

Book Review

Asian Access, comp. *Eastern Voices: Volume One: Insight, Perspective, and Vision from Kingdom Leaders in Asia In Their Own Words*

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This is a book that has been a long time coming. It is imperative to listen to the voices of Christians from the East, talking about issues that are global but from Eastern perspectives. These are contributors who are practitioners. Some of the authors do not have their names mentioned or are using pseudonyms. Such is the sensitive and critical situations they are in! The issues chosen have to do with shame and honor, economics, leadership (different aspects), worship, the Bible in different cultures, ministry to migrants, urban ministries, and social engagement.

When reading this volume, one can actually “hear” these Eastern voices. These are voices filled with faith, hope, and love. “Eastern” refers to South Asia, Southeast Asia, East Asia, and West Asia. Noel Becchetti of Asian Access, the book’s compiler and publisher, writes in the introduction (entitled “Can you hear the voices?”) that, although the voices are “speaking in English” which is not their mother tongue, the sentiments expressed are deep.

These articles are written in a personal way. Wesley Khaw Thura shares about losing his prestige and his “face” by taking on a new ministry leaving his pastoral one. Chapter 2 describes the author’s (unnamed) experiences as a bi-vocational minister. Are ministers willing to obey God and in the process “lose face”? Is it allowable for ministers to be “tent-makers”?

There are five articles in *Eastern Voices: Volume One* about leadership. The setting of Chapter 3 is Japan, where older age is greatly respected. The strength of this respect for age comes into play when an older minister coaches a younger one. It is the same story as Paul and Timothy in the New Testament. Alma Kyaw Thura states that an Asian Christian woman still struggles to be allowed to lead, even though God has called women. In Chapter 5, Leor Sarker deals with handing over foreign missionary leadership to national leadership, where national leaders need to make their own mistakes and learn. Skipping over two chapters to Chapter 8, Meng Aun Hour describes how Jesus’s leadership can fit in Cambodia. He lists out Jesus’s leadership principles of “actions speaking louder than words,” consistency, the use of power, “to lead is to serve,” and freedom to be like Jesus. Finally, Takeshi Takazawa in Chapter 9 asks the Eastern leadership that already exists, “Is this what Asian leadership looks like?”

Chapter 6 is by Adrian de Visser, an etic voice critiquing worship as a form of entertainment. Peter Debakar Mazumder in Chapter 7 goes back to the basics of “rightly handling the Word of God” in context. Kavitha Emmanuel brings up the whole issue of racial discrimination in Chapter 10. Jeyakaran Emmanuel in Chapter 11 gives an example of a church that managed to break the caste barrier. The Church is called to minister to migrants in Chapter 12. David Dayalan in Chapter 13 shares about challenges of church planting in an Eastern urban setting. Finally, in Chapter 14, an unnamed author gives a fresh way of looking at enemies.

All of the issues raised are important ones that *Eastern Voices: Volume One* has brought to the attention of the Church to consider seriously.