

2015

# Korean Church: God's Mission Global Christianity

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Regnum Edinburgh Centenary Series

VOLUME 26



# Korean Church God's Mission Global Christianity



**Edited By**

**Wonsuk Ma and Kyo Seong Ahn**



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REGNUM EDINBURGH CENTENARY SERIES  
Volume 26

Korean Church,  
God's Mission,  
Global Christianity

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## REGNUM EDINBURGH CENTENARY SERIES

The centenary of the World Missionary Conference of 1910, held in Edinburgh, was a suggestive moment for many people seeking direction for Christian mission in the 21st century. Several different constituencies within world Christianity held significant events around 2010. From 2005, an international group worked collaboratively to develop an intercontinental and multi-denominational project, known as Edinburgh 2010, based at New College, University of Edinburgh. This initiative brought together representatives of twenty different global Christian bodies, representing all major Christian denominations and confessions, and many different strands of mission and church life, to mark the centenary.

Essential to the work of the Edinburgh 1910 Conference, and of abiding value, were the findings of the eight think-tanks or 'commissions'. These inspired the idea of a new round of collaborative reflection on Christian mission – but now focused on nine themes identified as being key to mission in the 21st century. The study process was polycentric, open-ended, and as inclusive as possible of the different genders, regions of the world, and theological and confessional perspectives in today's church. It was overseen by the Study Process Monitoring Group: Miss Maria Aranzazu Aguado (Spain, The Vatican), Dr Daryl Balia (South Africa, Edinburgh 2010), Mrs Rosemary Dowsett (UK, World Evangelical Alliance), Dr Knud Jørgensen (Norway, Areopagos), Rev John Kafwanka (Zambia, Anglican Communion), Rev Dr Jooseop Keum (Korea, World Council of Churches), Dr Wonsuk Ma (Korea, Oxford Centre for Mission Studies), Rev Dr Kenneth R. Ross (UK, Church of Scotland), Dr Petros Vassiliadis (Greece, Aristotle University of Thessalonikki), and co-ordinated by Dr Kirsteen Kim (UK, Edinburgh 2010).

These publications reflect the ethos of Edinburgh 2010 and will make a significant contribution to ongoing studies in mission. It should be clear that material published in this series will inevitably reflect a diverse range of views and positions. These will not necessarily represent those of the series' editors or of the Edinburgh 2010 General Council, but in publishing them the leadership of Edinburgh 2010 hopes to encourage conversation between Christians and collaboration in mission. All the series' volumes are commended for study and reflection in both church and academy.

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REGNUM EDINBURGH CENTENARY SERIES  
Volume 26

**Korean Church,  
God's Mission,  
Global Christianity**

Edited by  
Wonsuk Ma and Kyo Seong Ahn

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Front cover photo – a South Asian missionary with a Korean-American partner working in an East African tribal area. The Korean church has facilitated the growth of a missionary movement in this particular South Asia region (Andrew B.Y. Kim photo).

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## COMMON CALL

The Edinburgh 2010 Common Call emerged from the Edinburgh 2010 study process and conference marking the centenary of the World Missionary Conference, Edinburgh 1910. The Common Call, cited below, was affirmed in the Church of Scotland Assembly Hall in Edinburgh on 6 June 2010, by representatives of world Christianity, including Catholic, Orthodox, Evangelical, Pentecostal, and other major Protestant churches.

As we gather for the centenary of the World Missionary Conference of Edinburgh 1910, we believe the church, as a sign and symbol of the reign of God, is called to witness to Christ today by sharing in God's mission of love through the transforming power of the Holy Spirit.

1. Trusting in the Triune God and with a renewed sense of urgency, we are called to incarnate and proclaim the good news of salvation, of forgiveness of sin, of life in abundance, and of liberation for all poor and oppressed. We are challenged to witness and evangelism in such a way that we are a living demonstration of the love, righteousness and justice that God intends for the whole world.

2. Remembering Christ's sacrifice on the Cross and his resurrection for the world's salvation, and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we are called to authentic dialogue, respectful engagement and humble witness among people of other faiths – and no faith – to the uniqueness of Christ. Our approach is marked with bold confidence in the gospel message; it builds friendship, seeks reconciliation and practises hospitality.

3. Knowing the Holy Spirit who blows over the world at will, reconnecting creation and bringing authentic life, we are called to become communities of compassion and healing, where young people are actively participating in mission, and women and men share power and responsibilities fairly, where there is a new zeal for justice, peace and the protection of the environment, and renewed liturgy reflecting the beauties of the Creator and creation.

4. Disturbed by the asymmetries and imbalances of power that divide and trouble us in church and world, we are called to repentance, to critical reflection on systems of power, and to accountable use of power structures. We are called to find practical ways to live as members of One Body in full awareness that God resists the proud, Christ welcomes and empowers the poor and afflicted, and the power of the Holy Spirit is manifested in our vulnerability.

5. Affirming the importance of the biblical foundations of our missional engagement and valuing the witness of the Apostles and martyrs, we are called to rejoice in the expressions of the gospel in many nations all over the world. We celebrate the renewal experienced through movements of migration and mission in all directions, the way all are equipped for

mission by the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and God's continual calling of children and young people to further the gospel.

6. Recognising the need to shape a new generation of leaders with authenticity for mission in a world of diversities in the twenty-first century, we are called to work together in new forms of theological education. Because we are all made in the image of God, these will draw on one another's unique charisms, challenge each other to grow in faith and understanding, share resources equitably worldwide, involve the entire human being and the whole family of God, and respect the wisdom of our elders while also fostering the participation of children.

7. Hearing the call of Jesus to make disciples of all people – poor, wealthy, marginalised, ignored, powerful, living with disability, young, and old – we are called as communities of faith to mission from everywhere to everywhere. In joy we hear the call to receive from one another in our witness by word and action, in streets, fields, offices, homes, and schools, offering reconciliation, showing love, demonstrating grace and speaking out truth.

8. Recalling Christ, the host at the banquet, and committed to that unity for which he lived and prayed, we are called to ongoing co-operation, to deal with controversial issues and to work towards a common vision. We are challenged to welcome one another in our diversity, affirm our membership through baptism in the One Body of Christ, and recognise our need for mutuality, partnership, collaboration and networking in mission, so that the world might believe.

9. Remembering Jesus' way of witness and service, we believe we are called by God to follow this way joyfully, inspired, anointed, sent and empowered by the Holy Spirit, and nurtured by Christian disciplines in community. As we look to Christ's coming in glory and judgment, we experience his presence with us in the Holy Spirit, and we invite all to join with us as we participate in God's transforming and reconciling mission of love to the whole creation.

### **Themes Explored**

The 2010 conference was shaped around the following nine study themes:

1. Foundations for mission
2. Christian mission among other faiths
3. Mission and post-modernities
4. Mission and power
5. Forms of missionary engagement
6. Theological education and formation
7. Christian communities in contemporary contexts
8. Mission and unity – ecclesiology and mission
9. Mission spirituality and authentic discipleship

### The Regnum Edinburgh Centenary Series to Date

Against this background a series of books was commissioned, with the intention of making a significant contribution to ongoing studies of mission. This series currently includes:<sup>1</sup>

*Edinburgh 2010: Mission Then and Now*, David A. Kerr and Kenneth R. Ross (eds).

*Edinburgh 2010 Volume II: Witnessing to Christ Today*, Daryl Balia and Kirsteen Kim (eds).

*Mission Continues: Global Impulses for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, Claudia Wahrisch-Oblau and Fidon Mwombeki (eds).

*Holistic Mission: God's Plan for God's People*, Brian Woolnough and Wonsuk Ma (eds).

*Mission Today and Tomorrow*, Kirsteen Kim and Andrew Anderson (eds).

*The Church Going Local: Mission and Globalization*, Tormod Engelsviken, Erling Lundeby and Dagfinn Solheim (eds).

*Evangelical and Frontier Mission: Perspectives on the Global Progress of the Gospel*, A. Scott Moreau and Beth Snodderly (eds).

*Interfaith Relations after One Hundred Years: Christian Mission among Other Faiths*, Marina Ngursangzeli Behera (ed).

*Witnessing to Christ in a Pluralistic Age: Christian Mission among Other Faiths*, Lalsangkima Pachuau and Knud Jørgensen (eds).

*Mission and Post Modernities*, Rolv Olsen (ed).

*A Learning Missional Church: Reflections from Young Missiologists*, Beate Fagerli, Knud Jørgensen, Rolv Olsen, Kari Storstein Haug and Knut Tveitereid (eds).

*Life-Widening Mission: Global Anglican Perspectives*, Cathy Ross (ed).

*Foundations for Mission*, Emma Wild-Wood and Peniel Rajkumar (eds).

*Mission Spirituality and Authentic Discipleship*, Wonsuk Ma and Kenneth R. Ross (eds).

*A Century of Catholic Missions*, Stephen Bevans (ed).

*Mission as Ministry of Reconciliation*, Robert Schreiter and Knud Jørgensen (eds).

*Orthodox Perspectives on Mission*, Petros Vassiliadis (ed).

*Bible in Mission*, Pauline Hoggarth, Fergus Macdonald, Knud Jørgensen and Bill Mitchell (eds).

*Pentecostal Mission and Global Christianity*, Wonsuk Ma, Veli-Matti Karkkainen and J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu (eds).

*Engaging the World: Christian Communities in Contemporary Global Society*, Afe Adogame, Janice McLean and Anderson Jeremiah (eds).

*Mission At and From the Margins: Patterns, Protagonists and Perspectives*, Peniel Rajkumar, Joseph Dayam, I.P. Asheervadham (eds).

*The Lausanne Movement: A Range of Perspectives*, Margunn Serigstad Dahle, Lars Dahle and Knud Jørgensen (eds).

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<sup>1</sup> For an up-to-date list and full publication details, see [www.ocms.ac.uk/regnum/](http://www.ocms.ac.uk/regnum/)

*Global Diasporas and Mission*, Chandler H Im & Amos Yong (eds).

*Theology, Mission and Child: Global Perspectives*, B Prevette, K White,  
CR Velloso Ewell & DJ Konz (eds).

*Called to Unity for the Sake of Mission*, John Gibaut and Knud Jørgensen  
(eds).

*Freedom of Belief and Christian Mission*, Hans Aage Gravaas, Christof  
Sauer, Tormod Engelsviken, Maqsood Kamil and Knud Jørgensen (eds).

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# FOREWORD 1

This is a brilliant collection of studies on the Korean church: its development and growth within the Korean society and its mission. The book will serve several significant purposes: reflections on Korean Christianity for insiders and a valuable resource to outsiders.

The formation of Korean Christianity has been a complex process, and we now feel the outcome of its richness and challenges. As a volume with more than thirty authors, it is unrealistic that a particular theme will be explored in depth. On the other hand, the breadth of the studies found in the book is astonishing, and there has been no resource of this magnitude in authors, themes, and perspectives. The editors are to be commended for this unusual feat, and their historic contribution to the development of Korean Christianity. For this reason, the book will be a unique gift to insiders as well as to the world church. For anyone who wishes to experience varying perspectives on Korean Christianity, here is the first book that will give you that valuable insight. The next generation of the Korean church will immensely benefit from this collection.

I want to personally express my deepest gratitude to the volume editors, series editors, publisher, and the hands that have made this and other volumes possible for the future of global Christianity and its mission. And the Korean church is part of it, and this book argues for its future role in mission.

Jung Woon Suh, S.T.D.  
Honorary President  
Presbyterian University and Theological Seminary, Seoul, Korea



## FOREWORD 2

The essays in this volume chronicle the history, the theology, the strategies, the progression, and the ambiguities characterizing Korean mission theory and practice.

This welcome addition to the Regnum Edinburgh Centenary Series provides an all-too-rare opportunity to hear from men and women whose voices are usually muted in global missiological circles. We missiologists in the West – long habituated to talking loudly and listening mostly to ourselves – are just beginning to notice that we have much to learn from wise men and women from the East. Having come to rely so heavily on modern electronic technologies, and with a dawning awareness that the most sophisticated of these devices is often designed and manufactured in Korea, we have become uncomfortably cognizant of our relative backwardness.

Similarly, after several decades of observing the dedication, ingenuity and accomplishments of Korean missionaries in some of the world's most challenging regions, we western missiologists are beginning to stop talking and start listening to our Korean counterparts. And this is what this book is about. Every chapter – all but two of them written by Koreans – is worthy of the reader's closest attention.

As I have occasionally observed elsewhere, we missionaries from western lands always smell, however faintly, of our nations' cultural, economic, political and military imperialism, of their genocidal occupations of entire continents, and of their aggressive meddling in the affairs of others. No corner of the planet has been left untouched by the heavy hand of western occupation or domination. And while no western missionaries or churches are personally to blame for the sins of their ancestors, we are symbolic reminders of these great evils, unavoidably tainted with the stigma of our racial and national identities. Like non-smokers in a room filled with smokers, we cannot avoid the smell of stale smoke in our hair and on our clothes. This prevents us from serving effectively in many parts of the world. Korean missionaries, on the other hand – unburdened with this legacy – *can* and *do* serve effectively in some of the world's most challenging socio-political environments.

The phenomenal growth of Christianity in Korea is no secret. In 1900, the number of Christians in Korea was estimated to be just over 42,000 – most of these *Roman Catholic*. By 1910 this figure had increased by an additional 9,000 mostly *Protestant evangelical*. By 1950 the number of believers was 1.6 million; by 1970 just under 6 million; by 2000 19.5 million. Current figures place the number of Korean Christians at just over

20 million – approximately 30 percent of the population.<sup>1</sup> In his book, *Born Again: Evangelicalism in Korea*, Professor Timothy S. Lee cited evidence from national surveys that suggested that in the early 1980s well over 90 percent of all Korean Protestants were solidly *evangelical*,<sup>2</sup> a figure that had declined to 75 percent by the late 1990s, and is presumably somewhat lower today.<sup>3</sup>

More exponential yet has been the increase in the number of Korean missionaries over the past thirty five years, chronicled by Timothy Park in his chapter in this book. In 1979, 93 missionaries were sent out by Korean churches. By 2000, this number had risen to 9,113. By 2014, fourteen years later, the number of missionaries had again more than doubled to 26,677.

The Korean missionary phenomenon does not take place in a vacuum. Churches across the peninsula are infused with an ecclesiology in which church and mission are fused. Without church commitment to mission, there would be no Korean mission phenomenon. While evangelical confidence is a hallmark of Korean evangelical missionary endeavor, so is humility – a willingness to learn from its own and western missionary experiences, and then adapt and improvise. And so the contributors to this volume, as exemplified by Sung-Gun Kim, do not shy away from complex internal challenges confronting Korean evangelical churches and their mission initiatives.

The Korean church's famous stress on formulas for numerical growth and the resulting corporatization of ecclesiology has given rise to serious structural and sometimes ethical problems for both churches and missions. Human power corrupts, and in its ecclesiastical manifestation, it can corrode both the integrity and the modus operandi of those who wield it. The wise voices of caution in this volume remind readers of the ease with which personal vested interest can induce any of us to use noble ends as a cover for selfish means. The wise words which T.S. Eliot places in the

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<sup>1</sup> This information is from the World Christian Database (Brill), accessed January 22, 2010. The 1910 data is from the *Atlas of Global Christianity* (Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh Press, 2009). See also the Pew Research Center's '6 Facts about South Korea's growing Christian population', (<http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2014/08/12/6-facts-about-christianity-in-south-korea/>, August 2014). An impressive English language assessment of evangelicalism in Korea is Timothy S. Lee's *Born Again: Evangelicalism in Korea* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2010). His Epilogue, 'The Beleaguered Success of Korean Evangelicalism in the 1990s' (139-51) is particularly insightful.

<sup>2</sup> In his 1989 classic study *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s*, Bebbington identified the four markers of 'evangelicalism' – what became known as the 'Bebbington quadrilateral': *biblicism*, a particular regard for the *Bible* (e.g. all spiritual truth is to be found in its pages); *crucicentrism*, a focus on the *atonement* work of Christ on the cross; *conversionism*, the belief that human beings need to be converted; and *activism*, the belief that the gospel needs to be expressed in both word and deed.

<sup>3</sup> Lee, *Born Again*, 141.

mouth of Archbishop Thomas Becket as he resists the temptation to prolong his life in exchange for his spiritual integrity are worth citing:

The last temptation is the greatest treason:  
 To do the right deed for the wrong reason....  
 Ambition comes when early force is spent  
 And when we find no longer all things possible.  
 Ambition comes behind and unobservable.  
 Sin grows with doing good....  
 Servant of God has chance of greater sin  
 And sorrow, than the man who serves a king.  
 For those who serve the greater cause  
 may make the cause serve them.<sup>4</sup>

It would be folly to predict the long-term role and impact of Korean missions on the growth and character of world Christianity. For now, it is enough to say that the Korean churches and their missionaries are God's instruments 'for such a time as this'.

Jonathan J. Bonk, PhD  
 Executive Director Emeritus, Overseas Ministries Study Center  
 Director, Dictionary of African Christian Biography, Boston University

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<sup>4</sup> T.S. Eliot, 'Murder in the Cathedral', in *The Complete Poems and Plays, 1909-1950* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1971), 196.

## PREFACE

This book is the fruit of a long planning process. The initial idea surfaced when the two Protestant mission societies in Korea undertook a series of studies to commemorate the centenary of the Edinburgh Missionary Conference. But this idea was quickly abandoned due to limited participation and perspectives. Catholics and Orthodox were not included, nor were practitioners' perspectives. The present volume attempts to preserve the confessionally inclusive spirit of the Edinburgh 2010 process, adopting at least two of the nine Edinburgh 2010's study themes: 'mission spirituality' and 'forms of missionary engagement'.

This nation-specific volume is rather an exception of the series. The Northeast Indian volume is another case. The editors had a strong goal: for the scope of contributors to be inclusive of church families, in gender, and also in forms of ministries. For the latter, we tried to have academicians, mission leaders, field missionaries, and pastors. At the same time, we wanted to find the best, most qualified thinker and/or practitioner for each subject. Between these two commitments, inclusiveness and expertise, whether the correct choices have been made is for the readers to judge.

The editors offer a special thanks to the contributors for their valuable studies. Some of them were extremely reluctant to accept our invitation, as they are frontline practitioners. It took much courage for them to join the team. It also took deep commitment for those who regularly research to contribute their studies to the volume. The briefs we provided for each contributor were rather specific: to be faithful to the spirit of the Edinburgh 2010. The series editors provided valuable guidance and constant encouragement, as they have done through the series. This volume, like all others in the series, is a work of love and generosity. The contributors not only provided their studies but also allowed their studies to become available for free download.

