



Grassroots Asian Theology: Thinking the Faith from the Ground Up

By Simon Chan

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A dynamic chapter of church history is now being written in Asia. But the theological inflections at its heart are not well understood by outsiders. The published voices of elite academic theologians have drowned out the cadences of Christian faith as it is spoken, lived and prayed in the homes and churches of Tokyo or Shanghai or Madras. Now, in *Grassroots Asian Theology*, Simon Chan examines Asian Christianity at its daily, sustaining level. There he uncovers a vibrant theology that is authentically Asian and truly engaging. More than a mere survey, *Grassroots Asian Theology* makes a serious and constructive contribution to Asian theology. Organizing his discussion under leading themes of Christian theology, Chan looks at how Christians have grappled with their living faith in the context of Asian cultures and societies. Then, drawing on the church's broader tradition, he points the way forward. Chan not only probes and informs, he leads and challenges readers across cultures to receive, live and communicate an authentic Christian faith. This is a significant book for both outsiders and insiders to Asian Christianity, as well as those interested in the broader horizons of global theology. Chan reminds us that authentic theologies are grounded in particular peoples, places and cultures.

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Editorial Review

Review

"It is a pleasure to read Chan's account of the thought world of ordinary believers and their communities. Just how are concepts like the Trinity and the work of the Holy Spirit presented in Asian contexts? Chan does an admirable job of addressing Catholic and Orthodox traditions, as well as Protestant and Pentecostal." (Philip Jenkins, *The Christian Century*, October 15, 2014)

"That many readers will want to keep the arguments going on this or that issue speaks well for this book. I came away with new topics to wrestle with in my own theological reflections. Chan is a wise evangelical thinker who points to spiritual concerns that require creative engagement not only with traditional Asian religions, but also with Catholic and Orthodox insights that can enrich our evangelical efforts, especially in drawing on the spiritual strengths of grassroots Pentecostalism. *Grassroots Asian Theology* informs us that the Lord is doing some wonderful things in local communities in Asia. But Chan does more than inform. He also teaches some important lessons from Asian Christians about how to faithfully serve the cause of the gospel in our own cultural contexts." (Richard J. Mouw, *Christianity Today*, August 2014)

"We certainly stand in Chan's debt both for his reasoned critiques of Asian theologies, and for forcing a rethink about grassroots Asian Christianity so it can assume a place in that global Christian family, and both enrich and be enriched by it. Hopefully, too, this book can serve as a catalyst for reflective theologians from other under-recognized cultures, so that Christians of every sort can grow together as the Spirit leads us into all truth." (Henry Rowold, *Concordia Journal*, Winter 2015)

"*Grassroots Asian Theology* draws our attention to Asian Christianity, where grassroots charismatic-Pentecostalism has significantly contributed to the efforts of the global church toward theological contextualization." (KimSon Nguyen, *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, Vol. 39, No. 1)

"Only Simon Chan can register Pentecostal perspectives in substantive conversation with Catholic and Orthodox traditions amidst Asian religio-cultural realities with surprising results about not only the retrieval of classical or historic Christian teachings but also with new points of contact and invited adjustments to established categories and frameworks of thinking. *Grassroots Asian Theology* is methodologically exemplary in suggesting a theology that is both fully Asian and ecumenical in the biblical sense." (Amos Yong, J. Rodman Williams Professor of Theology and dean of the School of Divinity, Regent University, Virginia Beach, Virginia)

"Simon Chan's latest work is certainly a challenge to how 'Asian theology' has been perceived in the academic world. Lavishly referenced, conservative and scholarly, this is a most welcome addition to his notable works, which challenge readers to recover the spiritual and truly 'theological' essentials of Christianity." (Allan H. Anderson, University of Birmingham, United Kingdom)

"Here is a thoughtful and ecumenically sensitive contribution to Asian theology from one of the most respected Pentecostal theologians in Asia. Particularly striking is the careful integration of Asian traditions--both grassroots and elite, with contemporary Western reflection. With this work we are seeing the emergence of a mature Asian evangelical voice that is certain to change the dynamics of the global theological conversation. The book will be useful in both theology courses and church education classes." (William Dyrness, professor of theology and culture, Fuller Theological Seminary)

"This is a groundbreaking work in privileging the lived experience of the Christian majority in Asia in the process of theological construction. More surprising and admirable is the author's grounding Asian grassroots theology in historic Christian theological traditions, opening a wide horizon for Asian theology to engage with and contribute to the global theological movement." (Wonsuk Ma, executive director, Oxford Centre for Mission Studies)

"A resourceful, perceptive and much-needed work in the complex landscape of Asian theology." (K.-K. Yeo, Harry R. Kendall Professor of New Testament, Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary)

"This book offers thought-provoking assessments of foundational Christian doctrines from close engagement with Asian circumstances and Asian Christian teachers. As it examines the Trinity, the church, the person and work of Christ, and the Holy Spirit, insights from western Protestants, Catholics and the Orthodox are put to good use, but always with the aim of articulating genuinely Asian theologies. Much of the future of Christian theology worldwide is outlined in this helpful study." (Mark A. Noll, Francis McAnaney Professor of History, University of Notre Dame)

"This welcome addition to the Asian theological conversation presses readers to consider alternate voices that may constitute the majority of those that the term 'Asian theology' actually describes. Anyone who deals with global theology in general or Asian theology in particular must read this book. (Chris Flanders, Missiology, July 2015)

About the Author

Simon Chan (Ph.D., Cambridge) is Earnest Lau Professor of Systematic Theology at Trinity Theological College in Singapore. He is the author of *Man and Sin*, *Pentecostal Theology and the Christian Spiritual Tradition*, *Spiritual Theology: A Systematic Study of the Christian Life* and *Liturgical Theology: The Church as Worshiping Community*. He is also the associate editor of the *Global Dictionary of Theology* and the *Dictionary of Mission Theology*.

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