

THEO5324 History of Christianity in Asia

Teacher	Tobias Brandner Tel 3943 1368; e-mail tobias@cuhk.edu.hk
Venue	ELB 401
Description	The course introduces the students to the history of Christianity in Asia, from the first century and the mission to India through the Sassanid period, life under Islamic rule, the Mongolian period, the spread of Roman-Catholic and Protestant faith in the colonial era to the development of independent Christianity since the 20 th century. A significant focus of the course will be on recent developments in different parts of Asia.

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 a partly parallel and independent rather than as latter development to Christianity in Europe.
- 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 models of Christianity and 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.

Structure of the course

- Mainly lecture with handouts
- Sections with joint discussion or with small-group discussion
- Student presentations towards the end of 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
- Nestorianism
- Christianity under Islamic rule
- Christianity in the Mongolian Empire
- Jesuit mission in Asia
- Christianity under Portuguese colonialism
- Protestant mission in 19th century Asia
- Christianity in the context of Confucianism (South Korea, China)
- Christianity in Korea
- 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.
- 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
- Koyama, Kosuke. *Water Buffalo Theology,* Maryknoll, New York: Orbis, 1999 [1974]
- 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.
- Phan, Peter C. ed. *Christianities in Asia.* Malden:: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011.
- Pieris, Aloysius. *An Asian Theology of Liberation.* Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1988.
- 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

- Abraham, K.C., ed., *Ecumenism in Asia: Essays in Honour of Feliciano Carino,* Bangalore: ATESEA, 1999
- Adeney-Risakotta, Bernard. "Religion, Violence and Diversity: Negotiating the Boundaries of Indonesian Identity," in Sterkens, Machasin & Wijzen, 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.
- Baker, Don. "Globalization, Nationalism, and Korean Religion in the 21st Century." *Asia Pacific: Perspectives* Vol 10/1, May 2011, 24-43
- 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. *Christianity and the State in Asia. Complicity and conflict.* Routledge 2009
- Bradley, Mark. *Iran and Christianity. Historical Identity and Present Relevance.* Continuum 2008
- 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.
- Dupertuis, Silvain. *The Gospel in the Land of a Million Elephants.* St-Prex: Éditions Je Sème, 2013.
- Gabriel, Theodore. *Christian Citizens in an Islamic State. The Pakistan Experience.* Ashgate 2007

- Goh, P.S. Daniel, "State and Social Christianity in Post-colonial Singapore," *Sojourn: Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia* Vol. 25 / 1, 54-89
- Hunt, Everett N. 1991 "The Legacy of John Livingston Nevius" in *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* Vol. 15 (Jan-Oct: 1991).
- 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.
- 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.
- Koshy, Ninan. *A History of the Ecumenical Movement in Asia. Volume I and II*. Hong Kong: CCA, 2004.
- 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.
- 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.
- Ling, Samuel Ngun. *Communicating Christ in Myanmar. Issues, interactions and perspectives*, Yangon: ATEM, 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
- 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.
- 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.
- Roxborough, John. *A History of Christianity in Malaysia*, Singapore: Genesis Books, 2014.
- 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].
- Song, Choan-Seng. *Third-Eye Theology. Theology in Formation in Asian Settings* (revised edition), Maryknoll, New York: Orbis, 1990 [1979]
- Tan-Chow May Ling: *Pentecostal Theology for the Twenty-First Century. Engaging with Multi-Faith Singapore*. Ashgate, 2007
- Tucker, Ruth A. *From Jerusalem to Irian Jaya. A Biographical History of Christian Missions*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan 2004 (first edition 1983)
- Watt, William Montgomery. *Muslim-Christian Encounters. Perceptions and Misperceptions*, London: Routledge 1991, 59-88.
- Weber, Hans-Ruedi. *Asia and the Ecumenical Movement 1895-1961*. London: SCM, 1966
- Wilfred, Felix. "South Asian Christianity in Context," in Felix Wilfred (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Christianity in Asia*, Oxford University Press 2014, 31-50.
- Young, Robert J.C. *Post-colonialism: An Introduction*. Oxford: OUP 2003.

