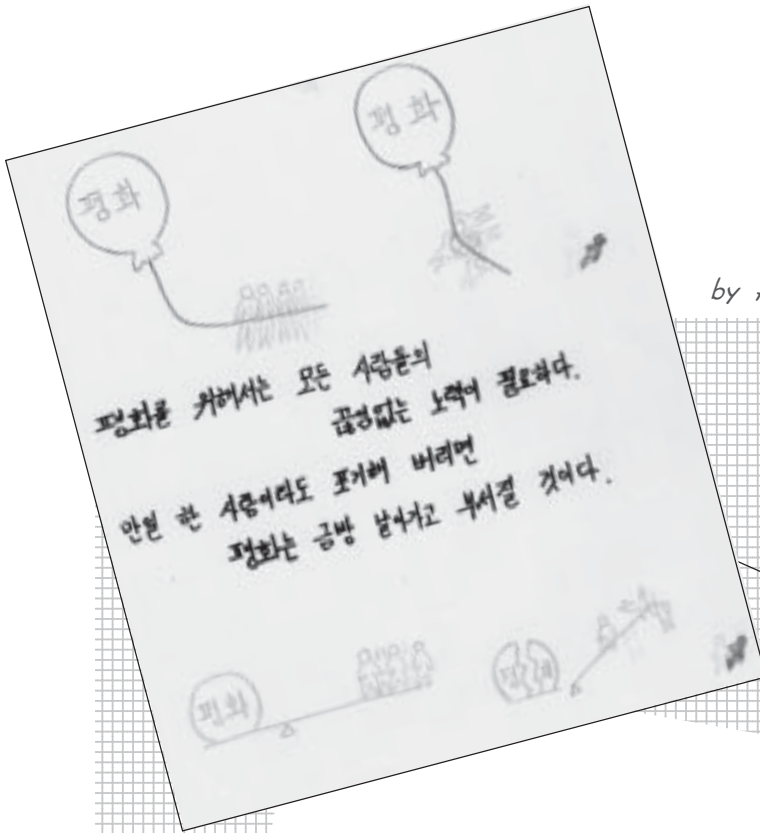
Let us enjoy our diversities and differences.

Let us enjoy dialogue within ourselves, with other people and with other groups.

Let us enjoy the process for Peace.

Let us utilize our power to build PEACE.

by Rieko Hana



by Andrew, Kim Jin Man

*To achieve peace,
there should be a consolidated effort of all people.
If a single person gives up,
peace will fly away and be broken.*



TUTI ARITOMANG



Dear God,

Many times we called your name

Without a deeply heart

Many times we prayed

But for only ourselves

Many times we cried the tears

And always be

Just for our own suffering

So, who we love with? To love you??

God, forgive us for neglecting others

Suffering

Forgive us for our failure to spread

Your true love to another

Forgive us we had created the wars

And destroy your love

In our house, neighbours, and our country.

Amen

Lord,

You have forgiven my sin.

You have given me your love.

You have rescued me from the dark place.

Now I want to share with others

what I have received from you.

But, I am asking to myself,

Can I do this? Can I do this?

So, I seek your help again.

Please give your strength
and courage to help others.

주님,
당신은 저 죄를 용서하셨습니.
당신은 저에게 사랑을 주셨습니.
당신은 저를 어두운 곳에서 구원하셨습니.
이제는 제가 다른 사람들에게
말씀하시며 받은 사랑을 나누어 줘십니.
그러나 믿음이 없습니다.
내가 할 수 있습니? 내가 할 수 있습니?
저에게 믿음이 없습니. 그래서 말씀 주셨습니.
저에게 받은 사랑을 나누어 줄 수 있
습니. 용서 부탁드립니다.

by Andrew, Kim Jin Man

My Prayer

*I know you're listening
As I call upon your name
It's not for me I ask
But my people souls to keep
It seems the world is going crazy
But I will hold on to your light
Thou' I need to do my share*



*I know I can't do this by myself
I thank you for your help*

*I know you're listening
So I know I'm not alone
Could you return us to your garden
When there's no one scared
When there's no one hurt
Use me to guide them day by day
Bring me/us so closed we won't forget
Teach me/us to love as you love
This is my prayer...*

by Tuti Arifonang

Buddhist Pray

translated by Nok, Somchit Laosoe



by Nok

*I pray for all human and all
friends in the earth who born,
suffer, old and death.*

*Be grateful, joyful and happy.
Do not hate each other.*

*Be peace, forget violence, never
hurt never suffer. Take care
yourself.*

*Stay away from sickness and
deceases.*

Be healthy forever.

*I pray all historical pain of ours
become pigeons of peace
fly over our land, fly over our land,
no immigrant is discriminated anymore,
no root is hungry anymore,
no belief is forbidden anymore,
across your country, his country,
our Asia, and over the world.*

by Chiu Fu-Yi

Between Mother's Prayer

Dear God

*I pray my children has food
and either so you.*



*I pray my children has growing up well
and either so you.*



*I pray my children has
a proper education in school
and either so you.*



*I pray my children has love
to love one another as they
love themselves.*

How about yours?

*I thank you that all my
children are adult and mature
till present.*



*by A-Ka,
Christina Lin*

“A Wonderful Future” Liturgy

Hope, Care, and Love

MEDITATION

Silence. Keep the place in silence, while everyone begin to open the heart to invite the Holy Spirit to each one of us.

LEADER : PROLOGUE

Silence, does not always mean in peace situation

Silence, you can not live in it for good

Silence, can be a gentle and refuge, fearless, suffering and unwise statement or unmeaningful

Silence, can be made a long suffering for many people where we may give the chances/ opportunities for other who created war, hunger, discriminations, depressions

Silence, you must leave it behind and do something before it is too late.

OPENING PRAYER

Lord, we proclaim you now as our Mighty God and our Majesty,

Come upon us now, release your power and let your presence fall.

Forgive us for all the selfish thing we had done only for ourselves without thinking of one another. Lord, we give ourselves to be the servant to help hand in hand one another because your Mercy and Love takes our fears away. Guide our step, lead us to your righteousness, as you require us to justice, and to love Kindness and humbly obey you.

READING BIBLE : ROMANS 8:18-30

REFLECTION

While all had read the bible scripture, spent time to reflect on what you feel in the presence of God... it is so peacefully!

A SONG FOR WORSHIP

Leader: I look to the hills! Where will I find help?
Woman: It will come from the Lord, who created the heavens and earth.
Man: The Lord is your protector, and the won't go to sleep or let you stumble.
Leader: The protector of Israel doesn't doze or ever get drowsy.
Man: The Lord is your protector, there at your right side to shade you from the sun.
Woman: You won't be harmed by the sun during the day or by the moon at night.
Leader: The Lord will protect you and keep you safe from all dangers
Together: The Lord will protect you, now and always wherever you go.
Amen.

SONG/ HYMN

*Everyone hold a candle, without light/ darkness,
silence then sing a 'peace' song peacefully.*

CLOSING PRAYER

Heavenly God, we seek your face in our boundaries and limitations as we come upon your Holy Name to ask, we then believed that we will receive. When we search then we will find and when we knock the door, the door will be opened for us. Give us the strength to do on what you'd like us to do and teach us to love as you love for all those suffering people and others in wounded, this is our prayer in Jesus name.
Amen.



by Tati

The World Under Threat

Lets Work 4 Peace

ENTRANCE

Play an instrumental song on cassette/ VCD and let the participants gather around a circle.

1. Light a candle in the middle.
2. Ask participants to close their eyes.
3. Worship leader puts on pictures, stories of women, men, elderly in pain and suffering in places where armed conflict is going on.
4. Ask participants to open eyes. Invite them to reflect on the situation of innocent women, men, elderly and children in places where armed conflict is going on.

OPENING PRAYER

We gather here in remembrance of people suffering in pain... we gather that we may have the strength to be in solidarity in their suffering and struggles.

Yahweh, we ask for your strength and guidance.

COMMUNITY SINGING

The truth behind or any local song reflective of country situation.



by Andrew, Kim Jin Man

GOSPEL READING

Psalm 97:1-12 The Lord Brings Justice

COMMUNITY SINGING

Seek ye First the Kingdom of God

by Glenda Rocas



REFLECTION AND SHARING

Participants will reflect on the scripture based on their country situation. Ask participants to share their reflection.

OFFERTORY

1. Cross — Symbol of Salvation
2. Lighted Candle — Symbol of Hope
3. Water and Bread — Symbol of Life

PRAYER FOR OFFERING

Sharing of Water and Bread.
Pass the Water and Bread around.

COMMUNITY SINGING

Pass it On

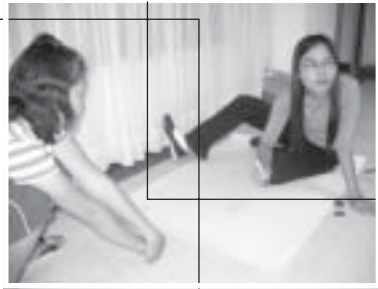
CLOSING PRAYER

Yahweh, we have heard the cry and laments of our brothers and sisters. We seek that you continue to make our ears open to their woes, our eyes open to their suffering. And our hearts and hand open to reach out and be in solidarity with them. Amen.

Andrew, Kim Jin Man
IYCS, Korea



Tuti Urma Aritonang
CCA, Indonesia



Rieko Hanna
YMCA, Japan



Nok, Somchit Laosoe
WSCF, Thailand



Glenda Rocas
EASY Net Coordinator

Rakesh Peter Dass
CCA

Wong Yick Ching
IMCS Asia Pacific



Chiu Fu Yi
CCA, Taiwan

: Host



Aka, Christina Lin, SCM
Chang Chung Chi, PCT

Resource Person :



Ruki Fernando from Sri Lanka



COLLECTION OF SONGS



*When we have freedom of expression,
which is listened, there will be PEACE.
by Chiu Fu-Yi*

I N D O N E S I A

Humanity shall Live in Peace

Pray For the Peace of Humanity x3

Humanity shall live in peace x2

REF: SHALOM, SALAM, SHANTI, SADHU, SIANCAI, SHALOM
Humanity shall live in peace

For Justice and Peace

words and music by Bart Shaha

1. For justice and for peace, O Lord, we've gathered in your name;
we seek your love, we seek your peace, your kingdom is our dream.

Where life has lost its dignity, and people are in fear.
Where peace is not a reality, and people do not care.

2. We'll work for justice and for peace, we'll offer all we have;
we'll work for justice and for peace, we'll offer all we have.

The Truth Behind

composed by Aldeem Yanez

What is the truth behind the bombings
What is the truth behind killings
Innocent lives being sacrificed
We've been living in a wounded land

What is the truth behind people's suffering
What is the truth behind chaos and hunger
Until when this unjust war end
We long for peace
But you're giving us bullets

*Until the truth set us free
Let the people live in peace
And let guns be turned
Into ploughshares

Let the people be set free
Let us build a world of peace
And the fruit of the land
Will be enjoyed by all
And we shall live in peace.

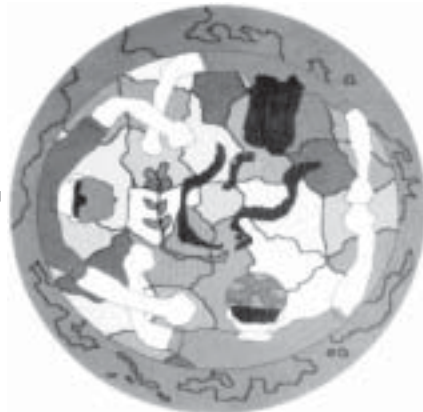
The hope and power borne of
People's struggle
Will lead us to the road of peace

by Jason Gildore



T A I W A N

Born on the Ground, a flower
Cherished the most, with parents love
As the wind blows, covered by a blanket
Don't let it fall into the dark
Not to blossom yet, needing our concern,
But being promised, a piece of land for it to grow.
Hand in hand, and heart linked to heart
We stand together, for it is our treasure.



by Jason Gildore



10 - 26 July 1993

Brazil

19-31 March 1993

Bangalore, India

Review, Reflect, Renew:

Building Sustainable Communities

21-28 January 2000

Chiangmai, Thailand



Together in Action

for Peace and Reconciliation

7-14 December 2004

Indonesia



ASIA-PACIFIC STUDENTS & YOUTH GATHERING

ASYG History

*"The incarnation of the Christian faith in the midst of suffering and struggle lies at the very heart of our works as youth and student movements. The challenge of deepened ecumenical cooperation and the search for new and creative ways of revitalising ecumenical youth and student ministry are vehicles to fulfilling our vision of a just, peaceful and sustainable world."
The inspiration of the 6 partner organisations of EGGYS*

In mid 1980s, the idea to have a world gathering of Christian youth arose in World Council of Church. Thus, in 1987 the World Council of Churches - Youth invited WSCF, YWCA, YMCA, IYCS and IMCS to discuss the revitalisation of ecumenical cooperation and global gathering of youth.

In July 1989, during the Second Ecumenical Youth and Student Seminar and in celebration of the Golden Anniversary of the First Christian Youth Conference that took place in 1939, the Planning Committee for the Ecumenical Global Gathering of Youth and Students (EGGYS) was formed.

The Objectives of EGGYS were the following:

1. To deepen and extend knowledge and understanding among the six partner organizations.
2. To evaluate the ecumenical cooperation which is already taking place at local regional and world levels and to identify problems and limitations that keep from improving it.
3. To reflect on the common mission and to identify common commitments for more effective cooperation.
4. To share know-how, challenges and problems, gaining from the experiences of young people coming from different realities-socially, culturally and theologically.
5. To pool our resources in developing ideological and theological reflection, pedagogy and methodologies for youth and student ministry.
6. To undertake joint analysis of issues affecting young people and students.

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7. To challenge each other to go farther in actions of solidarity, coordinating all efforts and resources.

The first Asia Students and Youth Gathering (ASYG) in 1993 held in Bangalore was a regional response to the EGGYS Process and at the same time a recognition that though there were existing contact, collaboration and joint programs among the six organisations, its cooperation and collaboration is far from satisfactory.

