

5th Salzburg International Conference

Syriac Christianity in China and Central Asia

June 18-23, 2016



Programme

Venue

St. Virgil Salzburg
Ernst-Grein-Straße 14
A-5020 Salzburg
Austria

ܩܘܪܕܝܢܐ ܕܥܘܪܫܠܝܡ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ
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第五屆薩爾茨堡景教研究國際研討會

中國和中亞的景教



Photo on the Cover Page –
Rubbing of the Luoyang Jingjiao Pillar
(China, 9th Century)

Conference Organizers:

Dr. Li Tang 唐莉

Univ.-Prof. Dr. Dietmar W. Winkler

Together with:

Ulrike Grill

Christine Hofer-Ranftl

Gabriel Rabo

Saturday, June 18, 2016

Registration

16:00 - 18:30 Registration - Lobby of St. Virgil
18:00 - 19:00 Dinner
19:00 Meet & Greet (Cafeteria of St. Virgil)

Conference Section

Sunday, June 19, 2016

09:00 – 09:10 Welcome & Announcements

Section I: Persia and Central Asia

Moderator: Prof. Samuel Lieu

09:10 - 09:45 Prof. Nicholas Sims-Williams (SOAS, London, UK)
The Sogdian “Book of Life”- A Reconsideration

09:45 - 10:30 Dr. Adam McCollum (University of Vienna, Austria)
*Philosophical Terminology in the Prologue of Sargis bar Wahlē's
Metrical Life of Rabban Hormizd the Persian*

10:30 - 11:15 Coffee Break

Moderator: Dr. Mark Dickens

11:15 - 11:50 Ralph Barczok (University of Konstanz, Germany)
*A New Research Project Database at the Research Center of Aramaean
Studies*

12:00 - 14:00 Lunch Break

Moderator: Dr. Erica Hunter

14:00 - 14:35 Dr. Mehmet Tezcan (Karadeniz Technical University, Turkey)
*On “Nestorian” Christianity among the Hephthalites or the White
Huns*

14:35 - 15:10 Dr. Mark Dickens (The King’s University, Alberta, Canada)
Tarsa: Persian and Central Asian Christians in Extant Literature

15:10 - 15:45 Coffee Break

Moderator: Prof. Dr. Theresia Hainthaler

15:45 - 16:20 Dr. Todd R. Godwin (SOAS, London, UK)
*The Royal Physicians of Tajikistan across the Courts of Iran, Central
Asia and China*

- 18:00 Dinner
- 18:40 Departure to Syriac Orthodox Student House Beth Suryoye (by Taxi)
- 19:30 - 21:00 Syriac Orthodox Evening Prayers at Beth Suryoye in Salzburg
(Reception after Prayer)

Monday, June 20, 2016

Moderator: Prof. Nicholas Sims-Williams

- 08:45 - 09:20 Dr. Nathan P. Gibson (Vanderbilt University/University of Munich)
A Guide to Syriaca.org Reference Tools and Desiderata for Central and East Asia
- 09:20 - 09:55 Prof. Dr. Aho Shemunkasho (University of Salzburg, Austria)
Mary in the Liturgical Text of Turfan
- 09:55 - 10:30 Dr. Erica Hunter (SOAS, London, UK)
MIK III/45. A Unique Hudra from Central Asia
- 10:30 - 11:05 Coffee Break

Section II: China – Tang Dynasty

Moderator: Prof. Dr. Dorothea Weltecke

- 11:05 - 11:40 Zhu Li (University of Konstanz, Germany)
Concepts in-between: The Meaning of “seng 僧”, “si 寺” and “shoujie 受戒” in the Jingjiao-Documents
- 11:45 Group Photo Section
- 12:00 - 14:00 Lunch Break

Moderator: Prof. emer. Dr. Peter Hofrichter

- 14:00 - 14:35 Dr. Ron Kydd (Tyndale University College and Seminary, Canada)
More Light on Dunhuang Christianity
- 14:35 - 15:10 David Tam (Tsinghua University, China)
Christology in the Dunhuang Jingjiao Document “Yi Shen Lun”
- 15:10 - 15:45 Coffee Break

