

ABSTRACT

Church and Secondary Societies in Korean Ecclesiology and the Christocentric Perspective of Karl Barth

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My purpose is to critically map out the relationship between Church and society in the current Korean context in light of three models: difference, identity, and harmony, and to propose a better relationship between Church and society in the Korean context from Karl Barth's Christocentric vision of the Church. First, the difference model between Church and society is represented in the "Fourfold Gospel Theology" whose theological basis is John Wesley's teaching of sanctification. This theology says that the Church and society are two distinctive territories and have their own different tasks, not to be confused with each other. Second, the identity model of "Korean Indigenization Theology" has emerged as a theological position that contradicts the difference model. This theology holds that the ultimate reality of Christianity already exists everywhere; salvation can be found outside the Church, and thus there exists an essential identity between Church and society. Third, the harmony model is an alternative position between the difference model and the identity model, and is proposed by "*Minjung* Theology." *Minjung* Theology focuses on the poor who suffer economic crisis and domestic violence and supports Christian's active participation in the socio-political conflicts. Hence, the Church and

society should cooperate toward building a utopian society as an “all-comprehensive society” within which the Church fulfills its function as a subsystem.

By contrast with these three models, Karl Barth (1886-1968) suggests a new vision of the relationship between Church and society. Barth unfolded his theory of Church and society under a Christocentric perspective: Christ the Lord is at the center, the Church is in the inner circle next to Christ, and society is in a more distant outer circle. Although Church and society cannot be mixed and confused, Barth believed that society is not an “independent entity,” and the Church is not a neutral space completely independent of politics. However, Barth prioritizes the Church over society. As an “asymmetrical” relationship, society becomes secondary to the Church in God’s redemptive economy. Consequently, the Church has a duty toward secondary societies as a model of peaceful behavior and should serve as a non-violent judge.

Church and Secondary Societies in Korean Ecclesiology and the
Christocentric Perspective of Karl Barth

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DEDICATION

TO

Dr. Bob E. Patterson, my doctoral mentor

For his encouragement, positive understanding of cultural diversity,
and
accepting me as his last doctoral student

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

A Story of the Korean People Encountering Christianity: Conflict and Reception

Korea has been considered a minor state because of its size, limited natural resources, and little socio-political power within the East Asian context. Thus, Korea was dubbed as “the Hermit Kingdom,”¹ or “a forgotten nation.”² From the perspective of Christian missionaries in East Asia, however, Korea has played a pivotal role and been a model of Church growth.³ The Korean people encountered Catholic Christianity for the first time through Catholic writings which were brought by ambassadors of the *Choson* kingdom (*Yi* dynasty) to be distributed in China in the early seventeenth century. Some scholars who belonged to *Sirhak* (“Practical Learning”)⁴ Confucianism became interested in “Western Learning (*Sŏhak*),”⁵ and were later identified as Catholic Christians.⁶

¹ Robert T. Oliver, *A History of the Korean People in Modern Times: 1800 to the Present* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1993), 17.

² See Robert T. Oliver, *Korea: Forgotten Nation* (Washington D.C.: American Council on Public Affairs Press, 1944).

³ Daniel J. Adams, “Church Growth in Korea: A Paradigm Shift from Ecclesiology to Nationalism,” in *Perspectives on Christianity in Korea and Japan: The Gospel and Culture in East Asia*, eds. Mark R. Mullins & Richard Fox Young (Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1995), 13-28. Robert Bruce Mullin, *A Short World History of Christianity* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008), 224, 272-273.

⁴ Ki-baik Lee, *A New History of Korea*, trans. Edward W. Wagner & Edward J. Shultz (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984), 232-243.

⁵ Kwang Cho, “Human Relations as Expressed in Vernacular Catholic Writings of the late Choson Dynasty,” in *Christianity in Korea*, eds. Robert E. Buswell Jr. and Timothy S. Lee (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2006), 30.

⁶ Kang-Nam Oh, “The Christian-Buddhist Encounter in Korea,” in *Christianity in Korea*, eds. Robert E. Buswell Jr. and Timothy S. Lee (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2006), 373.

Sirhak is Korean Confucianism which attempted to explicate the relationship between human beings and nature and had an openness toward Western civilizations and thoughts including Christianity. In the middle of the eighteenth century, *Sirhak* Confucians encountered Matteo Ricci's book, *The True Doctrine of the Lord of Heaven*, in which they found a similarity between "the Christian God" and "the Neo-Confucian Supreme Ultimate."⁷ Because of some contradictions in teachings between Christianity and Korean Confucianism (in particular, ancestral worship), Korean *Sirhak* Confucianism needed to have a thorough knowledge of Western thought and Christianity. Consequently, they sent Yi Sung-hun to Beijing for the purpose of bringing back Christian books. At Beijing in China, Yi Sung-hun was baptized; after he returned to Korea in 1787, he spread the Catholic Christian faith and founded a small Catholic Christian church for the first time in Korea.⁸

In the process of spreading Catholic Christianity in Korea and constructing a Church building, Korean Catholic Christianity confronted cultural controversy and political persecution. As Catholic Christianity was rapidly burgeoning on the Korean peninsula, the *Choson* dynasty (1392-1910), which was founded on neo-Confucian ideologies, intended to define this new Western religious movement and respond to it. After a cursory examination, the *Choson* dynasty concluded that the doctrines of this new Western Catholic religious movement contained anti-traditional and anti-governmental

⁷ Donald N. Clark, *Christianity in Modern Korea* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1986), 5. And see Paul S. Chung, "Mission and Inculturation in the Thought of Matteo Ricci," in *Asian Contextual Theology for the Third Millennium: A Theology of Minjung in Fourth-Eye Formation*, eds. Paul S. Chung et al., trans. Paul S. Chung (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2007), 314-316.

⁸ James Huntly Grayson, *Early Buddhism and Christianity in Korea* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1985), 72-74.

teachings.⁹ Catholic Christianity encouraged its followers to refuse ancestral worship and to freely contact the Western powers.¹⁰ This negative estimation of Catholic Christianity by the *Choson* government caused cruel and massive persecution. The Catholic Christian community suffered political persecution from the *Choson* government on January 10, 1801 – December 22, 1801 (*Shinyu* persecution), March – October, 1839 (*Kihae* persecution), June 5, 1846 – September 20, 1845 (*Bungoh* persecution), and 1866 – 1873 (*Bungin* persecution). During the *Bungin* persecution, over eight thousand Korean Catholic Christians were tortured and killed.¹¹

The *Choson* government's misunderstanding of the proper relationship between Church and society caused tragic conflict and persecution between *Choson* Catholic Christianity and the *Choson* dynasty. The *Choson* government affirmed that the Catholic faith inevitably demolished cultural traditions and the socio-political system of the *Choson* society, which was totally based on neo-Confucianism. Moreover, the *Choson* government believed that frequent contact between *Choson* Catholic Christians and the Western powers, and the free immigration of the Western Catholic priests to *Choson*, would finally result in a collapse of the *Choson* dynasty due to the influences of Western imperialism.¹² Unfortunately, *Choson* Catholic Christianity failed to effectively respond to the *Choson* government's misunderstanding of the Catholic faith because the *Choson*

⁹ Kyung-Bae Min, *Hanguk kidokgyohoesa* [A history of Korean Christianity] (Seoul: Yonsei University Press, 2009), 113-115.

¹⁰ Kang-Nam Oh, "The Christian-Buddhist Encounter in Korea," 373.

¹¹ Grayson, *Early Buddhism and Christianity in Korea*, 77-83. And also see Kyung-Bae Min, *Hanguk kidokgyohoesa* [A history of Korean Christianity], 66, 69, 82, 96, & 111.

¹² Kyung-Bae Min, *Hanguk kidokgyohoesa* [A history of Korean Christianity], 113-117.

Catholic Christians had not been theologically prepared to do Christian apologetics in defense of their faith.¹³

The *Choson* government's persecution of Catholic Christianity officially ended after 1884, mainly because the *Choson* dynasty was suppressed by powerful neighboring states, including the Western powers. The political power of the *Choson* government gradually weakened.¹⁴ At that time, many Western Protestant missionaries were entering the Korean peninsula and launching mission camps. Protestant missionaries had a totally different mission strategy from the early Catholic mission when approaching Confucian Korea. The Protestant mission emphasized the indirect mission strategy under which the missionaries entered mainly into educational missions and hospital missions by building a western medical hospital and higher educational institutions including women's schools. Horace N. Allen, an American missionary and a physician, came to Korea from the Presbyterian mission in China. Fortunately, Allen had a great opportunity to build the mission through the healing of a wounded Korean prince. As a reward, Allen opened "a Royal Hospital." Simultaneously, he secured religious liberty for missionary work in Korea.¹⁵

In contrast with the persecutions of early *Choson* Catholic Christianity, perpetrated by the *Choson* government, a totally different kind of persecution appeared

¹³ See Chai Sik Chung, "Confucian-Protestant Encounter in Korea: Two Cases of Westernization and De-westernization," in *Confucian-Christian Encounters in Historical and Contemporary Perspective*, ed. Peter K.H. Lee (Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1991), 400-402.

¹⁴ The *Coup d'Etat* (*Kapsin Chongbyon*) of the progressive political party, who were conflicted with conservative political policy and the isolation policy, happened in 1884. Although this political revolution failed, the *Choson* government rapidly lost its political power and the Korean peninsula turned into a conflicting arena of international political powers. See Ki-baik Lee, *A New History of Korea*, 276-281.

¹⁵ Chung-Shin Park, *Protestantism and Politics in Korea* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2003), 21; Grayson, *Early Buddhism and Christianity in Korea*, 103-107.

against *Choson* Protestant Christianity after 1894.¹⁶ In 1894 the *Choson* dynasty confronted a political turnover and a serious socio-political crisis resulting from Japan's imperial ambition to annex the East Asian states. The Sino-Japanese war between Japan and China broke out in 1894-1895, and Japanese imperialists requested the use of the Korean peninsula as a military base camp, and thus put the Korean peninsula under Japanese military control.¹⁷ The Korean people were enraged at this compulsory requirement of Japanese imperialism. Moreover, when the Japanese imperialists declared that the *Choson* dynasty was voluntarily annexed to Japan in 1910,¹⁸ the *Choson* people were filled with anger and despair. This political upheaval in the Korean peninsula created a new missionary situation because the main enemy of Korean people and government was not Western Christianity, but Japanese colonialism.

The Christian community in Korea was turned into the most powerful institution in opposition to Japanese colonialism. The Western missionaries, who ran the Korean Church, did not support Japanese colonialism and the Korean people gradually began to trust them.¹⁹ The Korean Christian revival movement during early Japanese colonialism was interested in the nation's colonial reality and focused on winning independence from Japanese imperialism. Chung-Shin Park writes:

¹⁶ On June 10, 1894, the Korean peninsula became a tragic place where two imperial powers (China and Japan) collided, and the Korean peasants protested against foreign imperial powers. However, through defeating Chinese military troops and Korean peasant uprisings, Japanese imperial powers started to monopolistically rule over the Korean peninsula. For the *Choson* government and the Korean people, Japanese imperialism became the main enemy. See Bruce Cumings, *Korea's Place in the Sun: A Modern History* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1997), 119-120.

¹⁷ Ki-baik Lee, *A New History of Korea*, 287-290.

¹⁸ Wi Jo Kang, *Christ and Caesar in Modern Korea: A History of Christianity and Politics* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1997), 41-42.

¹⁹ Samuel Hugh Moffett, *The Christians of Korea* (New York: Friendship Press, 1962), 66-70.

Followers of revival theology actively participated in Korean nationalist activities such as the Educational Society of Hwanghae Province (Haeso Kyoyuk ch'onghoe), the New People's Association (Sinminhoe), and the March First Movement of 1919 clearly tells us that they were not at all otherworldly escapists. Kil [Sun Joo] and other revivalist church leaders became "political ministers" for Korea's independence, not just spokesmen for their religious beliefs. As a radical socialist described it, the Protestant Christianity of the revival movement was "not a mere spiritual religious institution" but would be "the mother of Korean independence."²⁰

Many leaders of the Christian revival movement under Japanese colonialism were concerned not only with the spiritual reality of the Korean people, but also with the political reality of the Korean nation. Hence, Christian pastors were regarded as political ministers, and the Christian Church became a base camp for Korean independence.

The foreign-originated Christianity became a rallying point for hope in the face of national predicament and upheaval. Almost immediately, massive conversions began to occur.²¹ However, the Korean Church under Japanese colonialism underwent a serious test provided by the Japanese colonial administration, because the colonial administration "began urging all Koreans, including Christians, to participate in Shinto ceremonies."²²

Nak Heong Yang writes about the Shintoism:

Shintoism is a native Japanese religion which worshipped 'Kami.' A Japanese word, 'Kami' indicates a deity, or a spiritual being. From ancient times, Japanese worshipped as Kami awesome natural phenomena, mythological figures, historical heroes, and the spirit of their ancestors. Shintoism, therefore, can be said to be a polytheistic religion handed down from a primitive age. In accordance with the absolutization of the power of emperors, the focus of Shinto

²⁰ Chung-Shin Park, *Protestantism and Politics in Korea*, 65.

²¹ See In-Soo Kim, *Iljae eui hanguk gyohoe bakhaesa* [A persecution history of the Korean Church under Japanese colonialism] (Seoul: The Christian Literature Society of Korea, 2006).

²² Wi Jo Kang, "Church and State Relations in Japanese Colonial Period," in *Christianity in Korea*, eds. Robert E. Buswell Jr. and Timothy S. Lee (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2006), 107.

began to move to the worship of the Sun goddess, the progenitress of the Japanese royal house.²³

Japanese shintoism is a native polytheistic religion in Japan which worships nature, mythical figures, heroes, and ancestors. However, the Shinto shrine ceremony enforced the authority of Japanese emperors through emphasis on the worship of the Sun, which symbolized the Japanese royal house.²⁴

After 1935 Shinto worship became a major issue for Korean Christianity because the Japanese colonial regime commanded that all colonial schools, including Christian educational institutions, must participate in the Shinto worship ceremony. The Korean Christian Church's dilemma can be described as follows:

Korean Christians who had abandoned their own ancient practice of ancestor worship as idolatry were not convinced that paying such respect to Japanese ancestral spirits was not worship. In spite of the efforts to persuade them, most Korean Christians rejected the government's definition and refused to participate in the ceremonies. Many believed that bowing to the shrines violated God's commandment against idolatry, and the overwhelming majority of expatriate missionaries also understood the shrine ceremonies as religious acts.²⁵

The Korean Church under Japanese colonialism was confronted with the colonial government's request to participate in Shinto ceremonies. From the perspective of the Korean Church which had a tradition of rejecting ancestral worship under the neo-Confucianism of the *Choson* dynasty, it was a proper reaction to reject and protest against the colonial regime's policy of Shinto nationalism. Based both on the Korean Church's tradition of rejecting ancestral worship and on Korean nationalism to abhor Japanese

²³ Nak Heong Yang, *Reformed Social Ethics and the Korean Church* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc., 1997), 123.

²⁴ H. Byron Earhart, "Toward a Unified Interpretation of Japanese Religion," in *The History of Religions*, ed. Joseph M. Kitagawa (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1974), 204-209.

²⁵ Wi Jo Kang, "Church and State Relations in Japanese Colonial Period," 108.

colonialism, some missionaries encouraged the Korean people to resist the colonial religious policy.²⁶

The Japanese colonial regime continually coerced the Korean Church to support its war policy and to follow Shinto ceremony. In 1938 the Korean Presbyterian Church, the country's largest denomination, surrendered to the colonial government's pressure and reached an agreement to support Japanese colonialism and to participate in the Shinto shrine ceremony. After the Korean Presbyterian Church's declaration to obey the wartime religious policy of the Japanese colonial regime, the Japanese colonial government took the initiative in all Korean Christian Church's affairs.²⁷

By resisting and protesting against the colonial government in order to redeem the nation's independence, the Korean Christian Church confronted the Japanese colonial government about the national issue of independence.²⁸ The Korean people gradually regarded the Korean Christian Church as a national hope that could achieve the nation's independence and that could provide a political camp to resist Japanese colonialism. The Korean Christian Church successfully changed into a national Church and played a leading role in the independence movement and the political struggle against Japanese colonial power. However, Korean churches failed to base themselves on a Christocentric

²⁶ Donald N. Clark, "Mothers, Daughters, Biblewomen, and Sisters," in *Christianity in Korea*, eds. Robert E. Buswell Jr. and Timothy S. Lee (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2006), 183-184. Unfortunately, all the missionaries did not support the Korean Church's protest against Japanese colonialism and the Korean Church's endeavor to win national independence. "The Northern Presbyterian Mission" (Charles Allen Clark) and "The Methodist Episcopal Mission" (Bishop M.C. Harris) showed "The neutralism or non-committal stance towards the oppressor or the oppressed" [Nak Heong Yang, *Reformed Social Ethic and the Korean Church*, 116-117].

²⁷ Nak Heong Yang, *Reformed Social Ethics and the Korean Church*, 125-126. Wi Jo Kang, "Church and State Relations in Japanese Colonial Period," 110-111.

²⁸ The March First Movement for Independence (on March 1, 1919) was one of the most widespread, cooperative, and peaceful nationalistic movements in Korean history, in which Christians and the Church actively participated in and played a leading role. See Nak Heong Yang, *Reformed Social Ethics and the Korean Church*, 121-123.

vision. While the Korean Church showed its strength in fostering independent movements, its response to Shinto ceremonies revealed theological shortcomings and weaknesses. Finally, the Korean Church was annexed to the United Church of Christ in Japan.

Shortly after Korea became independent in 1945, the Korean people experienced the Korean War (1950-1953).²⁹ During this tragic wartime the Korean Church confronted cruel persecution by the communists of North Korea. During the Korean War, the North Korean Communists forced the main Christian leaders in South Korea to move to North Korea, and communists cruelly killed pastors and Christians who refused to abandon the Christian faith.³⁰ The story of Pastor Yang-won Sohn is a “passion narrative” of Korean Christianity in the War. When the South Korean army captured some North Korean soldiers who killed Pastor Sohn’s sons, Pastor Sohn supplicated the Korean army to grant them a pardon. Then he boldly adopted some of them as his sons. Hence, the Korean Church dubbed him a “nuclear weapon of love.”³¹

However, most Christian laypersons and pastors who experienced the cruelty of the communists during the Korean War have not forgiven the communist North Koreans. Because this communist phobia has been spreading in Korean Christianity, the Korean conservative Church has suspected even the activity of “the World Council of the Churches (WCC),” who attempted to actively communicate with communists and with

²⁹ Donald N. Clark, *Christianity in Modern Korea*, 15-17. Also see Bruce Cumings, *The Origins of the Korean War: Liberation and the Emergence of Separate Regimes, 1945-1947* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981).

³⁰ Wi Jo Kang, *Christ and Caesar in Modern Korea: A History of Christianity and Politics*, 158.

³¹ Young-Jun Ahn, *Sarang eui wonjatan* [The nuclear weapon of love] (Seoul: Sunggwang munwhasa, 2009), 184-208. Also see Moffett, *The Christians of Korea*, 120-121.

China.³² Through the trauma of the Korean War the Korean Church has been entangled in ideological controversy. A major contention of this dissertation is that the Korean Church should return to the Christocentric vision of the Church in which the Church plays a judging role toward secular reason and ideology.

During the military dictatorships (1960-1991) the Korean Church realized the importance of justice, peace, and the preservation of creation, and protested against the military regimes. The Church's recognition of its political duty led the Korean Church to participate in the political struggle and to experience severe persecutions from military governments. After the first Korean president, Syngman Rhee, resigned from his presidency, South Korea experienced a major political crisis.³³ This socio-political crisis caused a military revolution (May 16, 1961)³⁴ to emerge, in which Chung Hee Park played the leading role. Finally Park succeeded in establishing his military regime from 1961 to 1979.³⁵ Unexpectedly, Park was assassinated. During Park's military regime, he launched the *Yusin* (restoration) Constitution, officially intending to preserve "national security" and to maximize "economic development."³⁶ Based on the *Yusin* Constitution, however, Park "tightened restrictions across the board, eliminated all democratic elements, and established a political state. In the face of harsher controls, most of the

³² Even in these days, the most conservative and biggest denomination of the Presbyterian Church (*Hapdong* denomination) believes that the World Council of Churches (WCC) is a pro-communist organization with a Marxist-based theology.

³³ Oliver, *A History of the Korean People in Modern Times: 1800 to the Present*, 252-268.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 269-281.

³⁵ See George E. Ogle, *Liberation to the Captives: the Struggle against Oppression in South Korea* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1977), 93-105.

³⁶ Paul Yunsik Chang, "Carrying the Torch in the Darkest Hours: The Sociopolitical Origins of Minjung Protestant Movements," in *Christianity in Korea*, eds. Robert E. Buswell Jr. and Timothy S. Lee (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2006), 195.

[opposing] politicians, journalists, professors, and students were finally silenced.”³⁷ The *Yusin* Constitution allowed Park’s regime to be recognized as a legal dictatorship.³⁸

After Park’s assassination, another military *coup d’etat* led by Doo Whan Chun and Tae Woo Roh was instituted. Their regime governed South Korea from 1980 to 1991 based on a military dictatorship. Just after the success of the military *coup d’etat* in 1980, the Kwangju People’s Movement for Democratization took place.³⁹ Doo Whan Chun’s martial law government used the military army to disperse any demonstration for democracy. In the conflicts between the armed soldiers and Kwangju citizens, the military headquarters ordered the armed soldiers to shoot at unarmed civil protestors.

On May 17, 1980, the martial law government ordered special troops to the city of Kwangju in the southwest, where the students joined citizens to demonstrate against the military takeover. In the incident more than 2,000 people were wounded or missing, and, according to the official count, some 200 people were shot to death by the military. The Kwangju uprising was portrayed as a collaboration with the North.⁴⁰

This conflict between citizens and the armed troops resulted in many wounded and dead citizens, and the Korean people became afraid of Chun’s military regime for its cruelty and unchecked power.

Against these military dictatorships, however, the progressive Christian churches have resumed the Church’s prophetic role. They were inspired by “the Christian

³⁷ Chung-Shin Park, *Protestantism and Politics in Korea*, 192.

³⁸ When reviewing President Chung Hee Park’s dictatorship, see Paul Yunsik Chang, “Carrying the Torch in the Darkest Hours: The Sociopolitical Origins of Minjung Protestant Movements,” 212-218.

³⁹ Cumings, *Korea’s Place in the Sun: A Modern History*, 377-382.

⁴⁰ David Kwang-Sun Suh, “Minjung Theology: The Politics and Spirituality of Korean Christianity,” in *Perspectives on Christianity in Korea and Japan*, eds. Mark R. Mullins & Richard Fox Young (Lewiston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1995), 161.

experiences in the political struggle for justice”⁴¹ against the military dictatorial regimes of the 1960s to the 1980s. The political activism of these progressive churches has been labeled as Korean *Minjung* (people) Theology,⁴² in which the significant task of the Church is considered to be solidarity with the oppressed, the poor, and the marginalized. In other words, the Church should enter into the restoration of human rights and democracy in cooperation with Korean *Minjung*.⁴³

In Korean history Christianity has developed by enduring persecutions, confronting cultural controversies, and struggling against unjust military regimes. This development occurred under the neo-Confucian religious-cultural system of the *Choson* dynasty, under Japanese colonialism, under communist persecution during the Korean War, and under military dictatorships. Despite these serious persecutions and controversy within the Korean Church, Korea is the most Christianized nation in Asia.

After the 1990s, however, the controversy and division of the Korean Church has been caused by a distinctive element from the earlier period. This distinctive element has come from a political disagreement within Korean Christianity itself. This dissertation

⁴¹ David Kwang-Sun Suh, “A Biographical Sketch of an Asian Theological Consultation,” in *Minjung Theology: People as the Subjects of History*, ed. the Commission on Theological Concerns of the Christian Conference of Asia (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Press, 1983), 16.

⁴² “The Korean liberals disseminated a new theological trend and a new evangelistic movement mostly through the monthly *Kidokkyo sasang* [Christian thought]. The periodical was founded in 1957 by the Christian Literature Society of Korea, which was run by liberal theologians and clergy. Bonhoeffer’s *Letters and Papers from Prison*, Moltmann’s *Theology of Hope*, Harvey Cox’s *The Secular City*, John Robinson’s *Honest to God*, and other major works of radical theologians abroad were introduced in the monthly or translated by the Christian Literature Society of Korea” [Chung-Shin Park, *Protestantism and Politics in Korea*, 88].

⁴³ David Kwang-Sun Suh, “Minjung Theology: The Politics and Spirituality of Korean Christianity,” 143-145.

proposes that the disagreement results from the different socio-political perspectives⁴⁴ within the Korean Church concerning the relationship between the Church and society, as well as the Church's proper response to secondary societies.

*The Relationship between the Church and Society in Korea and Karl Barth's
Christocentric Vision of the Church*

The Church's increased participation in socio-political issues not only has driven Korean Christianity to an irrefutable division between the ecclesial and the political, but also has caused a tragic conflict between conservative and progressive Christians.⁴⁵ This division and conflict has arisen because Korean Christianity has no clear theological answer for the Church's relationship to secondary societies. Hence, I wish to study the relationship between the Church and society in the current Korean context. I will suggest three models of difference, identity, and harmony as hermeneutics for understanding the relationship between Church and society in Korean ecclesiology.⁴⁶ After this analysis, I will critique these three models from the Christocentric vision of the Church as stated by

⁴⁴ See Kim Gwang-Shik, *Tochakwha wa haesukhak* [Indigenization and hermeneutics] (Seoul: The Christian Literature Society of Korea, 1989). I include the "Fourfold Gospel Theology" of the Korean Evangelical Holiness Church (KEHC) in addition to "*Minjung* (people) Theology" and "Indigenization (*Tochakwha*) Theology" because among the major denominations in Korean Christianity (Presbyterian Church, Methodist Church, Korean Evangelical Holiness Church, Pentecostal Church, and Baptist Church), the KEHC is the only "ethnic-self risen Church" in Korean Christianity.

⁴⁵ For example, there is a serious conflict between the liberal theology of the National Council of the Churches in Korea (KNCC) and the fundamental theology of the Christian Council of Korea (CCK). The KNCC decided to hold the 10th international conference of the WCC in Busan, Republic of Korea (South Korea) in 2013. Unfortunately, the CCK radically rebuked this conference in Busan, Korea because the CCK believes that the theology of WCC is extremely liberal and pro-Communist.

⁴⁶ See Winfried Brugger, "From Hostility through Recognition to Identification: State-Church Models and their Relationship to Freedom of Religion," in *Secularization and the World Religions*, eds. Hans Joas and Klaus Wiegandt, trans. Alex Skinner (Liverpool, UK: Liverpool University Press, 2009), 160-180. Winfried Brugger proposes "six classificatory models of the relationship between state and church" as follows: (1) "hostility between state and church," (2) "strict separation in theory and practice," (3) "separation and partial cooperation," (4) "division and partial cooperation," (5) "formal unity of church and state," and (6) "material unity of church and state." In the Korean context, however, this classification is too detailed an analysis. Hence, I suggest three classifications: difference, identity, and harmony.

Karl Barth, and propose a Christocentric relationship between Church and society as a more proper model for Korean Christianity.⁴⁷

The first, or difference, model between the Church and society is represented in the “Fourfold Gospel (*Sajung-Bockeum*) Theology”⁴⁸ of the Korean Evangelical Holiness Church (KEHC) whose theological basis is John Wesley’s teaching of sanctification. However, the Fourfold Gospel Theology’s extreme emphasis on an individual’s holiness without socio-political consciousness has led the KEHC to make a radical distinction between Church and society. This theology posits that the Church and society are two distinctive territories and have their own different tasks.

⁴⁷ Korean Christianity has shown several typologies for understanding Christian theology in Korea. According to the study of Keun-Whan Kang, the theological propensity of the Korean church has been developed from “national and foreign” theological circumstances and influences, and consequently, the Korean Church has produced diverse theological trends, summarized as “single,” “double,” and “triple” theological penchants. See Keun-Whan Kang, “Hanguk gyohoe shinhak eui hurum gwa junmang” [Theological trends developed through the historical stream of the Protestant Church in Korea] (paper presented at the 30th Academic Conference of Korea Association of Christian Studies, Korea, October, 2001): “The ‘single’ idea is Conservative Theology. Dr. Herald S. Hong insists that, in general, the trend has been toward extreme fundamentalism. According to him, such a conservative type of theology blocked the introduction of other types of Christian thought. Dr. Spencer J. Palmer also writes that ‘fundamentalism held sway in the peninsula.’ The general trend of theology is either fundamentalism or conservatism. The ‘double’ idea is ‘Conservatism and Progressivism.’ Dr. Rhee, Jong Sung refers to the theological conflict within the Protestant Church in Korea as the “Left and Right” of conservatism and Progressivism in the Korean theological world. Dr. Chun, Sung Chun mentioned on this matter as ‘Fundamentalism and Modernism,’ or ‘Fundamentalism and Liberalism.’ The ‘triple’ idea is ‘Conservatism, Progressivism and Liberalism.’ Dr. Ryu, Tong Shik mentions in his *Hankook Shinhak eui Kwangmek* (韓國神學의 鑛脈) three streams of Korean theology, i.e., Conservative, Progressive, and Liberal theological thought. Dr. Choo, Chai-Yong also similarly views the streams of Korean theology as three: Conservative Theology, Progressive Theology of Life, and Indigenous Theology of Cultural Dialogue.” Basically, I depend on the triple understanding of Korean Christianity proposed by Tong-Shik Ryu. See Tong-Shik Ryu, *Hanguk shinhak eui kangmaeck* [A bonanza of Korean Christian theology] (Seoul: Jeonmangsa, 1990).

⁴⁸ Chongnahm Cho, *Sajung bokeum eui hyundae jeok euieui* [The modern significance of the Fourfold Gospel] (Seoul: The Christian Literature Society of Korea, 2009). The “Fourfold Gospel” refers to Christian doctrines of regeneration, sanctification, healing, and the second coming.

The second, or identity, model of “Indigenization (*Tochakwha*) Theology”⁴⁹ has emerged as a theological position that contradicts the difference model. This theology agrees with Paul Tillich’s understanding that the Christian Church cannot monopolize the truth of Jesus Christ because the *Logos* is already scattered within non-Christian religions and culture.⁵⁰ This theology accepts “non-Churchism (Mukyokai-shugi)”⁵¹ which holds that the ultimate reality of Christianity already exists everywhere, salvation can be found outside the Church, and thus there exists an essential continuity between Church and society.

The third, or harmony, model is an alternative position between the difference model and the identity model, and is proposed by “*Minjung* (people) Theology.”⁵² *Minjung* Theology, the Korean version of Liberation Theology, focuses on the poor victims of economic crisis and domestic violence, supports Christian’s active participation in socio-political conflicts, and advocates the Church’s political struggle for a better society. *Minjung* Theology believes that the restoration of justice, peace, and human rights will come about through solidarity with the people (*Minjung*). Hence, the Church and society should harmoniously cooperate toward building a utopian society as

⁴⁹ Tong-Shik Ryu, *Hanguk chonggyo wa kidokgyo* [Korean religions and Christianity] (Seoul: The Christian Literature Society of Korea, 1990).

⁵⁰ Paul Tillich, *A History of Christian Thought*, ed. Carl E. Braaten (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1968), 7-9, 27-32.

⁵¹ See Hiroshi Miura, *The Life and Thought of Kanzo Uchimura* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1996), 105-113.

⁵² See Nam-Dong Suh, *Minjung shinhak eui tamgu* [An investigation into Minjung Theology] (Seoul: Hangilsa, 1983). And see Byung-Mu Ahn, *Minjung sinhak yijagee* [A story of Minjung Theology] (Seoul: The Korea Theological Study Institute, 1987).

an “all-comprehensive society” within which the Church can fulfill its function as a “secondary sub-system.”⁵³

The three models of the Church and society, difference, identity, and harmony, in Korean ecclesiology have serious weaknesses. First, they focus on an anthropological orientation of the Church’s tasks such as individual’s holiness, restoration of national-cultural identity, and the rights of the poor. They also weaken the Church’s political function by promoting an extreme indifference to secondary societies or by painting the Church as the State’s political sub-system. These shortcomings of Korean ecclesiology can be corrected by learning from the Christocentric model of the relationship between Church and society in Karl Barth’s theology.

Barth unfolds his theory of Church and society under a Christocentric perspective: Christ the Lord is at the center, the Church is in the inner circle next to Christ, and society is in a more distant outer circle.⁵⁴ Although the Church and society cannot be mixed and confused, Barth believes that there is analogically a positive correspondence between them without a serious contradiction. Thus, society is not an independent entity, and the Church is not a neutral space completely independent of politics. Within God’s order of redemption, the Church has a primary position over society. Hence the Church under the lordship of Jesus Christ has a duty toward society as a model of peaceful behavior, and as a non-violent judge against violent societies and demonic empires.⁵⁵

⁵³ This perspective relies on Dr. Barry Harvey’s comments on the prospectus for this dissertation.

⁵⁴ Karl Barth, *Community, State, and Church* (Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, 1960), 158-159.

⁵⁵ This interpretation of Barth’s Christocentric vision of the Church depends on Kimlyn J. Bender’s study. See Kimlyn J. Bender, *Karl Barth’s Christological Ecclesiology* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005), 257-269.

Purpose and Significance

My first purpose is to critically map out the relationship between Church and society in Korean ecclesiology by referencing three models: difference, identity, and harmony. Second, I suggest Barth's Christocentric model of the relationship between Church and society as a corrective model for Korean Christianity.

This dissertation is timely for several reasons. First, one of the main controversies of indigenizing Western Christianity into the Korean context has been reduced to how to correlate the Church to society.⁵⁶ Recently the Church's increased participation in socio-political issues has driven Korean Christianity to a tragic division between the conservative and liberal denominations.⁵⁷ This division happened because Korean Christianity has no answer for the Church's proper relationship to secondary societies. Hence it is timely to estimate and seek for a proper relationship between Church and society within the Korean context. I am the first to suggest the three models, difference, identity, and harmony, as a hermeneutic for reviewing the relationship between Church and society in Korean ecclesiology. Furthermore, I recommend the Christocentric model as a creative substitute for these three models.

Secondly, this dissertation can challenge Korean theologians to put aside a recent interpretation of Barth's theology which attempts to investigate a vis-à-vis correlation between Barth's theology and Confucianism. After comparing Barth's sanctification and Wang's Confucian notion of "self-cultivation," Heup Young Kim concludes that they

⁵⁶ For a brief overview of Korean Church history, see Keun-Whan Kang, *Hanguk gyohoe hyungsung gwa gui wonin eui jerksa jeok buenserik* [The formation of the Korean Church and a historical analysis of its cause] (Seoul: The Christian Literature Society of Korea, 2004).

⁵⁷ This dissertation suggests that the conflicts between the progressive "National Council of the Churches in Korea (KNCC)" and the conservative "Christian Council of Korea (CCK)" are caused by disagreement on political issues, especially the proper relationship between the Church and society.

have the same aim of teaching “the *Tao* (way) of radical humanization.”⁵⁸ Similarly, Young-Gwan Kim proposes that Korean Confucianism plays a vital role of integrating Barth’s theology into a Korean ecclesiological context through analyzing Sung Bum Yun’s theology of *Sung* (sincerity) in neo-Confucianism.⁵⁹ However, these contextual interpretations of Barth inevitably disregard Barth’s emphasis on a Christocentric vision. This dissertation proposes, therefore, that Koreans who study the theology of Barth should try to understand the essential nature of Barth’s Christocentrism and to incorporate it into the Korean Church, rather than have a vis-à-vis comparison and present a typological analogy between Barth’s thought and Confucianism.

Third, this dissertation can help introduce Korean theology to the Western theological community. Western theologians have been interested exclusively in *Minjung* (people) Theology and thus *Minjung* Theology has been regarded as the representative of Korean theology in Western theological circles.⁶⁰ With this attitude toward Korean theology it is impossible to understand the dynamic diversity within Korean Christianity. Over two hundred years have passed since the Korean people’s reception of Western Christianity. In the process of spreading Christianity, different theologies have appeared and developed through cooperating or contention with each other. This dissertation reveals the diversity of Korean Christianity through sketching out diverse views of the relationship between Church and society.

⁵⁸ Heup Young Kim, *Wang Yang-ming and Karl Barth: A Confucian-Christian Dialogue* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1996).

⁵⁹ Young-Gwan Kim, *Karl Barth’s Reception in Korea: Focusing on Ecclesiology in Relation to Korean Christian Thought* (Frankfurt/Bern: Peter Lang Publishing, 2003).

⁶⁰ For example, Harvey Cox, *Fire from Heaven* (Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, 1995), 213-241.

Methodology

Most Korean theological projects are directly or indirectly under the influence of the “method of correlation,”⁶¹ through which the Korean existential question and the theological answer are correlated, and the ultimate reality of Christianity is reviewed within the Korean socio-cultural context. This methodology also influences the discussion of the relationship between Church and society, and the interpretation of Barth’s theology in Korean Christianity. Sung Yong Jun suggests that individual sanctification and pneumatology play a crucial role in Barth’s theology, and he supports the difference model.⁶² By contrast, Sung-Bum Yun, inspired by the notion of the “vestige of the Trinity” in Barth, proposes that the main task of Korean theology is to seek for the “vestige of the Trinity” within Korean culture and advocates the identity model.⁶³ As an alternative position, Shin-Keun Lee and Soon-Kyung Park, through studying the Confessing Church of Barth, conclude that the Church’s task is either cooperation with society for the Kingdom of God, or protest against an unjust power.⁶⁴ They advocate the harmony model.

However, these Korean theological discourses distort Barth’s theological emphasis because they consider the Korean context as the most important factor in doing theology. Contrarily, I intend to critique the relationship of Church and society in Korean

⁶¹ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 1 (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1951), 59-66.

⁶² Sung Yong Jun, *Karl Barth eui sungryungron jeok sereron* [Karl Barth’s pneumatological baptism] (Seoul: Handul, 1999).

⁶³ Sung Bum Yun, *Hanguk jeok shinhak: sung eui haesukhak* [A Korean-style theology: hermeneutics of sincerity] (Seoul: Sunmyong moonwhasa, 1972).

⁶⁴ Shin-Keun Lee, *Karl Barth eui gyohoeron* [The ecclesiology of Karl Barth] (Seoul: Handul, 2000). Soon-Kyung Park, *Minjok tongil gwa kidokgyo* [National reunification and Christianity] (Seoul: Hangilsa, 1986).

theology from Barth's Christocentric vision of the Church, and propose the Christocentric relationship between Church and society as a more proper model. In this sense, Barth's neo-Orthodoxy plays a critical methodological role in this dissertation, in which dialectical methodology and Christocentrism are emphasized.⁶⁵

First, Barth's dialectical methodology⁶⁶ was formulated under the influence of Søren Kierkegaard's thought, Eduard Thurneysen's pastoral theology, and an exegetical study of the Scripture. In contrast with the liberal theology of Adolf von Harnack and Wilhelm Herrmann, Barth concluded that there is an "infinite qualitative distinction"⁶⁷ between God and human beings, and thus human beings have no capability of approaching God on their own, but only through Jesus Christ. Barth rejected not only all human religious endeavors to reach God through natural theology, religious *a priori*, pietism, or mystical experience, he also rejected the ethical values of contemporary society to produce a utopian society through nationalism, religious socialism, communism, or capitalism. Conversely, Barth's theology has a characteristic of starting "from above," in which Barth designates God's revelation in Christ, the classical

⁶⁵ Bruce L. McCormack, *Orthodox and Modern* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), 291-304. McCormack prefers to use "dialectical" theology instead of "neoorthodox."

⁶⁶ Bruce L. McCormack, *Karl Barth's Critically Realistic Dialectical Theology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 266-280 & 464-467. According to Hans Urs von Balthasar's "two conversions" theory, Barth's conversion from liberalism via dialectic to analogy proposes Catholic thought (Thomas Aquinas) as a background for Barth's theology. In the meantime, Yale school's (especially Hans Frei and George Lindbeck) understanding of Barth's theology, focused on "intratextual narrative," presents a new possibility of interpreting Barth as a narrative-based theology without any special hermeneutic methodology. However, Bruce McCormack's rediscovery of Barth's constant dependence on "dialectic" methodology revives the derailing tendency of Barth's theology from the "critically realistic dialectical theology." According to McCormack, Barth never gave up his dialectic penchant during his whole theological journey [Richard E. Burnett, *Karl Barth's Theological Exegesis* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), 1-11]. Also see Kurt Anders Richardson, *Reading Karl Barth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2004), 57-78 & 143-144.

⁶⁷ Karl Barth, *The Epistle to the Romans*, trans. Edwyn C. Hoskyns (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968), 10.

Christology of the Nicean-Chalcedonian creed, and the Trinity as his theological starting points.⁶⁸

Secondly, Barth's theology can be characterized as a Christ-centered perspective in relation to all other Christian doctrines. Barth uses Christocentrism not as an *a priori* principle, but as a methodological rule – pointing out his endeavors to perceive every Christian doctrine with Jesus Christ as the center of God's revelation.⁶⁹ For Barth's theology, therefore, Christ governs the whole theological system from the beginning to the end via the center. However, Barth does not allow his Christocentrism to be misinterpreted as "Christomonism"⁷⁰ because a Christomonistic understanding inevitably ignores Trinitarian structure, concrete methodology, and the covenantal partnership between God and humans.⁷¹ Barth's doctrine of election, in which Jesus Christ is identified as the electing God and the elected man, reveals the core of Barth's Christocentrism. Thus, anthropology in Barth's theology is based on a Christological concentration, and there exists only the movement from Christology to anthropology.⁷²

After the Second World War, Barth extended his theological concerns toward the Church's political responsibility to secondary societies, and annulled his early view of

⁶⁸ Thomas F. Torrance, *Karl Barth, Biblical and Evangelical Theologian* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1990), 43-45. Also see George Hunsinger, *Disruptive Grace: Studies in the Theology of Karl Barth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2000), 131-147.

⁶⁹ McCormack, *Karl Barth's Critically Realistic Dialectical Theology*, 454. Also see David Mueller, *Karl Barth* (Waco, TX: Word Books, Publishers, 1975), 94-139.

⁷⁰ Henri Blocher, "Karl Barth's Christocentric method," in *Engaging with Barth*, eds. David Gibson & Daniel Strange (New York: T&T Clark, 2008), 26-27.

⁷¹ Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatic I/2*, trans. G.T. Thompson (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1956), 123 & 872.

⁷² Karl Barth, *The Doctrine of the Word of God: Church Dogmatics I/1*, trans. G.T. Thomson (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1949), 148.

political authority as “the existing order,” independent of the Church’s interference.⁷³

This modification was because Barth witnessed the improper cooperation of the German National Church with the Nazi regime in 1930s. Against this distorted cooperation, Barth participated in the Confessing Church and drafted the Barmen Declaration, which emphasized the lordship of Christ and a castigation of idolatry in Hitler’s National Church.⁷⁴ Barth showed that the Church, under the lordship of Christ, can come into conflict with society in the process of doing the Church’s own task.

From Barth’s work my conclusion is that all Korean theological discourses of the relationship between Church and society fail to understand the Church’s proper responsibility to society because they have made a compromise between the Christocentric vision of the Church and the Korean socio-political context. Hence, a serious reconsideration of Barth’s Christocentrism can help Korean Christianity forge a more proper relationship between Church and secondary societies.

Why Karl Barth? Barth was the dominant protestant constructive or systematic theologian of the 20th century. He died in 1968 but he has yet to be replaced by any one singular figure in the 21st century. For over fifty years Korean theologians have looked to Barth, the protestant “Thomas Aquinas,” for guidance, constructive proposals and criticism. Barth has become the baseline against which all other thinkers are evaluated. Their adulation is unwavering and they study him with devout attention. He is their model of how to do theology. But they don’t always see that Christology is the center of

⁷³ Will Herberg, “The Social Philosophy of Karl Barth,” in *Community, State, and Church*, by Karl Barth (Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, 1960), 22-24.

⁷⁴ Eberhard Busch, *Karl Barth: His Life from Letters and Autobiographical Texts*, trans. John Bowden (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1994), 235-315; John Webster, *Barth* (New York: Continuum, 2000), 141-162.

his thought, and various interpretations of his outlook have arisen in Korean Christianity. This dissertation is an attempt to apply Barth's insights to three understandings or misunderstandings of the Church and society in South Korea.

Plan of Study

This dissertation will include six chapters. Chapter one will briefly note the theological morphology of Korean Christianity, and investigate the importance of studying the relationship between Church and society in the Korean context.

The second chapter will study the Fourfold Gospel Theology's view of the relationship between Church and society in the Korean Evangelical Holiness Church (KEHC). In 1907, the KEHC began as an eschatological holiness Church with its emphasis on the doctrine of the Second Coming.⁷⁵ Since the 1970s, however, the eschatological Church of KEHC developed into two different groups. One is the "holiness" Church of Chongnam Cho who focuses on KEHC's reception of Wesleyan individual sanctification described by the 19th century Holiness movement in the USA.⁷⁶ The other is the "ethnic-self risen"⁷⁷ Church of Keun-Whan Kang who highlights the fact that the KEHC began with native Koreans as a nation-based Church. However, both the holiness Church and the ethnic-self risen Church are concerned only with the inner

⁷⁵ Myong-Soo Park, *Hanguk sungkyul gyohoe eui jeorksa wa shinhak* [A history and theology of the Korean Evangelical Holiness Church] (Bucheon, Korea: Seoul Theological University Press, 2004).