Thus the following objectives of ASYG '93 was drafted:

1. To strengthen Ecumenical contact and cooperation at local, national and regional levels among the partner Student and Youth Movements in Asia.
2. To build up solidarity among those motivated by their faith to join the struggles of the people for peace and justice.
3. To prepare the national and regional groups to enter more consciously into EGGYS process through a series of national and regional events in Asia.
4. To train key leaders to take the initiative in animating and fostering Ecumenical collaboration and contacts already existing at their local/national levels.
5. To pool together our analyses and reflections on the issues arising from the changing social realities in Asia and to build up an Asian perspective in the approach to these realities.
6. To enrich the EGGYS process by contributing the dimension of a comprehensive and collective response of Asian Students and Youth to the areas of on going Ecumenical concern.

ASYG '93 is also an effort to study and reflect the developments happening in Asia-Pacific and the world. ASYG '93 helped build stronger partnership and sharing between and among these movements, and its results have facilitated their work, mission and participation in society.

Building on this previous experience of Ecumenical co-operation, the five organisations [Asia and Pacific Alliance of YMCAs, Christian Conference of Asia

(CCA) - Youth, International Movement of Catholic Students (IMCS) Asia Pacific, International Young Christian Students (IYCS) Asian Secretariat, World Student Christian Federation (WSCF) Asia-Pacific] believed that it is vital to the life of the student and youth movements to ***build solid grassroots co-operation in Asia for mutual commitment to social justice.***

From April 1996, these five Ecumenical groups informally explored the possibility of co-organising a gathering for the new millennium. The changes brought about by globalisation and modernisation that made young people vulnerable: from being forced to work early in life, to experiencing drastic changes in culture and values; from having fewer opportunities for education and personal development, to being victims of society's ills. At the same time, however, the youth holds a certain strategic importance in effecting positive change. This was witnessed in the many occasions when students and youth, in solidarity with other sectors of society, have mobilised their ranks to force governments to listen to and act on the people's demands.

Thus the six movements again decided to come together in 2000 to continue their common study, reflection, and analysis of issues and concerns related to development specifically on globalisation and facilitate a 'looking forward' to the challenges these issues and concerns are posing.

The birth of Ecumenical Asia Pacific Students and Youth Network (EASY Net) and the current level of strong Ecumenical cooperation between the six regional core members of EASY Net (with the latest addition of YWCA) is an offshoot of previous Ecumenical collaboration, which by and large is reflected in the previous two ASYGs.

ASYG 2004 is therefore a continuing tradition of Ecumenical cooperation and an Ecumenical effort to study, respond and contextualising our faith collectively in the current situation.

One in Spirit, Together in Action

Chang Hsin-Wen (Sindy)

ASYG 2000 Taiwan Participant

As I review my experience in ASYG 2000 four years ago, what appears to me is not an “event” out there; instead, it is a journey for me to reflect on my dedication before God, to seek the empowerment again of students and youth movement, and to search for solidarity within God’s family.

Before ASYG 2000, though I had been an active student, participating in local and regional (most of it was Asia Pacific) SCM and WSCF activities, my ecumenical perspective was only limited to the role of “Christian” and “student” as an SCMer. I was not very much aware of the opportunity of cooperation with other ecumenical organisations in Asia Pacific and I never thought of how it would influence me. But things changed when I participated in the ASYG 2000, which was not only with SCM or WSCF but also with YMCA, IMCS Asia Pacific, IYCS Asia and CCA.

I remember at that time, in order to further foster the ecumenical cooperation, all Taiwan participants gathered 3 months before the actual ASYG took place in Thailand. We knew nothing about each other and had some stereotypes and wrong images towards each other’s organisations. We very much doubted the possibilities of cooperation and solidarity. However, when we gradually addressed our faith, concerns and problems in the world, we realised the common faith that we have in God and the common privileges we share in our role as youth and students that may iron out our differences between different movements. Based on this awareness, we were willing to continue our journey to Thailand to deepen our connection. There, under the theme of “Globalisation”, we once again struggled for our specific role as students and youth in this world and unjust society. We discovered our ways to



carry out the mission of “Ecumenism”, which is a fellowship of prayer, sharing, commitment and responsibility, especially among the youth coming from different realities. “Ecumenism” is no longer a slogan that we did not know how to put into practice, or a job added to our busy-enough daily life. On the contrary, it becomes one part of our vision, which means whatever we do, we can always think of our brothers and sisters in need and hold the chance to serve them.

ASYG 2000 indeed opened up our hearts and built up our foundation to carry on our ecumenical mission. After ASYG 2000, there were some follow-up activities happened in East Asia and in Taiwan. We continue to invite students and youth to join us in taking the initial role of sharing up our vision and concerns both within and between our organisations. We keep figuring out what to do and to retain the cooperative relationship. We know if students and youth hold in One Spirit and move Together in Action, there will always be love, hope and peace in our world. Even if I am no longer a student, I am still taking the ASYG spirit in my life, in my job, my church and so on. I believe my journey with ASYG spirit will go on and on because it has been already part of me, just like the other participants in the Asia-Pacific Students and Youth Gathering.

Ecumenical Journey

Jude Simon

ASYG 2000 Sri Lanka Participant

My personal understanding of ecumenism was nurtured in the YMCA context, and even within YMCA it differs. The understanding and approach can be different and it depends on the movement and its background. For me it is Bible based and the ecumenical understanding was witnessed when the early church people got together and formulated the Nicene Creed.

Sometimes people, especially the reformed Christians or Roman Catholics fear that ecumenism is a threat to their faith. Some might argue that it compromises the doctrine of their faith, and the doctrine of the church becomes diluted in another's faith or doctrine. There is so much self-imposed diversity in the Christian Churches and the dream of unification is difficult in the present context in what seems like another cold war in the Christendom.

The idea of ecumenism is to get back to basics of Christianity and to unify all the diverse fractions of Christianity into one apostolic following of Jesus Christ. We lived in diversity and our Christian faith and practice is based on our culture and tradition. Culture and religion are inseparable.

The YMCA movement opened my eyes to see the ecumenical identity, and understanding of the scripture John 17:21, "That they all may be one". It recognises that all human beings are created by God and it is the responsibility of human beings to seek Justice and Peace in God's created world.

The inspirations from the early champions of the YMCA are immeasurable in the ecumenical world, especially John R Mott, who lived and fought for Christian unity and paved the way for World Council of Churches and World Student Christian Federation. They left us a legacy, a footprint for us to follow in the legacy of Christian unity and love.

Today the challenge for Christians is to understand faith, and the centre of Christian faith is love. One of the biggest mistakes of Christianity is the belief that

God's love is only for fellow Christians. All our past actions are justified wrongly through the scriptures for our own benefit. It is evident in the experiences of several colonisations, apartheid in South Africa, occupations in Palestine, war in the Middle East and even in our local communities we falsely justify the injustice. It shatters the dream of Christian unity and love.

Participants from Sri Lanka presented in creative way their struggles under globalisation



According to the Bible, Jesus Christ was born because God loves us. Christ's love demands social action, Christ commanded, "Love one another, as I have loved you" Christ loved us first. Love is nothing but "concerned involvement" when I love my brother/sister I am concern for his/her well being. When I am concern I should involved in their problems.

It is good for all of us to ask the question of why we need an Asian Youth movement to have an ecumenical concern. What is the urgency for this? We cannot deny the fact that Asia is unique and it has a diverse community. Asia shares thousands of cultures and traditions. Asia and Pacific needs a common youth platform to voice our concerns. The challenge and success of the ASYG depends on the mobilisation and involvement of all Christian youth movements in creating a common dream for youth in Asia and Pacific.

The most difficult part in our ecumenical journey is that we become comfortable with our own compartment. It is our experience that the youth movements are always pushed to be the dream takers rather than making their own dreams for the future. Movements are driven by the hierarchy or non-youth elements, which

creates insecurity and suspicion of other movements.

We are caught up in the competition of building our own small territory, the most difficult and challenging task for ASYG is to unite the movements for collective action. We are divided, based on our affiliation, denominations and the way we interpret the issues and our actions. The only way the youth can overcome this situation is by involving in dialogues on issues e.g. in matters of justice, peace, war, religious conflicts, human rights, gender issues etc. These are issues in which all the youth movements should be concerned about. By coming together we can solve burning issues.

In my own context it is important for the Christian community to build up an identity as Christians rather than denominations and affiliations. Through this, young people can play a role in the entire nation, in reconciling the divided communities. God has given us a ministry of reconciliation to bridge the communities; we are called to be people in relationship, people who can be different from the other, yet in dialogue with each other.

It is true that if we stand together, youth can make a difference in Asia and Pacific.

Ecumenical Testimony

Arockiasamy Vimalraj

ASYG 2000 India Participant

As an IMCS delegate from All India Catholic University Federation (AICUF), I attended the ASYG 2000 which was held in YMCA International hotel at Chiangmai, Thailand from 21 - 28 January 2000 with the theme "Review, Reflect, Renew: Building sustainable communities". It was my first experience travelling outside of India for a regional conference, hence it was an exciting and fruitful one for me. I would like to share some of my experiences in this testimony.

My understanding of the word ecumenism is the power of unity of all the Christians towards the peaceful world.

The spirit of unity and solidarity of Asian ecumenical youth can be tracked back to the Asian Youth Assembly in New Delhi, India in 1984 and the ASYG in Bangalore, India in 1993, the regional gathering in preparation for the Ecumenical Global Gathering for the Youth and Students (EGGYS). The ASYG 2000 regional gathering followed numerous national gatherings held between January 1999 and December 1999. Finally ASYG 2000 was held in Chiangmai, Thailand. Through attending the various gatherings in India and Thailand I became aware of the word ecumenism.

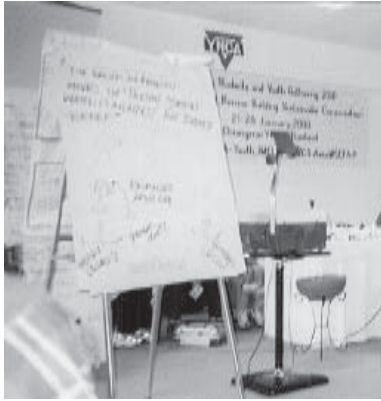
ASYG 2000 is like a light that guides me to study the social, economic and political problems of different countries in Asia. When we had a group sharing on the South Asian countries, I came to know that the problems existing in all the countries are the same. The major issues of South Asian countries are migration, displacement, ecological disorder, cultural erosion, unemployment and unstable government. This gave me an impetus to work against globalisation by conducting awareness camp and seminars in AICUF, the student movement.

I had an adventurous experience during my exposure in a village during ASYG 2000. I was given the practical knowledge of how to use the natural resources in the rightful manner by the villagers and the school children. The people were committed in preserving the environment from being destroyed or polluted. This

Ecumenical Testimony

Masao Koide

EASY Net Coordinator 2002-2003



is a touching experience in ASYG 2000.

Since I came from an indigenous background, I am now working for Dalits (an indigenous people) in my village at present.

Ultimately ASYG and EASY Net made me think broader, have deeper analysis, challenge myself to look forward for a just society.

Ecumenism is a very broad term and everyone has its own image and understanding of it. Ecumenism and its activities always present new challenges to my faith as well as to my commitment to social concerns. Let me share my experience in Ecumenical activities and I hope this will lead you to deepen the Ecumenical understanding.

I grew up as a Catholic. When I entered the university, I joined SCM (Student Christian Movement) in Japan. Before joining SCM, I hesitated to talk to Protestants; it was in SCM that I got my first experience in relating to "Protestant" people. SCM offered me a nice space to get in contact with these people. Daily activities were study groups but there were many things we shared. Actually, the first impression other members had on me as a Catholic was not so good. I was asked many funny questions perhaps derived from some forms of prejudice. But at the same time, I really could not answer the questions they raised. Then I asked the priests or research secretly in the library. Now I understand that the experience was good

because I got to know not only other churches and people, but also got to know my church and Catholicism much more than before.

Soon, I started to join and organise regional, national camps and programmes. It gave me an opportunity to meet many students from different universities who became my close friends. I really enjoyed taking part in those programmes but the leisure times were best in knowing the different sides of my friends. There were many things we shared and chatted and some of them are still living in my mind.

As a Catholic, who is still considered to be in the minority group in the Ecumenical movement in Japan, I always faced many “misunderstandings”. For many people, Catholicism means a feudal religion; all the efforts made after the second Vatican Council are not so known in Japan. But I am such a stubborn person and I never give up pointing out such a prejudice. I used to introduce my church as a diverse community and also I introduced Ecumenical activities into my church. At that time, I wanted to have dialogue with the youth in church directly, but not in the so-called Ecumenical organisations like SCM, YMCA and NCC. Finally, I was able to start organising “direct exchange” between the Catholic and Protestant youth with my friends.

In 1999, I was appointed as National Coordinator for ASYG 2000. With good arrangements given by the National Council of YMCA and local churches, I could join the National Gathering and could bring four participants to ASYG, including myself. Unfortunately, there is no national body for Catholic students in Japan and I had to approach people from personal level. Some gave me positive answers but the date of the meeting overlapped with examination timetables in their universities, thus I could not get participants from the Catholic Church. This has been my regret until now.

Later, I was appointed as the first Coordinating Secretary and Coordinator of EASY Net when this network was first formed. I took up this task as it was my



*Masao in a EASY Net
Workshop in 2002*

dream because I fully agreed and understood the importance of following up progresses in ASYG and the need for local networks. I always remember my own Ecumenical experiences and curiosities during my university years and these carried me through in times of difficulties.

Now, I would like to invite you to commit yourself to the Ecumenical movement. This is an endless learning process to know yourself and your society. Do not limit your faith in a particular style and knowledge. Let your faith roam free in this society and find out your own style from the Ecumenical exercises with your friends from different denominations and organisations.

There are certain processes to deepen your Ecumenical understanding through person-to-person encounters, awareness, reflection and expression in action. This year, EASY Net will provide you many opportunities to meet with people from six different organisations both at national and regional levels. This gives good opportunities to reflect and review yourself and the Ecumenical history. God always gives us some particular reflective exercises, so believe in your talents and the friends around you, and I am sure you will enjoy this journey of Ecumenism.

