



EUROPEAN MISSIONS AND PROTESTANT CHURCHES IN THE MIDDLE EAST: A SHARED HISTORY IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

AN ONLINE CONFERENCE ON THE OCCASION OF THE CENTENARY
OF THE ACTION CHRÉTIENNE EN ORIENT (1922-2022)

CONFERENCE TIMETABLE

THURSDAY, JANUARY 28, 2021,

LEBANON TIME: 4:00-6:30 PM

(= EUROPEAN CENTRAL TIME: 15:00-17:30)

4:00 PM	Welcome on behalf of Haigazian University	Paul Haidostian <i>President, Haigazian University</i>	
	Welcome on behalf of the ACO	Mathieu Busch <i>General Secretary, ACO France and ACO Fellowship</i>	
4:10 PM	Foreign Missionary Activity prior to and during the Armenian Genocide	Paul Haidostian	The presentation discusses how pre-Genocide foreign missionary activity prepared the way for relief and existential support during the Armenian Genocide of 1915-1921. Examples are drawn from British, German and American missionary organizations such as the <i>Bible Lands Mission Aid Society</i> , the <i>Christlicher Hilfsbund im Orient</i> , and the <i>American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions</i> .
4:30 PM	The Life and Ministry of Paul Berron	Thomas Wild <i>Former General Secretary, ACO France and ACO Fellowship</i>	Paul Berron was a Lutheran pastor from the Alsace who changed nationality three times. He co-founded and led the ACO in a time of rising

			nationalisms and conflicts. This presentation will examine Berron's missionary work, theology and ecumenical cooperation.
4:50 PM	Break		
5:00 PM	Between missionary independence and humanitarian colonization: the work of the Action Chrétienne en Orient and the French Mandate in Syria-Lebanon, 1922-1946	Philippe Bourmaud <i>Assistant Professor of Modern and Contemporary History, Lyon III University – Jean Moulin</i>	During the interbellum France exercised its League of Nations Mandate in Syria and Lebanon. This was also the time of the inception and growth of the work of the Action Chrétienne en Orient. This presentation will explore the relation between the mission work and the Mandate.
5:30 PM	ACO Women Missionaries in the Second Half of the Twentieth Century.	Rima Nasrallah <i>Assistant Professor of Practical Theology, Near East School of Theology, Beirut</i>	In the second half of the twentieth century the ACO sent several European female missionaries to the Middle East. This presentation focuses on their perceptions of and interactions with Syrian and Lebanese women.
5:50 PM	Discussion		
6:30 PM	End of the first day of the conference		

FRIDAY, JANUARY 29, 2021,

LEBANON TIME: 4:00-6:30 PM

(= EUROPEAN CENTRAL TIME: 15:00-17:30)

4:00 PM	The Evangelical Church of Iran, or faith in face of political circumstances.	Jean-Claude Basset <i>Retired Pastor, Protestant Church of Geneva, and Lecturer in Religious Studies, University of Lausanne</i>	This paper reflects on the history of a small church, rooted in Shi'ite Iran, severely affected by Ayatollah Khomeyni's revolution. In its relation with this church, the ACO navigated between active solidarity with its suffering brothers and sisters and the quest for a
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			living together through dialogue with Muslim interlocutors.
4:20 PM	Egyptian Protestant Churches and European Missions.	Tharwat Wahba <i>Professor of Missions, Evangelical Theological Seminary, Cairo</i>	This paper explores the work of three European missions to Egypt in the end of the 19 th and through the 20 th century. These missions used many different methods and faced many challenges politically and ecclesiastically.
4:40 PM	The Action Chrétienne en Orient: From Mission Agency to Fellowship of Churches	Wilbert van Saane <i>Assistant Professor of Theology and Mission, Near East School of Theology</i>	In 1995 the ACO Fellowship was formed as a body for cooperation. This paper traces the process that led to this transformation and analyses the change in missionary-ecumenical relations that took place in the postcolonial period.
5:00 PM	L'ACO-Fellowship: Un projet missionnaire innovant (The ACO Fellowship: An Innovating Missionary Project)	André Joly <i>Retired Pastor, Evangelical Reformed Church, Vaud, and former Chairperson of the ACO Fellowship</i>	This presentation offers a SWOT analysis of the ACO Fellowship, taking both external and internal factors into consideration, and reflects on current challenges.
5:20 PM	Break		
5:30 PM	Middle Eastern-European missionary-ecumenical relations in current research	Heleen Murre-van den Berg <i>Professor of Theology and Religious Studies and Director of the Institute of Eastern Christian Studies, Radboud University, Nijmegen</i>	The papers presented at the conference are placed in the wider context of current research in the field of Global Christianity, especially the study of the interaction between Christian communities in the Middle East and Europe.
5:45 PM	Discussion		
6:15 PM	Listener's perspective	Marina Behera <i>Research Tutor, MPhil Stage Leader and Editor of 'Transformation,' Oxford Centre for Mission Studies</i>	Concluding observations on trends, highlights and questions that were raised in the papers and the discussions.
6:30 PM	End of the conference		