

# To Be the Christian Beacon in the Far East: A Comparative Study on the Development of the Early Protestantism in China, Japan, and Korea (1850-1950).

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- **Abstract:** Protestantism spread to Korea at the end of the 19th century and established itself as the largest popular religion in South Korea in the 20th century. This phenomenon, not equaled in other East Asian countries such as China and Japan, nor in any other country in the world, leads us to consider the cause of this rapid growth of Protestantism in Korea. Some claim it was the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit; others attribute it to the religious nature of the Koreans; still others insist that it was because of the specific political and social climate at that time. However, we will argue that there was no one particular reason, but that many complex interrelated factors propelled the rapid growth of Protestantism in Korea. Until now, there have been some attempts to briefly describe the propagation process of Protestantism in the three countries-- Korea, China, and Japan. However, there has not been enough research work on the success of Protestant Christianity in Korea by comparatively analyzing the situation of the three countries in terms of political, social, and cultural frameworks. This study hopes to provide more context and fill in the gaps to understand Protestantism's explosive growth in Korea.
- **Keywords:** Protestantism, Korea, East Asian countries, Holy Spirit, interrelated, Christianity, frameworks, Explosive,