Demographics of world and Asian Christianity

AGC slides (7)

International religious demography

• demography: statistical study of human population characteristics
  o size, fertility, mortality, migration, net growth, location
• social demography: broader array of human characteristics related to populations
  o health, economics, language, religion
• religious demography: “...the scientific and statistical study of the demographic characteristics of religious populations, primarily with respect to their size, age-sex structure, density, growth, distribution, development, migration, and vital statistics, including the change of religious identity within human populations and how these characteristics relate to other social and economic indicators.”

• We track affiliation, not beliefs or practices or attitudes

How do we do this? (methodology)

Census: religion
• About half of the world’s countries ask a religion question on their census
• 3 examples, ask the question in different ways

Census: ethnicity
• Religion/ethnicity assumptions

Surveys and polls
• DHS
• Smaller, more concentrated

Data from religious communities
• Kinds of stats collected
• Inflation? Probably not; not sustainable

How religious adherence changes
• Births/deaths; converts to/converts from; immigration/emigration

Global stats: 20th century context
• More people killed in warfare in 20th century than previous 4 centuries combined
• Huge impact on religion around the world
1910: 100% religious
1970: 80% religious
2020: 90% religious

Global Christian percentage
1910: 181.1% of all Christians in the world lived in the global South
1970: 42.3% in global South
2020: 64.7% will live in global South

Christianity 1910 map
Christianity 2010 map

the figures
• pie charts and top ten countries with the most Christians, 1910 & 2010

2.3 billion Christians
• The whole church includes all Christian traditions such as Roman Catholics, Orthodox, Independents and others totaling 2.3 billion people in 2010.

denominations cartoon
• There were 18,800 Christian denominations in 1970, rising to 41,000 by 2010, expected to rise to 50,000 by 2020.
• 39 Reformed, Presbyterian churches in South Korea alone

growth of Pentecostal and evangelical movements
• Pentecostals, Charismatics, and Independent Charismatics have grown at nearly four times the growth rate of global Christianity. In 1970, Renewalists were 5.1% of all Christians, but by 2010 they had grown to 25.8% (averaging 4.1% growth per year between 1970 and 2010). Evangelicals have also grown from 98 million in 1970 to 300 million in 2010.
• 1910: 1 million Renewalists
• 2010: 600+ million Renewalists

Renewal 1910 map
Renewal 2010 map

Renewal movements
• pie graphics and renewalists in traditions table
theology: Jesus on the road to Emmaus

theology: Philippines 2010

Asia demographics

Asia religion 1910

Asia religion 2010

Asia Christianity 1910
• Christians were 2.4% of Asia’s population in 1910 (25.1 million)

Asia Christianity 2010
• Christians were 8.5% of Asia’s population in 2010 (352.2 million)

…but one of the world's largest churches is in Asia
• Yoido Full Gospel church
  o Assemblies of God; over 1 million members
• And Asia is home to the second largest missionary sending country in the world (South Korea)
• And some of the fastest-growing Christian populations are in Asia
  o Cambodia 7.2% pa
  o Mongolia 4.97% pa
  o Timor 4.8% pa
  o Nepal 4.66% pa
  o Benin 3.94% pa

(so that leads to a lot of diversity) Diversity of Asian Christianity
• Switch between majority Roman Catholic to majority Independent
  o In 1910 most Christians in Asia were Roman Catholic (52.6%; 13.2 million)
    ▪ Independents were only 9.1%
  o In 2010 most Christians in Asia were Independent (40.5%; 142.7 million)
    ▪ Catholics are only 3.9%
• Countries with the most Independents in Asia
  o China (house churches): 70 million
  o Philippines (Philippines Independent Church): 3.5 million
  o India (low-caste Hindu believers in Christ): 2.7 million
• Significant growth of Orthodox, Protestants, and Marginals as well (mission and migration)

Growth and decline
• Story of Christianity in Asia is not just of growth, but also of decline
• Growth in Eastern Asia (largely because of demographic weight of China)
• massive decline in Western Asia: almost every country had more Christians in 1910 than in 2010 (mass emigration)
  o 1910: W. Asia 22.9% Christian
  o 2010: 5.7% Christian

Ecumenism in Asia
• interesting history of ecumenism in Asia (pictured: church part of Church of S. India)
  o Church of South India, 1947
  o Church of North India, 1970
  o Church of Pakistan, 1970
  o Church of Bangladesh, 1971
  o United Church of Christ in Japan, 1941

• Future of ecumenism in Asia?
  o Incorporating new Independent churches
  o Overcoming theological differences for the sake of Asian Christian family, and global Christian family
  o Supporting shrinking churches in Western Asia

Questions