

THEO5324 History of Christianity in Asia

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| Teacher | Tobias Brandner Tel 3943 1368; e-mail tobias@cuhk.edu.hk |
| Venue | CCT T31 |
| Description | The course introduces the students to the history of Christianity in Asia, from the first century and the eastward movement of earliest Christianity to Christianity in the Sassanid period, life under Islamic rule, the Mongolian period, the missionary spread of Western forms of Christianity in the colonial era and the development of independent forms of Christianity in more recent times. A significant focus of the course will be on recent developments in different parts of Asia (excluding mainland China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong). |
| Language | English |

Expected Outcome

- a) The students will gain an understanding of the historical development of Christianity in Asia and will learn to perceive and appreciate Christianity in Asia as, to a significant extent, parallel and independent rather than as latter development to Christianity in Europe. The course will offer arguments to overcome the still widespread stereotype of Christianity as a Western phenomenon.
- b) The students will learn about the contemporary challenges of Christian churches in different contexts of Asia and the reasons for different growth developments. They will learn about the concerns of particular contexts.
- c) In the different historical developments of Christianity in Asia, the students will encounter different church and faith models and of Christian relations to their cultural environment. The students will equally discover different examples and issues of contextualization.
- d) The students will develop sensitivity regarding mission, ecumenism, and contextualization in the postcolonial Asian context and learn about different Christian responses to the multi-religious context of Asia. The focus on the diversity of Christian churches and faith expressions in Asia leads beyond the dualism of local church and church in the West and helps perceive Christianity in a multi-polar world.

- e) Asian Christians are our neighbors both internationally and locally. The study of Asian Christianity is a study of our own local context.
- f) Students will learn about the intertwined histories of colonial expansion, missionary endeavors, and local histories. The course thus has an important postcolonial dimension; it “[...] deepen[s] our awareness of the way the past and present of the imperial encounter interact with each other” (Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, 1994:39).
- g) The course stands at the crossroads of Christian historical studies and Asian studies including studies on Asia’s social, political, and cultural histories. It is part of a broader concern of using Asia as imaginary horizon for comparison and of entering into dialogue with Christianity / -ies in Asia from within Asia and thus shifting the common reference point that approaches Asia within a binary logic of East / West (Chen 2010).

Structure / methodology of the course

- Lecture with handouts
- Sections with joint discussion or with small-group discussion
- Student presentations towards the end of the course and for appropriate themes during the course.
- Regular homework assignment sheet with reading assignments and possible questions for further discussion; readings are expected to be read in preparation to each lesson and may be the subject of class discussion

Topics

- Christianity in the Sassanid period
- The Assyrian Church of the East (Nestorianism)
- Christianity under Islamic rule
- Christianity in the Mongolian Empire
- Jesuit mission in Asia
- Christianity under Portuguese colonialism
- Protestant mission in 19th century Asia
- South Korea: A Christian success story?
- Christianity and Buddhism in Southeast Asia
- The spread of Christianity among ethnic minorities in South and Southeast Asia
- Christianity in Islamic Southeast Asia (Indonesia, Malaysia)

- Christianity in the Hinduist context of India
- Global faith movements in modern Asia

Handbooks

- Bevans, Stephen B. and Roger P. Schroeder. *Constants in context. A theology of mission for today*. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, c2004.
- England, John C. et al. *Asian Christian Theologies: A Research Guide to Authors, Movements, Sources*.
Volume 1: Asian Region 7th-20th Centuries. South Asia; Austral Asia. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2002. xiv + 679 pages.
Volume 2: Southeast Asia. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2003. xlix + 684 pages.
Volume 3: Northeast Asia. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2004. xlvii + 768 pages.
- Jenkins, Philip. *The Lost History of Christianity. The Thousand Year Golden Age of the Church in the Middle East, Africa, and Asia – and How it Died*. New York: Harper, 2008
- Kim, Sebastian C.H. (ed.) *Christian Theology in Asia*. New York: Cambridge University Press 2008.
- Koschorke, Klaus and others (eds.). *A History of Christianity in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, 1450-1990*. Grand Rapids: Wm B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2007.
- Lamport, Mark A. a.o. (eds.). *Encyclopedia of Christianity in the Global South*, Rowman and Littlefield 2018.
- Moffett, Samuel Hugh. *A History of Christianity in Asia. Vol. 1. Beginnings to 1500*. 2nd rev. and corrected ed. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1998
- _____. *A History of Christianity in Asia. Vol. 2. 1500-1900*. New York: Orbis, 2005. Both volumes are also available in Chinese.
- Phan, Peter C. ed. *Christianities in Asia*. Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011.
- Ross, Kenneth R., Daniel Jeyaraj, Todd M. Johnson (eds.) *Christianity in South and Central Asia*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press 2019.
- Ross, Kenneth R. Francis D. Alvarez SJ and Todd M. Johnson (eds.). *Christianity in East and Southeast Asia*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press 2020.
- Sunquist, Scott W. *A Dictionary of Asian Christianity*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001.
- Wilfred, Felix (ed.). *The Oxford Handbook of Christianity in Asia*. Oxford University Press, 2014.