Moderator: Prof. Hidemi Takahashi

- 15:45 - 16:20 Dr. Glen L. Thompson (Asia Lutheran Seminary, Hong Kong)
The Structure of the Xi'an Stele
- 18:00 Dinner

Tuesday, June 21

Moderator: Prof. Dr. Dietmar W. Winkler

- 08:45 - 09:20 Matteo Nicolini-Zani (Monastery of Bose, Italy)
Auctor hic dicere volebat aut debebat: The Latin Translation of the Xi'an Stele by Carlo da Castorano, OFM (1741)
- 09:20 - 09:55 Prof. Shinichi Muto (Daito Bunka University, Japan)
The Term 'Three-One' (Trinity) in Jingjiao in Comparison with That in Religious Taoism
- 09:55 - 10:30 Prof. Samuel Lieu (Macquarie University, Australia)
Persons, Titles and Places in the Xi'an Monument
- 10:30 - 11:05 Coffee Break

Moderator: Prof. Dr. Max Deeg

- 11:05 - 11:40 Dr. Li Tang (University of Salzburg, Austria)
The Worship Language of the Church of the East in China
- 11:40 - 12:15 Dr. Dmitry Khudyakov (National Research University 'Higher School of Economics', Moscow, Russia)
Chinese Sources about the Decline of Syriac Christianity in China: Where It All Could Have Gone?
- 12:15 - 14:00 Lunch Break

Section III: The Mongol-Yuan Period

Moderator: Prof. François de Blois

- 14:00 - 14:35 Dr. Natalia Smelova (Russian Academy of Sciences, St. Petersburg, Russia/University of Manchester, UK)
Further Studies on the Christian Manuscripts from Qara Qoto (IOM, RAS collection)
- 14:35 - 15:10 Dr. Alexey Muraviev (HSE National Research University, School of Oriental Studies, Near Eastern Dept, Moscow Russia)
Some Syriac Saints Venerated by the Uighurs. A Statistical Approach to a New Syro-Uighur Liturgical Document
- 15:10 - 15:45 Coffee Break

Moderator: Dr. Glen Thompson

- 15:45 - 16:20 Prof. Dr. Dietmar W. Winkler (University of Salzburg, Austria)
The Exchange of Letters between Yahballaha III and the Popes
- 16:20 - 16:55 Prof. Xie Bizhen & Dr. Wu Weiwei (Fujian Normal University, China)
"Nestorian" Christianity and the Quanzhou Society

18:00 Dinner

Wednesday, June 22

Moderator: Dr. Ron Kydd

08:45 - 09:20 Prof. Hidemi Takahashi (University of Tokyo, Japan)
Notes on Prince Georges of the Önggüt and His Family in the Light of
the Newly-Discovered Inscriptions at Ulaan Tolgoi and Some Chinese
Sources

09:20 - 09:55 Prof. François de Blois (University College London, UK)
“The life of Mār Yaḅalāhā and of Rabban Ṣawmā”: Some Historical
Questions

09:55 - 10:30 Coffee Break

Moderator: Matteo Nicolini-Zani

10:30 - 11:05 Fr. Dale Albert Johnson (USA)
Syriac Quadratic Inscriptions

11:05 - 11:40 Chen Jian Andrea (University of Hong Kong, HK, China)
*Underestimated Treasure - Understanding the Diversity of the F. A.
Nixon's Collection*

11:40 - 13:00 Lunch Break

13:00 - 18:00 [Excursion: Lamprechtshausen - Arnsdorf - Oberndorf](#)

18:00 Dinner (back at St. Virgil)

Other Participants:

Drⁱⁿ Regina Augustin (Pro-Oriente, Vienna, Austria)

Christine Chaillot (Switzerland)

Prof. Dr. Max Deeg (University of Cardiff, UK)