⁷⁶ Chongnam Cho, *Sungkyul gyohoe eui shinhak jeok baekyung gwa sajung bokeom eui yureh* [The theological background of the Korean Evangelical Holiness Church and the origin of the Fourfold Gospel Theology] (Seoul: The Korean Evangelical Holiness Church Press, 1998).

⁷⁷ Keun-Whan Kang, "Gidokgyo daehan sungkyul gyohoe eui jaseongron jeok sogo" [A treatise on the self-born theory of the Korean Evangelical Holiness Church], *Seoul shindae gyosoo noncchong* [A theological journal for the Seoul Theological University faculty forum] (1987): 7-10.

holiness of the individual. This theological penchant drives the KEHC to form a radical difference in the relationship between Church and society.

The third chapter will study the relationship between Church and society in “Indigenization Theology.” This theology deals with the problems of indigenizing Western Christianity into a Korean context from the 1960s to the present. Sun-Whan Byun tried to correlate the Christian message with Buddhism;⁷⁸ Tong-Shik Ryu attempted to form a dialogue between Christianity and Shamanism;⁷⁹ and Sung-Bum Yun related Christianity to neo-Confucianism.⁸⁰ In these indigenization projects, in which Korean Christians take into serious consideration the Korean cultural identity, the notions of ethnic subjectivity and the “non-Church Movement” play an important role in opposition to Westernized Christianity.⁸¹ The non-Church Movement conveys an essential identity between Christianity and Korean culture, and purges the distinction between Church and society.

The fourth chapter will analyze *Minjung* (people) Theology’s view of the relationship between Church and society. Korean *Minjung* has experienced the history of *han*, “the emotional, rational, and physical suffering of pain,”⁸² and “the anger and

⁷⁸ Sun-Whan Byun, *Bulgyo wa kidokgyo eui maannam* [An encounter between Christianity and Buddhism], ed. Byun Sun-Whan Archive (Chunan, Korea: The Korean Theological Study Institute, 1997).

⁷⁹ Tong-Shik Ryu, *Hanguk mugyo eui jerksa wa gujo* [The history and structure of Korean Shamanism] (Seoul: Yonsei University Press, 1975).

⁸⁰ Sung-Bum Yun, *Gidokgyo wa hanguk sasang* [Christianity and Korean thought] (Seoul: The Christian Literature Society of Korea, 1964).

⁸¹ Chung-Bae Lee, *Hanguk gaeshingyo jeonyiu tohakwha yeongu* [A study of the advanced Korean Protestant Indigenization Theology] (Seoul: The Christian Literature Society of Korea, 2003), 84-86.

⁸² Andrew Sung Park, *The Wounded Heart of God: The Asian Concept of Han and the Christian Doctrine of Sin* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993), 16-17.

resentment of the *minjung*,⁸³ resulting from suffering under armed invasions, violence from dictatorships, a neo-Confucian patriarchal system, and economic poverty.⁸⁴ In Korea's socio-political situation of the 1970s, the *Minjung* Church had a close solidarity with *Minjung* (people) and was actively involved in socio-political struggles. Recently an "eco-economic *Minjung* Theology"⁸⁵ has emerged as a defensive theology against the intimidation of globalized capitalistic networks and the crisis of eco-economic systems in Korean society. This theology seeks to find a solution to this crisis both through restoring the Sabbatical community based on Taoistic hermeneutics, and through returning to a nation-state relying on neo-nationalism. To achieve these theological tasks the Church in *Minjung* Theology functions as a secondary sub-system for a utopian society because *Minjung* Theology believes that although the Church and society have their autonomous space, both are invited to cooperate in building a better society.

The fifth chapter will critique the three models of the relationship between Church and society in Korean ecclesiology – difference, identity, and harmony – from Barth's

⁸³ Cyris Hee-Suk Moon, *A Korean Minjung Theology – An Old Testament Perspective* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1985), 1-2.

⁸⁴ See Nam-Dong Suh, "Towards a Theology of *Han*," in *Minjung Theology: People as the Subjects of History*, ed. The Commission on Theological Concerns of the Christian Conference of Asia (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1983), 55-69.

⁸⁵ Won-don Kang, "Saengtae jeok nodong gaeyeom eui sunghuh jeok Guengea" [A biblical foundation of the notion of eco-labor], Kang Won-Don's Social Ethics, <http://socialethics.org/wwwb/CrazyWWWBoard.cgi?db=article&mode=read&num=23&page=5&ftype=6&fval=&backdepth=1> (accessed March 9, 2011); Won-don Kang, "Zum hermeneutischen Status des Erfahrungsbegriffs für theologische Perspektivenbildung," Kang Won-Don's Social Ethics, <http://socialethics.org/wwwb/CrazyWWWBoard.cgi?db=article&mode=read&num=243&page=1&ftype=6&fval=&backdepth=1> (accessed March 9, 2011); Won-don Kang, "Saengmyong eui kyungjae wa kidokgyo" [Economy of life and Christianity], Kang Won-Don's Social Ethics, <http://socialethics.org/wwwb/CrazyWWWBoard.cgi?db=article&mode=read&num=26&page=5&ftype=6&fval=&backdepth=1> (accessed March 9, 2011); Won-don Kang, "Noja eui Saengmyong Sasang" [The thought of life in Lao Tzu], Kang Won-Don's Social Ethics, <http://socialethics.org/wwwb/CrazyWWWBoard.cgi?db=article&mode=read&num=48&page=4&ftype=6&fval=&backdepth=1> (accessed March 9, 2011). In these articles, Won-Don Kang proposes the notion of "eco-economic *Minjung* Theology." According to this theology, the Christian community has to strive to sustain the ideal balance of the ecological preservation and economical development for *Minjung*, based on Biblical insights and Lao Tzu's thought.

Christocentric vision of the Church and society. Several contrasting interpretations of Barth's theory have appeared. Jürgen Moltmann proposes a "parable [or correspondence] theory,"⁸⁶ in which society analogically acts with correspondence to the Kingdom of God without absolute contradiction. By contrast, F.W. Marquardt presents the Church's anarchistic relationship toward society,⁸⁷ presupposing a constant conflict. As a middle position, John H. Yoder proposes "practical pacifism"⁸⁸ in which the Church is within the existing state without belonging to it. As another option, however, Kimlyn J. Bender maintains that although the Church and society have a positive relationship without absolute distinction, Barth puts a priority on the Church over society within the created world of God. As an "asymmetrical"⁸⁹ relationship between Church and society, therefore, society is secondary to the Church in the order of redemption, and the Church should serve as a model for and a non-violent critic of secondary societies. From this Barthian perspective the three models of Korean ecclesiology reveal that the Church modifies its relationship to secondary societies according to socio-cultural situations, in which the Church has been defined either as a neutral site indifferent to modern society or as a sub-system for a utopian society.

⁸⁶ Jürgen Moltmann, *The Politics of Discipleship and Discipleship in Politics*, ed. Willard M. Swartley (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2006), 27.

⁸⁷ Friedrich-Wilhelm Marquardt, "Socialism in the Theology of Karl Barth," in *Karl Barth and Radical Politics*, ed. and trans. George Hunsinger (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1976), 55. Also see Friedrich-Wilhelm Marquardt, *Theologie und Sozialismus: Das Beispiel Karl Barths* (Munich: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1985).

⁸⁸ John Howard Yoder, *Karl Barth and the Problem of War & Other Essays on Barth*, ed. Mark Thiessen Nation (Eugene OR: Cascade Book, 2003), 140.

⁸⁹ Bender, *Karl Barth's Christological Ecclesiology*, 263.

The sixth chapter will summarize the discussions made in the previous chapters and show the significance of a Christocentric vision of the Church in Christian social behavior as well as its practical application in the current Korean context.

CHAPTER TWO

Church and Society in the Fourfold Gospel Theology

Korean Spiritual and Evangelical Context

The Fourfold Gospel Theology – justification, sanctification, healing, and the Second Coming of Christ – has played a role in the evangelistic catchphrases of the Korean Evangelical Holiness Church (KEHC).¹ The notion of “fourfold” or “full” Gospel had already appeared as a theological system in the Pentecostalism of the American Holiness Movement context.² Bin Chung and Sang-Jun Kim, Korean indigenous pioneers of the Fourfold Gospel Theology, contacted the American holiness missionaries in Japan around the early 1900s.³ After they returned to Korea in 1907, Bin Chung and Sang-Jun Kim launched this theological movement in Korea with the support of “the Oriental Missionary Society”⁴ as a branch of “the International Apostolic Holiness Union.”⁵

¹ Roy E. Shearer, *Wildfire: Church Growth in Korea* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1966), 191-192. In his book, Shearer portrays the theological penchant of the Holiness Church in Korea as “closely related to the Methodist Church.” However, this theological review of the Korean Evangelical Holiness Church is superficial and disregards the multi-layered matrix of the formation of the KEHC.

² Donald W. Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism* (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1987), 174.

³ Soo-Hoon Ahn, *Hanguk sungkyul gyohoe sungjangsa* [A history of the Korean Evangelical Church's growth] (Los Angeles: Council of Korean Evangelical Church in America, 1981), 94.

⁴ Chun-Young Lee, *Sungkyul gyohoesa* [A history of the Korean Holiness Church] (Seoul: Korea Holiness Church Publishing House, 1970), 18-22.

⁵ Sang-Un Chung, “Sajung bokeum eui jerksa jeok yureh” [The historical origin of the Fourfold Gospel Theology], in *Sungkyul gyohoe wa sajung bokeum* [The Holiness Church and the Fourfold Gospel Theology], ed. The Institute of Holiness Theology of Sungkyul University (Anyang, Korea: Sungkyul Theology Research Institute, 1998), 58.

The Fourfold Gospel movement in the Korean context started as “the Oriental Missionary Society Gospel Mission Hall” (1907-20). After this period the movement developed as the “*Chosun Yasogyo* Oriental Missionary Society-Holiness Church” (1921-44) in which the Fourfold Gospel movement was initially formed as an ecclesiological structure. In its final stage, the Fourfold Gospel movement was officially organized with the name of “the Korean Holiness Church” (1945-present) which is considered one of the five mainline Churches in South Korea.⁶

Originally the Korean Fourfold Gospel Theology was influenced by the theological and missionary vision of the “International Apostolic Holiness Union” of the United States in 1897 without any significant alterations. This American holiness movement burgeoned after its prominent leader, Martin W. Knapp, left the Methodist Episcopal Church.⁷ Knapp argued that the late 19th century Methodist Church had been derailed from the original thought of John Wesley’s teaching, namely the sanctification of the individual.⁸ Focusing on the individual sanctification of Wesley, Knapp was also attracted to the new emerging evangelical movement in the United States whose theological accent was on “healing of the sick, the second Advent of Christ, and the

⁶ Young-Pil Oh, *Sungkyul gyohoe sunanki* [A history of the Korean Holiness Church under persecution] (Seoul: The Publishing Department of the Korean Holiness Church, 1971), 10-11. Also, see Myong-Soo Park, *Gundae bokeum juuie eui juyo haerum* [Mainstream modern evangelicalism] (Seoul: The Christian Literature Society of Korea, 1998), 464.

⁷ Sang-Un Chung, “Sajung bokeum eui jerksa jeok yureh” [The historical origin of the Fourfold Gospel Theology], 57-58.

⁸ Chang-Geun Mock, “Sajung bokem eui kiwon” [The origin of Fourfold Gospel Theology], The Sunggyul Theology Institute, <http://sgti.kehc.org/> (accessed January 31, 2011).

evangelization of the world.”⁹ Hence, the theological vision of the International Apostolic Holiness Union

emphasizes the sanctification of believers as a definite second work of grace instantaneously received by faith, the healing of the sick through faith in Christ, the premillennial reign of Christ on earth, and the evangelization of the world as a step in hastening the coming of the Lord.¹⁰

The theology of the International Apostolic Holiness Union was originally based on Wesleyan theology of individual sanctification. However, it gradually modified its theological dependence on the holiness revival movement in the United States in which the doctrines of healing and the premillennial Second Coming of Christ were preeminently emphasized.¹¹

As this new holiness movement in America significantly prospered, the members of the International Apostolic Holiness Union wanted to pass their evangelical zeal to the whole world. It dispatched foreign missionaries to all nations. According to the mission statistics of 1916, this group had been operating its missions in Africa, the British West Indies, and South America. It also sent missionaries to Japan in East Asia to spread the gospel of holiness under the supervision of the Oriental Missionary Society.¹²

When the Korean heralds of the Fourfold Gospel Theology learned this theology in Japan and returned to launch a mission camp in Korea, the socio-political situation in the Korean peninsula was very complicated and unstable because Japanese colonialism

⁹ Bureau of the Census, *Religious Bodies: 1916*, part II (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1919), 315.

¹⁰ Ibid., 315-316.

¹¹ Chongnahm Cho, “Hanguk sungkyul gyohoe eui shinhak jeok baekyung gwa kiwon” [The theological background and origin of the Korean Evangelical Holiness Church], in *Sungkyul gyohoe eui jerksa wa tukching* [A history and characteristic of the Korean Evangelical Holiness Church], ed. Shin-Keun Lee (Bucheon, Korea: The Theological Institute of Sungkyul Theology, 2000), 105-108.

¹² Bureau of the Census, *Religious Bodies: 1916*, part II, 316.

had appeared on the Korean peninsula. Experiencing complete victory in the Sino-Japanese War (1894-95)¹³ through using the Korean peninsula as a Japanese military base camp to proceed toward the East Asian continent, the Japanese imperial regime intended to totally subjugate the *Choson* dynasty. Having been successful in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904,¹⁴ the Japanese imperial government forced the Korean government (*Choson* dynasty) to sign the *Eulsa Protection Treaty* (1905), which lawfully gave the Japanese regime full control over the foreign policy and affairs of the Korean government. Finally, the Japanese imperial regime declared that Korea (*Choson* dynasty) was officially annexed to Japan in 1910.¹⁵

The political context of the late 1800s and the early 1900s in Korea was catastrophic because the Korean people were deprived of their nation. In addition to political upheaval, the Korean people had experienced huge socio-cultural chaos because new thoughts and cultures were imported and conflicted with the Korean traditional value system. Neo-Confucianism had gained power as a political ideology and value system during the *Choson* dynasty. In the Korean peninsula of the late 1800s and the early 1900s, however, the existing neo-Confucianism confronted and conflicted with the imported Christian faith because the Confucianized people found some anti-traditional and anti-governmental teachings in Christian thought.

The Koreans in the late 1800s and the early 1900s already recognized the Christian faith in the form of Catholicism through Christian evangelism and persecution of the Confucianism-based *Choson* government. Moreover, it was not difficult for the

¹³ Cumings, *Korea's Place in the Sun: Modern History*, 110-11 & 119.

¹⁴ Oliver, *A History of the Korean People in Modern Times: 1800 to the Present*, 92-92.

¹⁵ Ki-baik Lee, *A New History of Korea*, 309-315.

Korean people to access and read the Korean version of the Bible within the Korean peninsula because John Ross's Korean version of the Bible (1876)¹⁶ and Su-Chung Yi's Korean version of the Bible (1883) had circulated in Korean society.¹⁷ In addition to an introduction of the Korean-translated Bible to Korean society, the Protestant missionaries, Henry G. Appenzeller and Horace G. Underwood, launched and planted their Methodist mission and Presbyterian mission in 1885.¹⁸ Appenzeller and Underwood chose to adopt an indirect mission strategy toward the Koreans because of their limitations in directly connecting the Christian message within the political moratorium of the Korean context.¹⁹ In spite of these negative circumstances, the Protestant mission experienced a huge success because the neo-Confucian Koreans, crying at the loss of their nation, came to recognize that the Christian Church was able to fulfill the nation's hope for independence from Japanese colonialism.

In the Korean society of the late 1800s and the early 1900s, the *Tonghak* ("Eastern Learning") revolutionary religion (movement)²⁰ also appeared as a strong rival to neo-Confucianism (high class religion) and Christian faith ("Western Learning"). The *Tonghak* religion was popular especially among Korean grassroots (*minjung*) because its main teaching contained revolutionary visions. The basic doctrine of *Tonghak* was "man

¹⁶ Rak-Joon Paik, *Hanguk gaeshin gyohoesa* [A history of the Korean Protestant Church] (Seoul: Yonsei University Press, 1985), 49-53.

¹⁷ Grayson, *Early Buddhism and Christianity in Korea*, 103-104.

¹⁸ Rak-Joon Paik, *Hanguk gaeshin gyohoesa* [A history of the Korean Protestant Church], 113-124; Clark, *Christianity in Modern Korea*, 6-7.

¹⁹ Kyung-Bae Min, *Hanguk kidokgyohoesa* [A history of Korean Christianity], 155-158.

²⁰ Dong-Sun Kim, *The Bread for Today and the Bread for Tomorrow: The Ethical Significance of the Lord's Supper in the Korean Context* (New York: Peter Lang, 2001), 235: "*Donghak* (meaning eastern philosophy) Religion, which emerged in 1860, gave rise to the *Donghak* Revolution (1894), the largest *minjung* uprising in Korean history."

and God are one” [*In-Nae-Chun* (人乃天)]. This fundamental doctrine “means, in brief, that, potentially, man is God, but that this oneness is actually realized only as the individual exercises [of] sincere faith in the oneness of his own spirit and body[,] and in the universality of God.”²¹ However, this new understanding of the relationship between the Heavenly god and human beings was not coming from East Asian cosmology and naturalism. *Tonghak*’s basic doctrine originated from the spiritual integration of the Koreans’ recognition of the heavenly way (*Tao*) in Korean history through the passage of the socio-political upheaval in Korea.²²

In the process of *minjung*’s life, Korean *minjung* “had already (i) experienced the decent of Heaven in the present world, (ii) recognized themselves as the subjects of the new world, and (iii) dreamed of an egalitarian society.”²³ Under this vision, Korean *minjung* forged *Tonghak* religion, which synthesized all the existing religious thoughts in Korea, namely the “anthropomorphic” perspectives of God in Korean shamanism, the “pantheistic” vision in Taoism, the “non-dualistic” world view in Buddhism, and the harmonious world of “*Yin-Yang*” in Confucianism.²⁴

The *Tonghak* movement was concerned not only with social reformation, based on the modern thoughts of human rights and social justice within the *Choson* dynasty, but also with the restoration of the nation’s self government within international political relationships. In the progress of Japan’s plan to ultimately colonize the *Choson* dynasty,

²¹ Benjamin Weems, *Reform, Rebellion, and the Heavenly Way* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1964), 9.

²² Kyoung-Jae Kim, *Chonggyo dawon sidae eui kidokgyo youngsung* [Christian spirituality in the religious pluralistic era] (Seoul: Dasan gulbang, 1992), 263-265.

²³ Dong-Sun Kim, *The Bread for Today and the Bread for Tomorrow*, 130.

²⁴ Sang Jin Ahn, *Continuity and Transformation* (New York: Peter Lang, 2001), 52, 57, & 62.

however, the *Tonghak* revolution (1894) against the corruptive *Choson* official and Japan's imperial army unfortunately failed to realize the ideal doctrine of *in-nae-chun* as the Korean grassroots' dream within Korean society, and to protect the Korean peninsula against international powers, especially Japanese imperialism.²⁵

After the failure of the revolution, *Tonghak* gradually decreased in power and lost its followers. Meanwhile, after the official annexation to Japan, the neo-Confucian social system, as the *Choson* dynasty's socio-political ideology, also rapidly collapsed. By contrast, the Christian mission was significantly burgeoning and the Christian Church was emerging as an alternative to provide the Koreans with a hope and national identity in the late 1800s and the early 1900s. The Korean people expected the Korean Christian Church to play a leading role in resisting the Japanese colonial government.²⁶

With these tragic political, economical, social, and cultural backgrounds, the Fourfold Gospel Theology of the KEHC was welcomed by the desperate Koreans. Through the message of "justification" and "sanctification," the Fourfold Gospel preachers requested the Korean people to repent of their sins and to show a radical conversion. They believed that Korea's political subjugation to Japan resulted mainly from their amoral and unethical life.²⁷

Through the doctrine of "healing" the Fourfold Gospel preachers encouraged the Korean people to experience the grace of God which was able to restore all Christians from their weaknesses. Furthermore, by teaching the doctrine of the premillennial second

²⁵ Ibid., 67-69.

²⁶ Nak Heong Yang, *Reformed Social Ethic and the Korean Church*, 109-115.

²⁷ Man-Shin Lee, *Sajung bokeum kangdan* [Pulpit of the Fourfold Gospel] (Seoul: Chungpa, 1997), 165-188. Also, see Gyo-Soo Moon, *Lee sung-bong moksa eui buhyung woondong gwa hanguk gyohoe* [The revival movement of Rev. Sung-Bong Lee and his influence on the Korean Church] (Seoul: Forum Discussion, 2006), 54, 56, & 80-81.

coming of Jesus Christ, the Fourfold Gospel awakened all Christians to know that rather than Japanese colonialism, only Jesus Christ ruled over the world and only He had an authority to restore the Korean nation to its old glory.²⁸

Developmental Interpretations of the Fourfold Gospel Theology

Korean indigenous heralds of the Korean Evangelical Holiness Church (KEHC) had superficially and ambiguously defined the meaning of the “Fourfold Gospel,” and left no concrete theological system and theory. Consequently, the KEHC has been under pressure to define the exact meaning of the Fourfold Gospel and the Church’s identity. The Fourfold Gospel theologians who belong to the KEHC have attempted to define the nature of the Fourfold Gospel and to develop this theological thought in the Korean ecclesiological context. Various theological proposals for the origin and development of the Fourfold Gospel in the KEHC have appeared.²⁹

The indigenization process of the Fourfold Gospel Theology in the KEHC has been under construction. The Korean heralds of the Fourfold Gospel Theology, especially Bin Chung (1873 – 1949) and Sang-Jun Kim (1881 – 1933), put its emphasis on premillennial eschatology.³⁰ Kim’s theological penchant followed the scripture-centered apocalypticism³¹ in which Kim divided the historical era into seven stages and

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ See Chongnahm Cho, *John Wesley eui shinhak* [A theology of John Wesley] (Seoul: The Christian Literature Society of Korea, 1988), 216-247; Also see Chongnahm Cho, *Sajung bokeum eui hyundae jeok eueui* [A modern significance of the Fourfold Gospel], 19-43.

³⁰ Chang-Geun Mock, “Sungkyul gyohoe jaerimron eui hyungsung baekyung” [A formational background of the doctrine of the Second Coming in the KEHC], The Sungkyul Theology Institute, <http://sgti.kehc.org/> (accessed January 31, 2011).

³¹ Sang-Jun Kim, *Danielsuh kangeui* [Lectures on the Book of Daniel] (Kyungsung: The Choson Jesus Methodist Church, 1932), *Muksirok kangeui* [Lecture on the Book of Revelation] (Kyungsung, Korea: The Choson Jesus Methodist Church, 1918).

sought to regard it in exact agreement with biblical history. Based on the premillennial perspective, Kim also argued that the Second Coming of Christ will occur right before a millennium (premillennial).³² Furthermore, according to Kim's premillennial logic,³³ there exists a difference of time between the salvific rapture before tribulation and Christ's descent on the earth after tribulation.³⁴ The most important aspect of Kim's emphasis on the doctrine of the Second Coming was that he had read the socio-political predicament of Japanese colonialism in the Korean peninsula from the eschatological and apocalyptic vision of the Book of Revelation. Under Japanese colonialism the apocalyptic hope and vision in the Fourfold Gospel Theology provided the Korean Church and the Korean people with strength to endure tribulation and persecution from the Japanese colonial regime. The expectation of the Second Coming of Christ and Christ's judgment over the world were the most powerful theological logic in the Japanese captivity of the Korean Church.³⁵

Myong-Chik Lee (1890-1973), as a second generation theologian of the Fourfold Gospel Theology, had developed and ameliorated Kim's eschatological emphasis of the Fourfold Gospel Theology. Lee's theological strategy was to interpret the Fourfold Gospel Theology as having a universal horizon of Christianity and to evaluate it as the underlying theme in the whole Bible. In other words, Lee strove to prove that the

³² Gyu-Myong Choi, "Kim Sang-Jun moksa eui sangae wa shinhak" [The life and theology of Kim Sang-Jun], in *Kidokgyo daehan sungkyul gyohoe eui shinhak eui jerksa wa tukching* [A history and the features of the Korean Evangelical Holiness Church's theology], ed. Shin-Geun Lee (Bucheon, Korea: the Institute of Sungkyul Theology, 2000), 19-20.

³³ See Sang-Jun Kim, *Sajoong gyori* [The fourfold doctrine] (Seoul: Kyung Sung Bible Institute, 1921).

³⁴ Meesaeng Lee Choi, *The Rise of the Korean Holiness Church in Relation to the American Holiness Movement* (Lanham, MD: The Scarecrow Press, 2008), 94.

³⁵ See Chong Bum Kim, "Preaching the Apocalypse in Colonial Korea," in *Christianity in Korea*, eds. Robert E. Buswell Jr. and Timothy S. Lee (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i, 2006), 149-166.

Fourfold Gospel was not a theological agenda of a small denomination.³⁶ He held that the nature of Fourfold Gospel Theology belonged to evangelical orthodoxy because it was faithful to the scriptural way of salvation.³⁷ In particular, Lee positively intended to connect it with the theology of John Wesley. He realized that for development of the Fourfold Gospel Theology, it had to use an existing authentic theological system.³⁸ In order to extrapolate the doctrine of healing and the Second Coming from traditional Wesleyan theology, Lee proposed a hermeneutic of Wesleyan theology different from the interpretation of mainline Methodism. Lee believed that his understanding of John Wesley's thought was to return to "primitive Wesley,"³⁹ distinguishing it from a "liberalized" interpretation of Wesley's legacy. Simultaneously Lee argued that the doctrine of healing and the Second Coming of Christ played an important role in primitive Wesleyan thought. Meesaneng Lee Choi considers Lee's perception of Wesley's theology to be the same understanding of Wesley in the radical holiness movement in the American context in which the doctrine of healing and eschatology was considered as the important teaching of Wesley. *The Revivalist*, the theological journal

³⁶ Myong-Chik Lee, *Choson yasogyo dongyangsungyohoe sungkyulgyohoe raksa* [A brief history of the Choson Jesus Oriental Mission Holiness Church] (Kyung-sung: The Oriental Mission Church-Holiness Church Publishing House, 1929), 2-4. Also see Myong-Chik Lee, *Shin yakjeonsuh sajung bokeum* [A handbook for the fourfold scriptural theme in the New Testament] (Kyung-sung: OMS-Holiness Church Press, 1938).

³⁷ See In-shik Choi, "Lee myong chik moksa eui sangae" [The life of Rev. Myong-Chik Lee] (paper presented at the Academic Conference in the Association of the Korean Evangelical Holiness Church, Anyang, Korea, October 28, 2002. According to Choi, M.C. Lee's extreme scripture-centered interpretation of the Fourfold Gospel has led his theological thought to have a focus on the anti-nationalism and an extreme eschatology.

³⁸ Myong-Chik Lee, *Gidokgyo eui sadae bokeum* [Four axial themes of the Gospel in Christianity] (Seoul: Korean Evangelical Holiness Church Press, 1952).

³⁹ Myong-Chik Lee, *Choson yasogyo dongyangsungyohoe sungkyulgyohoe raksa* [A brief history of the Choson Jesus Oriental Mission Holiness Church], 2-3. Chongnam Cho who is a specialist of John Wesley's theology supports M.C. Lee's understanding of John Wesley's thought, based on Robert Chiles' research. See Robert E. Chiles, *Theological Transition in American Methodism: 1790-1935* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1965).

of the International Apostolic Holiness Church, portrayed Wesley as a strong advocate of both the doctrine of healing and eschatology.⁴⁰

However, Fourfold Gospel Theology's emphasis had rapidly changed through Chongnam Cho's exclusive Wesleyan interpretation. Cho focused on and developed the notions of "scriptural holiness" in the theology of Wesley and "primitive Methodism."⁴¹ M.C. Lee had slightly referred to them when he had comprehensively interpreted the ambiguous definition of the Fourfold Gospel, originally delivered by Bin Chung and Sang-Jun Kim. Cho's theological project intended to provide the Fourfold Gospel Theology with Wesleyan theology, exclusively emphasizing the sanctification of the individual. However, Cho's new interpretation of the Fourfold Gospel Theology radically highlighted the direct Wesleyan connection, and consequently, the doctrine of sanctification. It was inevitable, therefore, that Cho's Wesleyan hermeneutic of the Fourfold Gospel Theology diluted the vigor of the doctrine of healing and Christ's Second Coming which the early KEHC had accentuated. Nevertheless, with the help of Cho's theological endeavor, the Fourfold Gospel Theology was academically regarded as the root of Wesley's theology, and the KEHC was accepted as the Christian Orthodox Church within the Korean theological circle. However, Cho maintained that there are huge differences between the Fourfold Gospel Theology's interpretation of Wesley's theological legacy and the mainline Methodist Church in Korea. Cho wrote:

Then, it could be possible to ask what the difference between the Korean Evangelical Holiness Church and the already existing Korean Methodism is. It is absolutely true that Korean Methodism regards Wesley as its theological

⁴⁰ Meesaeng Lee Choi, *The Rise of the Korean Holiness Church in Relation to the American Holiness Movement*, 102.

⁴¹ Myong-Chik Lee, *Choson yasogyo dongyangsungyohoe sungkyulgyohoe raksa* [A brief history of the Choson Jesus Oriental Mission Holiness Church], 2-3.

background. However, the Methodist Church at that time was in the process of change from the doctrine and spirit of primitive Methodism to liberalism. Hence, the Korean Evangelical Holiness Church intended to inherit primitive Methodism, which was an ecclesiological movement solely following Wesley's evangelism and theology. In this sense, we can fully understand the meaning of primitive Methodism as emphasized by pastor Myong-Chik Lee. At that time, Methodism already derailed from the original theology of Wesley to liberalism.⁴²

In the above passage, Cho boldly argues that the Fourfold Gospel Theology of the KEHC had rightly inherited the true nature of primitive Methodism, compared to the Korean Methodist Church's derailment. Simultaneously, Cho also asserted that the KEHC's interpretation of "sanctification" was rooted in true "Scriptural Holiness."

Cho's theological project tried to show that a true Scriptural Holiness was well implemented in primitive Wesleyan Methodism and the Fourfold Gospel Theology in the KEHC, compared to other Wesleyan holiness movements. Cho proposed, therefore, that Wesleyanism was the theological backbone for the Fourfold Gospel Theology, and thus the KEHC had to use the Fourfold Gospel Theology as an evangelical slogan under the sub-division of Wesley's theology.⁴³ As a Korean specialist of Wesley's theology, Cho extended the theological horizon of the Fourfold Gospel Theology toward true Wesleyanism, successfully secured its universality, and creatively constructed the theological system of the KEHC.

Cho's exclusive interpretation of the Fourfold Gospel Theology from true Wesleyanism has been critiqued by other Fourfold Gospel theologians. These critiques have arisen because Cho's understanding of the Fourfold Gospel Theology did not carefully consider the Korean socio-political context, and the sacrificial endeavors of the

⁴² Chongnahm Cho, *John Wesley eui shinhak* [A theology of John Wesley], 217.

⁴³ Chongnahm Cho, *Sajung bokeum eui hyundae jeok euieui* [A modern significance of the Fourfold Gospel], 28-29.

Korean people who received this Fourfold Gospel, preached this Gospel, and constructed a Korean indigenous denomination – the Korean Evangelical Holiness Church. Keun-Whan Kang proposed the so-called “*Jasaengron*” (“self-born denomination theory”),⁴⁴ in which Kang emphasized the fact that the establishment of the KEHC depended totally on the Korean people, and not the Western Christian missionaries or theological movements. Kang argued that although the catchphrases and theology of the KEHC was founded on the foreign-originated theology (John Wesley’s theology and the American Holiness movements), the denomination of the KEHC had been built totally by the Korean indigenous people.⁴⁵ Kang’s perspective on the origin of the Fourfold Gospel Theology in the KEHC as “*Jasaengron*” (“self-born denomination theory”) successfully supplemented the unilateral origin of primitive Methodism (Wesleyanism) in Cho’s argument, in which there is no consideration of the Korean indigenous people’s endeavor to construct the KEHC.

Kang’s *Jasaengron* revealed its weakness because it did not consider the international interconnectedness in the process of the Korean people’s contacting the Fourfold Gospel Theology, implanting it within the Korean context, and establishing a Korean indigenous denomination (KEHC) based on this theology. While Cho’s project concerning the direct relationship between the Fourfold Gospel Theology and the

⁴⁴ Keun-Whan Kang, “Kidokgyo daehan sungkyul gyohoe eui jasaengron jeok sogo” [A treatise on the self-born theory of the Korean Evangelical Holiness Church], *Seoul shindae gyosoo nonchong* [Theological journal for the Seoul Theological University faculty forum] (December, 1987): 7-10. Also see Sang-Un Chung, *Sungkyul gyohoe wa jerksa yeongu 2 gwon* [Evangelical Holiness Church and historical study, vol. 2] (Seoul: Jireh Publisher, 1999), 117-144.

⁴⁵ There is another “*Jasaengron*” theologian, Sang-Un Chung. However, Chung’s argument is much more radical. According to Chung, the Korean Holiness Church was organized and established with the indirect influence of A.B. Simpson before two Korean heralds of the Fourfold Gospel. Chung’s logic boldly presents the origin of the KEHC as the result of the indigenous Christian movement of Korean People. See, Sang-Un Chung, *Hanguk sungkyul gyohoe eui jerksa 1 gwon* [A history of the Korean Holiness Church, vol. 1] (Seoul: Eunsung Publishing Company, 1997), 171.

theology of Wesley was leaning on his theoretical and abstract conviction of Wesleyanism without any serious consideration of the Korean context, Kang's *Jasaengron* was too narrowly focused on the formation history of the KEHC without comprehensive consideration about the theological genealogy of the Fourfold Gospel Theology.⁴⁶

In order to overcome these two extreme approaches about the origin and development of the KEHC and its theology, Myong-Soo Park pointed out the theological importance of recognizing the exact historical context both in Korea and in the United States in the late 1800s and the early 1900s. After historical research, Park concluded that the Fourfold Gospel Theology in the KEHC was directly related to the holiness movement of America/Britain in the 19th century.⁴⁷ As a scholar of church history, Park was unable to agree that the origin of the Fourfold Gospel Theology in the KEHC was directly related to primitive Wesleyanism (suggested by Cho) because this view is too

⁴⁶ Meesaeng Lee Choi critiques the K.W. Kang's "*Jasaengron*" as "the anti-imperialistic, anti-mission ideology of eliminating the role of missionaries and centralizing *MinJoong* (Koreans)" [Choi, *The Rise of the Korean Holiness Church in Relation to the American Holiness Movement*, 103]. In my judgment, however, Kang's theory is justified in compensating for the weakness of a totally foreign-originated perspective in the formation of the KEHC.

⁴⁷ Myong-Soo Park, *Geundae bokeum jueui eui juyo heureum* [Mainstream modern evangelicalism] (Seoul: The Christian Literature Society of Korea, 1998). Also see Myong-Soo Park, *Chogi hanguk sungkyul gyohoesa* [An early history of the Korean Holiness Church] (Seoul: The Christian Literature Society of Korea, 2001). In relation to the holiness movement of America/Britain in the 19th century, one needs to pay attention to A.B. Simpson's revival movement and his Fourfold Gospel. According to Meesaeng Lee Choi, "By combining a fellowship movement (Christian Alliance) and his mission endeavor (Evangelical Missionary Alliance), Simpson created the Christian and Missionary Alliance," and "The 'Fourfold Gospel' doctrine culminated in Simpson's experience, that is, in his encounter with Jesus as Savior, Sanctifier, Healer, and Coming Lord" [Meesaeng Lee Choi, *The Rise of the Korean Holiness Church in Relation to the American Holiness Movement*, 22]. Chongnahm Cho views Simpson's Fourfold Gospel as a Christocentric evangelizational catchphrase, confronting against liberal theology and social gospel movement. However, Cho argues that there is no direct connection between Simpson's Fourfold Gospel and the KEHC's Fourfold Gospel Theology because the KEHC has developed its Fourfold Gospel Theology from the Soteriological perspective of John Wesley [Chongnahm Cho, *John Wesley eui shinhak* [A theology of John Wesley] (Seoul: The Christian Literature Society of Korea, 1988), 218-219].

large of a theological jump without any consideration of historical research.⁴⁸ Park's starting point of interpreting the Fourfold Gospel Theology was based on the radical Holiness movement in the United States, in which the doctrine of sanctification was monopolistically highlighted.⁴⁹ Park's historical approach, especially the radical holiness movement in America/Britain in the nineteenth century, provided the study of the origin of the Fourfold Gospel Theology in the KEHC with a new viewpoint, different both from Cho's Wesleyan theological perspective and from Kang's "ethnic self-originated" perspective.

Nevertheless, Myong-Soo Park failed to recognize the multi-dimensional elements which were accumulated by the KEHC in the process of receiving, preaching, and theologizing the Fourfold Gospel Theology. Park predominantly emphasized the doctrine of sanctification in the Fourfold Gospel Theology proposed by the radical holiness movement in America/Britain in the nineteenth century. According to Park's understanding of the Fourfold Gospel Theology, therefore, the doctrines of justification, healing, and Christ's Second Coming became the sub-divisions for the doctrine of sanctification. Hence, Meesaeng Lee Choi rightly critiqued Park's hermeneutical position of the Fourfold Gospel Theology by saying, "As his historical interpretation was limited to the theological lens of holiness, his position was reductionistic to a certain degree."⁵⁰ Moreover, Park's "sanctification-alone theory" cannot be used as the

⁴⁸ Duk-Man Bae, "Sajung bokeum yel tonghaebon hanguk sungkyul gyohoe eui shinhak sasang" [The theological thought of the KEHC from the perspective of the Fourfold Gospel], *Sungkyul gyohoe wa shinhak* 1 [Holiness Church and theology 1] (1997): 195-199.

⁴⁹ Myong-Soo Park, *Geundae bokeum jueui eui juyo heureum* [Mainstream modern evangelicalism], 81-136.

⁵⁰ Meesaeng Lee Choi, *The Rise of the Korean Holiness Church in Relation to the American Holiness Movement*, 102-103.

hermeneutical key to interpret the Fourfold Gospel Theology and its denominational movement in Korea because an exclusive theological emphasis on sanctification was historically related to the emergence of Pentecostal churches and had represented their theological feature.⁵¹

Choi argues that the Fourfold Gospel Theology has a very complicated background. The actual historical origin of it in the KEHC is “in the matrix of the Wesleyan holiness and evangelical movements in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century America, England, and Japan.”⁵² Consequently, it becomes a very difficult theological task to rightly understand the complexity of related historical movements and the nature of the theological matrix behind its historical development.

Choi’s perspective, the multi-dimensional matrix for the origin of the Fourfold Gospel Theology, is both comprehensive and persuasive. Choi’s theory successfully reveals the origin of the Fourfold Gospel Theology in the KEHC from both historical and theological perspectives, and retrieves the originally quadrilateral system of the Fourfold Gospel Theology. Moreover, the multi-dimensional matrix theory of Choi is able to include the Wesleyan-centric interpretation of Chongnahm Cho, the self-born denomination theory (*Jasaengron*) of Keun-Whan Kang, and the sanctification-centric interpretation of Myong-Soo Park. Melvin E. Dieter well summarizes and reveals the significance of Choi’s research on the Fourfold Gospel in the KEHC as follows:

The author’s [Meesaeng Lee Choi’s] focus on the four-fold gospel theme opens up for us rich possibilities for parallel historical, theological and cultural cross studies. This study which draws upon the historical and theological development of two children of the Holiness revival, the Pilgrim Holiness Church, in the United States begun in 1897 and the Korean Holiness Church begun by Koreans

⁵¹ Ibid., 3.

⁵² Ibid., 103.

and missionaries of that Church only ten years later. It presents fertile grounds for bringing to the fore much neglected aspects of Holiness historiography, especially questions about the relationships between the National Holiness Association's historic more exclusively Methodist oriented holiness movement and the more pluralist and radical Wesleyan/Holiness movement. The importance of the "Four-fold Gospel" in the theology and life of God's Bible School, O.M.S. International, The Pilgrim Holiness (Now Wesleyan) Church, and the churches like the Korean Holiness Church which they nurtured through their missions works too often has been ignored by histories which rightfully and readily connect their present theologians to classical Wesleyanism, but fail to give due recognition to the hundred years of intermediate historical and theological contextual currents through which their current Wesleyanism became part of the present life of these movements.⁵³

Dieter evaluates Choi's study as unraveling the complicated and dynamic elements in the Fourfold Gospel Theology in the KEHC, based on actual historical knowledge and proper theological judgment.

Apocalyptic (Eschatological) Vision of the Church

Chongnahm Cho's Wesleyan theological interpretation of the Fourfold Gospel Theology mostly disregarded the doctrine of Christ's Second Coming in the system. Myong-Soo Park's historical interpretation of the Fourfold Gospel Theology as a branch of the radical Holiness movement in the American/British context of the nineteenth century resulted in the sanctification-centric interpretation of the Fourfold Gospel. These Wesleyan theological reductive and sanctification-centric interpretations deprived it of its eschatological and apocalyptic dynamic understanding of the Church and the world.

Shaye J.D. Cohen portrays the general definition of apocalypticism in the Scripture as follows:

The implicit message of the apocalypses is that events on the cosmic or national scale have been predetermined by God, but that individuals, forewarned by the vision, can ally themselves with the forces of God through repentance and

⁵³ Melvin E. Dieter, foreword to *The Rise of the Korean Holiness Church in Relation to the American Holiness Movement*, by Meesaeng Lee Choi (Lanham, MD: The Scarecrow Press, 2008), vii-viii.

righteousness. God's plan for world events was set centuries or millennia before the current times, and there is nothing that humans can do now to affect its course. In particular, one view that became widespread was the theory of four empires, which postulated that either Israel or the world would come under the dominion of four successive empires, each worse than the next. The last would launch a great persecution against God's elect, and in the midst of that crisis the series of empires would come to an end as God and his hosts would restore justice in the world. The theory was first enunciated by Daniel (chapters 2 and 7) and exerted enormous influence on the Jews and Christians of antiquity and the Middle Ages. In this scheme sin and righteousness, punishment and reward, obduracy and repentance, are irrelevant because the series of empires was decreed by God to be part of the unchangeable cosmic order. Thus do the apocalyptic seers explain the nature of the crisis that currently besets "the righteous" and "the elect."⁵⁴

Cohen in the above passage indicated that biblical apocalypticism can be summarized as cosmic narrative, an unchangeably cosmic crisis of all nations, a division of the period, and the ultimate judgment of good and evil.

This general biblical eschatology and apocalypticism predominated in the early theological writings and teachings in the KEHC. Sang-Jun Kim, one of two Korean heralds of the Fourfold Gospel Theology in the KEHC, pointed out the importance of the Second Coming of Christ in the Fourfold Gospel Theology. In his three important treatises,⁵⁵ Kim dealt with "the biblical apocalypticism" as the important perspective for understanding the Fourfold Gospel Theology. In interpreting the Book of Revelation Kim preferred the "futurist interpretation"⁵⁶ to a traditional-historical interpretation. Kim argued that the prophecy in the Book of Revelation will be accomplished during Christ's

⁵⁴ Shaye J.D. Cohen, *From the Maccabees to the Mishnah* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1989), 197.

⁵⁵ Sang-Jun Kim's three books are as follows: Sang-Jun Kim, *Sajoong gyori* [The fourfold doctrine] (Seoul: Kyung Sung Bible Institute, 1921); Sang-Jun Kim, *Mooksirok gangeui* [Lectures on the Book of Revelation] (Kyungsung, Korea: Chosun Jesus Methodist Church, 1918); Sang-Jun Kim, *Danielsuh gangeui* [Lectures on the Book of Daniel] (Seoul: Chosun Jesus Methodist Church, 1932).

⁵⁶ Gyu-Myong Choi, "Kim Sang-Jun moksa eui saengae wa shinhak" [The life and theology of Rev. Kim Sang-Jun], in *Sungkyul gyohoe shinhak eui jerksa wa tukching* [A history and characteristic of the Korean Evangelical Holiness Church's theology], ed. Shin Keun Lee (Bucheon, Korea: The Theological Insititue of Sungkyul Theology, 2000), 20.

second coming. Kim's understanding of the eschatology in the Book of Revelation can be defined as "millennialism" because he firmly believed that before constructing the new heaven and earth, Christ will reign over an intermediate kingdom on the earth for a thousand years.⁵⁷ M. L. Choi explicates the nature of the Kim's millennialism as follows:

Kim's millenarian thought must be considered as Dispensational Premillennialism, of which key ideas were first formulated by John Nelson Darby (1800-82), the early leader of the Plymouth Brethren movement, developed further in the context of nineteenth-century premillennial prophecy conferences, and found in the notes of the *Scofield Reference Bible*. Kim argued that the Second Coming of Christ would be before such a millennium (premillennial) and he utilized a historical periodization in his eschatological discussion as biblical history. The pretributational Rapture and posttributational descent of the earth also appeared distinctively. However, as his own preface describes, Kim's major concern was "apocalyptic" in its nature. Kim encouraged all persecuted saints to read the Book of Revelation, which enables the Christian community to rebuild its hope and its awareness of the powerful presence of the risen Christ."⁵⁸

Choi rightly interpreted Kim's hermeneutics of the Second Coming of Christ as pre-millennialism and biblical apocalypticism. Like the socio-political background in the Book of Revelation, Kim's pre-millennialism and his preeminent emphasis on the Second Coming of Christ in the Fourfold Gospel Theology gained powerful support among persecuted Christians under Japanese colonialism.