Further readings

General readings on Asia, on the history of Christianity, on postcolonial theology, and on religion and Christianity in Asia or parts thereof

- Bautista, Julius. "Christianity in Southeast Asia: Colonialism, Nationalism and the Caveats to Conversion." In Felix Wilfred (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Christianity in Asia*, Oxford University Press, 2014, 215-30.
- Bautista, Julius, and Francis Khek Gee Lim (eds.). *Christianity and the State in Asia. Complicity and conflict*. Routledge 2009.
- Chen, Kuan-Hsing. *Asia as Method: Toward Deimperialization*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010.
- Kang Namsoon, "Who / What is Asian? A Postcolonial Theological Reading of Orientalism and Neo-Orientalism." In Catherine Keller a.o. (eds.), *Postcolonial Theologies. Divinity And Empire*. St. Louis, Mo: Chalice Press 2004, 100-117.
- _____. *Diasporic Feminist Theology. Asia and Theopolitical Imagination*. Augsburg Fortress Publishers, 2014.
- Koyama, Kosuke. *Water Buffalo Theology*, Maryknoll, New York: Orbis, 1999 [1974]
- Küng, Hans. Christianity and World Religions: The Dialogue with Islam as One Model. *Muslim World*, 77 no 2 Apr 1987, 80-95.
- Kwan, Simon Shui-man. *Postcolonial Resistance and Asian Theology*. Abingdon: Routledge, 2014.
- Kwok, Pui-lan. *Postcolonial imagination and feminist theology*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005.
- Lumsdaine, David H. *Evangelical Christianity and Democracy in Asia*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press 2009.
- Ma, Wonsuk and Julie C. Ma. *Asian Church and God's Mission: Studies Presented in the International Symposium on Asian Mission in Manila*, January 2002. Manila: OMF Literature.
- Phan, Peter C. *Asian Christianities. History, Theology, Practice*. New York: Orbis, 2018
(loosely organized set of essays; overview of Asian Catholic history, theology, and practice (with some attention to other Asian Christian traditions); collection of Phan's recent scholarship and theology)
- Pieris, Aloysius. *An Asian Theology of Liberation*. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1988.
- Salemink, Oscar. "Is Protestant Conversion a Form of Protest? Urban and Upland Protestants in Southeast Asia." In Julius Bautista and Francis Khek Gee Lim, *Christianity and the State in Asia. Complicity and Control*. London and New York: Routledge 2009, 36-58.

- Song, Choan-Seng. *Third-Eye Theology. Theology in Formation in Asian Settings* (revised edition), Maryknoll, New York: Orbis, 1990 [1979]
- Tucker, Ruth A. *From Jerusalem to Irian Jaya. A Biographical History of Christian Missions*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan 2004 (first edition 1983)
- Young, Robert J.C. *Post-colonialism: An Introduction*. Oxford: OUP 2003.

Ecumenism in Asia

- Abraham, K.C., ed., *Ecumenism in Asia: Essays in Honour of Feliciano Carino*, Bangalore: ATESEA, 1999
- Koshy, Ninan. *A History of the Ecumenical Movement in Asia. Volume I and II*. Hong Kong: CCA, 2004.
- Weber, Hans-Ruedi. *Asia and the Ecumenical Movement 1895-1961*. London: SCM, 1966

Church of the East

- Baum, Wilhelm and Dietmar W. Winkler. *The Church of the East: A Concise History*. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge 2003.
- Li Tang and Dietmar W. Winkler. *From the Oxus River to the Chinese shores: Studies on East Syriac Christianity in China and Central Asia*. Wien, Zürich, Berlin: Lit c2013