Ecumenical Intensity

this is an excerpt only; if you want to read the full article, please email to easy.net@born2create.ph

ATHN Jae Woong

General Secretary of the Christian Conference of Asia

Ecumenical Commitment

The origin of the ecumenical movement was related to the missionary movement and the movement for unity and renewal of the church (Edinburgh Conference in 1910). But as time went on, the ecumenical movement faced a lot of challenges that were no longer within the traditional church or missionary concerns. Rather, it became a matter of ecumenical commitment in facing various issues in our time. Nevertheless, ecumenical movement is very much rooted *in partnership with God, human, and nature*, with the biblical concept of *"together with"* as basis. For example:

- Planted *together with* (Rom. 6.5)
- Joined *together with* (Eph. 4.16)
- Fellowship *together with* (Phil. 1.5)
- Work *together with* (2 Cor. 6. 1)
- Built *together with* (Eph. 2.22)
- Yoke *together with* (Phil. 4.3)
- Glorified *together with* (Rom. 8.17)

The true meaning of the ecumenical movement is not only fellowship together with God and Christians but also working together with people of other faiths and ideologies in order to glorify God together. Since Asia is a continent of many faiths and ideologies, we have to join together with our neighbours in upholding genuine religious values in our everyday of life. Jesus said, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the most important commandment. The second most important commandment is: love your neighbour as you love yourself" (Mt. 22. 37-39).

This summarizes the basic religious values of the ecumenical movement. If we all abide by these religious values, then there would be no more killings, discrimination, exploitation, and marginalization.

Asia has around 3.4 billion, out of over 6 billion of the world's population. Of this, 300 millions are Christians including Roman Catholics, Orthodox, Protestant, and others. Hence, Christianity is still the minority religion in Asia today.

The Situation of the Asian Churches

It is in the midst of these challenging realities that Asian churches are placed and called out to serve and manifest God's gift of unity and fullness of life for all. It is these glaring realities that make it difficult for us to affirm God's will for unity and fullness of life. But paradoxically, it is also these that make it even more necessary for us to affirm God's will. Hence, the situation of the Asian Churches at this time is very challenging.

More and more Asian churches have to continue to understand, analyze and respond to the issue of *globalization*, especially its impact on economy, market, trade and culture. This phenomenon has brought about advances in technology, especially information technology, from which some of us have benefited. But it has widened the economic and political gap within and among countries, thereby leading to greater exploitation and impoverishment of many Asians. Closely related to the issue of globalization is the global debt crisis that continues to affect many Asian countries. This is on top of the problems of many insecure and fragile economies that are still trying to survive the hard-hitting economic crisis in 1997. Hence, Asian Churches need to continually re-ignite the hope for genuine Sabbath and Jubilee from all debts.

The reality of Asian plurality is not new, as it has always been with us throughout our history. But unfortunately, it is oftentimes because of this plurality that Asian Churches are also faced with the problems of ethnic rivalries and religious conflicts. Of course there are related issues like religious fundamentalism and fanati-

cism, that complicate the matter. And these are true not only in non-Christian groups but in some Christian groups as well. In some cases, however, behind the fundamentalism, fanaticism, or a rebel or separatist movement really lie deep-seated resentments of some groups. These are oftentimes the groups that are asking for their share of a better life or reacting to something that is seen to be unfairly imposed upon them. And so Asian Churches are faced with the challenge of being the "salt" and "light" in this part of the world where there is a lot of suspicion, mistrust, hostility, and enmity among ethnic and religious groups.

In the wake of so much injustice and lack of peace in many Asian countries, Asian churches are called to continue praying and working for peace and justice. It must be highlighted that the ongoing process for the peaceful reunification of Korea is supported by the prayers and hard labour of many Korean Christians. The second peaceful people power event in the Philippines was also made possible with the active participation and leadership of prayerful Filipinos and justice-oriented groups. Ironically, however, as we long and pray for peace, there are also sections within Asia that are involved in arms trading (both from the West to Asia and intra-Asian) and increasing military build-up. Moreover, rampant human rights violations continue unabated in different parts of Asia. And as often is the case, it is the society's most vulnerable groups that become easy victims like women, youth, and children. And so Asian Churches are called upon to continue to pray for peace and work for justice.

How can the Asian Churches manifest God's will for unity and fullness of life?

In the midst of the challenging realities of Asia, the Asian Churches are called upon to witness together through its life-affirming ministry and hope-rekindling spirituality. The Asian Churches are to live out its prophetic work of denouncing what is false, pronouncing what is right, affirming what is true, and living out what is just. This is the Christian morality that issues in our advocacy work for peace with justice in Asia. It is the Christian morality that comes from a spirituality that is deeply grounded in our faith in Jesus Christ. Generally speaking, the Asian Churches constitute a small section throughout the whole of Asia. This is why we

need to do networking with one another as well as with other groups that share our vision for peace and justice and fullness of life for all.

State of Ecumenism

The ecumenical movement has been an instrument of promoting unity among divided churches, renewal of churches, engagement in God's mission, sharing of resources, and solidarity networking. Historically, the ecumenical movement grew out of the two World Wars resulting from ideological struggles of the world's powerful nations. Hence, the ecumenical movement has been deeply committed to promoting dialogue between Christians and Marxists. Christian-Marxist dialogue has created an open space for gradually overcoming differences of ideological framework in a divided world.

On the other hand, the ecumenical movement has been predominantly a part of the missionary movement and Christianity was often misunderstood as an agent of colonial powers by those from other religions and secular ideologies and cultures.

Furthermore, the ecumenical movement has been preoccupied with a bi-polar framework. But we are now living in a mono-polar system, where only the United States is the power that controls most, if not all of the world – politically, economically, militarily. A clear example of this mono-polar rule is the deployment of military combatants in 132 countries out of 191 members of the United Nations. We need to develop a new ecumenical framework.

A new discovery of the meaning of "oikoumene" in the context of mono-polar global situation is the immediate task of the ecumenical movement. Oikoumene or "the whole inhabited world" needs to be understood in the following senses:

- Ecclesiologically, for the visible unity of the church;
- Theologically and missiologically, for the renewal of faith and worship;
- Socio-politically, for freedom, justice, peace and equality; and
- Ethically, for the well being of people and of the whole of God's creation.

We need new ways of understanding the whole inhabited world based on openness to our neighbours, inclusiveness of all believers, and togetherness in doing God's mission. In addition, inter-faith cooperation and solidarity for fullness of life for all, is one of the important areas to pursue in our time.

A Matter of Ecumenical Horticulture

In support of working towards a new ecumenical configuration, I would like to suggest a re-invention of the ecumenical movement in the ways of what can be called an ecumenical horticulture in our time. By ecumenical horticulture, I mean the processes of planting new seeds of oikoumene; watering a new spirit of oikoumene; fertilizing a new energy of oikoumene; nurturing new branches of oikoumene; and harvesting new fruits of oikoumene.

Ecumenical horticulture should be concerned about the good life of the whole creation. It should be carried out with the goodwill of ecumenically minded people and good discipline of ecumenically committed people. A good society should be built upon the golden rule of God and love of neighbours as ourselves. This ecumenical horticulture will enrich the whole life, witness the message of the gospel, prevent false indoctrination, and promote genuine peace among all God's people. In order for this to expand, we need to produce ecumenical horticulturists to help bring about the reinvented ecumenical movement in the 21st century.

Ecumenical Movement Today

Konrad Raiser presented a paper at the WCC Round Table Meeting in Geneva in April 2003 entitled, "Reflections on Re-Configuring the Ecumenical Movement." He said the challenges of the 21st century are in three areas:

- The first challenge came with the process of economic and financial globalization.
- The second major challenge, relating to the fundamental changes in the religious field and the re-emergence of religion in the public arena.

- The final and more pressing challenge arises from ecological disturbances and from the possible manipulations of life-processes.

Upon this analysis, Raiser said that the ecumenical movement could be categorized as institutional churches and specialized ministries. These two instruments reflect the conviction that mission and diakonia belong to the being of the church and not only to its activities. Ecumenical organizations such as WCC and Regional Ecumenical Organizations (REOs) will have increased role in coordinating/ facilitating multilateral and ecumenical approaches; interpreting, connecting, and providing for the communication flow for the entire multilateral ecumenical configuration.

Around the circle of the fellowship of churches on different levels could be grouped three “functional circles” representing the three classical foci of the ecumenical mandate: unity, mission, and justice/service. For example, the Christian world communions would have to be linked organically with the circle of church unity, the mission boards, communities, and so on with the one on mission, and the specialized ministries in the field of development, advocacy, and diakonia with the third one on justice/service. Above all, Raiser said, configuration is shaped by structures, interests or agendas, and by persons.

Julio de Santa Ana’s article on “The Ecumenical Movement at the Crossroads,” which is in the WSCF Journal *Student World* (2003/1) is very interesting. Julio summarized the ecumenical history, spelling out five paradoxes and then pointing out four new trends in the ecumenical movement: strong piety, vital awareness of mission, new understanding of ecumenical social ethics, and faith and order. He suggested three points for finding meaning in our complexities: (a) inclusive ecclesiological and theological dialogue; (b) global ecumenical constellation; and (c) deciding the line of action (pp. 21-22).

I observed that the overall ecumenical enthusiasm has gradually declined in every aspect. Perhaps, ecumenical dreams, visions, theological thinking, agendas, involvement, leadership, resources are generally not much attractive in the

mainline churches. Decreasing membership and financial resources in the mainline churches will eventually have an effect upon the ecumenical movement. In order to revitalize the ecumenical movement, we have to focus on five ecumenical foundations: faith in God (requiring metanoia); love for each other and other people (requiring koinonia); hope in building communities (requiring diakonia); care for God's creation (requiring harmonia); and obedience to God (requiring gloria in excelsis Deo). This calls for the following tasks:

- Re-generate the spirituality of the ecumenical movement;
- Re-define the visions and mission of the ecumenical movement;
- Re-invent the programs of the ecumenical movement;
- Re-produce leadership of the ecumenical movement;
- Re-construct the structure of the ecumenical movement;
- Re-mobilize the resources of the ecumenical movement;
- Re-develop membership of the ecumenical movement.

One of the major problems of the ecumenical movement could be our tendency to be far away from the people – i.e. the oppressed and marginalized masses of people, the poor and victimized, migrants and refugees, patients of HIV/AIDS, women workers, child labourers, indigenous people and minorities, the outcasts. By being away from these people, how can we help empower or support/accompany them in their struggles for liberation from all forms of enslavement? Revitalizing the ecumenical movement means empowering the people in every sphere of life.

Common Values and Cultures

We, Asian people, are proud of our traditional values. Unfortunately, however, many of these values are being eroded and replaced, if not threatened, by other values. We therefore need to rediscover some of these values in eastern wisdom in order to live in peace with one another.

Eastern wisdom is part of the plural cultures in Asia, the social heritage of speech, education, tradition, myth, science, art, philosophy, government, law, rite, be-

liefs, inventions, and technologies. A good reminder of this can be found in H. Richard Niebuhr's *Christ and Culture* (1951). "Since it is the work of human hands and minds, culture is dynamic, ever changing – even seeking to combine peace with prosperity, justice with order, freedom with welfare, truth with beauty, scientific truth with moral good, technical proficiency with practical wisdom, holiness with life, and so on."

Our task as religious people is to find and offer some ecumenical solutions from many elements of cultures in order to produce a culture of peace, which is grounded in God's wisdom in our pluralistic cultures in Asia. One good example of Asian tradition is Mahatma Mohandas K Gandhi's non-violent movement, which inspired "ahimsa," or "noninjury", or "absence of a desire to kill". We have to continue this love-based ethic of "not harming or wishing to harm any being".

Towards a Culture of Peace

We know that peace is not simply the absence of conflict, cessation of war, or an end to hostility. True peace comes about when the work for justice is being done. That was the kind of peace that Jesus gave to his disciples even as he faced an impending brutal death (John 14:27). Today, we need the same peace from Jesus – to think through all conflicts we face in Asia and to be able to rise above them.

We live in a religiously and culturally plural Asia. We know that other sources of wisdom and spirituality in Asia also have their own visions and concepts of peace. For example, Thich Nhat Hahn in his book *Going Home* (1999) spoke about enlightenment, freedom and transformation happening through direct experience, "we know that peace cannot exist if religions are always in conflict with each other."

Hence, peace is not only the end or the goal for which we aspire. It is also the means to that end or goal. It is the still small voice that reminds us of our common humanity, which is sparked with God's divinity. It is the spirit that enables us

to will a radical change or transformation in our lives. It is the power that makes that radical change possible, a metanoia, as we say it in theological parlance.

The Immoral Society

In the book of Reinhold Niebuhr, *Moral Man and Immoral Society* (1932), he highlighted power as the main source of creating immoral society in every human history. This power has continued destroying human lives, common values, civilization, tradition and grand harmony of the human race.

Those who have power wage war any time, interrupt internal or domestic affairs anywhere in the world, dictate terms of reference, dominate global politics and disturb all the beauty of the norm of humanity. Similarly, power is misused by terrorists, elite, politicians, and even religious leaders. As a result, we are living in an immoral society. Mass killing by bombing, war, hunger, disease and human errors related to power eventually lead to human misery. Therefore, it is time for us to speak out the truth so immoral powers no longer legitimate their acts of destroying humanity.

M M Thomas, in his book *Response to Tyranny* (1979) mentioned at the Delhi meeting of churches (11 September 1975) under India's Emergency (1975-77) that "the churches in South Korea and the Philippines are involved in a spiritual struggle of suffering against the dictatorial forces of their states. I am not saying that we in India are moving into that situation. But no one can say we are not" (p.39).

In such a situation, M M Thomas sharply criticized Indira Gandhi's "20-point economic program". When the kairos of India's emergency came, M M Thomas was there to speak out the truth. Equally, Martin Luther King Jr. did the same thing. Many Americans were so disturbed by their country's drawn-out involvement in the Vietnam War. In 1965, Martin Luther King Jr. made a statement in his book, *In My Own Words* (2002): "I am not going to sit by and see war escalates without saying anything about it. It is worthless to talk about integration if there is no

world to integrate. The war in Vietnam must be stopped" (p.12). As Christians living in an age of war and terror, we have to speak out the truth where untruth prevails. We have to speak out the truth in one voice in different places from where we come from for the good life of the people.

The Good Life

What is the good life? It is a question for everyone, from the sages to ordinary people. Many religious teachings speak about the good life. It is something that can be achieved by being self-directed or other-directed in one's life. Perhaps the good life aims at identifying the most fulfilling, meaningful, and satisfying life possible for all human beings. It is that status of life that is described as 'blessed.'

