

Introduction to World Christian History

Available July 2016

\$18, 255 pages, paperback

978-0-8308-4088-5

“The emphasis on when things happened more than on where things happened has allowed many authors to gloss over whole regions of the worldwide church.”

– Derek Cooper, author of
Introduction to World Christian History

The Global Roots of Today’s Christianity

Despite its close connection to the West today, Christianity has always been a global and ethnically diverse religion. Not only was Jesus born in Asia, but in the early years of the church Christianity found fertile soil in Africa and soon extended to East Asia as well.

In this book, Derek Cooper explores the development of Christianity across time and the continents. Guiding readers to places such as Iraq, Ethiopia and India, Scandinavia, Brazil and Oceania, he reveals the fascinating – and often surprising – history of the church.

Cooper’s brief introduction to world Christian history stands out amid the numerous church history books available today. Cooper writes, “Many books still use antiquated language when referring to specific groups of Christians; refuse to incorporate recent findings among scholars of Christianity into their historical narratives; and continue to focus on Western Christianity to the exclusion of Christianity in other world regions.”

Introduction to World Christian History takes into account recent advances in scholarship on church history and provides a fully global perspective, giving equal weight to tracing Christianity’s development in all regions of the world.

Introduction to World Christian History is divided into three parts as follows:

Part I: Christianity from the First to the Seventh Centuries

1. Asia
2. Africa
3. Europe

Part II: Christianity from the Seventh to the Fifteenth Centuries

4. Asia
5. Africa
6. Europe

Part III: Christianity from the Fifteenth to the Twenty-First Centuries

7. Europe
8. Latin America
9. Northern America
10. Oceania
11. Africa
12. Asia

Additionally, each chapter begins with a chapter overview and includes helpful “trail markers” that give additional background on historical facts mentioned in the text.

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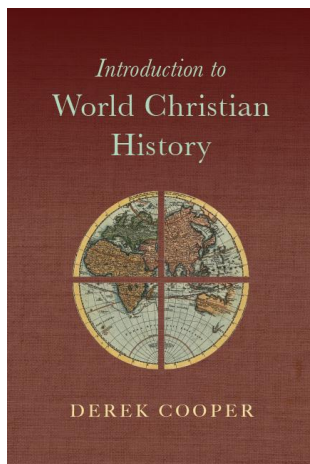


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Derek Cooper (PhD, The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia) is associate professor of world Christian history at Biblical Theological Seminary. He is the author of several books, including *Exploring Church History* and *Christianity and World Religions: An Introduction to the World's Major Faiths*. He is also the coeditor of the Reformation Commentary on Scripture volume on 1–2 Samuel, 1–2 Kings, 1–2 Chronicles.

“The reader is left with little doubt that Christianity was and is a worldwide movement.”

“It is widely known that today the majority of Christians live in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Less appreciated is Christianity’s thriving presence in these locations for many centuries. In this book Cooper reintroduces us to the global story of Christianity – relocating the center of the Christian narrative to the Global South, joining an emerging chorus of scholars who are challenging the status quo of Christianity as a Western religion.”

– Todd M. Johnson, associate professor of global Christianity, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary

“Derek Cooper’s helpful volume reminds us that the global complexity of Christianity today is the fruit of a Christian past that is equally multifaceted and complex. His fresh rendering of that past emphasizes overlooked histories of Christians in Africa, Asia, and other regions of the world, and downplays some familiar tales from the West that now seem quite parochial when viewed in global perspective. Cooper’s kaleidoscopic account provides many different angles from which to view Christian similarities and differences, and readers will be enriched by the breadth and magnanimity of his presentation.”

– Douglas Jacobsen, author of *Global Gospel*

“A welcome addition to the ever-expanding scholarship in the field of world Christianity studies, Derek Cooper’s book helps to rewrite our traditional Western understanding of church history and course-correct away from North Atlantic-centrism. Cooper gently leads us away from our particular tendencies to see and tell only our own stories toward a broader canvas of the ‘great cloud of witnesses’ that came before us and has not had its time in the spotlight.”

– Allen Yeh, associate professor of intercultural studies and missiology, Cook School of Intercultural Studies, Biola University

“Derek Cooper’s *Introduction to World Christian History* is a welcome contribution to the field. This accessible and informative historical narrative introduces the reader to the broad, diverse and far-reaching story of Christianity as it ‘blows where it wills’ from the first through the twenty-first century. In the end, the reader is left with little doubt that Christianity was and is a worldwide movement.”

– Jennifer Powell McNutt, associate professor of theology and history of Christianity, Wheaton College

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ENDORSEMENTS

“The challenge for those writing a book on this topic is negotiating the question of breadth and depth. . . . (Cooper) dexterously steers through these challenges and provides us with a work that engages and interacts with the range and diversity of the living realities of the Christian faith in various regions of the world, opening up entryways to wonder at the global expressions of Christianity.”

—**J. Jayakiran Sebastian, dean and H. George Anderson Professor of Mission and Cultures, Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia**