



Call for Papers

Asian Practical Theology International Conference 2023

on

Doing Practical Theology with Asian Resources:

Retrospect and Prospect

Organized by

Asia Academy of Practical Theology (Hong Kong)

AAPTHK

Co-organized by

Divinity School of Chung Chi College, The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Ray Bakke Centre for Urban Transformation, Bethel Bible Seminary

Conference Venue: Online on Zoom

Language: English

Conference Period: 2-3 June 2023; 9.30am – 5pm (Hong Kong Time Zone)

About Asia Academy of Practical Theology (Hong Kong)

2018 saw the establishment of the Asia Academy of Practical Theology Hong Kong (AAPTHK). It is more than a Hong Kong-based institution; it is an Asian practical theology movement. It has close partnerships with theological institutions and non-governmental organizations in the region, particularly the Divinity School of Chung Chi College of the Chinese University of Hong Kong. Its extensive international network includes notable practical theology institutions such as the International Academy of Practical Theology, the British and Irish Association for Practical Theology, and the Professional Doctorate Programme offered by the Cambridge Theological Federation. The vision and mission of AAPTHK are outlined below:

Vision Statement:

We call forth an Asia-wide practical theology movement that transforms Asian countries towards caring and righteous communities in accordance with Asian wisdoms and Christian traditions, and thereby contribute to the global practical theology movement.

Mission Statement:

We believe that all theology carries a mission to transform humanity according to God's divine intention, and therein lies the core of practical theology. Our mission is therefore

to promote locally in Hong Kong and regionally across Asia a kind of theology and Christian practice that gives primacy to the task of transforming human life in all of its aspects.

In carrying out its mission, AAPTHK will:

- form partnerships with local Christian bodies to promote theology-practice integration by organizing relevant activities, events, workshops, trainings, and conferences;
- form partnerships with Christian bodies in other Asian countries to foster the formation of national and regional practical theology academies, and to explore ways of Christian practice and theologizing which take Asian wisdoms and traditions seriously;
- form partnerships with international bodies to harness intellectual and material resources to encourage the development of inter-cultural practical theologies and Christian caring and righteous practices.

Call for Papers: Conference 2023

The Asian theological movement has been active for nearly six decades. There are numerous organizations promoting Asian theology, such as the Christian Conference of Asia, the Association for Theological Education in Southeast Asia, the Programme for Theology and Culture in Asia, and the Asian Women's Resource Centre for Culture and Theology. Minjung theology, Homeland theology, Water Buffalo theology, Dalit theology, Tribal theology, Third-Eye theology, and a variety of Asian feminist and postcolonial theologies are now widely accepted around the world. ***Nonetheless, theological movement in the name of Practical Theology remains largely unestablished in many Asian countries.*** The West, on the other hand, has already seen decades of thriving practical theology movements.

However, there have been a number of significant changes in the recent past. Cross-cultural practical theology is given a lot of emphasis in international academia, just as practical theology is being developed in the majority world. ***Accelerating these changes is the main objective of this conference, which has as its theme "Doing Practical Theology with Asian Resources."***

The practical and contextual aspect of practical theology is inherent to its essence. Without addressing the praxis context in which the Christian faith is lived, no practical theology can be constructed. Asian practical theology is done in Asia. However, what is Asia? In his edited volume titled *Christianities in Asia*, Peter Phan notes that the diversity in Asia—geographic, linguistic, ethnic, economic, political, cultural, religious, and even ecclesial—is mind-boggling, and it is impossible to comprehend Asia without addressing these differences. Asia, as a highly diversified region, is endowed with an abundance of cultures and religions. Asia can be both singular and plural. ***The purpose of our conference is thus to bring together practical theologians from various Asian cultures to discuss how they theologize practically using local resources and experiences, as well as what concerns them practically-theologically in their respective situations.***

In this conference, the term "Practical" refers to a broad variety of Christian practices that transform human life, both within and without the church. More precisely, it may refer to sociopolitical liberative practices, social ministries, theological/religious

education, pastoral/spiritual care and counseling, preaching/homiletics, liturgics, Christian aesthetics, interfaith practices, evangelism, mission, etc.

The term "Resources" is used broadly in this conference and includes, but is not limited to, Asian religious traditions and practices, Asian cultural worldviews and epistemologies, people's stories, Asian festivals, and Asian customs. It also refers to historical experiences, such as those associated with colonialism, Asian people's movements, Asian women, and Asian diasporic/hyphenated experiences.

To summarize, the primary objective of this conference is to bring together theologians who have a strong interest in Asian practical theology, to create opportunities for networking between these theologians in order to facilitate the establishment of practical theology academies at national and regional levels, and to investigate ways to incorporate Asian wisdom and traditions into Christian practice and theology in order to make a contribution to the worldwide movement of practical theology.

Keynote Speakers

"Practical Theology as an International Theological Movement—Past, Present, and Future"

By **Professor Bonnie MILLER-MCLEMORE**

E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Professor Emerita of Religion, Psychology, and Culture at the Divinity School and Graduate Department of Religion of Vanderbilt University.
Former President of the International Academy of Practical Theology
Former President of the Association of Practical Theology

"Doing Practical Theology with Asian Resources"

By **Professor Simon Shui-Man KWAN**

Professor, Divinity School of Chung Chi College, The Chinese University of Hong Kong
President, Asia Academy of Practical Theology (Hong Kong)

(**For a synopsis of the Keynotes, see the Appendix.)