Anyone who is self-directed by greed for power and wealth could end up as a dishonoured person. How we are going to live our life with dignity will be a basic question for everyone's criteria of the good life.

Many people live in a situation of being "other-directed" by their life. In the case of people living in dictatorial regimes, it is the ruling elite that determine almost all aspects of their life. However, if we reflect on the prophet Micah's words in the Old Testament, we may have a different image of life: "The Lord has told us what is good. What he requires of us is this: to do what is just, to show constant love, and to live in humble fellowship with our God" (6:8). If we abide with these words we may have an abundant life.

Love is a fundamental virtue for the good life as Jesus told his disciples: "For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who love their life for my sake will find it (Mt 16:25). The good life is more or less giving and caring for the sake of others.

In the same way, Paul clearly taught us in the *Epistle to the Philippians*: "If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the spirit, any compassion and sympathy, make my joy complete: be of the same

mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others (2:1-5). This is the truly Christian life who have the same mind of Christ and having the same love for others.

Ecumenical Campaign for Non-Bellicose World

We live in an age of war and terror, which has been created by a culture of violence in many parts of the world. We continue to experience the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 attacks in American soil. We witnessed the wars waged against Afghanistan and then Iraq, led by the United States and its allies. It could happen anywhere in the world. War on terrorism is the priority of American foreign policy.

As ecumenically committed persons, we should lead the ecumenical campaign for a non-bellicose world, together with people of other faiths, no faith, and civil society groups. Let “A non-bellicose world” be our dream.

Peace Building

Let me reiterate my position on the biblical notion of “Peace on earth” (Luke 2:14) as a basis of Christian virtue to promote the culture of peace. I consider the following areas as the main structure of the biblical foundation of peace:

- God of Peace (Phil. 4:9) and peace with God (Rom 5:1)
- Christ the peace (John 16:33) has taught us to build communities with others (John 14:27)
- Peace with neighbour (Luke 19:8) expressed as genuine peace with the poor (Matthew 19:21)
- Peace with nature (Romans 8:18-25) as the whole concept of the creation (Gen 1-2).

These biblical passages then embrace the whole notion of oikoumene — God

nature, Christ character, neighbourly perspective, and environmental concerns. Therefore, building communities of peace for all is interrelated and interdependent on life of shalom in oikoumene. In recent years, the peace movements have focused much of its attention on the abolition of nuclear weapons. The North Korean nuclear program is a notorious and controversial one. The potential for a nuclear threat between India and Pakistan is another case in Asia today.

However, true meaning of peace “shalom” in Hebrew is not only reduction of conflict but also include the concept of righteousness or wholeness – not only peace but also justice. It is also properly translated as liberation, and even as salvation. Killings and maimings of innocent people, torture and human rights abuses are acts contrary to justpeace and liberation.

Can war be an act of justice or liberation? Perhaps, just war and pacifist reasoning agree to reject war waged for unjust causes, or the use of means that is unable to respect the criteria of discrimination, proportion and non-combatant immunities. Without resolving the tension, hatred, hostilities in human hearts, any attempt for peace making effort is futile. The awareness of violence, non-violence and the struggle for justice are part of the “peace on earth” concept based on biblical teachings. We all know that war or any form of violence is no longer the ultimate means for restoring peace and achieving justice. Peace building is our commitment to struggle against racism, against militarism, against classism, against sexism, against discrimination and domination. These should be our constant tasks not only for Christians but for all those peace loving people.

People-to-people relationships eventually lead us to international understanding of peace building based on mutual respect and overcoming any prejudices in building communities of peace for all. As an alternative, we need to expand our concept of people-initiated peace making or people-oriented peace building which is what I would call the goal of Asian people’s Pax Asiana.

The state sponsored Pax Romana, Pax Britannica and Pax Americana are all false or fragile peace plans in the history. State power can be influenced in

many ways; direct military action, economic pressure or sanction, diplomatic pressure or isolation and even other forms of direct or indirect influence of ideas, culture and false expectation and so on. We have to gather all Asian people's wisdom, traditions, customs, exposition and experiences for building people's Pax Asiana in our times.

For example, the Buddhists way of Sangha may be one option. The Sangha is a spiritual community where all members shared their understanding of life and stability of community, share one's sorrow and joy and all connected each other. Buddhist way of Sangha could be an ideal stage of people's Pax Asiana in the future.

East and West in Ecumenical Partnership

Until recently, the West has dominated the ecumenical movement. But now is the time for the East to contribute to the larger ecumenical movement with its new thinking, new theological perspectives, new missiological tasks, new leadership, and new resources. From the East, we have a wealth of sources of wisdom through rich literature developed over thousands of years. But we have not made use of these resources for our own theological and ecumenical thinking.

- The concept of the grand harmony in Eastern thought, as well as the virtues of tolerance, charity, self-sacrifice, peace, justice, and benevolence should be clarified and emphasized.
- The understanding of Eastern ethics, Ahimsa, Satyagraha, Shunyata, the gods and goddesses of Eastern religions, and the teachings on the ultimate life need to be re-examined.

Of course these issues are not new, but we have to rediscover their meaning in order to have a better formulation of the ecumenical thinking and practices in our part of the world.

Spirituality of Transformation for Just-Peace

written and published for the 16th Asia and Pacific Alliance of YMCAs' General Assembly

* *Max Ediger*

We are gathered at a time when our world is a deeply threatened one. Wars of "liberation" are being waged against defenseless people, economic disparity is growing, pushing more and more people into acts of desperation and the world's limited resources are being squandered by a few. The lives and security of everyone in this global family are affected.

Justpeace - peace built on justice - seems like a goal too distant to be achieved. But there is hope because this threatened world can be transformed. The Apostle Paul said that when we put on Christ, we become a new person, or in other words, we become transformed (2 Corinthians 5: 17). The "putting on" of Christ transforms us, and through that transformation we become agents of transformation in the world. We begin acting together for justpeace, and therein lay the hope for the threatened world.

With this hope as our vision, the theme "Spirituality of Transformation for Justpeace" has been chosen for this Assembly. It confronts us with the challenge that a spirituality of transformation requires a life dedicated to the kinds of actions that build justice from which a true and lasting peace, or justpeace, can emerge. To participate in this transformative work, we need first look briefly at some of the stark realities facing us today.

Born in September of 1990, Santhi was unaware that by the end of that month the largest gathering of world leaders in history would assemble at the United Nations to attend the World Summit for Children. The purpose of that meeting

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was to adopt a Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children. Santhi is now twelve years old and is still unaware of that historic meeting nor of the rights and protections it was to provide her with. She is one of some 25 million Internally Displaced People (IDP) in 47 countries around the world who have little or no access to information. More than half of these IDPs are children. Another 12 million men, women and children are living as refugees in foreign countries.¹

Santhi is luckier than many of her generation because she is still alive. Last decade, over 2 million children were killed in war, 6 million wounded and 1 million orphaned. She, along with millions of other children lives among some 60 million land mines that litter the fields of present and past conflicts. Each year more than 10,000 children fall victim to these mines. The proportion of civilian war victims to combatants jumped from 5% to 90% in the last ten years.²

More than 300,000 young boys and girls, many less than 10 years of age, are child soldiers and a very large number of others are now heads of households because parents have either been killed or have simply disappeared.³

Santhi's two younger siblings died from preventable diseases shortly after birth because medical care and good food were not available to them or to their mother. They have become lost in the list of some 10 million children under the age of 5 who die each year from preventable disease and malnutrition.⁴

Living as an IDP Santhi joins 100 million other children worldwide who are not in school. At least 60% of those children are girls.⁵ Their future is grim indeed as they cannot enjoy the luxury of thinking about a better future but can only think of day to day survival.

When Santhi looks at her frail mother, she sees her own future all too clearly. On a global scale, women cultivate more than half of all the food that is grown. Although Santhi's mother is one of the major actors in feeding the world and fighting hunger and malnutrition, she herself is malnourished, has rarely been paid

and has little or no access to land, credit, training and technology. And like 544 million other women in the world, she is illiterate. 70% of the world's poor are women.⁶

Does Santhi have to exist in this kind of world? The answer is a resounding no! According to many international organisations, Santhi and her mother should not be malnourished because there is sufficient food being produced in the world to supply every human being with at least 2,700 calories each day. This makes the fact that 30 million people die each year of hunger and 800 million suffer from chronic malnutrition a crime against humanity. While over US\$900 billion are spent on military budgets worldwide, only 10% of that amount would ensure the essentials of life to everyone in the world. To satisfy the entire world's sanitation and food requirements would cost only \$13 billion; hardly as much as the people of the United States and the European Union spend each year on perfume.⁷

In the past few years, military budgets have skyrocketed taking money away from programmes for education, health care, refugees, food development, etc. The United States of America alone spends more than one billion dollars per day on their military machine. The cost of one B2 Spirit Bomber is \$2.1 billion while the cost to run the UN for one year is only \$1.25 billion.⁸ The money needed to de-

¹ "A Global Overview of Internal Displacement", GLOBALIDP, http://www.idpproject.org/global_overview.htm

² "The World of Children at a Glance", UNHCR, <http://www.unhcr.ch/children/glance.html>

³ *ibid.*

⁴ *ibid.*

⁵ "Human Development Report 2002", http://www.undp.org/hdr2002/presskit/HDR%20PR_balance.pdf

⁶ "Food: Women Farmers are Invisible Actors in Hunger Drama", World News Inter Press Service, http://www.oneworld.net/ips2/oct98/22_39_068.html

⁷ "The Politics of Hunger," Ignacio Ramonet, November 1998, <http://mondediplo.com/1998/11/01leader>

⁸ Federation of American Scientists, <http://www.fas.org/nuke/guide/usa/bomber/b-2.htm>

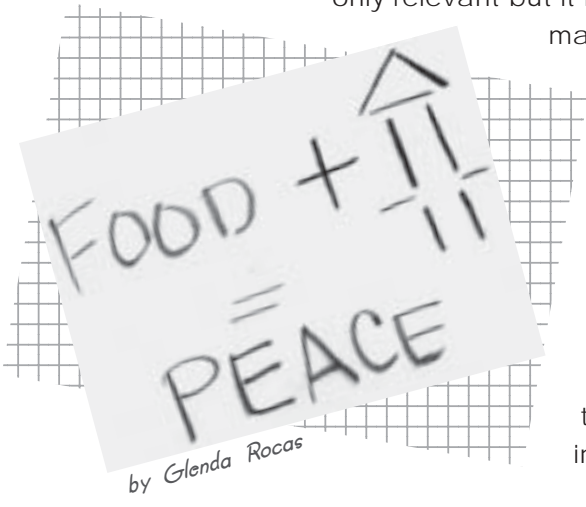
velop a more just world is available if only priorities to use resources to save life rather than to destroy it were emphasised.

While the World Bank, the IMF and the world's most powerful governments try to convince a billion people living on less than US\$2 per day that things are improving and that globalisation will bring a peaceful and happy future for all, a few modern prophets echo the words of Jeremiah, "They attempt to heal the pain of my people slightly by saying, 'Peace, peace; when there is no peace.'" (Jeremiah 6:14)

And like the false prophets of Jeremiah's day, these institutions of wealth seem not to even be ashamed of the vast and growing gap between themselves and the masses of people living in abject poverty. This is where the voices of God's people must be raised in protest. Peace will not come from GM foods, from globalisation, through the industrialisation of food production nor through economic systems that demand ever greater growth. Nor does security come from greater military might nor from wars against terrorism, for in all of these there is no justice, and without justice there is neither real nor lasting peace.

Within this global reality, "Spirituality of Transformation for Just-Peace" is not only relevant but it is also crucial and action oriented. Too

many of the issues that make life for Santhi and more than a billion other men, women and children around the world a living hell can be solved easily if we but commit ourselves to positive and long-term actions. But the solutions require political will and strong commitment to transform the present systems and structures of economic and political power in ways that will ensure that every individual has an equal share in the world's resources and a free and



responsible participation in decision making.

Transformation is not easy and requires stamina and a long-term vision sufficient to confront those forces that demand the maintenance of the status quo. That is why we must seek a transformation with roots deeply planted in a Biblical spirituality that will give us the wisdom, courage and strength to remain in the struggle for as long as it takes. The Apostle Paul defines this spirituality when he says we must first begin with our own transformation. "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God - what is good and acceptable and perfect." (Romans 12:2 NRSV)

To help us as we seek a spirituality of transformation and join together in positive actions for justice, we can focus on the following sub-themes:

- Building a Just and Participatory Civil Society
- Eradicating Poverty, Working Towards Sustainable Communities
- Action in solidarity with the Suffering

In *Building a Just and Participatory Civil Society* we must begin with the poor and the marginalised. Christ referred to them as the "least of these" and reminded us that our love for the least of these reflects our true love for God.

In most countries, including many democratic societies, the marginalised have little or no voice. Decisions that directly and indirectly affect their lives are made without any consideration of how such decisions will affect them. This group of marginalised is a growing percent of the total world's population and their marginalisation is not only a terrible form of violence, but also the roots for a future of increased violence.

A strong, healthy and inclusive civil society is essential for peace and security and the least of these must be an active part of that civil society. Our work needs to find creative ways of identifying these marginalised communities and

helping them develop the skills and understanding necessary to participate actively in the civil society. Building from the “bottom up” helps ensure that justice for the least of these will be a serious consideration in all political, economic and social development.

We should make a special focus on helping youth become more aware of and active in a just civil society. They represent the future of our world and their preparation to move into decision-making roles is a great responsibility for us.

It is also crucial that we continue to look seriously at the role women play in building a just society. While most of our societies marginalise women in a variety of ways, women continue to be a very important part of the fabric of our communities. Often working unnoticed and unrewarded, they strive to produce the food we consume, bring up their children in responsible and healthy ways and play a major role in peacemaking and conflict transformation activities. They must be recognised and encouraged in these efforts and their wisdom must be made available to the broader global community.

In *Eradicating Poverty, Working Towards Sustainable Communities* we must focus on forms of development and social organisation that emphasise equal access to resources rather than constant growth and competition to control more. Economic forms that rely on constantly expanding growth rather than on cooperation and sharing need to be confronted and positive alternatives suggested. We need to search our own old traditions of community and economic wisdom for the kinds of values that can help to eradicate poverty and help us focus more on sustainability. These alternatives could possibly include traditional organic farming methods, traditional medical treatments, traditions of community resource sharing, etc.

