

**COUNCIL FOR WORLD MISSION  
DISCERNMENT AND RADICAL ENGAGEMENT  
GLOBAL FORUM 2019  
19-22 June, 2019 Taipei, Taiwan**

**DARE**

**Concept**

**DARE and CWM**

Discernment and radical engagement are at the heart of the mission that makes CWM what it is. Attentive to the signs of the time and in response to imperial powers and powerholders that exploit, divide, despoil and threaten the world, CWM offers the DARE program as a voice of counter-imperial consciousness.

CWM is an international mission organization that serves local communities (its member churches) as well as collaborates with ecumenical and global partners. From its very beginning, the mission of CWM extends beyond the confines of worship and faith communities, into public arenas where services relating to education, health, welfare and ecology are provided, assessed and re-envisioned. And since the 1970s, CWM has wrestled with how to decolonize mission – its theory, theology and praxis – and how to proclaim fullness of life at a time when all of life is threatened.

Through DARE, CWM asserts its prophetic role in the present political, social and international landscapes. Through DARE, CWM partners with committed and creative thinker-practitioners of our time, sending a clear signal, to ourselves and to the world, that our loyalty is to the God of life who calls us to take on the life-giving mission for which Jesus lived and died. Through its programs, and especially through DARE, CWM declares that we are on the side of the radical, communitarian Jesus who dared to name “thieves and robbers” as the destroyers of life and presented himself as one of God’s mediators and messengers of life in fullness. DARE comes out of the conviction that another world is possible. Put more directly, CWM believes and works for another world

- free from the politics of hate;
- free from the ideologies of supremacy;
- free from enslavement to the imperial logic;
- free from greed; o in which ecology could heal;
- in which security of children is a priority;
- in which strangers welcome each other;
- in which movement of people is a right and freeing;
- in which the elderly are treated with compassion and care ...

Yes, another world is possible and necessary, and this double conviction makes DARE necessary.

**DARE as mission**

Discernment and radical engagement are woven into the fabrics of mission, theology and biblical studies, understood here as events that dare to discern and make sense of divinities, scriptures, traditions, responsibilities, destinies, practices, experiences, biases and blind spots

Discerning and making sense of texts, subjects and objects, are in themselves radical exercises. To discern and make sense (or construct meanings) is to do something radical to texts, subjects and objects, in order that they may “talk.”

The field of sense-making is wide and open, with places for those who are stingy and conserving in their construction of meanings, on the one hand, and those who are bold and generous, on the other hand, and for the many who are somewhere in-between. Discerning and making sense are radical (in its adjectival sense) insofar as those are the “fundamental” tasks of mission, theology and biblical studies.

Mission, biblical and theological studies are more radical when they do more than simply discern and make sense (in order to understand). Radical theological and biblical studies involve engagement (therefore, mission agents, interpreters and theologians cannot be distant and disinterested). Engagement requires mission agents, theologians and biblical interpreters to come out of the closet, so to speak, and away from the shores of theological stability and certainty.

To discern and make sense in order to understand is not enough; engagement is necessary in order to make biblical and theological studies manifest their radical souls. In other words, radical biblical and theological studies are more than just faith seeking understanding. In this connection, the mission of DARE is conceived at the coming together of

- (1) the radical soul of discernment and sense-making in traditional and constructive theology and biblical criticism
- (2) with the yearnings for signifying engagement that rise out of the valleys of despair and the slums of modernity,
- (3) and the commitment to redemption songs that inspire disturbance at the hubs of power.

And in the ripples of two shifts in theological and biblical studies—toward interdisciplinary studies, and toward becoming affective (in practical, organic and public ways)—the DARE program seeks to rekindle the passion to discern, to be radical and to engage, which tend to be excluded from the halls of mainline biblical and theological studies. In principle, the two shifts point in different directions. The move toward interdisciplinary theologies and interpretations encourages theologians and biblical scholars to embrace other ways and views, while the move to be affective requires theologians and biblical scholars to be rooted, selective and specific. The DARE program aims to show how, through practice, the two shifts meet “on the ground.”

