



NUS-USPC Collaborative Project  
Workshop on Christian Networks in Southeast Asia

# Intersecting Mobilities: Southeast Asia from the Perspective of Religious Mobility

1-2 December 2017, Georgetown, Penang



Photo © British Library Board. 1867. The Rev. Habb preaching to the Klings (South Indians) in Pinang. Photo 1000/42(4336)



## **CONTACT DETAILS**

### *Convenors*

**Dr Bernardo BROWN**, International Christian University, Japan  
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**Dr Shanthini PILLAI**, KITA – Institute of Ethnic Studies, National University of Malaysia  
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This two-day workshop focused on the historical and contemporary dynamics of Christian networks in Southeast Asia is part of the broader comparative exploration of religious networks in Asia supported by a collaborative grant awarded by NUS and Université Sorbonne Paris-Cité. The main objective of this workshop is to examine how the circulation of clergy, missionaries and educators across the institutions established by Christian churches in the region since the 16th century played a fundamental role in shaping regional networks of communication, education and evangelization.

Although the initial development of these networks was linked to Catholic missionary activity, the arrival of Protestant missionary projects not only introduced new dynamics across the region, it also prompted Catholic religious orders like MEP to reformulate the way in which they approached their work introducing new methods and expanding the scope of their activities. In this context, we are especially interested in the multiple ways in which – since the early 19th century – different Christian denominations have developed their support networks combining Euro-American funding and strategies, along the specific interests and developing identities of the growing local laities and elites.

The workshop will combine contemporary ethnographic approaches with comparative historical research to trace the intertwining of transnational religious networks made possible by Christianity in Southeast Asia. Contributions emphasize how technologies of mobility and networks that enable circulation made possible the historic consolidation of Christian communities across the region, and are currently shaping the future of Christianity in Asia. Turning the research lens toward aspects of mobility and materiality, the workshop aims to offer an innovative and dynamic approach to the study of contemporary Christianity that interrogates conventional models focused on unidirectional flows between center and periphery, reformulating traditional approaches that locate Asia exclusively at the receiving end of Christianity.

An approach to this project from the perspective of religious mobilities highlights patterns of interaction where networks redefine arrangements of economic, social and religious life.

We aim to contest the way in which mission, scripture and pilgrimage have been conceived as the preeminent domains for the study of religious circulation in the context of Christianity, turning the focus to the important role played by schools, orphanages, parishes, hospitals, seminaries and other institution that expanded the far-reaching networks of Christianity in the region. As there is no increase in mobility without extensive systems of immobility, focusing on these institutions in Southeast Asia can offer an original interpretive lens to understand the importance of these nodes for the circulation and teaching of Christianity.

We also wish to explore the impact of digital technology on Christianity and the creation of increasingly networked Christian societies of the 21st Century; as well as the complex financial and real estate arrangements that churches embark on to sustain their projects toward the future.

## FRIDAY, 1 DECEMBER 2017

09:30 – 10:00 REGISTRATION

10:00 – 10:30 WELCOME TEA & INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

**Shanthini PILLAI**, KITA – Institute of Ethnic Studies, National University of Malaysia

10:30 – 12:00 KEYNOTE ADDRESS

CHAIRPERSON **Claire Thi Liên TRAN**, IRASEC- Research Institute on Contemporary Southeast Asia, Thailand

10:30 **Relics Management: Building Spiritual Empire in Asia (16th-17th Centuries)**

**Ines G. Županov**, Centre d'Etudes de l'Inde et de l'Asie du Sud / EHESS

11:30 QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

12:00 – 13:00 LUNCH

13:00 – 14:30 PANEL 1

13:00 **The Mobility of Passion in the Roman Catholic Philippines**

**Julius BAUTISTA**, Kyoto University, Japan

13:30 **Mennonite Mobilities: Religious Circulations and NGO Networks**

**Philip FOUNTAIN**, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand

14:00 QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

14:30 – 15:00 TEA BREAK

15:00 – 16:30 PANEL 2

15:00 **Catholicism in Singapore: Pragmatic Nation, Pragmatic Church?**

**Bernardo BROWN**, International Christian University, Japan

**Leonard YEO**, National University of Singapore

15:30 **Mobilities of Vietnamese Catholics: The Transnational Educational Networks (1910' – 1950')**