Kim's eschatological initiative of the Fourfold Gospel Theology continually influenced other theologians in the KEHC. Specifically, Myong-Chik Lee, one of the successors to Kim's theological heritage, wrote three books, *Mooksirok Yakhae (A Brief Interpretation of the Book of Revelation)*, *Guriseudo eui Narim (The Coming of Christ)*, and *Gidokgyo eui Sadae Bokeum (The Fourfold Gospel of Christianity)*. In interpreting

⁵⁷ Eung-Ho Lee, *Hanguk sungkyul gyohoe eui jerksa 2 gwon* [A history of the Korean Holiness Church, vol. 2] (Seoul: Sungkyul moonwhasa, 2000), 557-582.

⁵⁸ Meesaeng Lee Choi, *The Rise of the Korean Holiness Church in Relation to the American Holiness Movement*, 93-94.

the Book of Revelation, M.C. Lee used Kim's three hermeneutic rules of futuristic perspective, literalism, and typology. However, Lee mainly had a position of futuristic interpretation in his exegesis of the Book of Revelation. Accordingly, Lee proposed that while chapters 1-3 in the Book of Revelation suggest the ordinary history from the exaltation of Christ to the Second Coming, all passages after chapter 4 describe the sequence of events during the exact time of Christ's Second Coming. Mainly relying on the futurist perspective, Lee attempted to literally interpret the Book of the Revelation, and yet he sometimes engaged in the typological hermeneutics of the Old Testament.⁵⁹

Lee accepted the seven thousand years' theory of human history, based on six days for creation and the Sabbath. Depending on 2 Peter 3:8 ("With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day"), Lee interpreted the six days in God's creation as a symbol for six thousand years, and the seventh day of the Sabbath as a symbol for one thousand years. Accordingly, Lee divided human history into seven periods, accepting the perspective that there were totally different ages of God's sovereignty over the world. These different generations are: the period of non-sin (Gen. 1-2), the period of conscience (Gen. 3-10), the period of morality (Gen. 11-Exodus 1), the period of law (Exodus 19 until Christ's crucifixion in the N.T.), and the period of the Church (the crucifixion of Jesus until the return of Christ).⁶⁰ However, Lee explicitly suggested five periods of human history. According to his mapping of Christ's Second

⁵⁹ Chang-Geun Mock, "Sungkyul gyohoe jaerimron eui baljun" [Development of the doctrine of the Second Coming of Christ in the KEHC], The Sungkyul Theology Institute, <http://sgti.kehc.org/> (accessed January 31, 2011).

⁶⁰ In-Sun Suh, "Lee myong-chik moksa eui sungshuk haesuk" [A biblical interpretation of Pastor Myong-Chik Lee], *Sungkyul gyohoe wa shinhak 2 gwon* [The Korean Evangelical Holiness Church and theology 2] (1998): 125.

Coming, however, Lee showed two other different periods: the period of tribulation on the earth and the millennial period.⁶¹

Chang-Guen Mock concludes, as illustrated in Lee's hermeneutics, that the interpretational tradition of prophecy in the KEHC is basically equal to the literal and the futuristic interpretations.⁶² In addition to these basic hermeneutics, the KEHC also partially accepts other interpretational methodologies, such as spiritual or symbolic interpretations. Spiritual interpretation in the KEHC is similar to the typological rather than the allegorical interpretation. This interpretational tradition has been shown in Sang-Jun Kim's, Myong-Chik Lee's, and Eung-Jo Kim's theological works. What the KEHC emphasized, the spiritual interpretation, was partly due to the significant influence of George D. Watson (1845-1923)⁶³ who led the American holiness movement which was based on the doctrine of Christ's Second Coming and dispensationalism.⁶⁴ While it is true that the KEHC chose the literal and the futuristic interpretation of the Scripture like the dispensationalists, the KEHC also used the spiritual or the symbolic hermeneutics for interpreting biblical prophecy.⁶⁵

⁶¹ Chang-Geun Mock, "Sungkyul gyohoe Jaerimron eui baljun" [Development of the doctrine of the Second Coming of Christ in the KEHC].

⁶² Chang-Geun Mock, "Sungkyul gyohoe jaerimron eui hyungsung baekyung" [A Formational background of the doctrine of the Second Coming in the KEHC], The Sungkyul Theology Institute, <http://sgti.kehc.org/> (accessed January 31, 2011).

⁶³ Chang-Geun Mock, "Blackstone gwa watson eui jaerimron bigyo yeongu" [A comparative study of the Second Coming in William Eugene Blackstone and George Watson], The Sungkyul Theology Institute, <http://sgti.kehc.org/> (accessed January 31, 2011).

⁶⁴ Eung-Ho Lee, *Hanguk sungkyul gyohoe eui jerksa 2 gwon* [A history of the Korean Holiness Church, vol. 2], 505-511.

⁶⁵ Chang-Geun Mock, "Sungkyul gyohoe jaerimron eui baljun" [Development of the doctrine of the Second Coming of Christ in the KEHC].

Sung-Bong Lee (1900-1965),⁶⁶ one of the leading Korean revivalists in the KEHC, proposed Christ's Second Coming as the Christian worldview in which he sought to find Christians' true recognition of their identity, their time, and their tasks.⁶⁷ Lee believed that the Second Coming of Christ is a very important truth which is why the Bible reveals this spiritual truth 318 times. Lee dealt with the doctrine of the Second Coming of Christ as an important topic in his sermons, which were filled with his frequent citations of the biblical passages related to Christ's Second Coming as compared to other theological topics.⁶⁸

Even Chongnahm Cho, who overemphasized the Wesleyanism-centric interpretation of the Fourfold Gospel Theology highlighting individual sanctification, did not fail to recognize the importance of Christ's Second Coming in the Fourfold Gospel system. Cho argued that the doctrine of Christ's Second Coming is very important and effective in expanding the holiness movement. Hence, accentuation of this doctrine is very proper for proliferating the Full Gospel, even in the modern era. As proposed by Martin Wells Knapp and Seth Cook Rhese, who were the vital leaders of the Apostolic Holiness Church in America, Cho suggested that the doctrine of Wesleyan sanctification has to be supported by the teaching of the Second Coming of Christ.⁶⁹

⁶⁶ See Sung-Bong Lee, *Lee Sung-Bong* (Seoul: Hongsungsa, 2008); Sung-Bong Lee, *Malro mothamyun jukeum uiroh* [If I did not do it with word, I would do it with death] (Seoul: The Publishing House of the KEHC, 1970).

⁶⁷ In-Gyo Chung, *Lee sung-bong moksa eui sangae wa sulgyo* [Life and sermons of Rev. Sung-Bong Lee] (Bucheon, Korea: The Institute of the KEHC's Theology, 1998), 122.

⁶⁸ Gyo-Soo Moon, *Lee sung-bong moksa eui buhyung woondong gwa hanguk gyohoe* [The revival movement of Rev. Sung-Bong Lee and his influence on the Korean Church] (Seoul: Forum Discussion, 2006), 163. Also see Sung-Bong Lee, *Immanuel kangdan* [Immanuel pulpits] (Seoul: Saengmyung eui malsumsa, 1993), 76.

⁶⁹ Chongnahm Cho, *Sajung bokeum eui hyundae jeok euieui* [A modern significance of the Fourfold Gospel], 189.

In sum, the doctrine of the Second Coming in the Fourfold Gospel Theology has constructed the Christian worldview in the KEHC from its earliest stage to the present. However, through Cho's Wesleyanization of the Fourfold Gospel Theology, individual sanctification became the main doctrine of the Fourfold Gospel Theology in the KEHC. Nevertheless, the doctrine of the Second Coming is still accepted as the Christian worldview, in spite of diluting its density in the present KEHC. In the early stages, however, the doctrine of Christ's Second Coming was strongly emphasized.

The Radical Difference between the Church and Society

Researchers of the proper relationship between the Church and society in the Fourfold Gospel Theology need to reconsider the apocalyptic and eschatological nature of this theology. Because of a strong emphasis on the apocalyptic mood of the Fourfold Gospel, the early KEHC was not interested in ecclesiology. On the contrary, the early KEHC had a concern for "faith mission" and "direct evangelism."⁷⁰ This attitude toward mission provided a sharp contrast with other denominational mission strategies which had focused on indirect mission, such as translating the Bible, building a hospital, or founding a school. Even the Fourfold Gospel's followers dubbed their institution the "Gospel Mission Hall" rather than "the Church." From 1921, however, the KEHC needed to organize the denominational Church because the Fourfold Gospel's followers had rapidly increased. Distinguishing itself from the existing Korean Methodist and Presbyterian Church, the KEHC defined its ecclesiological identity as the "eschatological

⁷⁰ Moon-Soo Park, "Hanguk sungkyul gyohoe eui gyohoeron jeok tukching" [Ecclesiological feature of the Korean Evangelical Holiness Church] (paper presented at the Second Forum of the Study of History for the Korea-Japan Holiness Church, Bucheon, Korea, May 18-19, 2009). Myong-Chik Lee, *Choson yasogyo dongyangsungyohoe sungkyulgyohoe raksa* [A brief history of the Choson Jesus Oriental Mission Holiness Church], 16.

holiness Church.” The Denominational Rule said that the KEHC is a holy community, spreading the Gospel and expectantly waiting for Christ’s Second Coming to identify with his holy bride.⁷¹

As an eschatological community the KEHC doctrinally and ethically prioritized the purity of the Church. Because the purity of the Church was an ecclesiological ideal, the KEHC rebuked Christian participation in social problems and the Church’s involvement in society. The KEHC proposed that although society persecutes and intrudes on the Church, the Church should not directly respond to society’s unjust persecution. In this sense the KEHC understood itself as “A Lily among Thorns.” Sung-Bong Lee, a major revivalist in the KEHC, explained the nature of the Fourfold Gospel’s followers and their sufferings for Christ in the midst of the socio-political upheaval through his famous poem, “A Lily among Thorns”:

A lily among thorns, a saint of the Lord
‘Cause of the constant pricking pain,
How many times you wept, nobody knows.
The Lord will wipe out your tears.

Let the southeast wind blow!
Let the northwest wind blow!
A lily among thorns, a bride of the Lord
Spreads the charming fragrance all over.⁷²

This poem came from Lee’s meditation on the Song of Songs 2:2 (“Like a lily among thorns is my darling among the maidens”). However, Lee presented an

⁷¹ The Korean Evangelical Holiness Church, *Hunbup* [Denominational law] (Seoul: The Publishing Company of the KEHC, 1983), 1:2. Also see Chun-Young Lee, *Sungkyul gyohoesa* [A church history of the KEHC] (Seoul: Korea Holiness Church Publishing House, 1970), 39.

⁷² Sung-Bong Lee, *Buheung sulgyo jinsu 2 gwon* [The essence of the revival sermon, vol. 2], ed. Sung-Bong Mission Society (Seoul: The Publishing Company of the KEHC, 1985), 514. I am using Jong Chun Park’s translation. See Jong Chun Park, *Crawl with God, Dance with Spirit!* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1998), 13.

interpretation different from the traditional interpretations to the suffering believers of the Fourfold Gospel in the Korean context. According to Jong Chun Park's interpretation,

This verse was frequently interpreted as Christ's confession of love to his beloved saints in the history of Christian mysticism. Sungbong Lee went a step further to delve into the depth of the suffering love of the saints who were fully united with Christ wearing the crown of thorns on his head. He felt that the southeast wind of Chinese and Russian imperialism blew on the tiny Korean peninsular. Korean Christians seemed to him like a lily among thorns or a bride of the Lord. So he could proclaim with courage: let the wind blow on the thorny peninsula and let the lily prove herself to be the bride of the thorn-crowned Lord!⁷³

The important thing is that the eschatological teaching of the Fourfold Gospel Theology only required the "suffering" of believers at the hand of society because any resistance against society inevitably led the Church to be mixed with society.

Despite the doctrinal teachings leaning on pacifism, sectarianism, and an apolitical approach to the world, the Japanese colonial government brutally persecuted the KEHC because of its doctrinal emphasis on Christ's Second Coming.⁷⁴ Although the KEHC taught this doctrine totally from a theological perspective, the Japanese colonial regime understood this doctrine as the most dangerous political teaching against Japanese colonialism. Because Christ's Second Coming in the Fourfold Gospel Theology taught about God's sovereign judgment, the coming of the Kingdom of Heaven and the restoration of Israel, Japanese colonialism considered this doctrine as blasphemy against their national Shintoism and a negligence of Japan's king.⁷⁵ Although the KEHC's thoughts were of a cosmic, peaceful, and non-violent orientation, the Japanese colonial

⁷³ Jong Chun Park, *Crawl with God, Dance with Spirit!*, 13.

⁷⁴ Soo-Hoon Ahn, *Hanguk sungkyul gyohoe sungjangsa* [A history of the growth of the KEHC], 166-177.

⁷⁵ Chun-Young Lee, *Sungkyul gyohoesa* [A history of the Korean Holiness Church], 23-25. In Soo Kim, *Iljae eui hanguk gyohoe bakhaesa* [A history of imperial Japan's persecution of the Korean Church] (Seoul: The Christian Literature Society of Korea, 2007), 135-137.

government perceived it as the most dangerous denomination and theology because of their emphasis on Christ's Second Coming. Finally, the Japanese colonial government arrested many pastors of the KEHC and followers of the Fourfold Gospel Theology on May 23, 1943 and dismissed the KEHC on December 24, 1943. Paradoxically, in its early stage the Fourfold Gospel Theology had a political impact on Korean society and Japanese colonialism.⁷⁶

The Fourfold Gospel Theology in the KEHC presented a distinctive notion of the apocalyptic eschatology, compared to that of other religious apocalyptic groups and other Christian denominations in the colonized Korea. The eschatology in the Fourfold Gospel can be characterized as cosmic, peaceful, and non-resistant. In Korean history apocalyptic thoughts and revolutionary movements have frequently appeared. However, there is a huge difference between them and the Fourfold Gospel Theology. *Jung Kam Lok*,⁷⁷ a traditional Korean prophetic book, presents a strong apocalyptic hope of the Korean grassroots. The main apocalyptic prophecy in the *Jung Kam Lok* is:

the replacement of the *Yi* dynasty by the kingdom of *Jung*. After 500 years the energy patterns of the earth will change; the *Yi* dynasty will be destroyed and replaced for 800 years by the *Jung* dynasty, who will rule from near *Kye Ryong* mountain. Then the *Cho* dynasty (100 years) will rule at *Kaya* mountain. Geomancy is used to answer why the different dynasties will rule in this way. The author has sought to give the people a reason for their history.⁷⁸

Jung Kam Lok's prophecy revealed a political dream of replacing the existing *Yi* dynasty with the new *Jung* dynasty. This suggested a detailed political road-map to transforming the old government in the near future.

⁷⁶ Chun-Young Lee, *Sungkyul gyohoesa* [A history of the Korean Holiness Church], 82-92.

⁷⁷ Su-San Kim, *Jung Kam Lok* [A book of Jung's revelation] (Seoul: Myungmundang, 1985).

⁷⁸ Sang Taek Lee, *Religion and Social Formation in Korea: Minjung and Millenarianism* (Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 1996), 76.

The nature of *Jung Kam Lok* represents anti-government and anti-traditional values, and a utopian longing. According to Sung-Bum Yun, the *Jung Kam Lok* reflects the awareness of Korean grassroots under an authoritarian socio-political system. Moreover, the *Jung Kam Lok* represents the vivid voice of the oppressed and the marginalized in Korean society.⁷⁹ In addition to its anti-governmental politics, the *Jung Kam Lok* shows a strong apocalyptic world view because it asserts that all political transformation and upheaval of the world will be accompanied with cosmic signs such as “irreversible stars, the destruction of mountains, the removal of the normal human relationship and the devastating plagues.”⁸⁰ However, while *Jung Kam Lok* describes the upheaval of the normal pattern of life, the perspective is contained within provincialism, revolutionary vision, and nature-worshipping ideology.

In the same millennial revolutionary movement of the *Jung Kam Lok*, the *Tonghak* movement showed another example of apocalypticism in Korean history. Through belief in and practice of *In Nae Chun* [人乃天 (humans and God are one)], *Tonghak* challenged the existing social class system and the unjust socio-political situation in the *Choson* dynasty. To do this *Tonghak* encouraged every person in Korea to believe that all people are equal and were born with a heavenly value, and thus should actively participate in transforming the unequal and the unjust socio-political system. The *Tonghak* movement strove to achieve “a transformed Korea,” or “a millennial age” as its ultimate goal. In the midst of the *Choson* government’s incapability, the invasion of the Japanese imperialists, the ethical collapse of the traditional religions and the

⁷⁹ Sung Bum Yun, “*Jung Kam Lok* eui ipjang easuhbon hanguk eui jerksa gwan” [A Korean historical view on *Jung Kam Lok*],” *Kidokgyo sasang* 140 [Christian thought 140] (January, 1970): 102-111.

⁸⁰ Sang Taek Lee, *Religion and Social Formation in Korea: Minjung and Millenarianism*, 78.

emergence of the millennial hope of the Korean people, the teachings of *Tonghak* movement “created a religious climate ripe for millenarian revolt, a climate in which salvation was sought in social change.”⁸¹

All these Korean traditional apocalyptic movements were mainly influenced by Korean chauvinism, which believed that the use of violence and power was justified for the nation’s interest and the peasant class’ emancipation.⁸² This perspective was the fundamental difference with the apocalyptic vision of the Fourfold Gospel Theology, in which the perspectives of non-resistance, pacifism, and cosmic eschatology prevailed.

Besides the apocalyptic passion of the *Jung Kam Lok* and the *Tonghak* movement, the Korean Church was possessed by the apocalyptic vision and eschatological expectations under Japanese colonialism (1910-1945) and the Korean War (1950-1953). One of the most famous preachers who was possessed by an interest in urgent apocalyptic eschatology was Rev. Sun-Ju Kil (1865-1935) who belonged to the Presbyterian Church.⁸³ With an ardent expectation of Christ’s Second Coming and His Kingdom, Kil wrote *Malsehak (A Study of Eschatology)*. In Kil’s theology, eschatology was the most important thought, based on *The Book of Revelation* and *The Epistles of John*. The Johannine mysticism heavily influenced the formation of Kil’s theological thought.⁸⁴

Kil’s sermons were focused on Christ’s Second Coming and millennialism, but he understood Christ’s eschatological event mainly from Christ’s earthly presence and believed that the Kingdom of God would be built on the earth. His eschatological

⁸¹ Ibid., 116.

⁸² Sang Jin Ahn, *Continuity and Transformation*, 67-70.

⁸³ Jin-Kyung Kil, *Younggae Kil Sun-Ju* [Spiritual river, Kil Sun-Ju] (Seoul: Chongro sujeok, 1980), 131-179.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 254-255.

apocalypticism was far from viewing the Kingdom of God as a pure spiritual and hidden reality. For him Christ's Second Coming will be an event of Christ's reincarnation within a concrete history.⁸⁵ This eschatological and apocalyptic perspective urged Kil to actively participate in the nation's independent movement under Japanese colonialism. His millennialism strongly enhanced Korean nationalism.⁸⁶ Kil's vision for the end of the world was represented as restoring the lost Garden of Eden. According to Chong Bum Kim's interpretation of Kil's apocalypticism,

Following the Last Judgment, three eternal worlds will be established: a heavenly paradise, the 'new Jerusalem': an earthly paradise, the 'new heaven and new earth'; and hell. The first and third worlds, that is, heaven and hell, are familiar aspects of Christian theology, but the second, an earthly paradise, seems distinctive to Kil. He calls it *pyonhwa mugung segye* (transformed eternal world) and identifies it as the restored Garden of Eden.⁸⁷

Kim pointed out that Kil's interpretation of the Garden of Eden as the "new heaven and new earth," and his literal belief in the restoration of the Garden of Eden, were alien to traditional Christian millennialism.

In his book, *Malsehak (A Study of Eschatology)*, Kil rejected the traditional description for the tragic destiny on the earth on the Last Judgment Day in which the earth will disappear and be consumed by fire. He proposed the exact contrary opinion concerning the Last Day, in which God will retrieve the Garden of Eden as the earthly paradise, having its original quality and form.⁸⁸

The apocalyptic vision of *Chung Kam Lok*, the *Tonghak* movement, and Kil's theological thought followed the general characteristics of revolutionary apocalyptic

⁸⁵ Kyung-Bae Min, *Hanguk kidokgyosa* [A history of Korean Christianity], 422-425.

⁸⁶ Jin-Kyung Kil, *Younggae Kil Sun-Ju* [Spiritual river, Kil Sun-Ju], 259-284.

⁸⁷ Chong Bum Kim, "Preaching the Apocalypse in Colonial Korea," 154.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 155.

thought described by Paul Hanson. According to Hanson, the general features of the apocalyptic movement can be explained as follows:

(1) If the group believes that reform of the dominant society is possible, it may generate what we may call an ‘alternative symbolic universe.’ As bitterness increased in later stage of a conflict, oppression and disenfranchisement may heighten the sense of alienation, leading to one of the following responses; (2) Withdrawal and founding of a new society based on a ‘utopian symbolic universe’; (3) retreat into secret sectarian existence, leading to a subsociety expressing its identity in a ‘symbolic subuniverse’; (4) violent opposition in reaction to persecution, generating a revolutionary community constructing a ‘symbolic counteruniverse.’ Such categories must be understood as ideal types, and while examples can easily be found for each (e.g., (1) the early followers of the Second Isaiah, (2) Qumran, (3) the early *Hasidim*, (4) the Zealot), commonly a mixture of types is found. For example, while the Covenanters of Qumran withdrew and constituted themselves as a new society, they drew up and refined plans for the day of battle in which God would lead them against their enemies.⁸⁹

In the above passage, Hanson generally indicated that the apocalyptic movement began as sectarian sub-society, and fully developed as a community of “symbolic counteruniverse.” In the developmental process of the apocalyptic movement, people usually reacted in a violent resistance against persecution and oppression, and built “a revolutionary community.”

Contrary to *Jung Kam Lok*’s, *Tonghak*’s, and even Rev. Sun-Ju Kil’s association with the general apocalypticism prescribed by Hanson, the eschatological apocalypticism of the Fourfold Gospel Theology in the KEHC was oriented differently toward universalism, pacifism, and non-violent practice. This eschatological apocalypticism of the Fourfold Gospel Theology did not have any connection with nationalism and violent attitude toward Japanese colonialism based on the theological conviction of the radical difference between the Church and society. Because of this theological propensity, the Fourfold Gospel Theology in the KEHC had not been considered as an important

⁸⁹ Paul D. Hanson, *The Dawn of Apocalyptic* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979), 435.

theology by the colonized Korean people and the nationalized Korean Church in the Japanese colonial era.

Nevertheless, the KEHC had been harshly persecuted by the colonial government because of its apocalyptic hope and radical eschatology during Japanese colonialism. The Japanese colonial regime considered the doctrinal emphasis on Christ's Second Coming in the KEHC as a protest against Japan's plan for ruling over the East Asian continent and a blasphemy toward Japan's emperor.⁹⁰ The apocalyptical eschatology of the KEHC presupposed the impossibility of restoring the fallen world from its sin, and thus the KEHC believed that there is no other alternative than to be judged by Christ and to disappear. According to the KEHC's eschatology, therefore, only Christ's return will create a new heaven and a new earth, and only Christ can bring peace and prosperity to all humanity. This was automatically linked to repugnant Japanese colonialism and Shintoism.⁹¹

Hence, on May 24, 1943, the Japanese colonial government arrested three hundred pastors, elders, and deacons in the KEHC, and cruelly tortured them for the purpose of finding a political message of anti-Japanese colonialism in their sermons and teachings. After thoroughly investigating whether the KEHC used political sermons and teaching, the KEHC's leaders were released because the Japanese colonial government was unable to find any evidence of political involvement.⁹² After these events in September 1943, however, the Japanese colonial government banned the Wednesday

⁹⁰ The Korean Evangelical Holiness Church, *Kidokgyo daehan sungkyul gyohoe eui jerksa* [A history of the Korean Evangelical Holiness Church] (Seoul: The KEHC Press, 1992), 381.

⁹¹ Soo-Hoon Ahn, *Sungkyul gyohoe sungjangsa* [A history of the growth of the KEHC], 175-176.

⁹² Young-Phil Oh, *Sungkyul gyohoe sunanki* [A history of the Korean Holiness Church under persecution], 12-14.

evening meeting and Sunday worship service. To make matters worse, the colonial government used the Church building as a military factory, and all the worship services as a public labor service. Finally, the colonial government promulgated the so-called “order of dismissing the KEHC”⁹³ on December 29, 1943 by threatening the Church’s leaders with the responsibility of announcing it.⁹⁴

The eschatological churches of the KEHC, based on the Fourfold Gospel Theology, experienced a paradoxical situation in the Japanese colonial context. In spite of its loyalty to the doctrine of Christ’s Second Coming, its sharp distinction between the Church and society, and its peaceful non-violent attitude toward their enemy, the Japanese colonial regime designated the KEHC as one of the most dangerous anti-governmental institutions. The story of the KEHC’s persecution holds that “the Church be the Church” is the best policy for the Christian social ethic.

However, since the 1960s a new interpretation of the Fourfold Gospel Theology has appeared: Wesleyan theological reductionism and sanctification-centric interpretation.⁹⁵ These interpretational trends overemphasize individual holiness in the Fourfold Gospel Theology, and have led the KEHC to erase the apocalyptic dynamism in the Fourfold Gospel Theology. Consequently, the relationship between the Church and society has rapidly diverged, and the KEHC has lost any significant political impact on secondary societies.

⁹³ Jin-Kyung Kil, *Younggae Kil Sun-Ju* [Spiritual river, Kil Sun-Ju], 90.

⁹⁴ Soo-Hoon Ahn, *Sungkyul gyohoe sungjangsa* [A history of the growth of the KEHC], 176-177; Chun-Young Lee, *Sungkyul gyohoesa* [A history of the Korean Holiness Church], 82-92.

⁹⁵ These theological interpretations of the KEHC were proposed by Chongnahm Cho and Myong-Soo Park respectively.

What would Karl Barth think of this radical dichotomizing of the Church and society? In chapter five of this dissertation the claim will be made that Barth would be totally opposed to this outlook. What sort of remedy, then, would he propose to the KEHC to redeem its eschatological vitality, its Christocentric discipleship, and be a paradoxical influence on the politics of secondary societies? Barth is not here to speak for himself, but a Barth reader might suggest that the KEHC would be advised to be open to a dialogue with someone like James McClendon and his Baptist vision. In his Baptist vision, McClendon presents five backbones which play a creative role in his theology: Biblicism, liberty, discipleship, community, and mission.⁹⁶ These five elements are correlated and show “first of all the awareness of the *biblical* story as our story, but also of *liberty* as the duty to obey God without state’s help or hindrance, of *discipleship* as life transformed into obedience to Jesus’ lordship, of *community* as daily sharing in the vision, and of *mission* as responsibility for costly witness.”⁹⁷ Contrary to a return toward fundamentalism or the quietistic pietism, McClendon’s Baptist vision seeks a dynamic connection between the primitive Church and the Church of our own time through the practice of radical discipleship.

In McClendon’s Baptist vision, eschatology functions as a main epistemological source for all Christian doctrine.⁹⁸ Hence, McClendon’s Baptist vision can be translated into an eschatological vision for the Church and the world. McClendon’s eschatological epistemology, emphasizing discipleship and pacifism, can show a way to rediscover the

⁹⁶ James Wm. McClendon, *Ethics: Systematic Theology*, vol. 1 (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2002) 27-28.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 34.

⁹⁸ Hence, in his *Doctrine: Systematic Theology*, vol. 2, McClendon put eschatology as the first of all Christian doctrines. See James Wm. McClendon, *Doctrine: Systematic Theology*, vol. 2 (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1994), 69-102.

eschatological vision of the Church and its responsibility toward secondary societies in the early Fourfold Gospel Theology in the KEHC. Barth might give his nod of approval to this vision.⁹⁹

McClendon responds to power with the “politics of the Lamb,”¹⁰⁰ where all the parts are brought into the whole,¹⁰¹ where triumphalism is ignored, where the just war does not work, where peace is practised without violence, and where Jesus has already shown the way of discipleship. McClendon writes:

Jesus was a pacifist: He evoked and guided a program of nonviolent action that transformed human conduct for its participants. The core of that program lies in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5-7; cf. Luke 6:20-49); it was inwardly but also outwardly oriented; its theme was the love of enemies; its focus, in light of God’s

⁹⁹ McClendon borrows from Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s notion of “life together,” but calls it a “radical gathering together” to emphasize the distinctive nature of discipleship. He also borrows from John Yoder’s pacifism to refute any Constantinian Christianity. He says: “Christian obedience is challenged by a world of power as surely as it is framed in a world of nature. Therefore the faithful Christian ‘community will not ask whether to enter or to escape the realm of power’; rather it must ask, ‘What kinds of power are in conformity with the victory of the Lamb?’” [McClendon, *Ethics: Systematic Theology*, vol. 1, 182].

¹⁰⁰ John Howard Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999), 228-247. P. Travis Kroeker writes about “the politics of the Lamb” in Yoder’s thought as follows: “The importance of apocalyptic symbolism and the slain Lamb in Yoder’s work is well known. The particularity of the Church’s identity is consistently tied by Yoder to this cosmic vision of God’s sovereign rule in creation. The controversial claim that founds Christianity is that this divine cosmic rule made its definitive appearance on earth two millennia ago in the form of a humble servant with a very short public career during which he rejected virtually every available political option, only to be killed nevertheless as a political figure, and to found a new political community – the Church – as the social carrier of that form of cosmic power and authority. For Yoder this means that the form of God’s rule is here publicly revealed in the world for all to see, in a form that is neither coercive nor juridical, neither externally imposed nor visibly triumphal – it is visibly characterized by the cross. It is as the slain Lamb that Christ is worshiped as king by the Church in that vivid worship scene of the heavenly court described by John of Patmos, and this symbolism is laden with socio-political meaning and consequence” [P. Travis Kroeker, “The War of the Lamb: Postmodernity and Yoder’s Eschatological Genealogy of Morals,” *The New Yoder*, eds. Peter Dula & Chris K. Huebner (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2010), 77]. According to Jonathan Tran’s interpretation, “Yoder’s *Politics of Jesus* names ‘world’ as that which denies the Lamb’s victory, and consequently subjugates creation (time, space, history) in order to save it. Hence, war is wrong because it places hope in the wrong places, and thus finally is not hope on Christian grounds, which has as its object an eschatological belief that the peaceable God has already won. War is the refusal to worship rightly: ‘concern for peace, whether Jewish or Christian, is part of the purpose of God for all eternity. God is by nature a reconciler, a maker of shalom. For us to participate in the peacemaking purpose of that kind of God is not just morality. It is not just politics. It is worship, doxology, praise’” [Jonathan Tran, “Laughing with the World: Possibilities of Hope in John Howard Yoder and Jeffrey Stout,” *The New Yoder*, eds. Peter Dula & Chris K. Huebner (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2010), 265-266].

¹⁰¹ McClendon, *Doctrine: Systematic Theology*, vol. 2, 98.

mighty signs and the inbreaking of the end, was the building of a community that could survive the dying of an old age while its Lord anticipated the new.¹⁰²

To show that he is against triumphalism of all sorts, McClendon critiques Jürgen Moltmann's eschatological theological vision as having a feature of Christian triumphalism¹⁰³ because McClendon finds Moltmann's misrecognition of the Christian mission as "the realization of the eschatological *hope of justice*, the *humanizing* of man, the *socializing* of humanity, [and] *peace* for all creation."¹⁰⁴ Moltmann's goal of mission is able to lead Christians to falsely interfere with all non-Christian work and monopolistically focuses on humanistic goals. By contrast, Hans Hut, who was possessed by "the vision of Christ's overwhelming triumph" on the last Judgment Day, ordered his followers not to "[conquer] the world with the world's weapons" but to "[obey] the commandments and [to practice] love one to another while they awaited God's own time."¹⁰⁵ McClendon positively views the true Baptist vision and eschatological ethic of Christians within Hans Hut's teaching.

This dissertation will return to Barth's evaluation of the KEHC in a later chapter, but a Barthian reader might say that the KEHC can share the eschatological worldview, the Church's essential identity, and the discipleship of McClendon's Baptist vision. However, in the 1970s, the Fourfold Gospel's radical turn to Wesleyan sanctification evaporated the eschatological epistemology, Christian discipleship, and the Church's identification with the practice of pacifism in the early KEHC. To make matters worse,

¹⁰² McClendon, *Ethics: Systematic Theology*, vol. 1, 309.

¹⁰³ McClendon, *Doctrine: Systematic Theology*, vol. 2, 97.

¹⁰⁴ Jürgen Moltmann, *Theology of Hope: On the Ground and the Implications of a Christian Eschatology*, trans. James W. Leitch (London: SCM Press, 2002), 312.

¹⁰⁵ McClendon, *Doctrine: Systematic Theology*, vol. 2, 97.

the relationship between the Church and secondary societies is radically dichotomized.¹⁰⁶

In this sense, the Korean Evangelical Holiness Church (KEHC) needs to retrieve the practice of peace and nonviolent participation in the secondary societies through radical discipleship, and recognize the dynamic fact that the Church “is a social ethic,”¹⁰⁷ as proved in the early history of the KEHC under Japanese colonialism.

¹⁰⁶ In order to overcome this radical dichotomy between the Church and society, the notable Wesleyan theologian in the KEHC, Chongnahm Cho suggests the KEHC’s concern for healing the chasm between the Church and society, based on the theological perspective of “The International Congress on World Evangelization” in Lausan in Switzerland in July 16-25, 1974. See Chongnahm Cho, *Sajung bokeum eui hyundae jeok euieui* [A modern significance of the Fourfold Gospel], 38-42.

¹⁰⁷ Stanley M. Hauerwas, *Christian Existence Today* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1988), 101: “the church does not *have* a social ethic but rather *is* a social ethic.”

CHAPTER THREE

Church and Society in the Korean Indigenization Theology

Korean Religious and Cultural Context

Before the Christian mission was launched in the Korean peninsula, Buddhism and Confucianism had played an important role in formatting Korea's religious and cultural landscape. Unofficially, however, shamanism had been represented as a Korean indigenous religion for generations. Although its beginning was not clear, shamanism in Korean history reflected the country's early history.¹

According to the early Korean people's shamanistic belief, "The souls of natural objects such as mountains, rivers, and trees were thought of in the same way as those of men, and certain of these were accorded status as divinities."² All creatures on the earth had to be carefully treated because they all contained the Great Spirit. The heavenly creatures, especially the sun and moon, had to be worshipped as graceful gods because the early Koreans believed that these heavenly creatures had a power to bring "productivity and happiness" to all humanity.³

Originally the world existed in a perfect harmony with all humankind. However, it was impossible for human beings to maintain this perfect harmony because "evil

¹ Joachim Gentz, "The Religious Situation in East Asia," *Secularization and the World Religions*, eds. Hans Joas and Klaus Wiegandt, trans. Alex Skinner (Liverpool, UK: Liverpool University Press, 2009), 269.

² Ki-baik Lee, *A New History of Korea*, 7.

³ Wanne J. Joe, *Traditional Korea: A Cultural History* (Seoul: Chung'ang University Press, 1982), 42-43.

spirits” had exercised and destroyed this harmonious order.⁴ Consequently, “it was necessary that there be adepts in magic, intermediaries with the ability to drive off evil spirits and invoke the gods so as to bring about a happy outcome.”⁵

In Korean shamanism⁶ *Chonjisinmyong* (“God-Light of Heaven and Earth”) was the supreme god to whom human beings prayed in the emergency situations of their everyday life. While *Hananim* (Heavenly God) was regarded as *Chonjisinmyong* from the functional perspective, it was officially thought of “as the supreme gods of all purposes.” Through a continual interaction with Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism, Korean shamanism created and developed “a pantheon of polytheistic gods” under *Hananim* as the supreme God who was worshipped by shamanistic priests (*mudang* or *shaman*).⁷

The shamanistic priests, as humans, had a special position in old Korean history in that they played a connective role between humans and the supernatural gods. Harvey Cox explains the special position and role of the shaman as follows:

The word “shaman,” which has become so dear to anthropologists and other students of religion over the years, is taken directly from a Tungus word used by the indigenous people of Siberia. But it refers to a religious reality that is so basic and so universal its equivalent has been found almost everywhere. Put quite simply, a “shaman” is one whose power comes directly from the supernatural world rather than through the medium of a traditional ritual or body of esoteric knowledge. For this reason, the shaman is often seen as the polar opposite of the priest, and there is some validity in this distinction. Further, the shaman ordinarily performs his or her ceremony not on stated occasions or in accord with a sacred calendar but when the need, say an illness or a drought, arises and must

⁴ Ibid., 43.

⁵ Ki-baik Lee, *A New History of Korea*, 7.

⁶ See Laurel Kendall, *Shamans, Housewives, and other restless Spirits: Women in Korean Ritual Life* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 1987). Mircea Eliade, *Shamanism: archaic techniques of ecstasy*, trans. Willard R. Trask (New York, NY: Pantheon Books, 1964).

⁷ Joe, *Traditional Korea: A Cultural History*, 44.

be dealt with. Most shamans accomplish their task while in a special, trancelike state which they are often able to induce themselves with music, chanting, drumming, or incantation. The important thing about shamans is that they exist in order to bring spiritual power to bear on human pain. For this reason, whatever denominational or agnostic nametag one may wear, there is probably a shaman lurking inside every human being.⁸

Shamans (*mudang*) attempted to restore a broken web and to redeem an original harmony between humans and the world. To do this shamans have to receive spiritual powers from supernatural entities.

The shaman's role and activity functioned as an important background of Korean religious consciousness. The ancestral worship as a characteristic ritual of Korean Confucianism was imported from the Korean shamanistic tradition and functions as "the intensive religious devotion of the Korean people"⁹ even in today's Korean socio-cultural context. Compared to shamanism in general, however, the characteristic of Korean shamanism can be described as follows:

Shamanism is the only religion among the various Korean religious traditions where women have been the center all through its development. Women shamans have been "big sisters" to many deprived *minjung* women, untangling their *han* and helping them cope with life's tribulations.¹⁰

In Korean shamanism women played a central role as priests. Above all they functioned as "a big sister" in their village, and their mission mainly focused on resolving the individual's psychological predicament (*han*) in their community.

Through importing Buddhism, which had a strong systematic and philosophical doctrine, in the Korean peninsula Korean shamanism had been challenged. The Korean

⁸ Harvey Cox, *Fire from Heaven*, 225-226.

⁹ Joe, *Traditional Korea: A Cultural History*, 43.

¹⁰ Chung Hyun Kyung, *Struggle to be the Sung Again: Introducing Asian Women's Theology* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1999), 66.

indigenous spiritual world was swept by the new foreign religion of Buddhism. After Korean shamanism had decreased the new foreign religion of Buddhism gained popularity in Korea. In the process of Korean history a new dynasty preferred a special new religion as their ruling ideology, and this new religion would replace the old one. Buddhism replaced the Korean indigenous shamanism for the three old Korean kingdoms: *Koguryo*, *Paekche*, and *Silla*.

King *Sosurim* of the *Koguryo* dynasty (37 BCE – 668 CE) in 372 welcomed Sundo (Xundao) who was “dispatched as a member of the delegation from northern China” as a monk, and constructed a temple for him. The *Paekche* kingdom (18 BCE – 660 CE) and *Silla* kingdom (57 BCE – 660 CE) were not hostile to Buddhism and finally accepted it in 384 and 534 respectively.¹¹ The Unified *Silla* kingdom (668-935) experienced the first golden age of Buddhism. During this era Buddhism was “the main force unifying the nation and developed many advanced cultural and artistic achievements. The full blossoming of Buddhism produced such great spiritual thinkers as Wonhyo (617-686) and Uisang (625-720), whose academic reputations and influence were [known] in China and Japan as well as in Korea.”¹²

The second golden age of Buddhism was during the *Koryo* dynasty (935-1392) which followed the Unified *Silla* kingdom. During this era Buddhism achieved significant developments in art, philosophy, and architecture. Above all, *Koryo* Buddhism completed “the carving of more than eighty thousand woodblocks and later inventing the world’s first movable type to print the Buddhist canon. There were also

¹¹ Kang-nam Oh, “The Christian-Buddhist Encounter in Korea,” in *Christianity in Korea*, eds. Robert E. Buswell Jr. and Timothy S. Lee (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2006), 372.

¹² Ibid.

some eminent Buddhist monks such as *Uichon* (1055-1101), and *Chinul* (1158-1210).”¹³

After these two golden ages Buddhism in Korea rapidly decreased. The main reason was that the *Yi* dynasty (*Choson*: from 1392-1910) adopted another new foreign religion, Confucianism, as the state’s religion and political ideology. The *Yi* dynasty restricted Buddhism and persecuted Buddhist monks.

Korean Buddhism, stemming from *Mahayana* (“the Great Vehicle”) Buddhism, showed its special characteristics when compared to the other country’s Buddhism. Korean Buddhism emphasized the harmonious unity of all existing beings, the practical spirit of *Bodhisattva*, and an open mind toward other religions and philosophies.¹⁴ First, Korean Buddhism stressed the harmonious unity of all contradictory thoughts and the “reconciliation of all disputes” (*hwajaeng*) through participating in “the One Mind” as “all-inclusive Reality” and “the unconditional Absolute.” This was proposed by the monk Wonhyo (617-687),¹⁵ who regarded *tathagatagarbha* (the *Tathagata* womb) as “the source of all things”¹⁶ in which all human beings originated. This notion of *tathagatagarbha* developed into the political argument for the equality of all humans regardless of their social and economical status.

The second feature of Korean Buddhism was represented as practicing the spirit of *Bodhisattva* (“an enlightenment-being”) in the existing world. In contrast with

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Kyoung-Jae Kim, *Christianity and the encounter of Asian religions: Method of correlation, fusion of horizons, and paradigm shifts in the Korean grafting process* (Zoetermeer: Uitgeverij Boekencentrum, 1994), 74. Also see Kyoung-Jae Kim, *Paul Tillich eui shinhak yeongu* [A study of Paul Tillich’s theology] (Seoul: The Christian Literature Society of Korea, 1987), 223-289. In this part, Kim deals with the dialogue between Buddhism and Paul Tillich’s theology.

¹⁵ Kyoung-Jae Kim, *Christianity and the Encounter of Asian religions: Method of Correlation, Fusion of Horizons, and Paradigm Shifts in the Korean Grafting Process*, 78.

¹⁶ Ibid., 78-79.

“Theravada Buddhism” in which “individual awakening” and the pure spiritual realm of *Bodhisattva* are unilaterally emphasized, Korean Buddhism does not negate the existing world. Although Korean Buddhism believes that “*bodhisattvas* see the emptiness of all things,”¹⁷ true *Nirvana* (“the state of being free from suffering”) is “interpenetrated with *Samsara* [continuous flow].”¹⁸ In Korean Buddhism, therefore, *Bodhisattva* means to undividedly practice the teachings of *Prajuna* (wisdom) and *Karuna* (compassion) within the present world by “participating in the joy and sorrow of the people.”¹⁹

Korean Buddhism has strongly shown “its compromising attitude” toward Korean traditional religions and philosophies. However, Korean Buddhism’s openness has produced both positive and negative results. While Korean Buddhism shows its “inclusive generosity” as its strength, “it degenerates into the solicitation of personal blessings and popular folk beliefs.”²⁰ Influenced by this traditional Korean Buddhism, the modern Korean Buddhism is also actively participating in “the human right[s] movement, social relief work, political Reunification movement of Korea, or [and the] ecological movement” in cooperation with other religions in Korea.²¹

The new emerging kingdom, *Yi* dynasty (*Choson* kingdom), which succeeded the *Koryo* dynasty, discarded the former socio-political system relying on Buddhism. By

¹⁷ Ibid., 74.

¹⁸ Ibid., 164. Also see John B. Cobb, Jr., “The Christian Witness to Buddhism,” in *Asian Contextual Theology for the Third Millennium: A Theology of Minjung in Fourth-Eye Formation*, eds. Paul S. Chung et al., trans. Paul S. Chung (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2007), 187-188.

¹⁹ Kyoung-Jae Kim, *Christianity and the Encounter of Asian religions: Method of Correlation, Fusion of Horizons, and Paradigm Shifts in the Korean Grafting Process*, 75.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Kyoung-Jae Kim, “Minjung’s Spirituality in the grafting process of East-Asian Religions,” Soombat Kim Kyoung Jae Archive, <http://soombat.org/wwwb/CrazyWWWBoard.cgi?db=article&mode=read&num=25&page=1&ftype=6&fval=&backdepth=1> (accessed January 31, 2011).

contrast, the *Yi* dynasty accepted and depended solely on Confucian political ideals and ethical practices. The *Yi* dynasty, unilaterally leaning on Confucianism, formed a totally different social system from the former *Koryo* kingdom. Korean Confucianism, as neo-Confucianism, followed Chu His's (1130-1200) interpretation of Confucius' texts.²² Neo-Confucianism concentrated on "the elementary rules of personal conduct and interpersonal relationships," and was characterized as being

ultimately rooted in Neo-Confucian metaphysics of *Li* or Principle. This immutable Principle, as we have seen, constitutes the essence of all things in the universe, that is, the *Tao* (Way) of the universe. As man's mind partakes of this Principle, its power of reason enables man not only to know what all things are but also to understand how they ought to be and to work harmoniously. Human relations and conduct, too, therefore, are determined by the Principle or Reason that underlies all phenomena.²³

Korean neo-Confucianism described humans as partakers of the Principle and taught that they had a power to recognize the *Tao* (Way) and how to practice this *Tao*.