This volume is also made possible through the generous financial support from four churches in Korea, selected members of the Diakonoi, Korea. They are Yoido Full Gospel Church (Rev. Dr. Younghoon Lee), Kwanglim Methodist Church (Rev. Dr. Chung Suk Kim), Anyang First Presbyterian Church (Rev. Dr. Sung-wook Hong), and Suwon Central Baptist Church (Rev. Myungjin Ko). They provided sufficient funds for the volume to be donated to a large number of selected libraries. Dr Kim also hosted a conference in Seoul where the book was presented to the Korean church, and selected authors engaged with church leaders.

For the editorial process, two ladies deserve our special thanks: Shiloah Matic-Ma and Irin Sarwar. They had to learn confusingly complex Korean names and further challenging Romanisation of them, which went through several conventions, and are still evolving. In spite of all the efforts to

harmonise various spellings, we have to admit that many discrepancies are still evident, as we were not willing to overly exert our own Romanisation system. Tony Gray exercised his editorial skill to make this large book also beautifully presentable. For all these gifts of missional generosity, the editors want to express their special appreciation to each. We also noticed that most authors commonly use 'Korea(n)' and 'Korean church' referring to, to be more accurate, 'South Korea(n)' and 'South Korean church'. The editors did not feel it necessary to change these. In a number of cases, the 'Korean church', or 'Korean Christianity' actually refers to the 'Protestant church'. The editors, after a struggle, decided not to correct these, both in the titles and in the texts, although they fully recognise them inaccurate. We seek the readers to understand the editorial choice and to exercise discernment. The order of Korean names in this book follows the western order: the given number appears before the surname. Well aware of complexities in the Korean language, the editors take the final responsibility for any mistake found in the book.

Now, we would like to present this book to the Korean church and to the global Christian community as a small gift for the furtherance of God's kingdom. Above all, this book is dedicated to the glory of God, who sent his Son and his Holy Spirit so that his people may remain faithful in witnessing to the loving grace of God to the ends of the earth and of the age.

Editors  
Pentecost, 2015

# INTRODUCTION

Wonsuk Ma

The Edinburgh Centenary Series is now shaping its complete picture, and this volume is one of the final titles. As one of several geographically defined collections of studies, the volume represents a national church that was not anticipated in the eyes of the 1910 conference participants.

## **The Korean Church at the Edinburgh Conferences**

It has been reported and reflected on that the Edinburgh Missionary Conference (1910) was initiated, led, and attended by the ‘western’ (or ‘northern’ or, more accurately, ‘Atlantic’) Protestant church leaders. Limited as this was in the eyes of a twenty-first century Christian from a southern continent, however, it is fair to say that the conference broke ground in several important areas in Christian mission. This has been thoroughly studied since the original conference, especially as world Christians prepared to mark its centenary.<sup>1</sup>

A Korean saying stresses the power of time in bringing changes: ‘For a decade, a river and a mountain change’. A century ago, many of today’s major mission players were ‘still at the side’ of the global church. For example, the Pentecostal movement, today claiming to be a global mega block of Christianity, only second to Catholics, was never represented in the conference; thus, there is no mention of it whatsoever.<sup>2</sup> Of course, many nations and states were not yet born (or had not yet gained independence) at the height of the widespread colonial rule. The Korean church was one of those not yet present in the conference, both physically and mentally. The official delegate of the Korean church was a North American missionary. The only Korean at the conference came as an observer. Professor Andrew Walls made this intriguing point when he highlighted those that were completely missing even in the imagination of the participants’ minds a hundred years ago. This observation was fittingly made in Ghana to key

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<sup>1</sup> Among others, two may be mentioned: Brian Stanley, *The World Missionary Conference: Edinburgh 1910* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2009), and the collection of studies organised by the Church of Scotland in anticipation of the centenary celebration. These studies formed the pre-conference (and now the first) volume of the Regnum Edinburgh Centenary Series: David A. Kerr and Kenneth R. Ross (eds.), *Mission Then and Now* (Oxford: Regnum Books, 2009).

<sup>2</sup> Now a full volume is dedicated to its global spread and its significant missionary achievements. See Wonsuk Ma, Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, and J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu (eds.), *Pentecostal Mission and Global Christianity*, Regnum Edinburgh Centenary Series (Oxford: Regnum Books, 2014).

leaders of the Global Christian Forum, a creative and highly effective new global initiative of church unity. According to him, one of those missing was the Korean church; we now have his full study included in this volume. This volume, therefore, represents a host of 'new' churches that have become key mission players of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first century.

The phenomenal growth of African Christianity, especially in the sub-Saharan region, is a towering achievement of twentieth-century global Christianity. In Asia, the rise, growth, and development of Korean Christianity, both Catholic and Protestant, has received similar attention, and many studies have appeared.<sup>3</sup> Its rise as a major missionary-sending church is something new: for some time, South Korea has been ranked as the second largest missionary-sending entity among Protestant churches in the world. Todd Johnson's study presents this global picture.

This was evident when the first Preparatory Conference was called by the Church of Scotland to discuss, and plan for, the centenary gathering of the 1910 Conference. Organised by Kenneth Ross on behalf of the Church of Scotland under the program 'Towards 2010' in the 2005 Conference, three among twenty hand-picked mission leaders were Korean! No explanation was given, but to the minds of those who came to the meeting, the Korean church represents the 'new' breed of missionary forces.

In the course of the planning, the Edinburgh gathering and its programmes were envisioned as one of several celebrations, planned by various mission families. At least three other global meetings took place in the same year. The Tokyo conference had a strong focus on mission agencies, mostly evangelically orientated, particularly from the global South. The Boston gathering was more academic in nature, bringing scholarly reflections to one table. The largest of all was the Lausanne Movement's Cape Town gathering of church leaders and mission networks, understandably evangelical in nature. Interestingly, the Tokyo conference was led by a Korean mission leader, and the Lausanne Movement elected a Korean-American to head the mission movement, after the Cape Town meeting. We should not forget that the director of the WCC's mission arm is also a Korean mission leader, who has made a critical contribution to the Edinburgh conference and programmes. This is not to single out Korean Christianity as being in a privileged place, but to take this as a sign of God's work in opening a new era of mission, raising the 'new' churches with fresh understanding of God's desire for the whole world. This is the main justification for this unusual volume.

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<sup>3</sup> A latest study, encompassing both Catholic and Protestant Christianity is Sebastian C.H. Kim and Kirsteen Kim, *A History of Korean Christianity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

## The Book

From the beginning of the process, two things were clearly stipulated as guiding principles. The first is the full realisation that the numerical, thus, the missional, weight of global Christianity now lies on the churches in the southern continents, or the 'southern church'. The make-up of the twenty-member General Council of the Edinburgh 2010 illustrated this, and so do the conference programme and the centenary publications. The launch of the *Atlas of Global Christianity* at the conference was more than symbolic, which powerfully argues for the global shift of Christianity in our days. The second concerns the ecumenical scope of the entire process. From the beginning, all the major Christian families were part of the decision-making process. The group includes Catholic, Orthodox, and Pentecostal and African Independent Church representatives, in addition to the Protestant churches that were the core of the original conference.<sup>4</sup> This geographical and ecclesiastical inclusiveness, among others, was remarkable progress from the 1910 conference.

Accordingly, the volume embraces this inclusivity as the first principle. The volume includes contributions on and by a wide range of church families. The most significant are the contributions of the Catholic Church. The absence of other church families is not due to a lack of effort. For each topic, the editors cast their net wide, but also aimed to identify the right contributor for each topic. Gender inclusivity was another important area that the editors paid much attention to, although the final outcome is less than satisfactory. The list of contributors shows the intentional effort to bring together voices of academicians and practitioners. The latter includes pastors and missionaries as well as leaders of mission bodies.

The second principle is to understand 'mission' in a wholistic way. Representing the new mission context, Korean Christians live 'at the end of the world', where Christianity is but one of several major religions in operation. For this volume, 'mission' is understood as the witnessing of Christians, in word, action, and life, to the transforming gift and power of the gospel in every sphere of human life and the entire creation. This understanding calls every believer to be missional, and emphasizes that witnessing requires the entirety of one's life. Thus, a missionary act takes place everywhere, every time, through every believer. For this reason, pastors (within the country and mostly mono-lingual and cultural) and

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<sup>4</sup> The General Council of the Edinburgh 2010 consisted of the representatives of the major church families and global mission bodies. The former includes African Independent Churches, Anglican, Baptist, Catholic, Church of Scotland, Lutheran, Methodist, Orthodox, Pentecostal, Reformed, and Seventh Day Adventist. The latter includes the representatives of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, the Council for World Mission, the International Association of Mission Studies, the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students, the Latin American Theological Fellowship, the Lausanne Movement, the World Council of Churches, the World Evangelical Alliance, and the World Student Christian Federation.



missionaries (outside of the country, cross- and multi-lingual and cultural) are no different when it comes to answering a missionary call. This wholistic vision embraces matters of both 'life before death' and 'life after death'. Missionary acts, thus, encompass physical, material, emotional, social, and spiritual aspects of life, as well as personal, familial, communal, national, and 'universal' (or environmental) dimensions.

The third is the bi-directional nature of mission. Unlike a hundred years ago, the world is no longer divided into missionary-sending and missionary-receiving nations. The steady decline of Christianity in the traditional western heartland and the expansion of Christianity in the former 'mission fields' have broken the established one-way missionary paradigm. Korea represents this new mission context: the gospel was introduced by western missionaries; the Korean church is now a missionary-sending church; and yet, it still continuously requires missionaries for evangelisation, diakonic work, and justice engagement.

The volume has two particular foci. The first is an inquiry into the missional formation of the Korean church. Through historical analyses, the first section explores various influences on missionary formation as Christianity developed in Korea. The historical studies in this section, therefore, have this specific inquiry in mind.<sup>5</sup> The second focus is on forms of missionary engagement. This is one of the nine Edinburgh Study Themes, which unfortunately did not see a volume come out of its study process. For a young mission player in this complex world, various case studies can provide a multifaceted understanding and practice of mission. This is where practitioners bring their experiences and reflections, alongside mission academicians.

The volume concludes with its sight set on the future. Korean Christianity has been showing signs that the old tricks are no longer working. Rapid social change, shadows of economic development, tensions between North and South Korea, and increasing plurality in religion and even race have been challenging the church to renew itself to be a true servant of suffering people and a divided society. In spite of the unprecedented growth in the past decades, the church's identity and mission are facing a serious challenge. The reflections on its missional assets found in the first two sections may suggest a direction for the future life of the Korean church and its mission.

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<sup>5</sup> Wonsuk Ma and Kenneth R. Ross (eds.), *Mission Spirituality and Authentic Discipleship* (Oxford: Regnum Books, 2013) is the outcome of the Study Group 9, and the studies try to address this issue of missionary motivation through case studies of various missionary engagement.

# **SECTION ONE**

## **MISSION FORMATION: HISTORICAL AND THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES**

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# THE EDINBURGH CONFERENCE AND THE KOREAN CHURCH

Eun Soo Kim

Translated by Gi Jung Song

## Introduction

From the middle of the nineteenth century when Protestant mission was at its height, several ecumenical mission gatherings were held. But a world missionary conference in a true sense was the World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh on 14-23 June 1910 (hereafter Edinburgh Conference).<sup>1</sup> To celebrate its centenary, the Korean Association of Mission (hereafter KAM) was organised with Jong-yoon Lee as Chair and with Kwang-soon Lee leading the process. KAM was joined by the Korean Society of Mission Studies, the Korean Evangelical Society of Mission Studies, the Korean Committee of the Lausanne Movement, the Korean Institute for Mission and Church Renewal International, the Center for World Mission, the Korean Institute of Christian Studies, and the Busan World Mission Council in its celebrations. Between 22 June and 5 July 2010, over one hundred mission academics and missionaries presented about one hundred studies under the theme ‘World Mission: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow’ in its meetings in Seoul, Incheon, and Busan.<sup>2</sup> Ten sections explored ten themes: Retrospect and Prospect of the 1910 Edinburgh World Missionary Conference; Bible and Mission Theology; Christian Mission and Other Faiths; Mission and Contemporary Society; Mission and Spiritual Leadership; Mission and Church/Pastoral Care; Korean Mission and Theological Education; Culture and Social Change; Mission and Unity; and the Korean Church and World Peace.<sup>3</sup>

Out of the studies, only a few have any relevance to the topic under consideration: ‘The Edinburgh Conference and the Korean Church’. This may reflect the dominance of the western church in the 1910 conference with less participation of non-western churches, including the Korean church. This does not belittle the unique contributions that non-western

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<sup>1</sup> William Richey Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundation* (New York: Harper & Bros, 1952), 98-142.

<sup>2</sup> KAM, *Witnessing to Christ Today* [in Korean] (Seoul: 2010 Korean Edinburgh Centenary Celebration Committee, 2010), 7-9.

<sup>3</sup> KAM, *Witnessing to Christ Today*, 7-9.

delegates made to the conference. Nonetheless, some attended the conference not to represent their countries but as part of western mission organisations.

## **Contribution of the Korean Church to the Conference**

### *Contributions by Korean Participants*

There were two categories of Korean delegates to the conference: first, western missionaries working in Korea; and the second, delegates selected by the American Committee. Among those delegates was the Hon. T. H. Yun (Chi-ho Yun, 1865-1945), a Korean who was also a prominent government official. Due to his involvement in the Reformist (Military) Revolution (December 1884), he had left Korea for Shanghai; there he studied at Anglo-Chinese College established by Young J. Allen of the South Methodist Mission (USA). He became a Christian and was baptised in April 1887. After his subsequent studies at Vanderbilt University and Emory University, he returned to Shanghai to teach in October 1893. In 1895, he returned to Korea as Under Secretary of Education of Korea. In 1904, he was appointed to Under Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but this appointment ended in 1905 as the Protectorate Treaty between Korea and Japan was finalised. When John R. Mott visited Korea in February 1907, Yun served as his interpreter and this relationship continued. While Yun was travelling in the United States in January 1910 through the invitation of the Southern Methodist Church, he received Mott's invitation to participate in the Edinburgh Conference.<sup>4</sup> Mott wrote:

I trust that without fail you will attend the great World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh next June. You are pre-eminently the man to represent your important and beloved country. In view of God's mighty work in Korea, it is most desirable that you be present in Edinburgh.<sup>5</sup>

This short letter contains three important indications about Yun and Korea: (1) missionary work was actively progressing in Korea; (2) Yun was perceived as a Christian leader to represent the Korean church; and (3) in spite of the Japanese colonial influence, the conference still recognised the independence of Korea.

He was the only Korean delegate to the conference, and yet he spoke twice on behalf of the Korean church and his contributions were part of the published proceedings. The first contributed message was delivered on the

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<sup>4</sup> Brian Stanley, *The World Missionary Conference, Edinburgh* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2009), 118-21.

<sup>5</sup> 'John Mott Files' (Archive of Yale Divinity Library); quoted in Shin Ahn, 'Yun Chi-ho's Mission Thinking and the Edinburgh Missionary Conference' [in Korean], *Mission Theology* 24:1 (2010), 222.

second day of the conference (15 June 1910) at Commission One on 'Carrying the Gospel to All the Non-Christian World'.<sup>6</sup>

Hon. T. H. Yun (Songdo, Korea) spoke of Korea as a microscopic mission field. For the last twenty-five years, noble men and women from Europe and America had been preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ in Korea, and now the day of the harvest had come. It was a matter of fact that today more converts were being gathered in Korea than in any other mission field. Twenty-five years ago, there was not a single missionary and not a single Christian; today, there are nearly two hundred thousand Christians in Korea. Different from the missionary work in Japan, the work in Korea was started among the common people, and as in the days of the Lord, the common people of Korea received the word gladly. Upon the shoulders of the common people rests the future of any country. Today, the Bible is the most well read and the most widely read book in that land. He took this opportunity to thank the British Bible Society for the great work they had been doing in that country. There were, however, great dangers. One was the revivification of Buddhism and Confucianism, and there was also the introduction of the philosophies of the West that have been made in some lecture rooms of Europe, which needed more fresh air rather than philosophy. The rapid conversion of the people was another danger. If they had a sufficient number of missionaries to take hold of the situation, the rapid increase of the converts would not mean so much danger, but when they had so few missionaries and so few trained native missionaries, there was a danger that the converts might not be taught as thoroughly as was necessary in order to lay wide and deep the foundation of the Church of the future. He pled for an adequate number of men and women to teach and train up that little country in the Christian religion.<sup>7</sup>

According to this report, Yun urged that more missionaries be sent, stressing three challenges that the Korean church was facing: The first was the spread of Japanese Buddhism, which had entered with the Japanese invasion of Korea, and the rise of Confucianism to counter this. The second was the introduction of philosophical thoughts that excluded religious experiences, such as Max Mueller's liberalism of religion. Yun expressed his opposition to this view, which he believed would erode the uniqueness of the Christian worldview. The third was that education was the right path for preparing healthy missions in Korea. According to him, only the Christian worldview could bring a transformation to social sectors and the gospel could take root through it.<sup>8</sup>

Yun, in addition to his report on the religious and mission context, introduced the unique geopolitical situation of Korea, the unique characteristics of Korean population, and the meek and contemplative

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<sup>6</sup> World Missionary Conference, *Report of Commission I: Carrying the Gospel to All the Non-Christian World* (Edinburgh: Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier, 1910), 71-77.

<sup>7</sup> World Missionary Conference, *Report of Commission I*, 410-11, quoted in S. Ahn, 'Yun Chi-ho's Mission Thinking', 232-33.

