

# Special Topic on Christianity in China:

## The Rise of Contemporary Chinese Christianity and World Christianity

### 中國基督教專題研究：當代中國基督教之興起與世界基督教

**Instructor:** Prof. Tsai, Yen-zen (蔡彥仁)

**Date:** 20 Jan - 24 Apr 2017

**Time:** Fridays: 7:00 - 09:15pm

**Venue:** YCT LG201

#### Course overview

Since the end of the Cultural Revolution and the implementation of the Reform-and-Open policy in 1978, China has rapidly progressed from a stagnant state into a phase of novelty and vitality. Almost all aspects of people's life have drastically changed, a new experience unprecedented in Chinese history. Among them, the area of religion or, for our purposes, Christianity is one that deserves our serious attention. This course is designed to help students who have slight knowledge about Christianity in contemporary China to explore more deeply the configuration, prominent features, and future development of this religion. Importantly, the course will guide students to understanding contemporary Chinese Christianity from the perspective of "world Christianity." It will cover ethnographical accounts about and scholars' theoretical discussions of different Christian manifestations or practices in China. Students will be asked to study these materials and, as well, relevant ones drawn from other countries for comparison. The aim of the course is then to help the students to evaluate contemporary Chinese Christianity against globalization that has radically transformed China and other parts of the world in the past few decades.

#### Learning outcomes

After completing this course, students will be able to:

- understand the powerful impact globalization has brought to religion in China.
- comprehend multiple manifestations of contemporary Chinese Christianity from a comparative perspective.
- analyze primary texts and critically respond to scholars' interpretations of them.
- come up with their own approach to different aspects of contemporary Chinese Christianity.

#### Topics

Topic	Contents
Rethinking contemporary Chinese Christianity	The first meeting explains the aim, scope, and other details of the course. Emphasis is made on the necessity of reconsidering contemporary Chinese Christianity in the context of globalization.
The concept of "world Christianity"	Introduces "world Christianity" from the viewpoints of global history of

	Christianity and anthropology of Christianity.
Background of Contemporary Chinese Christianity	Traces the socio-political development since 1980s in and from which contemporary Chinese Christianity evolves.
Rural Church	Four types of contemporary Chinese Christianity are highlighted for special learning. This is the first one. Reading of an ethnographical account on rural churches in Hunan .
Migrant workers' church	2 <sup>nd</sup> type of contemporary Chinese Christianity. Also reading of ethnographical accounts on migrant works' churches in various parts of China..
Entrepreneurs' Christianity	3 <sup>rd</sup> type of contemporary Chinese Christianity. Reading of field reports on Wenzhou Christians and the author's theoretical discussion of his findings.
Intellectuals and church	4 <sup>th</sup> type of contemporary Chinese Christianity. Reading of field reports on Christian intellectuals in Beijing and the authors' critical evaluations of their respective findings.
Civil society and Christian ethics	This topic pertains to how Christian intellectuals serve as mediators or "bridges" to bring about Chinese "democratization", as well as how Christian business people affect Chinese society by way of their insistent adherence to Christian ethics.
Examples from other countries	Two contemporary examples about development of Christianity from Malaysia and India are presented for comparison. They are meant to broaden students' vision about Christianity in China and elsewhere.
The study of Chinese Christianity	Discusses methods of doing research on contemporary Chinese Christianity on the micro-level. Particularly introduces anthropological approach.
The prospect of Chinese Christianity	Final reflection on the course by way of students' oral presentations based upon their written papers.

### Learning activities

Except for the first class, in which the teacher will deliver a full-hour lecture, and the last class, in which students will make oral presentations, all other class meetings will

consist of a combination of lectures and discussions. Students are expected to be familiar with the weekly assignment which will be the focus of open discussion.

Lecture	Discussion of readings
In class: 1.5 hrs (M) Out of class: 7 hrs (M/O)	In class: 1.5 hrs (M)
M: Mandatory activity O: Optional activity	

### Assessment scheme

Task nature	Description	Weight
Active participation in class	Students are expected to actively engage in learning, which includes preview of assigned readings, full class attendance, and active interaction with instructor and classmates in discussion sessions. The process of learning is crucial to achieving the outcomes expected.	40% of the course grade
Oral presentation	Oral presentation is a test of students' understanding of the learning subject. It is also a practice to organize and enunciate their knowledge in public. This activity is scheduled to take place at the last class meeting. The content of the oral presentation is normally the outline or summary of students' term paper.	20% of the course grade
Final term paper	The final term paper reflects what students have learnt from the course. Students are thus expected to write a 5000-6000-words paper by choosing a relevant topic generated in the process of their learning. While writing, they should take heed of the logic of their argument, balance of structure, correctness of style,	40% of the course grade

	<p>appropriateness of documentation, etc. For unskilled writers, they are encouraged to consult with specialists at the Writing Centre. The deadline for submitting the final term paper will be announced in class.</p>	
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### Learning resources

There are two types of readings for this course, required and recommended. “Required” is a must, whereas “recommended” is optional. For detailed information about required readings, see instruction indicated in Course Schedule under each week. The recommended readings are useful references for writing the term paper.