In *Actions in Solidarity with the Suffering* we must make a commitment to place ourselves with those who are suffering in order to empathise with their lives, their hopes and their dreams. It is not enough to simply “help” them from afar, but we must stand in solidarity with them as they confront and transform those systems

and structures that are at the roots of suffering and injustice.

This discussion also needs to look seriously at the issue of self-determination. Groups like the *Dalits* and *Nagas* of India, the *Ainus* of Japan and the various ethnic nationalities of Burma are part of larger nation-states that often do not recognise their indigenous identities or rights. Ways to stand with them and identify a form of self-determination that provides them with justice need to be identified and acted on.

There is also the question of justice for the growing number of migrant labourers, victims of war and ethnic conflicts, persons with HIV/AIDS, and children/teen suicides that needs to be seriously looked at. How can we stand in solidarity with these people in ways that lead to a more just and security life for all?

The prophet Isaiah talks about the transformed world that we are to envision in Isaiah 11. It is, perhaps, an idealistic vision, but God has called us to faithfully be a part of that vision. *Basileia*, or the reign of God, is already present in our world and we must commit ourselves to participate fully in it.

This Gathering is a time for us to seek together a deep spirituality of transformation that will begin to focus the world's attention on justice so that peace for all can begin to flourish. For this, we need to pray together, seek together and have faith together that one day, "the wolf and the lamb will live together; the leopard and the goat will be at peace. Calves and yearlings will be safe among lions, and a little child will lead them all." (Isaiah 11:6)

Notes:

The following websites provide additional information for study and reflection:

<http://www.unhcr.ch/children/>

<http://mondediplo.com/1998/11/01leader>

http://www.idpproject.org/global_overview.htm

<http://www.unicef.org/sowc02/brief1.htm>

<http://womenstrike8m.server101.com/English/InvestInCaringPet.htm>

http://www.oneworld.net/ips2/oct98/22_39_068.html

<http://www.web.amnesty.org/ai.nsf/index/IOR420011999>

<http://web.amnesty.org/80256A3B00688CC9/0/A50347E810FC2EE880256B880054CB7A?Open>

http://216.239.33.100/search?q=cache:qfk7YCWnBVAC:www.undp.org/hdr2002/presskit/HDR%2520PR_balance.pdf+human+development

[+balance+sheet&hl=en&ie=UTF-8](http://216.239.33.100/search?q=cache:qfk7YCWnBVAC:www.undp.org/hdr2002/presskit/HDR%2520PR_balance.pdf+human+development+balance+sheet&hl=en&ie=UTF-8)

http://www.unicef.org/children_conflict/

<http://216.239.33.100/search?q=cache:2z5EWHGe-qEC:www.undp.org/hdr2002/overview.pdf>

[+deepening+democracy+in+a+fragmented+world&hl=en&ie=UTF-8](http://216.239.33.100/search?q=cache:2z5EWHGe-qEC:www.undp.org/hdr2002/overview.pdf+deepening+democracy+in+a+fragmented+world&hl=en&ie=UTF-8)

<http://www.unicef.org/media/sowc02presskit/>

<http://www0.un.org/cyberschoolbus/humanrights/resources/factsheet.asp>

Peace Education in Asian Plural Context

The Context of Today's Youth and Students

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What is the context of today's Asian youth and students?

Writing about the "Ecclesia in Asia" (*Boletín* 2000, 13-14), Pope John Paul II listed several religious and cultural values that characterise the region of Asia. These values are love of silence and contemplation; simplicity; harmony; detachment; non-violence; spirit of hard work; discipline; frugal living; thirst for learning and philosophical enquiry; respect for life; compassion for all beings; closeness to nature; filial piety towards parents, elders and ancestors; highly developed sense of community and solidarity; a spirit of religious tolerance and peaceful co-existence. These positive values are, according to the Pope, at the core of being Asian, indicating deep spiritual insight and moral wisdom which are innate to the Asian soul. If these values were really at the core of Asian life, would there be more peace and less violence in Asia?

Unfortunately, such a beautiful list of Asian values can easily be contrasted to the glaring realities of violence, intolerance, hostility, violations of human rights, injustice, materialism, nihilism and individualism that seem to characterise life in Asia today. And unfortunately for youth, they live the prime of their lives in such a horrific context.

Many suicides that happen in Asia are committed by young people. These are often the result of too much pressure from different forces in society – e.g. demands from families, the school, religion, and culture. They could also be due to the loss of sense of meaning in life that many youth experience and, closely re-

lated to it, is the inability to deal with what seem to be overwhelming circumstances or situations.

The *South China Morning Post*, a newspaper daily in Hong Kong, featured a write-up in 2001 entitled, "Why teens and men in late 40s turn to murder". It was based on a research done by the Research and Training Institute for Family Court Probation Officers to uncover what motivates juveniles to commit murder. According to the study, 10 juveniles who committed murder between 1997-1999 could be grouped into three: (a) those who had shown problem behavior while young; (b) those who had suffered a major setback during their formative years; and (c) those who appeared to be normal. But what the three groups had in common was "a narrow way of thinking that made them see only violent solutions to problems". Such violence could be directed to themselves as in suicide or to others as a result of the desire to "protect oneself", as in murder.

Many lives that are lost at war and other conflicts in Asia are those of youth. After all, youth are among those who get victimised as innocent target of war/ conflict or who get co-opted by perpetrators of war. Either way, young people become helpless victims of these forces of death. Young people caught in this situation very often end up rolling within a cycle of violence. As a friend from Sri Lanka shared, many if not all of suicide bombers are orphan children whose parents had been brutally killed during the conflict. Young people constitute the front-line fighters on both sides of a conflict.

Many lives that are wasted through abusive use of drugs and sex are also those of the youth. Youth tend to be curious and want to experiment with something new. Somehow there is the excitement to risk and to try out something! Youth also need to belong and can become vulnerable to peer groups and peer pressure, for good or bad.

Indeed, youth and students live in very difficult times. The impact of globalisation, both negative and positive, affects young people drastically. Consequently, the goals of education to which youth and students are subjected are also dic-

tated by the global market. Many degree programmes offered in colleges and universities which lure the youth are those that will satisfy the demands of the market. Sadly, many young people end up just drifting by.

Closely related to globalisation is the age of terrorism that has elevated the ideology of war as the way to bring about peace. Again, it is often the young people, with so much potential in their lives, who get co-opted to serve this ideology.

But youth are capable of dreaming dreams, of holding on to ideals about how things should be and how life should be. That is why the immemorial saying: "with youth lies the hope of a better future". Yet the future is not simply something that is yet to be. The future is already now.

The ecumenical movement, not only in Asia-Pacific but worldwide, is a witness to the capacity of youth to dream an alternative life and to work towards the realisation of that dream. With that dream of peace and unity through justice, reconciliation and transformation, the ecumenical movement has tried to affirm, reclaim and proclaim the fullness of life that is meant for all. The World Student Christian Federation in general and the Student Christian Movement in particular has a massive crowd of witnesses to this fact. It has produced active and capable youth and student leaders who in their time inspired the birthing of the ecumenical movement. That is a noble history worth remembering and passing on – to keep that beacon of hope glimmering for the next generations of youth and students.

Education is for Life

Before going into peace education itself, which is the theme of this article for *Praxis*, it is important to affirm first of all that the goal of education is life, the sustenance and continuation of life in its fullness. If we trace the origin



Dream for peace expressed by Rochelle Cairinho, a student participant in EASY Net Workshop 2002

of education to the very beginning of human culture, we will see that education was whatever nurtured the younger generation for life, both in the family and the larger community. This naturally included basic training or orientation in survival skills, inculcation of community values, and handing down of culture (Antone 2003, 13). This is the broad and original meaning of education.

Today, dictionary definitions of education include "the act or process of acquiring knowledge, especially systematically during childhood and adolescence"; "the knowledge or training acquired by this process"; "the act or process of imparting knowledge, especially at a school, college or university"; "the theory of teaching and learning"; and "a particular kind of instruction or training". These definitions indicate more focus on the process and content but not so much on the goal of education. And these reflect the trends in general education today.

This is not to say that general education in pre-school, primary, secondary and tertiary school levels does not have any goals. But the fact is that goals can be dictated by other agendas, instead of life's agendas for peace, justice and social transformation. For example, in some places, the educational goal of some degree programs is to simply prepare students to meet and satisfy the demands of the market for cheap labor and other services from people of the developing countries. Every year, schools, colleges and universities produce graduates who are competitive enough for this global market economy. Even pre-school education has become so rigid and tough as parents demand more and more for nursery and kindergarten to prepare very young children for this competitive kind of education and the competitive life in the world.

With this shift in focus, education has become a tool to serve the global market as well as a commodity in the global market.

Dr. Kim Yong Bock, Korean theologian who is chancellor of the Advanced Institute for the Study of Life, re-defines education as a kind of cultural action for the sharing of life-wisdom in community (*CCA News*, December 2001, 10). It means the sharing of wisdom about life passed through the generations through

the family, religious community, and society as a whole. If education is cultural action, then the people should be the subjects of their life, not objects that those with power and money can control, manipulate, suppress and oppress. If education is cultural action, then people should be enabled to appropriate and create wisdom for life through and out of their experiences. This may include resisting powers of domination and suppression, overcoming silence and passivity, and taking action for genuine transformation.

Youth and students need to affirm this right to education as education for life. They must be critical of what is offered in schools, colleges and universities based on this important criterion of education for life.

The Need for Peace Education

Under the overall goal of reclaiming education for life is the call of the times for peace education.

This paper will focus on “Peace Education in Asian Plural Context” with the hope of contributing to the ongoing global discourse on overcoming violence through building a culture of peace. With education being a cultural action, peace education involves the evolving of a culture of peace as an alternative to the culture of war and violence prevalent in Asian societies. In this sense, peace education is more than a matter of subject to add to a school curriculum. Rather, it has to do with envisioning and actualising peace as an alternative way of living, thinking and being.

There are different ways of approaching peace education – depending on the realities of a given context. As for this paper, I will focus on the context of Asian plurality and what its implications are for peace education.

Asian Context of Plurality

The region of Asia is a region of plurality or diversity. No other continent in the

world do you see so many people of different colors, races, languages, cultures, and religions. This reality of plurality is probably the most striking characteristic of Asia – which has become both a source of pride as well as a source of many of its problems. At the root of the problem is the inability to deal with difference positively and creatively.

There are three basic approaches to difference. One is *exclusivism* – which is an attitude that regards one or one’s group as against the others. It therefore makes others one’s enemies who should be avoided if not annihilated, or, if possible, transformed (converted, in the language of Christian religion) into something like me or us. Many ethnic groups in Asia have exclusive attitudes towards other ethnic groups. Those in higher castes and classes also have exclusive attitudes towards those of other usually lower castes and classes. Religions and religious communities also have exclusive attitudes to those of other religions. Even differences in sexual orientation and ideological persuasion are used against the others. While exclusivism may have been a way of self-protection and self-propagation for a particular group to survive in the midst of other groups around them, it has definitely contributed to the intolerance and animosity among people of different groups. It puts oneself or one’s group against all others.

Another approach to difference is *inclusivism* – which is an attitude that embraces the others as part of one’s bigger, all-encompassing group. At the outset this may sound very positive. But a closer look at this attitude will reveal a certain kind of triumphalistic thinking. For example, how can a Christian claim that good Hindus, good Buddhists and good Muslims, etc., are the “unknown Christians” who are unknown even to themselves? What would the Christians say if the reverse were said about them by these people of other faith? While inclusivism, especially in matters of religion, may seem positive, it carries a tendency to ignore and negate the uniqueness of the other. It tends to put oneself or one’s group up and above the others.

The third approach to difference is *pluralism* – which is an attitude that puts oneself or one’s group as one with and among others. Together they are co-

sojourners in the world, co-sharers of life's struggles, joys and pains, and co-searchers for truth and freedom. I like the way Diana Eck (*Encountering God*) defines pluralism as involving a commitment to one's faith community as well as an openness to learning from and with other religious groups. Pluralism therefore is not relativism... A pluralist attitude is grounded in one's faith traditions but is open to learning from and with other traditions. It therefore includes a sense of confidence about one's faith as well as a sense of humility in the presence of other faiths.

The first two attitudes are obviously prevalent among Asians. The third attitude is not something new at all but is just not readily and properly understood by people.

Peace Education in Plural Context

So what does peace education entail in a plural context such as Asia? I would like to suggest some practical ways for peace education that helps to build a culture of peace.

First of all, it begins with *affirming the reality of Asian plurality* and the need to deal with it positively and creatively. This involves knowing the layers of plurality that characterise Asia – by virtue of the many races, ethnic groups, cultures and sub-cultures, religions, philosophies and spirituality, languages and dialects, ideologies and theologies, that are all part of and thriving in Asia. When we speak of Asia, we can not and we should not think of a region that is monolithic. Rather, we should think and affirm that it is a region that is so diverse and colorful. Think for a moment about Asian food or cuisine and you can already imagine the different unique Asian ingredients that give colors and fragrances and create a variety of exotic dishes. That is exactly what being Asian is about. Asia does not consist of one community but a community of communities. With such a diversity exclusivism in thinking and attitudes will surely create problems and difficulties. The challenge then is how these different communities can live together in peace

and harmony while respecting and affirming their uniqueness and differences.

In the life of the Student Christian Movement affirming the reality of Asian plurality means accepting the fact that there are many other youth and students who belong to other religious groups and social movements. And indeed there are many such groups in universities and schools, and many of them seem to respond to the needs of youth and students. Should the SCM see these groups as competition, some kind of enemy in need of conversion? Or should the SCM see them as potential partners for the common task of ministering to youth and students of Asia?

Second, we need to have an *awareness-raising on our exclusivist attitudes and tendencies* to others around us. This takes an honest self-assessment because people can be easily blinded by their rationalisations of why others are and should be excluded from one's in-group. Exclusivism has been the way for many of our ethnic groups in Asia – so much so that cross-cultural marriages were shunned and discouraged. Exclusivism is reinforced by peculiar languages or dialects and sub-cultures that are unique to particular groups. Exclusivism is expressed more blatantly when those of other groups are deprived of certain rights simply because they do not belong to the in-group.

