

EDITORIAL

We are proud to present the inaugural issue of *QUEST*, and we hope that you find the research papers inspiring and provocative. All of them have undergone rigorous double-blind peer review. *QUEST* is a publication from the Divinity School of Chung Chi College, the Chinese University of Hong Kong, and is funded by the United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia.

The idea of publishing *QUEST* emerged two years ago at a meeting between the two co-editors, who are also dean and associate dean of IASACT,¹ and was first promulgated by Simon Shui-Man Kwan during IASACT 2015. While *QUEST* is ready to publish the peer-reviewed articles authored by IASACT scholars and its alumni, it is not exclusively an IASACT journal. It endeavors to contribute to the ongoing efforts aimed at promoting creative thinking and lively scholarly interchange in the interpretation of all aspects of Christianity and other religions in Asia. So you will read in this inaugural issue and subsequent ones, articles submitted by researchers from the IASACT circle, as well as by other Asian and international scholars. *QUEST* welcome submissions—research papers and book review articles—that span the full spectrum of religious studies, cultural studies, theological studies, and interdisciplinary studies on the cultures and religions in Asia.

Some readers probably know that there was an old *QUEST*, that is, *QUEST: An Interdisciplinary Journal for Asian Christian Scholars*, which was published by the Association of Christian Universities and Colleges in Asia and the United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia. Unfortunately, the old *QUEST* ceased publication after 2007. In its final issue, it disclosed the reason: "The low number of subscribers does not justify the high cost of production." It was a paper journal, and as all of us know, "high cost" is often a heavy yoke that burdens a paper journal. The new *QUEST*, which is no longer a paper journal, sees itself in a relay race on the same team as the old *QUEST*. The new now takes up and renews the vision of the old. Here in this issue, we miss a brotherly name—Professor David Kwang-sun Suh, a globally renowned Minjung theologian. He was editor of the old *QUEST*. It was his excellent editorial skill as well as his academic prowess and passion that transformed the old *QUEST* into an international publication. Without him, the new *QUEST* would not have appeared.

The new *QUEST* is an electronic journal. Actually, we do not only want to publish an e-journal, but we also wish to engage authors and readers interested in Asian religious and cultural studies in the Open Access Movement. Open Access is more than a publishing model. It means e-democracy. For instance, a famous statement of the Budapest Open Access Initiative argues:

Removing access barriers to this literature will accelerate research, enrich education, share the learning of the rich with the poor, and the poor with the rich...and lay the foundation for uniting humanity in a common intellectual conversation, and quest for knowledge. (Budapest 2002)

¹The Institute for Advanced Study in Asian Cultures and Theologies (IASACT) is a four-week residential program that provides space and time for scholars to deepen their understanding of theologies and traditions. Participants undertake research and writing in the broad area of Asian cultures and theologies and complete a working paper while in residence. Starting from 2015, IASACT is organized by the Divinity School of Chung Chi College, the Chinese University of Hong Kong, and is funded by the United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia. Since IASACT's inception in 2004, more than 200 scholars from over 100 institutions in nearly 20 countries have benefited from the time IASACT affords for reflection, interaction and network-building. For details, pls. refer to <https://www.theology.cuhk.edu.hk/en/academics/iasact>.

We believe that there are strong ethical imperatives for making scholarly works public and freely available. John Willinsky (2006), an expert on open access knowledge and director of the Public Knowledge Project, even calls the knowledge gained from scientific and scholarly studies "public knowledge," since it is largely funded from public sources. We hope you will join us.

May we all learn as we share our views and our experience with each other.

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