Univ.-Doz. Dr. h.c. Jasmine Dum-Tragut

Prof. Dr. Theresia Hainthaler (Phil.-Theol. Hochschule St. Georgen, Germany)

Prof. *emer.* Dr. Peter Hofrichter (University of Salzburg, Austria)

Joachim Jakob (Doctoral Student, University of Salzburg, Austria)

Dr. *des.* Gabriel Rabo (University of Salzburg, Austria)

Prof. Dr. Dorothea Weltecke (University of Konstanz, Germany)

Dr. Helen Younansardaroud (Free University Berlin, Germany)

ABSTRACTS

Andrea Jian Chen

Underestimated Treasure - Understanding the Diversity of the F. A. Nixon's Collection

The F. A. Nixon's Collection, namely, the Nestorian Crosses, is believed to originate from the Mongolian Nestorianism, which is said to be a branch of the Church of the east. Its adherents used to live in the Ordos region during the Yuan dynasty. Hypotheses of this kind are firstly deduced from the cruciform (Cross representation) and the bird shape (Holy Spirit representation) very commonly found in the collection, and secondly from the Mongolian Nestorian historical records. These hypotheses tend to assume that the Collection should be taken as a single undivided whole, and thus tend to emphasize only the uniformity across the items explainable by the assumption, while the inherent diversity among them is often underestimated, sometimes even neglected

This paper will argue that such an underestimation, if not total negligence, was probably a result of the religious interests that had motivated the collecting of the "crosses" and that had conditioned the subsequent analysis of them. Based on a newly constructed database of the collection, this paper will also show that by focusing on the diversity instead of the uniformity, more reliable judgments about the identity, dating, region, historical account, and so on of the so-called Nestorian Crosses could be ensured. This new approach may bring significant developments not only to the Yelikewen study but also that of the Central Asia religions.

François de Blois

"The life of Mār Yaḥalāhā and of Rabban Ṣawmā": some historical questions

The biography of the Nestorian patriarch Mār Yaḥalāhā III and of his teacher Rabban Ṣawmā is a well-known book, arguably the most interesting historical work in Syriac, and an important source for the history of the Ilkhanate and its relations with Western Europe. My paper addresses some unsolved historical questions surrounding this text, in particular the relations, on the one hand, between the Church of the East and the Mongol ruler, and, on the other hand, the complicated relations between the Church of the East and the Church of Rome in the 13th century.

Mark Dickens

Tarsa: Persian and Central Asian Christians in Extant Literature

This presentation will examine the term *tarsa*, a common way of referring to Christians in Persia and Central Asia which was used by both Christians themselves and others. Beginning with the probable origins of the term, with specific reference to previous studies by Shlomo Pine and François de Blois, the presentation will trace its use from Middle Persian through New Persian and Sogdian, into various Turkic languages, as well as Chinese, Tibetan, Catalan and other languages.

Dmitry Khudyakov

Chinese Sources about the Decline of Syriac Christianity in China: Where It All Could Have Gone

This paper will examine the fate of Oriental Christianity in China after the Tang 845 Huichang suppression of Buddhism (and other foreign religions), according to official historical sources, and focus on its 'naturalization' strategies under the Song and the Ming dynasties. We shall discuss the following key factors in this process: a) the role of translation and interaction between cultural categories of the traditional Chinese culture and the Syro-Turkic world; b) the decline of communication routes with the rest of the Christian world after the fall of the Mongol Empire; c) the development of the concept of religious syncretism in the Ming China (*san jiao he yi* 三教合一) as an important condition for the 'naturalization' of Christianity.

Nathan P. Gibson

A Guide to Syriaca.org Reference Tools and Desiderata for Central and East Asia

Syriaca.org publishes online reference works about places, persons, texts, and events relating to the Syriac communities. As an open-access platform that interfaces with a variety of other online resources (including library catalogues, manuscript repositories, bibliographic databases, and other digital humanities projects), it has the potential to serve as a hub for Syriac scholarship that includes Central and East Asia. However, the data relating to these regions need more development. The present paper will consist of two parts: (1) a walkthrough of both published and pre-publication Syriaca.org reference tools; and (2) a discussion of the desiderata for Central and East Asia, including the specific ways that Syriac scholars working on these regions can benefit from and contribute their research to these reference works. The editors are, in turn, interested in feedback from the conference participants on the most useful directions for developing reference information relating to Central and East Asia.