Prospective Presenters

We are looking for critical and constructive papers in the following areas:

- (1) Decolonizing Practical Theology for Asia
- (2) Asian Epistemologies for Practical Theology
- (3) Reconceiving "Practice" in Asian Cultures
- (4) Models/Paradigms of Practical Theology in Asia
- (5) Critical Theological Analysis of Gendering Practices in Asia
- (6) LGBT+ in Asia
- (7) Practical Theology in Interfaith and Intercultural Settings in Asia
- (8) Theological Reflections on any Christian/ Ecclesial Practices with Asian Resources

Writing that is in anyway sexist, racist, homophobic, or otherwise discriminatory will not be accepted. All papers accepted are subjected to editorial modification.

Deadlines

- (1) **Abstract submission deadline:** 28 February 2023
 - Length of abstract: 300–400 words (MsWord)
 - Please include a brief bio and contact email addresses of all the prospective presenters.
 - Submit to both email addresses (with Subject “AAPTHK Conference 2023”)
 - Professor Simon Shui-Man KWAN (smkwan@cuhk.edu.hk)
 - Ms. Marvis Chan (marvis.chan@aapthk.org)

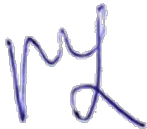
- (2) **Results of abstract review returned to authors:** Generally, within 4 weeks

- (3) **Full paper submission:** We will look for the chance to have the conference papers published as an edited volume with an international academic press. Presenters who are interested in participating in the publication project must submit their complete papers for peer review one month after the conference. Information will be released later.

Others

- (1) Registration fee: Free of charge
- (2) Presentation formats: Oral presentation (25mins) and floor discussion (15mins)

Sincerely,



Simon Shui-Man KWAN (PhD)
Chair, Conference Organizing Committee
President, AAPTHK
Professor & Associate Director,
Divinity School of Chung Chi College,
Chinese University of Hong Kong

Appendix Synopsis of Keynotes



Professor Bonnie MILLER-MCLEMORE

on

Practical Theology as an International Theological Movement— Past, Present, and Future

Bonnie J. Miller-McLemore is E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Professor Emerita of Religion, Psychology, and Culture at the Divinity School and Graduate Department of Religion of Vanderbilt University. A Henry Luce III Fellow in Theology and an author, co-author, and editor of over sixteen books as well as over a hundred chapters and articles, including “‘A Tale of Two Cities’: The Evolution of the International Academy of Practical Theology.” *HTS Theologese Studies/ Theological Studies* 73, no. 4 (2017). Her recent publications include *The Wiley Blackwell Reader in Practical Theology* (Wiley-Blackwell 2019); *Conundrums in Practical Theology* (Brill 2016); *Christian Practical Wisdom: What It Is, Why It Matters* (Eerdmans 2016); *Christian Theology in Practice: Discovering a Discipline* (Eerdmans 2012); and *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Practical Theology* (Wiley-Blackwell 2012). Her writing has been translated into several languages, including Korean, Portuguese, and Swedish. She is currently working on a book for a wide audience on vocation, *The Underside of Living Out Our Callings* (Oxford University Press).

A nationally and internationally recognized leader in pastoral and practical theologies and in women and childhood studies, she has served as president of the International Academy of Practical Theology, president of the Association of Practical Theology, and co-founder and co-chair of two programme units of the American Academy of Religion, Practical Theology and Childhood Studies in Religion. In addition to her Luce Fellowship, she has also received grants from the Louisville Institute, the Collegeville Institute, the Lilly Endowment Foundation, the Association of Theological Schools, the Wabash Center on Teaching and Learning in Religion and Theology, and Vanderbilt University for the study of families, children, and religion; research on practical theology; research on public theology; and exploration of teaching and vocation. Ordained in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), she served as an associate pastor, chaplain, and pastoral counselor while completing her M.A. and Ph.D. at University of Chicago in 1986.



Professor Simon Shui-Man KWAN

on

Doing Practical Theology with Asian Resources

Simon Shui-Man KWAN is one of the founders of the Asia Academy of Practical Theology (Hong Kong) and its current president. He is professor at the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK), and associate director of the Divinity School of Chung Chi College CUHK, as well as head of Graduate Division of Theology CUHK. He has authored over 80 articles and book chapters, and authored, co-authored, and edited 7 books. His recent works include

Postcolonial Resistance and Asian Theology (Routledge 2014), *Negotiating a Presence-Centred Christian Counselling: Towards a Theologically Informed and Culturally Sensitive Approach* (CSP 2016), *Asian Spiritualities and Social Transformation* (Springer, Forthcoming).

Most recently, he wrote a number of papers that are pertinent to the subject he will present at the conference: “Negotiating the Meaning of Spirituality in Holistic Health Care from a Chinese Perspective.” *Practical Theology* 11, no. 1 (January 2018); “Practical Theologies in Chinese Speaking Societies—A Cross-Cultural Consideration.” *International Journal of Practical Theology* 24, no. 2 (2020); “Decolonizing ‘Protestant’ Death Rituals for the Chinese Bereaved: Negotiating a Resistance that is Contextually Relevant.” *International Journal of Practical Theology* 25, no. 2 (2021); and, “Is Hospitality Enough for Interfaith Spiritual Care by Christians?” *Practical Theology* 15, no. 3 (2022).

An Asian and local leader in contextual theologies and practical theologies, Professor KWAN is former programme coordinator and chair of the Programme For Theology and Cultures in Asia, former co-dean of the Institute for Advanced Study in Asian Cultures and Theologies, local preacher of the Methodist Church, registered social worker, counselor in private practice. With a dissertation in the area of Asia Theologies, he earned his Ph.D. from the Chinese University of Hong Kong in 1999.

Conference Organizing Committee

Chair: Prof. Simon Shui-Man KWAN
Co-Chair: Ms. Susan Wing-Shan IP
Secretary: Ms. Marvis CHAN
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Ms. Sukyi PANG
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Dr. Elaine YIP