In addition Korean neo-Confucianism posited that the *Li* (Principle) of the universe was manifested in the form of *Ye* (proper ritual behavior), together with *Ki* (Matter) in the phenomenological world. Hence, the meaning of *Ye* in the Confucian metaphysic was "one facet of the heavenly principle and often became interchangeable with it. Standing above the human world, it was a moral principle, the normative character of which was based on its superhuman origin."²⁴

²² For Chu Hsi, see Chai-sik Chung, *A Korean Confucian Encounter with the Modern World* (Berkeley, CA: The Institute of East Asian Studies of University of California, 1995), 15-20.

²³ Joe, *Traditional Korea: A Cultural History*, 299-300.

²⁴ Martina Deuchler, *The Confucian Transformation of Korea* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), 125.

Korean neo-Confucianism held that *Ye* “was embodied in five interpersonal relationships.” These five human relationships played an important role as the fundamental ethic for upholding the social system. These five relationships were:

relations between father and son with a greater emphasis on son’s filial piety, monarch and subject on subject’s loyalty, husband and wife on wife’s obedience, elder brother and younger brother on the latter’s respect, and friend and friend on mutual sincerity. Thus, the burden of proper conduct was squarely placed on the shoulders of the obedient inferior, except for the friend-friend relations. The authority, that is, the king in the country, the father in the family, and so on, was, of course, [a] patriarchal one. Since the five human relations were the ethical manifestation in humanity of the metaphysical *Li* (Reason), the patriarchal authority was identifiable with the *Tao* (Way) of the universe.²⁵

These five relationships in Korean neo-Confucianism totally depended on patriarchal ideology, and were the core units for upholding the existing social system.

Korean neo-Confucianism also developed the four rites (*sarye*) (capping,²⁶ wedding, mourning, and ancestor worship) as practical liturgies for upholding and securing the *Ye* (proper ritual behavior) embodied in the five interpersonal relationships.²⁷ These four rites (*sarye*) enforced the patriarchal structure of family because three of the five important relationships were related to the family context. Above all, the *Ye* and *Sarye* were outstandingly concentrated on “filial piety” because Korean neo-Confucianism believed that all human relationships of family, small community, and nation depended on the practice of filial piety. Therefore, the important task of neo-

²⁵ Joe, *Traditional Korea: A Cultural History*, 300.

²⁶ *The Catholic Encyclopedia: an International Work of Reference on the Constitution, Doctrine, Discipline, and History of the Catholic Church*, vol. 4, eds. Charles G. Herbermann et al. (New York: The Encyclopedia Press, Inc., 1913), sv. “Confucianism: Rites”: “Capping was a joyous ceremony, wherein the son was honoured on reaching his twentieth year. In the presence of relatives and invited guests, the father conferred on his son a special name and a square cornered cap as distinguishing marks of his mature manhood.”

²⁷ Deuchler, *The Confucian Transformation of Korea*, 110.

Confucian education focused on how to effectively teach filial piety in order to preserve the family's cohesion.²⁸

The main reason for the *Yi* dynasty's emphasis on family affairs was that family solidarity was directly associated with socio-political stability in the *Yi* dynasty. This family solidarity was founded on socio-political stability and the patriarchal family system. The *Choson* dynasty had been upheld and preserved through the social class system. Byong-suh Kim writes:

The *Choson* dynasty under the influence of Confucianism has a strict system of four classes: the *yangban* (nobility), the *chungin* (middle people), the *sangmin* (commoners), and the *ch'onmin* (lowest class). The *yangban* were at the top of the *Choson* dynasty stratification system. The designation *yangban*, which originated in the *Koryo* dynasty, means two ranks: the eastern group (*tongban*), who were civil officers; and the western group (*soban*), who were military people. ... the *chungin* were the professionals and technicians, who usually lived in the center of the capital city. The *sangmin* were the people who engaged in farming, commerce, and trade. They were the majority of the total population. The *ch'onmin*, the lowest class, were the slaves, slaughterers, butchers, sorcerers, and convicts. They were not allowed to live in the villages.²⁹

The *Choson* dynasty (*Yi* dynasty) operated within a strict social class system dependant on the strong patriarchal family system. Because family background decided an individual's social class, the social caste system was upheld and preserved by the family system.

However this social class consciousness in the Korean people mostly collapsed because of Japanese imperialism and colonialism. Finally, through regaining independence from Japan in 1945, and experiencing the Korean War (1950-1953), the Korean people rebuilt their nation on the democratic vision in which the equality of the

²⁸ Joe, *Traditional Korea: A Cultural History*, 304.

²⁹ Byong-Suh Kim, "Modernization and the Explosive Growth and Decline of Korean Protestant Religiosity," in *Christianity in Korea*, eds. Robert E. Buswell Jr. & Timothy S. Lee (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2006), 312.

people and religious liberty were constituted. Since the 1960s, Christianity, as the last main foreign religion, has rapidly experienced the Church's growth. Its influence has gradually spread over the socio-political and religious-cultural areas in Korea. Now Christianity is one of the main religions in Korea, confronting the pluralistic situation in the Korean religious context, and striving to survive among the existing religions. In the midst of this religious and cultural context, Korean Indigenization Theology has emerged within Korean Christianity.

Emergence of Korean Indigenization Theology

Korean shamanism is the most widespread religious tradition in the Korean religious-cultural tradition.³⁰ Havery Cox and Korean Presbyterian theologians intend to find a theological connection between the Korean Pentecostal movement and the Korean shamanistic tradition, and they argue that the shamanistic ethos has worked as a direct background for Korean Pentecostalism.

After a careful analysis of the *Yoido* Full Gospel Church in Seoul, which is the most prominent institution of Pentecostalism in the world, Cox concludes that “what one finds in the *Yoido* Full Gospel Church of Seoul involves a massive importation of shamanistic practice into a Christian ritual.”³¹ Allan Anderson also concludes that the Korean Pentecostal faith “is a culturally indigenous form of Korean Christianity,” deeply

³⁰ Dong-shik Ryu, *Hanguk shinhak eui gwangmaek* [A bonanza of Korean theology], 338. Dong-Shik Ryu argues that shamanism is based on all religious phenomena and practices in Korea.

³¹ Cox, *Fire from Heaven*, 226.

influenced by “traditional shamanism and Confucianism.”³² Cox interprets the nature of shamanism and shamanistic influence on Christianity in Korea:

Shamanism is based on the premise that neither human beings nor nature itself hold the ultimate power in the universe. The ultimate power is a divine one. Further, it holds that the divine power can be brought to bear positively on earthly sorrow and pain, and that human beings need not be inert recipients of fate but can take measures that will improve their situation. Shamanism is not, like some of the so-called higher religions, fatalistic. It does not encourage resignation. It is, in this respect, more commensurate with certain strains of Christianity than with at least some of the dominant religious tradition of Asia.³³

Cox found that Christian teachings and rituals in the Korean religious soil were seriously influenced by shamanistic ritual and doctrine. As the illustration of his argument Cox suggests the great success of the Pentecostal movement in Korea.

David Martin also proposes that Korean Pentecostalism is a form of the perfect combination between Western Christianity and Korean shamanism. In particular, after a comparison of the spiritual reality between the New Testament and Korean shamanism, Martin concludes that both suggest a similar spiritual structure and concede the reality of demons as powers.³⁴

From the Korean Presbyterian Church’s perspective Chong Hee Jeong also agrees that there is a close relationship between the Korean Pentecostal movement and traditional Korean shamanism, and Korean shamanism has had a great influence on the development of the Korean Pentecostal movement from both the negative and positive perspective. Unfortunately, Jeong says, the Korean Pentecostal movement has predominantly bequeathed the negative elements of shamanism, such as “an attitude of

³² Allan Anderson, “Introduction: The Charismatic Face of Christianity in Asia,” in *Asian and Pentecostal*, eds. Allan Anderson and Edmond Tang (Oxford, UK: Regnum Books International, 2005), 10.

³³ Cox, *Fire from Heaven*, 227-228.

³⁴ David Martin, *Tongues of Fire* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd., 1990), 140.

dependence, a short-sighted attitude, moral indifference, fatalism, escapism and self-centered interest.”³⁵ Harvey Cox and the Korean Presbyterian Church’s conclusion on the origin of Korean Pentecostalism is a combination between Christianity and Korean shamanism. However, this has resulted from their superficial and typological comparison between two totally different religious traditions.

On the contrary a Korean Pentecostal theologian, Heyun Sung Bae, proposes a different perspective on the origin of Korean Pentecostalism and the Korean Pentecostal Church. In lieu of the Korean traditional philosophical and religious backgrounds, Bae argues that “The theological motif of Full Gospel Theology relies on the twentieth century Pentecostal Movement, whose theological foundations are ‘firmly planted in the nineteenth century Holiness Movement and American Revivalism’”³⁶ In other words, Korean Pentecostalism is directly implanted by the Holiness movement in the United States. As a senior pastor in the *Yoido* Full Gospel Church, Yonggi Cho’s doctrine of the “fivefold Gospel”³⁷ contends that his Pentecostal movement follows the universal pattern of Pentecostalism, characterized as the fourfold gospel: “Christ the Savior, Sanctifier, Healer, and coming King.”³⁸ Therefore, in spite of a phenomenological similarity

³⁵ Chong Hee Jeong, “The Korean Charismatic Movement as Indigenous Pentecostalism,” in *Asian and Pentecostal: The Charismatic Face of Christianity in Asia*, eds. Allan Anderson & Edmond Tang (Oxford, UK: Regnum Books International, 2005), 555.

³⁶ Hyeon Sung Bae, “Full Gospel Theology and A Korean Pentecostal Identity,” in *Asian and Pentecostal: The Charismatic Face of Christianity in Asia*, eds. Allan Anderson & Edmond Tang (Oxford, UK: Regnum Books International, 2005), 539; Also see Donald Dayton, “The Four-Fold Gospel: Key to Trans-Pacific Continuities,” in *From the Margins*, ed. Christian T. Collins Winn (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2007), 359-366.

³⁷ The fivefold Gospel is Christ’s redemption, fullness of the Holy Spirit, Blessing, Divine healing, and Christ’s Second Coming. See Yonggi Cho, *Ohjung bokeum gwa samjung chukbok* [The fivefold Gospel and the threefold blessing] (Seoul: Youngsan, 1983), 49-53.

³⁸ Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism*, 21-22.

between Korean Pentecostalism and Korean shamanism, it is clear to Cho that they had a different origin and theological structure.

The indigenization project between Christianity and Korean shamanism is looked at differently by Tong-Shik Ryu in the Korean Methodist theological group and Hyun Kyung Chung in the Korean feminist theological group. Tong-Shik Ryu (a Methodist theologian) was interested in Korean shamanism itself and has studied it.³⁹ Tong-Shik Ryu concludes that Korean shamanism did pave the way for Christianity to accept the reality of God and the spiritual world, to recognize the God's salvific economy as a practical and visible work in this world, and to believe in an earthly blessing from God.⁴⁰

Hyun Kyung Chung has sought to make a theological correlation between her Asian feminist theology and Korean shamanism. She uses Korean shamanism in understanding the "female image of Jesus" and as illuminating the healing mechanism from the *han* in her Asian feminist theology. Her strategies are to restore women's actual and ontological status leaning on Korean shamanism. Cox positively estimates that Chung's theological project "[has] gone beyond either slavishly embracing or mechanically rejecting the versions of the faith the missionaries brought to them. Instead they are crafting theologies and liturgies that draw on their own indigenous cultures."⁴¹ Cox claims that Chung's theological methodology stems from the Korean indigenous religions, especially shamanism. This means that she strongly rejects the Western version of theology.

³⁹ Tong-Shik Ryu, *Poongryudo wa hanguk shinhak* [Poongryudo and Korean theology] (Seoul: Chunmangsa, 1992), 143-163.

⁴⁰ Tong-Shik Ryu, *Kidokgyo wa hanguk chonggyo waeui maannam* [The Christian faith encounters the religion of Korea] (Seoul: The Christian Literature Society of Korea, 1962), 37-38.

⁴¹ Cox, *Fire from Heaven*, 215.

In her keynote address of the Seventh General Assembly of the World Council of Churches at Canberra, Chung presented her theological views from the Korean feministic perspective. For her theology, the notions of *han* and *han-pu-ri*⁴² have some significantly important meanings. According to Cox's remembrance of Chung's address at Canberra,

When she [Hyun Kyung Chung] addressed the audience directly Chung explained that in Korean folk tradition, *han* spirits are the wandering souls of those who are filled with anger, bitterness, and resentment because they were killed or died unjustly or for many other reasons. It is because of these *han* spirits, she said, that "we can feel, touch and taste the concrete, bodily historical presence of the Holy Spirit in our midst." Turning to the theme-prayer of the assembly, "Come Holy Spirit, Renew Thy Whole Creation," she insisted that it should not be used as an excuse for passivity, merely waiting for the Spirit. Rather it required active solidarity with all forms of life. "I no longer believe in an omnipotent God," she declared. "I rely on the compassionate God who weeps with us in the midst of the cruel destruction of life."⁴³

The above passage indicates that Chung's understanding of the *han* in human spirit and its healing process imitates the Korean indigenous religions, especially shamanism. In particular, from Chung's feministic perspective, healing process of *han* is well shown in the *mudang*'s "*kut*," which is the collective and communal ritual in Korean shamanism. Chung believes that "'kut' is one of the very few rituals and practices over which Korean women could exercise any measure of control and enjoy autonomy."⁴⁴

As a fundamental emotion of the Korean people,⁴⁵ *han* is defined as "the diseased hearts of people who are physically or psychologically associated with the suffering of survival created by wars, patriarchal suppression, poverty and sicknesses in Korean

⁴² See Hyun Kyung Chung, "'HAN-PU-RI': Doing Theology from Korean Women's Perspective," in *Frontiers in Asian Christian Theology: Emerging Trends*, ed. R.S. Sugirtharajah (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1994), 52-62.

⁴³ Cox, *Fire From Heaven*, 217.

⁴⁴ Chang-Hee Son, *Haan (한, 恨) of Minjung Theology and Han (한, 韓) of Han Philosophy* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2000), 57.

⁴⁵ Jae Hoon Lee, *The Exploration of the Inner Wounds – Han* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1994), 1-7.

history.”⁴⁶ In Korea, while Buddhism and Confucianism have been considered as “the spiritual property of the elite classes,” the shamanistic practices and ritual have targeted the grassroots (*minjung*) who have experienced a frustration under the strict Confucian class system.⁴⁷

Chung pays attention to the role of the female priests in Korean shamanism, which is an extraordinary religious system in the male-dominated society. Furthermore, she reads the female nature of Jesus Christ into the female *shaman*’s role and significance. Chung proposes that Korean women view “Jesus Christ as the priest of *han*” because they “take Jesus as a big sister just as they take the shaman as a big sister in their community.”⁴⁸ Like female *shaman*, the mission of Jesus Christ in the Scriptures seeks to unravel the *han* of the wounded people in their village.

Chung’s Asian feminist theology successfully shows the indigenization paradigm between Christianity and Korean shamanism. Meanwhile, the Korean Methodist theologians since the 1960s have attempted to form an Indigenization dialogue between Christian theology and Korean Confucianism, and between Christianity and Korean Buddhism. The Korean Methodist theologians had striven to redeem Korean subjectivity in theology and to consider the Korean traditional religions as the *Sitz im Leben* of Korean Christianity.⁴⁹

In the religious dialogue between Korean Confucianism and Christian theology, Sung-Bum Yun has played a leading role. In the Korean national *Dankoon* myth, Yun

⁴⁶ Chong Hee Jeong, “The Korean Charismatic Movement as Indigenous Pentecostalism,” 555.

⁴⁷ Cox, *Fire from Heaven*, 228.

⁴⁸ Chung Hyun Kyung, *Struggle to be Sun Again: Introducing Asian Women’s Theology*, 66.

⁴⁹ See Kwang-Shik Kim, “Hanguk tochakwha shinhak eui hyungsungsa” [A formation history of Korean Indigenous Theology], *Kidokgyo sasang* 390 [Christian thought 390] (June, 1991), 10-14.

found a Trinitarian perspective within “the triad of *Hwanin-Hwanwoong-Hwangom*,” which appeared as the three leading figures in the myth.⁵⁰ Based on this triadic system, he also found the “the dialectic of *Gam* (material)-*Somsi* (technique)-*Mot* (beauty)” in the Korean native tradition, and uses it as his theological methodology.⁵¹ According to Kwang Shik Kim’s understanding of the theological methodology in Yun’s indigenous project,

Beginning with the interpretation of Dankoon myth as the “vestigium trinitatis,” he [Sung Bum Yun] develops his own dialectic of intuition viz. the dialectic of Gam-Somsi-Mot in distinction from the dialectic of conception (Hegel, Kierkegaard, Schleiermacher). He seems to imply by the dialectic of intuition that the dialectical third (*Somsi*) makes two opposite elements (*Gam*) draw nearer and nearer into unity. This should not be confused with the “unio mystica.” The continuous working of the *Somsi* makes the unity [into] a line. And the line must be curved. The beauty of the curved line (*Mot*) symbolizes freedom. Freedom is analogous to salvation history. As a follower of Karl Barth, Yun seems to have been oscillating between Korean cultural a priori as a ratio of his genius aesthetics and the work of the Holy Spirit, in order to secure the concept of freedom.⁵²

From his own understanding of the Korean *Dankoon* myth, Yun concluded that the triad structure of *Hwanin-Hwanwoong-Hwangom* in the Korean national myth was able to be viewed as a strong evidence of the Christian Trinity, revealed within the Korean traditional myth, similar to “the trinity of the Nestorians in the ancient China.” Yun argued that the triad structure in the *Dankoon* myth could be considered as a *vestigium trinitatis* in Christian theology.⁵³

Leaning on his indigenous theological methodology, Yun has developed a theological dialogue between Korean Confucianism and Christianity. He proposed the

⁵⁰ Sung-Bum Yun, *Kidokgyo wa hanguk sasang* [Christianity and Korean thought], 41-70.

⁵¹ Ibid., 11-38.

⁵² Kwang-Shik Kim, *Tochakwha wa haesukhak* [Indigenization and hermeneutics], 298.

⁵³ Ibid., 297.

Sung (sincerity) hermeneutic,⁵⁴ in which he found a close relation between the Christian God and “a highly metaphysical concept” in the notion of the *Sung* of Yul Gog. Kwang-Shik Kim explains:

After some trial and error Yun is glad to find the concept [*Sung*] as the harmonizing third part of his dialectic, that is supposed to be able to solve all possible problems of conflict and opposition. Now the “*Sung*” is hypostatized to be God, Christ and the Holy Spirit as well as the divine revelation. Apparently Professor Yun is convinced that the Barthian trinity can be drawn from the concept of “*Sung*.” “*Sung*” is to him both the method and the object of theology.⁵⁵

Yun proposed that there is a similarity between the Christian idea of God and the Confucian notion of *Sung*. As with the Christian God, all opposition and contrast are resolved in the Confucian *Sung* because *Sung* contains all things.

In contrast with Yun’s perspective, Chai-sik Chung, who has a thorough knowledge of a Confucian-Christian dialogue, holds that a huge distinction exists between God and humans in Christianity and Confucianism. Compared to Confucianism, Christian theology teaches individuals absolute obedience to God, which contrasts with Confucianism because individual duty and loyalty is towards their family and the State.⁵⁶ Following Yun’s indigenous project, however, Korean Indigenization theologians continue to investigate the close similarity between Christian theology and Korean Confucianism.

Heup Young Kim concludes, after comparing Barth’s sanctification and Wang’s Confucian notion of “self-cultivation,” that they have the same aim of teaching “the *Tao*

⁵⁴ Chung-Gu Park, “Kidokgyo sahoe yunli wa hanguk tochakwha shinhak” [The Christian social ethic and the Korean Indigenous Theology], *Kidokgyo sasang* 390 [Christian thought 390] (June, 1991), 116-124.

⁵⁵ Kwang-Shik Kim, *Tochakwha wa haesukhak* [Indigenization and hermeneutics], 298-299.

⁵⁶ Chai-sik Chung, *A Korean Confucian Encounter with the Modern World*, 33.

(way) of radical humanization.” In this dialogue, Kim makes sure not to enter into “religious syncretism.” He explicates his theological strategy for dialogue relying on John Cobb (“beyond dialogue”⁵⁷), H. Richard Niebuhr (“a confessional method”⁵⁸), and R. Panikkar (“intrareligious dialogue”⁵⁹). Beyond the simple comparison of theological hermeneutics or theological *a priori* between Barth and Wang, Kim reveals how to converge two civilizations (Christianity and Confucianism) from the same perspective of “radical humanization.” According to Kim,

the thick resemblances between Wang’s confuciology of self-cultivation and Barth’s theology of sanctification can furnish points of departure to develop an East Asian Christology with a Confucian horizon. Their understandings of humanity in traditional terms of *jen* and *imago Dei* respectively are not only homologues but also materially congruent; namely, co-humanity, being-in-togetherness, or being for others. East Asian Christians would have no difficulty in perceiving Jesus Christ as the paradigm of humanity who prefers both *jen* and *imago Dei*. Also, in Jesus Christ, they find a perfect unity for the two root-metaphors of radical humanization, *ch’eng* and *agape*.⁶⁰

Presupposing the radical humanization as a starting point for a dialogue, Kim maintains that Karl Barth’s and Wang’s notions are surprisingly connected with each other hermeneutically and practically.

Furthermore, Kim argues that the Confucian theory of “humanization” is able to provide a deeper understanding of traditional Christology within Christian theology. As a Confucian-Christian dialogist, Kim proposes five indigenous portraits of Jesus Christ:

⁵⁷ In-Chul Han, “John Cobb eui dawon jueui bangbub sogo” [A study of John Cobb’s methodology of pluralism], in *Chonggyo dawon jueui wa hanguk jeok shinhak* [Religious pluralism and Korean theology], eds. Kyoung-Jae Kim et al. (Chunan, Korea: The Korean Theological Study Institute, 1992), 228.

⁵⁸ See Martin L. Cook, *The Open Circle: Confessional Method in Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), 67-85. Also see C. David Grant, *God the Center of Value: Value Theory in the Theology of H. Richard Niebuhr* (Fort Worth, TX: Texas Christian University Press, 1984), 5-24.

⁵⁹ Sun-Wan Byun, *Bulgyo wa kidokgyo eui mannan* [An encounter between Buddhism and Christianity], 277-280.

⁶⁰ Heup Young Kim, *Wang Yang-ming and Karl Barth: A Confucian-Christian Dialogue*, 181.

(1) “Jesus Christ as the *Tao* of radical humanization,” (2) “Jesus Christ as the ultimate sage,” (3) “Jesus Christ as the *Ch’eng Par excellence* (the most concrete universal),” (4) “Jesus Christ as the paradigm of humanity in the unity of *Imago Dei* and *Jen*, and (5) “Jesus Christ as the ultimate embodiment of *liang-chih* (wisdom)”⁶¹

After a comprehensive examination into the indigenization discussion between Christianity and Korean Confucianism, Young-Gwan Kim also suggests that Korean Confucianism has played a vital role in accepting the Western Christian theology (in particular, Karl Barth’s theology) into the Korean ecclesiological context through analyzing Sung Bum Yun’s theology of *Sung* (sincerity) in neo-Confucianism.⁶² More positively, in opposition to Asian feminist theologian’s castigation of Confucianism as oppressing woman’s role and status in Korean society,⁶³ Young-Gwan Kim highly respects the Confucian teachings which function as a bridge for Korean society to receive Western Christianity.

In addition to the Confucian-Christian dialogue, Korean Indigenization Theology has developed a Buddhist-Christian dialogue because Buddhism is another main religion in Korea. The religious dialogue between Christianity and Confucianism is relatively tolerable because Korean Confucianism has been considered as just a philosophical system or a custom of courtesy. The dialogue between Christianity and Buddhism has been restricted because Korean Christians recognize Buddhism as a completely different

⁶¹ Ibid., 182-185.

⁶² Young-Gwan Kim, *Karl Barth’s Reception in Korea: Focusing on Ecclesiology in Relation to Korean Christian Thought*, 313-324.

⁶³ Hyun Kyung Chung, *Struggle to be Sun Again*, 58.

religion. Hence, any theological proposal for a Christian-Buddhist dialogue needs to have the courage to confront open hostility.

Sun-Whan Byun exemplifies the predicament of a Christian-Buddhist dialogue within the Korean context.⁶⁴ Byun, as a former president of the Methodist Theological University in Korea, “was deprived not only of his position as the president of the university but also of his professorship and ministerial privileges – effectively excommunicating him from the order – primarily because of his sympathetic attitude toward other religions, and particularly Buddhism. When Pyŏn [Byun] made a statement to the effect that salvation was possible outside the church, he was severely criticized by fellow Christians from almost every denomination in Korea.”⁶⁵ Moreover, Byun boldly proposed that Christ is a *Buddha* because *Buddha*’s practice for other people (*Bodhisattva*) is similar to Jesus’ teaching about loving ones neighbor.⁶⁶

As a disciple of Byun, Seung-Chul Kim investigates the possibility of dialogue between Christianity and Buddhism from the perspective of history. Kim begins his dialogue with a critical reception of Paul Tillich’s study of the comparison between the Kingdom of God and *Nirvana*.⁶⁷ John Cobb summarizes Tillich’s methodology for religious dialogue as follows:

⁶⁴ Sun-whan Byun, *Bulgyo wa kidokgyo eui maanman* [An encounter between Buddhism and Christianity], 108-131.

⁶⁵ Kang-nam Oh, “The Christian-Buddhist Encounter in Korea,” 375.

⁶⁶ Sun-Whan Byun, *Bulgyo wa kidokgyo eui maanman* [An encounter between Buddhism and Christianity], 234, & 270-271. Dong-Shik Ryu, *Hanguk shinhak eui gwangmaek* [A bonanza of Korean theology], 271-276, & 337-343. Chai-Choon Kim, “Is Dialogue between Buddhism and Christianity Possible?,” in *Asian Contextual Theology for the Third Millennium: A Theology of Minjung in Fourth-Eye Formation*, eds. Paul S. Chung et al., trans. Paul S. Chung (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2007), 30.

⁶⁷ Paul Tillich, *Christianity and the Encounter of World Religions* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994), 33-47.

Tillich's proposal was that theologians interpret Christianity once again in the context of the whole global phenomenon of religion. Strictly speaking it is not the *history* of religions but the *phenomenology* of religion which especially illumines Christian but the *phenomenology* of religion which especially illumines Christian faith. He favored a "dynamic-typological" approach. He judged that all religions have a sacramental base and also mystical and prophetic elements. When these elements are appropriately unified the result is "the Religion of the Concrete Spirit," which he connects with his earlier category of theonomy. This provides a norm by which all actual religions can be evaluated. Tillich believed that this norm was fulfilled in Paul's doctrine of the Spirit.⁶⁸

As Cobb rightly summarized, Tillich's contribution to form a theological dialogue with other world religions is well revealed in his proposal of "dynamic-typological" methodology, based on the Pauline doctrine of the Spirit.

Seung-Chul Kim also agrees that through this "dynamic-typological" methodology, Tillich intends to unite Christianity and Buddhism in a dynamic contrasting system, and to discover multi-dimensional and unrevealed meaning in both religions.⁶⁹ However, Kim finds some mistakes in Tillich's understanding of Buddhism. According to Tillich, the Christian symbol of the Kingdom of God intends to drive Christians to participate in the practice of *agape* as forgiving and accepting other people. However, the Buddhist symbol of *Nirvana* is used to display the trouble in *Karuna* to the Buddhists.⁷⁰ According to Kim, Tillich seriously misunderstands the meaning of *Nirvana* because Tillich fails to recognize the existential, soteriological, and practical perspectives of *Nirvana*.

The world of *Nirvana* is interconnected with the existential and the physical through having a causal relationship, on which the notion of "nothingness" in Buddhism

⁶⁸ John Cobb, Jr., *Beyond Dialogue: Toward a Mutual Transformation of Christianity and Buddhism* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1998), 33.

⁶⁹ Seung-Chul Kim, *Chonggyo dawon jueui wa kidokgyo 1 gwon* [Religious pluralism and Christianity, vol. 1] (Seoul: Nathan, 1993), 242-243.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 244-245.

is based. *Nirvana* is far from a nihilistic stance toward the world or a negative escape from the world. Rather, *Nirvana* is a pure love from the highest level (nothingness), in which all things are interrelated like a web. In relying on the nothingness of the “true Self,” all existing things construct a true community through which every object is supposed to find the true “Selfness.”⁷¹ With this proper understanding of *Nirvana*, Kim firmly believes that the religious dialogue between Christianity and Buddhism can deepen one’s understanding of the other, especially as related to the notions of history and soteriology.

Korean Indigenization Theology respects the Korean religious traditions of Shamanism, Confucianism, and Buddhism as important cultural heritages. This Indigenization Theology tries to interpret Western Christianity within Korean religious and cultural traditions. Some theologians boldly propose that the Korean religious-cultural traditions are the womb of Korean Christianity, and they argue that the possibility of a salvific economy exists outside the Christian Church.

The Cultural Vision of the Church

Korean Indigenization Theology is deeply rooted in Paul Tillich’s presupposition⁷² that there is no qualitative difference between Christianity and non-Christian cultures because the *Logos* of God is already scattered in every culture and religion.⁷³ In this sense Korean Indigenization Theology has not paid attention to ecclesiology because it considers the Spiritual presence and the incarnation of the *Logos*

⁷¹ Ibid., 258-259.

⁷² Jiwhang Lew, “Paul Tillich’s Theological Method of Correlation Reconsidered for Intra-Religious and Inter-Religious Dialogue,” *Asia Journal of Theology* 17 (April, 2003): 115-133.

⁷³ Tillich, *A History of Christian Thought*, 326-327.

as the most important religious phenomena. One can dub this ecclesiology the “formless Church of Spirit” because it does not intend to have a special church building or a hierarchical church.⁷⁴ It seeks to find Spiritual presence and the incarnation of *Logos* as an “invisible Church” in every religious and cultural phenomenon.⁷⁵

Korean Indigenization Theology’s understanding of the Church as a “formless Church of Spirit” is indirectly influenced by the “non-church movement” led by Uchimura Kanzo in Japan.⁷⁶ Uchimura’s ecclesiology is as follows:

Protestantism institutionalized was a return back to the discarded Roman Catholicism. We need another Reformation to bring Protestantism to its logical conclusion. The new Protestantism must be perfectly free without a trace of ecclesiasticism in it – a fellowship, not an institution- free communion of souls, not a system or an organization.⁷⁷

Uchimura rejects the notion of the Church as a system or an organization. Instead Uchimura defined his non-church movement as “a lay reform movement within Christianity,” leaning on the idea of a “churchless Christianity.”

It is important to know that Uchimura’s negation of the inherited Western Christian legacy drives him to have a new theological interest in his native cultural and religious traditions. His non-church movement is motivated to seek “an indigenous form

⁷⁴ Nam-dong Suh, *Minjung shinhak eui tamgu* [An investigation into *Minjung* Theology], 299.

⁷⁵ Korean indigenous theology is depending on Paul Tillich’s “Spiritual Presence,” and his distinction between the invisible Church (the latent Church) and the visible Church. For Tillich’s notion, see John Charles Cooper, *The “Spiritual Presence” in the Theology of Paul Tillich* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1997), 91-100.

⁷⁶ Chung-Bae Lee, *Hanguk gaeshingyo junyui tochakwha jeongu* [A study of the advanced indigenization of the Korean Protestant], 81-82. Also see John F. Howes, *Japan’s Modern Prophet: Uchimura Kanzo, 1861-1930* (Vancouver: University of British Colombia Press, 2006). Carlo Caldarola, *Christianity, The Japanese Way* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1979).

⁷⁷ *CWUK (Complete Works of Uchimura Kanzo)*, vol. 31, 132 (1928), quoted in Mark R. Mullins, *Christianity Made in Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1998), 59.

of Christianity,” independent of the Western Christian traditions.⁷⁸ The non-church movement’s understanding of indigenous culture and religions may be stated as follows:

While missionaries could only see discontinuity between the Gospel and Japanese culture, Uchimura found many positive connections. One significant pattern in the new indigenous traditions of Christian thought may be referred to as the “Christianization of the pre-Christian past.” As Japanese struggled to make sense of the Christian faith for themselves, it was only natural that they sought to find common ground and points of continuity with native traditions and religious experience. Japanese Christians felt the need to redeem the past and consider how God had been at work in Japanese history and culture before the arrival of Western missionaries.⁷⁹

Uchimura took pride in his cultural heritage, and his non-church movement attempted to actively reinterpret the Christian message within his native cultural and religious traditions. In particular, Uchimura viewed Japan as the best place to become a melting pot between Eastern and Western civilization. Uchimura respected his indigenous culture and religion as well as understanding the necessity for the Christian teaching in Japan.⁸⁰

Uchimura’s thought of the relationship between *Buddha* and Christ well reflects his positive theological assessment of the indigenous religions. While Uchimura sees *Buddha* as “the Mood,” “the Mother,” and “Mercy,” Christ is thought of as “the Sun,” “the Father,” and “Righteousness.” Uchimura concludes that “I know that the love of the Moon is included in the love of the Sun, and that he who loves the Sun loves the Moon also.”⁸¹ In Uchimura’s theological system the “non-church” perspective has played an important role for the “contextualization” of Christianity in the Asian community; and

⁷⁸ Mark R. Mullins, *Christianity Made in Japan: A Study of Indigenous Movements*, 55-56.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 61.

⁸⁰ Hiroshi Miura, *The Life and Thought of Kanzo Uchimura*, 117-118.

⁸¹ CWUK, vol. 29, 456 (1925-1926), quoted in Mark R. Mullins, *Christianity Made in Japan*, 61.

Uchimura's notions of "Christianity without church" and a "Japanese Christianity" influenced the emergence of Korean Indigenization Theology.⁸²

Gyo-Shin Kim imported Uchimura's non-church movement into Korea. Through his theological journal, *Sungsuh Chosun* (A Biblical *Chosun*), Kim develops this movement as a social enlightenment movement and a religious indigenous movement. Kim's theological endeavor makes him a major contributor toward the initial idea of Korean Indigenization Theology.⁸³ In agreement with Kim's religious indigenous movement, Korean Indigenization Theology believes that "the gospel is sown and is accepted into the cultural-religious soil which is already fertilized by Buddhism, Confucianism, Shamanism and the indigenous folk religion."⁸⁴ Hence, the Spirit of God has worked to prepare for the indigenization of Western Christianity in Korea.

Korean Indigenization Theology has also depended on Paul Tillich's monistic view of the relationship between religion and culture, and his "correlation" methodology in which theology is supposed to give an answer to all philosophical questions.⁸⁵ From Tillich's perspective, religion and culture do not contradict each other, but have a close relationship. According to Tillich,

Religion as ultimate concern is the meaning-giving substance of culture, and culture is the totality of forms in which the basic concern of religion expresses itself. In abbreviation: religion is the substance of culture, culture is the form of religion. Such a consideration definitely prevents the establishment of a dualism

⁸² See Robert Lee, *The Clash of Civilizations: An Intrusive Gospel in Japanese Civilization* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1999), 7-9.

⁸³ Chung-Bae Lee, *Hanguk gaeshingyo junyui tochakwha jeongu* [A study of the advanced indigenization of the Korean Protestant], 82-83, 86-87.

⁸⁴ Kyoung-Jae, Kim, "Christian Faith and Culture: A Hermeneutical Approach to a Theology of Mission," *The Asia Journal of Theology* 19 (October, 2005): 443-444.

⁸⁵ Paul Tillich, *What is Religion?*, trans. James Luther Adams (New York: Harper & Row, 1973), 59-62; Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 3 (The University of Chicago Press, 1976), 248.

of religion and culture. Every religious act, not only in organized religion, but also in the most intimate movement of the soul, is culturally formed.⁸⁶

Tillich rejects the dualistic view of the relationship between religion and culture. He overcomes the dichotomy between religion and culture through seeing the relationship between religion and culture as that of substance and form.

For Tillich “Religion is not a special function of the human spirit!”⁸⁷ For him religion “is at home everywhere, namely, in the depth of all functions of man’s spiritual life. Religion is the dimension of depth in all [of] them. Religion is the aspect of depth in the totality of the human spirit.”⁸⁸ The notion of “depth” helps us understand religion as the “ultimate concern.”⁸⁹ For Tillich, “Religion, in the largest and most basic sense of the word, is ultimate concern. And ultimate concern is manifest in all creative functions of the human spirit.”⁹⁰ In the human being’s “cultural creativity,” therefore, there always exists this ultimate concern and “Its immediate expression is the style of a culture.”⁹¹ According to Tillich’s logic, every existing culture conveys ultimate concern, and thus, the culture is not an enemy of the Gospel through which culture has to be conquered and transformed. With the help of Tillich’s analysis of the relationship between religion and culture, Korean Indigenization Theology has concluded that the Christian Gospel, as the ultimate concern, is the substance of the Korean culture, and the Korean culture becomes a form of the Christian Gospel.

⁸⁶ Paul Tillich, *Theology of Culture* (London & New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), 42.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 6.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 7.

⁸⁹ See Paul Tillich, *Dynamics of Faith* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1957), 8-10.

⁹⁰ Tillich, *Theology of Culture*, 8.

⁹¹ Ibid., 42-43.

From this understanding of the Gospel and culture Korean Indigenization Theology has paid attention to the notion of the “invisible Church” in Tillich’s works,⁹² and attempted to investigate a universal form of the Church hidden in the Korean native religious-cultural traditions. While Korean Indigenization Theology prioritizes the “invisible Church,” this theology does not deny the role and value of the “visible Church.” As for building a visible Church, it intends to construct a “servant community of the Spirit ministering to the Living and the Dead.”⁹³ The visible Church in Korean Indigenization Theology strives to play a role of a melting pot within Korean religious-cultural traditions. The visible Church in Korean Indigenization Theology attempts “to correlate the Christian answer implied in the Gospel with the religious questions implied in Korean culture,” with the belief that “There is no such a thing as a pure Confucianism, a pure Shamanism, or a pure Christianity which transcends the concrete sociopolitical reality of Korean history.”⁹⁴ Hence, the Korean religious and cultural traditions are a matrix in which “religion, politics, economy, technology, science, art, thoughts, ideologies, etc., make up a complex system.”⁹⁵

The visible Church in Korean Indigenization Theology attempts to communicate with this complex Korean culture and heal the estrangement within it. Thus,

The Christian community of Korea as the servant community of the Spirit has the dual tasks of cultural ministry. One is the ministry of listening to the *han* cry of the dead in solidarity with Jesus who descended into hell. The other is the ministry of proclamation the kingdom of God in obedience to Jesus who will

⁹² For reviewing Korean Theology’s understanding of Tillich’s ecclesiology, see In-Shik Choi, “Paul Tillich eui gyohoeron” [Ecclesiology of Paul Tillich], in *Gyohoeron* [Ecclesiology], ed. Society of Korean Systematic Theology (Seoul: The Christian Literature Society of Korea, 2009), 255-277.

⁹³ Jong Chun Park, *Crawl with God, Dance with Spirit!*, 54.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 51.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

come to judge the living and the dead. First and foremost, the Christian community of the Eucharist is the servant community led by the Spirit of the crucified, dead, buried, and risen Jesus.⁹⁶

The visible Church in this Theology focuses on healing the broken hearts and the victimized culture of the neo-Confucian caste system, Japanese-colonialism, the Korean War, and military dictatorships.

To heal the *han* of the victimized, the oppressed, and the marginalized,⁹⁷ the visible Church in this Theology suggests a liturgical cooperation with shamanistic ritual (*kut*) and Confucian ceremony (ancestral worship).

While the Confucianist memorial rite which has won social recognition is carried out by males, the Shamanistic rite which complements the Confucianist rite is carried out by women. These two rites are not a bisexual dual structure of faith. Instead they make up a complete system of popular faith in Korea. Though the rites for the dead in Korea are mostly Confucianized, the Shamanistic *kut* is still alive because there must be some function which the Confucianist rite cannot fulfill. That missing function is *yonggye-ullim*, a segment of the séance in which the dead lament through their spirit mediums. The Confucianist rite, in which the ethos of filial piety is fundamental, produces the solidarity and continuity of the family unit. The Confucianist ideology of ancestor worship has sustained and consolidated Korean patriarchal social systems.⁹⁸

The Shamanistic *kut* and Confucian ancestral worship in the Korean religious tradition are directed to appease the dead, through which those left behind communicate with the dead and realize the unity of life and death. Those left behind are also able to feel comfort through solidarity with their dead ancestors.⁹⁹

However, some serious tasks remain. How does the Christian community have a deep relationship with other religious communities? Furthermore, to what extent does

⁹⁶ Ibid., 57.

⁹⁷ See Laurel Kendall, *Shamans, Nostalgias, and the IMF* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2009), 22.

⁹⁸ Jong Chun Park, *Crawl with God, Dance with Spirit!*, 55.

⁹⁹ See Jae Hoon Lee, *The Exploration of the Inner Wounds-Han*, 122-133.

the Christian community accept the phenomenon of “Spiritual Presence” in other religions? Jong Chun Park refers to the pagan woman who interrupts Jesus’ table fellowship, asking for the healing of her daughter. Jesus finally accepts this woman and heals her daughter even though Jesus’ reception of her radically violates the Jewish law. In addition, Park reminds us of Galatians 3:28: “There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither slave nor freeman, there can be neither male nor female-for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”¹⁰⁰

In Korean Indigenization Theology ecclesiology is strongly influenced by the non-church movement in which the traditional church’s system is disregarded, and the Spiritual presence in the traditional Korean religions supersedes the traditional Church. However, this “formless” Church in Indigenization Theology does not deny the significance of the visible church within the religious pluralistic context. The visible Church plays an active role as a communicator between Christianity and non-Christian religions. Furthermore, the visible church has a sympathy for hearing the “*han*-ridden cry” in Korean passion culture, and attempts to appease the sorrow and despair in Korean culture through creatively accepting the rites of the traditional Korean religions.

The Essential Identity between Church and Society

The early conservative Western missionaries had urged that Korean Christians should discard traditional Korean values, cultures, and religious practices because these things were against the pure Christian message and tradition. Because all Korean heritages were judged as anti-Christian, Korean Christians had radically separated the Church from the Korean socio-cultural sphere and had regarded the Church as

¹⁰⁰ Jong Chun Park, *Crawl with God, Dance with Spirit!*, 57.

independent from other secondary societies. At this time, Gyo-Shin Kim introduced the non-Church movement to the Korean Church from Japan, and published a theological journal in order to spread his non-Church theology. Without the visible Church, Kim sought to find the voice of the Christian message within Korean culture and religions through a direct dialogue between the Bible and the Korean religious-cultural traditions. Suk-Heon Ham had also attempted to investigate God's redemptive economy within Korean history before it contacted the Christian Gospel.¹⁰¹ This non-Church movement holds that the existing Korean history and culture are an active part of God's redemption, and thus, God's salvific economy needs no special room (i.e., the Church). This movement views the relationship between Church and secondary societies as an essential identity.

Paul Tillich's theological perspective has greatly influenced the formation of Korean Indigenization Theology.¹⁰² Tillich proposes a theological methodology of "correlation," in which philosophy raises an existential question and theology gives an essential answer. This correlative methodology insists that Christianity and the non-Christian world are connected in the form of question-answer. The notion of "Spiritual Presence" in Tillich's thought also influenced the notion of the Church in Korean Indigenization Theology. Without any concrete place, the true Church is always revealed in the event of Spiritual presence.

¹⁰¹ Suk-heon Ham, *Duteurobon hanguksa* [A Korean history viewed by God's salvific meaning] (Seoul: Hangilsa, 2003).

¹⁰² In particular, Kyoung-Jae Kim and Insik Choi are directly and indirectly engaged in Indigenization Theology from Paul Tillich's Theological perspective. They are leading Tillich's study in Korea. See Kyung-Jae Kim, *Paul Tillich eui shinhak yeongu* [A study of Paul Tillich's theology] (Seoul: The Christian Literature Society of Korea, 1987). Also see Insik Choi, *Die Taologische Frage nach Gott: Paul Tillichs philosophischer Gottesbegriff des "Seins-Selbst" und sprachliche verantwortung des Glaubens in Begegnung mit dem Taogedanken Laotz* (Frankfurt/Bern: Peter Lang, 1991).

Korean Indigenization Theology accepts Tillich's *logos*-Christology which maintains that Christ's *logos* was already operating within non-Christian religions and cultures. Dependent upon Tillich's theological thought, it argues that the Christian message and traditional Korean religious thought have the same purpose and intent to recover "human dignity or self-realization and ultimately salvation."¹⁰³ The task and goal of this theology will be accomplished when this theology heals the victimized and the alienated within Korean society and fulfills the hope of the Korean grassroots movement.¹⁰⁴

Korean Indigenization Theology argues that Korean cultural and religious heritages are the essential sources for properly understanding the Christian Gospel. In this theological presupposition, there is no point in distinguishing the Gospel from Korean culture, or making a distinction between the Church and secondary societies. The indigenization of the Christian Gospel in the Korean peninsula had started before the Western Christian mission, and is continuing within every Korean culture, religion, and history.

Korean Indigenization Theology also paid attention to a Western theological movement called "dialogical theology" as suggested by Heinrich Ott and Fritz Buri.¹⁰⁵ This theological project intends to bridge a gap between Christianity and Buddhism. These theologians are influenced by Karl Rahner's thought and Hans Küng's theology,¹⁰⁶

¹⁰³ Tong-Shik Ryu, *Hanguk chonggyo wa kidokgyo* [Korean religions and Christianity], 223.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Kwang-Shik Kim, *Tochakwha wa haesukhak* [Indigenization and hermeneutics], 281-287. Kyoung-Jae Kim, "Christian Faith and Culture: A Hermeneutical Approach to a Theology of Mission," 435.