There are two arms of the DARE program: (1) DARE contextual resources and (2) DARE Global Forums.

□ The DARE Resources will include tools for biblical and theological reflection on the nine

themes of CWM. These resources are intended for church members, for their private or communal study and reflections, and will be distributed in soft and hardcopies.

- ❑ The DARE Forums are platforms for conversations on current and critical scholarly concerns. The Forums will shift CWM’s commitment to education into another gear: CWM has built and supported schools and seminaries throughout the world, and with the DARE Forums CWM contributes toward shaping biblical and theological scholarship into the future.

## DARE Contextual Resources

CWM will appoint consultants from its six regions (Africa, Caribbean, East Asia, Europe, Pasifika, South Asia) to prepare biblical and theological resources relating to the nine themes of CWM (see below). The consultants will draw upon the experiences and resources of the global membership of CWM.

Though the consultants come from specific regions, the resources will be relevant for all of CWM’s regions. These resources will include study guides, handbooks, blogs, articles, videos, newsletters, and so forth, intended for lay members as well as mission agents. The resources will address the nine themes of critical concern to CWM:

- ❑ Children and young people;
- ❑ Climate change;
- ❑ Economic justice;
- ❑ Evangelism;
- ❑ Human trafficking;
- ❑ Inclusive communities against de-humanising social categorisations;
- ❑ Interfaith relations and ecumenism;
- ❑ Militarisation and conflict;
- ❑ Worship and discipleship.

Through the DARE resources, CWM serves its member churches as well as neighboring communities in the ecumenical family with “common platforms and shared narratives” for being and doing church in the twenty-first century.

## DARE Global Forum

The DARE Global Forums are platforms for scholars of different disciplines and activists in different fields, from different parts of the world, to share their views on concerns and topics that trouble mainline biblical and theological scholarship. The DARE Forums welcome and encourage participants to engage radically, creatively and justly.

### Outcomes

(1) In 2017, the inaugural DARE Forum was held at Bangkok, Thailand (May 28–June 02), with a focus on “Empire.” Several of the papers from the Bangkok forum are being edited by Jione Havea into five collections (published by Lexington & Fortress Academics):

- Religion and Power
- Scripture and Resistance
- People and Land
- Vulnerability and Resilience
- Mission and Context

(2) In 2018, the second DARE Forum was held at Mexico City, Mexico (May 23–26), around different separatist movements and mindsets. Some of the papers are being revised for publication, under the following working titles:

- Theologies in Motion (edited by Joerg Rieger, with Lexington and Fortress Academics)
- Religion and supremacy (edited by Steed Davidson and Marion Grau, with Bloomsbury)
- Doing Bodies: Indecent Proposals for Postcolonial Theologies (edited by André Muszkopf and Nienke Pruiksma)
- Media-ting theology (edited by Jione Havea)
- Bible, separation and exclusion (edited by Monica J. Melanchthon)

The ten books from the first two DARE Forums, published with mainline publishers, are intended to be resources for biblical and theological studies.

(3) The 2019 DARE Forum (see the call for papers) turns toward trans-sectional (“trans” as cross over, as well as transgress) theology and interpretation. Some of the papers from DARE 2019 will also be revised and collected for publication.

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DARE

## CALL FOR PAPERS

The minds and hearts that lean toward intertextual, interdisciplinary, intercultural and/or intersectional thinking, pry open the windows of biblical and theological studies for creative interventions. While these inter- approaches have many differences, they all encourage juxtaposing and enabling the interweaving of texts, mediums, imaginations, ideologies, subjects, and more. Put simply, the inter-ways-of-thinking encourage discerning and engaging toward interrelating, interfeeding, and even interceding.

