

**THEO5964 Special Topics on Mission I:
Study Tour to South Korea
Summer Term 2026**

Course outline

TEACHER:	Rev. Prof. Tobias Brandner
CREDIT:	3 units
TIME:	11 to 19 May 2026
LANGUAGE:	English
Participants:	Maximum 22 participants; the minimum number for the course to take place will be 12 participants.
Study Area:	For MDiv students: (5) Christianity and Society (elective course of Area 5, not fulfilling mission studies' requirement). For BD students (5) Christianity and Society (fulfilling requirement in mission studies)
Language:	Sufficient ability to understand English will be required
Credits:	3
Costs:	Around HKD\$10,500 + flight ticket (economy class, ~HK\$2,600) for single-room Around HKD\$7,000 + flight ticket (economy class, ~HK\$2,600) for shared-room <i>*Costs are estimated based on a group of 20 for a 9-day trip. They may change due to revisions to the itinerary, taxes, foreign currency exchange rates, and the final number of participants.</i>

South Korea, a nation of rapid modernization and deep-rooted traditions, is home to one of the most vibrant Christian communities in Asia and, as some argue, the most Christian nation in Asia and the most successful Protestant mission field. With nearly one-third of its population identifying as Christian, South Korea has become a center of church growth, global mission initiatives, and influential theological movements. At the same time, it remains a multi-religious society where Confucian heritage, Buddhism, and new religious movements continue to shape cultural and spiritual life. South Korea's unique blend of modernity and tradition, coupled with its strong emphasis on education and faith-based activism, sharpened through the experience of military rule and a still unresolved conflict with its North-Korean neighbor offers a rich context to explore how Christianity interacts with politics, society, and culture. Hong Kong students will find the encounter with Korean Christianity especially inspiring, since its cultural and religious affinities with China illuminate possible futures for Christianity in the Chinese world.

Course overview

The study tour to South Korea offers an immersive exploration of Korean Christianity, contextual theology, and church–society engagement. Beginning in Seoul, we will visit one or two Christian universities and theological schools, Yonsei University and / or Hanshin University, with lectures on Christianity in Korea and contextual theology, and opportunities for joint activities with local students. The tour further includes visits to a megachurch and encounters with ecumenical ministries such as the Yeongdeungpo Urban Industrial Mission, which highlights Christian responses to urban poverty, labor, and democracy, or the Seoul Diaspora Church who offers a home away from home to migrant workers. We will visit the Bargn Nuri Community, both in Seoul and in the countryside, experiencing an alternative Christian lifestyle and engaging in joint communal life and agricultural work. And we will journey to the Border Peace School in the demilitarized zone between North and South Korea, a journey that combines education, cultural exchange, and reflection on peace and reconciliation. The program integrates academic study, church visits, social engagement, and cultural immersion, offering participants a holistic view of Korean Christianity in context.

Learning outcomes

- Students will be able to distinguish different forms of Christianity in Asia.
- Students will learn to understand historical realizations of the Christian faith movement by interacting with different historically grown forms of Christianity.
- Through the encounter with alternative forms of contextualization the students will learn to analyze the contextual character of their own traditions.
- Through dialogue with local Korean scholars of religion, the students will get acquainted with beliefs and faith practices in the East Asian context.
- Interaction with the political contexts of the divided Korean peninsula and Christian initiatives of reconciliation will equip students to analyze how political issues shape religious life.

Topics

Several topics will be at the center of our attention and some teaching will be dedicated to these topics:

- Christianity in the context of Confucianism
- Faith and politics in a country that is technically still at war
- Christian faith under military dictatorship
- Christian history and theology in Korea
- Christianity and society, Christianity and peace-building

Students are welcome to write their reflection paper on one of the topics above or on any other topic related to the study tour.

Learning activities

The 9-day study tour includes lectures by Christian scholars of the Yonsei and Hanshin Universities. Further learning activities are exchange with faith practitioners, participation in

the life of a faith-based community, visits to sites of historical, cultural, political, and religious interest, and seminar-style discussions among the participants.