¹⁰⁶ Ji-Ryn Chung, "Shinang eui kil gwa chonggyo ganeui daewha," [The way of faith and dialogue among religions], in *Choggyo dawon jueui wa hanguk jeok shinhak* [The religious pluralism and Korean

attempting to understand the relationship between Christianity and other religions from the perspective of the Declaration of the Second Vatican Council.¹⁰⁷ However, Korean Indigenization theologians find a sharp distinction between Western dialogical theology and Eastern indigenization theology. While the Western dialogical theology tends to use “the analyzing-synthesizing approach,” the Eastern starts from the perspective of “the harmonizing-unfolding approach.”¹⁰⁸

From the harmonizing-unfolding approach, Sun-Whan Pyun accepts Karl Rahner’s notion of “anonymous Christians” and Hans Küng’s assertion of “salvation outside the church,” and applies these theological catchphrases to his Korean Indigenization Theology. Even though Küng rejects Rahner’s thesis of “anonymous Christians”¹⁰⁹ as violating the Catholic doctrine of the visible Church, both Küng and Rahner agree with the theological assertion that “the people of good will in other religions are saved through Christ.”¹¹⁰ According to Küng,

Christian faith represents radical universalism, but one grounded and made concrete in, and centered upon, Jesus Christ. This radical universalism means, as has already been said:

theology], eds. Kyoung-Jae Kim et al. (Chunan, Korea: The Korean Theological Study Institute, 1992), 279-281.

¹⁰⁷ Kyoung-Jae Kim, “Christianity and Culture: A Hermeneutic of Mission Theology in an East Asian Context,” in *Asian Contextual Theology for the Third Millennium: A Theology of Minjung in Fourth-Eye Formation*, eds. Paul S. Chung et al., trans. Paul S. Chung (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2007), 158. Also see Sun-Whan Byun, *Bulgyo wa gidokgyo eui maannam* [An encounter between Buddhism and Christianity], 258-260.

¹⁰⁸ Kwang-Shik Kim, *Tochakwha wa haesukhak* [Indigenization and hermeneutics], 301. Also see Tongshik Ryu, “Rough Road to Theological Maturity,” in *Asian Voices in Christian Theology*, ed. Gerald H. Anderson (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1976), 174-175.

¹⁰⁹ Karl Rahner, “Anonymous Christians,” in *Theological Investigations*, vol. 6, trans. David Bourke (London: Darton, Longman & Todd Publisher, 1969), 390-398.

¹¹⁰ Sang-Tae Shim, “Byun Sun-Whan baksa eui tachonggyogwan iehae” [Dr. Sun-Whan Pyun’s understanding of other religions], in *Chongyo dawon jueui wa hanguk shinhak* [Religious pluralism and Korean theology], eds. Kyoung-Jae Kim et al. (Chunan, Korea: Korean Theological Study Institute, 1992), 32-68. Kwang-Shik Kim, *Tochawha wa haesukhak* [Indigenization and hermeneutics], 302.

1. *Every* human being is under God's grace and can be saved: no matter whether he be of this or that nation or race, of this or that caste or class, free or slave, man or woman, or even inside or outside the Church of Christ. Every human being *can* be saved, and we may hope that *everyone* is.

2. *Every* world religion is under God's grace and can be a way of salvation: whether it is primitive or highly evolved, mythological or enlightened, mystical or rational, theistic or non-theistic, a real or only a quasi-religion. Every religion *can* be a way of salvation, and we may hope that they all *are*.¹¹¹

In the above passage Küng posits that the grace of God is already operating within other religions, and thus every world religion can be used as "a way of salvation." Outside the Church humans can be contacted by the grace of God and can be saved. "The Christian possesses no monopoly of truth."¹¹²

When paraphrasing Küng's theological assertion, Sun-Whan Pyun boldly proposed that there is salvation outside the Church. Pyun's theological declaration was confronted with trenchant critiques from conservative Korean Christians and theologians, and finally he was deprived of the position of president in the Methodist Theological University, his professorship, and the position of Methodist pastor.¹¹³

The religious dialogical and pluralistic penchant in Korean Indigenization Theology is not frustrated by a conservative Christian critique. In particular, Chan-Su Lee has studied the theology of Karl Rahner and seeks to form a dialogue between Christianity and Buddhism from the Rahnerian perspective.¹¹⁴ Lee's works promote the

¹¹¹ Hans Küng, "The World Religions in God's Plan of Salvation," in *Christian Revelation and World Religions*, ed. Joseph Neuner (London: Burns & Oates, 1967), 56-57.

¹¹² Hans Küng, "Towards an Ecumenical Theology of Religions: Some Theses for Clarification," in *Christianity among World Religions*, eds. Hans Küng and Jürgen Moltmann (Edinburgh: T.&T. Clark, 1986), 121.

¹¹³ Kang-nam Oh, "The Christian-Buddhist Encounter in Korea," 374-375.

¹¹⁴ Chan-Su Yi, *Ingan eun shin eui amho: Karl Rahner eui shinhak gwa dawon jeok chonggyo segea* [Human being as a cipher of God: Karl Rahner's theology and the world of pluralistic religions] (Waegwan, Korea: Benedict Press, 1999).

existing study of religious dialogue between Christianity and Buddhism in Korea. His strategy of religious dialogue is to focus on a new analysis of anthropology and the world, based on the Rahnerian concept of “the supernatural existential.”¹¹⁵ According to the Rahnerian idea of the “supernatural existential,” both the Church and the world are invited to the universal salvific calling of God without distinction because all humans are “existentially” invited to transcend themselves through God’s unconditional grace.¹¹⁶ Lee’s understanding is deeply rooted in John Cobb’s interpretation of Karl Rahner’s theological legacy. Cobb’s wording says that Karl Rahner

introduced the idea of the “anonymous Christian” as the person who unknowingly received the grace of Christ outside the church. For Rahner, as for Küng, the non-Christian religions can play a positive role in making this grace available to their believers. But for him, when the Christian church arrives on the scene, the need for these other traditions is in principle superseded.¹¹⁷

For Rahner anonymous Christians are those who have experienced the grace of God outside the Church. Through this revolutionary notion, Rahner maintains that those who belong to other religious traditions have a possibility of salvation.

Küng reads a Christian imperial attitude in Rahner’s idea of the “anonymous Christian” because this theological notion imposes the category of Christian on those who do not want to convert to Christianity.¹¹⁸ For Korean Indigenization Theology, however,

¹¹⁵ *Sacramentum Mundi: An Encyclopedia of Theology*, vol. 2, eds. Karl Rahner et al. (London: Burns and Oates, 1968-1970), sv. “Supernatural Existential.”

¹¹⁶ See Chan-Su Yi, *Ingan eun shin eui amho: Karl Rahner eui shinhak gwa dawon jeok chonggyo segea* [Human being as a cipher of God: Karl Rahner’s theology and the world of pluralistic religions], 51-57.

¹¹⁷ Cobb, Jr., *Beyond Dialogue*, 23.

¹¹⁸ Hans Küng, *On Being a Christian*, trans. Edward Quine (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1976), 97-98. For a recent Korean indigenous theologian’s understanding of Küng’s ecclesiology, see Ji-Ryun Chung, “Hans Küng eui gyohoeron” [Ecclesiology of Hans Küng], in *Gyohoeron* (Ecclesiology), ed. Society of Systematic Theology in Korea (Seoul: The Christian Literature Society of Korea, 2009), 281-302.

the Rahnerian assertion of anonymous Christian, based on the “supernatural existential,” has worked as one of the most important theories to provide a theoretical rationale for forming a religious dialogue between Christianity and Korean traditional religions.

Unfortunately, while Korean Indigenization Theology positively interprets the creative relationship between Christianity and Korean native religions, this theology has lost its theological function of critiquing secondary societies. The main reason is that the theological system of Korean Indigenization Theology is based on the Rahnerian “supernatural existential,” and thus, the relationship between the Church and society is essentially connected. John Milbank critiques the perspective of Rahnerian “supernatural existential” in integrating the Church and society as follows: “the social is an autonomous sphere which does not need to turn to theology for its self-understanding, and yet it is already a grace-imbued sphere.”¹¹⁹ Compared to French integralism of supernaturalizing the natural, Rahnerian integralism naturalizes the supernatural.¹²⁰ Milbank also argues:

Only the French version truly abandons hierarchies and geographies in theological anthropology, because it refuses even to ‘formally distinguish’ a realm of pure nature in concrete humanity. Nor, for this version, is the encounter with grace situated at the margins of every individual’s knowing (as for Rahner), but rather in the confrontation with certain historical texts and images which have no permanent ‘place’ whatsoever, save that of their original occurrence as events and their protracted repetition through the force of ecclesial allegiance.¹²¹

The Rahnerian integralism between the Church and secondary societies presupposes the existence of God’s grace “at the margins of every individual’s knowing” as the permanent site for divine grace.

¹¹⁹ John Milbank, *Theology & Social Theory* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 208.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 207.

¹²¹ Ibid., 208-209.

Korean Indigenization Theology's understanding of the Korean religious-cultural heritage and secondary societies follows Rahnerian integralism, and thus it deletes the concrete demarcation between the Church and society. This means that the Church fails to secure a "distance" for critiquing secondary societies. Because of this theological epistemology there only exists the radical identity and integralism between the Church and secondary societies without any Church's critique of secondary societies.

Through the lens of the theology of Lesslie Newbigin,¹²² Korean Indigenization Theology is to be judged as unilaterally leaning on the theology of Paul Tillich, Karl Rahner, and Hans Küng, while disregarding some different voices of the relationship between religions and culture. Newbigin introduces a distinguishing perspective of the relationship between culture and religion from that of Tillich. In order to understand a clear connection between culture and religion in Newbigin, one needs to know Newbigin's perspective on religious pluralism.

Beyond the opposition to religious pluralism, Newbigin redefines the issue of religious pluralism from the imperialistic perspective. First, human beings naturally seek "harmony," "coherence," and "mental security," through "knowing that there is no threat from what is radically alien." Humans intend to be united and create a pluralistic reciprocity in religion because this unified pluralism brings "security" to all humanity. The problem is that while the aim of religious pluralism is explicitly for peaceful co-existence, Newbigin insists that the proposal for this religious pluralism implicitly has a

¹²² See Geoffrey Wainwright, *Lesslie Newbigin: A Theological Life* (London & New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 132.

desire to stand at the center.¹²³ Hence, the theological request for cooperation of all world religions through forming a dialogue can easily be transferred onto individual religions' deterioration into a religious imperialism.¹²⁴

The indigenous project of theology creates a distance from the perspective of religious pluralism. By contrast, with regard to the evangelizational task, Newbigin proposes the perspective of "cultural pluralism" as distinguishing from the religious pluralism. There is no one who is free from culture. The Gospel cannot stand alone, independent of culture. In Newbigin's evangelism, cultural pluralism is acknowledged.

Newbigin writes:

Cultural pluralism I take to be the attitude which welcomes the variety of different cultures and life-styles within one society and believes that this is an enrichment of human life. I accept the truth of this, but qualify that acceptance with the obvious point that cultures are not morality neutral. There are good and bad elements in culture. I would not wish to see cannibalism or infanticide introduced into Birmingham, and I would not wish to see secular promiscuity and abortion on demand introduced into Madras.¹²⁵

While Newbigin agrees to take into consideration "cultural pluralism," he says that a bad culture and a good culture coexist in every civilization. Hence, it is urgent for Christian evangelists to distinguish a good culture from a bad culture. All Christian theologians are to remember that "God accepts human culture" and simultaneously, "God judges human culture."¹²⁶ Newbigin proposes a dualism between religion and culture. A Christian

¹²³ Lesslie Newbigin, "Religious Pluralism: a Missiological approach," *Studia Missionalia* 42 (1993): 234.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ Lesslie Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eedmans Publishing Company, 1989), 14.

¹²⁶ Ibid., 195.

missionary has a duty to discern a good culture from a bad one because this task is related to the Church's Scriptural authority as a "city on a hill."

Korean Indigenization Theology unilaterally leans on Tillich's monism of the relationship between religion and culture, and uncritically accepts the Rahnerian "supernatural existential" in dialogically approaching other religions and the native Korean culture. This theological penchant drives it to recognize the relationship between the Church and secondary societies as a continual identity, and to abandon the Church's function of critiquing secondary societies.

Hyun Kyung Chung, a Korean feminist theologian, suspects the theological tendency of Korean Indigenization Theology is a desire to go "back to our own tradition" and "protect our own culture." However, this theological propensity is necessarily used to preserve "the traditional patriarchal culture at the expense of Asian women." In Korean Indigenization Theology's theological system, therefore, the oppression of women by man tends to be justified as illuminated in the former nation-centered movement and neo-Confucian social system.¹²⁷

What would Karl Barth think of this close companionship of the Church and culture? In chapter five of this dissertation the claim will be made that he would be instantly suspicious of such an unhealthy and unnatural wedding. The most telling example of this is that he was fired on June 22, 1935 from his position at Bonn by the minister of cultural affairs in Berlin, Germany.¹²⁸ On November 7, 1934, Adolf Hitler required an unqualified oath of loyalty to himself. Hitler had taken over the combined

¹²⁷ Hyun Kyung Chung, *Struggle to be the Sun Again*, 33.

¹²⁸ Three days after this dismissal from his position at Bonn he was offered the chair of theology at the University of Basel, but his years of teaching in Germany came to an end.

offices of chancellor and president, and Barth refused to sign the oath in its prescribed form. When ordered to do so by the rector of the university, Barth made a counter proposal. He did not refuse to give the official oath, but stipulated that he could be loyal to the Führer only within his responsibilities as an Evangelical Christian. Barth felt that he had to preach against the persecution and disappearance of the Jews, or else he was not preaching the gospel at all. His stance on the Jewish question, his opposition to National Socialism, and his principal role in the authorship of the Barmen declaration put him in opposition to his culture, and put his life in danger. Barth would never again be at ease with a too congenial relationship with culture, and he would warn with great vigor that Korean Christians should never surrender their role as critics of their society.

CHAPTER FOUR

Church and Society in Korean *Minjung* (People) Theology

Korean Socio-political Context

Although Christianity was the last foreign-originated religion to be introduced into Korean society, the socio-political influence of Christianity on Korean society has been much stronger than any other religion. From the socio-political perspective, Christianity played a revolutionary role in the Korean society in the late 19th century when conservative feudalistic Confucianism was the ruling ideology. In the beginning of the 20th century, Christianity in the Korean society also functioned “as a liberation force seeking to free the people from the colonialism of Japan, human rights, the abolition of class barriers, the extension of women’s human rights, the overthrowing of superstitions, freedom of the press, recognition of democratic values and training.”¹ Because of these Christian messages and socio-political activities the Korean people considered Christianity to be revolutionary in teaching and practice, and thus expected Christianity to liberate them from colonial power, the desperate situation of the Korean War, and military dictatorship.

The Korean people were annexed to the Protectorate of Japan in 1910. From that time Japanese imperialism forced the Koreans to follow Japanese ultra-nationalism.² Nevertheless, “the Korean church that was solidified as a national church developed a

¹ Kyoung-Jae Kim, “Minjung’s Spirituality in the grafting process of East-Asian Religions.”

² Cyris Heesuk Moon, “Psalm 23:1-6: An Asian Perspective,” in *Return to Babel*, eds. John Levison & Priscilla Pope-Levison (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1999), 61.

theology with a strong ecclesiology with an emphasis upon its prophetic task.”³ The Korean Church was unable to separate itself from the nation’s political predicament under Japanese colonialism and Korean Christians believed that the Church’s participation in protesting movements against the Japanese colonial government was a proper Christian responsibility.

In the 1930s the conflict between the Korean Church and the Japanese colonial government reached its highest point. In order to secure a victory in the war with China in 1936, the Protectorate of Japan urgently needed to make the Korean people Japanese imperial citizens and to use the Korean peninsula as an important base camp for the war. Because of the geological location of the Korean peninsula in the East Asian continent, it was very important for executing an international war with China. However, the colonial regime recognized the Korean Church and its revival movement as a stumbling block for the war project of Japan because the Korean Church had gradually shaped its own form of strong nationalism.⁴

By suppressive means the Protectorate of Japan ordered all the Korean people to practice the worship of Japanese Shinto without exception. In 1938 the colonial regime declared that Shinto worship was the national practice, and began to harshly persecute those who refused to worship the Japanese Shinto.⁵ Christians attempted to resist the religious policy of the Japanese colonial government. Rev. Ki-Chul Chu who held

³ Yong-Bock Kim, “An Introduction to Korean Church,” Advanced Institute for the Study of Life, <http://www.oikozoe.or.kr/eindex.htm> (accessed January 31, 2011).

⁴ For understanding the origin of the Korean nationalism in the Korean Church, see In Soo Kim, *Protestants and the Formation of Modern Korean Nationalism, 1885-1920* (New York: Peter Lang, 1996).

⁵ Yong-Bock Kim, “An Introduction to Korean Church.”

“*ilsaghakoh*”(“Single-minded Preparation for Death”)⁶ stood against “the forced idolatry of Japanese imperialism”⁷ and was martyred.

The liberating tradition of Korean Christianity reappeared in the 1970s-1980s with the name of *Minjung* Theology. This theology connected the radical understanding of Jesus with the liberation traditions of Korean history. *Minjung* Theology was a theological response to the unfavorable socio-political surroundings of the 1970s and the 1980s. President Chung Hee Park had declared martial law in October 1972, called *Yushin* (Restoration) Constitution. President Park promulgated this new constitution for the purpose of having a dialogue with the North Korean government, and of dealing with the great socio-political and socio-economic changes which occurred on the international level.⁸ With the help of martial law Park’s military regime arrested, tortured, and imprisoned political dissenters. The everyday life of the Korean *minjung* was “under the constant surveillance and harassment of the Korean Central Intelligence Agency.”⁹

Many professors, students, religious leaders, and political leaders already recognized that President Park’s military government intended to use the *Yushin* Constitution to support the “political absolutization of power,” and thus many intelligent people in Korean society once again were confronted with authoritarian rule in President

⁶ Ju Gi-Cheol, *Ju Gi-Cheol: Essential Writings*, ed. and trans. The Korea Institute for Advanced Theological Studies (Seoul: The KIATS Press, 2008), 172-179.

⁷ Sang-Gyoo Lee, introduction to *Ju Gi-Cheol: Essential Writings*, ed. and trans. The Korea Institute for Advanced Theological Studies (Seoul: The KIATS Press, 2008), 15-16.

⁸ Andrew C. Nahm, *Historical Dictionary of the Republic of Korea* (Metuchen, NJ: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1993), 206.

⁹ Choan-Seng Song, *Third-Eye Theology* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2002), 199.

Park's military regime.¹⁰ As one of many reactions to the military oppression of the *Yushin* Constitution the progressive Christians proclaimed the "Theological Declaration" in 1973, in which they argued that:

Jesus the Messiah, our Lord, lived and dwelt among the oppressed, poverty-stricken, and sick in Judea. He boldly stood in confrontation with Pontius Pilate, a representative of the Roman Empire, and he was crucified in the course of his witness to the truth. He has risen from the dead to release the power of transformation which sets the people free.

We resolve that we will follow the footstep of our Lord, living among our oppressed and poor people, standing against political oppression, and participating in the transformation of history, for this is the only way to the Messianic Kingdom.¹¹

In this declaration the progressive Christians decided to resist political oppression and to have a solidarity with the poor, the oppressed, and the marginalized under Park's military regime. This theological declaration played a role in directly rebuking the *Yushin* Constitution.

President Park was assassinated by the chief of the Korean CIA on October 26, 1979. Although Kyu Hah Choi was inaugurated as the next president, General Doo Whan Chun had political and military power. This meant that although the time of the *Yushin* Constitution had ended, the appearance of General Doo Whan Chun signaled another military dictatorship.¹² During that time the "*Kwangju Minjung* Protest movement for Democracy" became the strongest resistance against the military leadership led by General Doo Whan Chun. Chris Moon reports the overall picture of this *Kwangju Minjung* Protest Movement for Democracy as follows:

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Christian Ministers in the Republic of Korea, "Theological Declaration (May 20, 1973)," in *Asian Voices in Christian Theology*, ed. Gerald H. Anderson (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1976), 245.

¹² Cyris H.S. Moon, *A Korean Minjung Theology*, 36.

Following the violent student demonstration in Seoul on May 14, 1980, the government extended martial law which had been declared on October 26, 1979 to the entire country on May 17, 1980, banned all political activities, and arrested many leading political leaders, including Kim Dae-Jung. Kim Dae-Jung was charged with the crime of inciting the students. Angered by such government action, the dissident groups in the city of *Kwangju* in South *Cholla* province rose violent protests, clashing with the police. ...

A special paratrooper unit was sent in to put down the rebellion, causing many deaths. Although the official estimate of the number of people killed was around 200, the local people claimed that more than 2,000 were killed. The *Kwangju* Uprising ended on May 27, 1980.¹³

The *Kwangju Minjung* Movement for Democracy produced both the most miserable reality and the greatest sacrifice in the struggle for Korean democracy. This movement ended with tragic results because the government used military power to dismiss participants in this demonstration.

After repressing the student and civilian demonstration in *Kwangju* with government soldiers, President Kyu Hah Choi “resigned on August 15, 1980, clearing the way to power for General Doo Hwan Chun, who was elected president on August 27, 1980.”¹⁴ Chun’s military government had described the *Kwangju*’s demonstration as an anti-governmental insurrection, ordered by the Communist North Korean government, intending to turn the South Korean government upside down. In April 1988, however, the government of the Sixth Republic in South Korea considered the *Kwangju* Uprising in 1980 as a “part of the democratization effects of the students and citizens in *Kwangju*.”¹⁵

These two military dictatorships’ policies had unilaterally focused on the economic growth of South Korea in order to justify their military government operated through

¹³ Andrew C. Nahm, *Historical Dictionary of the Republic of Korea*, 130.

¹⁴ Cyris H.S. Moon, *A Korean Minjung Theology*, 36.

¹⁵ Andrew C. Nahm, *Historical Dictionary of the Republic of Korea*, 130.

coup d'état and military power. During these military governments the overall GNP in Korea had been rapidly growing. However, the social problems resulting from the rapid economic prosperity then appeared in Korean society. The most negative outcome in Korean society was that laborers hardly benefited from this national economic growth. According to Cyris Moon,

Many of these factory workers are women, especially young women between fifteen and twenty-one years of age. Low wages for these women have been justified by employers on the grounds that the work they do is temporary, held only until marriage. In reality, however, they have been the objects of much discrimination in a society that is filled with the Confucianist influence. Most of these women have migrated to the urban areas from rural farming areas because they have thought that opportunity and economic gains in the urban areas would bring them new prosperity. But the fact is that they find many problems instead, not only in terms of low wages but also in the areas of housing and vocational skills. Their housing is substandard and their living conditions indicated that they have been exploited and utilized as machines. All of this has brought about their dehumanization. Such an emphasis on industrialization – at the expense of humanization – in economic strategy has brought about imbalance, dependence, and many other serious problems. As for the *minjung*, this has meant increasingly oppressive economic policies.¹⁶

The military regime's economy-first policy increased the financial benefit only of national and international companies, which justified their exploiting the laborers. This resulted in dehumanization and the violation of human rights of many factory laborers and low income workers.

In the process of revealing many contradictory socio-political problems, the progressive Christians had developed a totally different theology from the conservative churches – *Minjung* Theology. *Minjung* Theology was built in the seventies by theologically critiquing the *Yushin* Constitution of President C.H. Park's military regime. This theology was considered the Korean version of Liberation Theology in Latin America. But many *Minjung* theologians denied the theological connection and influence

¹⁶ Cyris H.S. Moon, *A Korean Minjung Theology*, 37.

between Liberation Theology and *Minjung* Theology.¹⁷ *Minjung* theologians believed that Liberation Theology in Latin America was too heavily dependent on Marxist socio-political analysis as its theological methodology. By contrast, Korean *Minjung* Theology sought to find its theological methodology in the traditional Korean liberation movement and the Scriptural tradition.¹⁸ However, Korean *Minjung* Theology was believed to have used the Marxist social analysis as its theological methodology. It was also seen as indigenizing the Liberation Theology of Latin America in the Korean context.¹⁹

Theological Features of the Korean Minjung Theology

In the midst of the socio-political conflicts in Korea in the 1970s and 1980s, Korean *Minjung* Theology emerged by focusing on the people's liberation tradition in Korean history. *Minjung* Theology's theological motifs were deeply related to the revolutionary movements in Korean history, and to the social life of the Korean *minjung* who was "oppressed politically, exploited economically, alienated sociologically and deprived educationally."²⁰

¹⁷ Ju-Yeon Lee, ed., "Teukjib jadam: hanguk tochakwha shinhak nonjaeng eui pyungga wa junmang" [A special discussion: evaluation and preview of Korean Indigenization Theology's debate], *Kidokgyo sasang* 390 [Christian thought 390] (June, 1991), 83. In this discussion, Byung-Mu Ahn, a leading theologian of Korean *Minjung* Theology, argued for the disconnection of Korean *Minjung* Theology and Liberation Theology in Latin America because Korean *Minjung* Theology had no ideological presupposition.

¹⁸ See James H. Cone, preface to *Minjung Theology: People as the Subjects of History*, ed. The Commission on Theological Concerns of the Christian Conference of Asia (CTC-CCA) (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1983), ix-xix.

¹⁹ See Il-Cho Chang, "Hanguk minjung shinhak ee daehan meutgagee taejea" [Themes of Korean Minjung Theology], in *Hanguk minjung shinhak eui chomyong* [A study of the Minjung Theology in Korea], ed. Korean Christian Academy (Seoul: Daewha Publisher, 1983), 119-144. Also see Kyoung-Jae Kim, "Minjung shinhak eui shinhaksa jeok euimi wa gu pyungga" [The significance of theological history of Minjung Theology and its estimation], in *Hanguk minjung shinhak eui chomyong* [A study of the Minjung Theology in Korea], ed. Korean Christian Academy (Seoul: Daewha Publisher, 1983), 99-100.

²⁰ Jong-Sun Noh, "Theology of Reunification," Advanced Institute for the Study of Life, <http://www.oikozoe.or.kr/eindex.htm> (accessed January 31, 2011).

Most *Minjung* theologians were inspired by the *Tonghak* revolutionary movement and considered it as a paradigm for the Korean *minjung* movement.²¹ After Japanese imperialism had invaded the Korean peninsula and annexed it, the Korean indigenous religious movements burgeoned and illumed Korean society from a different perspective by distinguishing it from the existing elite religions. During that time Korean grassroots launched a new religion called the *Tonghak* movement (“Eastern Learning”). According to Joachim Gentz’s report of the socio-political context in the emergence of the *Tonghak* movement,

In 1895, Japan invaded Korea, annexed it fully in 1910 and governed it as a colony until 1945. The Confucianist system was abolished, Western teachings were introduced and Christian missionaries were allowed to carry out their work. As a consequence of the modernization forced upon the country by the Japanese invasion, a large number of new religions emerged between 1890 and 1910 as protest movements against penetration by things Western, whose political dominance led to a politicization and secularization of the religious field. In opposition to the powerful new Western influences, a new liberation movement developed in the second half of the nineteenth century, which initially took the name ‘Eastern Teaching’ (*Tonghak*), thus defining itself as the opposite of ‘Western teaching,’ which meant Catholicism. This Eastern Teaching united Confucian, Buddhist, shamanistic and – despite its xenophobic and anti-Christian stance – Christian-humanistic elements, making this a typical example of a neo-religious national doctrine.²²

The *Tonghak* movement was characterized as anti-Western and anti-traditional because it focused on the protest against Western teaching and the existing Confucian social class. It intended to build a totally new world.

²¹ Yong-Bock Kim, “Messiah and Minjung,” in *Minjung Theology: People as the Subjects of History*, ed. The Commission on Theological Concerns of the Christian Conference of Asia (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1983), 188-189; Nam-Dong Suh, “Historical References for a Theology of Minjung,” in *Minjung Theology: People as the Subjects of History*, ed. The Commission on Theological Concerns of the Christian Conference of Asia (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1983), 170-171.

²² Joachim Gentz, “The Religious Situation in East Asia,” 270; Also see Kang Wi Jo, “The Secularization of Korean Buddhism under the Japanese Colonialism,” *Korea Journal* 19, no. 7 (July, 1979): 42-47.

The key doctrine of *Tonghak* was related to *Tonghak* anthropology. *Tonghak* suggested a new thought of *In Nae Chun* (humans and God are one) which played a role in collapsing Confucian social classes in the late *Choson* dynasty.²³ Also, the belief in *In Nae Chun* transformed the social consciousness of Korean *minjung*, and caused the Korean people to realize the importance of self-responsibility in their destiny. *Tonghak* awakened its followers to realize the idea of “Infinite Energy being” within them, and also to recognize that every believer was “identified with God, and of one nature with all existence.”²⁴

The thought of *In Nae Chun* in *Tonghak* led its believers to achieve social consciousness and to strive for human rights, equality of all humans, and the abolishment of classism. Che-U Choi, the early leader of the *Tonghak* movement, emphasized the virtue of honesty and justice in socio-political life, and taught that all humans should be respected regardless of their social class, economic ability, and political power.²⁵ Che-U Choi never dreamed that the existing government could be displaced. Ironically Choi’s preaching awakened the socio-political consciousness of his followers because they believed that Choi’s attack against corrupt officials, unjust government, and immorality of the upper class was the most important message in his teaching and preaching. After Choi was arrested by the *Choson* government because of his critique of government corruption, the *Donghak* movement showed its radical anti-governmental attitude and political-oriented action. Gradually this political action became the important doctrine in

²³ See Allen Clark, *Religions of Old Korea* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1929), 160.

²⁴ Se-Kwon Lee, *Tonghak sasang* [Tonghak thought] (Seoul: Kyongin munwhasa, 1987), 58.

²⁵ See Paul Beirne, *Su-un and His World of Symbols: The Founder of Korea’s First Indigenous Religion* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2009), 26-35.

the later *Donghak* movement.²⁶ Sang Taek Lee explains the political development of *Tonghak* movement as follows:

This was followed by a peasant revolution which began in the South-east and swept up towards Seoul. This was led by Chon Bong Jun (1854-1895) who had seized control of the southern branch of the movement from the more conservative Choi Shi Hyung, reshaping the movement into an anti-foreign, anti-*yangban* (anti-upper class) force. The movement sought the destruction of the *yangban* “upper class” through political and social reform. Few people were actually killed but the nobility suffered much abuse as the uprising spread. The king at this point turned to China for military aid. A truce was sought with the rebels and they were promised that all restrictions on the movement would be removed. For a time the *Tonghak* leaders were in a position to issue a manifesto containing their demands for reform. However, this ended with the arrival of Japanese troops. Concerned about the interference of the Chinese and the threat this posed to Japanese interests, the Japanese government decided to send in an army, which landed at Inchon in the south, just five days after the arrival of the Chinese. They marched to Seoul and on their way crushed the *Tonghaks* they met, scattering them widely. The end result of these actions was the beginning of the Sino-Japanese war. Japanese victory was followed by their military occupation of Korea.²⁷

The early *Tonghak* movement, as an indigenous religious movement, had gradually modified its course as a politicized religious group, intending to transform the corrupted social system and to protect the Korean peninsula from foreign imperial powers.

After being defeated by the Japanese army, the *Tonghak* movement re-systemized and reinforced its structure and doctrine, and changed its name to *Ch’ondogyo* (Heavenly Way) in 1906. Again, *Ch’ondogyo* played a leading role in the *Samil Mansei* movement which was the large and peaceful protest against the Japanese colonial regime on March 1, 1919. After this movement, however, *Ch’ondogyo* lost its significance in Korean history

²⁶ Sang Taek Lee, *Religion and Social Formation in Korea: Minjung and Millenarianism*, 106.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 106-107.

because its religious leaders were imprisoned and the Japanese colonial regime brutally persecuted its believers.²⁸

Some progressive Christian theologians rediscovered the significance and value of *Ch'ondogyo* in the 1970s and the 1980s, and used its revolutionary doctrine and practice as an ideal model for constructing Korean *Minjung* Theology.²⁹ Korean *Minjung* theologians have readily accepted the anthropology, social ethics, and formation of a revolutionary community in the *Tonghak* movement, and have considered this precious socio-political practice and thought of *Tonghak* as a fundamental source for building and developing Korean *Minjung* Theology.

Korean *Minjung* Theology seeks to use the Korean people's revolutionary movements as its theological source. Also, it searches for the liberation movement of the oppressed, the marginalized, and the poor in the Biblical narrative. It is the confluence of two liberation stories: one from Korean indigenous history and one from the Biblical tradition.³⁰ As an Old Testament scholar, Cyris H.S. Moon connects the concept of *minjung* with the notion of "my people" in Micah who are "the country people," "the powerless widows," and "the have-nots."³¹ From the lens of the Exodus narrative, "though the *minjung* may be 'apiru' or 'am ha'arets' sociologically speaking, theologically the minjung are the masters of the world and history."³²

²⁸ Benjamin B. Weems, *Reform, Rebellion, and the Heavenly Way*, 81-86.

²⁹ Joachim Gentz, "The Religious Situation in East Asia," 271.

³⁰ Nam-Dong Suh, *Minjung shinhak eui tamgu*, [An investigation into Minjung Theology], 45-82.

³¹ Cyris H.S. Moon, *A Korean Minjung Theology*, 45-46.

³² Kwang-Sun Suh, "A Biographical Sketch of an Asian Theological Consultation," 34.

Minjung Theology believes that God reveals His will and plan within a concrete historical event, and considers the Exodus event in the Old Testament as containing God's foundational revelation. From Korean *Minjung* Theology's perspective, therefore, *minjung*'s liberation story in the Exodus event and God's creation of humans according to His image become the essential part of the Old Testament.³³ The creative confluence of both God's creation story and the Exodus story in the Pentateuch illumines "a key aspect in *Minjung* Theology because the Exodus story shows how God restores Israel's enslaved *minjung* to their original purpose."³⁴

From the New Testament's perspective, Byung-Mu Ahn distinguishes the meaning of "*ochlos*" from that of "*laos*." For Ahn, *Minjung* is related to *ochlos* rather than *laos* because *ochlos* is connected with the social and historical classes. Ahn searches for the real portrait of *ochlos* by studying the Gospel of Mark.³⁵ Ahn identifies the "*ochlos*" in the Gospel of Mark as the oppressed, the marginalized, and the poor who are monopolistically supported by Jesus and play a leading role in the Markan story of Jesus. This new theological perspective of the Markan Gospel drives Ahn to rethink Mark's story of Jesus as the "son of man" challenging kerygmatic Christology. Hence, Ahn is opposed to the position of Rudolf Bultmann who argued the priority of *kerygma* over the

³³ Cyris H.S. Moon, "An Old Testament Understanding of *Minjung*," in *Minjung Theology: People as the Subjects of History*, ed. The Commission on Theological Concerns of the Christian Conference of Asia (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1983), 124-127.

³⁴ Paul Yunsik Chang, "Carrying the Torch in the Darkest Hours: The Sociopolitical Origins of *Minjung* Protestant Movements," 207.

³⁵ Byung-Mu Ahn, *Minjung shinhak yiyagi* [A story of *Minjung* Theology], 25-26. Byung-Mu Ahn, "Jesus and *Ochlos* in the Context of His Galilean Ministry," in *Asian Contextual Theology for the Third Millennium*, eds. Paul S. Chung et al., trans. Paul S. Chung (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2007), 33-50.

historical Jesus.³⁶ Ahn requires readers of the Gospel story to focus on the passion narrative. For Ahn, however, passion history is much more important than passion announcement because Jesus' announcement has developed from a totally different course in his real life. According to Ahn,

the announcement says that Jesus will be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes, and be killed. But the passion-history reports that not only the Jewish ruling class but also the Roman authorities executed him. Therefore, it is a stern reality that he was killed as a political prisoner by the Roman power. Moreover, the great crowd in Jerusalem and even his disciples turned their back on him.

Second, what is most important to be aware of is that there is not a single hint about an immediate resurrection anywhere in the Passion-history, while the passion-announcements the prediction that he will rise after three days is a major presupposition. The Passion-history reveals the naked reality of the darkness that prevailed under the rule of the unjust power. And even God seemed to have turned away and did not intervene in the event of the execution of Jesus. The severe reality in fact was the reality of God's absence.³⁷

In Ahn's view, in order to scrutinize the nature of *minjung* in the Jesus story of the Gospels, readers need to focus on the real story rather than Jesus' announcement.

According to the real history of Jesus, Jesus was a politically oppressed *minjung*, and experienced the agony of *han* through God's absence and the disciples' betrayal.

From the practical and historical reading of the Gospel of Mark, the *ochlos* is portrayed as the sinners, the tax collectors, the sick, the oppressed, the despised people of Galilee, or the prostitutes.³⁸ Ahn proposes that the meaning of the Korean word *Minjung*

³⁶ Kwang-Shik Kim, *Tochakwha wa haesukhak* [Indigenization and hermeneutics], 102-103.

³⁷ Byung-Mu Ahn, "Jesus and People (Minjung)," in *Asian Faces of Jesus*, ed. R.S. Sugirtharajah (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1993), 171.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 167-168.

can be interpreted as the meaning of “*ochlos*” in the Gospel of Mark.³⁹ Although the meaning of *minjung* is related totally to the revolutionary movements of Korean history, Ahn argues that the notion of *ochlos* in the Gospel of Mark has the same social status and vision of *Minjung*. Based on the Markan Gospel, Ahn proposes that “‘Minjung’ does indeed denote the oppressed, deprived and poor farmers, but is considered as the hope for the salvation of mankind.”⁴⁰ As a positive interpretation of *ochlos* in the Gospel of Mark, Ahn maintains that “when Jesus was looking around on those *ochlos* who sat around him, he proclaimed, ‘These are my mother and my brother’! (Mk 3:31ff).” According to Ahn, this biblical passage “clearly presents Jesus as being part of the *Minjung* itself.”⁴¹ Ahn boldly holds that *minjung* is “both Savior and the people who are to be saved.”⁴²

From the perspective of systematic theology, Kwang-Sun Suh understands the concept of *minjung* as having a more comprehensive and broader meaning. According to Suh’s interpretation,

The *minjung* is present where there is sociocultural alienation, economic exploitation, and political suppression. Therefore, a woman is a *minjung* when she is dominated by man, by the family, or by sociocultural structures and factors. An ethnic group is a *minjung* group when it is politically and economically discriminated against by another ethnic group. A race is *minjung* when it is dominated by another powerful ruling race as is the case in a colonial situation. When intellectuals are suppressed for using their creative and critical abilities against rulers on behalf of the oppressed, then they too belong to the *minjung*. Workers and farmers are *minjung* when they are exploited, their needs and demands are ignored, and they are crushed down by the ruling powers.⁴³

³⁹ See Jürgen Moltmann, “Minjung Theology for the Ruling Classes,” in *Asian Contextual Theology for the Third Millennium: A Theology of Fourth-Eye Formation*, eds. Paul S. Chung, Kyoung-Jae Kim, Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, trans. Paul S. Chung (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2007), 72-75.

⁴⁰ Kwang-Shik Kim, *Tochakwha wa haesukhak* [Indigenization and hermeneutics], 299.

⁴¹ Byung-Mu Ahn, “Jesus and People (Minjung),” 170.

⁴² Kwang-Shik Kim, *Tochakwha wa haesukhak* [Indigenization and hermeneutics], 299.

⁴³ Kwang-Sun Suh, “A Biographical Sketch of an Asian Theological Consultation,” 36.

Suh refuses to limit the interpretation of *minjung* within the Scripture and the Korean people's movement. Broadly, the *minjung* is identified as the oppressed, marginalized, and the poor from the socio-political perspective beyond the scriptural world and the Korean historical world. Accordingly the women in the Confucian social system, the ethnically oppressed, and the poor in capitalism belong to *minjung*.

Although every definition of *minjung* is not the same, *Minjung* Theology argues that the life of *minjung* is related to the feeling of *han*. According to Nam-Dong Suh, the emotion of *han* is the basic ethos for the Korean *minjung* (people). On one hand, *han* "is a dominant feeling of defeat, resignation, and nothingness. On the other, it is a feeling with a tenacity of will for life which comes to weaker beings. The first aspect can sometimes be sublimated [in]to great expressions and the second aspect could erupt as the energy for a revolution or rebellion."⁴⁴ According to the Korean national history, Suh portrays the nature and feature of Korean *han* as the following,

- (1) Koreans have suffered numerous invasions by surrounding powerful nations so that the very existence of the Korean nation has come to be understood as *han*.
- (2) Koreans have continually suffered the tyranny of the rulers so that they think of their existence as *baeksong*.
- (3) Also, under Confucianism's strict imposition of laws and customs discriminating against women, the existence of women was *han* itself.
- (4) At a certain point in Korean history, about half of the population were registered as hereditary slaves and were treated as property rather than a people of the nation. These thought of their lives as *han*.⁴⁵

This fourfold meaning of *han* in the above passage has been accumulated in the historical process of suffering, being oppressed, and experiencing poverty. *Han*, an unique aspect of Korean's emotions, is formed through the subjective experience of having one's sense of suppression intensified. "When these feeling are suppressed for a long period they

⁴⁴ Nam-Dong Suh, "Towards a Theology of Han," 58.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

turn inside and become the feelings of *han*. Where there is suppression of emotion, there is *han*.”⁴⁶

Korean *Minjung* Theology seeks to find a similar concept of Korean *han* in the Scripture. Young-Hak Hyun finds a similar pattern of *han* in Jesus’ crucifixion. According to Hyun, *han* is “a feeling of total abandonment (‘Why hast thou forsaken me?’), a feeling of acute pain of sorrow in one’s guts and bowels making the whole body writhe and wiggle, and an obstinate urge to take ‘revenge’ and to right the wrong all these constitute.”⁴⁷ As shown in Jesus’ story, *han* is not sin, but a result of the sins of the ruling powers. In this sense, there is a clear contrasting view of sin in Western theology and Korean *Minjung* Theology. Jung Sun Oh writes:

Unlike the existentialist theology represented by Søren Kierkegaard in the West, which interprets anxiety as a driving force leading to the fall of human existence, the *Minjung* concept of sin is not based on human beings’ willful action but on a passive human condition, which Koreans have allowed to happen. In addition, *Minjung* theology understands human sin differently from Reinhold Niebuhr’s notion of sin that identifies pride as the fundamental root of sin and is closely related to overbearing self-esteem or self-centeredness.⁴⁸

For *Minjung* Theology sin is not related to a human being’s anxiety or self-centered hubris. By contrast sin in Korean *Minjung* Theology refers to the “passive human condition” that causes Korean people to commit a sin. Hence, sin is everything that expands the feeling of *han*.

⁴⁶ Jae Hoon Lee, *The Exploration of the Inner Wounds – Han*, 3.

⁴⁷ Hyun Kyung Chung, “‘*Han-pu-ri*’: Doing Theology from Korean Women’s Perspective,” 55.

⁴⁸ Jung Sun Oh, *A Korean Theology of Human Nature* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2005), 55.

The Korean people urgently need to eliminate the feeling of *han* in order to overcome the desire to commit sin. The release from *han* is called *dan* (cut off).⁴⁹ While the *minjung* experience inevitably causes the feeling of *han*, *dan* plays a soteriological role in the *Minjung* Theology. Nam-Dong Suh scrutinizes the dialectical structure between *han* and *dan*. His understanding of the relationship between *han* and *dan* is indebted to Chi-Ha Kim, a Korean *Minjung* poet, who identified himself as “a priest of *han*.” According to Chi-Ha Kim’s explanation, while *han* is based totally on “one’s self-sacrifice,” “*dan* represents the transformation of the secular world,” and thus, “*dan* breaks the chain of *han*.”⁵⁰

Suh interprets the meaning of *dan* more positively than just “cutting the chain of the circulation of *han*.” According to Suh, “*dan* is for the transformation of the secular world and secular attachments.” Hence, “*Dan* is to overcome *han*. Personally, it is self-denial. Collectively, it is to cut the vicious circle of revenge.”⁵¹ “The cutting of the cycle of revenge,” Cyris Moon argues, “would finally establish harmony in the political and social order.”⁵²

Suh argues that the anthropology of *han* and soteriology of *dan* in Korean *Minjung* Theology are totally different theological beliefs compared to Western thought. He writes:

Kim Chi-ha’s theology of *han* is different from both socialism and the traditional theology of redemption. The dialectics of *han* and of cutting are different from

⁴⁹ According to Cyris Moon, “*dan*” (斷) “is a Chinese word meaning ‘a cutting off’ and represents the attempt to destroy the greed which is at the center of the oppressor-oppressed cycle” [Cyris H.S. Moon, *A Korean Minjung Theology*, 54-55].

⁵⁰ Nam-dong Suh, “Towards a Theology of Han,” 64-65.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Cyris H.S. Moon, *A Korean Minjung Theology*, 55.

socialist understanding of dialectical materialism and revolution. In Western theology, the church is responsible for redeeming the people and preaches the need for repentance from sin and penitence. This is the ideology of the ruling class. In Kim Chi-ha's theology the church resolves the *han* of the minjung and consoles them. But the minjung themselves seek their own liberation and salvation in the process of establishing their identity as the subjects of history.⁵³

Dan's soteriology in Korean *Minjung* Theology needs no mediator to release *minjung* from the feeling of *han*. Korean *minjung* is its own mediator for *minjung*.