The days when so-called masters (locked up in front of books to learn and) assume that they know everything about a subject, independent of other thinkers and other subjects, are passing. Being inter-something is the creative energy for daring biblical and theological thinkers of the current time. In the spirit of being inter-something, the 2019 DARE Forum takes a step toward a supplementing mindset: to be trans-something as well. Trans is understood here in two ways:

- (i) to cross over and
- (ii) to transgress.

The following possibilities are presented as primers, and as examples, aiming to spark trans-thinking:

- A trans-textual reading explores how selected texts (i) intersect and interrelate as well as (ii) transgress one another. For example, in the annunciation stories in Matthew (1:18-25, to Joseph) and Luke (1:26-38, to Mary), (i) the two stories intersect in that they share a common purpose, to approve the bearing of a child by a betrothed young woman, Mary; (ii) but Luke transgresses Matthew insofar as it is not clear whether Mary consented to her impregnation — was Mary forced, raped, in Matthew? and in Luke? • A trans-conceptual/thematic study of justice and peace (i) explains how one is necessitated by the other—justice is necessary for peace, and peace is necessary for justice, (ii) as well as queries instances when peace (that benefits authorities) is established at the expense of justice (for the minoritized).
- A trans-sectional study of world religions would (i) identify and invite dialogue around shared teachings and values, rituals and commitments (ii) as well as points of differences, tensions and phobia.
- A trans-scriptural reading of the character of Joseph, the son of Jacob who took his family into Egypt, could also ask why Joseph's well in Genesis 37 was dry but Yusuf's well in Sura 12 was wet. Two characters, two scriptures, two stories, two wells, two states — wet, dry. What do the two stories, two scriptures, do to each other?
- A trans-cultural reading of reconciliation movements could also ask why attempts by some minoritized figures (e.g., Esau in Gen 33) or groups (e.g., Palestinians) are ignored. As well as, why some characters (e.g., Hagar) or groups (e.g., West Papuans) don't get a place/break at the reconciliation table.

- ❑ A trans-national study of any theme or subject invites attention to the intersection of economics, labour and migration, and whether access to those are determined along the lines of location, color, religious affiliation or some other discriminating leanings. As well as, what the international market contributes toward running down local markets and labourers.
- ❑ A trans-sectional engagement with any political or capital philosophy, or movement, could also wrestle with whether those develop out of, or bank on, cultures which assume that White is Ok.
- ❑ A trans-sectional study of any minoritized narrative, agent or spirituality, could also turn into itself, and interrogate its own systems of minoritization.
- ❑ A trans-sectional study of any subject or system could also ask, what has been “transacted” (sold, bought, borrowed, stolen ...) herein?
- ❑ A trans-sectional study of any culture or civilization, enlightened or colonial, could also inquire about the place and state of the native and indigenous.
- ❑ And other trans-possibilities ...

## DARE Streams

The 2019 DARE Forum will flow in six streams, and persons who wish to propose a paper are invited to begin from one of these streams:

**i. Earth**

**ii. Class**

**iii. Race / Caste**

**iv. Gender**

**v. Occupation**

**vi. Artificial intelligence**

and trans- (cross, transgress) with another theme(s), concern(s) or struggle(s). In the short description of the streams below, suggestions are given for the trans-sectional pole but those are not the only possibilities. The suggestions are for the purpose of tapping the imagination and creative energies, and for inviting people to be radical, engaging, and daring ...

(i) Earth

Earth refers to the combination of dryland and the water worlds (freshwater and saltwater), which both impacts as well as being impacted by the sky and the underworld. Given the downplaying and general disregard for climate justice in international politics, proposals that

trans-sect **Earth** with **Justice** are encouraged. How is Earth conceived in documents and scriptures of justice? Justice for whom? What might justice look like in the interest of Earth? whose (part of) Earth? Proposals that transect Earth with other concerns will also be considered especially if Earth is conceived beyond human interests, if plant and animal lives are engaged, and/or if the study flows into the mercurial spheres of the indigenous or of the sexual.