India

- Neill, Stephen. *A history of Christianity in India: the beginnings to AD 1707*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1983
- _____. *A history of Christianity in India: 1707-1858*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1985.
- Robert Frykenberg. *Christianity in India: From Beginnings to the Present*. Oxford: Oxford University Press 2008.
- Parratt, John. "Christianity, Ethnicity, and Structural Violence: The Northeast India Case," in Ogbu U. Kalu (ed.). *Interpreting Contemporary Christianity. Global Processes and Local Identities* (Studies in the history of Christian missions series), Eerdmans 2008, 319-340.
- Rajkumar, Peniel. *Dalit Theology and Dalit Liberation : Problems, Paradigms and Possibilities*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2010.
- Robinson, Rowena (ed). *Margins of Faith. Dalit and Tribal Christianity in India*. Sage 2010.
- John B. Webster. *The Dalit Christians: A History*. Chennai: ISPCK 1992

- _____. *Historiography of Christianity in India*. Delhi: Oxford University Press 2012.
- Wilfred, Felix. "South Asian Christianity in Context," in Felix Wilfred (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Christianity in Asia*, Oxford University Press 2014, 31-50.

Indonesia

- Adeney-Risakotta, Bernard. "Religion, Violence and Diversity: Negotiating the Boundaries of Indonesian Identity," in Sterkens, Machasin & Wijsen, eds. *Religion, Civil Society and Conflict in Indonesia*. Zurich: Lit Verlag, 2009, 9-26.
- Aritonang, Jan Sihar and Steenbrink, Karel (eds.). *A History of Christianity in Indonesia*. Brill, 2008.

Islamic nations

- Bouma, Gary. *Religious Diversity in Southeast Asia and the Pacific*. Dordrecht: Springer 2010.
- Bradley, Mark. *Iran and Christianity. Historical Identity and Present Relevance*. Continuum 2008.
- Gabriel, Theodore. *Christian Citizens in an Islamic State. The Pakistan Experience*. Ashgate 2007.
- Ridgeon, L. and Schmidt-Leukel, P. (eds.). *Islam and Inter-Faith Relations*. London: SCM Press, 2007.
- Schmidt-Leukel, Perry. "Christianity and the Religious Other." In David Cheetham, Douglas Pratt, and David Thomas (eds.). *Understanding Interreligious Relations*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 118-147.
- Smith, Huston. *Islam: A Concise Introduction*. HarperCollins 2001.
- Thomas, David. "Islam and the Religious Other." In David Cheetham, Douglas Pratt, and David Thomas (eds.). *Understanding Interreligious Relations*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 148-171.
- Watt, William Montgomery. *Muslim-Christian Encounters. Perceptions and Misperceptions*, London: Routledge 1991.

Japan

- Mullins, Mark R. (ed.). *Handbook of Christianity in Japan*. Leiden; Boston: Brill 2003.
- Mullins, Mark R. and Richard Fox Young (ed.). *Perspectives on Christianity in Korea and Japan. The Gospel and Culture in East Asia*. Edwin Mellen Press 1995.

Korea

- Baker, Don. "Globalization, Nationalism, and Korean Religion in the 21st Century." *Asia Pacific: Perspectives* Vol 10/1, May 2011, 24-43.
- Buswell, Robert E., Jr. and Timothy S. Lee (eds.). *Christianity in Korea*. University of Hawai'i Press 2006.
- Cox, Harvey. *Fire from Heaven. The Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the Twenty-first Century*, Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley 1995, 213-241.
- Kang, Namsoon. "Reclaiming Theological Significance of Women's Religious Choice-in-Differential: Korean Women's Choice of Christianity Revisited," *The Journal of World Christianity* Vol 3:1 (2010), 18-46.
- _____. "Resurgence of Asian Values. Confucian Comeback and Its Embodiment in Christianity." In Kang, *Diasporic Feminist Theology: Asia and Theopolitical Imagination*. Augsburg Fortress Publishers, 2014, 291-322.
- Kim, C.H. Sebastian, and Kirsteen Kim. *A History of Korean Christianity*. New York, Cambridge University Press, 2015.
- Kim, Kirsteen. "Korean Pentecostalism and Shamanism: Developing Theological Self-understanding in a Land of Many Spirits," *PentecoStudies* 16.1 (2017), 59–84.
- Hunt, Everett N. 1991 "The Legacy of John Livingston Nevius" in *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* Vol. 15 (Jan-Oct: 1991).