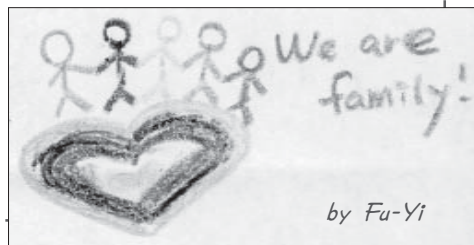
Perhaps in the life of the Student Christian Movement in Asia today, there is a growing openness to youth and students of other denominations, even those of other religions. But in many places, the exclusive attitudes and tendencies still prevail. Also in many places, more still needs to be done in terms of dealing with those of different sexual orientation, ideological persuasion, and those of different castes. Youth and students need to be able to answer themselves honestly why the allergy or aversion to certain groups of people, what are those stereotypes they hold about people, where did they learn to have such thinking and attitude, etc. Dealing with the root of our exclusivism is a great step forward to dealing creatively with plurality.

Third, we need to *critique those inherited traditions* that support our exclusivist

attitudes and tendencies. These traditions may be cultural or religious and they usually are very deeply entrenched in the psyche of the people. Many of them have simply been inherited and passed on to the next generation without question. In order to critique those inherited traditions that support exclusivist attitudes and tendencies, we need to re-read sacred texts and revisit teachings that have been handed down to us without question. For example, the few references in the Bible to same-sex acts do not refer to homosexuality as it is understood today. The incident described in Judges 19:22 is about gang rape rather than the loving relationship of a couple who happens to be of the same sex. On the matter of caste, it is important to understand when and why the caste system got introduced into the religious and cultural system of a people, and who got it introduced anyway? Another important question to ask is how the caste system is also present in other religions/cultures although it is not named that way.

The Student Christian Movement has been, historically speaking, the critical eye or arm of churches and universities. As such, it can and it should help in unearthing some of those inherited traditions that continue to promote exclusivism. This of course is better done together with other groups, which is an exercise in affirming plurality.

Finally, genuine peace education happens, when after the earlier points have been well taken we become *partners with other groups in the advocacy for peace and reconciliation*. Recognising that Asia is big and wide enough to accommodate the many communities that are thriving in it, there is no need for the different groups to be against each other; or for any one group to be above or better than all the others. The way to live in Asia is for peaceful co-existence of neighbors and friends, not strangers and enemies. This is possible through building just relationships and enabling just sharing of the rich resources of Asia.



Globalization in Asia and the Role of the Ecumenical Movement

Rakesh Peter Dass

*Joint Executive Secretary of Ecumenical Formation, Gender Justice & Youth Formation
Christian Conference of Asia*

Dear friends,

This essay is divided into 3 sections, namely (1). An introduction to globalization, (2). Some realities of globalization in Asia, (3). What role the churches and the ecumenical youth movement can play in addressing globalization.

1. Introduction to Globalization

Globalization can be defined as the process by which the individual features that distinguish between nations are subsumed by a global reality. Hence globalization can be of economy, culture, society, language or any other element of a nation's reality. Today, our global language is English; we also use it in our ecumenical meetings. English was adopted by various nations in the world as a common language from their colonial occupiers. The fact that the US dominates the world today has carried on the global grip of English. Languages like French, Spanish, and Dutch have not been able to enjoy the same widespread appeal as English. For this essay, our focus is economic justice hence I will focus on issues of economic globalization.

The history of what economic globalization means to us today begins after the Second World War. The victors of that war, namely the Americans, the British, the French, and other Allied Powers [AP] were faced with two crucial questions, namely, how to reconstruct Europe, and how to fund that reconstruction. So the victors of the WW II met in Bretton Woods in USA. This meeting was influenced by the prevailing dominant theory of economics which propagated a market-based system of economy and believed that the wealth of nations should be shared by other nations for the benefit of all in a market-controlled, self-regulatory environ-

ment. The group concluded their deliberations at Bretton Woods by deciding to create two organizations. One would loan money to countries and encourage them to join the global community of economies, while the other would loan money to countries for reconstruction and development. The former organization was called the International Monetary Fund [IMF] while the latter was called the World Bank [WB]. Hence, sometimes, the IMF and WB are referred to as the Bretton Wood Twins. Both were controlled by the European and American Allied Powers, and countries who would take from the IMF and the WB would need to comply with the economic policies of these organizations. The intention was to set up the reconstructed Europe as a capitalist economy while encourage other nations around the world to join this party. It was made sure that the decision making power and veto remained with the Allied Powers in the eventuality that other non-AP nations did business with and joined the IMF and the WB.

Gradually the integration of national economies resulted in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade [GATT] as national boundaries were crossed for trade. The GATT institutionalized itself into the World Trade Organization [WTO]. Today much of the anti-globalization movement is against the policies of the WTO, the IMF and the WB. Globalization created a lot of wealth by the sharing of resources. However the sharing of this wealth has been unequal with the powerful nations using globalization as a tool to accumulate wealth. There are innumerable cases of unfair and imbalanced trade agreements and regulations.

2. Realities of Globalization in Asia

Economic globalization has two aspects. *Globalization of trade* being facilitated by the WTO and *globalization of money* which is being facilitated by the IMF and the WB. Globalization is associated with words like privatization, reduction of subsidies, cheap labor, and exploitative trade agreements. It has meant liberalization - that is 'liberating' an economy from Government control - by opening domestic markets to foreign competition, and removal of protection for domestic companies, usually resulting in a loss of control of a nation on its economic policies. Repeated calls have been made for the protection of control of na-

tions on their economic policies. However, loans from the IMF come with Structural Adjustment Programs [SAPs], while doing business through the WTO has meant relaxing trade regulations. These changes have mostly been detrimental to the common people.

As more and more nations feel the many disadvantages of economic isolation, they are joining the global economy by taking loans from the WB and IMF, focusing on export-led economies, attracting increased foreign direct investment (FDI), or entering into bi- and multi-lateral trade agreements with other nations. A good example of this phenomenon is China's recent entry into the WTO after years of negotiations. Though starting out as a Socialist economy, there is so much FDI flowing into China, and an ever increasing export of her cheap labor and goods, that this has 'forced' China into joining the WTO. India abandoned her Mixed/Socialist economy for a market-economy in 1991 when she ran dangerously close of bankrupting herself with a Foreign Reserves balance then that could guarantee only two weeks worth of imports for the country. This forced India to take IMF bailouts, agree to IMF's Structural Adjustment Program (SAP), and in the process liberalize her economy and join the global economic bandwagon. These have been two of the largest Socialist economies in Asia. The same drama has been played out in Malaysia, Thailand, Taiwan, and in Japan after the II World War. The Asian Crises of 1997, which started in Thailand, was a result of huge FDIs which created a real estate and currency speculation bubble in the Crises affected countries. Currency speculation that started in Thailand spread and hit Malaysia, Korea, the Philippines, and Indonesia.¹

Some issues related to the effects of globalization in Asia are:

2.1. Labor Conditions: Nearly all multi-national brands outsource their production to Asia today. Combined with the lack of proper implementation of

¹ Joseph E. Stiglitz, *Globalization and Its Discontents*, W. W. Norton & Company (New York, 2002).

labor laws, and the desire for Asia countries to attract foreign business, this outsourcing has resulted in inhuman labor conditions. Sweat shops are found from China to Indonesia making everything from sports shoes, watches, clothes to firecrackers, cigarettes and footballs. Children below the age of 14 are employed as labor in hazardous industries like chemical fertilizers, heavy equipments, tobacco factories, glass factories, lime stone quarries and other such places. Wages are irregular and only a fraction of what organized labor doing the same work would be paid. Most of this labor is contractual with no permanency or benefit.

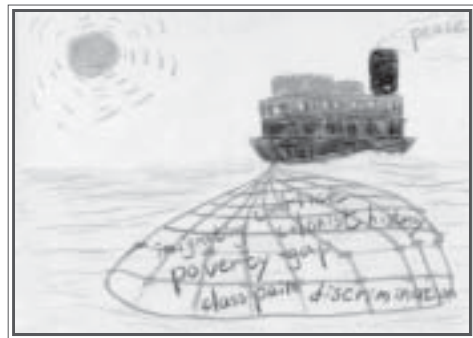
2.2. Environmental Degradation: Foreign and domestic companies interested only in making profit are indiscriminately polluting the land, water, and destroying forests all over Asia. The timber mafia of Thailand and Myanmar is destroying forests to fulfill the needs of South Eastern China and India. Tribal land is being encroached upon by the government to mine for nuclear material in Eastern India. Local art in Indonesia is being taken over by businesses from Malaysia. Small farmers across Asia are being forced out of business by corporate, giant farmers. Genetically Modified seeds are increasing the use of fertilizers which is in turn sapping up the potentiality of farm lands. Market-driven prices are making small farming difficult. More and more land is being used for factories, commercial purposes, or modernization ignoring concepts of sustainable development and environmental protection. Governments are either unable to control, or many times in collusion with, this unsustainable development.

2.3. Unequal distribution of wealth: The United Nations [UN] reports there are 2 billion people in the world without access to clean drinking water. Over a billion people in the world survive on less than the UN subsistence level of US\$ 2 per day. Nearly half the children of the world do not have access to health care. More people are being killed due to a disease like AIDS than all the wars of the last century. The combined wealth of the top 5 richest people in the world exceeds the combined Gross Domestic Product [GDP] of more than a dozen nations. US & EU which account for 10 % of the world's popula-

tion account for more than 75 % of the global GDP. Luxury items sell like hotcakes in a world where millions are homeless and starving. Despite being the biggest debtor in the world – to the tune of US\$ 500 billion – the US is able to balance this debt with annual currency investments amounting to nearly US\$ 550 billion due to the strength of its currency and biased international trade. In the recently failed Cancun Round of the WTO, the rich countries, led by US & EU, were pushing for greater market access in developing nations while still maintaining subsidies to their markets. IMF and the WB are used to force de-regulation of developing markets while they maintain protected markets.

2.4. Loss of national sovereignty and responsibility: Who is responsible for the welfare of a nation's people? The answer would normally be: the national government concerned. But governments no longer have total control over their policies, especially economic policies. Economics is political. The Structural Adjustment Programs [SAPs] of the IMF have forced governments to reduce social spending in health, education, and other such social sectors, privatize public utility service providers, reduce subsidies, de-regulate, and remove price control mechanisms on essential products. Multi National Corporations [MNCs] make money with no national responsibility. MNCs take the cake while the national government is left with the bill. Governments do not have the capacity to pay these bills as more and more wealth is filling the coffers of the already rich and powerful.

Given the fact that it is not the common people but rather the politicians who decide trade deals, and the fact that due to large debts and spending beyond their means countries no longer can afford to take care of their expenses through national earnings alone, it is not surprising that despite the global opposition to globalization, countries have



by Fu-Yi

joined the global economy and continue to do so. Also, as long as there is one international currency of trade used by the world, globalization cannot be resisted. So, what does this mean for the anti-globalization movement?

3. Role of the Churches and the Ecumenical Youth Movement in Addressing Globalization

The convictions of the church call her to be in solidarity with the oppressed, as a voice of the voiceless. The Word of God that she follows asks of her that “justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-ending stream” [Amos 5:24], that “there may be fullness of life for all” [John 10:10], and gives her a vision of the new heaven and a new earth [Isaiah 65: 17-23]. The exploitation and inequality that globalization brings is then unacceptable in the eyes of any Christian. The Christian God is a God of liberation. This liberation is in the independent and fulfilling existence of all creation.

Nobel-prize winning economist Joseph E. Stiglitz, who served as the Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers for former US President Bill Clinton (1993-1997) and Chief Economist at the World Bank (1997-2000), gives us an insider’s view on globalization, “Globalization today is not working for many of the world’s poor. It is not working for much of the environment. It is not working for the stability of the global economy.... To some there is an easy answer: Abandon globalization. That is neither feasible nor desirable. Globalization has also brought huge benefits (development of countries due to opportunities for trade, increased access to markets and technology). Globalization has brought better health, as well as an active global civil society fighting for more democracy and greater social justice. The problem is not with globalization, but how it has been managed.” (*ibid*, Joseph Stiglitz)

There is a need to “put the country in the driver’s seat” in the process of globalization. There is a need to make sure *the people* – and not just democratically-elected representatives who are supposed to represent the good of the people, but who are actually in collusion with business interests most of the time – have a

say in decisions that affect them, to promote democracy and fair trade. Government has a role in making any society, any economy, function efficiently-and humanly. "The discontent with globalization arises not just from economics seeming to be pushed over everything else, but because a particular view of economics - market fundamentalism - is pushed over all other views. Opposition to globalization in many parts of the world is not to globalization per se, but to the particular set of doctrines that the international financial institutions have imposed." [ibid.]

So what does this mean for the churches? It means there needs to be a focus on how to soften the ill effects of globalization. There needs to be an understanding of the appropriate level - local, national, or global - at which collective action needs to be undertaken. Churches should leave the global fight against globalization to NGOs and focus on collective action at the local and national levels, with focus at the local levels. Globalization cannot be resisted, however it can be controlled. The forces of globalization and its effects can be controlled for the good of the people being affected. This can be achieved by a process which can be called **glocalization** (localizing globalization). Localizing globalization involves making globalization subjective to local communities. It also involves sharing the wealth and control of economic processes with those who are directly affected by such processes. Localization can be at the national level, state/regional level, and at the village, community, or factory level. For example, if a company is being privatized and jobs need to be cut, this should be done in consultation with the people being affected. If a state company is being privatized, the workers can be invited to become shareholders of the privatized company. If a factory is to be built on private land, the people involved should be consulted rather than coerced into cooperation.

Churches and their social justice organizations should focus their energy on taming globalization, rather than stopping it or eradicating it. Alternative methods of economy are good and should be encouraged, but until such methods can be adopted at national levels and provide national development, governments will be forced to join the global economy. I think it is healthy for countries to utilize

by Jennifer, Lee Tien-Chieh



their competitive labor prices and resources available to their advantage under healthy guidelines rather than try to isolate them from the world.

The churches should focus their energy and resources on local efforts rather than on international efforts to control globalization. These efforts should not be to simply deride globalization, but should be more to facilitate local actions that curtail the ill effects of globalization.