**Claire Thi Liên TRAN**, IRASEC- Research Institute on Contemporary Southeast Asia, Thailand

16:00 QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

16:30 – 17:30 COMMENTARY

**Kenneth DEAN**, National University of Singapore

18:00 – 20:00 **DINNER** (FOR SPEAKERS, CHAIRPERSONS & INVITED GUESTS ONLY)

*The Kebaya Dining Room, Stewart Lane, Georgetown*

## SATURDAY, 2 DECEMBER 2017

### 09:00 – 10:30 PANEL 3

09:00 **Diaspora and Catholic Mobilities in Peninsular Malaysia: 1857 – 1955**  
**Shanthini PILLAI**, KITA – Institute of Ethnic Studies, National University of Malaysia

09:30 **Malaysia: Promised Land for Korean Missionaries?**  
**Hui-Yeon KIM**, INALCO – Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales

10:00 QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

### 10:30 TEA BREAK

### 1100 – 13:00 PANEL 4

11:00 **Displacement, Mobility and Global Connections among Karen Baptists from Myanmar and Thailand**  
**Kwanchewan BUADAENG**, Chiang-Mai University, Thailand

11:30 **Mobilising Religious Education for Catholic Youths in Peninsular Malaysia**  
**Steven SELVARAJU**, Penang Diocesan Pastoral Institute, Malaysia

12:00 **The Collège Général of Penang, Laboratory of Acculturation and Inculturation for European Catholicism in the Colonial Context of the 19th 20th Centuries**  
*Video Presentation* **Bernard PATARY**, Lycée Paul Claudel, France

12:30 QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

### 13:00 – 14:00 LUNCH

### 14:00 – 17:30 VISIT TO MEP HISTORICAL SITES IN PENANG

**Steven SELVARAJU**, Penang Diocesan Pastoral Institute, Malaysia

### 20:00 – 22:00 DINNER (FOR SPEAKERS, CHAIRPERSONS & INVITED GUESTS ONLY)

*Arthi Villas, Tanjung Tokong, Penang*

## KEYNOTE ADDRESS

### Relics Management: Building Spiritual Empire in Asia (16th-17th Centuries)

**Ines G. Županov**

Centre National de la  
Recherche Scientifique, France,  
and Centre d'études de l'Inde/  
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Among the sacred objects Jesuit missionaries imported, created, exported, and filled into circulation in Asia and around the globe, relics of saints and martyrs were probably the most valuable of all. Wherever the relics travelled, they were intended to foster and fuel Jesuit networks, and to shore up Christian affects and communities. Encased in their reliquaries, often made of precious materials and masterpieces of local craftsmanship, these sacred objects were 'spiritual currency' in the Christian empire the Jesuits worked to establish under the Portuguese royal Padroado. By looking into only a sampling of documents from the Jesuit archives and during the first missionary century, I follow the movement of these objects (in texts, in time and in space), arguing that between the early 16th century and the early 17th century, the Jesuits not only quickened the flow of these objects, they also managed their quantity and quality, and modulated the publicity accorded to them in the apologetic texts. Most importantly, from around the middle of the seventeenth century the Jesuits, often torn between service to a community and demands from metropolises such as Lisbon and Rome, strove to secure the important relics and preserve them in one place.

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**Ines ŽUPANOV** is Senior Research Fellow at the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique in Paris and the Current Director of the Centre d'études de l'Inde/l'Asie du Sud (CNRS-EHESS). She is a Social/Cultural Historian of Catholic missions in South Asia and has also worked on other topics related to Portuguese empire. In addition to other two books, her latest monograph co-written with Ângela Barreto Xavier is *Catholic Orientalism; Portuguese Empire, Indian Knowledge, 16th-18th centuries* (OUP, New Delhi, 2015). She co-edited seven books and her articles in various languages are published in edited books and journals (*Annales, Representations, Indian Economic and Social History Review, Archives de sciences sociales des religions, Journal of Early Modern History, Journal of Economic and Social History of the Orient, RES: Anthropology and Esthetics*, etc.)