Assessment Scheme

- 1) Participation during the lectures and the study tour (20%)
- 2) Two reading reports (15% for reading report 1 and 15% for reading report 2)
or: one reading report (reading report 1, 15%) and one diary entry (15%)
- 3) Reflection paper (50%)

a) Reading report 1

- Read the articles or book chapters listed below, either option A or option B (or if you like option A and B together with an automatic addition to your marks of 5%:

Option A

- 1) Kim, C.H. Sebastian, and Kirsteen Kim. 2015. *A History of Korean Christianity*. Cambridge University Press. Chapter 7. 263-315.

Consider particularly how the authors understand how historical change shaped the development of Christianity.

Option B

- 2) Kang, Namsoon. 2010. "Reclaiming Theological Significance of Women's Religious Choice-in-Differential: Korean Women's Choice of Christianity Revisited." *The Journal of World Christianity*. Volume 3:1, 18-46.
- 3) Cox, Harvey. 1995. *Fire from Heaven. The Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the Twenty-first Century*. Addison-Wesley. 213-241.
- 4) Park, Joon-Sik. 2012. "Korean Protestant Christianity: A Missiological Reflection." *IBMR*. 2012. 59-64.

Consider particularly how the three authors interpret the growth of Christianity in South Korea.

- Following requirements:
 - o 1000 words
 - o Submission by 11 May 2026
 - o Offer a short and concise summary of the contents of the two chapters and identify crucial issues, problems, and opportunities among Christians in Indonesia.
 - o Use of AI is not allowed for this assignment.

b) Reading report 2

- Choose one of the following options:
 - a) Kim, C.H. Sebastian, and Kirsteen Kim. 2015. *A History of Korean Christianity*. Cambridge University Press.
 - b) Kang, Namsoon. 2014. *Diasporic Feminist Theology: Asia and Theopolitical Imagination*. Augsburg Fortress Publishers.

- c) Commission on Theological Concerns of the Christian Conference of Asia. Ed. 1981. *Minjung Theology: People as the Subjects of History*. Christian Conference of Asia. (200 pages)
- d) Baker, Don. Ed. 2014. *Critical Readings on Christianity in Korea. Four Volumes*. Brill. Volume Four, Part Seven: Christianity in Korea Today (pages 1253-1439).

- Around 1,000 words
- Submission deadline: 31 May 2026.
- Use of AI is not allowed for this assignment.
- Assessment criteria:
 - Content and thought: Does the student show understanding of the content and core message of the book as well as the purpose of the author's writing? does he / she engage in a thoughtful dialogue with the author? Does he / she draw from additional resource material
 - Form: Neatness of the paper, good structuring, concise writing, mastering of language and proper use of source material
- Questions that you may consider to take into account:
 - What is the value of the book you read?
 - What is the core message of the book?
 - What is the theological position of the author?
 - What is the situation to which the book / the author responds?
 - In what way is this book relevant to you?

c) Diary entry

- Write a diary entry of one day (or one event of a day) describing what happened and reflecting on it.
- Around 1,200 words
- Submission deadline: 31 May 2026.
- Use of AI is not allowed for this assignment.

d) Reflection paper

- Around 3,000 words
- Submission deadline: 15 June 2026
- Choose any topic that is related to Christianity in Korea and the topics of the course. Try to link experiences and reflections from the study tour with further research.
- Examples for topics:
 - Pentecostals in South Korea
 - Women in South Korean Christianity
 - The role of Christians in the political realm
 - Ecumenical relations in South Korea
 - Christians during the dictatorship
 - Churches and money in Korea
 - Etc.
- Assessment criteria:

- Relevance and depth of the thought
- Link to the Indonesian context
- Form: Neatness of the paper, good structuring, concise writing, mastering of language and proper use of source material

General readings on Asia, on the history of Christianity, on postcolonial theology, and on religion and Christianity in Asia or parts thereof