R. Todd Godwin

The Royal Physicians of Tajikistan across the Courts of Iran, Central Asia and China

Scholars of East Syrian Christianity and its connections to foreign communities residing in Tang Dynasty China (617-907) have long wrestled over the meaning and origin of the name *Da-qin* of *Da-qin Jing-jiao*, promulgated by official decree for the Church of the East in the year 745. This paper proposes that *Da-qin* is the Sogdian and Persian word *tāgīk*, connected loosely to the contemporary country of Tajikistan. Tibetan and Chinese materials connect “Tajiks” to Western medicine. The paper then proposes that Tajik doctors and Syriac Christianity were both part of a heritage of Tibetan, Chinese, and Persian inter-courtly relations.

Dale Robert Johnson

Syriac Quadratic Inscriptions

An investigation of illustrated Crosses in the Syriac libraries and MSS and stone monuments of the Orient reveal a tradition independent of the Constantinian-Byzantine influences such as the use of the Latin phrase “in hoc signo vinces.” The paper hopes to demonstrate that although the Syriac texts seem to echo the Byzantine military motto, the Oriental tradition and texts surrounding the Cross drew from scriptural and talismanic influences as forms of protection rather than Byzantine military mottos.

Ron Kydd

More Light on Dunhuang Christianity

For a century the banner and the Christian manuscripts discovered in Cave 17 of the Mogao Grottoes have caught and held scholarly attention in the west. Further information about Christianity at this famous Buddhist site was added with the publication of “*Ein syrisch-christliches Fragment aus Dunhuang/China*” by Wassilios Klein and Jürgen Tubach. While on a research trip to China in 2014, I was shown a “bronze cross” which had been found *in situ* at the grottoes. In this paper I will first contextualize this cross which was presented and reflect on the importance it may have for the history of Christianity at the north-west end of the Hexi Corridor.

Zhu Li

Concepts in-between: the meaning of “seng 僧”, “si 寺” and “shoujie 受戒” in the Jingjiao-documents

Encounters between religions or religious groups from different cultural contexts imply an ongoing process of interaction and transformation of both sides. Analysis of emergence and changing of concepts while travelling across cultural boundaries by setting a certain typology builds the methodical basic for the further comparative studies in religion history. One possible option of inter-religious contact is the “adaptive, but transformative use of alien elements in one’s own religious tradition” (Krech), with whose help the enculturation of the Syrian-Persian Christian in medieval China could be characterized and analyzed. It should be, however, pointed out that so far it has barely been distinguished between the dominant and the marginalized religious traditions. In this paper the “own religious tradition”, the Jingjiao-Christianity, is exactly a religious minority in the Tang-China. Christians took Chinese terms like “seng 僧”, “si 寺” and “shoujie 受戒” to describe the internal structure of Christian church, while keeping the main points of Christian doctrines, which in turn are held “alien” by the Chinese people.

Samuel Lieu

Persons, titles and places in the Xi'an Monument

The lecture is part of a continuing research program to produce a new edition and translation with commentary of the Xi'an Monument and will focus on the use of foreign loan words both in the Syriac and the Chinese versions of the inscription.