## The Mobility of Passion in the Roman Catholic Philippines

### **Julius Bautista**

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Studies, Kyoto University, Japan

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The focus of this discussion is the Visita Iglesia: a Filipino Roman Catholic pilgrimage tradition in which the faithful make a walking journey to several Churches for prayer and reflection. In the Philippine province of Pampanga, this pilgrimage is held as part of the Lenten commemoration of the Passion of Christ. I will describe the specific aural and visceral landscape in which this tradition is practiced as a way of framing the embodied agencies that drive various modes of religious circulation. I will also reflect upon on the broader social and cultural issues that exert significant influence over its practice in contemporary times.

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**Julius BAUTISTA** is Associate Professor at the Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University, Japan. He received his PhD in Southeast Asian Studies (anthropology and cultural history focus) at the Australian National University, and has subsequently published on religious practice in Asia, with a focus on Christian iconography, religious rituals, and the relationship between religion and the state. He is author of *Figuring Catholicism: An Ethnohistory of the Santo Niño de Cebu* (Ateneo, 2010), editor of *The Spirit of Things: Materiality and Religious Diversity in Southeast Asia* (Cornell SEAP, 2012) and co-editor (with Francis Lim) of *Christianity and the State in Asia: Complicity and Conflict* (Routledge, 2009).

## Mennonite Mobilities: Religious Circulations and NGO Networks

### **Philip Fountain**

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Victoria University of  
Wellington, New Zealand

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Since the Second World War the NGO institutional formation has become an increasingly prominent and influential means to connect geographically disparate populations. The impact of NGO-ification on religious communities has been highly significant, though the theme has often been neglected by scholars of religion and development alike. Within Christian communities the NGO form has readily been picked up and deployed by diverse denominations, orders and agencies. This paper examines the mobilities that have been inspired and propelled by one specific Christian NGO, the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), a North American Christian service organisation in the Anabaptist tradition. MCC has facilitated the circulation of religious people, ideas and things across the world since the 1920s, resulting in complex multidirectional movements along highly interactive networks. Drawing on fieldwork in Indonesia and narrative accounts of Mennonite work in various other parts of Asia, this paper examines the creative ways in which MCC has mobilised Mennonites through the NGO form.

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**Philip FOUNTAIN** is a Teaching Fellow in Religious Studies at Victoria University of Wellington. Prior to this, he was a Senior Research Fellow in the Religion Cluster at the Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore. He received his doctorate in anthropology from the Australian National University. He has published extensively on religion and development, religion and disaster relief, the anthropology of Christianity and anthropological theologies. His books include *Religion and the Politics of Development* (edited with Robin Bush and R. Michael Feener) and the forthcoming volumes *The Mission of Development: Religion and Techno-politics in Asia* (edited with Catherine Scheer and R. Michael Feener) and *Pursuing Peace in Godzone: Christianity and the Peace Tradition in New Zealand* (edited with Geoff Troughton).



## Catholicism in Singapore: Pragmatic Nation, Pragmatic Church?

### **Bernardo Brown**

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### **Leonard Yeo**

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People in Singapore are generally considered to be very religious. According to the General Household Survey conducted in 2015, 82% of Singaporeans declared themselves as adherents of a particular religion. Although their active religiosity might seem to contradict the perceived utilitarian ethos of Singapore, a close look reveals that its pragmatism and capitalist rationality also shape the domain of religion. Singapore's experience of religiosity therefore appears to work in a very capitalist way, whereby pragmatic approaches and entrepreneurial shrewdness recurrently emerge in the decisions taken by religious institutions, especially so in the case of Christianity. This paper examines a series of decisions taken by the Catholic Church over the last ten years with respect to the relocation and renovation of some of its buildings. These decisions require careful financial planning and the constant movement of resources and people between different buildings in diverse locations. Such plans are done with the aim of sustaining an extensive network of parishes and other buildings across the island, and are meant to become a reflection of the health and vibrancy of Catholicism in Singapore. Whereas many dioceses in Southeast Asia face financial difficulties that hamper their functioning, Singapore Catholicism seemingly takes pride in its financial dynamism and its determination to constantly reinvent the way in which it uses space efficiently. This pragmatism is consonant with other logics that govern Singapore, where the performance and exhibition of efficiency are a fundamental characteristic of its national identity.