<sup>8</sup> S. Ahn, 'Yun Chi-ho's Mission Thinking', 233-34.

disposition of Koreans, the varying literacy rates by geographical and social groups, and the current state and the future vision for evangelisation in Korea. His report was comprehensive and detailed and pleaded with the world church to take Korea seriously.<sup>9</sup>

His second contribution was made to Commission Two on 'The Church in the Mission Field':

I am to speak from the standpoint of a native Christian on the third division of the first topic: 'Must all work carried on by foreign money be under foreign control?' I know it is a very delicate question for a native Christian to speak about. I know also that it is a first principle that money given by the foreign church through the missionaries representing the church should be under the control of those missionaries. I say it is the first principle, but we sometimes find that there is a principle which is higher than that principle, that is the principle of Christ, and in order to carry on the work in any particular missionary field successfully, the missionary must see to it that the distribution of the money be so directed as not to arouse any suspicion in the mind of the local church and to make the money given by the Christian people of these Christian lands do the most for Christ and for men. Missionaries have and must see to it that native leaders are taken into frank consultation in the distribution of the money, because that money is not for a selfish purpose, but for the advance of the Kingdom of God in that particular land, and that cannot be done unless you have the hearty and sympathetic co-operation of the native leaders.<sup>10</sup>

His reflection was on the indigenous church in Korea from the perspective of the Southern Methodist Church. He reasonably admitted the initiatives of Western missionaries, and yet advised the missionaries to openly discuss the administration of mission funds with national church leaders.<sup>11</sup> Based on the 'Principle of Christ', he pointed out the widespread racial bias and arrogance of missionaries against the indigenous population and urged them to enter a meaningful partnership with the nations. Some criticised the national leaders' lack of contribution to the conference,<sup>12</sup> but

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<sup>9</sup> Sung-whan Kim, 'An Analysis of the Status of Korea as Reported to the Edinburgh Missionary Conference' [in Korean], in KAM, *Proceedings of Commission One* (2010), 111-14.

<sup>10</sup> World Missionary Conference, *Report of Commission II: The Church in the Mission Field* (Edinburgh: Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier, 1910), 358-59, quoted in S. Ahn, 'Yun Chi-ho's Mission Thinking', 234.

<sup>11</sup> The reports of the conference revealed a sizeable financial contribution by the indigenous churches to mission. For example, the Wesleyan Methodist Church of Natal in South Africa organised a council to oversee the ministries in the region. Out of the one million pounds they secured for the council, about half of it came from the local members. Korean Christians also contributed about 25,000 pounds in one year out of their poverty. Eun-soo Kim, *Current and Themes of Modern Mission*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. [in Korean] (Seoul: Korean Literature Society, 2013), 24-25.

<sup>12</sup> Andrew F. Walls, 'From Christendom to World Christianity: Missions and the Demographic Transformation of the Church', *The Princeton Seminary Bulletin* 22:3 (2002), 315.

Yun, along with others such as A.V. Azariah and Chen-chi Yi, pressed the conference delegates (1,355 from 159 mission organisations) to end the unilateral approach to mission and begin a mission through cooperation with native churches.<sup>13</sup>

### *Contribution by Western Missionaries*

It was John R. Mott (1865-1955) who took the leadership role in the Edinburgh Conference. He visited Korea twice. His first visit was made with his companions from Japan to Seoul passing through Pusan by ship. Mott was said to have foreseen the imminent growth and revival of the Korean church hinted at by the growth of the YMCA and the great spiritual revival of 1907. He then visited the Korean king, King Ko-jong, through the introduction by Ransford Miller with the intention to seek political support for the mission in Korea. His second visit was made in 1913 after the Edinburgh Conference.<sup>14</sup> After his second world mission journey, John Mott introduced the growth of the Korean church with the subtitle 'The Rising Spiritual Tide' in his book *The Decisive Hour of Christian Mission*:

On Christmas Day, 1887, three years after the first missionaries entered Korea, seven baptized Christians in Seoul united behind closed doors in the first celebration of the Holy Communion. Today that interesting land is wide open to the Christian Gospel. There are now, including those under instruction for church membership, fully 200,000 Koreans who acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord, and the number is increasing at the rate of over 30 percent each year. The visitor to Korea is impressed by the fact that the Spirit of God is working with great power in all parts of the country. People of all classes are being brought under the sway of Christ.<sup>15</sup>

The Korean church growth was introduced in a real sense by Samuel Austin Moffett (1864-1939) in the Edinburgh Conference. On behalf of the Korean church, he highly praised the self-supporting mission by Koreans in front of 1,200 international delegates in the Commission One meeting chaired by Mott. He also reported the dramatic spiritual movement of Korea from the so-called 'Land of Morning Calm' in the past to a nation of powerful contemporary spirituality.<sup>16</sup> Although his report was summarised in the report of Commission One, the full text was later published in a journal, through which we can understand his points in detail.<sup>17</sup> His

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<sup>13</sup> Kim, *Current and Themes of Modern Mission*, 19-26.

<sup>14</sup> During Mott's second visit to Korea, the nation was under the firm hand of Japanese annexation.

<sup>15</sup> John R. Mott, *The Decisive Hour of Christian Mission*, (London: Church Missionary Society, 1910), 76. Mott also agreed with Moffett that 'the Koreans are Bible-studying Christians'.

<sup>16</sup> World Missionary Conference, *Report of Commission I*, 431.

<sup>17</sup> 'The Place of the Native Church in the Work of Evangelization', *Union Seminary Magazine* 22:1 (October-November, 1910), 226-35.



valuable contribution to the Edinburgh Conference was his emphasis on the importance of cooperation or partnership between indigenous workers and missionaries rather than finance-orientated mission by missionaries.

George Heber Jones (Korean name: Won-si Cho, 1867-1919) was another missionary who also introduced the Korean church in the Edinburgh Conference.<sup>18</sup> According to his report, 92 students graduated from Pyongyang Soongsil University, with 225 students currently registered. He suggested founding schools for the blind and for the deaf and dumb, as well as a medical university. His report also pointed out that the Korean government had set up sixty primary schools, replacing private Chinese classes.<sup>19</sup> Jones' contribution to the Edinburgh Conference was his emphasis that education is a crucial strategy for mission, based on his own experiences in Korea.

## Significance of the Conference to the Korean Church

### *Urgency of Ecumenical Cooperation*

With respect to ecumenism, the Edinburgh Conference contributed two significant points to the Korean church. First, it urged ecumenical cooperation by recognising the conference as the initiative of the ecumenical movement. Second, it established the urgency of ecumenical cooperation with indigenous workers. As the issue of ecumenical cooperation was raised as the focal point in the Edinburgh Conference, the conference ended up concluding the issue of mission and unity that was dealt with by Cooperation and the Promotion of Unity, insisting the passion and necessity of unity in mission.<sup>20</sup> In this context, the Continuation Committee was organised during the conference, which led to the birth of the International Missionary Council in 1921. For eleven years after the conference, under the leadership of John Mott and Joseph Oldham, the Continuation Committee and Emergency Committee of Co-operating Missions set up mission cooperation committees in the West and Asia, which, in turn, became members of the International Mission Council.<sup>21</sup>

As the birthplace of the contemporary ecumenical movement, the Edinburgh Conference stimulated the Korean church to devote itself to

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<sup>18</sup> Jones' report is recorded in World Missionary Conference, *Report of Commission III: Education in relation to the Christianisation of National Life* (Edinburgh: Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier, 1910), 385-90.

<sup>19</sup> Sung-whan Kim, 'An Analysis of the Status of Korean', 117.

<sup>20</sup> World Missionary Conference, *Report of Commission VIII: Cooperation and the Promotion of Unity* (Edinburgh: Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier, 1910), 5, 8.

<sup>21</sup> K.S. Latourette and W.R. Hogg, *Tomorrow is Here* (New York: Friendship Press, 1947), 50.

ecumenical cooperation.<sup>22</sup> At this point it must be said, however, that the early Korean Christian mission was an era of cooperating missions. The issue of the contemporary ecumenical movement emerged as a result of the expansion of Christianity in the nineteenth century and its importance was confirmed by the Edinburgh Conference.<sup>23</sup> The Korean church had a good tradition of ecumenical cooperation even prior to the Edinburgh Conference.

When foreign missionaries entered Korea between 1884 and 1885, missionaries from the Presbyterian Church (USA) and the Methodist Church (USA) cooperated together. The United Council of Missions was established with missionaries from the Australian Presbyterian Church in 1889. The Council of Missions holding the Presbyterian type of church government was also organised by Presbyterian missionaries from the United States, Canada, and Australia in 1893.<sup>24</sup>

In line with this cooperating mission movement, the mission department of the Korean Presbyterian Church and the Methodist Church pursued mission together in Japan in 1912. The Choseon [Korea] Christian Church, which was planted inter-denominationally in Japan in 1934, was a good model of mission cooperation within the Korean church. The spirit of unity of the Korean church gave birth to Korean National Christian Council (KNCC), which in turn grew into the National Council of Churches in Korea (NCKK), a major ecumenical body in the Korean ecumenical movement.

Moreover, the Korean church saw the urgency of the ecumenical cooperation with indigenous workers in the Edinburgh Conference. The urgency of ecumenical cooperation was a crucial issue continually discussed at the conference. The matter of self-government of the native churches was specifically discussed even before the commencement of the conference. In connection with the self-supporting ability of the native churches, Western missionaries concluded that the native churches were not able to financially support pastors.<sup>25</sup> They also believed that the leaders of the native churches were not trained enough to be responsible for their churches.

However, the church leaders from the non-Western countries with a short church history, including Korea, stressed the necessity for mutual respect. For example, besides T.H. Yun's suggestion of cooperation regarding missionary funds, A.V. Azariah of India stressed friendship

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<sup>22</sup> Latourette in Rouse/Neil, *Geschichte der ökumenischen Bewegung*, 2 Bd (Göttingen, 1957) I, 497.

<sup>23</sup> Regarding its history and background, see Kim, *Trends and Themes of Modern Mission*, 31-35.

<sup>24</sup> Nak-joon Baik, *A History of Protestantism in Korea (1832-1910)* [in Korean] (Seoul: Yonsei University Press, 1985). 199-210.

<sup>25</sup> Harry Sawyerr, 'The First World Missionary Conference: Edinburgh 1910', *International Review of Mission* 267 (1978), 260.

rather paternalism.<sup>26</sup> These arguments bore positive fruits in two aspects. A number of delegates to the Edinburgh Conference agreed on the view that any proposals issued by native churches and the mission committee together should be more acceptable than the mission committee's one-sided proposals.<sup>27</sup> This led to the refreshing realisation that churches should be taking the key role in mission, even though the Edinburgh Conference was mainly attended by missionary delegates.

Furthermore, calling certain parts of the world 'mission fields' was criticised. On 'The Church in the Mission Field', Commission Two declared, 'The whole world is the mission field, and there is no Church that is not a Church in the mission field'.<sup>28</sup> This statement is in line with the report of Samuel Moffett representing the Korean church. Having said that, the urgency of ecumenical cooperation was the first meaningful contribution by the Korean church to the Edinburgh Conference.

### *Not Unilateral, but Bi-lateral Mission*

Only seventeen delegates were from non-western 'Young Church', also representing Western mission organisations.<sup>29</sup> The central nation at the conference was the United Kingdom, which had the most colonies around the world. The message from the conference to the church was one way, directed towards the non-western world:

We had heard from many quarters of the awakening of great nations, of the opening of long-closed doors, and of movements which are placing all at once before the Church a new world to be won for Christ. ... We need supremely a deeper sense of responsibility to Almighty God for the great trust which He has committed to us in the evangelisation of the world.<sup>30</sup>

The passion for mission of the western church could be noticed in the military terms used at the Edinburgh Conference. In addition to this, those with a conflicted structure between the Christian world and the non-Christian world saw the world from a geographical and historical perspective rather than a theological perspective. Their mission concept was dominated by the idea of a one-way mission wherein the Christian world should conquer the non-Christian world.

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<sup>26</sup> World Missionary Conference, *The History and Records of the Conference* (Edinburgh: Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier, 1910), 306, 311-12, 315.

<sup>27</sup> Sawyerr, 'The First World Missionary Conference', 262.

<sup>28</sup> World Missionary Conference, *The Report of Commission II*, 4.

<sup>29</sup> Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundation*, 124; J. Mott, 'At Edinburgh, Jerusalem and Madras', *International Review of Missions* 27 (1938), 298; Sawyerr, 'The First World Missionary Conference', 257; Rodger C. Bassham, *Mission Theology: 1948-1975 Years of Worldwide Creative Tension Ecumenical, Evangelical and Roman Catholic* (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1979), 16.

<sup>30</sup> World Missionary Conference, *The History and Records of the Conference*, 108-109.

However, the one-way mission concept has now come to an end in favour of finding a mutual way to cooperate, where mission should be carried out based on partnership. For the implementation of this, new mission structures and mission field-orientated theology and beliefs are required.<sup>31</sup> The mission by cooperation concept should inform every aspect of mission practice, including decision-making, financial resource use, and the exchange of human resources, rather than promoting a one-way relationship between the sending and receiving church. The World Council of Churches (hereafter WCC) published a mission document titled 'Toward Common Witness' for the implementation of cooperating mission. On the other hand, problems occur where there is a lack of cooperation between churches due to a competitive structure. With respect to this, Korean missionaries need to reflect on their mission, which has been carried out in endeavouring to convert the Orthodox Church in Russia into the Korean evangelical type since the early 1990s, having had a negative view of the Orthodox Church, even classifying it as cult. This was due to a misunderstanding of the tradition and rituals of the Orthodox Church, considering icons used for worship and prayer as idol worship.

Moreover, most Korean missionaries tend to have a contradictory view on Catholic tradition in Latin America. However, it should be understood that the gospel that began to spread from Jerusalem has created various Christian churches, which we now face through the gospel's inevitable engagement with different local cultures, rather than the creation of one type of church with a monolithic and stagnant theology and tradition.<sup>32</sup> Concerning this, the WCC stated through its literature, 'We need to acknowledge that the hidden mystery of God is revealed to us in manifold ways and we need together to recognise the variety of ways in which that mystery has been and is understood, expressed and lived. At the same time, for the sake of coherence of the faith and the unity of the community, a common understanding of the interpretative process is crucial for enabling the churches to affirm together their common Christian identity and to be open to what the Spirit is saying through the faith, life and witness of one another'.<sup>33</sup> Therefore, partnership mission can be achieved through a mutual hermeneutical process that all the participating churches in mission learn and experience from one another.

For cooperating mission, there is much literature pointing out the dangers of proselytism by distinguishing it from evangelism. The

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<sup>31</sup> 'There can be no universal confession: every congregation needs to learn how to confess the faith in its particular context.' Craig Van Gelder, *Missional Church in Context: Helping Congregations Develop Contextual Ministry* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2007), 42.

<sup>32</sup> Guk-il Han, 'Missiological Basis on Ecumenical Cooperation Mission' [in Korea], *Mission Theology* 24:1 (2010), 310-13.

<sup>33</sup> World Council of Churches, *A Treasure in Earthen Vessels: An Instrument for an Ecumenical Reflection on Hermeneutics* (Geneva: WCC, 1998), 11.

inappropriate motive and mission methodology may sadly end up opposing the Kingdom of God that Jesus proclaimed. We can see this mistake in imperialistic mission and cultural superiority in mission history. The Korean church should carry out cooperating mission in partnership with native churches, realising that they may make the same mistakes by the careless notion that they were victims of political imperialism.

### *From Missionary Society to Missional Church*

The Edinburgh Conference recognised mission as just a part of church, and therefore, it was a gathering of missional delegates. This, of course, does not mean that there was no discussion at all on the mission of church. Randall Davidson, the Archbishop of Canterbury, emphasised that the life of the church is in mission, newly recognising the missional responsibility of church.<sup>34</sup> This is clearly seen in the final message of the conference: 'It is committed to all and each within the Christian family...so the present condition of the world and the missionary task demands from every Christian, and from every congregation, a change in the existing scale of missionary zeal and service, and the elevation of our spiritual ideal'.<sup>35</sup>

However, the missional responsibility of church mentioned in the Edinburgh Conference actually meant an appeal to churches to show more interest and support for mission as many voluntary mission societies were being supported by and relying financially on home churches. In this aspect, it was insisted that church should be at the centre of supporting missional endeavour.<sup>36</sup> This is very different to the contemporary perspective that the purpose of church is mission, that is, that the goal is ultimately to become a missional church. Although it has been over one hundred years since the Edinburgh Conference, the reality of the Korean church is that mission is primarily carried out by missions, including both denominational mission boards and missionary societies.

The number of Korean missionaries working abroad by the end of January 2010 was 22,130, including some overlapped figures. The total figure consists of missionaries from different denominations.<sup>37</sup> The ten largest sending denominational and mission societies are shown in the table overleaf.

There are 9,215 Korean missionaries sent by denominational mission boards, which is 41.6% of the total number of Korean missionaries. There are 12,915 missionaries sent by missionary societies, which are 58.4% of the total number of Korean missionaries. This indicates the decline in the proportion of denominational missionaries, which was 49.0% in 2004. This

<sup>34</sup> Sawyerr, 'The First World Missionary Conference', 260.

<sup>35</sup> World Missionary Conference, *The History and Records of the Conference*, 109.

<sup>36</sup> Sawyerr, 'The First World Missionary Conference', 271.

<sup>37</sup> See <http://www.kwma.org>, 2011. The data may be different from the above depending on researchers and time.

phenomenon shows the problematic mission structure of the Korean church, which still has not provided any solution for this issue.

10 Largest Sending Denominational Mission Boards		10 Largest Sending Mission Societies	
General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Korea (Hapdong);	2,043	University Bible Fellowship	1,714
Presbyterian Church of Korea (Tonghap)	1,141	Korea Food for the Hungry International	823
Korean Methodist Church	963	Campus Missions International	630
Assemblies of God of Korea	834	World Full Gospel Church Mission	550
Korea Baptist Convention	635	InterCP	514
Presbyterian Church in Korea (Daeshin)	436	Youth With A Mission Korea (Yesu Jeondodan)	480
Presbyterian Church in Korea (Baekseok)	418	Worldwide Evangelisation for Christ International Korea	457
Korean Presbyterian Church (Hapshin)	335	Paul Mission	327
Korean Evangelical Holiness Church	318	Tyrannus International Mission	314
Kosin Presbyterian Church in Korea	302	Korea Campus Crusade for Christ	306

However, in the early twentieth century, the world church had already realised that the purpose of the church was to accomplish the Great Commission given by Christ and has transformed the paradigm shift from 'a missionary society-orientated mission into a church-orientated mission'.<sup>38</sup> Moreover, in the middle of twentieth century, the WCC pursued reforms in the church structure, making it into a missional church. The missional responsibility of church has been an ongoing predominant theme ever since the Edinburgh Conference established the International Missionary Council through its Continuation Committee in 1921.

As the WCC, founded in 1948, proceeded to merge with the International Mission Council, it adopted the 'missional church' as the central theme for discussion on its consolidation. The two Councils, the International Mission Council representing 'mission' and the WCC representing 'church', eventually merged on the missional church foundation in New Delhi in 1961.<sup>39</sup> Since then, continuous efforts have

<sup>38</sup> Kim, *Current and Themes of Modern Mission*. The author took the phrase 'From a Missionary Society-Orientated Mission to a Church-Orientated Mission' for the first chapter to describe the trend of the twentieth century mission.