Malaysia

- Roxborough, John. *A History of Christianity in Malaysia*, Singapore: Genesis Books, 2014.
- Scott, David W. *Mission as Globalization. Methodists in Southeast Asia at the Turn of the Twentieth Century*. Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2016.
- Thu, En Yu. "Malaysia." In Hope Antone a.o. (eds.), *Asian Handbook for Theological Education and Ecumenism*. Regnum Studies in Global Christianity. Oxford Center for Mission Studies 2013, 559-564.
- _____. *Ethnic Identity and Consciousness in Sabah. A Christian Perspective in the Management of Communal Conflicts in Malaysia*. Kota Kinabalu, Sabah: Sabah Theological Seminary 2010.
- Zhang, Delai. *The Hakka Experiment in Sabah. Commemorative Publication of the 90th Anniversary of the Arrival of the Hakkas and the Founding of Inanam-Meggatal-Telipok Towns*. Kota Kinabalu, Sabah: Sabah Theological Seminary 2007.

Singapore

- Goh, P.S. Daniel, "State and Social Christianity in Post-colonial Singapore," *Sojourn: Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia* 2010, Vol. 25 / 1, 54-89.
- Mathews, Mathew. "Accommodating Relationships. The Church and State in Singapore." In Julius Bautista and Francis Khok Gee Lim, *Christianity and the State in Asia. Complicity and Control*. London and New York: Routledge 2009, 184-200.
- Tan-Chow May Ling: *Pentecostal Theology for the Twenty-First Century. Engaging with Multi-Faith Singapore*. Ashgate, 2007.

Southeast Asia (Thailand, Myanmar, Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam)

- Boonyakiat, Satanun. *Christian Theology of Suffering in the Context of Theravada Buddhism in Thailand*. Langham Publishing 2020.
- Brandner, Tobias. "Emerging Christianity in Cambodia: People Movement to Christ or Playground for Global Christianity?" *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 2020, Vol. 44(3), 279–289.
- Dupertuis, Silvain. *The Gospel in the Land of a Million Elephants*. St-Prex: Éditions Je Sème, 2013.
- Ling, Samuel Ngun. *Communicating Christ in Myanmar. Issues, interactions and perspectives*, Yangon: ATEM, 2005.
- Smith, Alex G. *Siamese Gold. The Church in Thailand. A History of Church Growth in Thailand: An Interpretive Analysis 1816-1982*. Kannok Bannasan (OMF Publishers): Bangkok, 2004 [1982].

Resource material

- International Journal of Asian Christianity

Feedback for evaluation

End-of-term university wide course evaluation will be conducted in class

Assessment

Oral participation 20%; class presentation 10%; church visit report (or book report) 20%; final paper 50%.

a) Oral participation

- Physical and mental presence during course
- Quality of contribution to discussion, etc.

b) Class presentation

- Presentation on your findings regarding the final paper or possibly presentation on a special topic in the course of the lecture.
- Language: English or Chinese

c) Church visit report

Visit a church of another national group (e.g., Korean church; Philippino church; Thai congregation; Indonesian church; Nepali church; etc.) and write a short report (1,500 to 2,000 words) about your observations.

Deadline: 10 Nov 2022

Language: English only

Word limit: 2000 words

d) Final paper

Write an essay about a topic within the broader themes listed below:

- Topic area 1:
Encounter of Christianity and ***Islam in Asia***.
Or: Encounter of Christianity and ***Buddhism in Asia***.
Discuss with reference to specific contexts.
- Topic area 2:
Christianity and ***ethnic minorities***. Discuss the historical growth of Christianity among ethnic minorities and analyze reasons for this growth.
- Topic area 3:
Asian Christianity and the ***situation of women in Asia***: discuss how Christianity affected gender justice in Asia – both contributing to the equal status of women in society and hindering it. Discuss with reference to historical events.
- Topic area 4:
Christianity and ***social change***: Discuss how Christianity acted as a motor of social and political change or possibly as hindrance to it with reference to historical examples.