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**Bernardo BROWN** is Assistant Professor of Anthropology at the International Christian University (ICU) in Tokyo, Japan. His current research projects focus on Catholic seminaries and priestly vocations in South and Southeast Asia. His work on return migration to Sri Lanka has been published in several journals including *Anthropological Quarterly* (2017), *Ethnography* (2015), *The Australian Journal of Anthropology* (2017) and *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies* (2015). He received a MA from the New School for Social Research and a PhD in Cultural Anthropology from Cornell University. Before joining ICU, he was Research Fellow at the Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore, affiliated with the Religion and Globalization and the Asian Migration research clusters; and held a post-doctoral fellowship at IIAS, Leiden.

**Leonard YEO** is a Research Assistant in the Religion and Globalisation Cluster at the Asia Research Institute of the National University of Singapore. Prior to joining the Institute, he was pursuing studies in Catholic philosophy and theology at the Catholic Regional Seminary and Fu Jen Catholic University in Taipei. Through pastoral work and community service in Taipei, he has gained an insight into the workings of the local Catholic Church, which has given him the basis for his current research. At present, he focuses on the Catholic Church in Singapore, in particular the local Chinese Catholic community, as well as the management of religious space and assets by the Church, such as the relocation of the local diocesan seminary.

## Mobilities of Vietnamese Catholics: The Transnational Educational Networks (1910' -1950')

**Claire Thi Liên Tran**

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Contemporary Southeast Asia,  
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Because of a hostile context of persecutions by the Vietnamese imperial State, the European missionaries have developed very early, transnational educational networks in order to offer a proper education for their promising Vietnamese Seminarians. Indeed, there were the majority at the Saint Joseph Seminary in Ayutthaya (Siam) mid 17th c and at the Collège Général in Penang beginning of the 19th c. Some Vietnamese Catholics had even get the opportunity to travel in Europe accompanying the Western missionaries as Philiphê Binh, a Vietnamese Catholic priest who traveled from Tonkin to Lisbon end of the 18th century or Nguyễn Trường Tộ, the Catholic scholar and reformer during the reign of Tự Đức of the Nguyễn Dynasty during the 19th century.

My paper intends to describe the key period from the 1910 to the 1950 during which the transnational dimension of the Catholic Educational networks has been developed. In parallel to the development of Catholic Educational networks within French Indochina, how the transnational education networks have played an increasing role in the building of the new Catholic elites in Modern Vietnam? My presentation will focus on the initiators of this transnational networks: besides the Western actors as the Vatican, the European missionaries, the Colonial Government, Vietnamese actors have claimed for a better access to higher Education and created their own transnational networks (lay Catholic representatives as Nguyễn Hữu Bài, Minister of the Interior in the Royal Court of Emperor Bảo Đại, the first Vietnamese Bishop as Bishops Nguyễn Bá Tông or Lê Hữu Từ and individuals). Moreover, I will focus on the concrete setting up of these networks from the participation of Catholics to the Đông Du (journey to the east) initiated by the nationalist Phan Bội Châu at the start of the 20th century, encouraging young Vietnamese to go east to Japan to study, to the great diversity of networks to study in Europe (Italy, France, Belgium, Germany). At least, I will choose some significant examples of clerical and lay Catholics in order to show the impact of their transnational education on the political, cultural and religious live in colonial and post colonial Vietnam.

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**Claire, Thi Liên TRAN** is Director of Irasec, a French Research Institute on Contemporary Southeast Asia, Bangkok. She completed her PhD at the Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Paris and till 2016, was Associate Professor at Paris Diderot University. She is working on the Catholic minority and relations State/religions in Contemporary Vietnam and also on the Elites, Press and Gender History. Her recent works include *Công giáo và Dân Tộc The Vietnamese Catholic minority and the Nation State* in T Engelbert, *Vietnam's Ethnic and Religious Minorities: A Historical Perspective* (2016) and Nguyễn Xuan Mai, *Itinéraire d'un médecin indochinois engagé pendant la Première Guerre mondiale*, in H Baty-Delalande and C Trévisan, *Entrer en guerre* (2016). She is the coeditor of the annual publication *Asie du Sud-Est 2017, Bilan, enjeux et perspectives*.