<sup>39</sup> For the historical proceedings on the missional church structure of the WCC, see Eun-soo Kim, 'History of Missionary Church and Ecumenical', *Mission Theology* 36 (2014), 105-34.

been put into transforming the church into a missional church. This was a key task that the Edinburgh Conference gave to the Korean church to achieve.

### Conclusion

The Edinburgh Conference reminded the Korean church of the importance of partnership with national churches and of ecumenical cooperation, and allowed it to share its experience with the world church. The Korean church also received a new challenge, particularly from the non-Western delegates: (1) to recognise the problems caused by paternalism exercised by the Western church; (2) to position the non-Western church as the main player of mission; and (3) to place the mission initiative into the hands of local church and Christian workers, instead of Western missionaries.

At the same time, the conference still has a relevant message to the Korean church. At the conference, Samuel Moffett introduced the message as loving and studying the word of God, which gave birth to a revival. However, the Korean church replaced its focus from the word to mammon, as it achieved a splendid numerical growth during the military dictatorship in the 70s and 80s. Regrettably, in many mission fields, Korean mission is heavily criticised as using money as a primary missionary tool.<sup>40</sup> The Korean church is now in a critical moment for deep self-reflection to discern if it has abandoned the previous traditions and gifts of its early years.

It is also important as the second largest missionary-sending nation (among Protestants) to examine if we in the Korean church are committed to the building of national churches and leaders. The endless divisions in the Korean church are transplanted into the mission settings, and thus, Korean missionaries fail in ecumenical cooperation. Moreover, their paternalistic attitude towards other national churches has been heavily criticised by nationals. Today, the Korean church faces a huge challenge, as Moffett reported to the conference: to maintain and creatively develop its unique spiritual tradition.

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<sup>40</sup> In the academic symposium jointly held by the Institute of the History of Christianity in Korea and the Institute for Korean Church History in 2007, the author suggested the missional task of the Korean church in four aspects, as follows: (1) de-denominationalism; (2) de-cultural-imperialism of the Korean church as a sending church; (3) de-materialism of size; and (4) de-colonialism. This suggestion drew attention from the media and gained support. *Culture and Mission* (Jeonju, Korea: Jeonju University Press, 2008), 269-72.

# THE MISSIONARY MOVEMENT OF THE KOREAN CHURCH: A MODEL FOR NON-WESTERN MISSION

Timothy K. Park

## Introduction

The Korean church has been a missionary church almost from the beginning. However, since the 1980s in particular, the church has gone from being a 'missionary-receiving' church to being a 'missionary-sending' church. Korean missionaries are going out to almost any place of the world, risking their lives for Christ.

A couple of major U.S. Internet newspapers, both secular and Christian, heralded the missionary movement of the Korean Church. The New York Times wrote,

South Korea has rapidly become the world's second largest source of Christian missionaries.... It is second only to the United States and ahead of Britain. The Koreans have joined their Western counterparts in more than 160 countries from the Middle East to Africa, from Central to East Asia. Imbued with the fervor of the born again, they have become known for aggressively going to – and sometimes being expelled from – the hardest-to-evangelize corners of the world.<sup>1</sup>

Christianity Today predicted the inevitable success of the Korean church as a missionary-sending church, saying that 'South Korea sends more missionaries than any country but the U.S. And it won't be long before it's number one'.<sup>2</sup> The Korea World Missions Association (KWMA) has recently released statistics on Korean missions. The number of Korean missionaries as of 31 December 2014 is 26,677 in 170 countries.<sup>3</sup> Leaders of the Korean church and mission declared in 2008 that they will send one million tent-making missionaries by 2020 and 100,000 missionaries by 2030.<sup>4</sup> It is a bold faith projection.

The churches in the world have begun to recognize the dynamic emergence of the Korean church as a missionary church. The Korean church has played and will play an important and unique role in the

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<sup>1</sup> Norimitsu Onishi, 'Korean Missionaries Carrying Word to Hard-to-Sway Places', *New York Times*, 1 November 2004.

<sup>2</sup> Rob Moll, 'Missions Incredible', *Christianity Today*, 24 February 2006.

<sup>3</sup> Korea World Missions Association, 'Missionary Statistics, Dec 2014' [in Korean] ([http://kwma.withch.kr/bbs/board.php?bo\\_table=sub7\\_1&wr\\_id=1672](http://kwma.withch.kr/bbs/board.php?bo_table=sub7_1&wr_id=1672)).

<sup>4</sup> Korea World Missions Association, 'Vision of KWMA' [in Korean] ([http://kwma.withch.kr/bbs/board.php?bo\\_table=sub1\\_1](http://kwma.withch.kr/bbs/board.php?bo_table=sub1_1)).



missionary movement of the global church in the twenty-first century. The fact that the Korean church became a missionary church is closely related to the work of the early American missionaries, who considered Koreans not only as a target people for their missionary work but also as a missionary force.

In this study, I will give a brief overview of the missionary movement of the Korean church, from its beginning to the present; describe the current situation of the Korean mission; highlight factors that contributed to the missionary movement of the Korean church; assess the unique assets and problems of Korean mission; and make suggestions and give important lessons to non-western churches for their missionary movement.

### **A Brief History of Korean Mission**

The story of church growth in Korea has been well-known throughout the world for several decades. However, though the Korean church has been a missionary church from the time of its organisation, the spotlight was not put on its missionary movement until the beginning of the third new millennium.

Mission history of the Korean church can be divided into three periods: (1) mission during Japanese colonial rule (1907-1957), (2) mission after the independence of Korea (1955-1991), and (3) current mission (1980-present). Let us note the unique characteristics of each period.

#### *During the Japanese Colonial Period (1907-1957)*

Korea was officially annexed to Japan in 1910 and liberated in 1945. Korea, however, had begun to be taken by Japan since 1905. The first Korean cross-cultural missionary was sent to Jeju Island (known as Island of Quelpart to westerners) in 1907 and the last missionary, who was sent to Shandong, China, in 1937 during Japanese colonial rule, returned home in 1957.

The Korean church's missionary work outside the Korean peninsula had begun as early as 1907 when the self-supporting, self-governing, and self-propagating independent Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church in Korea was ushered into existence. As the first native Presbytery was constituted, seven men, graduates of the Theological Seminary of Korea (Pyeongyang), were ordained to the ministry. Ki-Poong Yi, one of the seven, went to Jeju Island as a missionary. George L. Paik wrote about it as follows:

Yi Ki Poong, one of the seven ordained ministers, volunteered to go to the Island of Quelpart [Jeju], about sixty miles off the southern coast of the mainland, as the first Protestant missionary of the Korean church. The Presbytery accepted his offer and appointed a missionary committee to

administer the undertaking and ordered the whole church to make a special offering to carry on the propagation of the faith.<sup>5</sup>

‘From its very organization,’ Reynolds said, ‘the Presbytery of Korea unfurled its blue banner to the world as a missionary church’.<sup>6</sup> This missionary movement gradually won the support of the believers and the church sent missionaries to other parts of the world.

In 1909, the church ordained the second group of nine ministers. The church sent one of them, Kwan-Heul Choi, as missionary to Vladivostok, Siberia, a Russian territory. In the same year, the Presbytery of the church also sent Suk-Jin Han to Korean students in Tokyo and Hwa-Chung Pang to Korean emigrants in California and Mexico.<sup>7</sup>

In 1912, when the General Assembly of the church was organised, the Presbyterian Church in Korea made a resolution to send three ministers to Shandong, China, the birth place of Confucius. It was a landmark event for the General Assembly. The three missionaries went to the field in 1913 with their family members. ‘Again, as an expression of the joy of the Church in the great event, a Thank Offering was taken throughout Korea and the three pastors and their families were sent to open a real Foreign Mission work in the Chinese language for the Chinese in Shantung, China’.<sup>8</sup>

The Korean church sent about eighty missionaries outside the Korean peninsula during the Japanese colonial regime. The church sent missionaries to Jeju Island, Siberia, Japan, California, Mexico, Manchuria, Shandong, Shanghai, Nanking, Peking, Mongolia, etc. Most of the missionaries during the Japanese colonial period were sent primarily to Korean immigrants in other countries, but they also engaged in ministries to win the natives of those areas to Christ.

The greatest and most significant missionary work of the Korean church, however, was the mission to Shandong, China. This was foreign missionary work in its true sense. It was the first Asian mission by Asian people since the days of the apostles. It was interesting to note that the missionary work was carried out by despised people who’d lost their sovereignty. The Korean church was young, Korea was one of the poorest countries in the world, and Korea had lost its sovereignty to Japan. How could the Korean church launch a missionary movement in such an unfavourable situation?

Ki-Poong Yi’s mission to Jeju Island was attributed to Graham Lee, a missionary from the Presbyterian Church, USA. Ham-Ae Yun, who became Yi’s wife, was a foster daughter of Graham Lee and was influenced

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<sup>5</sup> George Lak-Geon Paik, *The History of Protestant Missions in Korean 1832-1910* (Seoul: Yonsei University Press. 1929).

<sup>6</sup> W.D. Reynolds, ‘The Presbytery of Korea’, (*The Korea Mission Field* 3:11 (1907).

<sup>7</sup> Paik, *The History of Protestant Missions*, 390; *Northern Presbyterian Report* (1910), 281.

<sup>8</sup> *Korean Mission Field* 30:8 (August 1934).

by him while she lived in Lee's home. She seemed to have heard missionaries talk about the need for mission on Jeju Island. Samuel A. Moffett, who had arranged their marriage, served as an advocate for Yi's appointment as missionary to Jeju Island and also mentored him both before the Yis went to the mission field and while they were in the field.

William Hunt, a missionary from the Presbyterian Church, USA, connected the Korean missionaries to his fellow missionaries in Shandong, China, to help the Koreans to settle in their mission district and to start their missionary work. Foreign missionaries in Korea served on the missionary committee of the Korean church as members and guided the missionary movement of the Korean church. Its leaders were mission-minded, but the role of the foreign missionaries was significant for they helped Korean church leaders to be aware of their missionary responsibility.

Both the Korea Mission Field<sup>9</sup> and The Christian Messenger<sup>10</sup> nurtured the missionary spirit of the Korean church by constantly reporting on the missionary work of the Korean missionaries and by introducing David Livingstone's story from the first issue onwards, in the case of the Christian Messenger. Would it be possible for the Korean church to become such a missionary church from the early days without these great missionaries and their efforts?

### *After the Independence of Korea (1955-1991)*

After World War II, the political situation in the Far East hindered the missionary movement of the Korean church. The Communist Revolution in Mainland China and the Korean War compelled the Korean church to temporarily suspend its missionary enterprise. Though Korea reclaimed its sovereignty from Japan in 1945, the nation underwent a civil war from 1950 to 1953 and had to suffer the disastrous effects of the Korean War. It was in an extremely difficult position; the national GDP after the war was less than US \$70.

The church, however, continued to carry on its missionary responsibilities even in such a destitute condition. Says Samuel I. Kim, a former Korean missionary to Thailand, in his country report presented to the All-Asia Mission Consultation in Seoul (1973):

After the Korean War, the churches in Korea were looking for new mission fields besides the Red China area. In 1956, the Korean Church began to send two missionary couples to Thailand and [others] to other parts of the world. It was the signal for the missionary advance of the Korean Church for new fields and new era. The burning missionary zeal was rising up from the dedicated Christians in the midst of the ruined streets of the war. Even before

<sup>9</sup> The official monthly bulletin published by the Federal Council of Evangelical Missions in Korea.

<sup>10</sup> The first official Christian Bulletin jointly published by the Presbyterian Church in Korea and Methodist Episcopal Church in Korea.

they were restored from the destruction of the war and from the poverty, they sent many full-time missionaries to various places such as Thailand, Taiwan, Japan, Vietnam, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Pakistan, Nepal, Ethiopia, Okinawa, Brazil, Mexico, Argentina, Brunei, USA, and so forth. The total number of Korean missionaries overseas is 234 (M2 and M3)... Those thirty missionaries (including their wives) currently belong to missionary societies in Korea and are supported by them. They are working mainly on the basis of cross-cultural and cross-ethnic operations (namely, M-3 missionaries).<sup>11</sup>

For about three decades after the independence of Korea, Korean mission was mission from a position of weakness. Korean missionaries in this particular period carried out their missionary responsibility without strong political, ecclesiastical, or financial support. They humbly served the Lord among the nations. Korean mission during this period was carried out by both denominations and missions, but mainly by missions. In this period after the nation's independence, foreign missions not only served the Korean church as channels for missionary dispatch and deployment but also as partial financial supporters while Korea was economically struggling. Western missionaries in Korea and other countries served their Korean counterpart as receiving bodies, deploying them in proper places and supervising their work.

#### *Current Period (1980-Present)*

With its strong commitment to mission, the Korean church has aggressively sent out its missionaries since the 1980s and has become one of the major missionary-sending churches in the twenty-first century. Unprecedented economic growth, continued immigration growth into many countries of the world, national diplomacy growth, higher education, and accumulated missionary experience have enhanced the missionary movement of the Korean church in recent years, all due to the explosive church growth.

Korean missionary work in the last four decades has been characterised as mission from the position of strength – mission from affluence. This has been both good and bad. Korea's economic affluence has enabled the Korean church to support missionaries, but in recent years both the church and its missionaries tend to depend more on material resources than on the power of the Holy Spirit. Economic affluence nurtures a dependent spirit in the minds of national workers.

### **The Korean Mission Movement Today**

The Korean church has emerged as a new missionary force by aggressively launching its missionary enterprise to the world. Most of its leaders are

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<sup>11</sup> Samuel I. Kim, 'Korea,' in David J. Cho (ed.), *New Forces in Missions* (Seoul: East-West Center for Missions Research and Development, 1976), 124.

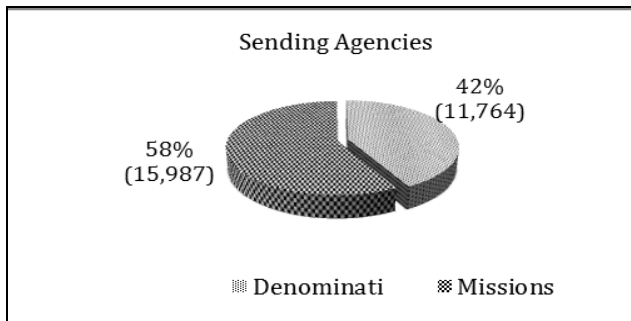
aware of their missionary responsibilities to the world. They believe that the Lord is using them for the coming of the kingdom.

### *Current Status of Korean Mission*

According to the survey conducted recently by the Korea World Missions Association, 26,677 missionaries are working in 170 countries as of the end of 31 December 2014. This reveals that 1,317 missionaries were added in 2013 and 932 in 2014.<sup>12</sup>

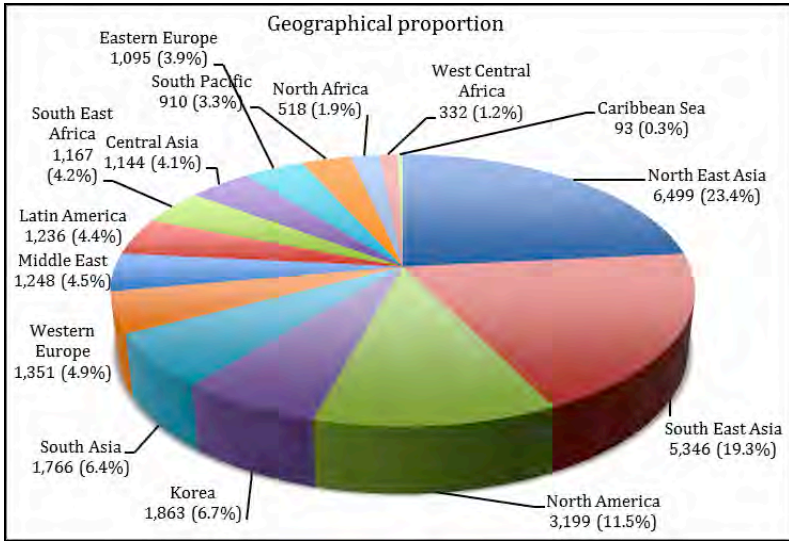


In terms of mission agencies that sent missionaries, denominations sent 11,764 missionaries (42.4% of the total missionaries), while mission organisations sent 15,987 (57.6% of the total missionaries) as of 31 December 2014.



<sup>12</sup> KWMF, *The 7<sup>th</sup> KWMF Leadership Conference 2015* (Seoul: KWMF, 2015), 159.

Among the denomination-based sending agencies, the Global Mission Society (GMS) has sent the largest number of missionaries (2,396 missionaries to 100 countries),<sup>13</sup> and has been maintaining this position for several years. The Presbyterian Church of Korea (Tonghap) and the Methodist Church in Korea Mission follow GMS. Among the mission organisations, University Bible Fellowship has the largest number of missionaries (1,740 missionaries in 93 countries).<sup>14</sup>



The geographical distribution of the Korean missionaries show that 6,499 missionaries (23.4%) are working in Northeast Asia, 5,346 (19.3%) in Southeast Asia, 3,199 (11.5%) in North America, 1,863 (6.7%) in Korea, 1,766 (6.4%) in South Asia, 1,351 (4.9%) in Western Europe, 1,248 (4.5%) in the Middle East, 1,236 (4.4%) in Latin America, 1,167 (4.2%) in South East Africa, 1,144 (4.1%) in Central Asia, 1,095 (3.9%) in Eastern Europe, 910 (3.3%) South Pacific Ocean, 518 (1.9%) in Northern Africa, 332 (1.2%) in West and Central Africa, and 93 (0.3%) are in Caribbean.<sup>15</sup> A majority of the Korean missionaries are working in Asian countries and in North America.

<sup>13</sup> Global Mission Society of the Presbyterian Church in Korea, 'Statistics of Missionaries' [in Korean] (<http://gms.kr/?d1=2&d2=1&d3=1>).

<sup>14</sup> University Bible Fellowship, 'An interview article: Historical meaning of Korea UBF 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary' (<http://www.ubf.org/world-mission-news/korea/interview-article-historical-meaning-korea-ubf-50th-anniversary>).

<sup>15</sup> KWMA, *Statistics of the Sending of Korean Missionaries as of the End of December 2014* (Seoul: KWMA, 2015), 6.