Note further the following:

- Language: English only
- The paper should refer to contexts outside of Hong Kong and Mainland China.
- Around 5000 words
- Include references to at least 6 scholarly works (books or articles)
- Deadline: 12 Dec 2022
- Assessment criteria:
 - Does your paper show knowledge of the topic?
 - Do you include the most important scholarly works?
 - Does your paper contain a clear thesis, an understandable structure, and is your argument convincing?
 - Does your paper show critical engagement and creativity of thought?

Overview

PART I ASIAN CHRISTIANITY FROM JESUS TO THE 19th CENTURY

| Session | Theme |
|-------------------|--|
| 1 7 Sept 2022 | Course outline Introduction to the course Asia as an area of studies and as area of Christian concern |
| 2 14 Sept 2022 | The spread of Christianity in the first millennium <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The Asian church in the first two centuries b) The church under the Sassanid Empire in Persia c) Christianity under Islamic rule (7th to 10th century) Tutorial: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is Asia? 2. Nestorian contextualization: The Nestorian monument's theological introduction |
| 3 21 Sept 2022 | Asian Christianity under Mongolian rule and the first wave of Catholic mission |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The Assyrian Church of the East under Mongolian rule b) Franciscans and the Mongols: The first missionary encounter of Catholic Christianity with Asia under the Mongols (13th to 15th century) <p>Tutorial: Contextualization of the <i>Jingjiao</i>: The Jesus-Messiah Sutra (possible student presentation on the Jesus-Messiah Sutra)</p> |
| 4 28 Sept 2022 | <p>Catholic Mission to Asia from the 16th to the 19th century</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Jesuit mission to Asia b) Asian Christianity from the 16th to the 18th century <p>Tutorial: Shusaku Endo's novel <i>Silence</i> – historical backgrounds and missional challenges? (possible student presentation on Silence)</p> |
| 5 5 Oct 2022 | <p>The emergence of the Protestant mission movement in the West and early Protestant mission in Asia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Backgrounds: The different waves of Protestant mission b) Characteristics of Protestant Mission before the 19th century c) Protestant mission in Asia before the 19th century <p>Tutorial: on the emergence of the Protestant mission movement in the West</p> |
| 6 12 Oct 2022 | <p>Protestant mission in 19th century Asia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) China b) Korea c) Southeast Asia: from Thailand to the Philippines d) India <p>Tutorial: on contextualization and the impacts of the Protestant mission on Christianity in Asia</p> |

PART II ASIAN CHRISTIANITY SINCE THE 1900s

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| <p>7 19 Oct 2022</p> | <p>Korean Christianity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Historical periods of Korean Christianity b) Factors of Christian growth in Korea c) Characteristics of Korean Christianity d) Christianity in North Korea e) Impacts of Korean Christianity and assessment <p>Tutorial: on feminist-Christian criticism of Confucianism and on Pentecostalism in Korea.</p> |
| <p>8 26 Oct 2022</p> | <p>Korean Christianity (continue)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> f) The Korean mission movement g) A concluding assessment of Korean Christianity <p>Christianity in the Buddhist context of Southeast Asia: Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, Myanmar</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Christianity in Thailand <p>Tutorial: On the relationship between Christianity and Buddhism – convergences and conflicts</p> |
| <p>9 2 Nov 2022</p> | <p>Christianity in the Buddhist context of Southeast Asia: Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, Myanmar (continue)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> b) Christianity in Laos c) Christianity in Cambodia d) Vietnam e) Myanmar <p>Tutorial: on Christianity among ethnic minorities in Myanmar</p> |
| <p>10 9 Nov 2022</p> | <p>Christianity in an Asian urban context: the case of Singapore</p> <p>Tutorial: on the complex of problems related to mission trips to regional neighbors (or student presentations)</p> |
| <p>11</p> | <p>Christianity facing Islam in Southeast Asia</p> |

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| 16 Nov 2022 | <p>a) Indonesia b) Malaysia</p> <p>Tutorial: on the relationship between Christianity and Islam (or student presentations)</p> |
| 12 23 Nov 2022 | <p>Christianity in India</p> <p>a) The challenge of Hinduism b) Dalit Christianity</p> <p>Tutorial: Student presentations</p> |
| 13 30 Nov 2022 | <p>Conclusion:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Towards Asian theologies? 2) Beyond national boundaries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asian Christianities in a global context • Global faith movements across Asia: Evangelicals, Pentecostals, and Ecumenical Christians <p>Tutorial: Student presentations</p> |