## Diaspora and Catholic Mobilities in Peninsular Malaysia: 1857 – 1955

**Shanthini Pillai**

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In this paper I investigate the evidence of diasporic mobilities within the Roman Catholic context. Between the 1850s and the early 1900s, missionaries The Société des Missions étrangères de Paris (M.E.P) established more than twenty churches that catered to Tamil and Chinese communities in the Straits Settlements and the northern Malay Peninsular. I focus on the journey of the Tamil Catholic community in peninsular Malaysia, from the formation of the first parish for Tamil speaking parishioners in 1857 by MEP priest Francois Hab to the rise of the Tamil Catholic as an elite of the Roman Catholic church of Malaysia in 1955. The paper begins with an exploration of Tamil Catholic ontological mobilities in the nineteenth century as Tamil parishioners began to establish a sense of localised individual and communal identity. It will do so by discussing selected samples from a French missionary memoir as well as correspondence between Tamil Catholics and select French missionaries. Here I interrogate the various aspects of Tamil diasporic mobilities especially as they intersect with individual, communal and institutional structures and imaginaries. Central to this will be the dialectics of the changes in the hierarchical trajectories between missionary and convert as French Catholic hierarchy encounters the flows from various tributaries of Tamil Catholic individual imagination. I will then move on to show how these and other everyday aspirations of the nineteenth century Tamil Catholic community traced in the memoirs and letters can be seen as seeds of change that eventually culminated in the rise of the Tamil Catholic as elite, with the ordination of the first local Malaysian Bishop of ethnic Tamil heritage in 1955.

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**Shanthini PILLAI** is Associate Professor at the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, and Associate Senior Research Fellow at the Institute of Ethnic Studies (KITA), National University of Malaysia (UKM). Her research interests are anchored primarily in ethnic diversity, diaspora and transnationalism in literary and cultural texts with particular reference to the global South Asian diaspora. An emergent interest is in the cultural consciousness of Catholic diasporic Indians in Malaysia. She has held Research Fellowships at the University of Queensland, Australia and the Asia Research Institute, Singapore and is currently heading a research project on Malaysian Catholics and Transcultural Adaptability, in collaboration with the Catholic Research Centre of the Archdiocese of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. She is author of *Colonial Visions, Postcolonial Revisions: Images of the Indian Diaspora of Malaysia* (2007) as well as numerous articles in various journals of Literary and Cultural Studies.

## Malaysia: Promised Land for Korean Missionaries?

### **Hui-Yeon Kim**

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Malaysia is one of the countries of South-East Asia where Korean missionaries are massively sent by their mother churches in South Korea. At first glance, they seem to be trying to convert local people and to get involved in social works to help and thus influence the poorest people in this country, using the same strategy that they develop in other countries of this region. However, the church growth is not their priority in Malaysia, while their colleagues in Cambodia are eager to establish parishes of Korean Protestant churches. Is this just due to the Islamic religious background in Malaysia and thus specific difficulties to engage in evangelizing activities? Malaysia is one of their favorite destinations in South-East Asia after the Philippines. Is this only a question of religion and evangelization? In this paper, I will analyze Korean missionaries work in Malaysia and their role as religious leaders, social actors and also small entrepreneurs. Focusing on these multi-functional activities permits to understand the work of these Koreans, their links with the local society and the role of protestant leaders especially in the Malaysian context.

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**Hui Yeon KIM** is Sociologist and Associate Professor at Institut National de Langues et Civilisations (INALCO), Paris, member of the research unit ASIEs and affiliated to the Centre d'études en Sciences sociales du religieux (CÉSOR). Her research focuses on the transnationalization of Korean Protestant church and aims to thereby contribute to a better understanding of the development of Protestant movements on a global scale. Dr Kim developed her research on the South-Korean influence in Southeast Asia and the role of religious leader in the organization of migration toward South Korea. Besides publishing the results of this research in the form of a monograph, she has also authored several chapters in edited books focused on religion in contemporary Asia.