### (ii) **Class**

Class refers to categorising and dividing human society according to opportunities and privileges. While class is understood primarily in economic terms, which groups society into the rich and the poor, divisions based on religious (e.g., Hindu caste system) and indigenous (e.g., bartering systems) values concerns labour. As such, proposals that transect Class with Labour (including child and sex labour; forced labour and the displaced labour force) are encouraged. If social categorising is done fairly, what would be the class for the harshest forms of labour? There is room for proposals that transect Class with other divisive modes of organising society, and for studies that present native and indigenous alternatives to the classification of society.

### (iii) **Race**

The proverbial elephant in the room in conversations about race, caste, racial politics and racial discrimination, is colour. While some colours go unnoticed, Black does not seem to get much of a break: Whiteness is privileged even in the Black worlds; Blackness is discriminated against even in the Black and Indigenous worlds. There are myths of Whiteness as well as myths of Blackness, but does that justify taking #WhiteisOK in the same way as #BlackLivesMatter? How might readings and theologies that are sensitive to racial or caste differences also attend to matters of colour, and to the languages and the accents of darker folk? What is the future of theological and biblical studies if the intersections of race or caste and colour are interrogated? Proposals that transect Race or Caste with Colour are invited. Proposals that transect Race or Caste with imperial and scriptural legacies, are most welcomed.

### (iv) **Gender**

Aware of the complexity of the subjects of gender and gendered identities, and with due respect to the bodies of work in feminist, womanist, mujerista, masculinity, indecent and queer studies, the focus of this stream is transgender. Proposals that discern and radically engage prospects for transgender theology and/or transgender hermeneutics are welcomed. Proposals that come from and with native and indigenous sensitivities will be considered with enthusiasm.

**(v) Occupation**

Many lands are still under occupation—from Palestine to Papua, from the British Virgin Islands to French Guiana, and around the world—and many people are trapped in what Bob Marley calls “mental slavery” (Redemption song). What and whose teachings justify and necessitate the occupation of lands? What and whose narratives or songs enslave people to think that occupation is acceptable, even godly? Might occupying powers operate differently if cultures of negotiation (in the place of doctrines of discovery and occupation) are encouraged within their borders? How might nations that have received independence but are still mentally enslaved find and sing redemption songs? Proposals that transect Occupation with opportunities in cultures of Negotiation (defined broadly) are invited.

**(vi) Artificial intelligence (AI)**

If life in the future will be in the hands of bodies (robots) that are minded by artificial intelligence, what forms would theological studies and religious rituals take? What would the traditional topics of systematic theology (God, Sin, Salvation, Spirit, Church, etc.) mean in the AI world? What might it mean to read and theologize in a world ordered and ruled by AI? Proposals that transect Artificial intelligence with Theology (traditional, constructive, contextual, decolonial ...) are invited.

**PROPOSALS**

The scope of DARE 2019 is open and will consider proposals that address any of the world religions and their written or oral scriptures, as well as so-called secular texts (novels, poetries, arts) and drives (social movements, climate warriors, etc.). Proposals that also flow into the mercurial spheres of the indigenous and sexual are encouraged.

Please send proposals in MS word/doc format as attachment to **[cwmdare2019@gmail.com](mailto:cwmdare2019@gmail.com)** by **31 December, 2018**.

Include the following:

- a. Preferred stream
- b. Working title of paper
- c. Abstract (200-250 words)
- d. Confirmation that paper has not been published
- e. Name of presenter
- f. Biodata (4-6 lines)

**TIMELINE**

1. Review of proposals: Jan 07, 2019
2. First feedback to presenters: Jan 21, 2019
3. Revised proposals (if requested): Jan 28, 2019
4. Decision on proposals: Feb 11, 2019
5. First draft of program: Feb 18, 2019
6. First draft of papers: May 25, 2019
7. DARE Forum: June 19-22, 2019 (Taipei, Taiwan)