

Seminar – Easter 2026

Evangelists, Mules, Horses, and Canoes: Missionary Travels and the Dynamics of the Evangelical encounter in Central Brazil, 1900-1950

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Tuesday 5 May 2026, 4.00–5.30pm GMT, Lecture Room 7, Faculty of Divinity & Online



Dr Pedro Feitoza. Trained as a cultural and social historian, Pedro Feitoza is lecturer in Latin American Christianity at the School of Divinity, University of Edinburgh. His monograph *Propagandists of the Book: Protestant Missions, Christian Literacy, and the Making of Brazilian Evangelicalism* was published by Oxford University Press in 2024 and was joint winner of the Ecclesiastical History Society Book Prize 2025.

Abstract: This presentation will explore how the modes of travels of missionaries associated with the Evangelical Union of South America (EUSA) in the backlands of Central Brazil shaped the way the missionary encounter unfolded in the twentieth century. EUSA missionaries moved about the vast and sparsely populated Brazilian hinterlands on horse and muleback to minister to far-off congregations and ventured down the Araguaia River in their attempts to reach out to indigenous populations. Itinerant evangelism shaped the relationships they developed with such rural communities: they relied on the expertise of local informants and indigenous guides, depended on the hospitality of the rural population for shelter and protection, and their experiences of physical and psychological exhaustion impacted their sense of vocation and how they imagined the missionary enterprise. The presentation will also explore how EUSA missionaries were drawn into popular narratives that stigmatised the Brazilian backlands as wild and inhospitable, and how their lived experiences on the ground reshaped such representations.