Korean *Minjung* Theology finds this self-redemptive logic of soteriology in the *Pansori* (Korean opera) and *Talchum* (Korean mask dance).⁵⁴ *Pansori* and *Talchum* play a liturgical role for removing the feeling of *han* in the Korean people. Through participating in *Pansori* and *Talchum*, Korean grassroots' participants expelled the feeling of *han* from themselves and experienced the resolution of their *han*. Furthermore, Korean *minjung* used these traditional dances and songs as a protesting activity against the ruling class by metaphorically criticizing "the morality, power, and the pretensions of the ruling class" in song and mask dance.⁵⁵ *Minjung* who participated in either the performance or the audience had a great experience of healing their *han*, and thus had the self-consciousness of a "priest of *han*."

Korean *Minjung* Feminist Theology suggests a Korean woman's strategy for being liberated from *han*. Hyun Kyung Chung proposes the notion of "*Han-Pu-Ri*" as the important liturgy in feminist theology by saying, "In the Korean tradition the untanglement of *Han* is named *Han-Pu-Ri*. Gentle ways of *Han-Pu-Ri* have been

⁵³ Nam-dong Suh, "Historical Reference for a Theology of Minjung," 179.

⁵⁴ Young-Hak Hyun, "A Theological Look at the Mask Dance in Korea," in *Minjung Theology: People as the Subjects of History*, ed. the Commission on Theological Concerns of the Christian Conference of Asia (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1983), 47-48.

⁵⁵ Nam-dong Suh, "Historical Reference for a Theology of Minjung," 173.

through songs, dances, and rituals; and militant ways of *Han-Pu-Ri* have been developed by farmers, workers, slum dwellers, and women's organized political movements.”⁵⁶

Korean *Minjung* Theology suggests an ideal combination of sources from Korean indigenous heritage and the Scriptural tradition. In the methodology of Korean *Minjung* Theology, however, the text and the context are always exchanged and reversed; moreover, *Minjung* Theology prioritizes the Korean context over the Scriptural text. It is not a theory-oriented theology but a praxis-oriented theology. In *Minjung* Theology “justice, *koinonia*, and *shalom*” are viewed as theological contents for praxis. “Justice is a faithful relation or a faithful interweaving of the stories of the people and power so that there is no contradiction between them; *koinonia* is the content of the creative interaction that will take place among the people; and *shalom* is the wholesome development of humanity and its well-being.”⁵⁷ *Minjung* Theology believes that Christ's commandment is “the realization of justice” economically and politically. To do this the people should participate in struggles (*koinonia*) against the unjust social structures and oppressive powers, and create peaceful human community (*shalom*). Therefore, the church has to take part with the *minjung* who are the poor, the marginalized and the oppressed, and has

⁵⁶ Chung Hyun Kyung, *Struggle to be the Sun Again*, 43. Also See Hyun Kyung Chung, “‘Han-pu-ri’: Doing Theology from Korean Women's Perspective,” 59. In her article, Chung explains the notion of “Han-pu-ri” as follows: “Originally the term *han-pu-ri* came from Korean shamanistic tradition. Korean shamans have played the role of the priest or priestess of *han-pu-ri* in is or her communities. Shamanistic *kut* (ritual) gave the opportunity for the voiceless ghosts to speak out their stories of *han*. The community then must solve the *han* of the ghost collectively either by eliminating the source of oppression for the ghosts or by comforting or negotiating with the ghosts. Therefore *han-pu-ri* has been an opportunity for collective repentance, group therapy, and collective healing for the ghosts and their communities in Korean society.”

⁵⁷ Yong-bock Kim, “Messiah and Minjung,” 187.

to endeavor to redeem their human rights.⁵⁸ The *minjung* act as an “active subject of history” and has to cooperate with God in the redemptive economy. *Minjung* theology firmly believes the Kingdom of God is coming and will arrive on the earth as a utopian society. In this sense it is distinct from “Christian realism” in Reinhold Niebuhr’s thought.⁵⁹ Niebuhr argues that because of humans’ sinful nature and their disregard for power struggles, idealistic socio-political utopianism “is not only misguided but also dangerous.”⁶⁰

The Political Vision of the Church

Compared to the apocalyptic vision of the Church in the Fourfold Gospel Theology and the cultural view of the Church in Korean Indigenization Theology, Korean *Minjung* Theology suggests a political vision of the Church which is a totally distinctive voice in Korean theological history. The mainstream of Korean Christianity has been formulated through the fundamental theology of the early Western missionaries, the evangelical revival movement in 1907, a frustrated experience of the March First Movement in 1919 under Japanese colonialism, and the Korean War under the divided nation in the 1950s. The pessimism and nihilism of all these experiences has pushed

⁵⁸ See Byung-mu Ahn, *Minjung sagun sokeui Christ* [Christ in Minjung event] (Seoul: The Korea Theological Study Institute, 1989). Also see Byung-mu Ahn, *Haebangja Jesus* [Jesus, the liberator] (Seoul: Hyundae sasangsa, 1979).

⁵⁹ Sang-bok Lee, *A Comparative Study between Minjung Theology and Reformed Theology from a Missiological Perspective* (New York: Peter Lang, 1996), 89.

⁶⁰ Robert Thomas Cornelison, *The Christian Realism of Reinhold Niebuhr and the Political Theology of Jürgen Moltmann in Dialogue: The Realism of Hope* (San Francisco: Mellen Research University Press, 1992), 11. For a general introduction of Niebuhr’s Christian realism, see Bob E. Patterson, *Reinhold Niebuhr* (Waco, TX: Word Books, Publishers, 1977), 13-62.

Korean Christians to seek for personal salvation rather than the “Social Gospel” through an active participation in socio-political issues.⁶¹

Against this theological tendency, however, progressive Korean Christians had thought about the true duty of Christians and the biblical vision of the Church in the midst of the military dictatorship and the economic injustice of the 1970s and the 1980s. They finally concluded that the true mission of the Church and Christianity was to participate in the political struggle, and to correct social, political, and economical injustice. In the process of participating in socio-political issues, protecting *minjung* from unjust society, and protesting against military dictatorships, Korean *Minjung* Theology appeared and quickly systemized its theological thinking.

Minjung Theology pays attention to the collective *han* of Korean *minjung*, resulting from unjust treatment from the socio-political and socio-economic perspectives. *Han* in *minjung* has been caused by “the suppressed, amassed, and condensed experience of oppression,” and moreover, this feeling of *han* makes *minjung* consider themselves as having “a kind of ‘lump’” within their consciousness.⁶² From the Korean socio-political context of the 1970s, Korean *minjung* became a part of the system of *han*, and thus was totally frustrated because:

(i) the oppression of the socially weak, the so-called *minjung*, by the military government reached an extreme; (ii) the absurdity of the high rate of economic growth was already exposed; (iii) the discontent of the *minjung* began to be plainly expressed; (iv) Korean society as such expected the religious circles to do something for the *minjung*, and above all; (v) the church did not respond properly to the expectation of society, especially that of the *minjung*.⁶³

⁶¹ Chung-Shin Park, *Protestantism and Politics in Korea*, 66-67.

⁶² Nam-dong Suh, “Towards a Theology of Han,” 68n1.

⁶³ Dong-sun Kim, *The Bread for Today and the Bread for Tomorrow*, 153.

Minjung in the 1970s were oppressed by the military regime, were taken advantage of by their employers, and were left behind in the rapid economic growth. To make matters worse, the Church was not ready to appease the *han* of Korean *minjung*.

In this situation *Minjung* Theology paid attention to the *han*-ridden life of *minjung* and had determined to construct a utopian society whose theological goal was to be liberated from *han*.⁶⁴ In this utopian society the accumulated *han* of *minjung* was removed from the dark experience of feudalism, colonialism, postcolonialism, and neo-liberalism. It would result in the complete restoration of socio-economic justice, political freedom, and human rights.⁶⁵ So that *minjung* would become the “subject of history,” *Minjung* theologians in the 1970s proposed a theological paradigm of “the social biography of *Minjung*.” This theological paradigm was

methodologically based upon an ethnographical approach to the reality of *Minjung*. It contributed to breaking away the presuppositions and prejudices of intellectuals and to finding the subject position of *Minjung* in history. It shone especially in the times in which *Minjung* were degraded to be the object of suppression, exploitation and exclusion in the notorious military regime under General Park Jung-Hee. In the darkness of Korean history one could nearly have no idea of the subject position of *Minjung*. With the social biography of *Minjung* in hand, theologians developed a theology of witness.⁶⁶

The attitude of the social biography of *Minjung*, which has been hidden within history of upper classes, places *Minjung* in a leading role in history. The important task of *Minjung* theologians is to find and witness this social biography of *Minjung* in past and present Korean history.

⁶⁴ Nam-dong Suh, *Minjung shinhak eui tamgu* [An investigation into *Minjung* theology], 37-44.

⁶⁵ Jung Sun Oh, *A Korean Theology of Human Nature*, 56.

⁶⁶ Won-don Kang, “‘Empire’ and *Minjung*: There is no Place for Empire!,” Kang Won-Don’s Social Ethics Archive, <http://socialethics.org/wwwb/CrazyWWWBoard.cgi?db=article&mode=read&num=203&page=3&ftype=6&fval=&backdepth=1> (assessed January 31, 2011).

To vividly witness against the unjust socio-political situation *Minjung* Theology presented its own vision of the Church and the Church's mission. Based on the "Urban Industrial Mission," the "Mission for the Poor," and the Social Revolution Movement in the 1970s to the 1980s, the *Minjung* Church movement was born.⁶⁷ Initially the *Minjung* Church movement began as a social change movement in the 1980s. However, in the 1990s the *Minjung* Church movement developed as a combination of a social change movement and a new pastoral movement for redeeming the pure ecclesiological nature. Finally, in the 2000s the *Minjung* Church movement developed an equal emphasis on three independent spheres: the mission of *minjung*, traditional pastoral tasks, and social welfare.⁶⁸

In the initial period of the *Minjung* Church movement in the 1970s, the *Minjung* Church realized the importance of recognizing the marginalized life of *minjung* and experiencing the *minjung*'s real life within Korea's industrial context. The *Minjung* Church was unilaterally concerned with improving the economic and political environment of the oppressed and the poor in the economy-first government. In its initial development *Minjung* theologians were deeply shocked by the horrible suicide of a young devoted Christian laborer, Taeil Chun, and seriously reconsidered their tasks in an unjust society.⁶⁹

Taeil Chun had been employed as a textile laborer in the Peace Market in Seoul. Most laborers, who were between 15 and 20 years old, worked 15 hours a day under bad

⁶⁷ Ogle, *Liberty to the Captives: The Struggle against Oppression in South Korea*, 33-36; 67-80.

⁶⁸ Chang-Hyun Ryu, "Minjung shinhak gwa gyohoeron" [*Minjung theology and ecclesiology*], *Gyohoeron* [Ecclesiology], ed. Society of Korean Systematic Theology (Seoul: The Christian Literature Society of Korea, 2009), 444.

⁶⁹ Dong-Sun Kim, *The Bread for Today and the Bread for Tomorrow*, 154.

labor conditions. When he turned 22 years old Taeil Chun recognized socio-economic injustice through his work at a small textile company. Employers seriously violated the labor law constituted by the government. Taeil Chun attempted to inform governmental officials and church leaders of the unlawful labor conditions. After he recognized that governmental officials and church leaders did not pay attention to his voice, Taeil Chun burned himself to death for the purpose of exposing unjust labor conditions to the Korean people.⁷⁰

The death of Taeil Chun as a poor laborer had a huge socio-political impact on the intelligent Korean class and theologians. Furthermore, the labor environment, which was exposed through the death of Taeil Chun, revealed the dark-side of high speed development within the Korean economy. Korean Christians and theologians repented for their lack of concern about the de-humanizing industrial environment, and modified their theological penchant as prioritizing a close solidarity with *minjung*.⁷¹ Finally, this repentance and reflection on the Korean socio-political context created Korean *Minjung* Theology and the *Minjung* Church movement in the 1970s.

Meanwhile, the labor movement in the Dong-il Textile Company also provided *Minjung* theologians with a theological inspiration for building their thought. By participating in and analyzing the labor struggle of the Dong-il Textile Company, *Minjung* theologians recognized the existence of oppression against female laborers. Hyun Kyung Chung, a leading feminist theologian in Korea, explains the overall picture of Dong-il Textile Company's labor movement as follows:

⁷⁰ Byung-Mu Ahn, *Minjung shinhak yiyagi* [A story of Minjung theology], 257-258. Also see Andrew Sung Park, *The Wounded Heart of God: the Asian Concept of Han and the Christian Doctrine of Sin*, 21-22.

⁷¹ Nam-Dong Suh, *Minjung shinhak eui tamgu* [An investigation into Minjung theology], 351-354.

Dong-il Textile Company is an export-oriented company. As in many other textile factories, the majority of workers are women. Behind the rapidly increasing gross national product (GNP) of Korea in the 1970s were many women workers who worked under miserable conditions in the textile companies. These companies provided the main materials for Korean export. At Dong-il Textile Company about 80 percent of the workers were women. Male workers originally led the union. Women worker's consciousness was raised by their participation in the labor movement, and they finally elected a woman as their union leader.⁷²

The labor movement in the Dong-il Textile Company represents a typical situation of the labor movement in Korea in the 1970s, in which female workers suffered under a male-oriented labor movement. Through participating in this movement, however, female workers realized the necessity of a women's movement and the "liberation from sexism."⁷³ As a feminist *Minjung* theologian and pastor, Wha Soon Cho,⁷⁴ "who staunchly supported the women workers [in the Dong-il Textile Company], confessed that this event raised her and other women's consciousness as women."⁷⁵

While preparing to launch the *Minjung* Church movement, many young pastors participated in the real life of the *minjung* and strove to enhance the *minjung*'s social status because they believed that Messiah (Jesus Christ) was a *minjung*; and thus the *minjung* are Messiah.⁷⁶

This new concept of the Church and the Church's mission, whose center was *minjung*, was effective and developed within the Korean socio-political context. The *Minjung* Church movement was supported by and cooperated with the non-Christian revolutionary movement in the 1980s. The *Kwangju* People's Movement for

⁷² Hyun Kyung Chung, *Struggle to be the Sun Again*, 28.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ogle, *Liberty to the Captives: The Struggle against Oppression in South Korea*, 36-41.

⁷⁵ Hyun Kyung Chung, *Struggle to be the Sun Again*, 28.

⁷⁶ Byung-mu Ahn, *Minjung shinhak yiyagi* [A story of Minjung theology], 31.

Democratization in May 1980, which resulted in a massacre by the military government, played a watershed role in radically developing the *Minjung* Church movement.⁷⁷ Dong-Sun Kim writes:

After the *Kwangju* People's Movement for Democratisation in 1980, the participation of the minjung in a social movement became more active. Consequently, the oppression by the government became more severe. The church was one of the most suitable places to discuss the so-called minjung movement. "The main function of the minjung church was to educate laborers, rather than to worship. It was more recognized as a "life-together community" rather than as a "worship community." Many non-Christian activists gathered in the church to secure a safe place. As a result, *internally* traditional church activities were more or less neglected; nevertheless *externally* the gap between the church and society was narrowed.⁷⁸

The *Minjung* Church movement intended to build a just society in which *minjung* were the primary participants through promoting a harmonious cooperation with non-Christian revolutionary movements. Putting aside the traditional service of the Church, the *Minjung* Church functioned as a sub-system for constructing a utopian society within the Korean context.

In the 1980s, *Minjung* theology had formed a distinctive theological paradigm, distinguishing it from the paradigm of *Minjung* Theology in the 1970s. Won-don Kang writes:

The second paradigm was elaborated in the 1980s. It was basically oriented to a Marxist analysis of reality. Minjung was regarded as the coalition of different classes and strata. For younger Minjung theologians the coalition led a sort of people's democratic revolution in Korean society. Christians, devoted to the liberation of Minjung, have found some useful tools in the paradigm. They have paid more attention to the class problem in Korean society and made experiments to mediate a social-scientific analysis of reality and a theological reflection with each other.⁷⁹

⁷⁷ Dong-sun Kim, *The Bread for Today and the Bread for Tomorrow*, 154.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 155.

⁷⁹ Won-don Kang, "'Empire' and Minjung: There is no Place for Empire!"

The theological paradigm of *Minjung* Theology in the 1980s was characterized by its positive use of Marxist social analysis, and an active cooperation with the non-Christian social revolutionary movements.

During the June People's Movement and the August Labor Movement in 1987, however, the solidarity between the *Minjung* Church movement and the non-Christian revolutionary movement broke apart because the powerful and effective non-Christian social movements overwhelmed the role of the *Minjung* Church movement.⁸⁰ The *Minjung* Church's influence on the revolutionary movement for building a new ideal society had weakened and the *Minjung* Church movement gradually lost its significance and purpose.

This is why the *Minjung* Church movement of the 1990s questioned its nature and purpose and sought to rediscover its proper role within traditional Church history.

According to Dong-Sun Kim,

After broad discussion on the dissension between faith and ideology until around 1989, the minjung church professed that "a church is a community of believers before it is a community of social participants." This idea implied, on the one hand, a reflective conclusion that the social sciences cannot be an ultimate tool to explain the Christian meaning of suffering, and, on the other hand, a confession that the past minjung church movement, which had neglected the two thousand years of Christian traditions, e.g. the Bible, prayer, worship, spirituality, etc., was definitely erroneous.⁸¹

In the 1990s, the *Minjung* Church redefined its goal as "a community of believers," in which *Minjung* theologians rediscovered the value of the traditional Christian liturgy and spirituality, rather than socio-political consciousness. However, this did not mean that *Minjung* Theology disappeared in the Korean theological context. In this period,

⁸⁰ Dong-sun Kim, *The Bread for Today and the Bread for Tomorrow*, 155.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 155-156.

Minjung theologians proposed a different theological paradigm from *Minjung* Theology of the 1970s and the 1980s. Won-don Kang summarizes:

The third paradigm was devised after the collapse of real existing socialism. Under strong influences from the civil society it denied any centeredness of movement, therefore it started from the diffuseness and over-articulation of various movements. It tended to build up a network of movements. In such a web various movements as follows could have their own place and carry out their own tasks, but also co-operate in solidarity: the environmental movement, feminist movement, culture movement, political movement, church reform movement, etc.⁸²

In the 1990s *Minjung* Theology proposed a theological paradigm which constructed a network of all the various *minjung* movements. Although there was no all-comprehensive center of the various social movements, the *Minjung* theologians intended to form a web of all social movements in which *Minjung* Theology played the role of a catalyst for cooperation.

In addition the *Minjung* Church investigated the ideal model of the Church in Christian history to support the mission of the *Minjung* Church, and to distinguish it from the *status quo* conservative Church. *Minjung* theologians started to identify their Church as the “equal community of the people of God.”⁸³ The *Minjung* Church posited the “base-level ecclesial community”⁸⁴ in Liberation Theology of Latin America as an ideal model of the Church, in which the practice of sacrament, preaching, and social service were totally ascribed to lay persons free from the Church’s hierarchical system. In the same manner the *Minjung* Church intended to build a brethren community in which everyone played a role of the “priest of all persons” regardless of sex, social class, or

⁸² Won-don Kang, “‘Empire’ and Minjung: There is no Place for Empire!”

⁸³ Byung-mu Ahn, *Minjung shinhak yiyagi* [A story of Minjung Theology], 184.

⁸⁴ Gustavo Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, eds. and trans. Caridad Inda & John Eagleson (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2001), xli.

education.⁸⁵ Consequently, the *Minjung* Church was programmed to support *minjung* by *minjung*, and to dedicate *minjung* to fulfill their own salvation through the power of the Holy Spirit. This perspective contrasts with the notion of *Missio Dei* (mission of God), in which only God's activities in the process of salvation are overemphasized.⁸⁶

While the *Minjung* Church movement of the 1990s focused on redefinition and restoration within the traditional Church context, the *Minjung* Church had its own interpretation of the sacrament, the position of lay person, and the nature of the Church, when compared to the Korean conservative Church. The *Minjung* Church significantly modified its ecclesiology. *Minjung* Theology presented a new definition and vision of the *Minjung* Church as “as a new alternative community” for Korean Christianity,⁸⁷ “as a table fellowship community,”⁸⁸ or “as a liberation camp for all.”⁸⁹

Minjung Theology and the *Minjung* Church movement have made two great contributions towards compensating and correcting the strong conservative theological tendency in Korean Christianity.

⁸⁵ Yong-Bock Kim, “Minjung gyohoeron shiron” [Preface to ecclesiology of Minjung Theology], *Shinhak gwa sasang* 63 [Theology and thought 63] (1988): 846-865.

⁸⁶ Su-il Chae, *Eeship il seki eui dojun gwa sungyo* [Challenge in 21st century and mission] (Seoul: The Christian Literature Society of Korea, 1998), 89-90.

⁸⁷ Jin-gwan Kwon, “Jaeguk sidae eui minjok gwa minjung” [Nation and minjung in the era of the empire], in *Jaeguk eui shin* [God of the empire], ed. The Theological Institute of Sungkonghoe University (Seoul: Dongyeon, 2008), 141-173. Also see Jin-gwan Kwon, *Sungryung gwa Minjung* [The Holy Spirit and Minjung] (Seoul: The Korea Theological Study Institute, 1993).

⁸⁸ See Jae-Soon Park, *Jesus undong gwa bapsang gongdongche* [Jesus movement and table-fellowship community] (Seoul: Chunji, 1988).

⁸⁹ Min-Ung Kim, “Jaeguk eui pokryuk ee masuhnnoon haebang yel yiehan shinhak” [The theology for liberation against the unrighteous power of the empire], in *Jaeguk eui shin* [God of the empire], ed. The Theological Institute of Sungkonghoe University (Seoul: Dongyeon, 2008), 174-216. Also see Kyung-ho Kim, *Haebang eul yihan sarang eui sunhan saum* [A good fight of love for liberation] (Seoul: Nathan Publishing Company, 1992). Also see Kyung-ho Kim, *Gyohoe ro gan minjung shinhak* [Minjung Theology to go to the Church] (Seoul: Manu wa janggong, 2006).

First, the starting point of Minjung theology is Minjung, the people, especially the ruled, the exploited, the despised, and the marginalized. As a Korean theological anthropology, it deals with human beings, namely the Minjung, as central theological subjects.

Second, Minjung theology uses socio-economic and political interpretations of sin and salvation and balances the personal and the spiritual interpretations of Korean Christianity, thus resulting in a wholistic theological hermeneutic in Korea. Korean churches have often ignored issues of social justices and freedom in socio-political and economic situations. Minjung theology has opened up new approaches to solve the sin, han, of the Minjung at the socio-economic and political level, an indubitable contribution to Korean theology.⁹⁰

Minjung Theology provides Korean Christians with the theo-political lens for approaching social issues. Furthermore, the *Minjung* Church challenges conservative Christians to realize that the territory outside the Church is also encompassed by God's salvific economy. *Minjung* Theology has introduced the Church's socio-political struggle as an important Christian mission in the conservative Korean Church.

Harmonious Cooperation between Church and Society

The Korean *Minjung* Church movement was first established for the purpose of supporting poor laborers in the urban areas in Seoul. Its overall nature was to be a counteractive movement against the conservative mega church's spiritual revival crusade whose members consisted of the middle class and the white collar laborers in the 1970s and 1980s. The ecclesiological structure and liturgy of the *Minjung* Church were totally different from existing traditional churches. The *Minjung* Church focused mainly on "fellowship and service programs for the laboring community."⁹¹ Because of the

⁹⁰ Jung Sun Oh, *A Korean Theology of Human Nature*, 56.

⁹¹ Suh David Kwang-Sun, "Minjung Theology: The Politics and Spirituality of Korean Christianity," 155.

Minjung Church's purpose and activism, the *Minjung* Church movement can be considered as representative for the Korean grassroots' movements.⁹²

Minjung Theology and Church have its own special mission in the Korean context.

According to David Suh,

First, *Minjung* theology as a political theology has to articulate a theological basis for the establishment of peace and the reunification of the Korean peninsula with justice and the integrity of creation. *Minjung* theology as an ecumenical theology has to carry out the work of theologically articulating the Christian understanding of working and living for justice, peace and the integrity of creation.

Second, *Minjung* Theology as a cultural theology has to continue to struggle for peaceful coexistence with other religions in Korea and broaden the space for mutual dialogue. *Minjung* theology is a liberation theology of religions, and in order to become such a theology of religion it has to work on the liberation of Christian theology from its narrow exclusivism to become a truly indigenized Korean Christianity.⁹³

The *Minjung* Church, based on *Minjung* theology, strives to establish a higher society in which justice, peace, and the integrity of creation are preserved, and in which the "peaceful coexistence" of every society will be achieved.

Korean *Minjung* Theology intends to construct a better society through the Church's harmonious cooperation with secondary societies. This theological position is deeply influenced by Dietrich Bonhoeffer's thought which is interpreted as "the theology of secularization" by Korean *Minjung* theologians.⁹⁴

There exist polyphonic readings and interpretations of Bonhoeffer's theological works. In general, the "death of God" theology in Thomas J.J. Altizer, the notion of the "secular city" in Harvey Cox, and the situation ethic of Joseph Fletcher have been

⁹² Ibid., 154-155.

⁹³ Ibid., 157-158.

⁹⁴ Bong-Rang Park, *Kidokgyo eui bichonggyowha* [Religiousless Christianity] (Seoul: Bummunsa, 1976); Shin-Gun Lee, "Bonhoeffer eui gyohoeron" [Ecclesiology of Dietrich Bonhoeffer], in *Gyohoeron* [Ecclesiology], ed. Society of Systematic Theology in Korea (Seoul: The Christian Literature Society of Korea, 2009), 231-253.

developed from Bonhoeffer's theology, mainly described in *Letters and Papers from Prison* and *Ethics*. By contrast, John Howard Yoder and James McClendon intend to understand Bonhoeffer's theological legacy from the perspective of the Baptist tradition (dynamic pietism).⁹⁵ Korean *Minjung* Theology has no interest in understanding Bonhoeffer's work from the position of dynamic pietism and the Baptist tradition. Rather, *Minjung* Theology prefers to accept Altizer's and Cox's reading of Bonhoeffer, and has applied these interpretations to recognize the relationship between the Church and secondary societies in the Korean context.⁹⁶

In *Discipleship* and *Life Together* one can find Bonhoeffer's shift from Barthian neo-Orthodoxy to dynamic pietism (the Baptist tradition). In these books, Bonhoeffer shows a different theological concern from Barth in that Bonhoeffer puts his theological emphasis on the practice of dynamic pietism. In *Letters and Papers from Prison*, however, Bonhoeffer shifts from praxis of piety to form a dialogue with the instrumental rationality and autonomy of a modern society. In his book Bonhoeffer produces the notions of the "religionless situation" and the "world come of age." These two notions in Bonhoeffer's theology have played an important role in constructing the theological logic of the proper relationship between the Church and secondary societies in Korean *Minjung* Theology. In coming of age according to Bonhoeffer, passing through the traumatic and distressing age of puberty, the world and humans put their destiny into their own hands in

⁹⁵ See John Howard Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999), 129-130; James Wm. McClendon, *Systematic Theology: Ethics*, vol. 1 (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2002), 193-212; Stanley Hauerwas, *Performing the Faith: Bonhoeffer and the Practice of Nonviolence* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2004), 13-17.

⁹⁶ Suk-Sung Yu, "Bonhoeffer eui pyungwha yunli" [The ethic of peace in Dietrich Bonhoeffer], *Haesukhak gwa yunli 3* [*Hermeneutics and ethics 3*] (1999): 33-58. And see Paul S. Chung, "Dietrich Bonhoeffer Seen from Asian Minjung Theology and the Fourth Eye of Socially Engaged Buddhism," in *Asian Contextual Theology for the Third Millennium*, eds. Paul S. Chung et al., trans. Paul S. Chung (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2007), 127-145.

ever increasing amounts because of the growth of human autonomy caused by the increase of human power and technology. As a result, in coming of age, humans have no need to depend on God and religion. All final responsibility in the world is not ascribed to destiny, God, or any other religious narrative. Bonhoeffer writes:

There is one great development that leads to the world's autonomy. In theology one sees it first in Lord Herbert of Cherbury, who maintains that reason is sufficient for religious knowledge. In ethics it appears in Montaigne and Bodin with their substitution of rules of life for the commandments. In politics Machiavelli detaches politics from morality in general and founds the doctrine of 'reason of state.' Later, and very differently from Machiavelli, but tending like him towards the autonomy of human society, comes Grotius, setting up his natural law as international law, which is valid *etsi deus non daretur*, 'even if there were no God.' The philosophers provide the finishing touches: on the one hand we have the deism of Descartes, who holds that the world is a mechanism, running by itself with no interference from God; and on the other hand the pantheism of Spinoza, who says that God is nature. In the last resort, Kant is a deist, and Fichte and Hegel are pantheists. Everywhere the thinking is directed towards the autonomy of man and the world.⁹⁷

The above passage shows that the increase of autonomy diminishes the need of God and religion. It is natural, therefore, that in coming of age the notion of the religious *a priori* is superseded by "a historically conditioned and transient form of human self-expression,"⁹⁸ and thus human beings confine God into *deus ex machina*.⁹⁹ Accordingly, humans have experienced a radical religionless situation in the world due to their coming of age.¹⁰⁰

The "religionless situation" in the world-come-of-age in Bonhoeffer's theology needs to be carefully interpreted. Bonhoeffer's theological notion is not interpreted as his

⁹⁷ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Letters and Papers from Prison*, trans. R.H. Fuller et al., enlarged edition (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1972), 359.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 280.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 281-282.

¹⁰⁰ See Barry A. Harvey, *Another City: An Ecclesiological Primer for a Post-Christian World* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1999), 112-114.

declaration of the “death of God” in the world. He proposes that Christian theology should not manipulate the world in coming of age; and conversely, the world in coming of age should not disregard Christian theology. In the religionless situation of the world-come-of-age the relationship between the Church and the world cannot be a mutual absorption nor a mutual ablate.¹⁰¹ In this sense Bonhoeffer presents a new direction of the relationship between the Church and secondary societies: “dialectical cohabitation.”¹⁰²

In his recognition of the technical development and the maturity of instrumental rationality of modern society, Bonhoeffer attempts to seek the proper place for God in the world-come-of-age. He argues that:

I should like to speak of God not on the boundaries but at the centre, not in weakness but in strength; and therefore not in death and guilt but in man’s life and goodness. As to the boundaries, it seems to me better to be silent and leave the insoluble unsolved. Belief in the resurrection is *not* the ‘solution’ of the problem of death. God’s ‘beyond’ is not the beyond of our cognitive faculties. The transcendence of epistemological theory has nothing to do with the transcendence of God. God is beyond in the midst of our life. The church stands, not at the boundaries where human powers give out, but in the middle of the village.¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ Bonhoeffer concludes that liberal theology (E. Troeltsch), Lutheran epigones (Heim and P. Althaus), Paul Tillich’s theology, and Karl Barth’s theology fail to suggest a proper relationship between the Church and secondary societies. According to his critique of these theologies, liberal theology’s view on the relationship between the Church and the world has a fatal weakness in that “it conceded to the world the right to determine Christ’s place in the world; in the conflict between the church and the world it accepted the comparatively easy terms of peace that the world dictated.” Lutheran epigones, like the defeated in a battle of Christ versus the world, seek to find an alternative territory for Christ. For Heim, it is a “heart” of an individual Christian, and for Althaus it is Lutheran teaching (ministry) or Lutheran worship in the world. In the religious socialism of Tillich, the theological attempt to give the world shape through religion fails because the world refuses to be understood as “religiously” as Tillich wanted. Finally, the “positivism of revelation” of Barth also fails to give a concrete guidance, either in dogmatics or in ethics. Hence, Bonhoeffer declares that all these theological attempts to make a proper place for God in the world come of age have failed [Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Letters and Papers from Prison*, 327-328].

¹⁰² This terminology comes from Richard H. Roberts. Richard H. Roberts, “Theology and Social Sciences,” in *The Modern Theologies*, ed. David F. Ford, 3rd ed. (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 377-378. Bong-Rang Park, *Kidokgyo eui bichonggyowha* [Religionless of Christianity], 528-529.

¹⁰³ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Letters and Papers from Prison*, 282.

In the above passage Bonhoeffer suggests that the Church and the world cannot totally conflict nor converge with each other. Rather, the relationship between the Church and the world can be defined as “dialectical cohabitation.”

The Church cannot claim a privilege or a position of judging the world, and the world-come-of-age cannot accept the notion of “the religious *a priori*.” It is because the world is passing through its period of adolescence and is arriving at its adult stage. In Bonhoeffer’s theology, therefore, the Church is positioned in the midst of the “village,” and thus Christians belonging to the Church have to work toward the praxis of *ecclesia* within the “village” until the eschatological end time.

Based on the theological logic of Bonhoeffer’s “dialectical cohabitation,” Korean *Minjung* Theology has developed a proper relationship between the Church and secondary societies from its harmoniously cooperative perspective. This position presupposes that the Church and secondary societies are totally autonomous entities and have respectively distinctive tasks under God’s redemptive economy. *Minjung* Theology’s recognition of the relationship between the Church and society as being in harmonious cooperation towards building a better society can correct the Korean conservative Church’s perspective of “political Augustinianism,”¹⁰⁴ in which the Church considers itself as the center of the redemptive economy and as the salvific agent toward the world.

However, the critical weakness of this harmonious model¹⁰⁵ is to presuppose a utopian society as an all-comprehensive society within which the Church fulfills its

¹⁰⁴ H.-X. Arquillière, *L’Augustinisme Politique* (Paris: J. Vrin, 1955).

¹⁰⁵ From Barth’s Christocentric vision of the Church, “The Christian Church must be guided by the Word of God and by it alone.” Furthermore, “The Word of God is not tied to any political system, old

function as a secondary subsystem. Hence, the Church should not ever interfere in secondary societies because they have their own proper autonomy and have been destined to fulfill their own mission as ordered by God.

What would Karl Barth think of this harmonious cooperative model of the Church and society? In chapter five of this dissertation the claim will be made that Barth would say “first things first.” The first thing for him was the doctrine of God, and knowledge of God comes through the revelation of God in the Bible as interpreted Christologically. The primary task of theologian is to develop a coherent interpretation of God, a project of little concern to most social scientist. The theological ethicist, James M. Gustafson, says that “No pages in my personal theological library show as much wear as Karl Barth’s *Church Dogmatics*, II/2, chapter 8, entitled ‘The Command of God.’”¹⁰⁶ “To come to grips with” God for Barth is “one of the best ways to formulate a comprehensive and coherent theological ethics” for social structures.¹⁰⁷ Social policy in Korea should be shaped by the account one renders of God and God’s relation to the world. God is the creator, and because He is for humans He has made a covenant with us. But what is right and good is determined by God and not by us.

Having affirmed that, Barth would secondly say that theological judgments are carried out in ethics. God will not command anything for society contrary to His grace shown in Jesus Christ. God’s covenant in creation is focused on humans, and there is a direct relation between religion and morality. Gustafson says that once Barth has

or new. It justifies and judges all of them. It passes through, because it is superior to, all political change. It is neither old nor new, but eternal” [Karl Barth, *Against the Stream: Shorter Post-War Writings, 1946-52*, ed. Ronald George Smith (New York: Philosophical Library, 1954), 86-87].

¹⁰⁶ James M. Gustafson, *Ethics from a Theocentric Perspective*, vol. 2 (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1984), 26.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

established his doctrine of God, then he can apply moral principles to “almost everything under the sun.”¹⁰⁸ What are some of these “almost everything under the sun” that Barth discusses? Here is a short list of moral issues: abortion, creation and creatures, animals, biology, birth control, capital punishment, celibacy, artificial insemination, cosmos, creation, death, divorce, marriage, science, health, humanity, *eros*, class conflict, parenthood, socialism, war, atomic bomb, and work. There seems to be no end to the list of things that Barth would include in his theological ethics. But again Barth would warn: God in Christ is at the center, the Church is in the inner circle next to Christ, and society is in a more distant outer circle.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ James M. Gustafson says that the best and most coherent account of theological ethics in the Protestant tradition comes from Barth. He says that Barth has been a chief “conversation partner” for him. See Gustafson, *Ethics from a Theocentric Perspective*, vol. 2, 26-42.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Christocentric Relationship between Church and Society in Karl Barth

Karl Barth's Christocentric view of how Church and society should relate created a stormy debate which still rages today. To gain access to Barth's thinking these fierce arguments need to be examined. This chapter will look at four various interpretations that careful readers have given to Barth's efforts to relate Christ and culture. The chapter will conclude with an estimation of how South Korean Christians have responded to Barth's Christocentric theology.

Seen as a Radically Conflicting Relationship

Friedrich-Wilhelm Marquardt understands Karl Barth's theology as having a continual relationship with socialism, and proposes a model of the radical conflicting relationship between the Church and society. When Marquardt examined the life and thought of Karl Barth he asserted that Barth's whole life and theology was deeply painted with socialistic ideals; concerning the relationship between the Church and society, Barth's position is to be described as analogous to "the radicality of the anarchist."¹

¹ Friedrich-Wilhelm Marquardt, *Theologie und Sozialismus: Das Beispiel Karl Barths* (Munich: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1972), 165: "Barth wird deswegen so schwer verstanden, weil er, anders als die übrige christliche und theologische Zeitgenossenschaft, seinerseits in einer Radikalität denkt, die, wird sie politisch artikuliert, nur als »links« von der Sozialdemokratie und spatter links von der bolschewistischen Revolution angesiedelt verstanden werden kann. Barth denkt und argumentiert in der Radikalität des Anarchisten. Er stellt die Frage nach der wesentlichen Freiheit oder Unfreiheit des revolutionären Menschen, aber das ist *nicht* bürgerlicher Rückzug vor der Revolution in die Innerlichkeit des Individuums, sondern wird nur unter dem Gesichtspunkt der revolutionären Effektivität und Totalität vollzogen. Das ist aber phänomenal eine glatte Entsprechung zu der anarchistischen Position, der es wesentlich um den revolutionierten Einzelnen geht."

According to Marquardt, Barth joined “the Social Democratic Party” two times during his life. Barth’s early involvement in “the Swiss Socialist Party” began at the end of 1915. The main reason Barth joined this Party was that:

he now wanted to criticize the party from within for having lost its radical socialist principles; previously he had advanced this criticism only under religious-socialist auspices. He was troubled, for example, by the question of national defense and militarism on which the party, after August 4, 1914, had reneged.²

Barth had paid attention to the socialist movement and socialism had influenced the formation of Barth’s theology from his early years. In particular, Barth started to develop his theological thought deeply influenced by religious socialism.

In his essay “Jesus Christ and the Movement for Social Justice (1911),”³ Barth strongly advocates the socialistic direction of the Kingdom of God which he sees as the main topic of Jesus’ teaching. In this article Barth portrays Jesus as “more socialist than the socialists.”⁴ Barth’s socialist perception of Jesus was concerned with healing “social misery,” and constructing “a new world.” Hence, Barth interpreted the Kingdom of God as a social-materialistic reality rather than “a merely spiritual and inward” entity.⁵

As strong evidence for Barth’s life-long concerns about socialism, Marquardt pays attention to Barth’s participation in “the German Social Democrats” movement in 1932. In spite of the fact that the National Socialists’ victory was undeniable, and thus socialism did not need to form an organization and party, Barth believed that socialism

² Friedrich-Wilhelm Marquardt, “Socialism in the Theology of Karl Barth,” in *Karl Barth and Radical Politics*, ed. and trans. George Hunsinger (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1976), 47-48.

³ Karl Barth, “Jesus Christ and the Movement for Social Justice (1911),” in *Karl Barth and Radical politics*, ed. and trans. George Hunsinger (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1976), 19-45.

⁴ Ibid., 30.

⁵ Ibid., 26-28.

and the socialistic movement still had validity. Differing with Paul Tillich, Barth proposed to belong to the party because “he understood his socialism in terms of *praxis*, not in terms of religious and social theory.” This attitude toward socialism means that the practice of the socialists is always needed to renovate society in every generation.⁶

Marquardt says that Barth showed his anti-Nazism and his propensity for leaning on the communist organization by participating in the activity of the Confessing Church. At the end of the war Barth played an active role in “the Swiss section of the communist-led ‘Committee for a Free Germany.’” Even after the war, Barth requested other Germans to join this committee by sending them letters. As strong evidence for Barth’s socialistic enchantment Marquardt assesses Barth’s position toward Eastern European communism as follows:

From this perspective Barth’s famous or infamous attitudes toward Eastern European communism also takes on a political aspect: that of his socialism. Barth was no neutralist –either with respect to the church, which he wished to place “between East and West,” or with respect to state and society. His “No” to Soviet imperialism was of equal importance with his “Yes” to a “more than Leninist” – or left-wing –socialism.⁷

In the above passage Barth’s ongoing concern about socialism is revealed in his lack of comment on Eastern European communism. Marquardt maintains that Barth’s lack of criticism toward Eastern European communism resulted from his preference for communism among the existing socio-political ideologies. However, Frank Jehle reports that “Barth was against an ideological anti-Communism and *at the same time* against a Christian glorification of Communism in the East. He fought in both directions against

⁶ Marquardt, “Socialism in the Theology of Karl Barth,” 48.

⁷ Ibid., 49.

an absolutism and a theologization of political positions which were intrinsically secular.”⁸

Marquardt further argues that Barth’s support of socialism throughout his life is strongly revealed in his sermons and theological writings, especially *The Epistle to the Romans* and *Church Dogmatics*. Marquardt insists that when Barth served as a pastor his primary concern was not with the word of God. In actuality, Barth’s primary task was “the problem of belonging to that socially comprehended religious organization, the church.”⁹ In the second edition of *Romans*, Barth declared that the “the existing order” is a necessary “evil.” Hence, Barth “places the Christian community in the radical-socialist role,” and thus requested that the Christian communities “participate in street fighting from the barricades.”¹⁰

Marquardt also seeks to find the evidence of Barth’s attachment to socialism in his *Church Dogmatics*. Marquardt investigates Barth’s concept of God, based on “Marx’s eleventh thesis on Feuerbach [which] applied to the concept of God,”¹¹ and “Marquardt would not falsify the antispeculative thrust of Marx’s thesis on Feuerbach.”¹² In his *Church Dogmatics* Barth interprets the concept of God “as the one who is ‘all in all’ and who as such concerns the ‘totality’ of human existence.”¹³ Marquardt quotes Barth’s

⁸ Frank Jehle, *Ever against the Stream: The Politics of Karl Barth, 1906-1968*, trans. Richard and Martha Burnett (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2002), 103.

⁹ Marquardt, “Socialism in the Theology of Karl Barth,” 51.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 58.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 68.

¹² Hermann Diem, “Karl Barth as Socialist: Controversy over a New Attempt to Understand Him,” in *Karl Barth and Radical Politics*, ed. & trans. George Hunsinger (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1976), 133.

¹³ Marquardt, “Socialism in the Theology of Karl Barth,” 68.

definition of God in which God is “the fact that not only newly illuminates, but also really transforms reality.” To paraphrase from the Marxist perspective, “God is not a basis for interpreting the world, but the fact which really transforms it.”¹⁴ Marquardt writes:

My thesis is that: The *Church Dogmatics* subjects the dogmatic tradition of Christianity to the canon of a socially reflected concept of God. Those who think that it establishes a theological ontology of transcendence are wrong. Those who see that it is essentially political even in its theological details are correct.¹⁵

In the above passage Marquardt argues that Barth has shown his socialistic leaning in his major theological writings as well as in his pastoral sermons and activity. Based on Marquardt’s study of the strong connection between Barth’s thought and socialism, the relationship between the Church and state become radically anarchistic and constantly conflicting.

Marquardt has sketched a new portrait of Barth. First, his research reveals that Barth had been positively engaged in socialism throughout his whole life, and thus Barth’s socialistic propensity is revealed in both his early work and his later work. Second, Barth’s approach to socialism is not theoretical, but practical. Regardless of whether or not Barth fully recognized the theory of socialism, the most important thing in Barth’s theological life is that his view of socialism is based on his “*socialistic praxis*,” and his theology strongly leans on “his political involvement (*praxis*).”¹⁶ George Hunsinger strongly endorses Marquardt’s study as follows:

Marquardt served effectively to dispel the illusion that Barth’s theology was done in splendid isolation. No longer could Karl Barth be so safely imagined (whether

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid., 49.

by his critics or by his adulators) as a man squirreled away in his cubicle with a Bible, surrounded by musty theological texts, and absorbed in some strangely scholastic enterprise.¹⁷

Hunsinger positively evaluates Marquardt's study as correcting any misunderstanding of Barth's theology as apolitical, transcendent, and only based on the Bible. In short, Marquardt's reinterpretation of Barth as a socialist corrects the prejudice toward Barth's theology as the dichotomy between theology and politic, and between the Church and society.¹⁸

However, many critics disagree with Marquardt's understanding of Barth's theology as socialistic, and his view of the proper relationship between Church and society as constantly conflicting. John Howard Yoder maintains that the proof which Marquardt used to support his thesis is "too vague." In particular, Marquardt's definition of "radical politics" in Barth's activity and theology "falls short of political and ethical sophistication, especially when it is used as a tool to understand what was going on in the 1920's or the 1930's."¹⁹ Another serious problem in Marquardt's thesis is that Marquardt used socialism as the "first principle" to control the entire course of Barth's theological journey "like an inertial guidance system." From Yoder's perspective, what Marquardt reads into Barth's systematic theology (*Church Dogmatics*) from socialism is that it is "to be over-interpreted."²⁰

¹⁷ George Hunsinger, *Disruptive Grace: Studies in the Theology of Karl Barth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2000), 114.

