

## BOOK REVIEW

**Title** : *A Lúcas Chan Reader. Pioneering Essays on Biblical and Asian Theological Ethics*  
**Editor** : *George Griener & James F. Keenan*  
**Publication** : *Dharmaram Publications, Bengaluru, India, 2017, x + 260*

This book is a rare book which is an anthology written by Lúcas Chan, an Asian moral theologian. Some of his articles have been published in several journals of theology such as *Asian Horizon*, *Chinese Cross Currents*, *Asian Christian Review* and *Theological Studies*. The book also consists some chapters of his both books that have been published. This anthology however does not only comprise Chan's articles that have been published, but it has some writings which makes the book looks like a biography of Lúcas Chan. The editors, George Griener and James F. Keenan, both are Jesuit theologian in the USA, place Chan's autobiography in the beginning of the book. It was a text that Chan himself has been prepared for his job interview in the *department of theology* at Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin in 2014. Griener and Keenan, the editors, write also a prolog so that the reader may understand the thoughts of Chan and his personal vocation as a moral theologian. At the end of the book, there are the last words of Chan which he had spoken in the Jesuit chapel two weeks before his sudden death.

Lúcas Chan died when he was 46 years old, the best year for his career and intellectual achievement. Although he has a short life, Chan gives important contribution for the development of moral theology in Asia. Thus, Griener and Keenan collect his writings from some journals and conferences. The book, "*A Lúcas Chan Reader. Pioneering Essays on Biblical and Asian Theological Ethics*," is an anthology as complement for two books that Chan wrote about biblical moral theology: "*Ten Commandments and the Beatitudes: Biblical Studies and Ethics for Real Life*" (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2012) and "*Biblical Ethics in the Twenty-first Century: Developments, Emerging Consensus, and Future Directions*" (Paulist Press, 2013). Chan's main concern is a biblical ethic. Since his studied in Boston College, he developed his study on moral theology and wrote his doctoral thesis in the biblical ethic area, "*Why Scripture Scholars and Theological Ethicists Need One Another:*

*Exegeting and Interpreting the Beatitudes as a 'Scripted Script' for Ethical Living.*" When we defended his thesis, Daniel Harrington SJ, one of his promotor encouraged him to write books based on the dissertation. Both of his books are the fruit from his doctoral dissertation (pg. 28).

In his book, "*Biblical Ethics in the Twenty-first Century*", Chan argues that biblical scholars had never been succeed to explain the ethical messages in the scripture. Moral theologian also did the same thing that they did not do exegesis seriously to explain the moral values and message in the scripture. Chan states that biblical scholar and moral theologian have to work together for doing biblical ethics. Chan has contributed to place the important of Scripture in the reflection of moral theology. He encourages Catholic moral theologian to be more serious in using Scripture and develop relationship with biblical scholars.

The book is divided in two parts: biblical essays and the Asian theological ethics essays. In the first part, Keenen provides introduction for the articles of Chan and gives the summary so that leaders can follow it easily. The leader can see how serious Chan in doing his exegeses as the source and foundation for the reflection of theological ethics. Chan proposes two main pericope as the pillar of Christian morality: the 10 commandments (the Decalogue) and the Beatitudes. He interprets the text thoroughly by finding the meaning of the lord commandments and the moralistic implications related to the daily moral problems. Thus, he underlines the competence of exegeses and hermeneutic in the moral and ethical problems (pg. 62-63).

Moral theology has some methods in its reflections and Chan argues that virtue ethics is the proper method for translating the biblical exegesis to the current moral problem. For example, Chan takes the story of the hospitality of Ruth in the Old Testament. The virtue of hospitality in the Bible provide ethical implication for the problem of immigration in many countries which cause people have xenophobia (the fear of foreigners).

Chan hope that those who are interested in studying biblical ethic may understand the rapid development of the biblical ethics so that they can respond to the daily problems and find the orientation for their life (pg. 113). His approaches in biblical ethics does not merely the western, but combining with the tradition and knowledge from the East especially Confucians. He develops a project how to interrelate between the West and the East and put them together in writing. Moreover, Chan organiz-

es Moral theologians from Asia and hold the first meeting in Bangalore in 2015. Unfortunately, Chan pass away before the meeting begins. The second part of the book explores his project about Asian Moral Theology.

This book guides leaders to enter the thoughts and reflection of Asian Moral theologian. Asian theologians are compelled to be more serious in seeing and listening the Asian problems related to multi ethnics, religion, and culture. They have to use the Scripture as the main source for doing moral theology in Asia. Lúcas Chan Has opened the way for Asian biblical ethics, and it is appropriate to call him the pioneer of Asian biblical ethics theologian. (Dionius Bismoko Mahamboro)