## Displacement, Mobility and Global Connections among Karen Baptists from Myanmar and Thailand

### **Kwanchewan Buadaeng**

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### **Boonsong Thansrithong**

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This paper describes the expansion of connections between Karen Baptists from Myanmar, Thailand and third countries since the 1980s, when thousands of Karen Baptists from Myanmar become displaced and migrated to Thailand side of the border. The Karen is an ethnic minority living mostly to the east of Myanmar and the west of Thailand. The Karen in Myanmar (then Burma) was first converted to Christianity in 1826 by American Baptist missionary. In 1882, Karen missionaries started to travel to conduct the mission among Karen in Northern Thailand. Due to the long distance, among other reasons, the Karen Baptists in Northern Thailand have been left to be on their own and later in 1955 set up the Thai Karen Baptist Convention (TKBC). After Burma independence in 1948, some Karen leaders of the Karen Baptist Convention (KBC - set up in Burma since 1913), have actively participated in the Karen National Union (KNU)'s struggle for the autonomous Karen state. Due to the separation from the KBC, KNU's Baptist leaders set up the Kawthoolei Karen Baptist Churches (KKBC) in 1983. The fall of KNU's strongholds in early 1990s results in hundred thousands of Karen people flee to Thailand side of the border. The bible school of KKBC moved in the biggest refugee camp in 1990 and becomes an important mechanism in rebuilding the connections between KBC and TKBC. Connections of Karen Baptists around the world have also been rebuilt via the operation of humanitarian aids and the increasing mobility of missionaries, Karen refugees and migrants. The Global Karen Baptist Fellowship (GKBF) is set up in 2007 to facilitate the expansion of connections among Karen Baptists from Myanmar, Thailand and elsewhere. The paper argues that the displacement of the Karen people, in Thailand-Myanmar in-between space, has facilitated the movement and the connections of Karen Baptists globally as never happened before.

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**Kwanchewan BUADAENG** is Assistant Professor at the Department of Sociology-Anthropology, Faculty of Social Sciences, Chiang Mai University, Thailand. She received her PhD in anthropology from the University of Sydney (2001). Her recent works include *A Karen Charismatic Monk and Connectivity across the Thai-Myanmar Borderland* in *Charismatic Monk of Lanna Buddhism*, edited by Paul T. Cohen (NIASb ress, 2017) and *The Karen Leke Religious Movement in the Thailand-Myanmar Borderland: Deterritorialization and Diversification*, in *Ethnic and Religious Identities and Integration in Southeast Asia*, edited by Ooi Keat Gin and Volker Grabowsky (Silkworm Books, 2017).

## Mobilising Religious Education for Catholic Youths in Peninsular Malaysia

**Steven Selvaraju**

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During the British rule of Malaya, the religious education of Catholic youths was carried out mainly in mission schools run by religious congregations, such as, the Infant Jesus Sisters (IJ), the La Salle Brothers, which originated in France. While the British did not prevent the teaching of the Catholic religion in these schools, they insisted that no child (even if he or she is Catholic) is compelled to be present. Even then, religious instruction was not permitted during school hours, and only teachers who were not on the British government payroll were allowed to teach catechism. When Malaya gained her independence in 1957, the situation changed dramatically. Educational policies introduced by the new formed Malayan government affected not only the influence of the religious congregations in their own schools, but also the teaching of the Catholic religion. Due to some government pressure and the lack of Catholic teachers, the classes were gradually discontinued. This prompted the local Church leaders to seek new ways of promoting religious education for the youth in the parishes. Suitable resources had to be made available. Volunteers had to step in to take on the role of religion teachers even though most were not trained in this field. The necessary structures and facilities had to be set up. The issue of providing religious education for hundreds of Catholic youth in the four major languages used in the Malaysian Church, namely English, Bahasa Malaysia, Tamil and Chinese had to be addressed. Over the years, much has been done in this area, although challenges continue to exist. The talk will examine and discuss some of the challenges faced, and initiatives that have been taken by the Catholic Church, in mobilising religious education for multi-ethnic Catholic youths in Peninsular Malaysia.

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**Steven SELVARAJU** holds a Licentiate and Doctorate in Theology with Specialisation in Catechesis (Catholic Religious Education) and Youth Ministry from Pontifical Salesian University, Rome, Italy. He specialises in the training of Catholic religion teachers, and is well versed in English, Bahasa Malaysia and Tamil languages. He served as the Director of a project which involved the production of the 'Malaysian Catechetical Series', a local Catholic textbook series for youths aged 7-16 years, of which he authored the books for ages 12-16 years. These books are available in English, Bahasa Malaysia, Tamil and Chinese and are presently being used in most parishes in Peninsular Malaysia and Sabah and Sarawak. Presently, he works as the Director of the Penang Diocesan Pastoral Institute, a Catholic organisation that provides training programs for Catholics.