¹⁸ See George Hunsinger, "Toward a Radical Barth," in *Karl Barth and Radical Politics*, ed. and trans. George Hunsinger (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1976), 181-184.

¹⁹ John Howard Yoder, *Karl Barth and the Problem of War & other Essays on Barth*, ed. Mark Thiessen Nation (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2003), 134.

²⁰ Ibid.

Gerhard Sauter opposes Marquardt's understanding of Barth's theology because "Marquardt saw the young Barth, according to the center and focus of his theology, as a religious socialist."²¹ Sauter believes that the portrait of Barth as socialist originated from Leonhard Ragaz's interpretation of Barth's theology from a religious socialist perspective. For Sauter, Ragaz intends to build a new portrait of Barth's theology in which "the kingdom of God is the moving principle of history, destroying politically all static order and destroying theologically all static thought."²²

Sauter also critiques Ragaz's interpretation of Barth's political thoughts based on his hermeneutical presupposition of the Kingdom of God. Denying Ragaz's understanding of Barth's political consciousness, Sauter emphasizes the apolitical nature of Barth's thought as follows:

Never did Barth wish to understand his work or himself in this manner, however often he spoke of trend and movement or however much he set himself in motion. I agree with Eberhard Jüngel when he interprets Barth's concept 'the revolution of God' as a taking back of the concept of 'revolution' into God's reality. Thus the theologian has no specific call to act as a revolutionary in the name of God. Rather, the theologian is called to ask questions about the truth of God in the middle of a changeable and changing reality. These questions can lead from time to time revolutionary consequences, not because the theologian, through his calling, is in opposition to the existing state of things; rather because the asked-for truth of Jesus Christ pushes against opposition, since this question does not grow out of our world and its frame of reference.²³

Sauter asserts that in Barth's theological thoughts the concept of revolution belongs only to God. Barth never encouraged Christians and theologians to participate in revolutionizing the world in the name of God. As with Eberhard Jüngel's understanding

²¹ Gerhard Sauter, *Eschatological Rationality* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1996), 113.

²² *Ibid.*, 126.

²³ *Ibid.*, 126-127.

of Barth,²⁴ true revolution for Christians comes from their participating in God's reality and action of love. From Sauter's perspective Barth developed his theology from "an apolitical, non-activist 'right-wing' outlook."

In Sauter's understanding of Barth's Christocentric logic, Christians are never called to politically revolutionize the *status quo* and to rebuild a kingdom of God on the earth. Far from revolutionary action, Sauter argues that in Barth's theology "all human action is subordinate to *prayer*, which is the 'fundamental act' of 'obedience engendered in faith.' Prayer is the essential form of action in the freedom of human individuals facing God."²⁵ Sauter affirms that his understanding of Barth moves a long distance from those who intend to view Barth's thought as socialism or a political revolutionary theology. For Sauter, "Adequate God-talk – with its roots in prayer as talk-to-God – is action in the full sense of the word"²⁶ in Barth's theology.

Both Sauter's extremely apolitical reading of Barth and Marquardt's understanding of Barth's thought as politically socialistic lack Barth's Christocentric vision of the Church and society. For Barth the Church has a responsibility for society as a model and prototype, and thus the Church has its influence on society from a Christocentric perspective. Neither a rival perspective of the relationship between the Church and

²⁴ Eberhard Jüngel, *Karl Barth: A Theological Legacy*, trans. Garrett E. Paul (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1986), 97-104.

²⁵ Sauter, *Eschatological Rationality*, 134. However, Frank Jehle proposes a totally different interpretation of the meaning of prayer in Karl Barth as follows: "'Justification and Justice,' of 1938, Barth said that the 'prayer for the bearers of authority in the state' is part of the 'basic rations' of the church's existence. This is 'fundamentally and comprehensively' the 'work of the church for the state.' After the war, in his 1946 lecture 'The Christian Community and the Civil Community,' he stated this theological insight more pointedly: the Christian community prays 'for the civil community.' But as she is praying for it, she 'takes up responsibility for it before God. And she would not do this seriously if she would only pray and not also, while praying for it, work actively for it.' . . . 'A silent community, merely observing the events of the time, would not be a Christian community.' This is the legacy of Karl Barth's political ethics" [Jehle, *Ever against the Stream: The Politics of Karl Barth, 1906-1968*, 108].

²⁶ Sauter, *Eschatological Rationality*, 134.

society, nor the apolitical vision of the Church within the world, adequately express Barth's original meaning. In Barth's theological system, "Prayer and praxis are bound together: '*Ora!* And therefore *Labora!*'"²⁷

Seen as an Analogically Correspondent Relationship

Will Herberg and Jürgen Moltmann represent the understanding of Barth's view of the relationship between the Church and society as "correspondence" or "parable." In order to properly understand Barth's perspective of the relationship between Church and society, Herberg reviews the existing theory of the relationship between the Church and society as two doctrines: seen from the perspectives of "the natural law tradition" and "the Augustinian-Reformation" view.²⁸

According to the doctrine of natural law God is ultimately the basis for all natural law and phenomena, and thus God's goodness is reflecting on all existing things, and all existing things are able to recognize "the God-ordained principle." By relying on the doctrine of natural law and their reason, humans can understand "the proper orderings of society and the state." In the doctrine of natural law the state is positioned in the highest level within human societies, and the social nature of human beings is consummately revealed in the state as "its essential goodness."²⁹

The Augustinian-Reformation understanding of the state is fundamentally different from the theological tradition of natural law in that Augustinian-Reformation theology understands the state from the perspective of "an order of preservation."

²⁷ Hunsinger, "Toward a Radical Barth," 226.

²⁸ See David Haddorff, "Karl Barth's Theological Politics," in *Community, State, and Church*, by Karl Barth (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2004), 56n1.

²⁹ Will Herberg, "The Social Philosophy of Karl Barth," *Community, State, and Church*, by Karl Barth (New York: Anchor Books, 1960), 25.

According to the “order of preservation,” humans’ construction of social institutions, including the state, is caused by their sinful nature. Humans are constantly possessed by a desire to become the center of the world and to rule over other people by making a strong state. Humans have always designed the state to protect life in society from destruction and sin. Accordingly, the Augustinian-Reformation theological tradition considers the state as the “greatest of all reflections upon human nature,” which is summarized as “ambiguity and sinfulness.”³⁰

Will Herberg maintains that Karl Barth rejects the theological rationale of both the natural law tradition and the Augustinian-Reformation tradition.³¹ Herberg writes:

The natural law doctrine is obviously excluded, since it presupposes not only a broad natural “point of contact” between the divine and the human but also the substantial integrity of human nature, human reason, and the cosmic order; in other words, it appears to ignore entirely the pervasiveness of sin and the fallenness of creation. But neither can Barth make the Augustinian-Reformation doctrine his own, for this doctrine seems to him unduly to separate creation from redemption, and therefore to falsify the radically Christocentric character of the Christian faith.³²

From the Christocentric character of the Christian faith in Barth the theological tradition of natural law emphasizes the integrity of human nature and reason, and thus one is unable to distinguish a difference between God and human beings. The Augustinian-Reformation tradition also reveals its weakness in that it creates an extreme distance between God’s creation and His salvific economy.

The problem is that those theological traditions present two extreme perspectives on the state. While the theological tradition of natural law positively views the state as

³⁰ Ibid., 29.

³¹ According to Haddorff, “the most useful portion of Herberg’s essay was his concise, yet comprehensive, discussion of the two main Christian traditions of the state, and Barth’s departure from them” [Haddorff, “Karl Barth’s Theological Politics,” 56n1].

³² Herberg, “The Social Philosophy of Karl Barth,” 29.

being the highest level and as having an essential goodness, the Augustinian-Reformation tradition tends to understand the state as a core of evil, created by fallen human sinfulness. As a middle position Barth proposes an alternative understanding of the state based on his Christocentric perspective. Concerning Barth's Christocentric understanding of the state, Herberg writes:

The authority of the state is seen as "included in the authority of Jesus Christ," as "an image of him whose Kingdom will be a kingdom of peace without frontiers and without end." In fact, the entire teaching is a teaching that hinges upon a correspondence between what is "above" with what is "below," between the "heavenly *polis*" and the "earthly *polis*." The state, Barth insists, must be seen "as an allegory, as a correspondence and an analogue to the Kingdom of God which the Church preaches and believes in"; indeed, it *is* the Kingdom of God in "an external, relative, and provisional embodiment." Political action is to be guided by this criterion: "Among the political possibilities open at any particular moment, it [the Church] will choose those which most suggest a correspondence to, an analogy and a reflection of, the content of its own faith and gospel."³³

The state in Barth's Christocentrism is neither essentially good nor fundamentally evil. Instead, from the Christocentric perspective, Barth considers the state as being an image of Jesus Christ, being included in the lordship of Jesus Christ, and belonging to the Kingdom of Jesus Christ. The Christocentric foundation of the Church and state can have a corresponding relationship to the Church and the state.

Herberg concludes that Barth attempts to understand not only the Church but also the state from a Christocentric foundation. And Herberg's critique of Barth's view is related to Barth's intent to build the state on a Christocentric basis. For Herberg, Barth's theological projection created a totally bizarre perspective on the state. From his Christocentric perspective, Barth put the state under the "order of redemption," in which,

³³ Ibid., 31.

in addition to the Church, the state plays a role of salvific agency.³⁴ Herberg believes that Barth's understanding of the state from the order of redemption has a major impact on shaping his view of the Church. According to Herberg's critique of Barth's ecclesiology, Barth

agrees substantially with Cullmann's picture of the Christian community (*ekklesia*) and the civil community (*polis*) as both within and under the kingship of Christ, the Church constituting the "inner circle" within the "wider circle" of the world. The Church's primary calling is to preach the saving word of God, but it also has its responsibility to the state – to pray for it, to intercede on its behalf, to speak to it in encouragement and admonition from out of its witness to Jesus Christ. For – and this is what constitutes the "relation between the two realms" – "apart from the Church, nowhere is there is any fundamental knowledge of the reasons which make the state legitimate and necessary."³⁵

Because the Christocentric connection between the Church and the state already exists in Barth's thought, the Church automatically and legitimately has a responsibility for the state. Conversely, any state affair should reflect on the Church's preaching. Herberg suggests, therefore, that Barth's assertions, "the existence of the Christian community is political" and "the existence of the Christian community [is] as of ultimate and supremely political significance,"³⁶ has to be interpreted as the Christocentric solidarity between the Church and the state.

Herberg's critique of Barth's Christocentric relationship between the Church and the state is that Barth's understanding of the state from "an order of redemption in correspondence with the '*heavenly polis*'"³⁷ is able to distort the Biblical definition in which the state is mainly portrayed from an "order of preservation." Herberg points out

³⁴ Ibid., 26.

³⁵ Ibid., 37.

³⁶ Barth, *Against the Stream: Shorter Post-War Writings, 1946-52*, 19.

³⁷ Herberg, "The Social Philosophy of Karl Barth," 64.

that Barth lost his continuity to preserve his perspective of a Christocentric relationship between the Church and society at the practical level. In practicing the Christocentric supervision of the Church over secondary societies, Barth's attitude was not radical but arbitrary for selecting political phenomena and situations. While Barth's political consciousness encourages the Church to participate in protest against the Nazi regime, he keeps silent concerning the communist movement and its invasion of Eastern Europe. Herberg argues that Barth fails to integrate his theology of politics and to uphold his theological consistency concerning political phenomena.³⁸ In relation to Herberg's understanding of Barth, John H. Yoder argues that "Herberg is right in discerning a difference [of Barth's theological stance between the wartime works and the late 1930's writings], but his inattentiveness to the inner structure of Barth's thought, and his own high valuation of democratic anticommunism keeps Herberg from seeing which is 'the real Karl Barth.'"³⁹

In contrast with Herberg, Jürgen Moltmann positively reviews Barth's view of the relationship between the Church and society from the perspective of "Christological eschatology," which corrected "Luther's apocalyptic eschatology."⁴⁰ Moltmann argues that Barth views the relationship between the Church and society as a Christological eschatology. Moltmann defines his Christological eschatology as follows:

- a. "Christological eschatology" in which "Jesus is victor." Christian faith lives everywhere in the certainty of Christ's victory.

³⁸ "Herberg's analysis," Yoder states, "saw a progression from indifference to social ethics (1920-30), then [moved] toward a serious social philosophy which he could respect (1935-45); in three essays in his book), followed by an inexplicable relapse in the 1950's" [John H. Yoder, *Karl Barth and the Problem of War* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1970), 129].

³⁹ Yoder, *Karl Barth and the Problem of War*, 131.

⁴⁰ Jürgen Moltmann, *The Politics of Discipleship and Discipleship in Politics*, ed. Willard M. Swartley (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2006), 23.

b. Universal Christology in which Christ is the Pantokrator: “For through him was everything created that is in heaven and on earth, seen and unseen” (Col 1:16). From this perspective the world-historical struggles are only the rear-guard actions of an already defeated enemy.

c. The Christological ethic of obedience discipleship in all areas of life, i.e., an ethic of the relationship of created life to the reconciling God!⁴¹

Because God’s victory over “a world-historical struggle between God and the devil” has been revealed in Christ’s resurrection, Christ is ruling over all nations and all human relationships. Moreover, all the political authorities should be subjected to the Exalted Lord, Jesus Christ. According to Christological eschatology, therefore, “the incomplete earthly state and the incomplete human society are oriented toward the coming lordship of God.”⁴²

However, Moltmann insists that Barth’s understanding of the state is ambiguous in relation to the Kingdom of God because Barth’s text shows that “the state is not and never will become the kingdom of God; nevertheless it stands under the promise of the coming kingdom of God.” In other words, Barth sees neither “exact similarity” nor “absolute dissimilarity” between the state and the Kingdom of God. Instead, Barth technically expresses this relationship as “parable, correspondence, and analogy.”⁴³

Moltmann writes:

Politics, like culture, is thus capable of acting as a parable, a picture of correspondence, for the kingdom of God, and necessarily so. Because of this, Barth calls the civil community the outer circle of the kingdom of Christ. Since the Christian community as inner circle and the civil community as outer circle have their common center in Christ the Lord and their common aim in the kingdom of God, the Christian community, by means of its *political* decisions, will urge the civil community to act as a parable by corresponding to God’s

⁴¹ Ibid., 24.

⁴² Ibid., 22.

⁴³ Ibid., 27.

justice and not contradicting it. It wants the state to point toward, and not way from, the kingdom of God.⁴⁴

Based on the relationship of Christological eschatology between the Church and society, Barth urges the Church to drive a civil community to follow the rule of the Kingdom of God.

Moltmann argues that in Barth's Christocentric relationship between the Church and society relying on "Christ's victory over the powers," the Church's interference with secondary societies is very restricted.⁴⁵ The Church should play the role of "example" for secondary societies. From the practical perspective, however, Moltmann disagrees with Barth's restriction of the Church's role as an "example" because the Church cannot be an example for manipulative civil communities, and the Church's hierarchical system cannot be a model for democratic civil communities.

Furthermore, Moltmann critiques Barth's Christological eschatology as leading toward "a Christian metaphysic of the state."⁴⁶ Moltmann maintains that any metaphysic of the state is unable to satisfy either Christians or non-Christians. The Christocentric vision of the Church and society cannot be a political project to build a new Christendom, but "can only be discipleship ethics."⁴⁷ Moltman argues that Christological eschatology "is an ethic for Christians in a state, but not a Christian ethic for the state. It is political

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ See Nigel Goring Wright, *Disavowing Constantine: Mission, Church and the Social Order in the Theologies of John Howard Yoder and Jürgen Moltmann* (Cumbria, UK: Paternoster Press, 2000), 142-147.

⁴⁶ Moltmann, *The Politics of Discipleship and Discipleship in Politics*, 33.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

ethics for the Christian community but not Christian politics for the civil community.”⁴⁸

However, Moltmann fails to understand the political connotation in the “parable” in

Barth’s writings. Helmut Gollwitzer writes:

Rather, ‘parable’ shows how the kingdom of God is conceived here: not individualistically and spiritually, not merely as a symbol whose picture of social fulfillment (rejected by the Old Testament and thus very inauthentic) is the individual’s perfection through his affirmation by God. Rather, whoever is guided by the concept of parable in ‘The Christian Community and the Civil Community’ to carry out the specific determinations of choosing and deciding from below to above by analogy to the kingdom of God, that person receives a vision of brotherly human society filled with salvation in communion with God: precisely that vision which – in the midst of the Safenwil misery work – caused the Safenwil pastor to become not only a social reformer, but indeed a socialist.⁴⁹

According to Gollwitzer, Barth’s description of the relationship between the Christian community and civil community as a “parable” does not refer to the individualistic and spiritual perspective. Rather, the relationship of the parable between the Church and society means society’s participation in the kingdom of God with “a vision of brotherly human society,” through a salvific communion with the triune God. Hence, the relationship of the parable between the Church and society in Barth becomes active and dynamic politics.

Seen as a Practically Pacific Relationship

John Howard Yoder proposes Karl Barth’s social ethic as “practical pacifism,” in which Barth views the relationship between the Church and society as a working pacific relationship. Yoder accepts that Barth is intrinsically a pacifist because he confesses it himself. Barth’s pacifism is not exercised in principle, but in practice.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Helmut Gollwitzer, “Kingdom of God and Socialism in the Theology of Karl Barth,” in *Karl Barth and Radical Politics*, ed. and trans. George Hunsinger (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1976), 98-99.

Yoder opposes Walter Bense's argument for making a distinction between "relative" and "absolute" pacifism, in order to understand Barth's pacifism.⁵⁰ With his categorization of pacifism, Bense would assert that while Karl Barth and Emil Brunner's understanding of pacifism is able to be seen as relative pacifism, John Yoder's pacifism is defined as absolute pacifism. Bense believes that one can easily find a main characteristic of relative pacifism in Barth's thought which accepts and supports the just war tradition within orthodox Christianity.⁵¹

Yoder disagrees with Bense, who categorizes Barth's thought as relative pacifism, because this understanding masks "the great distance between him [Barth] and every one else whom Walter Bense would also call relative pacifists."⁵² Instead, Yoder proposes that Barth's political ethic has to be viewed from the perspective of "practical" pacifism.

Yoder writes:

Karl Barth is far nearer to Christian pacifism than he is to any kind of systematic apology for Christian participation in war. For him it is theologically not possible to construct a justification of war. There is no Christian argument for participating in war. There is only the possibility of "limiting cases," whose sole ground is God's sovereign (and exceptional) command to man.⁵³

Yoder reveals that Barth's understanding of war is significantly different from the traditional Christian understanding of just war in that Barth never theologically develops

⁵⁰ Walter Bense, "The Pacifism of Karl Barth: Some Questions for John H. Yoder" (paper presented at the Society of Christian Ethics, Toronto, January, 1977), quoted in Yoder, *Karl Barth and the Problem of War & Other Essays on Barth*, 136.

⁵¹ Yoder, *Karl Barth and the Problem of War & Other Essays on Barth*, 138.

⁵² Ibid., 139.

⁵³ Yoder, *Karl Barth and the Problem of War*, 52.

a theory of justifying any war or even Christian participation in war.⁵⁴ Rather, Barth “has committed himself to understandings of the church and her ethics which will lead in the direction of pacifism.”⁵⁵ Providing strong evidence, Yoder argues that “Both the ethical interpretation of the meaning of sanctification (*KD* IV/2) and his participation in the efforts of churchmen to oppose the rearmament of West Germany and its incorporation in NATO led Barth to [a] stronger ‘practically pacifist’ statement.”⁵⁶

Yoder’s understanding of Barth’s practical pacifism comes not only from his analysis of Barth’s social philosophy, but also from his study of the link between Barth’s ecclesiology and ethics. According to Yoder, Barth’s practical pacifism is an emerging process of practicing radical discipleship and life-together from a radical ecclesiological vision. However, this does not mean that Barth’s ethic belongs to the so-called Radical Reformation and to sectarianism. In contrast with Yoder’s understanding, Barth refuses to accept “a strong *diastasis* between church and state,” and regards “the church’s positive task as bearing witness to the state.”⁵⁷

Yoder states that Barth’s understanding of the Church is mixed. In particular, Yoder believes that Barth’s definition of the Church as “living” within the community belongs to “a free church axiom.” However, Yoder proposes that Barth does not accept

⁵⁴ According to David Clough, however, “John H. Yoder has provided the most extensive and careful criticism of Barth’s treatment of war in the *Dogmatics*. His contention is that Barth’s use of the category of *Grenzfall* is mistaken, and the mistake is particularly evident in the ‘non-Barthian’ way Barth uses extra-biblical categories to resolve the question of whether war could be commanded by God. Yoder questions the need for the attention Barth gives to exceptional cases in ethics” [David Clough, *Ethic in Crisis: Interpreting Barth’s Ethics* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2005), 94].

⁵⁵ Yoder, *Karl Barth and the Problem of War & Other Essays on Barth*, 140.

⁵⁶ Yoder, *Karl Barth and the Problem of War*, 105.

⁵⁷ Haddorff, “Karl Barth’s Theological Politics,” 49.

the notion of *ecclesiola in ecclesia* as a pietistic anti-hierarchical view of the Church.⁵⁸

Yoder concludes that Barth's view of the Church is that it should "[remain] missionary for the free church vision within the institutions of establishment."⁵⁹

Barth's pacifism is evolved from the composition of his ecclesiology and social ethics. Barth's social ethic cannot be interpreted from the perspective of socialism, or pacifism in principle. Instead, Barth's pacifism, suggested by Yoder, includes all these elements and produces "practical pacifism" between the Church and the state. Yoder writes:

The normal function of the state is neither war nor readiness for war, but peace. First of all, the state's function is to maintain internal peace. War is a sign of the state's failure, because it means that peace has become injustice. Likewise the state's function is to maintain external peace. Neither pacifism nor militarism requires the exercise of much insight in weighing the cost and the prerequisites of external peace. What does require insight is to see that the main problem is what to *do* about keeping the peace. This is the message of the church to the state. What is needed is neither the pacifist insistence on disarmament nor the militarist insistence upon armament, but the elimination of occasions for war. The church cannot preach that war is always avoidable; still less can she be permitted to give the least expression to the satanic idea that war is unavoidable. She must and can proclaim at least that war is relatively avoidable, and that it is the responsibility of the state to carry that avoidance as far as humanly possibly through the maintenance of justice.⁶⁰

The above passage indicates that Barth's pacifism is not related to absolute pacifism nor to militarism. From Barth's pacifism, therefore, the state's involvement in war is neither "always avoidable" nor destined to be "unavoidable." In the midst of this dilemma the Church is able to argue that "war is relatively avoidable" and the state has the total responsibility for warfare.

⁵⁸ Yoder, *Karl Barth and the Problem of War & Other Essays on Barth*, 143.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 147.

⁶⁰ Yoder, *Karl Barth and the Problem of War*, 39-40.

Bruce L. McCormack supports Yoder's understanding of Barth's social ethics as practical pacifism. McCormack believes that Barth's social ethic is oriented neither to Christians' "subjection to the state" nor a revolutionary attitude toward the state. Although "Barth clearly had a great deal of sympathy with the revolutionaries," he firmly believed that "revolution could not achieve the goals it sets for itself."⁶¹ Instead Barth proposes a new alternative, practical pacifism. McCormack writes:

Barth clearly favored doing the work of the Kingdom within the existing state. The best alternative under the circumstances is to live within the state, taking part in its life (paying taxes, engaging in party activity, even serving in the military), but as one who does not belong to it, as one for whom the state is already doomed to pass out of existence.⁶²

Barth's understanding of the relationship between the Church and the state is not revolutionary nor subordinate. Instead, Barth favors a practical pacifistic relationship between both. In this relationship Christians are within the existing state without belonging to it and should accept the state's requirement for civil duty – both military service and payment of tax.

George Hunsinger critically responds to Yoder's interpretation of Barth's notion of the relationship between the Church and the state and says that it can be viewed as a radical political vision.⁶³ Hunsinger points out that Yoder's understanding of Barth's social ethic relied upon his "sectarian Protestantism." Hunsinger writes:

Yoder's case for the claim that Barth's political theology ended up in the free church tradition seems to rest on three separate prongs. First, Barth developed what was essentially a free church ecclesiology. Second, he moved from an

⁶¹ Bruce L. McCormack, *Karl Barth's Critically Realistic Dialectical Theology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), 176-177.

⁶² Ibid., 177. Also see Jüngel, *Karl Barth: A Theological Legacy*, 101.

⁶³ Hunsinger, *Disruptive Grace: Studies in the Theology of Karl Barth*, 119.

establishment to a nonconformist social ethic. And finally, he was implicitly headed toward a sectarian Protestant view of the secular realm.⁶⁴

In the above passage Hunsinger showed Yoder's bias toward "a sectarian Protestant view of the secular realm" for understanding Barth's political theology. Yoder's interpretation of Barth's thought comes from his presupposition of the free church ecclesiology and the nonconformist social ethic. In other words, from Yoder's perspective, "The church – not the state – remains the visible reminder or 'sign' of the kingdoms reality, promise, and hope."⁶⁵

Hunsinger argues that Yoder misread Barth's texts because of his own theological presupposition. According to Hunsinger's understanding of Barth, Barth's political theology is far from the sectarian nonconformist social ethic. On the contrary, Barth encourages Christians to have solidarity with secular societies, to participate in the world, and to fully commit themselves to the world under the lordship of Jesus Christ.⁶⁶

Hunsinger maintains that while Barth makes a clear distinction between the Church as built on the virtue of love and the state as relying on coercive force, he positively illumines the "relationship between the two communities as grounded in the fact that they are both exponents of the kingdom of God independent of their relationship to one another."⁶⁷ According to Hunsinger's logic, Yoder's understanding of Barth is focused on the negative dichotomy between the Church and society, and thus Yoder failed to recognize the notion of the Church's positive involvement in the secular world in Barth's political theology.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Haddorff, "Karl Barth's Theological Politics," 49.

⁶⁶ Hunsinger, *Disruptive Grace: Studies in the Theology of Karl Barth*, 123.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 124.

Seen as an Asymmetrically Christocentric Relationship

Kimlyn J. Bender proposes Barth's understanding of the relationship between the Church and society as an asymmetrically Christocentric correlation. According to Bender, the proper relationship between the Church and society in Barth's thought is neither to "be confused" nor to "be set in absolute conflict" because Jesus Christ is the common center, and directs both the Church and secondary societies to the Kingdom of God in spite of their individual classes and beliefs.

Bender posits, therefore, that in Barth's theological logic, the Church and the state require each other, has a positive relationship to Jesus Christ, and thus should cooperate with each other for the Kingdom of God. To construct a "positive" relationship and harmonious cooperation between the Church and the state Barth suggests a new theological strategy. Barth proposes the Christocentric vision of the state as well as the Christocentric vision of the Church. According to Bender,

Specially, Barth's mature political thought is shaped by Christological convictions, as Barth refuses to identify and define the state as an independent entity apart from Christ. In other words, Barth refuses to see the state (as the world at large) as an *abstraction* apart from Jesus Christ. For this reason, Barth takes the unique position of including the state not under the order of creation, but under the order of reconciliation, addressing the state within the general framework of the second article of the creed, rather than the first, and thus in relation to the particular revelation in Christ rather than in relation to general revelation or natural law.⁶⁸

Barth's theological strategy is to categorize both the Church and the state as the means to redemption. Consequently, Barth modifies the ultimate goal of the state as anticipating

⁶⁸ Kimlyn J. Bender, *Karl Barth's Christological Ecclesiology* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005), 258-259.

for and participating in the Kingdom of God. Hence Barth “sees a positive relationship between the church and the state, rather than one of conflict.”⁶⁹

Bender pays attention to Barth’s assertion of the state, which is located “outside the church but not outside the range of Christ’s dominion – it is an exponent of His Kingdom.”⁷⁰ The Church and the state should make a distinction so that “neither may be subsumed into the other.” The Church and the state cooperate for “God’s order of reconciliation,” and “are thus intricately united in the overall purpose of redemption” even though they have separate responsibilities.⁷¹ The Church is far from a place of “neutrality” and from having an attitude of “indifference” to secondary societies.

Basically Bender agrees to interpret Barth’s view of the relationship between the Church and society as positive and cooperative for the Kingdom of God,⁷² and to “[see] more of an equal and reciprocal relationship between church and state.”⁷³ However, Bender proposes that while Barth focuses on the “solidarity,” “co-responsibility,” and reciprocal cooperation in the relationship of the Church and society, he simultaneously recognizes the “asymmetrical” ranking between them within God’s created world.

Bender writes:

⁶⁹ Ibid., 259.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 262.

⁷¹ Ibid., 261.

⁷² See Robert E. Willis, *The Ethics of Karl Barth* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1971), 394-395. Willis proposes that “The relation between the Christian community and the civil community may be likened to two concentric circles whose center lies in the event of reconciliation accomplished in Christ. Their respective responsibilities and tasks will thus be directly related to the redemption of man secured in that event, which establishes the fulfillment of the created order.” More specifically, “the service of the community to the State is marked initially by subordination and prayer indicates that the Church brings no ideological program of its own into the political sphere.” However, “the ‘intercession’ of the Christian community on behalf of the State can, on occasion, take the form of criticism, opposition, and, in extreme cases, revolt.”

⁷³ Bender, *Karl Barth’s Christological Ecclesiology*, 264.

For Barth, while the relation between the church and the world is on the whole positive, and while each serves a necessary function, they do not in the end stand on the same plane. A strong case can be made that, for Barth, the church precedes the state both ontologically and epistemologically, the church providing the meaning of the state rather than vice versa. The relation between the church and the state, while to some degree reciprocal, is therefore on the whole predominantly an asymmetrical one. While this theme is hidden and underdeveloped in his essay ‘Church and State,’ it is clearly the logic of ‘The Christian Community and the Civil Community’ as well as his exposition of church law as exemplary law in the *Church Dogmatics*.⁷⁴

In his political thought, Barth prioritizes the Church over society “both ontologically and epistemologically.” The relationship between the Church and society is “an asymmetrical one.”

Compared to the state, “the church takes precedence over the state in the order of redemption and provides the primary, normative, and intentional witness to Christ for the world, while the state bears a secondary, broken, and unknowing witness.”⁷⁵ The Church “unites” civil society and Jesus Christ to promote God’s redemptive work within the existing world.⁷⁶ In the positive but asymmetrical relationship, the state does not have “autonomy” and “independence” from the Kingdom of God and the existing Church because the Church has been given an authority to “support” or to “resist” the state in Barth’s theological logic.

Bender recognizes the existing critics who find fault with “Barth’s attempt to determine specific Christological analogies within the state,” and Bender’s interpretation of Barth’s perspective as the positive cooperation but an asymmetrical correlation. Bender pays heed to Will Herberg’s and Stanley Hauerwas’ critique. Bender writes:

⁷⁴ Ibid., 263.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 264.

⁷⁶ See Barth, *Against the Stream: Shorter Post-War Writings, 1946-52*, 68 & 94-97.

Barth's derivation of these analogies has often been judged to be arbitrary, governed not by Christology but by an attempt to shore up preconceived political convictions through Christological means. Furthermore, the question has been raised as to what controls these analogies in the first place – they seem to lend themselves more to abstract than concrete ethical questions.⁷⁷

Bender summarizes by saying that while Herberg critiques the arbitrariness of Barth's Christocentric vision of the state, Hauerwas characterizes Barth's view as lacking in concrete ethical direction. Though Bender fully agrees with Herberg's and Hauerwas' critiques on Barth's theory of the Christocentric relationship between the Church and society, Bender asserts that "one must either abandon Barth's central Christocentric tenet, or one must attempt to articulate it in a manner that corrects its inherent shortcomings. A third option does not seem to be forthcoming."⁷⁸

John Milbank's "Augustinian two cities" is able to supplement Bender's asymmetrical relationship between the Church and secondary societies, and to play a role in fulfilling Barth's Christocentric vision.⁷⁹ Milbank suggests a new vision of the integration of Church and society by proposing the idea of the supernaturalizing of the natural.⁸⁰ Milbank tries to integrate the supernatural and the natural by paying attention to Maurice Blondel's notion of integralism that supernaturalizes the natural in opposition

⁷⁷ Bender, *Karl Barth's Christological Ecclesiology*, 268.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 268-269.

⁷⁹ David Haddorff proposes a typically contrasting argument as follows: "Hauerwas and Milbank, remain even more contrastive, rather than dialectical, in relation of church and state (and world). In this way, Barth remains closer to the thought of O'Donovan and Yoder than he does to Hauerwas and Milbank. For these latter theologians, the church remains not only an alternative *polis* to the communities of the world, but also the only authentic *polis* within the world. What theology says about other societies or communities emerges form the particular society of the church" [Haddorff, "Karl Barth's Theological Politics," 51]. However, Haddorff is disregarding the fact that Milbank's "ecclesia-centrism" has a strong emphasis on Christocentrism and Trinitarianism, suggested by Karl Barth. See John Milbank, *The Word Made Strange* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 1997), 156, 186, & 205-206 (This insight came from Dr. Barry Harvey's comment on my prospectus).

⁸⁰ John Milbank, *Theology & Social Theory* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 206-210.

to Rahnerian “supernatural existential.” In Milbank’s theological epistemology the Church and society are not independent entities but correlated and integrated.

Milbank’s ecclesiology also benefits from the Pauline notion of the Church as “the body of Christ” in which “complex bodies” are united as one under Christ, expanding themselves like an organic entity.⁸¹ For the extension of the body of Christ, the “middle associations,” such as medieval guilds and monastic movements, play a crucial role as extended *ecclesia*. They become both a religious order within the Church, independent of the Church’s hierarchy, and a political entity indifferent to the State’s political subsystem. Milbank’s ecclesiology is deeply based on a Christocentric vision.⁸²

Finally, Milbank follows the “Augustinian two cities” in which two cities do not have their autonomous spaces of operation, but refer to their respective “direction of desire.”⁸³ While the Church has a desire for the infinite good, secondary societies are always oriented to a false goal. The Augustinian “two cities” stand against the dualism of the Church and secondary societies because separation from the Church is not a concern for the infinite good and simply results in a sinful status in which secondary societies forfeit their being. To treat the sinful deviance of secondary societies the Church can perform a corrective role with the limited use of coercion for educational purposes.⁸⁴ In Milbank’s integralism there never exists a secular sphere that justifies its own autonomy without the Church’s interference and guidance.

⁸¹ See Milbank, *The Word Made Strange*, 276; Barry Harvey, *Can These Bones Live?* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2008), 16; John Milbank, *Being Reconciled: Ontology and pardon* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 210.

⁸² Milbank, *The Word Made Strange*, 150-159.

⁸³ Milbank, *Theology & Social Theory*, 404.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 384-417.

Milbank's project to correlate the Church to secondary societies is based on the French version of integralism, the Pauline vision of the Church as the body of Christ, and the Augustinian two cities. Milbank's theological project (Radical Orthodoxy) can be used to enforce and strengthen Barth's Christocentric relationship between the Church and society. As with Barth's perspective of the relationship between the Church and society Milbank prioritizes the Church over society, relying on the Pauline vision of the Church and the Augustinian two cities. The relationship between the Church and society is asymmetrical because the Church is given predominant authority and value over society in God's created world.⁸⁵

Reconsidering the Korean Interpretations of Barth's Christocentric Vision

For over half a century Barth's *Church Dogmatics* has been mined by readers for helpful theological insights. The Korean Church and theologians have been enthusiastically interested in Barth's theology. His thought has been readily accepted in the Korean Church, regardless of denomination, theological legacy, and attitude of belief (conservative or progressive). However, there are huge differences when the Koreans interpret his theology.

Some Barthian theologians who belong to the Korean Evangelical Holiness Church (KEHC) intend to find a theological connection between Wesley's sanctification of the individual and Barth's pneumatology. As a representative of the KEHC, Sung Yong Jun produced a book, *Karl Barth eui Sungryungron jeok Sereron* (*Karl Barth's*

⁸⁵ In this sense R.R. Reno's and Steven Shakespeare's critiques of Milbank's ecclesiology as "Anglo-Catholicism" and as an "idealization of the Church" should lose their cogency [See R.R. Reno, *In the Ruins of the Church: Sustaining Faith in an Age of Diminished Christianity* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2002); Steven Shakespeare, "The New Romantics: A Critique of Radical Orthodoxy," *Theology* 103, no. 813 (2000): 163-177].

Pneumatological Baptism), in which he deals with pneumatology and sanctification as the most important topics in Barth's *Church Dogmatics*.⁸⁶ Jun sees a strong pietistic element in Barth's theology. Through his new interpretation of Barth, Jun tries to challenge a rumor in which Barth has an abhorrence for pietistic theology⁸⁷ that does not lead to social and political changes. Jun proposes that Barth did develop a dynamic pietism that is akin to John Wesley's "justification" and positive "sanctification." Jun's argument echoes Eberhard Busch and Donald Dayton's assertion of a pietistic penchant in Barth.⁸⁸

Busch and Dayton suggest a connection between the dynamic pietistic traditions and Barth's theology. If this dynamic pietistic understanding of Barth's theology is applied to his Christology, Barth's texts show his imitation of the theories of "two steps Christology" in the dynamic pietistic tradition: "inner rebirth" and "the new covenant life."⁸⁹ Barth also develops his Christology based on discipleship (following Jesus) and the transformation of followers as extended Christology.⁹⁰ This Christological structure, "Christology and beyond," is found in John Wesley's understanding of Christology as

⁸⁶ Sung Yong Jun, *Karl Barth eui sungryungron jeok sereron* [Karl Barth's pneumatological baptism] (Seoul: Handul, 1999). In this book, Jun believes that the doctrine of sanctification can play a role in connecting Barth's theology and Wesley's theology.

⁸⁷ See Karl Barth, *Protestant Theology in the Nineteenth Century*, trans. Brian Cozens and John Bowden (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2002), 643-647.

⁸⁸ See Eberhard Busch, *Karl Barth & the Pietists*, trans. Daniel W. Bloesch (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004); Donald W. Dayton, foreword to *Karl Barth & the Pietists*, by Eberhard Busch (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004), ix-xii.

⁸⁹ See Robert Friedmann, "Anabaptism and Protestantism," *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 24 (1950), 17-18.

⁹⁰ Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics* IV/2, trans. G.W. Bromiley (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2000), 533-598, & 783-840.

“justification” and positive “sanctification” which work out as Christian perfection in love.⁹¹

Barth’s Christological starting point shows a relation between the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as *opus ad extra* and “the inter-trinitarian life of God.” Despite no direct *vestigium trinitatis*,⁹² however, Barth presents “a material coincidence” within in the creaturely world “beyond the formal similarity” between the Trinitarian God and the history of humans.⁹³ This leads Barth to the Trinitarian grounding of anthropology (“high-pitched” anthropology⁹⁴), in humanity’s covenant partnership with God and their fellowship with God the Father through the act of worship, prayer, and thanksgiving. This logically moves Barth to dynamic pietism, namely, humans are also in covenantal relations with one another as part of the eschatological mission. Jun concludes that Barth’s sanctification, based on pneumatology, most closely resembles Christian perfection as found in the sanctification of John Wesley. Jun’s recognition of sanctification and pneumatology in Barth’s theology points out that in Barth’s thought, because of what Christ has done for sinful humanity, humans are called to discipleship, awakened to conversion, and have the freedom, even as sinners, to render obedience to God in dynamic acts of love.⁹⁵

⁹¹ Randy L. Maddox, *Responsible Grace* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1997), 141-143.

⁹² Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, IV/2, 338-339.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 341.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 82, 264-267, & 316-317.

⁹⁵ See Sung Young Jun, “Karl Barth eui sungwharon: sungkyul gyohoe waeui daewha ryul mosaek ham” [Sanctification of Karl Barth: an attempt to form a dialogue with the Korean Evangelical Holiness Church], The Sungkyul Theology Institute, <http://sgti.kehc.org/> (accessed January 31, 2011).

By contrast, Korean Indigenization Theology uses Barth's theological thoughts as a dialogical agenda for entering into theological dialogue between Christianity and the indigenous Korean religion and culture. Sung-Bum Yun, a Korean Barthian scholar, investigates the vestige of the Trinity in the Korean nation-founding myth, *Dankoon*. Yun asserts that he found a similar Trinitarian pattern to the Nestorians in early China in "the triad of *Hwanin-Hwanwoong-Hwangom*" of the *Dankoon* myth. Moreover, Yun boldly suggests that the triad formula of the *Dankoon* myth should be interpreted as a "*vestigium trinitatis*," according to Barth's wording.⁹⁶ Yun's theological work argues that Barth's Word of God theology was transformed into natural theology.

Yun made a comparison between the neo-Confucianism of *Sung* (sincerity) and the Word of God in Christianity. From Yun's understanding of Barth's theology, Barth prefers to define his theology as the theology of the Word of God, and ameliorates his theological arguments from a Trinitarian perspective. Yun attempts to correlate Barth's Trinitarian theology to neo-Confucian Yulgok's notion of *Sung* (sincerity).⁹⁷

Yun understands the nature of Yulgok's *Sung* as both the cosmic Principle (*li*) and the ontological ground, similar to the notion of "idea" in Platonic philosophy. The notion of *Sung* (sincerity) in Yulgok's thought could be considered as the ultimate Truth, as well as cosmological and soteriological ground. For Yulgok, *Sung* also becomes the anthropological ground in which human beings could find the way to redeem their

⁹⁶ Kwang-Shik Kim, *Tochakwha wa haesukhak* [Indigenization and hermeneutics], 297.

⁹⁷ Jung Sun Oh, *A Korean Theology of Human Nature*, 89.

original nature.⁹⁸ In this sense one can find the phenomena of *Sung* through Christ's mission and more broadly in the event of the Word of God.

The incarnation of God's Word (*Logos*) in Christianity is analogous to Yulgok's personalized *Sung* (Sincerity). Yun intends to connect Barth's Word of God theology with the notion of *Sung* in neo-confucianism. Similarly, Heup Young Kim correlates Wang Yang-min's notion of "self-cultivation" and Barth's sanctification because both thinkers suggest that radicalization of humanity can be realized through humans' rediscovery of their relationship with the transcendental. While both thinkers point out the problem of evil in the human paradigm, they concede "the root-paradigm" of the human being as having "innate knowledge of the good (*liang-chih*)" and *imago dei* (image of God).⁹⁹ Young-Gwan Kim concludes that Confucianism has played an important role in the pre-understanding and bridging of Barth's theology to Korean Christianity.¹⁰⁰ Through these Confucian-Christian dialogical theologians, Barth's Word of God theology has been modified to become a theology of culture in the Korean context.

As an alternative option, in Korean *Minjung* Theology, Barth's Christocentric vision of the Church is understood as promoting "harmonious cooperation" between the Church and society. In particular, the feminist *Minjung* theologian, Soon-Kyung Park has dedicated herself to the study of Karl Barth's theology, focusing on Barth's early religious socialism and Barth's participation in the Barmen declaration as well as the Confessing Church movement. Park tries to apply Barth's theological paradigm as

⁹⁸ Sung Bum Yun, *Hanguk jeok shinhak: sung eui haesukhak* [A Korean-style theology: hermeneutics of sincerity] (Seoul: Sunmyoung moonwhasa, 1972), 25.

⁹⁹ Heup Yong Kim, *Wang Yang-Ming and Karl Barth*, 10.

¹⁰⁰ Young-Gwan Kim, "The Confucian-Christian Context in Korean Christianity," *Asian Review* 13 (Spring 2002): 70-91.

struggle and critique against unjust political power within the Korean socio-political situation.¹⁰¹ In particular, Park's theological interest has been in the reunification between North and South Korea because she believes that without this reunification, permanent peace and democracy cannot be expected in the Korean peninsula. The military dictatorship has cunningly sustained this division of the Korean peninsula by dubbing its opponents as communists, or the supporters of the North Korean regime, and has easily imprisoned them in the name of "Anti-Communist Security Law." Park has encouraged the Church to cooperate with the just, non-governmental organizations for a better Korean society and for reunification. In Park's mind, the most ideal society is the reunified Korean nation. To accomplish this, Park has dedicated her life to participate in the reunification movement in the name of Barth's theology.

Although he actually belongs to the Fourfold Gospel Theology of the KEHC, Shin-Keun Lee also shows a typical understanding of *Minjung* Theology in Barth's ecclesiology.¹⁰² While Lee diminishes the impact of the Christocentric vision of the Church in Barth's ecclesiology, he maximizes Bonhoeffer's influence on Barth's formation of his ecclesiology.¹⁰³ Lee regards the purpose of the earthly Church, according to Barth, as serving others. Furthermore, the earthly Church has to make a contribution to transformation of the world through "political" worship services in the

¹⁰¹ Soon-Kyung Park, *Minjok tongil gwa kidokgyo* [National reunification and Christianity] (Seoul: Hangilsa, 1986). Also see Ae-Young Kim, *Ye-sung shinhak eui bipan jeok tamgu* [Critical investigation of feminist theology] (Seoul: Hanshin University Press, 2010), 231-266.

¹⁰² Shin-Keun Lee, *Karl Barth eui gyohoeron* [Ecclesiology of Karl Barth] (Seoul: Handul, 2000). Also see Ae-Young Kim, *Karl Barth eui jungchi, sahoe jeok haesuk* [The socio-political interpretation of the theology of Karl Barth] (Seoul: The Christian Literature Society of Korea, 1991).

¹⁰³ Shin-Keun Lee, *Karl Barth eui gyohoeron* [Ecclesiology of Karl Barth], 216-219, & 272.

concrete and historical context. Lee perceives the Church, as envisioned by Barth, in its political relationship with the world.