Conclusion

Globalization has not benefited the majority of the world. It has become a tool in the hands of the powerful and the rich for exploiting the resources of the poor and developing nations and peoples of the world. It has been characterized by accumulation of wealth, indiscriminate greed, unfair practices, and blatant disregard for the environment that sustains us all. It has also resulted in the consolidation of diversity into uniformity. So far, globalization has been a predominantly negative experience for the developing world. Our debate is whether the present system of globalization can be beneficial for the developing world.

Churches in Asia need to focus their energy and resources in local grassroots efforts to oppose or curtail globalization. Being community based, churches have their primary responsibility within the communities she works in. No social organization can claim to be present in tens of thousands of communities, villages, towns, and cities across Asia. Only the churches can claim such a network, and this must be their strength. The churches must surely link her efforts against globalization to the wider global movement but her primary focus should be work in the local communities.

I leave you with the following questions for deliberations:

1. How do you view globalization? Comment on the view of Joseph E. Stiglitz "The problem is not with globalization, but how it has been managed".
2. Gather 5 examples of the effects of globalization from within your group? [These examples can be of either the positive or the negative effects of globalization. You are encouraged to critically analyze, not straightforwardly reject globalization.]
3. What role can the churches play in addressing the effects of globalization? Comment on the strategy for churches suggested in the paper.
4. What role do you see yourself involved in while addressing globalization? Kindly be specific and practically local.

An Introduction to Patriarchy, Feminism and the Feminist Movement

This input is the first step to understand the multiple aspects and experiences of Feminism as it evolves from its onstart to the present 21st century. WSCF AP encourages students and youth to continuously research and study on this subject of Feminism which is constantly evolving in lieu of new understanding and analysis.

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*This paper was presented in
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Feminist and Feminism - emotive words that often evoke hostile reactions. Feminism often thought of as a recent phenomenon, is rooted in western society. This word is commonly used in Europe and elsewhere in 19th and 20th century to signify *AGITATION ON ISSUES CONCERNING AND AFFECTING WOMEN*. In the Third World, confusion is caused by conservatives that allege that feminism is:

- A product of 'decadent' western capitalism - that it is a purely west European and North American phenomenon.
- Based on a foreign culture of no relevance to women in the Third World.
- An ideology of women of the local bourgeoisie.
- Alienates if it diverts women from their indigenous culture and family responsibilities, and from revolutionary struggles for national liberation and socialism.
- Where feminist struggle exists, they are merely initiatives of western models.

Feminism IS NOT imposed on the Third World by the west. But rather, historical circumstances produced important materials and ideological changes that affected women and the response from women. Feminist struggles originated between 70 and 90 years ago in many countries in Asia. This is now considered a fact that has been "hidden from history". Only recently, with the rise of feminist

movements all over the world, has attention been directed to early feminists and feminism in the Third World; in Asia.

These early efforts were:

- Debates on women's rights and education were held in 18th century China.
- There were movements for women's social emancipation.

Originally feminism meant AGITATING ON ISSUES CONCERNING WOMEN - related to the democratic rights of women - right to vote, property rights, and right to education and employment, etc. (focus on legal reforms for women's emancipation). Now its meaning has expanded to include ideological/theoretical and political formulations:

- Challenging the unequal relations between men and women.
- An awareness of women's oppression and exploitation within the family (at the very level of intimate personal relationships), at work and in society, and conscious action (by men and women) to change this situation.
- Social movements for change in the post (?) conditions of women - to change the traditional role and images of women, to end sexism and the oppression of women and to attain for women equal (not necessarily similar) rights with men. It is based on the understanding from the women's point(s) of view.
- Not a fight between men and women, but rather a fight between an ideology, which enforces sexual stereotyping and intimations upon both men and women.

Feminism, therefore, goes beyond movements for equality and emancipation, which agitate for equal rights and legal reforms to redress the prevailing discrimination against women. While such movements often advance the struggle for equality, they do not tackle basic issues of WOMEN'S SUBORDINATION within the family or challenge existing frameworks of men-women relations within which the subordination of women is located. It is a struggle for the achievement of women's equality, dignity and freedom of choice to control their lives and bodies within and outside the home and in all aspects of their daily lives.

The understanding of feminism has to be placed in HISTORICALLY AND CULTURALLY specific realities, LEVELS OF CONSCIOUSNESS, PERCEPTIONS and ACTIONS of members of society. So, this can be articulated differently in different countries or by different groups in the same country.

The first stage of feminism is to liberate women from the constraints of society. The next stage is to liberate the remainder of the society from the same system. Thus, "inclusion" of men in the process of women's liberation is imperative to its success. While women are slowly starting to escape the social conditioning which constrain them, men have not even begun to challenge the way they are told to live. Whilst feminism has been the strongest movement in the 20th century, its progress cannot go on further unless men start to be liberated along with it. Men too, are victims of the same set of oppressive forces, which dictate to the individual how people are to behave. However, feminism cannot solve male problems. In the same way that only women can evaluate women's needs and wants, only men can bring about changes in their own lives, and redefine their gender roles. What women can do, is to provide the impetus and support for men to go through this process, and to recognise its importance in their lives.

THE DIFFERENT FEMINISMS

Each feminism is a blend of ideas, histories and ideological perspectives. There are different perspectives with which feminism has been analysed and within each feminism, patriarchy, male dominance, and gender inequality are looked at differently. Each type of feminism has a specific agenda for change arising from its particular analysis.

But common to all forms of feminism are:

- Belief in equal rights and opportunities for women.
- Recognition that women are oppressed and exploited by virtue of being women.
- Organising for change.

However, extensive differences in strategy; in identifying constituencies and allies:

- Vision about what constitutes women's liberation.
- Attitude and reactions to men.
- Understanding the roots of women's oppression.
- Setting priorities.

AT A GLANCE...

Liberal Feminism analyses the place of women primarily from a legal/political perspective. Aims at bringing equality between men and women within the framework of the existing social order. Concentrates on lobbying governments for pro-women reforms and trying to influence decision-makers for equal opportunity.

Central theme is the equality of opportunity: each individual in society should have equal chance to compete for the resources of that society and to be inhibited by custom and law. Emphasises on the redistribution of opportunity in order to give women access to power and opportunities of men. Barriers to competition must be removed. Concentrates on improving educational opportunities for women to give them the tools to compete, on changing socialisation patterns shaping a feminine personality uncomfortable with competing, and on removing legislation that discriminates against women.

Radical Feminism focuses its analysis on PATRIARCHY - the whole system of male power over women. This is reinforced by and reinforcing the power of individual men over women and children within their families. Sees sexual oppression as primary and aims at changing all oppressive social institutions. Adopts a militant, anti-men stance to the point of being isolationist. Stresses 'women only' campaigns and demonstrations; building a women space and a women's culture.

Identifies women's unique capacity to give birth to children as central to women's experiences and to the material basis of women's oppression. Women's role in biological reproduction (often child rearing) is seen to be the basis upon

which male privilege is established and the root of male control of women's bodies, which is expressed in exploitative patterns of male/female sexuality and in violence against women.

Identifies fundamental emotional, social and political differences between men and women. Validated the differences between men and women and, in fact, the need for female nurturing and life-giving values of women. It named the differences between women and men and thus made women's oppression visible. Largely responsible for the development of women-centered culture that takes the form of alternatives. Against male control of women's bodies - rape crisis centers, shelters for battered women.

Marxist Feminism analyses women's oppression exclusively from the economic (class) point of view. Women's struggles are considered part of a larger class struggle against an exploitative capitalist system. Capitalism and class structure are viewed as the ROOT of women's oppression. Emphasises struggle against capitalism and the need of working class women and men to unite and fight for equality. Women's emancipation will then follow.

Socialist Feminism raises economic and class questions and sees the problem as a combination of MALE DOMINATION AND CLASS EXPLOITATION. Seeks to analyse subordination of women as linked with other forms of oppression, and attempts to unite movements for socialism with those for women's liberation. Family and economy are not separate institutions but are interacting systems. Emphasises making alliances with other oppressed groups, movements and left political parties.

ORIGINS

Liberal Feminism

- Its beginnings can be traced to the flowering of liberalism in the 16th and 17th centuries. (Liberalism emphasises the right of all individuals to pursue their self-interest and the duty of the state is to enable them to do so.)

- It gained predominance during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and came to the forefront of the women's movement in the West in the 1960s.
- It draws strength from the ideals of equality and liberty, and emphasises the distinction between the public and private spheres of life. It has been influenced by the writings of Mary Wollstonecraft, Elizabeth Lady Stanton and Harriet Taylor Mill in early liberal Europe.

Radical Feminism

- Its beginnings can be traced to the late 1960's, coinciding with the second wave of feminism and the new women's liberation movement in the West.
- It has historical linkages with the writings of Shulamith Firestone (*Dialectics of Sex*), Kate Millet (*Sexual Politics*), and a series of pamphlets, which emerged from the experiences of the women's movement.

Marxist Feminism

- Draws its basis from Marxism (Engels and Marx's view) specially Engels' works: "Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State" (1884).

Socialist Feminism

- It combines the Marxist and Liberal Feminist positions, but is marked by a strong radical feminist influence as well. According to Alison Jaggar, socialist feminism combines the rigorous, historical materialist method of Marx and Engels with the radical feminist insights that the personal is political and that gender oppression cuts across class lines.
- It emerged in the early 1970s as the ideological perspective of women who were active in the new left and early radical feminist movements.
- It has been influenced by various disciplines - sociology, economics, political science, anthropology and psychology.

EMPHASIS

Liberal Feminism

- Stresses on the equality between men and women for equal opportunity,

and strives for equal rights of women.

- Points out that women are equally involved in the labour market as men; that men should take equal responsibility for domestic work or that family responsibilities should be the work of paid professionals.
- Stresses on women's self-improvement and encourages women to get into decision-making positions via their entry into male professions (e.g. law, banking, business, police, armed forces, etc.) Urges women to see a career as important as marriage.
- Does not give importance to the sexual differentiation between men and women nor the social differences emerging from the former.

Radical Feminism

- Men and women are considered different from each other because of their biological and psychological characteristics.
- The conflict between men and women (or the dialectics of sex) is the primary contradiction in society and this is based on male power.
- Men as a class are seen as the enemy responsible for the oppression of women.
- Family is seen as the center of women's oppression. Therefore, violence in the family is the principal focus of organising, e.g., rape, wife-beating, amniocentesis. Wages struggles or other economic issues are concerns of mass organisations.
- Sexuality, and violence are emphasised in discussion for feminist consciousness raising.
- Promote separatism between men and women, suggests that women should only relate to other women-centered social and cultural world.
- To do the above women must discover new forms of language and communication based on the body, and more expressive of female patterns of thought.

Marxist Feminism

- The antagonistic relationship between classes is the context within which the woman's question is situated. Thus, women's oppression is situated in

the context of class oppression which supercedes all other forms of oppression.

- The fight for women's liberation is not a fight of women against men, but of women against the capitalist system and all capitalist social relations of male dominance.
- Only with class struggle will the sexual discrimination of women end.
- Once private property is abolished (through collective ownership of the means of production), the exploitation and oppression of women will automatically disappear.

Socialist Feminism

- Recognises 'gender' along with class as an important element in women's subordination and the importance of imperialism in women's oppression in the Third World.
- Gender relations are understood as relations of power and, therefore, must be analysed along with class, caste or other power relations to understand the configuration of society.
- Within the sphere of employment, sexual division of labour still operates against women, putting them in low paid jobs, and certain types of jobs without career prospects, etc.
- Believes that liberation and end to oppression cannot be achieved within the existing system. Struggle has to be against all forms of oppression.
- Argues for collaboration between men and women in their creation of a new society, and for the collaboration of women of all classes to eradicate injustices of all types.

ON PATRIARCHY

Liberal Feminism

- Does not discuss the concept of patriarchy, since it assumes equality of sexes within the existing framework. Does not challenge existing structures of society.

Radical Feminism

- Define it as a sexual system of power by which men possess superior power and economic benefits. It is maintained through marriage and the family, through the sexual division of labour and by society.
- It is rooted in the biological (sexual) differentiation of men and women, by which men dominate over women in all institutions of society.
- The family, as a patriarchal unit is seen as the site of women's triple oppression: sexual, economic, and psychological.
- Considers patriarchy as preceding all other forms of human oppression and exploitation and is manifested through male violence and control.
- It is universal and overlooks the cultural diversity and historical specificity of human relations.
- It is also linked to men's biology (i.e., their ability to rape women).

Marxist Feminism

- Collective struggles against public forms of patriarchy and violence are stressed as opposed to struggles against violence in the family alone.
- Domination of women by men is intimately connected with capitalism, because patriarchy and capitalism are mutually supportive. Within the household women produce labour power in the sense of bearing children and caring for their husbands, who are workers, which supports men but the women do not get benefits for this domestic work. Therefore, it is argued that men should be brought into social production, and domestic activities should be socialised because this work has capital value. In the absence of this domestic labour, the expense would fall on capital. Even outside the home, the segregation of women into certain occupations has enabled employers to keep their wages down.

Socialist Feminism

- Believes that Patriarchy existed before private property came into existence, but that does not mean that it will disappear when private property is abolished.
- It is part of the economic system, and reinforces the system.

- Questions the underlying basis of sexual division of labour and women's subordination in all institutions of society.
- It, therefore, analyses patriarchy and its manifestations in society, as the structural constraints to women's empowerment.

CRITIQUE

Liberal Feminism

- Does not address the general context within which women's discrimination occurs, i.e., does not question the structures and systems in society due to which women are 'two-paid workers' and 'unpaid housewives'. Does not question the existing social order, i.e., inequalities of wealth and power, nor the structures of oppression which create sexist ideologies and unequal laws and practices. Has little sensitivity to differences among women and tends to assume that solutions for one group of women would be equally useful for others. It does not question the basis of unequal gender relations, only adopts a posture of cautious reforms.

Radical Feminism

- They do not accept the relevance of gender, but use the category 'sex'.
- They accept the biological differentiation between men and women as final - it cannot be changed.
- Is not concerned with factors such as class, caste, etc. and are insensitive to differences between women. They do not see a connection between the sexual division of labour and the economic division of labour.
- Does not question whether women have any negative attitudes, behavioural patterns or psychological attributes.

Marxist Feminism

- Does not question the sexual division of labour, because only the economic (class) division of labour is important - gender blind.
- Ignores the power relation between men and women, whether in the family or the workplace.