- Bautista, Julius, and Francis Khek Gee Lim (eds.). 2009. *Christianity and the State in Asia. Complicity and conflict*. Routledge.
- Bevans, Stephen B. and Roger P. Schroeder. 2004. *Constants in context. A theology of mission for today*. Orbis Books.
- Chan, Simon. 2014. *Grassroots Asian Theology. Thinking the Faith from the Ground Up*. IVP Academic.
- Chen, Kuan-Hsing. 2010. *Asia as Method: Toward Deimperialization*. Duke University Press.
- England, John C. et al. *Asian Christian Theologies: A Research Guide to Authors, Movements, Sources*. Orbis.
2002. Volume 1: Asian Region 7th-20th Centuries. South Asia; Austral Asia. xiv + 679 pages.
2003. Volume 2: Southeast Asia. xlix + 684 pages.
2004. Volume 3: Northeast Asia. xlvii + 768 pages.
- Jenkins, Philip. 2008. *The Lost History of Christianity. The Thousand Year Golden Age of the Church in the Middle East, Africa, and Asia – and How it Died*. Harper.
- Kim, Sebastian C.H. (ed.) 2008. *Christian Theology in Asia*. Cambridge University Press.
- Koschorke, Klaus and others (eds.). 2007. *A History of Christianity in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, 1450-1990*. Wm B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.
- Kwan, Simon Shui-man. 2014. *Postcolonial Resistance and Asian Theology*. Routledge.
- Lamport, Mark A. a.o. (eds.). 2018. *Encyclopedia of Christianity in the Global South*, Rowman and Littlefield.
- McGavran, Donald A. and C. Peter Wagner. 1990. *Understanding Church Growth*. 3rd edition. Wm B. Eerdmans.
- Moffett, Samuel Hugh. 1998. *A History of Christianity in Asia. Vol. 1. Beginnings to 1500*. 2nd rev. and corrected ed. Orbis Books.
- _____. 2005. *A History of Christianity in Asia. Vol. 2. 1500-1900*. Orbis.
Both volumes are also available in Chinese.
- Phan, Peter C. ed. 2011. *Christianities in Asia*. Wiley-Blackwell.
- Ross, Kenneth R. Francis D. Alvarez SJ and Todd M. Johnson (eds.). 2020. *Christianity in East and Southeast Asia*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Sunquist, Scott W. 2001. *A Dictionary of Asian Christianity*. Eerdmans.
- Wilfred, Felix (ed.). 2014. *The Oxford Handbook of Christianity in Asia*. Oxford University Press.

Christianity and theology in Korea

- Anderson, Allan. 2004a. *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity*. Cambridge University Press.

- Anderson, Allan. 2004b. 'The Contextual Theology of David Yonggi Cho.' In Wonsuk Ma, William W. Menzies and Hyeon-sung Bae (eds.), *David Yonggi Cho: A Close Look at His Theology and Ministry*. APTS Press. 133–59.
- Baker, Don. 1997. 'From Pottery to Politics: The Transformation of Korean Catholicism.' In Lewis R. Lancaster and Richard K. Payne (eds.), *Religion and Society in Contemporary Korea*. University of California Institute of East Asian Studies. 127–68.
- _____. 1999. 'Catholicism in a Confucian World.' In JaHyun Kim Haboush and Martina Deuchler. Eds. *Culture and the State in Late Chosŏn Korea*. Harvard University Press. 199–230.
- _____. 2002. 'Hananim, Hanuʻnim, Hanullim, and Hanoʻllim: The Construction of Terminology for Korean Monotheism.' *Review of Korean Studies* 5/1 (June). 105–31.
- _____. 2008. *Korean Spirituality*. University of Hawaii Press.
- _____. 2011. "Globalization, Nationalism, and Korean Religion in the 21st Century." *Asia Pacific: Perspectives* Vol 10/1, 24-43.
- Baker, Don. Ed. 2014. *Critical Readings on Christianity in Korea. Four Volumes*. Brill.
- Buswell, Robert E., Jr. and Timothy S. Lee. Eds. 2006. *Christianity in Korea*. University of Hawai'i Press.
- Chung, David. 2001. *Syncretism: The Religious Context of Christian Beginnings in Korea*. State University of New York Press.
- Chung, Hyun-kyung. 1988. "'Han-pu-ri": Doing Theology from a Korean Women's Perspective.' *Ecumenical Review* 40/1 (Jan.). 27–36.
- _____. 1991a. 'Come, Holy Spirit – Renew the Whole Creation.' In Michael Kinnamon. Ed. *Signs of the Spirit: Official Report of the Seventh Assembly of the WCC, Canberra*. WCC. 37–47.
- _____. 1991b. *Struggle to Be the Sun Again: Introducing Asian Women's Theology*. SCM Press.
- Chung, Mee-hyun. 2006. 'Introducing Korean Feminist Theology.' In Chung Meehyun. Ed. *Breaking Silence: Theology from Asian Women*. ISPCK. 77–89.
- Chung, Paul S., Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen and Kim Kyoung-Jae. Eds. 2007. *Asian Contextual Theology for the Third Millennium: Theology of Minjung in Fourth-Eye Formation*. James Clarke and Co.
- Commission on Theological Concerns of the Christian Conference of Asia. Ed. 1981. *Minjung Theology: People as the Subjects of History*. Christian Conference of Asia.
- Cox, Harvey. 1995. *Fire from Heaven. The Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the Twenty-first Century*. Addison-Wesley. 213-241.
- Han, Gil-Soo, Joy J. Han and Andrew Eungi Kim. 2014. "'Serving Two Masters': Protestant Churches in Korea and Money." In Don Baker, Ed. *Critical Readings on Christianity in Korea. Four Volumes*. Brill. 1349-1386.
- Hunt, Everett N. 1991. "The Legacy of John Livingston Nevius" in *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* Vol. 15.
- Kang Wi Jo. 1997. *Christ and Caesar in Modern Korea. A History of Christianity and Politics*. State University of New York Press.