## The Collège Général de Penang, Laboratory of Acculturation and Inculturation for European Catholicism in the Colonial Context of the 19th 20th Centuries

### **Bernard Patary**

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From 1808 to 1968, 2000 students, mainly from Southeast Asia, came to study in Latin under the supervision of the French missionaries from the *Missions étrangères de Paris* (MEP), in a seminary dedicated to the education of the future indigenous clergy. The project itself, the methods implemented over the years reflect the European mentalities and their transformation upon contact with the Asian cultures and in the historical context of colonization and decolonization. This international seminary fully achieved its objective: around 800 priests and bishops were trained there, permitting, for example, the first "indigenous bishops" to take charge of the destiny of the Church of Malaysia. This unique institution allows us to think about the complex process of acculturation and inculturation (theological version of the anthropological concept of acculturation). The effects produced by these cultural transformations, which are readily observable amongst Europeans, remain to be studied in reference to the indigenous clergy. Indeed, the former seminarians of the *Collège général* remained quite discreet about the appreciation of the education they had received there and about their relations with the French missionaries. The only exception happens perhaps after Second Vatican Council during which the very principle of the "Foreign missionaries" had been rightly challenged (decree *Ad gentes*, 1965).

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**Bernard PATARY** teaches History at the Lycée Paul Claudel-d'Hulst in Paris. His PhD titled *Homo Apostolicus. La formation du clergé indigène au Collège général des Missions Etrangères de Paris, à Penang (Malaisie), 1808-1968 : institution et représentation*, at University Lumière-Lyon 2 (2009), has been published at Karthala Editions in 2016 as *L'institution missionnaire en Asie (XIXe-XXe siècles)*. *Le Collège Général de Penang : un creuset catholique à l'époque coloniale*. He has also published numerous papers and chapters on the question of acculturation and inculturation

## ABOUT THE ORGANISERS AND COMMENTATOR

**Bernardo BROWN** is Assistant Professor of Anthropology at the International Christian University (ICU) in Tokyo, Japan. His current research projects focus on Catholic seminaries and priestly vocations in South and Southeast Asia. His work on return migration to Sri Lanka has been published in several journals including *Anthropological Quarterly* (2017), *Ethnography* (2015), *The Australian Journal of Anthropology* (2017) and *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies* (2015). He received a MA from the New School for Social Research and a PhD in Cultural Anthropology from Cornell University. Before joining ICU, he was Research Fellow at the Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore, affiliated with the Religion and Globalization and the Asian Migration research clusters; and held a post-doctoral fellowship at IIAS, Leiden.

**Kenneth DEAN** is Raffles Professor of Humanities and Head of the Chinese Studies Department, National University of Singapore, and Professor Emeritus, McGill University. He is the Religion and Globalization Research Cluster Leader, Asia Research Institute, NUS. Dean is the author of several books on Daoism and Chinese popular religion, including *Ritual Alliances of the Putian Plains: Vol. 1: Historical Introduction to the Return of the Gods, Vol. 2: A Survey of Village Temples and Ritual Activities*, Leiden: Brill, 2010 (with Zheng Zhenman); *Epigraphical Materials on the History of Religion in Fujian: The Quanzhou Region*, 3 vols., Fuzhou: 2004 (with Zheng Zhenman); *Lord of the Three in One: The Spread of a Cult in Southeast China*, Princeton: 1998; *Epigraphical Materials on the History of Religion in Fujian: The Xinghua Region*; Fuzhou 1995 (with Zheng Zhenman); *Taoist Ritual and Popular Cults of Southeast China*, Princeton 1993; and *First and Last Emperors: The Absolute State and the Body of the Despot* (with Brian Massumi), Autonomedia, New York. 1992. He directed *Bored in Heaven: A Film about Ritual Sensation* (2010), an 80 minutes documentary film on ritual celebrations around Chinese New Years in Putian, Fujian, China. His current project is the construction of an interactive, multi-media database linked to a historical GIS map of the religious sites and networks of Singapore. His most recent publication (with Hue Guan Thye) is *Chinese Epigraphy in Singapore: 1819-1911* (2 vols.), Singapore: NUS Press, 2017.

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