- Less concerned with getting women into positions of power than the liberal feminists.
- Does not place importance on giving equal access to education and training.
- Less vocal on issues of sexual harassment of women because of its commitment to working class solidarity.
- Believes that once women work on equal terms with men, they will win men's respect and sexist attitudes will be undermined.

Socialist Feminism

- Offers the most comprehensive approach to understanding women's reality. It reveals a complex world where there will be no easy solutions to the struggle for women's liberation beyond patriarchy and to society's movement against poverty and injustice.

CONTRIBUTIONS

Liberal Feminism

- General advocacy on women's issues. Strongly advocates legal reform and women's political participation. It motivated the UN Decade for Women (1975-1985).
- Emphasises networking and producing services for women by women, demanded child care, rights of poor women and control over one's reproductive life.
- Its reformist vision has inspired the struggles of many Third World feminists, politicians, jurists, and academics.

Radical Feminism

- Though very radical to the point of being extreme, these feminists have provided useful insights into the nature of women's subordination.
- Instead of struggling for votes and legal reforms, demanded for the destruction of patriarchy.
- Set up rape crisis centres, women refugee help centres, organised cam-

paings against harassment of women, boycotted violent and pornographic films, promoted collective child care and self-reliance of women.

- It has led the crusade against sex tourism in Asia.

Marxist Feminism

- Wages for housework campaigns in 1970 gave recognition and value to housework.
- General advocacy on a just wage for female labour.

Socialist Feminism

- Highlights the role of media and education in promoting stereotyped attitudes of men and women, and the need for changing school curriculum.
- Points to the role of the state and trade unions to join in combating sexist attitudes and practices.
- Raised widely the issue of pornography and nature of female sexuality in their struggle against women's exploitation. Point out that it is not enough to fight against capitalism and accept existing theories of how socialist society should be organised.
- Important to organise alternative forms of relations which give men and women similar skills.
- Believe that to take the struggle for liberation forward, it is important to set up autonomous women's organisations which can play a vital role in women's politicisation processes - provide a forum for discussion, networking advocacy of different demands from women's issues to other socio-political and economic issues impacting upon the lives of women.

EASYNET



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The Ecumenical Asia-Pacific Students and Youth Network is a voluntary network of students and youth organisation namely,

Asia and Pacific **Alliance of YMCAs (APAY)**

Christian Conference of Asia (CCA)

International Movement of Catholic Students (IMCS) Asia Pacific

International Young Christian Students (IYCS) Asia

World Student Christian Federation (WSCF) Asia Pacific Region

World Young Women Christian Association (World YWCA)

To promote ecumenical dialogue and cooperation in Asia Pacific.



Asia and Pacific Alliance of YMCAs (APAY)

Present APAY Thrust

- Youth Participation and Development
- Women Development and Involvement
- Contemporary Mission and Social Relevance
- Building Community and Culture of Peace
- Movement Strengthening

Basic Orientation

The YMCA is a world-wide Christian, ecumenical, voluntary movement for women and men with special emphasis on and the genuine involvement of young people. It seeks to share the Christian ideal of building a human community of justice with love, peace and reconciliation for the fullness of life and creation.

Started in London in the context of the Industrial revolution, wherein young people faced inhuman social conditions and moral dilemmas, the YMCA spread rapidly to every continent of the world. The YMCA strives to reflect the cultural identity of the Nation in which it exists and serves. Today, there are YMCAs in 128 countries and they are united under the World Alliance of YMCAs, established in 1855 in Paris, that has its headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland. YMCAs have been established in twenty-seven countries and territories in Asia and Pacific under the umbrella of the Asia and Pacific Alliance of YMCAs, the office of which is located in Hong Kong.

The mission of the YMCA is expressed in its motto taken from the Bible "That they may all be one" (John 17:21), and the Paris Basis,

Membership & Structure

which emphasizes: working for “unity”, and promoting “the Kingdom (Reign) of God” on earth, that is, working for a society characterised by justice, peace and love according to the teachings of Jesus Christ. The contemporary expression of the YMCA mission is called “Challenge 21” which includes imperatives or areas of concern in which YMCAs could work on.

YMCAs work with all people in the community irrespective of religious, racial, gender or cultural background. This commitment led YMCA to work for social change and to address the root causes of issues and problems faced by people. It is involved in people’s issues through community organising and programmes for empowering the people. It is also engaged in educational activities, recreation, sports, emergency and relief work for refugees and displaced people. Issues such as racism, youth at risk, and unemployment are creatively addressed by many YMCAs in response to growing secularisation, consumerism and fragmentation. The YMCA, in keeping with its spiritual basis, continues to explore and renew a spirituality relevant to the times.

The Asia and Pacific Alliance of YMCAs is an integral part of the World Alliance of YMCAs. The World Alliance is a confederation of National Councils of YMCAs around the world. The National Councils are composed of local associations within their countries wherein individuals can become involved as Members and programme participants.

Currently APAY comprises of Movements in Australia, Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Fiji, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Macau, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Samoa, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Tahiti, Taiwan, Thailand, Timor Lorosa’e and Vietnam.

Christian Conference of Asia (CCA)



Basic Orientation

CCA is a regional ecumenical movement and fellowship of more than 100 churches and national council of churches in Asia Pacific. It serves as an organ and a forum of continuing co-operation among the churches and national Christian bodies in the region within the framework of the wider ecumenical movement.

CCA began as the East Asia Christian Conference in 1957 through a decision of churches and national council of churches who met in Indonesia. It was later changed to Christian Conference of Asia in 1973 in the light of changing circumstances, but retained its purpose.

CCA's basis of unity is "Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the scriptures and that therefore seek to fulfil their common calling to the One God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit."

Currently CCA has 15 National Councils and nearly 100 churches in Aotearoa-New Zealand, Australia, Bangladesh, Cambodia, East Timor, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Taiwan and Thailand.

At the local level, there are church youth organisations, which are co-ordinated at the national level through the NCC ecumenical youth councils or committees. At the regional level, CCA Youth co-ordinates the interaction among the NCC youth units, working in partnership with them. The youth department of CCA is a part of the programme area on Ecumenical Formation, Gender Justice and Youth Empowerment. It is part of the mission of CCA and works with different church youth groups in Asia Pacific.

Present Programme for Youth Empowerment

Under the priorities of ecumenical leadership formation and networking, CCA engages the following mechanisms, among others, to serve the ecumenical youth movement in Asia:

- Internships.
- The School for Ecumenical Leadership Formation.
- Leadership Development for the churches and the ecumenical movement.
- Support and monitoring national and/or local youth projects.
- Support to sub-regional initiatives of youth.
- Publications of resource materials relevant to the ecumenical youth movement, like worship and meditation materials, and materials on contemporary social, geo-political and economic issues, publications of modules for leadership development, etc.

International Movement of Catholic Students (IMCS) Asia Pacific



IMCS is an international lay movement of tertiary and university students. It is an International Catholic Organisation (ICO) recognised by the Holy See.

Formed in Fribourg, Switzerland in 1921 under the name of Pax Romana, IMCS has the mission "to carry out the complete development of Catholic idea in the student milieu in all fields of university, intellectual and social life, based on the best traditions of the Christian past and trying to meet the exigencies of the present times." (Fribourg Document, 1961)

IMCS continues to strive for a sense of mission within the milieu, crossing the boundaries of race, culture and religion, inspired by the Christ and the gospel values. In solidarity with all marginalised social sectors, IMCS increasingly discovers the scientific, intellectual and cultural demands of the struggle for justice. It puts studies at the service of the marginalised and the poor.

National Catholic Student Movements and Groups in universities are the local base of IMCS. In Asia Pacific IMCS is present in Australia, Bangladesh, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Macau, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam.

The Regional Offices in Africa, Asia Pacific, Europe, Latin America and North America coordinate its respective member movements. The International Office in Paris serves as an overall coordinator.

With the main goal of witnessing to justice and participating in the process of integral human development with other social forces, IMCS Asia Pacific works through:

- Formation Programmes
- Campaigns for International Solidarity
- Visit and Communication
- Publications
- Extension Work

**Present
Programme**

**Membership &
Structure**

International Young Christian Students (IYCS) Asia



IYCS was born around 1930s when students inspired by the Young Christian Workers' pedagogy of See-Judge-Act, initiated organizing amongst catholic students using the same pedagogy and approach. The See-Judge-Act pedagogy was promoted by Cardinal Joseph Cardijn who initially started YCW and a pioneer of Catholic Social Action and Lay Apostolate in the Church. IYCS was officially founded in 1946, when 8 representatives of YCS movements met together in Fribourg, Switzerland.

In Asia, IYCS has been present since the late 1940s, and is present in 13 countries today. Presently IYCS is in the following countries in Asia: Bangladesh, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Korea, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam. The IYCS Asian Secretariat, based in Manila, Philippines, coordinated by Asian Team, which is composed of laypersons coordinating the life of the movements in Asia. Cell Group is the heart of the movement. It is based in schools, parishes, villages and cities. It is in these cells that the "Review of Life" took place. Students review their life situations in relation to their school, family and to the whole community based on the SEE-JUDGE-ACT methodology promoted by Cardinal Cardijn, aiming to transform themselves and the society they live in.

The International Young Christian Students (IYCS) Movement is a lay movement in the Catholic Church that is recognized by the Vatican as International Catholic Organization. IYCS also has consultative status with UNESCO and is recognized as an International Non-Governmental Organization (NGO). Its International Secretariat is based in Paris, France.

And IYCS works closely with the International Team, Regional Teams of IYCS, FABC (Federation of Asian Bishops Conference) Offices, especially highlighting matters concerning youth, students, laity, justice and peace. Networking with other student and youth movements (Ecumenical & secular) in the region, as well as like-minded NGOs is also an important dimension of the Asian Secretariat.

IYCS as a lay & church Movement of students has the option for the poor. It is a community of students with a common vision of making God's Kingdom reign on this earth here and now, and for all people to live in dignity. It involved students from all faith background and shares the Mission and Life of the Church.

It provides space and opportunities for students to develop their leadership qualities through letting students plan, participate, facilitate, animate and evaluate different actions and initiatives by themselves.

Present Thrust

Theme (2003-2006)

"With Faith & Heart, We Call All Students to Build a Culture of Peace & Love"

The IYCS Movement in Asia is focusing on EDUCATION & GLOBALIZATION in the orientation, which all the programs and Activities are based on these issues. Plane of Action:

- 1) Great awareness of YCS realities.
- 2) Formations for animators, chaplains and student leaders.
- 3) Integrations of the ASC (Asian Session and Council) orientation in programs and Activities.
- 4) Strengthening the National & International coordination towards unity.
- 5) Mobilizing sufficient human resources.

World Student Christian Federation (WSCF) Asia Pacific Region

Basic Orientation

The World Student Christian Federation (WSCF) is a worldwide ecumenical federation of Student Christian Movement.

It seeks to provide a worldwide forum for students across boundaries of culture, race, and denomination. Its major concerns and priorities are leadership development, empowerment of women, critique of higher education in the context of globalisation, as well as the exploration of theology and spirituality rooted in the hopes and struggles of students worldwide. Main Objectives:

1. To bring its membership into fellowship with one another in mutual service.
2. To strive for peace and justice in and among nations.
3. To work for the manifestation of the unity of the Church.
4. To be servants and messengers of God's reign on earth.

WSCF was formally established in Vadstena, Castle, Sweden in 1895. Key founders include John R. Mott from USA and Karl Fries from Sweden. WSCF was at the frontier of modern missionary movement in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Historically, WSCF is the first international student organisation and one of the oldest existing youth movements. From then till now, SCM members are constantly engaged in the work of reflecting on Christian theology and spirituality, challenging the mainline institutional churches and working for unity in the church and for peace and justice in the world.



Membership and Structure

WSCF member organisations could be found in 108 countries. WSCF is grouped in six regions: Africa, Asia Pacific, Latin America & Caribbean, North America, and the Middle East.

In Asia Pacific, there are 15 active national Student Christian Movement. They could be found in the following countries: Aotearoa New Zealand, Australia, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Taiwan and Thailand.

The *Student Christian Movement (SCM)* is the LOCAL UNIT of WSCF. SCMs are based in universities and tertiary institutions. Membership is primarily university students, but also includes senior friends, staff, church workers, academic professors and other persons involved in churches and ecumenical work.

The General Assembly is the Highest Policy Making Body which meets every four to five years. Each region has its own Regional Assembly, elected Regional Committee, and a Regional Office.

Present Programmes

- Student Empowerment for Transformation
- Human Rights and Solidarity Work
- School for Ecumenical Leadership Formation
- Women's Programme
- CCA-WSCF Joint Programme
- Publications: Praxis and Resource Book Series

World Young Women Christian Association (World YWCA)

The World YWCA is the oldest international ecumenical women's organization. It is an international Non-Governmental Organisation and has consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (UN ECOSOC).

The World YWCA strives to build a just society committed to gender equality and the full integration of women locally, nationally, and internationally. It aims to improve women's lives, achieve social and economic justice, ensure human rights, and restore the integrity of the planet.

The World YWCA's work initially begun in 1854, in Great Britain during the Industrial Revolution, when Christian women worked together to respond to the housing, recreation and spiritual needs of young women who had migrated to the cities. It was founded officially in 1894 by 4 associations from Great Britain, Norway, Sweden and the United States.

Membership and Structure

World YWCA unites 25 million women and girls from over 110 countries. In Asia Pacific, member associations are present and active in Australia, Aotearoa-New Zealand, Solomon Islands, Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Western Samoa, American Samoa, Bangladesh, China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Taiwan and Thailand.

At the local level, the YWCA is an autonomous organisation that is rooted in the communities and advocating for the rights and welfare of poor and marginalized women. As a non-profit membership association, each YWCA is run by and for women of the community. Local YWCAs are affiliated to the national YWCA of their country.



Current Thrusts

- Training Programmes for leadership, advocacy and economic self-reliance
- Advocacy for Social and Economic Justice, people-centred development, peace and justice, women's human rights, women's health
- Young Women's Leadership Development
- Ecumenism and inter-faith dialogue
- Networking with other international ecumenical and non-governmental organizations on HIV/AIDS, trade for justice, globalization, the rights of Palestinian People
- International Training and Advocacy at the UN Commission on the Status of Women and UN Commission on Human Rights

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by Chiu Fu Yi