**THE 5651 Unification Studies Seminar:**

 **Providential Epic History of the Korean People**

Fall 2025, 3 credits

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### Syllabus

#### Course Description

This seminar course focuses on a careful academic study of "The Epic History of the Chosen Han People of Korea" ("Korean Epic"), which is emerging as a new resource for Unification theological reflection, teaching and preaching. In addition to a close reading/viewing of current expressions of the Korean Epic, we will consider the wider context of Korean and East Asian history, religion and culture, as well as theological and philosophical issues related to the formation and content of the Korean Epic. We will utilize a comparative theological frame as well as a providential approach to concepts such as chosenness, typology, exemplary prophecy, and holy history.

In the first part of the course (approximately half), we will begin with origins in the pre-history (pre-chosen) period and advance to the contributions of Confucian, Buddhist and shamanist religious traditions in the nurture of the Chosen Han people. In the second part, our focus will be on the fulfillment of the Korean Epic in the birth of the Only Begotten Daughter, the Holy Wedding with the Returning Messiah, and the establishment of Cheon Il Guk as ideal and reality.

##### Learning Outcomes

Upon the completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Identify leading personalities and events depicted in the Korean Epic and explain their significance.

2. Develop constructive theological reflections on persons or events in the providential history of Korea as depicted in the Epic.

3. Demonstrate an ability to integrate the Korean Epic contents into a personal account of faith and conviction, and apply them to teaching and/or preaching.

4. Discuss the significance of core concepts presented in the Korean Epic and interpret them for Unification and non-Unification audiences.

See “Student Learning Outcomes Rubric” on p. 8.

## Textbooks & Video Lectures (Required)

1. *The Epic History of the Chosen Han People of Korea: The Story of the Korean People’s Spiritual Calling* (Seoul: Cheon Won Co. Ltd, 2025) ISBN: **‎**979-11-94221-25-8 03230. ₩12,000 Korean Won. For students who have difficulty obtaining this book, a text file of the content will be made available by the instructor.
2. Don Baker, *Korean Spirituality.* University of Hawai’i Press, 2008. ISBN-13: 978-0824832575. $17, currently new $11.63, used from $2.99, Kindle $17 on Amazon.com
3. Six Video Lectures describing the Epic History by the professors in Korea who compiled it, with English soundtrack and slides. Available at <https://vimeo.com/showcase/11601985>
4. *Handouts,* can be downloaded at the appropriate lesson.

### Supplemental Texts (Optional):

1. Eugene Y. Park, *Korea: A History***(**Stanford University Press, 2022) ISBN-13:‎ 978-1503629844 (Paperback). $35, currently $30.33 on Amazon.com
2. *The Value of True Parents in Heaven’s Providence* (Heavenly Parent’s Holy Community: Cheon Mu Won, supplied by Cheon Won Co. Ltd., Korea, 2025) $25 at Familyfed Store (currently out of stock).
3. Hak Ja Han Moon, *Mother of Peace: And God Shall Wipe Away All Tears from Their Eyes* (The Washington Times Global Media Group, 2020).
4. Sun Myung Moon, *As a Peace-Loving Global Citizen.* The Washington Times Foundation, 2010.

##### Course Requirements

The course covers a long period of history and lot of material. Therefore, **it is important to complete each week's work on time**. You will have only two weeks to complete discussions and reflection assignments. Asynchronous courses are not very forgiving of late work. All work must be completed by the end of the semester.

### 1. Lectures & Reflections

There are two sets of assigned lectures for this course:

a) The **weekly Course Lectures (15)** by the instructor provide the main framework for our investigations of the providential epic history of the Korean people.

b) There are also **Korean Epic video lectures** (**6)** by the Korean professors who compiled the Korean Epic text, which reveal some of the thinking behind the Epic.

**For most lectures, you are asked to write a 1-2 paragraph (1 page) reflection.** It will be graded based on evidence that you have engaged with the content (keep a copy for review). Do not merely summarize the content; rather, pick out points that impressed you and comment on them. Please write your reflection immediately after you finish viewing each lecture, while it is fresh in your mind.

### 2. Discussions

**There will be ten (10) graded “threaded discussions”**, approximately one each week. These discussions are the heart of our shared exploration. The instructor will post a question, and each student posts a response. Once you have answered the instructor’s question with a thoughtful contribution of about 1.5 pages, you can see other students’ answers and comment on them as much as you like. Your participation in the discussions is graded, so your contributions should be substantial and well-considered. You improve your grade by replying to other students' posts (for full credit, make at least two comment posts). Each discussion will be open for a specific window of time, usually about two weeks, after which it will be closed.

**3. Mid-term Quiz**

Students will take the midterm quiz (multiple choice, true/false, short answers) on CANVAS during the 8th week of class. *A list of keywords* will be available for your study. You can take the quiz only once. The Midterm covers Weeks 1-8.

### 4. Final Paper

The Final Paper is an 8-10 page paper on one of the comparative topics that will be available after the Midterm Quiz. (Other topics are possible only with the advance permission of the instructor.) The final paper must be submitted before midnight Eastern US time on December 18, 2025.