- Kang, Namsoon. 2010. "Reclaiming Theological Significance of Women's Religious Choice-in-Differential: Korean Women's Choice of Christianity Revisited," *The Journal of World Christianity* Vol 3:1, 18-46.
- _____. 2014. "Resurgence of Asian Values. Confucian Comeback and Its Embodiment in Christianity." In Kang, *Diasporic Feminist Theology: Asia and Theopolitical Imagination*. Augsburg Fortress Publishers, 291-322.
- Kim, C.H. Sebastian, and Kirsteen Kim. 2015. *A History of Korean Christianity*. Cambridge University Press.
- Kim, C.H. Sebastian. 2008. "The Word and the Spirit: Overcoming Poverty, Injustice and Division in Korea." In Kim, *Christian Theology in Asia*, 129-153.
- Kim, Kirsteen. 2010. 'Christianity's Role in the Modernization and Revitalization of Korean Society in the Twentieth-Century.' *International Journal of Public Theology*. 4/2. 212–36.
- _____. 2017. "Korean Pentecostalism and Shamanism: Developing Theological Self-understanding in a Land of Many Spirits," *PentecoStudies* 16.1, 59–84.
- Kim, Yong-bock. 1981. 'Korean Christianity as a Messianic Movement of the People.' In CTCCCA (Commission on Theological Concerns of the Christian Conference of Asia. Ed. *Minjung Theology: People as the Subjects of History*. Christian Conference of Asia. 80–119.
- _____. 1995. "Messianic Buddhism and Christianity in Korea." In Mark R. Mullins and Richard Fox Young. Eds. *Perspectives on Christianity in Korea and Japan. The Gospel and Culture in East Asia*. Edwin Mellen Press. 81-94.
- Lee, Hong-jung. 1999. 'Minjung and Pentecostal Movements in Korea.' In Allan H. Anderson and Walter Hollenweger. Eds. *Pentecostals after a Century: Global Perspectives on a Movement in Transition*. Sheffield Academic Press. 138–60.
- Moon, Sang-cheol Steve. 2008. 'The Protestant Missionary Movement in Korea: Current Growth and Development.' *IBMR*. 32/2. 59–64.
- _____. 2016. *The Korean Missionary Movement. Dynamics and Trends, 1988-2013*. William Carey Library.
- Mullins, Mark R. and Richard Fox Young. Eds. 1995. *Perspectives on Christianity in Korea and Japan. The Gospel and Culture in East Asia*. Edwin Mellen Press.
- Park, Joon-Sik. 2012. "Korean Protestant Christianity: A Missiological Reflection." *IBMR*. 2012. 59-64.
- Suh, David Kwang-Sun. "Minjung Theology: The Politics and Spirituality of Korean Christianity." In Mark R. Mullins and Richard Fox Young. Eds. *Perspectives on Christianity in Korea and Japan. The Gospel and Culture in East Asia*. Edwin Mellen Press. 143-162.
- Yung Hun Choi. 2019. "Yonggi Cho's Influence on Pentecostal Theology in Korea." In Denise A. Austin, Jacqueline Grey, and Paul W. Lewis. Eds. *Asia Pacific Pentecostalism*. Brill. 37-60.

