

EVANGELICAL REVIEW OF THEOLOGY

VOLUME 15

Volume 15 • Number 4 • October 1991

Evangelical Review of Theology

*Articles and book reviews original and selected from
publications worldwide for an international
readership for the purpose of discerning the
obedience of faith*

GENERAL EDITOR: BRUCE J. NICHOLLS



Published by
THE PATERNOSTER PRESS

profoundly creational. What happens in the church must not overturn, deny or detract from the roles and relationships of men as husbands and fathers and women as wives and mothers which are rooted in the very creation of God.

IV. IMPLICATIONS

It hardly needs to be stated that the matter of women's ministry is deeply divisive within the Christian Community. If this passage is held to be applicable today, the implication would be that a woman may not be the principal teacher in the congregation. Paul appears to be concerned to hold in due equilibrium the delicate balance of husbands and wives within the families of the churches. The view taken here is that Paul's concerns are not purely cultural, to be confined in their application to his era.

However, not all congregations today are family churches. Many are youth congregations in schools and universities; many are single sex congregations in girls' schools and women's colleges, hospitals and prisons. Moreover, the team ministry is increasingly seen to be the way forward in our modern industrialized cities; the value of the mono-ministry is increasingly questioned. [p. 334](#)

If women prayed and prophesied in the churches, if they were encouraged to learn—as they are in this passage, if the older taught the younger, if they worked alongside Paul in the work of evangelism—then there is no good reason of exegesis or hermeneutics which would limit their ministries in those and related areas today. If [1 Tim. 2:11–15](#) restricts women from becoming the senior teacher to the family-congregation there appears to be no reason why they should be prevented from the whole range of pastoral, didactic or sacramental ministry under the leadership of the senior teacher in a team or in their own right in specialist, single sex congregations.¹²

Dr P. W. Barnett is the Master of Robert Menzies College which is an affiliate of Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia. He is an ancient historian and author. [p. 335](#)

The Oppression of Asian Indigenous Women

Victoria Corpuz

Reprinted with permission from Women Under Racism, A Decade of Visible Action, PCR Information WCC, Geneva

Asia has the largest number of indigenous people in the whole world. The total population of indigenous people in the world is 200 million and 150 million of these are found in

¹² 12. See also M. A. G. Kaykin, 'The Fading Vision? The Spirit and Freedom in the Pastoral Epistles', *EQ* LVII/4 (1985), 291–305. D. J. Moo, '“1 Timothy 2.11–15: Meaning and Significance”', *Trinity Journal*, 1/1 (1980), 62–83. C. D. Osburn, 'AYTHENTEIO (1 Tim. 2:12)', *Restoration Quarterly* 25/1 (1982), 1–12. P. Perkins 'Women in the Bible and its World', *Interpretation*, (Jan. 1988), 33–44

around 20 countries in Asia. This fact is hardly known, however, even among the other indigenous peoples because it is very difficult for us to come out of our countries not only because of economic considerations but also because of increasing repression in many of our countries. India has a total of 60 million indigenous people, Burma has 11 million, and the Philippines 7 million. China would also have a huge number, but I don't have the data available. If women make up half the population, then there must be 75 million indigenous women living in Asia.

Almost all Asian countries, with the exception of Thailand, Nepal and Burma, have undergone histories of colonization not only by the Northern superpower countries but also by Asian nations like Japan, Indonesia and India. Many of those which are supposed to be independent have remained as neocolonies of more powerful nations. What is seen today as problems and issues of indigenous peoples are the result of the colonial experience. The imposition of foreign economic and political systems and alien world views has caused untold misery to the indigenous women and men. The extent of the devastation and dehumanization brought to the lands and lives of indigenous peoples can be better appreciated if viewed from the perspectives of indigenous women.