#### Required readings

- Bauman, Chad M. 2013. “Hindu-Christian Conflict in India: Globalization, Conversion, and the Coterminal Castes and Tribes.” *The Journal of Asian Studies* 72.3: 633-653.
- Cao, Nanlai. 2007. “Christian Entrepreneurs and the Post-Mao State: An Ethnographic Account of Church-State Relations in China’s Economic Transition.” *Sociology of Religion* 68: 45-66.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2008. “Boss Christians: The Business of Religion in the ‘Wenzhou Model’ of Christian Revival.” *The China Journal* 59: 63-87.
- Chan, Shun-hing. 2013. “Civil Society and the Role of the Catholic Church in Contemporary China.” In Francis Khek Gee Lim, ed. *Christianity in Contemporary China*. London and New York: Routledge. Pp. 123-137.
- Fällman, Fredrik. “Calvin, Culture and Christ? Development of Faith among Chinese Intellectuals.” In Francis Khek Gee Lim, ed. *Christianity in Contemporary China*. London and New York: Routledge, 2013. Pp. 153-168.
- \*Jenkins, Philip. 2002. *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity*. New York: Oxford University Press. (Chs. 1, 4, 5)
- Kim, Sebastian and Kristeen Kim. 2008. *Christianity as a World Religion*. London and New York: Continuum. (Chs. 1, 7)
- Lee, Joseph Tse-Hei. 2007. “Christianity in Contemporary China: An Update.” *Journal of Church and State* 49.2: 277-304.
- Liu, Yi. 2010. “From Christian Aliens to Chinese Citizens: The National Identity of Chinese Christians in the Twentieth Century.” *Studies in World Christianity* 16.2: 145-168.
- McGrath, Alister. 2004. “The Future Configuration of a Global and Local Tradition.” In *World Christianity: Politics, Theology, Dialogues*. Eds. Anthony O’Mahony and Michael Kirwan. London: Melisende. Pp. 163-177.
- Riddell, Peter G. 2004. “Malaysian Christians and Islamisation.” In *World Christianity: Politics, Theology, Dialogues*. Eds. Anthony O’Mahony and Michael Kirwan. London: Melisende. Pp. 226-256.
- Robbins, Joel. 2004. “The Globalization of Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity.” *Annual Review of Anthropology* 33: 117-143.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2007. “Continuity Thinking and the Problem of Christian Culture: Belief,

- Time, and the Anthropology of Christianity.” *Current Anthropology* 48.1: 5-17.
- Tong, Joy Kooi-chin. “Christian Ethics and Business Life: An Ethnographic Account of Overseas Chinese Christian Entrepreneurs in China’s Economic Transition.” In Francis Khek Gee Lim, ed. *Christianity in Contemporary China*. London and New York: Routledge. Pp.168-182.
- Tsai, Yen-zen. 2015. “Glossolalia and Church Identity: the Role of Sound in the Making of a Chinese Pentecostal-charismatic Church.” *Review of Religion and Chinese Society* 2: 87-108.
- Walls, Andrew F. 2002. *The Cross-cultural Process in Christian History: Studies in the Transmission and Appropriation of Faith*. Maryknoll: Orbis / Edinburgh: T&T Clark. (ch. 2)
- Wielander, Gerda. 2009. “Bridging the Gap? An Investigation of Beijing Intellectual House Church Activities and Their Implications for China’s Democratization.” *Journal of Contemporary China* 18.62: 849-864.
- \*歐陽肅通。2009。《轉型視野下的中國農村宗教 — 兼以鄉村基督教為個案考察》。北京：中國社會科學出版社。
- \*黃劍波。2012。《城市農民工教會 — 中國都市化與民工基督教》。香港：道風書社。
- Note: All the required readings are compiled into a *Reader* in pdf form for students’ easy access. The three books marked by a red asterisk, out of consideration of copyright, are on reserve in the library.