A note on grading

The grading follows the general grading policy of the CUHK outlined below (in short form):

Grade A / Excellent: Outstanding performance on ALL learning outcomes.
 Demonstrates the ability to synthesize and apply the principles or skills learned in the course in a manner that would surpass the normal expectations at this level and typical of standards that may be common at higher levels of study.

Grade A- / Very Good:	Generally outstanding performance on all or almost all learning outcomes. Demonstrates the ability to synthesize and apply the principles or skills learned in the course in a manner that would fully fulfill the normal expectations at this level and occasionally reaches standards that may be common at higher levels of study.
Grade B / Good:	Substantial performance on all learning outcomes, OR high performance on some learning outcomes which compensates for slightly less satisfactory performance on others, resulting in overall substantial performance. Demonstrates the ability to apply the principles or skills learned in the course in a comprehensive manner that would sufficiently fulfill the normal expectations at this level.
Grade C / Fair:	Satisfactory performance on the majority of learning outcomes. Demonstrates the ability to partially apply the principles or skills learned in the course in a manner that would meet the basic requirement at this level.
Grade D / Pass:	Barely satisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes. Addresses the task inadequately by meeting the basic requirement at this level only in some areas while responding minimally with possibly tangential content in others.
Grade F / Failure:	Unsatisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes, OR failure to meet specified assessment requirements. Fails to address the task and likely does not understand what the task requires. In other words, the work completely misses the point.

To avoid grade inflation, CUHK requires that not more than 40% of students should be graded in the range of A or A-, and around 10% in the range of C+ or below.

A note on Plagiarism

- The University places great emphasis on students' academic honesty.
- A short video clip (in three different versions – Cantonese, Mandarin, and English) introduces you to the notions of plagiarism and academic honesty:
 - http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/clear/tnl/acad_honesty.html
 - Read also the following academic honesty website: <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/>
- Note that the use of AI tools needs to be treated in the same way as scholarly references.

A note on the use of AI

AI may only be used with explicit acknowledgement and proper citation. Students are required to acknowledge all functional uses of a generative AI tool and cite it when they paraphrase, quote, or incorporate into their own work any content (whether it is text, image, data, or other format) that was created by it. Please provide the prompt that you gave AI when asking AI.

- i. An example of acknowledgement
'I acknowledge the use of (name of AI tool – e.g. ChatGPT (<https://chat.openai.com/>)) to (specify the support, e.g. plan my essay, generate some ideas for the content, ask for examples of data collection instruments, get the dates of historical events, etc.)

- ii. An example of citation:
OpenAI. (2023). ChatGPT (Mar 20 version). <https://chat.openai.com/chat>
(Students are reminded that due to the rapid developments of generative AI tools, some citation formats may be updated regularly.)
- iii. An example of including texts generated by an AI tool in their work:
"The following text was generated by an AI tool / language model (ChatGPT):"[Insert the text generated by ChatGPT here.]
- iv. An example of including texts generated by an AI tool and the prompts that were used to elicit the text from the AI tool:
"[The prompt], as generated by an AI language model (ChatGPT):" [Insert the text generated by ChatGPT in response to the prompt.] Students are reminded to learn and use the AI tools responsibly and ethically and be aware of the limitations. Students are reminded to clarify with the course teacher and obtain permission if necessary when in doubt.