Alexey Muraviev

Some Syriac Saints venerated by the Uighurs. A Statistical Approach to a New Syro-Uighur Liturgical Document

The liturgical document from Turfan which was reconstituted recently with the help of the missing part kept in Taipei (Academia Sinica Historical Documents of the Ming and Qing Dynasties No. 297453) contains a number of the saints' names which were venerated by Uighur people who left numerous notes on the marginal fields. These names reveal a kind of liturgical calendar which was used by these Syro-Uighur Christians. Compared with the epigraphy data the cycle could be tentatively reconstructed. There are three types of saints: Biblical saints (Mary or John the Baptist), Holy Martyrs (Phebronia, Guria etc) and local saints ('Sopholigos' and some other). Of these the third category is the most interesting one showing how these Christians developed their liturgical calendar. Several cases have to be analyzed separately: Mar Abun, Bar Shabba, Hnannya Sopholigos, Mar Yohannan, Mat Maypreh, Thamar. Those saints were a part of the Eastern Syriac liturgical Calendar on the eastern Silk Road and were a link that connected Syro-Uighur communities in China with their co-religionists in Central

Asia and further on westwards. The comparative analysis of the manuscript data compared with the publications of epigraphic material from Central Asia (Chwolson, Kokovtsov, Paikova etc) witness to the community of the hagiological thesaurus on the Silk Road. A statistical analysis of the names in available sources was made by V. Rybatsky and his data should be compared with the new data on Syro-Uighur Christianity provided by the new documents.

Shinichi Muto

The Term ‘Three-One’ (Trinity) in Jingjiao in Comparison with That in Religious Taoism

From a theological point of view, no serious treatises on Syriac Christianity can do without the Trinity. Neither can those on some Religious Taoism preceding Jingjiao. For the two religions had met on this focal point when it was translated as ‘three-one’ in Chinese. Although the examples of the term as such are rare in Jingjiao, they are huge in Religious Taoism. A lacuna was a terminological study concentrating on its usage in terms of the background of Jingjiao Inscription of Xi’an. Therefore my paper approaches its precedents in Religious Taoism around the period of the Six Dynasties. Comparing with them, I consider what Jingjing the author meant by the term as well as what the contemporary Chinese readers would understand by it.

Matteo Nicolini-Zani

Auctor hic dicere volebat aut debebat: The Latin Translation of the Xi’an Stele by Carlo da Castorano, OFM (1741)

The paper is a study of the Latin translation of the Xi’an stele by the Franciscan friar Carlo da Castorano (1673-1755). His *Versio Monumentis seu Lapidis Sinici*, made in Rome in 1741, stands as a document of great interest, not for the quality of the translation, that the French sinologist Paul Pelliot did not hesitate to describe as “worthless”, but because it comes from a non-Jesuit milieu—a position, rather, in strong opposition to it. For this reason it represents a unique voice in the process of reception, interpretation and “exploitation” of the text of the Xi’an stele in the history of the Christian mission in China.

Nicholas Sims-Williams

The Sogdian “Book of Life”: A Reconsideration

The Christian Sogdian folio which now bears the shelf-mark n 396 was first mentioned in 1968 by Olaf Hansen, who noted that it contains a series of saints’ names but was unable to elucidate its contents any further. Subsequently the text was edited by Martin Schwartz, for the first time in his doctoral dissertation of 1967 and again, with a more elaborate commentary, in 1991. According to Schwartz, the text (or at least its first part) belongs to the “Diptychs” or “Book of Life”, and in his 1991 article he compares the list of saints to those in the few surviving examples of such books. In my catalogue *Iranian manuscripts in Syriac script in the Berlin Turfan collection*, I cast doubt on this identification, pointing out in particular that Schwartz’s reading *spr hÿ* “Book of Life” (based on pre-war photographs) is not supported by the manuscript, which rather has *qwpryn* “Cyprian”. It seems in fact that the text refers to itself as the “Anathema of the Holy Mar Cyprian”, although what survives of its contents more closely resembles the “Anathema of Paradise” published by H. Gollancz in 1912.

Natalia Smelova

Further studies on the Christian manuscripts from Qara Qoto (IOM, RAS collection)

The paper reveals the results of re-examination of the fragments in Syriac script discovered in Qara Qoto (Inner Mongolia) by Peter Kozlov in 1909 and now kept in the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts of the Russian Academy of Sciences in St Petersburg, in their connection with the manuscripts unearthed in Qara Qoto in 1983-1984 by Li Yiyou and his team, and the Christian library from Turfan, including Syriac, Sogdian and Turkic manuscripts. Further and more precise attribution of fragments previously published by Nina Pigulevskaya will be presented along with an overview of the collection as a whole and some considerations on the character of Christian community in Qara Qoto.

