
Seminar with Chae Young Kim, Sogang University, Seoul

Abstract
The goal of this talk is to outline key psycho-spiritual features in various personal religious experiences within Korean New Religious Movements (NRMs). In Korean NRMs, as in other religions, religious experiences are diffused and disseminated from key persons to ordinary participants or followers. However, reports of religious experiences among ordinary followers are usually not collected or documented systematically for research purposes. Moreover, ordinary participants’ experience materials are too numerous to handle them in a single paper. Therefore, this paper focuses on a comparison between four key persons’ religious experiences that have led to the formation of NRMs in Korea: Choe, Je-u (“Eastern Learning”); Kang, Jeungsan (“Daesoonjinrihoe”); Kwon, Shin-Chan (“Salvation Sect”); Yun, Julia (“Mary’s Ark of Salvation”). Methodologically, William James’s psychology of religion will be introduced to articulate the dynamic flow of these key persons’ religious experiences.

Speaker
Prof. Chae Young Kim, Sogang University (Seoul), Department of Religious Studies

Speaker Biography
Chae Young Kim is professor of Religious Studies at Sogang University (Jesuit Foundation, Seoul). His main research interests are in psychology of religion, religious education, contemporary Korean religious experiences and their interpretation in light of the works of William James, Wilfred Cantwell Smith, Carl Gustav Jung, and Bernard Lonergan. Professor Kim served as president for the Korean Association for Religious Studies from 2014 to 2016 and is editorial board member of the international journals Religion and British Journal of Religious Education. He has published several articles in English in The Heythrop Journal, The Journal of Humanistic Psychology, Journal of Dharma, and The Journal of Religion and Health. In Korean, he co-authored several books in the fields of religious studies, psychology of religion and philosophy of religion. He is the translator of William James’ The Varieties of Religious Experience and Ernest Becker’s The Denial of Death into Korean.