To prove his thesis, Lee proposes a modification of Barth's theology,¹⁰⁴ relying on Hans Urs von Balthasar's "two conversions" theory; Barth's conversion from liberalism, via dialectic, to analogy shows Catholic thought (Thomas Aquinas) as a background for Barth's theology.¹⁰⁵ Lee's understanding of Barth's ecclesiology is based on the analogical methodology of the late Barth. Similar to Jürgen Moltmann and Will Herberg's understanding, Lee interprets the relationship between the Church and society in Barth as reciprocal correspondence.¹⁰⁶

But Lee fails to recognize the Christocentric vision of the Church and the Church's relationship with the world as an "asymmetrical" one. Lee seems to support the correspondence theory, interpreted by Moltmann and Herberg. Based on this correspondence theory, Lee argues that when the Church stands for others and serves the world, the Church becomes the *Church*. In Lee's interpretation, Bonhoeffer's "cohabitation" between the Church and society is presupposed and thus the Church and society have to harmoniously cooperate to construct a better society in which the Church functions as one of the secondary societies.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 261-275.

¹⁰⁵ Hans Urs von Balthasar, *The Theology of Karl Barth*, trans. Edward T. Oakes, S.J. (San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 1992), 84-85.

¹⁰⁶ However, Bruce McCormack's rediscovery of Barth's constant dependence on the "dialectic" methodology corrects these studies to divorce Barth's theology from Reformed heritage. According to McCormack, Barth has never abandoned his dialectic penchant in his whole theological journey. Within all of these studies of Barth, however, Barth's theology can be described as a focus on the objective side of Christology, the unsubstitutable divine identity of Christ, the strength of Christocentrism, and the Nicean-Chalcedonian understanding of Jesus Christ.

In conclusion, in Korean Christianity Barth's theology has been interpreted through the various lens of Korean theologies. Sung Yong Jun of the "Fourfold Gospel Theology" proposes, with a "non-political" reading, that individual sanctification and pneumatology play a significant role in Barth's theology. Meanwhile, Sung-Bum Yun of the "Indigenization Theology" attempts to investigate a vis-à-vis correlation between Barth's theology and Confucianism. By contrast, Shin-Keun Lee and Soon-Kyung Park of "*Minjung* (people) Theology," through studying the Confessing Church, conclude that the Church's task is either to cooperate with society or to protest against unjust power for the purpose of building a better society. In these Korean theologies Barth's emphasis on the Christocentric perspective is completely disregarded. Hence, the Church's tasks are concentrated on anthropological orientation, such as individual holiness, solidarity with the people, and the restoration of national-cultural identity. Moreover, the Church is viewed either as a neutral sphere indifferent to society, or as a secondary subsystem for constructing a utopian society. However, all these Korean interpretations of Barth's theology lack the Christocentric vision of the Church. These shortcomings of Korean ecclesiology can be corrected through an understanding of Barth's perspective of the Church's responsibility to society.

Barth reveals his theory of the Church and society through a Christocentric perspective: Christ the Lord is at the center, the Church is in the inner circle next to Christ, and society is in a more distant outer circle. Because there is a Christological relationship between the Church and society, society is not an independent entity nor is the Church a neutral sphere independent of politics. Barth prioritizes the Church over society, and thus the Church has a duty toward society as a model of peaceful behavior

and as a non-violent judge of violent reality. Barth's Christocentric relationship between the Church and society can work as a proper model for Korean ecclesiology and serve as a corrective rationale for misinterpretations of Barth's theology.

CHAPTER SIX

A Positive Concluding Proposal

Summary

In the Korean context a theological consideration of the proper relationship between the Church and secondary societies is urgently needed because the recent controversy in Korean Christianity is deeply rooted in this theological issue.¹ The Church's participation in socio-political issues has gradually increased and the Christian political party has organized within Korean political history. Presently conservative Christianity and progressive Christianity in Korea are in conflict with one another. It is a very important theological project to research the current discourse of the relationship between the Church and society in Korea, and to think over the best option for the Korean model. I suggested categorizing the current view of the relationship between the Church and society in Korea in three models: the radical distinction model of the Fourfold Gospel Theology, the essential identity model of Korean Indigenization Theology, and the harmonious cooperation model of Korean *Minjung* Theology. There are theological weaknesses in these three models. To remedy this I proposed in this dissertation to research the proper relationship between the Church and society in the current Korean context from the perspective of Barth's Christocentric vision of the Church.

¹ In particular, the conservative churches and the progressive churches in modern Korean society are in conflict with each other over the issues of political election, the reunification movement, and the Korean-American relationship.

The Fourfold Gospel Theology of the Korean Evangelical Holiness Church (KEHC) had developed its ecclesiology from the apocalyptic and eschatological vision of the Church in 1907. In this ecclesiological vision the existing world is totally denied, but the coming Kingdom of God is enthusiastically expected for the hope and the renewal of the whole world. Consequently, Fourfold Gospel Theology presents a sharp difference between the Church and secondary societies. The most interesting aspect of this view is its relationship to Japanese colonialism. The Korean peninsula under Japanese imperialism was filled with eschatological enthusiasm irrespective of its religious beliefs. Non-Christian religions *Chong Kan Lok*, *Tonghak*, and *Minjung* Buddhism proclaimed the end of the time and the coming of a new period, governed by great humans.² In Korean Christianity, Sun-Ju Kil's revival movement was strongly based on eschatology and the hope of redeeming the Garden of Eden on this earth.³

All these eschatological religious movements justified their use of the "sword" against Japanese colonialism and encouraged their believers to take part in positive and violent resistance against Japanese imperialism. In these eschatological movements Korean nationalism played an important role in upholding their beliefs. In contrast, the eschatological apocalypticism of the Fourfold Gospel Theology encouraged its believers to practice non-violence pacifism against all the worldly powers, including Japanese imperialism. Many leaders and lay persons who followed the teaching of the Fourfold Gospel Theology were persecuted and imprisoned by the Japanese colonial power, mainly because they openly emphasized the doctrine of Christ's Second Coming as their

² Kyoung-Jae Kim, *Christianity and the encounter of Asian religions*, 100-102.

³ In-Soo Kim, *Protestants and the Formation of Modern Korean Nationalism, 1885-1920: A Study of the Contributions of Horace G. Underwood and Sun Chu Kil*, 109-175.

important evangelizing motto.⁴ The KEHC was the first denomination ordered to be dispersed under Japanese colonialism. Paradoxically, while the Fourfold Gospel Theology of the KEHC was an apolitical theology and supported the radical distinction between the Church and society, this theology was considered as the most dangerous political theology by Japanese imperialism.

In the 1970s, however, the Fourfold Gospel Theology of the KEHC had changed its theological emphasis from the doctrine of Christ's Second Coming to Wesleyan sanctification. This theology concentrated on the inner purity of the believers and disregarded the existence of secondary societies.⁵ The emphasis on individual sanctification radically internalized the nature of the Fourfold Gospel Theology. Because the modern Fourfold Gospel theologians recognize the extreme difference between the Church and society, they strive to redeem the nonviolent pacifistic eschatological perspective of the relationship between the Church and society.⁶ Theoretically, the Fourfold Gospel Theology presented the radical difference between the Church and society; practically, it emphasized the doctrine of eschatology which was an important political theology in the Japanese colonial period. However, since its doctrinal modification towards individual sanctification from the 1970s, it has gradually lost its paradoxical and indirect political impact on society, and has overemphasized a radical difference between the Church and society.

⁴ In Soo Kim, *Iljae eui hanguk gyohoe bakhaesa* [The history of imperial Japan's persecution of the Korean Church], 135-137.

⁵ Chongnahm Cho, *John Wesley eui shinhak* [The theology of John Wesley], 132-161.

⁶ Chongnahm Cho, *Sajung bokeum eui hyundae jeok eui eui* [A modern significance of the Fourfold Gospel Theology], 38-42.

In contrast with the radical difference between the Church and society in the Fourfold Gospel Theology, Korean Indigenization Theology posits the essential identity between the Church and secondary societies. In its early stage, Uchimura Canzo's "non-Church movement" had broadly influenced the formation of Korean Indigenization Theology. In particular, through his theological journal, *Sungsuh Choson (Bible Choson)*, Gyo-shin Kim introduced the non-Church movement to the early Korean Church and applied this theological thought to Korean Christianity. The non-Church movement encouraged every Christian to form a dialogue between Christian thought and Korean indigenous religion and culture. Korean Indigenization Theology was strongly backed by Paul Tillich's method of correlation and his theological perspective that the Christian Church cannot monopolize Christian truth because the *logos* of God has been already scattered within non-Christian religion and culture.⁷

In particular, Korean Indigenization Theology's ecclesiology was strongly rooted in Tillich's assertion that "Spiritual Presence" is the affirmative phenomenon of the true Church. Korean Indigenization Theology paid attention to the phenomenology of Spiritual Presence outside the Christian Church. Moreover, Korean Indigenization theologians boldly held that there was God's redemptive economy outside the Church. It also leaned on the Raherian theological epistemology, the "supernatural existential." However, this theological thought intended to naturalize the supernatural because the "supernatural existential" presupposed that the grace of God had already been placed within all the spheres of human existence.

As an alternative option, *Minjung* Theology proposed a harmonious model of the relationship between the Church and society. *Minjung* Theology accepted the notion of

⁷ Kyoung-Jae Kim, *Christianity and the encounter of Asian religions*, 53-55.

Bonhoeffer's "dialectical cohabitation" that the Church and society have different tasks and roles within their own autonomy, and thus two different entities have to coexist peacefully and harmoniously. In the logic of *Minjung* Theology, however, while the role of the Church had been diminished in the process of salvific economy, the significance of society was magnified. *Minjung* Theology proposed that salvation is a social process of liberation from poverty and exploitation, and thus the Church played a major role in freeing the enslaved. The secular was autonomous, Marxist social analysis was welcome, original violence was presupposed, and armed conflict might be expected.⁸

However, Korean *Minjung* theology is naïvely based on Marxist socio-political theory and prioritizes the current situation over the Scripture. As a result its ecclesiological system strongly leans on the Marxist class struggle. By the lens of Marxist social analysis, the Korean *Minjung* Church presupposes a pre-theological praxis as its ecclesiological foundation: solidarity with *Minjung* and the marginalized. In addition, *Minjung* Theology pays attention to an indigenized liberation tradition in the Korean history and culture, which was baptized in the notions of violence, chaos, and conflict. By this logic, the Christian community is based on the active praxis of the *Minjung* and the poor toward liberation through cooperation with just societies in order to build a utopian society.

In the midst of this unsettled situation, Barth's Christocentric vision of the Church can play a corrective role and also suggest an alternative option. Barth unfolds his theory

⁸ Worthy of mentioning is the *Minjung* theological methodology of Won-Don Kang. Won-Don Kang, as a second generation theologian of Korean *Minjung* Theology, strove to interpret the Korean people's struggle for justice, peace, and preservation of the created world from the perspective of the Marxist analysis of reality. After studying the relationship between the Korean *minjung*'s practice for liberation and the material reality, Won-Don Kang presented his own theology, a "materialistic theology." See Won-don Kang, *Mul eui shinhak* [The theology of materialism] (Seoul: Hanwool, 1992), 178-214.

of the Church and society under a Christocentric vision: Christ the Lord is at the center, the Church is in the inner circle next to Christ, and society is in a more distant outer circle. The Church has a duty toward society as a model of peaceful behavior, and also as a critic of societies against inhuman societies, violent states, and demonic empires. However, the Church cannot be reduced to its social function.

Many interpretations of Barth's thought have appeared. Marquardt presents the Church's "anarchistic" relationship toward society, presupposing a permanent conflict. By contrast, Moltmann proposes a "parable" ("correspondence") theory, in which the Church and the society have a reciprocally correspondent relationship without an absolute contradiction. As a middle position, Yoder and McCormack interprets Barth's position as "practical pacifism," in which Christians are within the existing state without belonging to it and should respond to the state's requirements. However, Bender suggests that the relationship between the Church and society in Barth's thought is "asymmetrical" because the Church "ontologically and epistemologically" has a priority over society within the created world of God. Barth's understanding of the proper relationship between the Church and society is needed for Korean Christianity to confront and respond to several major issues.⁹ If Barth's theological ethics allowed him to make judgments on "everything under the sun," how relevant would he be to three major crises now playing out in the Korean churches: economics, politics and the environment?

⁹ This threefold examination of modern Korean issues originally came from Dr. Bob Patterson. I also depend on Clifford Green's threefold analysis of Barth's theology. Moreover, I would like to form a dialogue between Green's Barth and modern Korean issues.

The Christocentric Vision of the Church and the Economical Issue in Korea

Even though the time of colonialism had passed, the time of “neo-colonialism” and “neo-liberalism” appeared on the Asian continent. Lawrence Ziring explains the reality of neo-colonialism and neo-liberalism as follows:

Term used by Third World nations to signify that Western imperialism / colonialism has not receded. Neocolonialism points to the penetration of the Third World nations by international capital. It centers on dependency relations between the developed and developing states, and it asserts that the Third World countries are controlled by the industrial states who dominated their economies. The principal neocolonial state is supposed to be the United States because its multinational corporations, as well as its grants and aid, influence policy, programs, and even the selection of governmental leaders in the Third World nations. Japan is judged another important neocolonial state. According to some observers, its aggressive trading practices have succeeded where its armed forces failed in promoting Japan’s Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere.¹⁰

Neocolonialism is related to the Third World’s economic subjugation to international capital, which is hovering over developing countries and seeks to trap these countries in the economic crisis in order to economically manipulate them. Lawrence Ziring suspects that the United States and Japan have a dream of recolonizing the Asian continent with its economic power.

The Korean *Minjung* theologians tend to believe that the United States spreads the ideology of neo-liberalism. From the Korean *Minjung* theologians’ perspective, the United States is “the dominant Western political power, with its pervasive network of information industries, wire services, satellite communications and so on [; furthermore, it] interlocks with the Asian national communications media and subverts these on political, economic and cultural levels, producing a powerful impact upon the people of

¹⁰ Lawrence Ziring & C.I. Eugene Kim, *The Asian Political Dictionary* (Santa Babara, CA: ABC-Clio, Inc., 1985), 315.

Asia.”¹¹ In 1997, South Korea experienced a financial crisis. As a result, the national economic ownership came under IMF (the International Monetary Fund).¹² Korean economists believed that this financial crisis resulted from unethical international capitalism, influenced by neo-liberalism. The Korean government declared an economic moratorium and asked IMF to lend money. However, the problem is that:

Many Third World economies are also centrally planned and controlled according to the dictates of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD). ...

The giant global corporations are also highly centralized as planning techno-structures. They neither recognize the *oikonomia* [the steward of one's own economic household] as the common household nor allow the participation of the people. The people are relegated to the position of objects in the big and highly planned projects and are instructed by communication to follow and obey the rules of the dominant economic powers: states or corporate entities.¹³

From the perspective of Korean *Minjung* Theology, the IMF's programs of reformation for the Korean national economy subordinates the Korean economy to the global market without any protection. This means the Korean economy becomes just a sub-division of the international market place.

In this period of the national economic crisis, the Fourfold Gospel Theology and Korean Indigenization Theology have not presented a comprehensive theological diagnoses. They did not propose a Christian socio-economic reaction to this nationalized economic crisis. By contrast, Korean *Minjung* Theology positively analyzed the accumulated contradiction and weakness of the Korean economy from the perspective of

¹¹ Yong-Bock Kim, "Jesus Christ among Asian Minjung," Advanced Institute for the Study of Life, <http://www.oikozoe.or.kr/eindex.htm> (accessed January 31, 2011).

¹² See Tran Van Hoa, "The Asian Financial Crisis: An Overview," in *The Causes and Impact of the Asian Financial Crisis*, eds. Tran Van Hoa & Charles Harvie (New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc., 2000), 1-25.

¹³ Yong-Bock Kim, *Messiah and Minjung: Christ's Solidarity with the People for New Life* (Kowloon, Hong Kong: Christian Conference of Asia-Urban Rural Mission, 1992), 126.

Minjung Theology, and moreover suggested the task of the Church and the Korean *minjung* in the midst of the national economic crisis.

From the perspective of *Minjung* Theology, Won-don Kang analyzed the process of national economic bankruptcy in the Asian continent, including South Korea, from the perspective of the international neo-liberal capital's conspiracy. Kang writes:

The international apparatus which are in charge of trade and military, political, economical and financial affairs, work more effectively since the beginning of the 1990s than in any other times. In the previous times, of course, political compromises among the superpowers have shown unexpected abilities in the international economic order which was led by the USA. A good example was the Plaza Consensus 1985 which coerced Japan to lower the foreign exchange rate. Japan's property was plundered with this newly made arrangement to the extent of almost 80 billion dollars. In the 1990s such plundering has been carried out more bluntly. In the outbreak of the 1990s the bank system of Japan began to collapse after the BIS changed the reserve rate. In 1995, the year in which the WTO came into the world, the resulting trade norms gave a crushing blow to laborers and peasants both in the developed and in the developing countries. It is widely spread that the IMF compels countries which are experiencing a crisis of foreign liquidity to accept neo-liberal reform programs for the global network economy.¹⁴

Kang argued that the unrevealed international power struggles played a crucial role in breaking down the Asian economy, including the Japanese economy. While Lawrence Ziring designates the United States and Japan as the leading countries which intend to rule over the Asian continent economically possessed by the spirit of neocolonialism, Kang views the United States as having the real power to manipulate the international apparatus for spreading neo-liberalism.¹⁵

¹⁴ Won-don Kang, "'Empire' and Minjung: There is no Place for Empire!," Kang Won-Don's Social Ethics Archive, <http://socialethics.org/wwwb/CrazyWWWBoard.cgi?db=article&mode=read&num=203&page=3&ftype=6&fval=&backdepth=1> (assessed February 2, 2011).

¹⁵ See Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000).

Before experiencing the national economic crisis the focus of Korean theologies was on the socio-political struggle and religio-cultural phenomenon. After recognizing the breaking down of the national economy Korean theologians have started to extend their theological borderline outside the Korean peninsula. In particular, Korean *Minjung* Theology has ardently criticized neo-liberalism and the international capital conspiracy because while Korean society was extremely troubled with a huge financial predicament, many international companies benefited from the economic crisis in Korea.

Minjung Theology considers neo-liberalism and globalized international capitalism as a new enemy of the Korean *minjung*. In order to defend these new enemies, however, *Minjung* Theology proposes an anachronistic movement to return “the state-centeredness” and to reconstruct a nation-state. Kang argues:

It is inevitable to build up a national state which is really controlled by the Minjung and to coerce delegates of the state to represent the interests of the Minjung in the vital instances of various international organizations. I don't think that such strategies are nationalistic and state-centered. It is rather absolutely absurd to deny the substance of national states, of which the international apparatus consists.¹⁶

In this passage Kang proposed a restoration of the nation-centeredness in the state's system to block the international networking of capitalism. And *minjung* should play a supervising role for operating within the nation-state system.

More practically, Kang proposed a new paradigm of *Minjung* Theology as constructing “a network of movements,” including the Christian and non-Christian social movements. In this networking movement, while various socio-political movements are expected to execute their own tasks within their own place, they also attempt to build a

¹⁶ Won-don Kang, “‘Empire’ and Minjung: There is no Place for Empire!”

web of movement through cooperation with one another.¹⁷ Through solidarity with all forms of socio-political movements, this new paradigm of *Minjung* Theology intends to have Korean *minjung* recognize themselves as the subjects in the midst of neo-liberal globalization.

Kang's suggestion to the Church in the era of the international networking within capitalism can be considered as a direct contradiction to Barth's Christocentric vision of the Church. Kang proposed a cooperation between the *Minjung* Church and secondary societies, and a positive network system of all liberation movements. However, this proposal leads the Church to function as a sub-system for building an economically independent society free from neo-liberalism and internationally networked capitalism. Furthermore, in order to protect Asian *Minjung* from international capitalism, Kang's argument for restoring the nation-centered state can be also judged as a dangerous theology from the Christocentric perspective. As shown in the Nazi regime in Germany, the emphasis on nationalism can create an idolatrous government and chauvinistic hatred toward other races and nations. Resorting to nationalism presents a fundamental problem for the Church.

Barth supports the concept of God in the Old Testament, in which God always shows His favor to the poor, the widows, the orphans, and the oppressed. God's righteousness is always connected with His mercy. Later Barth "extended this line of thought in a fundamental critique of modern capitalism."¹⁸ From the Christocentric

¹⁷ Ibid. Also see Won-Don Kang, "Jaeguk gwa minjung" [Empire and minjung], in *Jaeguk eui shin* [God of the empire], ed. The Theological Institute of Sungkonghoe University (Seoul: Dongyeon, 2008), 124-140.

¹⁸ George Hunsinger, introduction to *For the Sake of the Word: Karl Barth and the Future of Ecclesial Theology*, ed. George Hunsinger (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2004), 8.

vision of the Church in Barth, therefore, the Church “must concentrate first on the lower and lowest levels of human society. The poor, the socially and economically weak and threatened, will always be the object of its primary and particular concern, and it will always insist on the state’s special responsibility for these weaker members of society.”¹⁹ Hence, socialism in Barth is always used to uphold social and economic justice.²⁰

According to Barth’s logic in his essay “The Christian Community and the Civil Community,” the Church should take on the role of supervising political systems as well as be an example for the state. In this sense, the Church “is not only a community of the Word and the Spirit, but also an economic and political community.”²¹ Based on Barth’s perspective, Christians should “focus on the economic life of the church as political witness.”²² However, the economic politics of Barth has to be interpreted from the perspective of discipleship as a Christian practice of love. Barth writes:

As an act, however, what the New Testament calls love takes place between Christians. The one exception which confirms this rule is 1 Thess. 3¹²: “The Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men” (εἰς πάντας). This is a salutary reminder of the readiness of Christians for all men; of the fact that the existence of the community (as formerly that of Israel) is not an end in itself; and that the *saem* is true of the mutual love of its members. As the community exists for the sake of the world loved by God, so the mutual love practiced within it is practiced for all, for the world, in a provisional and representative manifestation of the action for which all are determined.²³

¹⁹ Clifford Green, ed., *Karl Barth: Theologian of Freedom* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), 284.

²⁰ In order to review Barth’s criticism on capitalism, see Barth, “Jesus Christ and the Movement for Social Justice (1911),” 29-30.

²¹ Clifford Green, “Freedom for Humanity: Karl Barth and the Politics of the New World Order,” in *For the Sake of the Word: Karl Barth and the Future of Ecclesial Theology*, ed. George Hunsinger (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2004), 105.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ Barth, *Church Dogmatics* IV/2, 805.

Christians' understanding of economic justice in Barth is based on the notion of mutual love in the Scripture. Mutual love within the Christian community is a paradigmatic and has to be extended toward those outside the community: for others, for strangers, and for enemies.

However, Fourfold Gospel Theology and Korean Indigenization Theology have failed to recognize the nature of the economic crisis in Korea, and thus their response to this crisis is very superficial. Their churches have focused on supporting the homeless, the unemployed, and the bankrupt family without any consideration of the international cause of the economic crisis in Korea. By contrast, Korean *Minjung* Theology seeks to illumine the fundamental mechanism intended to destroy a developing country's economy, and designates neo-liberalism and internationally networked capitalism as its enemies. From the perspective of Barth's Christocentrism, however, *Minjung* theologians propose an unreasonable solution. They argue for the restoration of a nation-centered state, in which *minjung* plays a leading role in supervising the policy of the state and confronting the neo-liberal economic movement through cooperation with all grassroots social movements. This project of the *Minjung* Theology can lead the Church to function as one of the secondary societies needed for building a comprehensive utopian society.

The Christocentric vision of the Church in Barth also prioritizes the poor, the lower, and the marginalized of the economic crisis in Korea. Barth's socialism includes economic and political justice. However, in order to establish Christian socialism, Barth's methodology as the Christocentric vision of the Church and society seeks to be

based on evangelical projects as reflected by Jesus's earthly life, not the ideological practices proposed by Korean *Minjung* Theology.

The Christocentric Vision of the Church and the Political Issue in Korea

The most important socio-political mission of the Korean Church is that the Church should play a crucial role in the reunification and reconciliation of South Korea and North Korea.²⁴ The Korean peninsula has been divided into two parts by the Western powers since Korea's independence from Japanese colonialism in 1945. Because this tragic division of the Korean peninsula happened without any notice to the Korean people, the Korean people did not have any methods to oppose the policy of division.²⁵ After experiencing the national tragedy of the Korean War the conflict and hatred between North and South Korea increased.

Outside the Church many extreme conservatives in South Korea urged the South Korean government to invade North Korea or to push for the collapse of North Korea's government. This opinion held that even all humanitarian supports to North Korea should be stopped because all this aid postponed the natural collapse of the North Korean government. By contrast, the progressives intended to enthusiastically deal with reunification issues based on emotional nationalism and on an optimistic ideology without political and social considerations.²⁶

²⁴ David Kwang-sun Suh, "Theology of Reunification," in *Frontiers in Asian Christian Theology: Emerging Trends*, ed. R.S. Sugirtharajah (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1994), 202-205.

²⁵ Cumings, *Korea's Place in the Sun*, 186-192.

²⁶ See Anselm Kyoungsook Min, "The Division and Reunification of a Nation: Theological Reflections on the Destiny of the Korean People," in *Christianity in Korea*, eds. Robert E. Buswell Jr. & Timothy S. Lee (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2006), 268-270.

The Korean Church, baptized by conservative and revival evangelism, was not actively involved in the peaceful discourse of reunification between North and South Korea. The Korean conservative churches followed the government's guideline on how to deal with North Korea, leaning on the logic of military and economic power. This military and economic contention between South and North Korea was supposed to bring the radical collapse of the Korean peninsula through military collision.

The Korean nation desperately needs to have an alternative option for the reunification movement because the worldwide political situation and the economic condition of North Korea has rapidly changed. The political map of the world had also changed because Soviet communism suddenly collapsed and many communist states discarded their communist ideology in the 1990s.²⁷ North Korea experienced an irreversible economic crisis. The South Korean churches had already realized the economic and political predicament of the North Korean people under the dictatorship of Kim Jung-il. After having recognized the econo-political instability in North Korea, the South Korean churches have positively been interested in their role for helping the North Korean people and for reunifying the divided Korea. According to Mahn-yol Yi's analysis,

The Protestant reunification movement at the time was being carried out through a variety of channels: the first channel was that of the Peaceful Reunification and Jubilee Movement, centered on the KNCC; the second, that of the Coalition of Christian Social Movement, a group of whose chief agenda included promoting peace and armament reduction in the peninsula; the third, that of pan-Korean conferences, participated in by North and South as well as overseas Koreans, in which Protestants also participated; the fourth, the women's movement; and, finally, that of Evangelical, conservative Protestants who, in the 1990s, emerged

²⁷ David Kwang-Sun Suh, "*Minjung* Theology: The Politics and Spirituality of Korean Christianity," 156.

as a new force in the movement.²⁸

The Korean churches developed their reunification movement under a diverse and polyphonic channel from the progressive group to the conservative circle. As a positive sign, the conservative churches participated in helping the North Korean people.

These movements to support the North Korean people resonated with *Minjung* theology's general agenda and policy for reunification. The theological policy was as follows:

... first, accelerating democratization at all levels of our political life; second, establishment of peace on the peninsula and peaceful coexistence between North and South; third, humanitarian consideration of the need of separated families for free travel and communication across the line of the division; and, fourth, Minjung participation in the process of building a reunification policy. It has been the collective effort of the Minjung theologians to make the reunification movement a Minjung movement, thus maximinzing the Minjung's democratic participation in the process of reunifying the nation.²⁹

Minjung Theology's intention in the above passage was to attempt to reunify South and North Korea which did not depend only on the government's endeavor. But the process of reunification requires all Korean people to participate in and to make sacrifices.

This theological policy also intended to pay attention to the task of reunification as the nation's most important mission, and to make sure that its discussion was open to all people. Since the 1990s, evangelical denominations in South Korea have responded to the progressive protestant's request for all churches' participation in the reunification movement. Mahn-yol Yi writes:

At about the time the Evangelicals began to explore ways to participate in the reunification movement, the progressive Protestants, who had been unrivaled in

²⁸ Mahn-yol Yi, "Korean Protestants and the Reunification Movement," in *Christianity in Korea*, eds. Robert E. Buswell Jr. and Timothy S. Lee (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i, 2006), 249.

²⁹ David Kwang-Sun Suh, "*Minjung* Theology: The Politics and Spirituality of Korean Christianity," 156.

their leadership in various social movements in South Korea, had become burned out with regard to them and were in the doldrums. Consequently, when the Evangelicals brought their fresh passion and deep coffers into social ministry, the ministry was reinvigorated. The progressives needed the Evangelical's energy and material resources, and the Evangelicals needed the progressive's expertise; consequently, they cooperated.³⁰

This cooperation led both the progressive and the evangelical churches to organize the "Protestant Food Aid to North Korea." When the North Korean people experienced the notorious famine and food shortage in the early 1990s, the Korean churches, among many non-governmental organizations in South Korea, started to help the North Koreans. Because of the strict legal restrictions at that time, however, the South Korean Church took the approach of helping North Korea through a third country.

From the middle of the 1990s, through providing food to the North Korean people,³¹ solidarity and cooperation between the conservative and progressive churches in South Korea has increased.³² Accordingly, the Korean nation's hope has gradually been concentrated on the role of the Church for peaceful reunification. The Korean Church has shown its power to arbitrate the extreme conservative argument for reunification through collapsing the North Korean government³³ and the extreme progressive argument for the reunification through an unconditional solidarity with the North Korean people.

For the reunification projects between South and North Korea, therefore, the Korean Church should not lose its initiative to deal with this issue. To do this the Korean

³⁰ Mahn-yol Yi, "Korean Protestants and the Reunification Movement," 249-250.

³¹ Marcus Noland, *Avoiding the Apocalypse: the Future of the Two Koreas* (Washington, DC: Institute for International Economics, 2000), 171-194.

³² Mahn-yol Yi, "Korean Protestants and the Reunification Movement," 252-253.

³³ Noland, *Avoiding the Apocalypse: the Future of the Two Koreas*, 285-322.

churches have to distance themselves from both extremes, and the churches have to forge their own ecclesial alternative for the reunification of the Korean peninsula.

The Fourfold Gospel Theology and Korean Indigenization Theology have shown an apolitical position which did not transgress the guideline of the Korean government. Both theological groups have focused mainly on the evangelistic and humanitarian projects, such as supplying food to the North Korean people, taking care of North Korean refugees, or constructing a church and hospital in North Korea under the South Korean government's supervision.

From the critiques of Barth's Christocentric vision of the relationship between the Church and society, Fourfold Gospel Theology and Korean Indigenization Theology accepted the existing political limitation and played a role as a sub-system of the South Korean government for reunifying North and South Korea. However, this position can be interpreted as the Church's subjugation to the political government through the exclusion of the political approach toward reunification.

By contrast, Korean *Minjung* Theology actively participated in the discussion of the reunification issue. Through discussing reunification this theology critiqued the national policy of reunification suggested by the political military government. *Minjung* theologians are in conflict with the South Korean government about the policy of reunification because they prioritized reunification over national security, and thus they easily violated national security laws for the reunification movement. The *Minjung* theologians were ready to contact the North Korean people without the South Korean government's permission. They believed that redeeming the peaceful relationship

between South and North Korea was the most important commandment from God in the Korean context.

Minjung Theology's perspective of reunification is based on the principle of pacifism. From the Christocentric vision of the Church Barth portrays the Church's mission as the practice of peace. However, there is a huge difference between understanding the notion of peace within Korean *Minjung* Theology and Barth's Christocentrism. In Barth's Christocentric vision the practice of peace "leads to what he calls his 'practical pacifism' – not pacifism as an abstract principle, not an absolute pacifism that ruled out the use of force in certain circumstances, but a definite imperative to peace."³⁴ By contrast the Korean *Minjung* Theology approached the reunification issue from absolute pacifism. Hence, *Minjung* theologians believed that the existing national security law, controlling all activities that were beneficial for North Korea, could be disregarded in the pursuit of peace on the Korean peninsula.

From Barth's Christocentric vision of the Church, the Korean Church should overcome the apolitical attitude of the reunification movement, and actively participate in the political discussion of the proper policy and action for reunification based on pacifism. However, the Church's practice of peace is not leaning on absolute pacifism but on Christocentric pacifism, which Jesus exemplified to his followers in the synoptic gospels.

³⁴ Green, "Freedom of Humanity: Karl Barth and the Politics of the New World Order," 99. In my opinion, John H. Yoder rightly understands pacifism in Barth's theology not as absolute but as practical. It seems to me, however, that Yoder fails to recognize that Barth's pacifism includes not only the peaceful coexistence of the Church within the state but also the asymmetrical position between the Church and society in the created world of God. In particular, Jonathan Tran understands Yoder's pacifism as "christological pacifism: the final victory of the Lamb as the ground of the church's hope" [Tran, "Laughing with the World," 266].

The Christocentric Vision of the Church and the Environmental Issue in Korea

In the Asian context there are two extreme attitudes toward the natural world: exploiting nature and worshiping nature. Communism in China, econo-centrism in Japan, and nuclear militarism in the Korean peninsula belong to the attitude of exploiting nature. The traditional Asian thoughts of Taoism, Zen Buddhism, and *Feng Shui* teach a different approach to nature: worshiping it. These two extreme attitudes toward nature coexist in contemporary Korea.

Historically the Asian people had struck a balance between exploiting and worshiping the land. Specifically, the “land-use system” of the Asians had played an important role in preserving “the forest-soil relationship” and continuing “to control soil fertility and soil erosion.”³⁵ But the situation in Asia changed during the nineteenth century because of the “population increasing rapidly and the development of modern agricultural systems – usually monocultures – industrial processing and the growth of great cities.”³⁶ The traditional ecological perspective became regarded as an old-fashioned cultural heritage. An urgent demand for economic growth substituted for traditional Asian ecology. The economic factor prevailing in the developing countries in East Asia has ignored the environmental factor, and this now applies to Korea. Political leaders have put the priority on the virtue of economic growth. The land in South Korea has been exploited, devastated, and ruined in the name of economic progress. In addition to the ideology of economic growth, the Korean peninsula has another serious environmental issue: the exploiting of nuclear weapons in North Korea and the threat of

³⁵ Philip Stott, “Asian and Pacific Ecology,” *Asia and the Pacific*, vol. 2, ed. Robert H. Taylor (New York: Facts On File, Inc., 1991), 1575.

³⁶ Ibid.

war.³⁷ One nuclear explosion over Seoul would turn the city to ashes and destroy the country. Nuclear weapons are related to the military problem, but these weapons will bring the environmental predicament to the Korean peninsula by destroying nature.

Japan is not free from the environmental crisis either. The industrialization of Japan was influenced by the utilitarianism of the West. This influence, therefore, has “remained in considerable tension with traditional views of nature. During the last decade, rapid economic growth and population concentration in very limited land areas produced some of the worst air and water pollution in the world.”³⁸ In China Mao Tse-tung’s communism declared “a war against nature” for the sake of human survival. Mao’s regime derailed the traditional Confucianism and its idealization of nature. This means that the “revolutionary government has seen nature mainly as a resource to be exploited for the good of society. But this does represent a major shift from the characteristic cultural attitudes of the Chinese past.”³⁹

In contrast with the exploiting approach toward nature, the Asian people also showed their attitude toward nature through worship by following Taoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism. The greatest common denominator of these religious and philosophical systems is worshiping nature, or being identified with nature. According to Taoism, the world is “an organic and interdependent system.” Accordingly,

Nothing exists in isolation; the parts of the whole are interpenetrating and interfused. Every particular being is manifestation of the Tao, the nameless unity that exists before differentiation into multiplicity. The human is part of a wider

³⁷ See Noland, *Avoiding the Apocalypse: the Future of the Two Koreas*, 143-170.

³⁸ Ian G. Barbour, *Technology, Environment, and Human Values* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1980), 20.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 19-20.

cosmic order. To achieve a harmonious relationship to the natural world, we must respect it and adjust to its demands.⁴⁰

In traditional Asian philosophical and religious thought the notion of the harmonious correlation as a unity between humans and the natural world was emphasized. Even in this tradition humans are subordinated to a wider cosmic order. In the logic of Taoism the virtue of a human being is to be identified with nature.

Zen Buddhism is similar to Taoism because Zen Buddhism was influenced by both Taoism and *Mahayana* Buddhism. In Zen Buddhism, “the merging of self and other is known in immediate experience. Intuition and personal awareness, not analytic rationality or conceptual abstraction, reveal the unity of subject and object. In the Zen tradition, nature is to be contemplated and appreciated rather than mastered. Humankind should act on nature with restraint, bringing out the latent beauty and power of the natural world.”⁴¹ The emphasis of Taoism and Zen Buddhism is on harmonious cooperation and unity between humans and nature.

In addition to Taoism, Zen Buddhism, and Confucianism, the thought of *Feng Shui* also represents an approach toward nature either as reverence for or fear of it. Yeow-Beng Mah describes an overall picture of *Feng Shui* as follows:

Feng Shui (pronounced as ‘Ferng Shwee’ in Mandarin and as ‘Fung Shway’ in Cantonese) literally means ‘wind’ and ‘water,’ respectively, in Chinese. The simplest and most utilitarian definition of *Feng Shui* is that it is the art of arranging one’s home or workplace to enhance one’s health, wealth and happiness. Underlying it is the principle of living in harmony with one’s environment so that the positive *Qi* or energy surrounding a person can work for, rather than against, him or her. It can thus affect virtually every aspect of life.⁴²

⁴⁰ Ibid., 18-19.

⁴¹ Ibid., 19.

⁴² Yeow-Beng Mah, “Living in Harmony with One’s Environment: A Christian Response to *Feng Shui*,” *The Asia Journal of Theology* 18 (October, 2004): 341.

Those who follow the thought of *Feng Shui* believe that the good arrangement of the environment brings good fortune to them. If people choose a bad arrangement of the environment, they will encounter malediction. *Feng Shui* is a popular quasi-religion toward land, location, and nature in Asia.

These two different attitudes toward nature (exploiting the nature and worshipping the nature) coexisted in spite of contradicting one another. In Korea the perspective of nature still oscillates between these two extreme poles.

The second generation theologians of Korean Indigenization Theology have sought to construct an indigenous theological rationale based on traditional Korean thought of the natural world. The ecological theology in Korea has evolved mainly from the critical reinterpretation of Korean Indigenization Theology. Chung-Bae Lee points out that the early Korean Indigenization Theology attempted to extract only the concept of the personal God in the Korean indigenous texts which also contained an ecological cosmology, a socio-political vision of God, and an indigenous religious-cultural wisdom.

Early Korean Indigenization Theology investigated only the notion of Christian's personal God within the indigenous Korean texts and strove to find a similar relationship between the personal God in Christianity and indigenous Korean thought. As a paradigmatic study on this topic Sung-Bum Yun argued that the Korean *Dankoon* myth was to become a hermeneutic of the relationship between the personal God in Christianity and the traditional God of the Korean people. According to Yun, the content of *Sung* (Sincerity) was similar to the Christian God's revelation. In addition, the family structure of *Whanin*, *Whanwoong*, and *Whangum* in *Dankoon* myth reveals that the

Korean people have a pre-understanding for the Christian doctrine of God, incarnation, and the trinity.⁴³

From the critical reviews of the second generation theologians in Korean Indigenization Theology, however, this understanding of the indigenous Korean texts from the early Korean Indigenization Theologians focused only on the anthropology-centered reading. It digressed from the original intention of the indigenous Korean texts in which a “panentheistic” cosmology was promoted and the “life community” as perfectly practicing the peaceful co-existence between humans and their environment was emphasized. The second generation theologians of the Korean Indigenization Theology intend to modify their theological perspective from the anthropocentric ethic to cosmo-ecological panentheism.

Based on this cosmo-ecological panentheism, Hyun-Shik Jun has studied the ecological contents in the Korean *Tonghak* religious movement. He suggests the perspective of the “biotic community” in the *Tonghak* movement.⁴⁴ In order to overcome the dichotomy between human beings and the nature, Jun uses the epistemology of *Pulyon Kiyon* in the *Tonghak* movement, which originated from its early leader, Suun, who experienced a mystical unity between himself and *Hanullim* (God). Jun writes:

The term *Pulyon* literally means “it is not”; while it term *Kiyon*, “it is.” The two terms have opposite meanings, thus they lie in a contradictory relationship. “It is not,” never consists with, “it is.” This is the law of contradiction. There should be “it is not” or “it is.” This is the law of the excluded middle. Since Aristotle, this formal logic has dominated western philosophy, more specifically the oppositional mode of thinking represented by hierarchical dualism.

⁴³ Chung-Bae Lee, “Tochakwha shinhak gwa sangmyong shinhak” [Indigenization Theology and the Theology of Life], *Kidokgyo sasang* 390 [Christian thought 390] (June, 1991): 39.

⁴⁴ Hyun-Shik Jun, “The Tonghak Ecofeminist Reconstruction of Knowing and Doing,” *The Asia Journal of Theology* 20 (October, 2006): 338.

Instead of this logic of dominating relationship, Suun claimed that the logic of *Pulyon-Kiyon* grasps the interdependent nature of reality and relationship in the world and is rooted in all aspects of life. According to his logic of life, while reality is composed of seemingly opposite categories and principles and they seem contradictory with each other, they are just different perspectives from which to look at the same reality.⁴⁵

Jun rediscovered the possibility of overcoming the western thought of dualism between humans and nature, and between humans and God through the traditional Korean epistemology of *Tonghak*: the logic of *Pulyon* and *Kiyon*.

Moreover, Jun understands that the *Tonghak* movement not only strove for human rights of the low social class in the late Confucian *Choson* dynasty, but also realized the ecological justice for the holistic world. For Jun, therefore, the “biotic community” originated from his ecological interpretation of the Korean *Tonghak* movement, which is the basic paradigm of the Church in Korean Indigenization Theology. The Church has an ecological vision which plays the role of ecological mediator for the peaceful coexistence between humans and nature.

In the Christocentric vision of the Church in Barth, however, there is a different story of the natural world. Paul Santmire maintains that in Barth’s theology the relationship between the natural world and human beings is asymmetrical. In other words, Barth proposed an anthropocentric perspective for recognizing the natural world in the created world of God.⁴⁶ In the doctrine of revelation and in the doctrine of creation, Barth suggests that through unity with the person of Jesus Christ, only human beings have a monopolistic relationship with God and all His creatures. Clifford Green writes:

⁴⁵ Ibid., 340.

⁴⁶ Thomas F. Torrance, *Karl Barth, Biblical and Evangelical Theologian* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1990), 64-65. Also see H. Paul Santmire, *The Travail of Nature: The Ambiguous Ecological Promise of Christian Theology* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985).

In Barth's doctrine of election this focus on God and humanity discloses its eternal ground. Election is the eternal basis of everything that happens in history, it is the internal basis – the *raison d'être* – of the creation. Jesus Christ, the eternal Son, is the electing God. Jesus Christ, as the incarnate Son, is the elect human being. But election also involves, as Santmire puts it, "the ontological prefiguration of a *community of humans* united together in the person of the 'God-Man.'" But the nonhuman creation has no eternal ground. It is rather the "external ground of the covenant," the "theater" where the eternal covenant is played out in history.⁴⁷

The natural world in Barth's theology is "no eternal determination." At most it plays a role of the "external ground" of God's covenant because God's election monopolistically focuses on humanity through Jesus Christ. The natural world is "instrumental" for the essential and internal covenant between God and humans.⁴⁸

This does not mean that the natural world exists outside God's redemptive economy. According to *Genesis*, nature is an object neither to be exploited nor to be worshiped by human beings. God created nature. As one of God's creatures, humans must obey the commandment of Sabbath by God. *Genesis* 2:1-4a shows both the immanence and transcendence of God toward His creatures, and humans' accessibility (work) and inaccessibility (rest) toward God's creatures (nature). Humans have to keep a balance between work and rest in their relationship toward nature. Humans cannot

⁴⁷ Green, "Freedom of Humanity: Karl Barth and the Politics of the New World Order," 103.

⁴⁸ I would like to reconsider Robert E. Willis' conclusion of the ethics of Karl Barth. According to Willis, human beings in Barth's ethics are hardly to be considered as "subject and agent" because their "independent status as the creature distinct from God is immediately jeopardized." At the same time, Barth's understanding of creation, as "the external basis" or "ground of the covenant," "obscures somewhat the independent status of the created order" [Robert E. Willis, *The Ethics of Karl Barth*, 433-434 & 437-438]. However, Willis fails to recognize that Barth prioritizes humans, as covenantal partners in his *Church Dogmatics*, over the natural world.

monopolize nature nor deal with it at their disposal. The human attitude toward nature should be stewardship.⁴⁹

This stewardship does not mean that one has to obey nature's will and to believe in God redemptive economy as "immanence and process" within nature. Rather, it is related to "human linguistic community" and its concern is with "eternity and transcendence."⁵⁰ Hence, ecological and environmental issues belong not only to the natural, but also to the cultural. "The Church as God's new language"⁵¹ has to deal with these environmental issues in the Korean context which are not from the Taoistic reverence for nature and the capitalistic exploitation of God's created world, but from the cultural-linguistic and Christocentric perspective.

This dissertation set out to critically examine the relationship between Church and society in modern Korea in the light of three models: difference, identity, and harmony. These three models were then critiqued by the Christocentric vision of the Church in the theology of Karl Barth. The conclusion proposes a better relationship between Church and society in Korea based on Barth's insights. My hope is that I have accomplished this purpose.

⁴⁹ Max Oelschlaeger, *Caring for Creation: An Ecumenical Approach to the Environmental Crisis* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 128-132.

⁵⁰ See Milbank, *The Word Made Strange*, 257-267.

⁵¹ Hauerwas, *Christian Existence Today*, 47.

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