Hidemi Takahashi

Notes on Prince Georges of the Önggüt and His Family in the Light of the Newly-Discovered Inscriptions at Ulaan Tolgoi and Some Chinese Sources

As one of the most prominent Christian figures in the Yuan Empire, Prince George of the Önggüt has been the subject of a number of papers presented at previous Salzburg conferences. The recent discovery of the inscriptions he left behind at Ulaan Tolgoi in western Mongolia has given us the occasion to look further into the sources relating to him and his family. These sources, telling us among other things of the patronage extended to Daoists and Buddhists, as well as Christians and Confucians, by members of George’s family, allow us to paint a somewhat different picture of the prince and his family from that presented in the past.

David Tam

Christology in the Dunhuang Jingjiao Document “Yi Shen Lun”

Yi Shen Lun (On One-God) is one of the longest and most theology-oriented Jingjiao documents. Its first part aims to convince readers that God exists, and He is One, filling and sustaining the universe. Its second part tells the story of Jesus/Mishihe, his teachings, suffering, crucifixion, and ascension. Both parts implore people to resist Satan and devils, turn to Mishihe/Shizun, worship Him, so that they can be saved, and can enjoy heaven. This paper explores: What is the relationship between One-God and Mishihe, who is also known as Shizun, and Yishu? What is the Christology in Yi Shen Lun, and how is it compared with traditions such as that of Theodore of Mopsuestia?

Li Tang

The Worship Language of the Church of the East in China

This paper will investigate some historical sources to see what language the Christians from the Church of the East in China may have used for worship and what implications it may have for us to understand Syriac Christianity in the cultural context of China.

Mehmet Tezcan

On the Nestorian Christianity among the Hephthalites or the White Huns

The Orthodoxy rejected and condemned, at the Council of Ephesus in A.D. 431, Nestorius's religious opinions. Zenon, the Byzantine emperor closed the School of Edessa (Urfa today) in 489. Those religious men and teachers who had studied in Edessa went to the Sasanian Persia and began to seek refuge there. By the help of the Sasanian governors, they made Nisibis (Nusaybin today) the center for their own religious activities and began to spread “Nestorian” Christianity in the Persian area. So, a wide spread of “Nestorian” Christianity in the East especially in the Hephthalite Empire was related with this negative attitude of the Byzantine Empire towards Eastern Christians. When the Sasanian emperor Peroz, who was the responsible person for helping the “Persian” Christians, was killed in 484 during the wars with the Hephthalites, his son Kavad went to the Hephthalites and took refuge with them, together with some Christians, the two of whom remained in the Hephthalite country for about 30 years. Having serious political, religious and matrimonial relations with the Sasanians, the Hephthalites got acquainted with “Nestorian” Christians. According to some early Christian sources, “Nestorians” came to the region of the Hephthalites (*Mawara al-nahr*, that is, beyond of the Oxus, later *Country of the Haitals*) in A.D. 497. And the Syriac Chronicle of Mar Aba, who was the catholicos of “Persian” Christians, mentions that upon a request of the Hephthalites, a bishop was sent to them by Mar Aba in 549. So, a metropolitan for Eastern Christians was founded in Samarkand, which was under the Hephthalites at that time. It occurred that a religious group of Hephthalite Christianity (*krestyane haptaraye*) was there. Again, becoming a main area of wars between the Sasanians and the Hephthalites, in the country of *Aparshahr* (that is, later Khorasan), Merv, the main center in this area had a metropolitan for the “Persian” Christians. However, as a result of the wars in 563 and 567 between the Hephthalites and the Turks, the Hephthalite Empire collapsed, and its huge territories were shared by the Sasanians and the Turks. According to Sebeos, one Armenian source, there were some Hephthalite principalities in both Khorasan and Mawara al-Nahr, which were subjected to the Sasanians and the Turks respectively. During this Turkic reign, some of Turks converted to “Nestorian” Christianity thanks to the activities of Elijah, the metropolitan of Marv in 640s.