### Optional Zoom Q&A Sessions

Although this is an asynchronous course, students are invited to join three optional Q&A sessions on Zoom that will be scheduled in the 3rd, 8th and 12th weeks. Recordings will be made available for those who are unable to join the sessions.

##### Evaluation

A letter grade will be assigned based on:

1. Reflections 30%

2. Discussions 30%

3. Midterm Quiz 10%

4. Final Paper 30%

Grades are understood as follows:

A Excellent

B Good

C Acceptable

D Acceptable, but below expectations

F Failure

**Assignments should be completed during the week that they are due. An assignment handed in more than 7 days after the due date will incur a penalty of 1 grade. Failure to complete an assignment will result in an F for that assignment.**

In computing the cumulative grade point average (G.P.A.) the following quality point scale is used:

A 4.00 A- 3.67 B+ 3.33

B 3.00 B- 2.67 C+ 2.33

C 2.00 C- 1.67 D+ 1.33

D 1.00 D- 0.67 F 0.00

Incompletes are given only when there are compelling medical or personal reasons.

\*See HJI catalog for a detailed grading policy.

**Netiquette Policy**

When posting online, you need to follow the same ethical standards and laws as you would in face-to-face communications. Your language should be respectful of faculty members and fellow students. Do not post private or confidential information about anyone, and do not provide personal information that could put yourself at risk. The school's LMS has robust security measures to protect communication between teacher and student. Yet please be aware that anything that you post in discussions and groups in which other students participate can be retrieved by others and copied.

Do not download and share course materials without permission of the instructor, as this may violate copyright. HJI reserves the right to delete postings on HJI-maintained sites that are considered insensitive, harassing or illegal. Language that is illegal, obscene, defamatory, threatening, infringing of intellectual property rights, invasive of privacy, profane, libelous, threatening, harassing abusive, hateful or embarrassing to any person or entity, or otherwise, is a violation of the Student Code.

**Academic Integrity**

Each student's work is expected to be a product of his or her own effort. That’s the whole point of education in this course. Plagiarism is a form of dishonesty that occurs when a student passes off someone else's work as their own. This can range from failing to cite an author for ideas incorporated into a student's paper, to cutting and pasting paragraphs from different websites, to handing in a paper downloaded from the Internet. It also includes buying or submitting a paper written by a third party. All are considered forms of “plagiarism” and a violation of the Seminary’s academic integrity policy. The instructor has the option of having the student repeat or fail the assignment. In cases of serious or repeated violations, the instructor has the option of having the student fail the course or of reporting the student to the Academic Dean for disciplinary action. Possible disciplinary actions include probation, suspension or withdrawal from HJI.

**AI Use Policy**

Students are permitted to use AI tools, such as ChatGPT, to assist with coursework in a limited way. In order to ensure that you are not misusing AI, you must comply with the following guidelines:

1. **Originality**: AI tools can help generate ideas, clarify concepts, and assist in drafting responses. However, **all final submissions must reflect your own understanding and critical analysis. Copying or submitting AI-generated content as your own is prohibited.**

2. **Citation**: If AI tools contribute significantly to your work, acknowledge how you used them by including a statement at the end of your assignment.

3. **Plagiarism Detection**: Faculty reserve the right to use plagiarism detection software, such as Turnitin, to find instances of AI-generated writing, as well as plagiarism from other sources, in student assignments. Any submission found to rely excessively on AI or lack proper citation will be subject to academic integrity review

4. **Integrity**: Misuse of AI to bypass critical thinking or generate misleading content is considered academic dishonesty and will result in disciplinary action (see ACADEMIC INTEGRITY section above).

By following these guidelines, you ensure ethical and responsible use of AI in your academic work.

##### Course Lectures

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| Week | Dates | Topics |
|  | 8/25-31 | Introduction to the Korean Epic and Overview of the Course * True Mother’s Teaching About the Korean Epic
* Main Structure and Forms of the Epic
* Review of the Course Syllabus
 |
|  | 9/1-7 | Hermeneutics of the Korean Epic* Sacred History and Ordinary History
* Chronology of Korean History
* Principles of Selection for the Epic
 |
|  | 9/8-14 | Origins: Myths, Mottos and Motifs* Comparative Context: Jewish Myth & History
* Multiple Origin Stories: The Roots of the Han Korean People
* Ritual and Shamanism
 |
|  | 9/15-21 | Personal Cultivation in Korean Confucian Tradition* Sage Learning
* The Four-Seven Debates
 |
|  | 9/22-28 | Personal Cultivation in Korean Buddhist Tradition* Buddhist Mindfulness: Self and No-self
* Harmonized Practice and Seon Meditation
 |
| 1.
 | 9/29-10/5 | Filial Piety, Loyal Patriots & Social Order* Filial Piety and Sagely Governance
* Admiral Yi Soon-shin and Other Heroes
* Yu Gwan-soon and Other Patriots
 |
|  | 10/6-12 |  Cultural Creativity: Science & Aesthetics* Hangul and Other Inventions
* Aesthetic Refinement
* Korean Epic Paintings (#1-6)
 |
|  | 10/13-19 | National Foundation: “Great Hope Thought”* The Pure Land and the Coming Maitreya Buddha
* Eastern Learning (Donghak) and Other Indigenous Religions
* Jeonggamnok and Other “Prophetic” Texts
 |
|  | 10/20-26 | Inheriting the Christian Foundation* Early Beginnings; Catholic and Protestant missions
* Wonsan and Pyongyang Revivals; Spirit-led Christian Groups
* Christianity and Traditional Korean Religions