When the traditional subsistence economies of indigenous peoples were eroded by the capitalist market economy, the indigenous women were the ones who were directly marginalized. In Asia many indigenous women are pushed to sell their labour in agribusiness, become tenants, migrate to the cities and join the ranks of the urban poor or, if lucky, become one of the exploited factory workers. A recent development is the alarming increase in the rate of indigenous women who are forced to go overseas either to work as domestics or be victimized by sex trafficking syndicates. Many of those who become domestics have suffered from maltreatment from their employers. Countries such as the Philippines, Thailand, Sri Lanka, India, Bangladesh and Nepal have been exporting women overseas [p.336](#) and there is an increasing number of indigenous women being recruited into this system. Many indigenous communities in Asia have been converted by big business and international lending institutions into resource base areas where mining industries are set up. Open cut mining, which is highly destructive of the environment is being done in many indigenous communities. This method of mining has caused the displacement of small scale miners some of whom are women.

The Narmada Valley Project in India will displace more than 2 million people, the majority of whom are the Adivasi tribal people. This project is supported by the World Bank and it will flood 550,000 hectares of land if completed. In Sarawak, Malaysia, a [US\\$ 10 billion](#) dam project called the Bakun Hydro electric dam will displace 5,000 Dayak people from their lands. The displacement brought about to indigenous families has increased the burden of women, who often have to bear the brunt of social and economic dislocation.

Another cause of displacement is brought about by the presence of foreign military bases in ancestral homelands. Okinawa hosts 75% of all US military presence in Japan and these occupy 20% of the total land area of Okinawa. The two biggest US bases outside of American soil are found in the Philippines, and lands of the Aetas and Ibalois indigenous people were lost. The indigenous peoples who are around these bases end up as scavengers in the garbage areas within the base perimeters, or some women become prostitutes hoping that they may end up with American men. Some indigenous peoples, like those in West Papua and East Timor, are victims of the Transmigration Policy of the Indonesian government, which allows the non-indigenous segment of the population to move to the indigenous communities so that the 'backward' natives will assimilate the dominant culture. Militarization is increasing all over Asia, and in some areas paramilitary units are formed which replace the military in their dastardly acts. There have been

reports of indigenous women being raped and sexually harassed because the military has covertly approved such methods of dealing with rebellious peoples. In the Chittagong Hill Tracts in Bangladesh reports of human rights violations, torture and rape are increasing everyday. There is an increasing number of refugees as a result of militarization.

The debt crisis has affected most of the Asian countries and the indigenous women feel very much the effects of this. Cuts in social services deprive indigenous women of their rights to health care. To earn foreign dollars for debt repayment, tourism has been developed with women as the main attraction. The commodification of indigenous women in Asia has worsened in the past few years. Thailand and Manila have earned the label of sex centres of the world.

Resistance and opposition to all these efforts to subjugate and dehumanize the indigenous peoples have been waged and there are still many which are ongoing. At present, the Naga and Mizo peoples of Nagaland are putting up a fight against the Indian government. The West Papuans are still struggling against the Indonesian government and military. The Cordillera peoples in the Northern Philippines and the Bangsa Moro in the Southern region are very much part of the national liberation movement being waged against neocolonialism. The Karens in Burma are also resisting the Burmese government which has consistently discriminated against them. The indigenous peoples in the Chittagong Hill Tracts in Bangladesh are also actively engaged in a resistance movement against the Bangladeshi government. The Tibetan peoples in China continue to assert their rights to self-determination. Indigenous women are actively involved in these resistance movements in varying degrees. They are very much victims of human rights violations brought about by militarization. Documentation of incidents of rape, sexual abuses and arbitrary detentions among the women is increasing.

The situation of Asian indigenous women has definitely worsened these past few years and there is an urgent need to look more deeply into how they are affected by such issues and what they are doing about it. There needs to be more support to the efforts of indigenous women in Asia to organize themselves. Many of our sisters are still in the early stages of organizing themselves as Women. It is because of this situation that the indigenous women in Asia would like very much to be a part of a broader network which can provide a venue wherein they can air all these issues and get further support for their struggles. p. 338

Women in Conflict: Latin American Version

Beatriz Zapata

Reprinted with permission from Transformation April/June 1989

In 1992 Spain will have a great celebration. She will celebrate 500 years since the conquest of the West Indies, which opened the door to the Latin American Continent.

When the Spanish *conquistadores* arrived in our Latin countries, they admired the land and took for themselves much of the natural riches. However, they decided that of all the