Theophylaktos Simokatta, the Byzantine historian of the early 7th century informs us that (V.10.12-14) in 590s that the Sasanians took many prisoners and led them in chains to Chosroes (Khusraw Aparwez). Some of the captives of Turkish race were sent to the (Byzantine) emperor Maurice. The sign of cross was inscribed on their foreheads. Archaeological excavations reveal ruins and remains of monasteries, churches, and ostracons in Samarkand, Panjikand, Termez and especially in Ak-Beshim.

Glen L. Thompson,

The Structure of the Xi'an Stele

Although the Jingjiao Stele has been the subject of numerous studies and translations over the past several centuries, much remains to be done. There is currently no critical edition of the text. There is no complete study of the text's formal, literary or grammatical structure. There have only been incomplete comparisons between the Xi'an text and that of other contemporary or model texts, such as the Dhuta Monastery Inscription. New fields, such as Corpus Linguistics might yield further advances. In this paper I wish to encourage such work by demonstrating how a more systematic study of the stele text's structure can open new insights into the stele and into our wider understanding of the Jingjiao as well.

Dietmar W. Winkler

The Exchange of Letters between Yahballaha III and the Popes

When Rabban Sauma came back from his diplomatic mission, which had let him to Constantinople, Rome, Paris and the South-East of France, he could report to his Turco-Mongol Patriarch Yahballaha III, that he had met the Cardinals and the Pope in Rome, discussed with them theologically, presented the East Syriac Liturgy to “Mar Papa” (Pope Nicholas IV) and that he himself took part in the Catholic Mass receiving the Eucharist from the hand of the Pope. The relations between the Catholicos-Patriarch and the Pope(s) continued. The paper will give preliminary insight into nature, content and context of the exchange of letters between an Asian and European ecclesiastical culture.

Xie Bizhen & Wu Weiwei

“Nestorian” Christianity and the Quanzhou Society

After Nestorian Christianity was introduced into China in the Tang Dynasty, it flourished nationwide but encountered setbacks and was heavily attacked in 845. “Nestorian” Priests, like monks of the Buddhism and Daoism, were forced back into the secular world and church properties were confiscated. Christianity gradually drifted away from the cities as well as the political and cultural centers. Christians quietly settled in the Northwest border. With time passing, Mongolian cavalry moved into the Central Plains, and “Nestorian” Christianity and other religions returned to the mainland, and even to the southeast coastal area of China. The rise of “Nestorian” Christianity in Quanzhou during the Yuan Dynasty precisely reflected the booming of this religion in China in this historical context.

In the Yuan Dynasty, the rise of “Nestorian” Christianity in Quanzhou has an important influence on the Quanzhou society, mainly in the following aspects: First, it promoted commerce in Quanzhou society, attracting business people of different religions all over the world to come to Quanzhou, and foreign trade developed rapidly. Second, it facilitated the cultural exchange of the Quanzhou society that became a multi-cultural melting pot with rapid development of a national culture. Third, it promoted international relations through Quanzhou. The dissemination of “Nestorian” Christianity enhanced the friendly exchanges between Quanzhou, Central Asia and West Asia and stimulated the peaceful development of Quanzhou. Fourth, it left a valuable legacy for the modern Quanzhou culture. Quanzhou became the focus of Maritime Silk Road. The contribution of “Nestorian” Christianity to the Quanzhou Society has been obvious.



This conference is sponsored by:

- Fachbereich Bibelwissenschaft und Kirchengeschichte, Universität Salzburg
- ZECO – Zentrum zur Erforschung des Christlichen Ostens, Universität Salzburg
- Stiftung Pro-Oriente
- St. Virgil Bildungshaus Salzburg
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