**Mid-term Due This Week** |
|  | 10/27-11/2 | Forming a New Nation* Japanese Occupation and the Korean Provisional Government
* March 1st 1919 Independence Movement
* Liberation (1945) and the Korean War (1950-53) including UN troops
 |
|  | 11/3-9 | Final Preparations for the Coming of the Only Begotten Daughter* Forced Shinto Shrine Worship and Spirit-led Groups
* Wedding of Hong Soon-ae and Han Seung-un (1934)
* Calling of young man Sun Myung Moon by Jesus (1935)
* Birth (1943) and Early Life of the Only Begotten Daughter
 |
|  | 11/10-16 | The Centrality of True Parents’ Holy Wedding (1960)* The Holy Wedding and the Christian foundation
* The Holy Wedding in Comparative Perspective
* Fulfillment of "Great Hope" and "Heaven's Descendants"
 |
|  | 11/17-23 | The Worldwide Providence Led by the True Parents* Special Providence in America; End of the Cold War
* Foundation Day of Cheon Il Guk; CheonBo Families
* Safe Settlement of Cheon Il Guk and Cheon Shim Won
 |
|  | 11/24-30 | **Thanksgiving Break Week** |
|  | 12/1-7 | Cheon Won Gung and Cheon-il Sanctum* Entrance Ceremony & Epic Musical Performance
* Cheon Il Guk Governance, UN/UPF Providence
* Hyojeong Cheonwon and Gapyeong County Restoration
 |
|  | 12/8-14 | Wider Significance of the Korean Epic * Historical Reflections: Kim Gu and Ham Seok-heon
* The Chosen Han People of Korea and Blessed Families Worldwide
* Toward Heavenly Unified Korea and a Heavenly Unified World
 |
|  |  | **Final Paper due on December 18 by midnight US Eastern time** |

##### Bibliography (Selected)

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Kalton, Michael C., et. al. *The Four-Seven Debate.* Albany, NY: SUNY Press,1994.

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Reed, Herbert. *Icon and Idea: The* *Function of Art in the Development of Human Consciousness.* New York: Schocken Books, 1965.

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\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. *Hsieh Liang-tso and the Analects of Confucius: Humane Learning as a Religious Quest*. Oxford University Press, 2005.

Seth, Michael J., *A Concise History of Modern Korea: from the late nineteenth century to the Present.* Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2010, 3rd edition, 2019.

Tu, Weiming and Mary Evelyn Tucker, eds. *Confucian Spirituality Volume Two.* New York: Crossroad Publishing, 2004. See articles on Korean Confucianism by Kalton, Chung and Ro.

##### Student Learning Outcomes Rubric

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Outcomes | Progressing | Fair | Good | Excellent |
| 1. **Knowledge**

Identify the leading personalities and events depicted in the Korean Epic and explain their significance in the Epic. | Identifies a few facts about ideas or figures in the Korean Epic. | Identifies key figures/events and mentions their significance in the Korean Epic | Appropriately relates key figures and events in the Korean Epic. | Demonstrates command of key events and figures depicted in the Korean Epic. |
| 1. **Analysis & Synthesis**

Develop constructive theological reflections on persons or events in the history of salvation as depicted in the Korean Epic.  | Mentions only one meaning of an event or person in the Korean Epic, without evidence of reflection. | Explains the significance of events and persons in the Korean Epic in a careful, reflective way. | Explores potential avenues for theological reflection on events/persons in the Korean Epic | Discusses options for constructive theological reflection on persons and events in the Korean Epic.  |
| 1. **Pastoral Application**

Demonstrate an ability to integrate the Korean Epic contents into a personal account of faith and conviction, and apply them to teaching and preaching. | Offers a general discussion of the Korean Epic without reference to one’s personal faith or application. | Shows preliminary thinking about how to integrate the Korean Epic into personal faith, teaching and/or preaching. | Shows careful thinking about how to integrate the Korean Epic in personal faith and teaching or preaching. | Shows exceptional personal insight in the integration and application of the Korean Epic contents. |
| 1. **Interpretation**

Discuss the significance of core concepts presented in the Korean Epic and interpret them for Unification and non-Unification audiences. | Presents Korean Epic concepts only in a pre-existing framework of Divine Principle.  | Shows preliminary understanding of core concepts of the Korean Epic, but only in a Unification context. | Shows developing understanding of core concepts of the Korean Epic, in both Unification and non-Unification contexts. | Interprets core concepts of the Korean Epic and offers cogent explanations for both Unification and non-Unification audiences |