The following are the types of ministries Korean missionaries are involved in:

Major Ministries	No. of Countries	No. of Missionaries
Church Planting	137	11,095
Discipleship Training	140	8,973
Campus Ministry	73	2,499
Education	78	1,434
Welfare/Development	70	1,001
Medical	55	673
Children/Youth	68	509
Others	?	493
Total		26,677

Korean missionaries are involved in various ministries, but more than 35% of them are involved in a church-planting ministry, which reflects their high view of the church.

### *Changes in Korean Mission*

At least, three changes have been observed in Korean mission over the last two decades. The first is a change in focus from mission to Korean immigrants to mission to unreached peoples. Korean mission in the 1970s was mainly for Korean immigrants in other countries. The cross-cultural mission movement began at the end of 1990s when the church was particularly concerned with evangelism for unreached peoples.

The second change is the emergence of Korean native missions from western missions. In the past, particularly after the independence of Korea, most of the Korean missionaries belonged to foreign missions. Today, only a small number of them belong to western missions. The number of missionaries who work under Korean native missions, such as Global Mission Society, Global Partners, UBF, GMF, Paul Mission, Intercorp, etc., has been consistently increasing.

Another change in Korean mission today, unlike mission in the past, is that both denominations and missions carry out their missionary responsibilities, maintaining a symbiotic relationship. The missionary movement of the Korean church during Japanese colonial rule and after Korea's independence was launched dominantly either by denominations or by missions. Today, however, both denominations and missions are working together.

### **Factors Contributing to the Missionary Movement**

Various factors have contributed to the missionary movement of the Korean church: divine, human, organisational, and contextual factors.

### *Divine Factors*

One of the remarkable divine factors that contributed to the growth of mission in the Korean church was the revival movement, particularly the Great Revival Movement that occurred in Pyeongyang in 1907. As a result, the Korean church experienced dynamic vigour, not only in local church growth, but also in sending out missionaries to surrounding nations. The manifestations of the power of God and the healing of the sick are also divine factors that contributed to the growth of Korean mission, particularly in the mission to Jeju Island.

### *Human Factors*

Among the human factors that contributed to the missionary movement of the Korean church were the spirit of gratitude of the Korean people, their passion for saving the lost, and the church's able leaders. Koreans, by nature, are people who pay their debts of gratitude. Sending missionaries to Jeju and Shandong were expressions of their gratitude to God and to western churches for bringing the gospel to them and for organising the independent Presbytery and the General Assembly. In choosing the Shandong area of China, the birthplace of Confucius and Mencius, Korean Christians showed their gratitude to the Chinese who passed on to them the doctrines of Confucius and Mencius that became the foundation and standard for Korean ethics. Korean Christians had passion for missionary work, both to their own people and to other people in other lands.

Under extremely difficult political, social, and financial situations, Korean Christians carried out missionary responsibilities in foreign lands. Great leaders, such as Helen Kim of Ewha Women's University, David J. Cho of Korea International Mission, John E. Kim of Chongshin University, and Joon Gon Kim of Korea Campus Crusade for Christ, made great contributions to the missionary movement of the Korean church.

### *Organisational Factors*

There are several organisational factors that also contributed to the growth of Korean mission: the development of the Korean church's missions committee and two-structured mission and the emergence of native missions. The Korean church, from the beginning, had a missions committee that took charge of missionary work. The committee was composed of both Korean and foreign missionaries. Experienced western missionaries mentored Koreans and connected them to mission fields. Early Korean missionaries worked in partnership with western missions and the churches in the fields. They also worked in close cooperation with fellow Korean missionaries, western missions, and even with national churches, particularly in China.



The Korean church also had denominational structures and mission structures from the beginning. Though the missionary work was carried out mainly by the denominations (modality), mission structures (sodality) such as the Women's Missionary Society and the Student Missionary Organization were also actively involved in the missionary work. When the church structure was about to give up the missionary enterprise, the mission structure took on the responsibility for the continuation of the enterprise. Hundreds of indigenous missions have emerged in recent years, such as the Korea World Mission Council – organised in the United States by Korean-American church leaders – the Korea World Mission Association in Korea, and Mission Korea, all of which have greatly promoted the missionary movement of the Korean church in the past thirty years.

### *Contextual Factors*

The following contextual factors have also contributed to the growth of Korean mission: information distribution through missionary reports, magazines, and newspapers, immigration growth, mission conferences, economic growth, and diplomatic expansion. Two newspapers were the primary influencers of Korean Christians in the missionary movement. The Korea Mission Field was published in Korea by the Evangelical Missions in Korea for the exchange of information among foreign missionaries in Korea and for mission promotion in their home churches. The Christian Messenger was jointly published in Korean by the Methodists and Presbyterians. Both had great impact on the missionary movement of the Korean church. These newspapers introduced the missionary work of foreign missionaries and home missionaries to the general public. In particular, the Christian Messenger stirred up the missionary spirit among the Korean church by publishing articles written by the missionary David Livingstone forty-four consecutive times in one year, starting from its first edition. Today, there are many Christian newspapers and mission journals that distribute information on mission.

Political, social, and economic conditions of Korea also led to the immigration of many Koreans to surrounding countries. The scattered Koreans became missionaries in their host countries and in other countries. International conferences held in Edinburgh in 1910 by the International Missionary Council, WCC mission conferences, and Lausanne gatherings in the twentieth century also helped stir the missionary spirit of the Korean church. National mission conferences organised by Korea Campus Crusade for Christ, the Korea World Mission Council, the Korea World Mission Association, and Mission Korea challenged and mobilised Korean Christians for mission. The dynamic growth of the church, the economic growth of the nation, and the successful hosting of the Olympiad in Seoul in 1988 all helped open a way for Korea to establish diplomatic ties with

most of the countries of the world. As a result, Koreans today are able to travel almost anywhere in the world with a Korean passport.

The early missionary movement of the Korean church had to do with the world missionary movement, like the International Missionary Council. The missionary movement of the Korean church after the Korean War had to do with the missionary movement of the World Christian Council of Churches. The current missionary movement of the Korean church, however, was initiated by students of theological seminaries in the beginning of the 1970s. Korean Campus Crusade for Christ, Mission Korea, the Korea World Mission Association, and the Korea World Mission Council all played major roles in making the Korean church a missionary church in recent years.

### **Assets and Problems of Korean Mission**

Korean Mission has both assets and problems, as already mentioned. These are the assets: dynamic church growth, rapid economic growth, consistent growth of immigration, diplomatic ties with almost all the nations, zeal for higher education, accumulated mission experiences, and passion and commitment for the Great Commission. These assets enabled the Korean church to carry on its missionary responsibility dynamically.

But problems have also surfaced. The Korean church has been faithful to the preaching and teaching of the word of God, but has neglected the social responsibilities of the church. It has been church-oriented, but not kingdom-oriented. It needs to preach the gospel in word and deed. It should be concerned with the coming of the kingdom of God, not just the extension of its churches. Theology produces methodology. The Korean church needs a balanced mission theology.

Most Koreans grow up in a monocultural background, and Korean missionaries in the field try to impart their culture to the churches they serve. They need to respect the host cultures and communicate the gospel in a way the host culture can accept. Many Korean missions and missionaries work with neither accurate information of the fields nor a workable strategy.

Missionaries have been inappropriately selected, trained, and deployed. Korean missionaries did not learn to have a cooperative spirit from early missionaries. They create a lot of problems in the field by working competitively. Many Korean missionaries were not effective in their ministry because their mission education and mission administration were taken care of by blackboard missionaries who did not have field experience. One of the most serious problems of Korean mission is lack of cooperation between the sending, receiving, and supporting bodies. Local church pastors who do not have proper knowledge and experience control their missionaries and their ministry. Missionary leadership has not yet developed and a missionary care system has not yet been utilised.

### **Suggestions for the Korean Church and Other Non-western Churches**

The Korean church has a strong and long missionary history. Korean missionaries are going and are willing to go to any place in the world, risking their lives for Christ even in the hardest-to-evangelise corners of the world. The bold faith projection of the Korean church to send one million tent-making missionaries by 2020 and 100,000 missionaries by 2030 will continue to challenge Korean believers to move forward. The Korean church will play an important and unique role in the missionary movement of the Church in the twenty-first century.

In light of this overview of the Korean missionary movement and assessment of Korean mission, here are some suggestions to consider as non-western churches look to doing mission in the twenty-first century:

1. The churches and missions need to establish a mission theology relevant to its situation by recognising the call of the times and by understanding the changes in the world, which includes a ministry of both word and deeds. Their focus must be on the coming of the kingdom of God, not on the expansion of their denominations or missions.
2. The churches and missions need to pursue team ministry with fellow Korean missionaries and partnership ministry with other ethnic churches and other mission groups as the early Korean missionaries in Shandong, China, did to help evangelise the growing world population. They need to use various methods and to work with short-term missionaries, professional missionaries, non-residential missionaries, and business missionaries.
3. The churches and missions need to avoid paternalism and missionary methods that depend on paid agents, while developing methods that help indigenise the local churches as self-governing, self-supporting, and self-propagating churches as the early foreign missionaries in Korea and Korean missionaries to Shantung, China, did.
4. The churches and missions need to depend on the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit.
5. The churches and missions need to conduct in-depth areas studies and discern the gifts of their missionaries in order to deploy the right missionaries to the right places.
6. The churches and missions should recognise the importance of lay people, including women, and help them maximise the effects of their mission.
7. The churches and missions have to learn lessons from their mission history. Learning from history and critical evaluation of what missionary forces are doing today are so important in order not to make the same mistakes and to better carry out missionary responsibilities.

8. The churches and missions should develop the leadership skills of their missionaries for them to be more effective and useful.
9. The missionaries and their family members should be well taken care of.
10. The churches and missions should pray for revival and renewal, develop missionary leadership, have proper structures for mission, hold mission conferences, and share information.

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# PRESBYTERIAN MISSION METHODS AND POLICIES IN KOREA, 1876-1910

Sung-Deuk Oak

This study discusses the multiple origins of the Presbyterian missions, the Koreanised Nevius-Ross method, and some recent debates on the Nevius method. Presbyterians, Methodists, and Anglicans dominated the early Protestant missions in Korea from 1884 to 1910 when 575 full-time missionaries were sent to Joseon, the 'Land of Morning Freshness'. Presbyterians in the USA, Canada, and Australia sent 276 missionaries and organised the Council of the Presbyterian Missions to cooperate with a unified policy. American and Canadian Methodists sent 175 missionaries and the Church of England sent 67 British and one American Anglicans until 1910. As seen in Table 1, Presbyterians accounted for about two-thirds of 320 missionaries and more than two-thirds of 180,000 Korean adherents in 1909.

The main mission method of the Presbyterians was the Nevius-Ross method; the Methodists adopted a sociological mission theory; and the Anglicans formed a few compound communities of single missionaries. As space is limited, this chapter discusses only the Presbyterian method because it actually combined these three methods and theories – the church-centred indigenisation, the institution-centred Christian civilization, and the station-centred expansion. Presbyterians were also the majority group whose mission methods and policies had considerable influence on the other groups in the context of interdenominational cooperation.

Korea was opened by Japanese gunboat diplomacy in 1876 and, after many turbulent events, it finally became a Japanese colony in 1910. During this 35-year 'open-port period', the number of Korean Protestant Christians (adherents) grew to 12,465 in 1898, 26,643 in 1901, 81,684 in 1906, 111,379 in 1908, and 214,960 in 1910. Protestant Christians experienced revivals from 1903 to 1907 and they have outnumbered Roman Catholics since 1906. Behind the rapid growth, there was a series of negotiations and confirmations of evangelical mission theories and methods.

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<sup>1</sup> Sung-Deuk Oak, *Sources of Korean Christianity* (Seoul: IKCH, 2002): appendix; idem, *A Pictorial History of Korean Protestant Christianity, 1900-1910* (Seoul: Hongsungsa, 2009), 406.

	Missionaries	%	Korean Adherents	%
PCUSA	101	31.6	96,443	53.5
PCUS	43	13.4	15,209	8.4
CP	17	5.3	5,594	3.1
AP	12	3.8	4,498	2.5
MEC	58	18.1	43,814	24.3
MECS	10	3.1	7,687	4.2
Anglicans	28	8.8	3,356	1.9
Others	5	1.5	400	0.2
Total	320	100	180,201	100

- PCUSA: Presbyterian Church in the USA,
- CP: Canadian Presbyterians
- AP: Australian Presbyterians,
- MEC: Methodist Episcopal Church
- MECS: Methodist Episcopal Church, South

*Table 1. Statistics of missionaries and Korean Protestant Christians, 1909*

### **Korean Initiatives: Multiple Origins and Issues**

The Neo-Confucian Joseon government strictly prohibited Roman Catholicism and executed Korean Christians from 1791 and French missionaries from 1839 to 1866. When an American schooner, the General Sherman, was destroyed in Pyongyang in 1866, a Welsh missionary, Robert J. Thomas, was killed there. Despite these dreadful events and the national policy of seclusion, some young Korean merchants visited Scottish missionaries (John Ross and John MacIntyre) in Manchuria and studied forbidden Christian books. Before American missionaries began to work in Seoul in 1884-85, Koreans encountered Scottish-Chinese Presbyterianism in Newchwang (Yinkou) and Mukden (Shenyang) in Manchuria beginning in 1874 and American-Japanese Presbyterianism and Methodism in Yokohama and Tokyo in Japan from 1882. The former was carried out through merchants (e.g. Eungchan Yi, Hongjun Paek, and Sangnyun Seo) and the latter through intellectual yangban (e.g. Sujeong Yi) and government students (e.g. Punggu Son).<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> For detailed stories of the conversions of Koreans in Manchuria and Japan, their Bible work, the formation of the first Korean congregations at Uiju and Sorae in 1884, and the organisation of the first Presbyterian church in Seoul in 1887, see Sung-Deuk Oak and Mahn-Yol Yi, *A History of the Korean Bible Society 1* [in Korean] (Seoul: KBS, 1994): 30-176; Sung-Deuk Oak, *Historical Sources of the Korean Bible Society 1: Correspondence of John Ross and Henry Loomis* (Seoul: KBS, 1999); Sung-Deuk Oak, *Sources of Korean Christianity*, 14-36.

### *The Trans-Yalu-River Encounters*

The trans-Yalu-River encounters between Koreans and Protestantism and Protestantism's expansion along the Beijing-Seoul Road reveal the features and fundamental issues of the rise of the Protestant churches in northern Korea. The first Christian groups along the Yalu River were either border-crossing peddlers or displaced migrant peasants. As their socio-political status was precarious, their religious searches were mixed with secular motivations. Merchants had been despised by Neo-Confucian intellectuals as the lowest class among the commoners. However, as Ross found, they were a newly rising 'middle class' that had potentiality to become the backbone of the future church.<sup>3</sup> They had bilingual literacy and cultural liminality; had accumulated wealth by international trade, hard-work, and frugality; and were largely free from Neo-Confucian ideology and open-minded enough to accept western culture and Protestantism, though they were most interested in imported textiles, a British commodity. They welcomed the 'Nevius-Ross Method' of the three-self (self-support, self-propagation, and self-government) principles because it gave them the merit-based space where they could attain upward mobility by becoming colporteurs, helpers, leaders, deacons, or elders. They tried to overcome status inconsistency by acquiring such titles of the church or the 'heavenly kingdom,' which they regarded of spiritual equivalence to the titles of yangban of the Joseon kingdom.<sup>4</sup>

Some of the merchants (including the first four baptised Koreans in Newchwang in 1879) were literate enough to understand the classical Chinese texts or translate them into colloquial Korean. Thus, all their initial activities were related to the Bible – reading and studying the Chinese scriptures and then translating them into the vernacular Korean and distributing the printed copies. They were a community committed to biblical texts in order to find purpose and a new 'social imagery' and a new moral order.<sup>5</sup> Early Korean Christians continued this quest; they were called 'Bible-centred Christians' and their religion 'Bible Christianity'. Positively speaking, this promoted vernacularism of the missions and literacy among uneducated people and women. Adopting the people's language for the sacred texts contributed to the awakening of the people and, eventually, the democratisation of the society. Yet, 'Bible Christianity' as a distorted form of sola-scriptura Protestantism could also fall into anti-

<sup>3</sup> Sung-Deuk Oak, *The Making of Korean Christianity* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2013), 224-31; Kyung Moon Hwang, *Beyond Birth: Social Status in the Emergence of Modern Korea* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2004), 161-289.

<sup>4</sup> For a sociological or anthropological analysis, here we can use Max Weber's thesis on the 'Protestant ethics and the spirit of capitalism' and Victor Turner's concept of 'liminality' (threshold person).

<sup>5</sup> See Charles Taylor, *Modern Social Imageries* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), 23-25.

intellectualism and a rejection of secular thought. When American fundamentalism began to exert its influence in the late 1910s, the institutionalised Presbyterian Church fell into its rigid ideology. It fought against new theology and socialism in the 1920s, and in doing so, it lost missional and social relevancy among the intellectuals and younger generation, as well as tenant farmers and urban labourers.

By contrast, the other group, migrant peasants in the Corean Valley in 1880s, who had fled from heavy taxation and famines, wanted to protect their lives and properties from corrupt officials or landowners through the power of western missionaries. They thought that their membership in the church would guarantee financial and political aid from missionaries. The danger was that this produced 'rice Christians', whose main concern was survival or monetary benefit. In his trip to Manchuria in 1891, Rev. Samuel A. Moffett found that most of the Christians in the Corean Valley were rice Christians.<sup>6</sup> Thus he examined the applicants for baptism carefully and created the classes of catechumens as a probational system in Pyongyang from 1894. The tension between the socio-political desire for power and protection and the religious-textual quest was one of the main issues among Korean Christians, and it affected the mission policy.

### *The Yokohama-Tokyo Communities*

The Yokohama-Tokyo area was the other setting where Korean government students encountered Protestantism. Sujeong Yi (1842-1886), who rescued Queen Min in the Military Revolt in July 1882, went to Tokyo to study advanced civilization in September 1882. His high scholarship was respected by the Japanese elite. His interactions with Japanese Christians, studying of the Bible, and reflection on the superiority of Protestant Christianity over Confucianism, Buddhism, and Roman Catholicism, led him to accept baptism by a Presbyterian missionary, Rev. George W. Knox, in 1883. He was hired as a Korean language teacher at the Government Foreign Language School.