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%; presentation 20%; church visit report 20%; final paper 40% or
Oral participation 20%; book report 20%; church visit report 20%; final paper 40%

a) Oral participation

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

b) Class presentation

- Presentation of a reading in preparation of the lecture or a short presentation on your findings regarding the final paper

c) **Book report (as possible alternative to class presentation)**

Choose one of the following books:

- Philip Jenkins. *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)
- Pieris, Aloysius. *An Asian Theology of Liberation*. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1988.

Note the following requirements:

- The **reading report** should show evidence of a thorough reading and a good understanding of the whole book.
- 1500 to 2000 words

Think about the following questions (depending on which book you choose):

- What is the significance and contribution of Christianity in a context of poverty and religious pluralism?
- Why did Christianity disappear in parts of Asia?
- In what ways has Christianity influenced Islam?

Note further:

- Submission deadline: 31 Oct 2018
- Assessment Criteria:
 - Content: does the paper reflect a good understanding of the texts?
 - Thought: Does the student critically engage with the thoughts expressed?
 - Form: does the form of the presentation enhance the understanding of the written essay? (Neatness of the paper, good structuring, concise writing, mastering of language and proper use of source material)

d) **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 (1,000 words) about your observations.

Deadline: 30 Nov 2018

e) **Final paper**

Choose **one topic** out of the list of topics below and write an essay about it

- Topic 1:
Encounter of Christianity and ***Islam in Asia***.
Discuss with reference to specific contexts.
Or: Encounter of Christianity and ***Buddhism in Asia***.
Discuss with reference to specific contexts.
- Topic 2:
Christianity and ***ethnic minorities***. Discuss the historical growth of Christianity among ethnic minorities and analyze reasons for this growth.
- Topic 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 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:

- The paper should refer to contexts outside Hong Kong and Mainland China.
- Around 5000 words
- Include references to at least 6 scholarly works (books or articles)
- Deadline: 12 Dec 2018
- 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 5 Sept 2018	Course outline Introduction to the course <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Why studying church history: how is church history related to theologyb) Asia as an area of studies and as area of Christian concern
2 12 Sept 2018	The spread of Christianity in the first 1250 years <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) The Asian church in the first two centuriesb) The church under the Sassanid Empire in Persiac) Christianity under Islamic rule (7th to 10th century)d) Christianity under Mongolian rule
3 19 Sept 2018	Asian Christianity from 1250 to 1800 <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) The Franciscans and the Mongols: The first missionary encounter of Catholic Christianity with Asia under the Mongols (13th to 15th century)b) Jesuit mission to Asiac) Asian Christianity from the 16th to the 18th century
4 26 Sept	The emergence of the Protestant mission movement in the West and Protestant mission in Asia <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) The different waves of Protestant missionb) Characteristics of Protestant Mission before the 19th centuryc) Protestant mission in Asia before the 19th centuryd) Protestant mission to India
3 Oct 2018	Session cancelled due to conference participation
5 10 Oct 2018	The emergence of the Protestant mission movement in the West and Protestant mission in Asia <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Chinab) Korea

	c) Southeast Asia: from Thailand to the Philippines
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PART II ASIAN CHRISTIANITY SINCE THE 1900s

17 Oct 2018	Public Holiday (Chung Yeung) – no class
6 24 Oct 2018	<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
7 31 Oct 2018	<p>Korean Christianity (continue)</p> <p>Christianity and Buddhism in Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Current developments and challenges of Thai Christianity b) Christianity in Laos c) Christianity in Cambodia d) Vietnam
8 7 Nov 2018	<p>Christianity and Buddhism in Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam (continue)</p> <p>Christianity and ethnic minorities: the case of Myanmar</p> <p>Christianity in urban Asia: the case of Singapore</p>
9 14 Nov 2018	<p>Christianity facing Islam in Southeast Asia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Malaysia b) Indonesia
10 21 Nov 2018	<p>Student presentations</p> <p>Christianity in India and Nepal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The challenge of Hinduism

	b) Dalit Christianity c) Present-day challenges
11 28 Nov 2018	Student presentations Beyond national boundaries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Asian Christianities in a global context b) Unity and diversity of Asian Christianities
12 5 Dec 2018	Student presentations Global faith movements in the Asian context <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evangelical mission • Pentecostalism • Ecumenism in Asia Conclusion: Towards Asian theologies?