#### Recommended readings

- Aikman, David. 2003. *Jesus in Beijing: How Christianity is Transforming China and Changing the Global Balance of Power*. Washington, DC: Regnery Publishing.
- Anderson, Allan and Edmond Tang. Eds. 2005. *Asian and Pentecostal: The Charismatic Face of Christianity in Asia*. Oxford, UK and Costa Mesa, USA: Regnum.
- Bays, Daniel H. 2003. “Chinese Protestant Christianity Today.” *China Quarterly* 174.2: 488-504.
- Chao, Jonathan and Rosanna Chong. 1997. *A History of Christianity in Socialist China, 1947-1997*. Taipei: China Ministries International Publishing.
- Cox, Harvey. 1996. *Fire from Heaven: The Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the Twenty-First Century*. London: Cassell.
- Dunch, Ryan F. “Protestant Christianity in China Today: Fragile, Fragmented, Flourishing.” In Uhalley, Jr. Stephen and Wu, Xiaoxin, eds. *China and Christianity: Burdened Past, Hopeful Future*. Armonk, NY: ME Sharp, 2001. 195-216.
- Hunter, Alan and Kin-kwong Chan. 1993. *Protestantism in Contemporary China*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993.
- Kao, Chen-yang. 2009. “The Cultural Revolution and the Emergence of Pentecostal-style Protestantism in China.” *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 24.2: 171-188.
- Lewis, Donald M. Ed. 2004. *Christianity Reborn: The Global Expansion of Evangelicalism in the Twentieth Century*. Grand Rapids, MI and Cambridge, UK: William B. Eerdmans.
- Lian, Xi. 2011. *Redeemed by Fire: The Rise of Popular Christianity in Modern China*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Martin, David. 2002. *Pentecostalism: The World Their Parish*. Oxford: Blackwell

Publishers.

Miller, Donald E. *Global Pentecostalism: The New Face of Christian Social Engagement*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007.

O'Mahony, Anthony and Kirwan, Michael, eds. *World Christianity: Politics, Theology, Dialogues*. London: Melisende, 2004.

Yang, Fenggang. 2004. "Between Secularist Ideology and Desecularizing Reality: the Birth and Growth of Religious Research in Communist China." *Sociology of Religion, A Quarterly Review* 65.2: 101-119.

\_\_\_\_\_. 2012. *Religion in China: Survival and Revival under Communist Rule*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

梁家麟。1999。《改革開放後的中國農村教會》。香港：建道神學院。

邢福增。1999。《當代中國政教關係》。香港：建道神學院，1999。

陳村富。2005。《轉型期的中國基督教 — 浙江基督教個案研究》。北京：東方出版社。

### **Feedback for evaluation**

Students are encouraged to give their feedback in class whenever possible. They can also do that via e-mail or, if necessary, by making appointment with the instructor.

### **Course schedule**

Week 1 (13 Jan)

(No class meeting; this course starts from the second week.)

Week 2 (20 Jan)

Topic: Rethinking contemporary Chinese Christianity

Readings: Jenkins, chs. 1, 4, 5; McGrath

Week 3 (3 Feb)

Topic: The concept of "world Christianity"

Readings: Robbins 2004; Walls, ch. 2

Week 4 (10 Feb)

Topic: Background of Contemporary Chinese Christianity

Readings: Lee; Liu

Week 5 (17 Feb)

Topic: Rural church (I)

Readings: 歐陽，頁 213-343.

Week 6 (24 Feb)

Topic: Rural church (II)

Readings: 歐陽，頁 344-454.

Week 7 (3 Mar)

Topic: Migrant workers' church (I)

Readings: 黃，頁 1-127.

Week 8 (10 Mar)

Topic: Migrant workers' church (II)

Readings: 黃, 頁 129-289.

Week 9 (17 Mar)

Topic: Entrepreneurs' Christianity

Readings: Cao 2007, 2008.

Week 10 (24 Mar)

Topic: Intellectuals and church

Readings: Fällman; Wielander

Week 11 (31 Mar)

Topic: Civil society and Christian ethics

Readings: Chan; Tong

Week 12 (7 Apr)

Topic: Examples from other countries

Readings: Bauman; Riddell

Week 13 (14 Apr)

(No Class meeting; Easter Holiday)

Week 14 (21 Apr)

Topic: The study of Chinese Christianity

Readings: Robbins 2007; Tsai

Week 15 (24 Apr) (Make-up class meeting)

Topic: The prospect of Chinese Christianity

Oral presentation of term paper

**Contact details for instructor**

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Teaching venue: YCT LG201