Yi did three things for the future of Korean Protestantism: translating the Bible, founding a Korean church, and calling American missionaries to Korea. With the support of Henry Loomis, agent of the American Bible Society, Yi translated the Scriptures, first from Chinese into Sino-Korean and then into Korean. Six thousand copies of the Korean Gospel of Mark were published in February 1885. Meanwhile, Yi converted some Korean students and organised a church in Tokyo. Yi sent a letter to American Christians, requesting that they send missionaries to Korea. With the pride of a Korean yangban scholar, he did not want 'a second-hand civilization' from Japan, but preferred the Americans to lead the elevation of his

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<sup>6</sup> Samuel A. Moffett to F.F. Ellinwood, 6 September 1892 and 4 May 1896.



people.<sup>7</sup> He worried about the preoccupation of the country with French Roman Catholicism. His 'Macedonian call', published in the mission magazines, pressed the Presbyterian Church to send Horace G. Underwood (1859-1916) and John W. Heron (1858-1890) to Korea. Underwood and Henry G. Appenzeller (1858-1902), the first two clerical missionaries, brought some copies of Yi's Mark when they arrived at Chemulpo on 5 April 1885.

Okkyun Kim (1851-1894), a leader of the progressive party, met American missionaries in Japan and induced Robert S. Maclay (1824-1907), a Methodist veteran missionary, to visit Korea. King Kojong permitted Maclay to establish a mission school and a hospital when Maclay made a scouting trip to Seoul in July 1884. After the failure of the Coup of December 1884, Kim fled to Japan with Yonghyo Park, Gwangbeom Seo, and Jaepil Seo. They taught the Korean language to William B. Scranton, Underwood, and Appenzeller in Yokohama in early 1885. Okkyun Kim studied Christian books and temporarily helped Loomis revise Sujeong Yi's translation but never became a Christian.

These two cases of Korean encounters with Protestantism in Japan show the dominant motivation of the conversion was the project of 'civilisation', though both the civilisation and the religious motivations coexisted. The Methodist mission in Korea started with the idea of 'Christian civilisation' to build the kingdom of God through the combination of evangelistic, educational, medical, and literary work. It was a sociological mission theory for the Christianisation of Korea, not just for planting the indigenous national church. But potential pitfalls lay in the opportunism and institutionalisation of the mission enterprises, which could have produced the short-term rapid growth followed by long-term stagnation.

### *The Trans-Korean Strait Activities*

There were two non-western missionary groups – Chinese evangelists and Japanese colporteurs – who were sent to Korea in the 1880s. When the National Bible Society of Scotland published the first Korean Gospels of the Ross version in Manchuria in 1882, they sent thousands of copies to J. Austin Thomson, an agent in Tokyo. He sent a Japanese colporteur to Busan, which was rapidly changing into a Japanese open port city. In April 1884, Thomson visited Busan with two Japanese colporteurs (Miura and Sugano) and opened a depot. Sugano worked in Busan, visited Daegu, and distributed 10,000 copies of scriptures until his death in January 1887. Thomson visited Chemulpo with another Japanese colporteur, Seino, and opened a depot there. Seino worked in Chemulpo and Seoul until 1887. Even though these Japanese colporteurs distributed the Korean scriptures of the Ross version, their evangelistic work failed because they did not know

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<sup>7</sup> Henry Loomis to E.W. Gilman, June 11, 1883.

the Korean language and the Ross version was translated in a northwestern dialect that was unintelligible in Busan, Chemulpo, and Seoul.

On the other hand, Anglicans in Fuzhou of China started their mission in Korea in 1885. Archdeacon J.C. Wolfe of the Church Mission Society visited Seoul accompanied by Allen in October 1884. His church in Fuzhou organised the first Protestant 'Mission to Corea' in China and, in the fall of 1885, sent two Chinese catechists with their wives to Busan, now an open port in southern Korea that was connected through the steamship lines from Fuzhou and Nagasaki. Wolfe helped them settle down and visited them again in 1887. However, as the Chinese evangelists failed to learn the Korean language, they did not succeed in converting anyone for several years. With their health failing, they withdrew from Korea in 1890. These Japanese and Chinese missionaries' activities failed mainly because of the language gap and the lack of sufficient support. Their experience influenced the Korea Mission of the Church of England, led by John Corfe from 1890. Bishop Corfe formed a few missionary compounds in the open port areas with single missionaries and concentrated on the study of the Korean language and culture without direct evangelism for seven years.

The above two paths, the Northern route (Newchwang/Shenyang-Uiju-Pyongyang-[Chefoo-Chemulpo]-Seoul-Sorae) and the Southern route (Tokyo/Yokohama or Fuzhou-Nagasaki-Busan-Chemulpo-Seoul), became the pipelines through which Protestantism was introduced to Korea in the 1880s. The coexistence of these dual routes revealed the different motives of Koreans in accepting Christianity. They were (1) searching for the spiritual meaning of life (a personal religious motive) and upgrading social status (a personal social motive) among the merchant group; (2) protecting lives and properties (a personal monetary motive) among the oppressed peasant group; (3) accepting western civilisation for the building of a modern nation state (a national political motive); and (4) encouraging the enlightenment of the people (a national cultural motive) among the yangban group. Protestant missions had to tackle these non-religious needs of the people and satisfy their spiritual hunger through certain policies and regulations. One of these efforts was the adoption of the Nevius and Ross method.

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### **The Nevius-Ross Method**

The Nevius method in relation to the rapid rise of the Korean (Presbyterian) Church has been written about over and over again since the publication of George N. Paik's book, *The History of Protestant Missions in Korea* (1929) and Charles A. Clark's book on the Nevius Plan in Korea (1937).<sup>8</sup> In 1900,

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<sup>8</sup> George L. Paik, *The History of Protestant Missions in Korea* (Pyongyang: Union Christian College, 1929); Charles A. Clark, *The Nevius Plan for Mission Work, Illustrated in Korea* (Seoul: Christian Literature Society in Korea, 1937).

however, Underwood said, 'The system as now followed by our mission is not exactly what was originally known as the Nevius system, but has grown out of the needs of the work, and has been developed with it.'<sup>9</sup> In 1934, Moffett added, 'Our mission has gone considerably beyond the suggestion of Nevius on these lines but to him we owe a great debt of gratitude for his advice and counsel when we were first formulating our policies.'<sup>10</sup> Therefore, this section pays attention to how it was accommodated to and modified in the Korean context. John L. Nevius developed a new method for the planting of indigenous churches in Shandong from 1880.<sup>11</sup> John Ross applied it to the context of Manchuria.<sup>12</sup> Presbyterians in Korea accepted these two methods and naturalised them in the field. Thus, this essay uses the term 'the Nevius-Ross method' [hereafter the NRM] and then 'the Underwood-Moffett method' as a revised form of the former.

### *Conflict between Allen and Underwood: Separation of Church and State*

Horace N. Allen (1858-1932), who was transferred from Shanghai to Seoul in September 1884 as the first resident Protestant missionary in Korea, cured Yeongik Min, who had been seriously wounded in the Gapsin Coup in December 1884; Allen was then appointed to the head of the Government Hospital in April 1885. Allen opposed the illegal direct evangelism of Horace G. Underwood (1859-1916). He argued that the royal favour was the essential element for the mission in its initial stage and that the mission activities should remain within the legal boundary. He believed that the royal hospital, though evangelism was not permitted there, was a stepping stone for the preparation of the field. His legal discretion was succeeded by Heron when he was appointed as the head of the hospital in December 1887. Underwood, an enthusiast evangelist, opposed the top-down method and made inland evangelistic trips using a touristsightseeing passport, following the Nevius method, a bottom-up method. Underwood

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<sup>9</sup> H.G. Underwood, 'An Object Lesson in Self-Support', *Chinese Record* [hereafter *CR*] 31 (August 1900), 385.

<sup>10</sup> Samuel A. Moffett, 'Fifty Years of Missionary Life in Korea', *The Fiftieth Anniversary Celebration of the Korean Mission of the PCUSA* (Seoul: YMCA Press, 1934), 38-39.

<sup>11</sup> John L. Nevius, 'Mission Work in Central Shantung', *CR* 11 (October 1880), 357-64; idem, 'Principles and Methods Applicable to Station Work, Letter I', *CR* 16 (Nov. 1885), 421-24; idem, 'Letter II', *CR* 16 (December 1885), 461-67; idem, *The Methods of Mission Work* (Shanghai: Presbyterian Mission Press, 1886).

<sup>12</sup> John Ross, 'Missionary Methods', *CR* 29 (May 1898), 247; idem, *Mission Method in Manchuria* (New York: Revell, 1903). The second edition of *Missionary Method in Manchuria* (1906) added a chapter, 'Testing the Church'. It described the endurance and victories of the Manchurian Church without the aid of the foreigners during the Boxer persecution.

argued that illegal evangelistic activities were inevitable breakthroughs in the context of not having religious freedom just like in China and Japan in 1850s and 1860s, and that pioneer missionaries 'ought to obey God rather than men'.

In contrast, Allen was a realist who believed in the value of the medical mission itself as a practice of Christian love. In fact, he treated more than 10,000 patients at the government hospital, Jejungwon, in the first year. He also maintained a good relationship with the king, which was important for the infant mission. He did not participate in direct evangelism because he had not learned to speak the Korean language. Allen was appointed to the American Legation in 1887, served the interest of American trading companies and the Unsan Gold Mine, and spent summer seasons at his vacation house on a hill of Incheon. He could not satisfy both the national aspiration of King Kojong and the imperialist desires of the U.S. and Japan at the same time. He was fired by President Roosevelt in 1905. He served God for four years and then gold and empire for seventeen years. A top-down method of institutionalism of a missionary deteriorated into the capitalist and political imperialism of a diplomat.

In terms of their policy on the separation of church and state, the Presbyterian mission moved from close cooperation with the government from 1884 to 1898 to loose separation from central government politics and passive resistance at the local level from 1899 to 1904. The Korean government had never allowed for full religious freedom; missionaries had no right to purchase property in the inland cities, for example. This uncomfortable relationship changed in 1905 when the Japanese Protectorate Government came to Korea. Resident-Governor Ito granted full religious freedom to missionaries as the carrot yet confined their activities to the spiritual sphere with the disciplinary sticks of new laws and regulations on schools and religious organisation.

### *The Nevius-Ross Method for the Indigenous Churches*

When inexperienced young missionaries – Allen, Underwood, Heron, and Miss Ellers – arrived in Seoul in 1884 and 1885 and disputed with each other over the policy to deal with the prohibition of evangelism by the government, they sought advice from Frank F. Ellinwood, who was the secretary of the Board in New York, and the seasoned missionaries in the neighbouring stations in China and Japan. John L. Nevius (1829-93) in Shandong across the Yellow Sea, John Ross (1849-1915) in Mukden across the Yalu River, and James C. Hepburn (1815-1911) in Yokohama across the Korean Strait became their mentors. Ross learned from Nevius and applied his new method in Manchuria. Thus, the Koreans' initial contacts across the Yalu River accepted the NRM. After meeting Nevius in 1890

and visiting Ross in 1891 with James S. Gale and Sangnyun Seo,<sup>13</sup> Samuel A. Moffett (1864-1939) moved to Pyongyang to open a new station for building the indigenous churches in Pyongan provinces. In contrast, Underwood in Seoul combined Hepburn's Christian civilisation theory with the NRM initially, moved gradually to the former theory when he published the weekly *Christian News* in 1897, and supported Olive R. Avison's (1860-1956) plan to establish the Severance Hospital in Seoul in 1900, without abandoning the NRM that was effective in the rural churches.

Underwood first invited Ross to Seoul in 1887, for the majority of the church members in Seoul were the results of the distribution of the Ross Version by Sangnyun Seo. Ross visited Nevius in Chefoo to learn Nevius' method more in returning to Mukden.<sup>14</sup> Ross kept a close friendship with Nevius and respected him. Ross employed more Chinese evangelists on a meagre salary. Nevius endorsed this because many qualified men existed in Manchuria where many Shandong farmers had migrated and worked as entrepreneurs and merchants.

After meeting Ross, Underwood studied the Nevius method (which was formulated around 1880)<sup>15</sup> and read *The Methods of Mission Work* (1886) to train Korean evangelists.<sup>16</sup> He invited Nevius and his wife to Seoul in September 1890, just after the General Conference in Shanghai. The couple advised young missionaries, drawing from their long experience in the field. Nevius lectured on the full meaning of his method for two weeks. The Korea Mission of the PCUSA adopted its 'Standing Rules and By-Laws' in February 1891. The rules were more 'thoroughly self-supporting than the plans laid down' by Nevius. They employed more Korean helpers (unordained ministers), Bible women (unordained female ministers), and local leaders (unordained elders) than in Shandong. The Korean churches were growing rapidly by voluntary self-propagation and the missionaries could visit them only once a year to baptise the candidates who were recommended by a helper. In 1893, the Council of the Presbyterian Missions (consisting of four missions) adopted the modified NRM. They set the working classes, not the higher classes, as the main target of evangelism. The second target group was women and girls, 'since mothers exercise so important an influence over future generations'.<sup>17</sup> They also

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<sup>13</sup> S.A. Moffett, 'Evangelistic Tour in the North of Korea', *Church at Home and Abroad* 5 (October 1891), 330; idem, 'An Evangelistic Tramp through North Korea', *Herald and Presbyterian*, 13 and 20 January 1892.

<sup>14</sup> John Ross, 'Missionary Methods', *CR* 29 (May 1898), 247.

<sup>15</sup> John L. Nevius, 'Mission Work in Central Shantung', *CR* 11 (October 1880), 357-64. The first point among ten was that 'its most important nature is the voluntary system in contrast to the employment system'.

<sup>16</sup> H.G. Underwood to F.F. Ellinwood, 10 July and 25 August 1888.

<sup>17</sup> C.C. Vinton, 'Presbyterian Mission Work in Korea', *Missionary Review of the World* 16 (September 1893), 671; D.L. Gifford, 'Annual Meeting of the Presbyterian Mission, North', *Korea Repository* 2 (November 1895), 444.

emphasised Christian education at primary schools; Bible translation; vernacular literature; self-support in churches, schools, and hospitals; and evangelism at hospitals. In 1895, the Korea Mission officially declared that Presbyterian missionaries believed in the NRM and their one aim was to win souls, believing that individual change could bring about social change. This was different from the sociological mission theory of the Methodists.

### *Korean Features of the Nevius-Ross Method*

In 1909, Moffett stated that ‘the seed thoughts of two great principles in our work – the Bible Training Class system and self-support’ – came from Nevius. ‘In the development of these ideas,’ Moffett continued, ‘local conditions and our experience in adapting the methods to meet different circumstances have led to great modification.’<sup>18</sup> As Underwood mentioned, the methodology of the Korea Mission did not impose a completely organised church on the Koreans and instead planned church architecture in accordance with the ability of the natives to build and the styles of houses generally used. Self-support, with the flexible church organisation and the Korean-style church buildings, became ‘the cornerstone of the indigenization’.<sup>19</sup>

The whole system of the Nevius method in Korea was, therefore, closer to Rufus Anderson’s congregationalism than Henry Venn’s moderate Anglicanism. Yet the Ross method – a combination of the Scottish Enlightenment mission theory with the Nevius method – supplemented this local-church-centredness and individual-salvation-priority. From the Ross method, the Korean Presbyterian Church accepted a more tolerant attitude toward indigenous culture and religions. Paik’s argument connecting the self-support of the Nevius method with the indigenisation of the Korean churches should be understood in this framework.

The NRM had some distinctive Korean features. A major objective of the self-supporting principle was to build local churches without the mission’s financial support, so most early chapels were small thatched houses or tiled-roof houses. Typically, there was a single square room for service with a curtain or partition in the middle, practicing customary gender segregation, though the preacher from the pulpit could see both sides. When the Sorae Church, the first self-supporting church, was enlarged in the T shape in 1896, it had three rooms: two small front ones for Bible studies or mothers and babies during the service and a longer one for men and women, who were separated by the high wooden partitions. The curtain or the partitions in the churches began to disappear in 1908, yet many remained until the late 1910s. Some churches, when enlarged or

<sup>18</sup> S.A. Moffett, ‘Evangelistic Work’, *Quarto Centennial Papers Read Before the Korea Mission of the PCUSA* (Pyongyang: 1909), 18.

<sup>19</sup> Paik, *The History of Protestant Missions in Korea*, 151-52.

newly constructed, were built in the L-shape, so that one wing was occupied by men and the other by women. The largest L-shaped church was the Central Presbyterian Church in Pyongyang, completed in 1901, which could accommodate 1,500 people. This L-shaped church initially facilitated the attendance of female members in a public worship space; it was a new experience for women, who had never gathered together with men in public. Yet the structure of the architecture made gender segregation a permanent feature in the church and, thus, demoted the status of women, contemporaneous with the popular ideas of 'wise mother and good wife' in the 1910s or those about 'new women' in the 1920s. By contrast, the churches in Seoul were not L-shaped; square brick constructions began to be built in 1905. When the segregating curtains were removed in the early 1910s, both sexes could see each other during the service, though men still sat on one side and women on the other.

In self-propagation, there were two offerings to support helpers or evangelists. As most members were poor farmers and did not have money to donate, housewives separated a spoonful of rice when they cooked every meal and brought a bag of rice to the church once a month. They called it 'rice offering', which originated from a new Korean religion, Donghak. The Protestant churches adopted it to support evangelists, colporteurs, and pastors. The other offering was lay people's voluntary 'day offering' for evangelism. Usually, at the last evening of the winter Bible Training Classes, the attendants pledged to give days or weeks for evangelistic work in non-Christian villages.

NRM's motto, 'maximum natives and minimum missionaries', could be realised with well-trained church members, and one of its most effective means was the system of the Bible Training Class (BTS, Sagyonghoe). It aimed to train all church members as volunteer evangelists and equip them with basic Christian tenets and biblical messages. First, all adherents needed to attend the church BTS every Sunday morning and study the lessons systematically. Second, there were annual BTSs at three levels – a three-to-five-day BTS at a local village church with surrounding groups (unorganised churches); a five-to-six day BTS for a circuit at a central church of a county; and an annual large BTS and conference for leaders, church staff, and teachers of the province at a city church for ten days or two weeks during the lunar New Year holiday. The daily programme of the winter provincial BTS consisted of Bible study in the morning; Bible study and a discussion session on church affairs and hygiene or outdoor evangelistic work in the city in the afternoon; and an evening evangelistic/revival meeting for enrolled attendants, seekers, and believers of the city. At the BTS in Pyongyang in January 1907, the great revival started and swept all the churches in Korea in a year, spreading out to Manchuria and China. In addition, a voluntary dawn prayer meeting was started by Koreans at BTS from 1898 and Seonju Gil made it a voluntary



church program in 1909 when the revival fever receded.<sup>20</sup> The dawn prayer meeting was introduced as an everyday church programme – a hallmark of the contemporary Korean Protestant Church – in 1907-09 and became a constant in the 1920s.

