

# THEO5324 History of Christianity in Asia

Teacher	Tobias Brandner Tel 3943 1368; e-mail <a href="mailto:tobias@cuhk.edu.hk">tobias@cuhk.edu.hk</a>
Venue	N.A. Due to the current covid-19 epidemic, the course will be taught online until further notice.
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.

## **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.
- 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.

### **Structure of the course**

- 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
- 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 19<sup>th</sup> 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**

- Bevens, 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
- 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.

- 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. Both volumes are also available in Chinese.
- Phan, Peter C. ed. *Christianities in Asia*. Malden:: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Asian Christianities. History, Theology, Practice*. New York: Orbis, 2018.
- 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

#### *Generally on Asia 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. *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.
- 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.

- 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

#### *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 & 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.

#### *Islamic nations*

- Bouma, Gary. *Religious Diversity in Southeast Asia and the Pacific*. Dordrecht: Springer 2010, 71-82 (short section on Malaysia).
- 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 21<sup>st</sup> 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.
- 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 90<sup>th</sup> 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.
- 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)

- 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. 21.
- 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 20%; church visit report (or book report) 20%; final paper 40%.

#### **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.

#### **c) Church visit report (or book 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.

If, due to the pandemic, a proper church visit is not possible, you may write a book review on one of the following books:

- Koyama, Kosuke. *Water Buffalo Theology*, Maryknoll, New York: Orbis, 1999 [1974]
- Kim, C.H. Sebastian, and Kirsteen Kim. *A History of Korean Christianity*. New York, Cambridge University Press, 2015.
- 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
- Scott, David W. *Mission as Globalization. Methodists in Southeast Asia at the Turn of the Twentieth Century*. Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2016.

Deadline: 10 Nov 2020

#### d) Final paper

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

- Topic 1:  
Encounter of Christianity and ***Islam in Asia***.  
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 of Hong Kong and Mainland China.



- Around 5000 words
- Include references to at least 6 scholarly works (books or articles)
- Deadline: 12 Dec 2020
- 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 19<sup>th</sup> CENTURY

Session	Theme
1 9 Sept 2020	Course outline Introduction to the course <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) Why studying church history: how is church history related to theology</li><li>b) Asia as an area of studies and as area of Christian concern</li></ul>
2 16 Sept 2020	The spread of Christianity in the first 800 years <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) The Asian church in the first two centuries</li><li>b) The church under the Sassanid Empire in Persia</li><li>c) Christianity under Islamic rule (7<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> century)</li></ul> Tutorial: the theological introduction to the Nestorian stele
3 23 Sept 2020	Asian Christianity under Mongolian rule and the first wave of Catholic mission <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) The Assyrian Church of the East under Mongolian rule</li><li>b) Franciscans and the Mongols: The first missionary encounter of Catholic Christianity with Asia under the Mongols (13<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> century)</li></ul> Tutorial: Contextualization of the <i>Jingjiao</i> : The Jesus-Messiah Sutra (possible student presentation on the Jesus-Messiah Sutra)
4 30 Sept	Catholic Mission to Asia from the 16 <sup>th</sup> to the 19 <sup>th</sup> century <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a)</li><li>b) Jesuit mission to Asia</li><li>c) Asian Christianity from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> century</li></ul> Tutorial: Shusaku Endo's novel <i>Silence</i> – historical backgrounds and missional challenges?

	(possible student presentation on Silence)
5 7 Oct 2020	<p>The emergence of the Protestant mission movement in the West and early Protestant mission in Asia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Backgrounds: The different waves of Protestant mission</li> <li>b) Characteristics of Protestant Mission before the 19<sup>th</sup> century</li> <li>c) Protestant mission in Asia before the 19<sup>th</sup> century</li> </ul> <p>Tutorial: on the emergence of the Protestant mission movement in the West</p>
6 14 Oct 2020	<p>Protestant mission in Asia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) China</li> <li>b) Korea</li> <li>c) Southeast Asia: from Thailand to the Philippines</li> <li>d) India</li> </ul> <p>Tutorial: on contextualization and the impacts of the Protestant mission on Christianity in Asia (possible student presentation on the booklet „Good words to admonish the age“ by Liang Fa and its contextualization of the Christian message)</p>

## PART II ASIAN CHRISTIANITY SINCE THE 1900s

7 21 Oct 2020	<p>Korean Christianity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Historical periods of Korean Christianity</li> <li>b) Factors of Christian growth in Korea</li> <li>c) Characteristics of Korean Christianity</li> <li>d) Christianity in North Korea</li> <li>e) Impacts of Korean Christianity and assessment</li> </ul> <p>Tutorial: on feminist-Christian criticism of Confucianism and on Pentecostalism in Korea.</p>
8	Korean Christianity (continue)

28 Oct 2020	<p>f) The Korean mission movement g) A concluding assessment of Korean Christianity</p> <p>Christianity in the Buddhist context of Southeast Asia: Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, Myanmar</p> <p>a) Christianity in Thailand</p> <p>Tutorial: On the relationship between Christianity and Buddhism – convergences and conflicts</p>
9 4 Nov 2020	<p>Christianity in the Buddhist context of Southeast Asia: Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, Myanmar (continue)</p> <p>b) Christianity in Laos c) Christianity in Cambodia d) Vietnam e) Myanmar</p> <p>Tutorial: on Christianity among ethnic minorities in Myanmar</p>
10 11 Nov 2020	<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>
11 18 Nov 2020	<p>Christianity facing Islam in Southeast Asia</p> <p>a) Indonesia b) Malaysia</p> <p>Tutorial: on the relationship between Christianity and Islam (or student presentations)</p>
12 25 Nov 2020	<p>Christianity in India</p> <p>a) The challenge of Hinduism b) Dalit Christianity</p> <p>Tutorial: Student presentations</p>
13 2 Dec	<p>Conclusion:</p>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Towards Asian theologies?</li><li>2) Beyond national boundaries<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Asian Christianities in a global context</li><li>• Global faith movements across Asia: Evangelicals, Pentecostals, and Ecumenical Christians</li></ul></li></ol> <p>Tutorial: Student presentations</p>
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