Regarding the self-government of the NRM, William Scott said in 1975 that ‘the overemphasis on self-government produced a church hierarchy that was often motivated by pride of office’.<sup>21</sup> In 1917, Gwangsu Yi described this structure as the ‘caste system’ of the church: ‘Pastors and elders of the Korean Church today stand above their lay brethren, trying to enjoy superior privileges in all things. Pastors and elders may almost be called Yangbans while the lay members are Sangnoms.’<sup>22</sup> Others criticised the lower level of theological education of Korean pastors, quoting William Reynolds who said in 1896, ‘Don’t send him to America to be educated, at any rate in the early stages of Mission work. Don’t train him in any way that tends to lift him far above the level of the people among whom he is to live and labour.’<sup>23</sup> In 1955, Sung Chun Chun insisted that such a policy produced ‘isolationism’ of the Korean church. He said, ‘Information concerning social and theological developments abroad was curtailed because few students were sent overseas for further education.’<sup>24</sup>

The combination of these comments gives us an image of ill-educated Korean pastors ruling the churches with ecclesiastical authoritarianism in the name of self-government. In fact, the Presbyterian Church did not have any ordained Korean elder until 1900 and no ordained Korean minister until 1907. However, this does not necessarily prove the absence of self-governance. Local churches and groups were expanding rapidly and missionaries could not give them proper attention while visiting them once or twice a year. Thus they put a leader (unordained elder) in a local church and a helper (unordained minister) in a circuit. Both had self-governing rights to preach and minister to their congregations. Theological education in Korea was not lower than any other mission field that had a similar policy, like the comity (territorial division), adopted by the Foreign Mission Conference of North America in 1897<sup>25</sup> and by other world missionary

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<sup>20</sup> S. Oak, *The Making of Korean Christianity*, 292-93.

<sup>21</sup> William Scott, ‘Canadians in Korea’ (typescript, 1975), 53. He argued that the overemphasis on self-support meant that ‘all their resources were needed to keep the church organization going, with little thought or financial means left for social welfare’. But the Presbyterian churches in the 1900 were active in diakonia activities.

<sup>22</sup> Gwangsu Yi, ‘Defects of the Korean Church Today’, trans. Chiho Yun, *Korea Mission Field* (December 1918), 256.

<sup>23</sup> W.D. Reynolds, ‘The Native Ministry’, *Korean Repository* (May 1896), 200.

<sup>24</sup> Sung Chun Chun, ‘Schism and Unity in the Presbyterian Churches of Korea’ (Doctoral thesis, Yale University, New Haven, CT, 1955), 71.

<sup>25</sup> ‘Native converts should be discouraged from coming to Europe and America for education’. *Foreign Missions Conference of North America, Report of the Meeting*



conferences from 1900 to 1910. And the self-government in Korea was delayed owing to the semi-colonisation in 1905 and the Japanese annexation of Korea in 1910. When many Korean pastors were produced, they became the majority of the presbyteries and the General Assembly. They were chairpersons or moderators of organisations and committees. The impression of missionaries' prolonged paternalism and delayed devolution during the colonial period is considerably misleading, for the Koreans said in 1924, 'The Presbyterian Church is a Korean Church. In other words, it is not under the control of foreign mission, but all organisations and polities are independent'.<sup>26</sup>

One of the best exemplary places where the NRM was practiced was the town of Seoncheon, 70 miles south from Uiju in Northern Pyongan Province, where a mission station was established in 1901. The rural town church itself grew rapidly from 50 adherents in 1899 to 2,500 in 1909. It took only ten years to convert about one third of the town's population.<sup>27</sup> Some missionaries in China criticised such an explosive growth as a 'bubble' and characterised it a reckless mass conversion. Alfred M. Sharrocks of Seoncheon invited such critics to come and see the facts. He insisted that the voluntary self-propagation of fifteen full-time Korean evangelists (who were supported by Koreans) and a Korean congregation (who donated 8,000 days for evangelism for a year) was the secret of the rapid yet sound growth. A spirit of local people's initiative and voluntarism made a town church with 75 people attending in 1901 into a church where 1,435 people were enrolled, in just five years. Sharrocks emphasised, 'From the first the Koreans were made to believe that the spread of the Gospel and growth of the church was their work rather than ours.'<sup>28</sup>

## Recent Debates of the NRM

### *The NRM and Nationalism*

Recently a few studies investigated the implications of the NRM in early modern Korean society beyond the church sphere. A nationalist interpretation was given by Jacqueline Park. She connected the self-governing principle with the master plan of independence and democracy of the nation of Changho Ahn, a prominent Christian nationalist from 1905

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*of the Conference of Foreign Missions Boards in Canada and in the United States*, 5 (New York, 1897), 13.

<sup>26</sup> 'Characteristics of the Presbyterian Church' [in Korean], *Kidok sinbo* (1 October 1924).

<sup>27</sup> Harry A. Rhodes (ed.), *History of the Korea Mission Presbyterian Church, USA 1, 1884-1934* (Seoul: Presbyterian Church of Korea, 1934), 202.

<sup>28</sup> A.M. Sharrocks, 'The "Bubble" at Syen Chun', *Assembly Herald* 12 (November 1906), 547.

to 1938. She argued that the Nevius method 'was of critical importance to Ahn Changho's emergence as a pioneering constitutional democrat'. And it 'embodied the self-defining path of Ahn, as he came to translate and reconstitute the theory and praxis of Presbyterian self-government into the Korean independence movement'.<sup>29</sup> Park depicted Ahn's conversion at the Underwood School in Seoul around 1895, his founding of the United Korean Association in San Francisco and writing of its constitution by applying the principle of the American Federalist Constitution in 1905, and his returning to Pyongyang and secret organisation of the Sinminhoe (New People Society) for the national independence movement in 1907.<sup>30</sup>

Ahn's constitution and secret national society Sinminhoe, however, had nothing to do with the NRM. He was very critical of the Great Revival Movement in 1907 and its apolitical agenda. Missionaries intended to depoliticise the churches through the revival movement from 1905 to 1908. And the missionaries' ongoing official policy in politics during the colonial period was loyalty to the Japanese government. That is why mission historiography has emphasised the spiritual side of the great revival in 1907. The post-liberation scholars, including Wijo Kang, Chungshin Park, and J. Park, under the metanarrative of Korean nationalism, emphasised the contribution of the NRM to the nationalistic character of the Korean churches.<sup>31</sup> Not only have nationalist church historians used Nevius for a national church history, but Korean historians have used the NRM to establish the church as a rallying point for the empowerment of the national subject or the development of capitalism.

Even though Ahn read a Chinese version of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in USA in 1905 and its English version later, it was not related to the NRM, for the Presbyterian polity in Korea until 1907 was similar to the Andersonian congregationalism that gave more autonomous (self-governing) right to the local churches and their leaders. In addition, all Korean Presbyterians were not apolitical and the great revival had not eliminated nationalism from the churches.<sup>32</sup> It would be true that the NRM ultimately contributed to the development of democracy with its emphasis on self-government of the local church, where people were trained with modern rationalism, public discussion on church affairs, election of church staff as representatives, and committee work. But it is hard to find any

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<sup>29</sup> Jacqueline Park, 'Cradle of the Covenant: Ahn Changho and the Christian Roots of the Korean Constitution', in Timothy S. Lee and Robert E. Buswell Jr. (eds.), *Christianity in Korea* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2005), 128.

<sup>30</sup> Park, 'Cradle of the Covenant', 129-33.

<sup>31</sup> See Wi Jo Kang, *Christ and Caesar in Modern Korea: A History of Christianity and Politics* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1997), 30; Chungshin Park, *Protestantism and Politics in Korea* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2003), 4.

<sup>32</sup> Sung-Deuk Oak, 'Major Protestant Revivals in Korea, 1903-1935', *Studies of World Christianity* 18:3 (Oct. 2012), 269-90.

evidence to show the direct connection between Ahn's nationalistic activities and the NRM.

### *The NRM and the Spirit of Capitalism*

On the other hand, Albert L. Park argued, 'Western missionaries contributed to the cultivation of new forms of economic thought and practice [capitalism] through the establishment of ideological and physical structures between 1885 and 1919'.<sup>33</sup> First, by 'ideologically', he means that the 'self-supporting' principle of the Nevius method made the church members stakeholders who needed to contribute money constantly; this practice promoted a view of 'money as a form of productive capital' and a definition of labour as a positive activity for the accumulation of money. Second, by the 'physical structure', Park means the Industrial Education Departments (IEDs) of Christian schools.

It was true that church members had a duty to give offerings, especially tithes, for the management of the church and its missional activities. In many cases, however, a rich person or a widow donated the land for the chapel or a house for the church building at the founding of a local church. When the church grew, the members adopted a three-year subscription plan for a larger building. Usually two-thirds of the cost was raised by the local members and one-third came from the mission, missionaries, or their friends in America. For example, in the case of the Central Presbyterian Church in Pyongyang, completed in 1901, wealthy people were major donors. In rural areas, the contribution of a few rich people could sustain a local church that consisted of many poor farmers and tenants. In short, the self-supporting principle of the NRM had created neither a new idea of money nor a new social class for capitalism.

Additionally, earlier IEDs were developed by Methodists who had not adopted the NRM, such as at the Baejae School in Seoul in 1888 and the Hanyeong (Anglo-Korean) School in Songdo in 1906. IEDs were a part of the general mission policy in other mission fields where the Nevius method was not practiced. In fact, in 1918, the 'only instance of Christian industrial training per se' in Korea existed at the YMCA of Seoul.<sup>34</sup> It was not necessarily related to the NRM. There were small scale IDEs at some Presbyterian academies, not any primary school, for the self-support of the poor students and the teaching of the value of labour: Soongsil Academy in Pyongyang from 1900, Sinseong (Hugh O'Neil) Academy in Suncheon from 1906, and Gyeongsin (John D. Wells) Academy in Seoul from 1912. Park

<sup>33</sup> Albert L. Park, 'A Sacred Economy of Value and Production: Capitalism and Protestantism in Early Modern Korea (1885-1919)', in Albert L. Park and David K. Yoo (eds.), *Encountering Modernity: Christianity in East Asia and Asian America* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2014), 19.

<sup>34</sup> Horace H. Underwood, 'Industrial Training in the Far East', *Missionary Review of the World* (September 1918), 677.

quotes Chiho Yun and his school several times to support the argument. But Yun's school belonged to the Southern Methodist mission and he did not support the NRM. The NRM in Seoul began to change from 1897 and its focus gradually shifted from planting indigenous churches to promoting Christian civilisation by institutions. The churches in Seoul in the 1910s were no longer under the Nevius method per se. It is true that the NRM, Protestant ethics, and its Christian civilisation theory had contributed to the rise of capitalism in early modern Korea; however, there were more diverse factors than just a mission method. It is hard to directly connect the self-supporting principle of the NRM with the rise of early Korean capitalism and industry.

### **Conclusion**

As the Presbyterian churches in South Korea grew explosively after the Korean War (1950-1953), they propagated a monolithic image of the constantly expanding church from the beginning of the mission and explained it with the Nevius method. This supported their church growth theory along with its policy of the separation of church and state. In fact, they were favoured by the Seungman Rhee's 'Christian regime' from 1948 to 1960 (like the missions were favoured by King Kojong from 1884 to 1897) or supported and checked by the Chunghee Park's 'Yusin regime' in the 1970s (like the churches were under the Japanese government in the 1910s). In this milieu, the 'nationalist church' historiography since the 1970s, influenced by the project of the general 'national history' that aimed to overcome the Japanese colonial historical perspective, offered the Nevius method a special place in the story of national resistance against Japanese imperialism, the enlightenment of the people, and the development of capitalism. They argued that it was the Protestant missions and the Nevius method that gave Koreans the knowledge and values needed to struggle against the colonial state and to develop a new economic system. Thus, the use and misuse of the Nevius method have been legitimised in the past four decades. As this chapter does not want to repeat this kind of historical abuse of the NRM, it emphatically puts the method in its original historical context. The investigation of its early development and modifications in the progress of the first-generation Korean Presbyterian Church will help the contemporary church understand its past trials and errors and prepare for its future trajectory in the decline of constituency and influence.

# THE SIGNIFICANCE OF KOREAN WORLD MISSION FOR MISSION STUDIES

Kirsteen Kim

It is widely reported that South Korea is one of the world's largest missionary-sending countries.<sup>1</sup> Being a large movement, its inclusion in the study of missions is expected; however, in this article, I suggest that not only the power but also the very existence, motivations, means, and aims of Korean world missions are highly significant for the development and future of mission studies.

## Power: Korean World Mission

If Protestant sending overseas alone is considered, South Korean missionary numbers are second only to the United States, although the actual number – about 20,000 – is only a sixth of the US total. If global Catholic sending is also taken into account, in 2010 South Korea ranked fifth in both total missionary numbers and missionaries per capita.<sup>2</sup> In 2011, Korean Protestant missionaries were active in 177 countries. More than half were serving in other parts of Asia, including the Middle East, the main destinations being China, Japan, and the Philippines. Russia, Thailand, Indonesia, and India were also large fields and there were several hundred Korean missionaries involved in campus ministries in the USA, Germany, and Canada.<sup>3</sup> Although the rate of growth of Protestant missions is slowing<sup>4</sup> an increasing number of Catholic missionaries are being commissioned. According to the 2012 Bishops' Conference, 183 Korean priests were engaged in mission to foreign nations and 400 more were serving the Korean diaspora. The number of Koreans serving overseas with missionary congregations – both founded in Korea and elsewhere – was around 700; the vast majority of them were religious sisters. Although this figure is only a fraction of the Protestant one, it is increasing by about 10% annually. The

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<sup>1</sup> Especially Rob Moll, 'Missions Incredible', *Christianity Today* (24 February 2006).

<sup>2</sup> Todd M. Johnson and Kenneth R. Ross (eds.), *Atlas of Global Christianity* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 259.

<sup>3</sup> Steve Sang-cheol Moon, 'The Protestant Missionary Movement in Korea: Current Growth and Development', *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 32:2 (2008), 59-64.

<sup>4</sup> Steve Sang-cheol Moon, 'Missions from Korea 2012: Slowdown and Maturation', *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 36:2 (2012), 84-85.

continued growth of overseas service in missions seems certain, as Catholic numbers in South Korea continue to rise and as Korean seminaries are turning out a surplus of priests who can be deployed globally.

It is not just the size and extent of the Korean missionary movement that suggests it will have significant global impact in the next few decades but also its wealth. South Korea has 14 million mostly middle and upper class Christians and a GDP ranked in the world's top 20. Furthermore, Korean Christians are generous givers, many of whom tithe their income.<sup>5</sup> Not only have they been funding activities overseas but South Korean churches have played a significant part in shaping the global mission agenda by generously hosting global church and mission events, from the Pentecostal World Conference in 1973 to the World Council of Churches General Assembly in 2013.

### Existence: Mission from the East

Even if it were a smaller movement, the existence of a world missionary movement from South Korea would challenge mission studies, which still reflects its origins in the nineteenth century as a discipline developed in the West to inform its missionary movement.<sup>6</sup> In 1910, the World Missionary Conference at Edinburgh was primarily concerned with strategy and tactics to achieve the necessary conditions for the coming of the kingdom of God.<sup>7</sup> This was chiefly expressed in terms of 'carrying the gospel to all the non-Christian world'<sup>8</sup> and was closely related to European colonial activities of education and government.<sup>9</sup> Consequently, in the post-colonial period, not only the missionary enterprise but also the theological foundation for continued missionary sending were questioned. In both Protestant ecumenical and Catholic circles, mission studies became less about method and planning and more about a search for a theology that could undergird ongoing global engagement and for a spirituality that would distance

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<sup>5</sup> Gil-soo Han, Joy J. Han, and Andrew Eun-gi Kim, "'Serving Two Masters': Protestant Churches in Korea and Money', *International Journal for the Study of the Christian Church* 9:4 (2009), 333-60, 347-48.

<sup>6</sup> See, for example, the reports prepared for the World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh in 1910 published in Edinburgh and London by Oliphant, Anderson and Ferrier.

<sup>7</sup> Brian Stanley, *The World Missionary Conference, Edinburgh 1910* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2009), 1-5.

<sup>8</sup> See, World Missionary Conference, *Report of Commission 1: Carrying the Gospel to All the Non-Christian World* (Edinburgh and London: Oliphant, Anderson and Ferrier, 1910).

<sup>9</sup> World Missionary Conference, *Report of Commission 3: Education in Relation to the Christianisation of National Life* (Edinburgh and London: Oliphant, Anderson and Ferrier, 1910). World Missionary Conference, *Report of Commission 7: Missions and Governments* (Edinburgh and London: Oliphant, Anderson and Ferrier, 1910).

mission from colonial patterns.<sup>10</sup> This theology was found in the ecumenical consensus around the *missio Dei* paradigm, that is, mission should be primarily understood as a participation in the sending activity of God the Father of Christ and the Holy Spirit into the world.<sup>11</sup> Both the *missio Dei* and its corollary that each local church is missionary were suited to the post-war world in which the sending of missionaries was difficult and contentious. During the Cold War, western churches were forced to withdraw from what had been their main mission fields of India and China and some churches in the Third World, wishing to assert their independence from their former colonial masters, called for a moratorium on mission. When church attendance in Europe declined, secularisation rose and Christian values appeared to be lost. This called attention to the need for the evangelisation of Europe and justified the local church's missional focus. Even though contemporary missions were winding up or reinventing themselves, the study of the western missionary movement could continue from a historical perspective.<sup>12</sup> However, for a number of reasons – including that mission was no longer connected with the government and that churches were declining in social status in the West, as well as that mission was tainted by its colonial past – mission studies declined in western academies. Scholarly interest shifted from the transmission of the faith to its appropriation in diverse contexts under the heading of 'world Christianity' or 'intercultural theology'.

However, the existence of the Korean missionary movement challenges any perception that missionary sending is largely a thing of the past and that mission studies should, in the academy, be devoted to world Christianity or intercultural theology,<sup>13</sup> or, in the churches, focus only on local evangelism. The same tools of analysis that have been applied to western movements should now be utilised to study South Korean missionary sending. Under the heading 'reverse mission', some attention has been given to non-western movements, particularly African Pentecostalism, as they impinge on the West in terms of migrant congregations.<sup>14</sup> There is a significant Korean effort to evangelise the West

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<sup>10</sup> See, for example, Daryl Balia and Kirsteen Kim (eds.), *Edinburgh 2010: Witnessing to Christ Today* (Oxford: Regnum Books, 2010).

<sup>11</sup> David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1991).

<sup>12</sup> For example, through the Yale-Edinburgh Group on the history of the missionary movement.

<sup>13</sup> For example, Werner Ustorf, 'The Cultural Origins of "Intercultural" Theology', in Richard Friedli, Jan Jongeneel, Klaus Koschorke, Theo Sundermeier, and Werner Ustorf (eds.), *Intercultural Perceptions and Prospects of World Christianity* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2010), 81-104, 88.

<sup>14</sup> See, for example, Afe Adogame and Shobana Shankar (eds.), *Religion on the Move! New Dynamics of Religious Expansion in a Globalizing World* (Leiden: Brill, 2013).



coupled with a widespread perception that the churches in Europe and North America, which had once led world mission, are dying or even 'dead' and a belief that the torch that had once been relayed from Europe to the USA is now being passed on to Asia.<sup>15</sup> However, it is incorrect to describe the whole Korean missionary movement by this terminology because its objective is not simply to go in a direction opposite from western movements. The Korean missionary movement is multi-directional and its chief focus is on other Asian countries and other parts of the Majority World. The phenomenon should be studied in its own terms as a Korean movement arising out of a particular Korean experience.<sup>16</sup> In South Korea itself, statistical analysis of the movement, study of its historical origins, and theological reflection are well developed and are having a significant effect on mission studies, as this chapter shows.

### **Motivations: Christianity as a Missionary Religion**

Although the base and direction is different, Korean mission is related to modern missions because, just as in Korean theology in general, it draws on the evangelisation from the West for its models and rhetoric. Both Catholic and Protestant churches in Korea claim that Koreans themselves founded the first Christian communities, but they then called the missionaries – after the pattern of the Macedonian call of Acts 16 – who connected Korea with world Christianity as a mission field. Western missions were viewed positively by Christians as bringing social and economic benefits, and eventually independence, to the country.<sup>17</sup>

Not only is being evangelised a relatively recent memory for Korean Christians but, in this highly literate society, it has been documented from the Korean as well as the western side. Between the first evangelisation of Korea and the present, there has hardly been a period when the churches were neither sending nor receiving. That the Korean movement owes much to the western one is evident in the central motif of Korean mission

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<sup>15</sup> Cho-choon Park, 'The Dynamics of Young Nak Presbyterian Church Growth', in Bong-Rin Ro and Marlin L. Nelson (eds.), *Korean Church Growth Explosion* (Seoul: Word of Life Press, 1983), 201-20, 206; Dough K. Oh, 'History of the Korean Diaspora Movement', in S. Hun Kim and Wonsuk Ma (eds.), *Korean Diaspora and Christian Mission* (Oxford: Regnum Books, 2011), 181-96, 181.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Sebastian C.H. Kim and Kirsteen Kim, *A History of Korean Christianity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015); Kirsteen Kim, 'South Korea as a Missionary Centre of World Christianity: Developments after the Liberation (1945)', in Klaus Koschorke (ed.), *Polycentric Structures of World Christianity. Studies in the History of Christianity in Asia, Africa, Latin America 20* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2014), 111-29.

<sup>17</sup> For example, David Kwang-sun Suh, 'American Missionaries and a Hundred Years of Korean Protestantism', *International Review of Mission* 74/293 (1986), 5-18.



motivation: the desire to 'repay the debt of the gospel', that is, to fulfil the obligation arising in Confucian culture on receipt of a gift. The grace received from Christ's suffering on the cross and the sacrifice made by the missionaries to Korea together represent a gift that demands a generous response. Furthermore, to be able to 'repay the debt' is a matter of national pride and a duty to the martyrs, whose blood should be the seed of the CGM church. This motive has been articulated by Catholic<sup>18</sup> as well as Protestant<sup>19</sup> missions.

Far from seeing missions as a politically incorrect legacy of a colonial past, Korean Christians embrace sending – especially cross-culturally – as one of the highest expressions of Christian love. Furthermore, the sending of Korean missionaries is regarded as signifying Christian maturity and declaring the standing of the Korean church among the churches of the world. In 1912, not long after its founding (1907), the Presbyterian Church of Korea marked its membership of global Christianity by commissioning three men to take the gospel to China's Shandong Province.<sup>20</sup> The Korean Catholic Church, which came into existence in 1962, likewise described its world mission initiative in the 1970s as 'a sign of a mature Korean Church' motivated by gratitude, responsibility, and compassion.<sup>21</sup>

South Korean Christianity is a minority faith in a country steeped in more ancient religious traditions and in which religious freedom has been fought for against Confucian hegemony, Japanese oppression, and the atheistic communist regime in the North. It has survived in large part because of its global Christian ties and has grown through evangelistic and missionary activity. Korean Christianity is characteristically outgoing and highlights for mission studies the missionary currents in Christianity as a religion.

### Means: History of Mission

Being an example of a modern world missionary movement of non-western origin, the Korean missionary movement is a reminder that missions in Christian history have not only been from the West to the East and the South but also from the East to the West and the North, especially in the first millennium. Although its scale, the resources behind it, and the fact

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<sup>18</sup> Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences, *Living Mission in Asia: Recent Initiatives of Local Churches for Evangelization*, Paper 88 (Manila: FABC, 1999), 21-24.

<sup>19</sup> For example, Myung-hyuk Kim, 'Korean Mission in the World Today and Its Problems', in *Korean Church Growth Explosion*, 127-34, 133.

<sup>20</sup> See, Choi Young-woong, 'The Mission of the Presbyterian Church of Korea in Shandong, North China, 1913-1957', in Klaus Koschorke (ed.), *Transcontinental Links in the History of Non-Western Christianity* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2002), 117-30.

<sup>21</sup> Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences, *Living Mission in Asia*, 21.

that it is from Asia make it unique thus far in the modern era, South Korea is one of several former mission fields from the colonial period that is now a missionary-sending country (others include Brazil and Nigeria). Their emergence is evidence that the drive for missions and world Christianity no longer lies with Europe. The de-centring of Europe sets European world missions in a longer historical and broader geographical scheme that invites the rewriting of mission history as part of a 'history of the world Christian movement', which from its inception was global and polycentric.<sup>22</sup>

Korea makes a fertile historical case study for the reasons for the emergence of missionary movements in general. Space does not permit more than a listing of some of the key factors identified:<sup>23</sup> first, the relationship between mission and national interests. There was a close link between the adoption of Christianity in Korea and movements for national salvation during the period of instability at the turn of the twentieth century, under Japanese occupation, and in the establishment of South Korea and its struggle against the North. In this light, the Shandong mission, for example, which continued into the 1950s, was all the more meaningful to the identity of the church when the independence of the nation had been taken away by Japanese colonial occupation. Through overseas links and missionary sending, Korean churches have a voice among the world's churches. In the current context, they declare the religious freedom that is conspicuously absent in North Korea. World missions both raises the profile of South Korean Christianity in a way that guards against the threat of Communism and also promotes a global peace that may eventually lead to reconciliation on the peninsula itself.

A second factor is the relationship between mission and migration. The Korean missionary movement is closely connected to the Korean diaspora, which, for various reasons, is largely Christian.<sup>24</sup> The existence of an extensive global Korean diaspora due to the instability in Korea since the mid-nineteenth century facilitated the Korean missionary movement by providing bases in different regions that offered local know-how, operations bases, and practical and religious support.

A third factor is that the Korean missionary movement highlights the link between missionary and economic flows. The Korean missionary movement was not powerful or extensive until Korea became an exporting country with a liberalised and growing economy. Although Koreans were sent out for mission from the early twentieth century and missionaries could be supported by diaspora communities, the ability to send missionaries strategically has been greatly enhanced by the increased resources of the churches since the 1970s and the greater ability to send

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<sup>22</sup> Dale T. Irvin and Scott W. Sunquist, *History of the World Christian Movement*, 2 vols. (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2001; 2012).

<sup>23</sup> For further details, see, Kim and Kim, *A History of Korean Christianity*.

<sup>24</sup> See S. Hun Kim and Wonsuk Ma (eds), *Korean Diaspora and Christian Mission* (Oxford: Regnum Books, 2011).

funds out of the country brought about by the economic liberalisation in the 1980s. Protestant missions in particular have links to business enterprises and these provide entry into countries that might otherwise be closed to missionary activity.

### Aims: Theology of Mission

Mission studies stands to benefit from critical examination of several decades of Protestant missionary work from a Korean standpoint and the development of a Korean theology of mission. Some of its distinctive features will be mentioned here. First, because of the revival history of Korean Protestantism, its mission theology is often expressed pneumatologically as the mission of the Holy Spirit to give life and defeat evil. Attention to the mission of the Spirit is found across the theological spectrum, from Nam-dong Suh Minjung theology, which was a liberation theology of the Spirit in Korean history,<sup>25</sup> to Yonggi Cho's Pentecostal understanding of the 'fourth-dimension' that transcends all other spirits.<sup>26</sup> There are both negative and positive aspects of Korean mission pneumatology. On the one hand, revivalism has encouraged competition among churches and agencies to send more missionaries and rivalry between mission leaders. Victory in the Spirit has been confused with triumphalism and paternalism; the expectation of divine intervention has generated a sense of urgency that has militated against judgment; and confidence in the Spirit's power has been an excuse for poor preparation, undeveloped policies, and a lack of proper training and accountability.<sup>27</sup> On the other hand, conviction that God's Spirit is at work in the world generates hope and expectation of new life. The Korean church's confidence in the renewing power of the Holy Spirit both inspires and energises the movement. The global influence of Korean mission

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<sup>25</sup> Suh Nam-dong, 'Historical References for a Theology of the Minjung', in Commission on Theological Concerns of the Christian Conference of Asia (ed.), *Minjung Theology: People as the Subjects of History* (London: Zed Press, 1983), 155-82.

<sup>26</sup> Yonggi (David) Cho, *The Fourth Dimension: More Secrets for a Successful Faith Life* (Secunderabad: Ben Publishing, 1999b [1983]); Yonggi (David) Cho, *The Fourth Dimension: The Key to Putting Your Faith to Work for a Successful Life* (Secunderabad: Ben Publishing, 1999c [1989]); Kirsteen Kim, *The Holy Spirit in the World: A Global Conversation* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2007), 103-39.

<sup>27</sup> For example, Myung-hyuk Kim, 'Korean Mission in the World Today and Its Problems', in *Korean Church Growth Explosion*, 127-34; Council of Presbyterian Churches in Korea, 'Statement on the Mission of the Korean Churches in the New Millennium', *International Review of Mission* 89/353 (April 2000), 233-38; cf. Sooil Chai, 'Missio Dei: Its Development and Limitation in Korea', *International Review of Mission* 92/367 (2003), 538-49.

pneumatology can be seen in the declaration of the 2013 statement on mission by the World Council of Churches.<sup>28</sup>

Second, and connected to the first by its conviction that the Spirit brings material and not merely religious blessing, Korean mission theology is closely linked to theologies of well-being and prosperity. The first western missions to Korea were welcomed because of their potential to contribute to national development; for two decades after the Korean War, South Koreans were the recipients of inter-church aid and development support. The mainstream churches then actively supported successive governments in their efforts to build a strong nation and modernise Korea, with leading pastors closely linking church growth with both personal and national blessing, including material blessing.<sup>29</sup> Confident of this connection because of the economic success of South Korea and the awareness that Korea had been poor not long ago, Korean churches support seminaries, hospitals, and IT and other training institutions around the world. Korean missionaries combine evangelistic and social ministries, expecting that Christianisation will bring about wealth-creation and positive social change, and engaging in educational, medical, and entrepreneurial initiatives to improve the lives of the poor.<sup>30</sup>

Third, given the polarised context of the divided Korean peninsula, Korean mission theology is a political theology. The mass movement to Christianity in the South is in part a demonstration against its suppression in the North. Korean world mission extends that struggle globally. It was linked with Cold War policies and anti-communism<sup>31</sup> and more recently with anti-terrorism and pro-religious freedom and human rights agendas. While popular forms of Christianity have tended to regard North Korea as an enemy to be defeated by mission in the name of Christ, from the 1970s a minority of Christians associated with Minjung theology reached out to North Korea, developing a theology of reconciliation, which contributed to political rapprochement. Following the widespread famine and the near-collapse of the North Korean economy at the end of the Cold War, both progressive and conservative Christians participated in international aid

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<sup>28</sup> World Council of Churches, *Together Towards Life: Mission and Evangelism in Changing Landscapes* (Geneva: WCC, 2013). The statement was drafted by the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism and its secretary, Jooseop Keum, a Korean theologian, prepared the first draft of the introduction and conclusion to the document that reflected indigenous Korean theology.

<sup>29</sup> See, for example, Kyung-Chik Han, *Just Three More Years to Live* (Seoul: Rev. Kyung-Chik Han Memorial Foundation, 2005), 178, 180. Kyung-Chik Han (1902-2000) was the leading Protestant pastor of the second half of the twentieth century.

<sup>30</sup> For further detail, see, Kim and Kim, *A History of Korean Christianity*, 304-14.

<sup>31</sup> See, for example, In-cheol Kang, *Korean Protestant Church and Anti-Communism* [in Korean] (Seoul: Jungsim, 2006).

operations in the North and continue to support some development projects as part of their mission.<sup>32</sup>

A final distinctive and noteworthy facet of Korean mission theology is its emphasis on self-sacrifice. Koreans have known tremendous suffering over the last century and the churches have a history of martyrdom, beginning with the Catholic martyrs from the late eighteenth century. The suffering of Christ is a central motif of missionary preparation and has encouraged Korean missionaries to endure tremendous hardship and enter inhospitable territory. In Korean theology, the Korean nation is closely identified with Israel and with Christ, so there is a sense that the suffering of the peninsula is for the sake of the world and that success in missions is a vindication of that.<sup>33</sup>

### Conclusion

In view of what we have seen of Korean world mission, we must conclude that the study of mission is not only of continuing importance for explaining 'how Christianity became a world religion'<sup>34</sup> but also for understanding how it continues to be such.<sup>35</sup> Mission studies is a vital discipline because, despite arguments against it, world, transnational, cross-cultural, and the even more local missionary activity continues to thrive, in various forms. Sending movements emanate from the West, but also from multiple centres and in directions that western commentators have not anticipated. The study of contemporary missionary movements from Africa, Asia, Latin America, and elsewhere is a neglected area in contemporary scholarship. The local motivations and theologies behind them are poorly understood. This is partly because the sources are not so readily at hand as those of western missions – a problem the Regnum Edinburgh Centenary Series is helping to address. Furthermore, where they are studied, the nomenclature of 'reverse mission' detracts from the global agendas of growing churches outside the West. The study of Korean world mission in particular is of great importance for understanding contemporary world Christianity, for revealing the inherently missionary nature of Christianity as a religion, for revising the history of mission and for the development of a theology of mission.

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<sup>32</sup> Kim and Kim, *A History of Korean Christianity*, 256-73.

<sup>33</sup> Sok-hon Ham, *Queen of Suffering: A Spiritual History of Korea*, trans. E. Sang Yu (London: Friends World Committee for Consultation, 1985).

<sup>34</sup> Dana L. Robert, *Christian Mission: How Christianity Became a World Religion* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009).

<sup>35</sup> Sebastian Kim and Kirsteen Kim, *Christianity as a World Religion* (London: Continuum, 2008).

# THE HOLY SPIRIT MOVEMENT: CHARISMATIC TRADITION IN KOREA

Younghoon Lee

## Introduction

The shaping of the Holy Spirit movement of the Korean church is based on Korea's religiosity and Christian tradition, as well as the birth and spread of Pentecostal denominations, prayer retreat movements, Bible classes, and revival meetings. Therefore, those who are interested in and want to research Charismatic Christianity in Korea should examine the tradition of the Korean church, which achieved remarkable growth through the dynamic work of the Holy Spirit. In this study, the author will examine the key factors of the Korean church's formation and growth and reflect on what they mean while looking forward to the future of the Holy Spirit movement in Korea. The case of the Yoido Full Gospel Church (YFGC) is useful as a representative of the Holy Spirit movement of Korean Christianity. Having begun as a tent church with five initial members in a slum area of Seoul in 1958, the church has grown in its half-century history to be the largest church in the world with 780,000 church members.

## The Formation, Revival, and Growth of the Korean Church<sup>1</sup>

### *The Formation of Korean Christianity*

Before Protestant missionaries came to Korea, the translation of the Bible into Korean was conducted in places like Manchuria and Japan.<sup>2</sup> In 1876, Sangnyun Seo and other Koreans started to translate the Bible with missionary John Ross. *Yesu Seonggyo Jeonseo*, a Korean translation of the New Testament, was published in Manchuria in 1887.<sup>3</sup> In Japan, Sujeong Yi began a Bible translation by request from Henry Loomis, the manager of the American Bible Society in Japan. The Gospel of Mark was translated and published in 1884, which missionary Horace Grant Underwood

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<sup>1</sup> See also other chapters of this volume, such as one by Kirsteen Kim, Timothy K. Park, etc.

<sup>2</sup> See also Je Soon Chung's chapter of this volume.

<sup>3</sup> Young Jae Kim, *The History of Korean Church* (in Korean; Seoul: Korea Society for Reformed Faith and Action, 1996), 63-66; Kyung Bae Min, *The History of Korean Church* (in Korean; Seoul: Korean Christianity Press, 1993), 168-71.

brought with him when he went to Korea.<sup>4</sup> Before western Protestant missionaries entered Korea, Koreans accepted the Christian faith, translated the Bible, and returned to Korea to evangelise and establish churches. This is a rare case in the history of world mission. As there was a Korean translation of the Bible, the Korean church came to have a tradition of passionate Bible study, a primary characteristic of Korean Christianity that brought about the growth of the church. This is one reason why missionaries could bear abundant fruits of mission.<sup>5</sup> In 1887, fourteen who came to the Christian faith through an interaction with Bible sellers established Jeongdong Church and Saemoonan Presbyterian Church, the first churches established in Seoul by Koreans with the assistance of the missionaries.<sup>6</sup>

### *The Revival and Growth of the Korean Church*

In 1903, missionaries encountered the powerful work of the Holy Spirit in Wonsan. This revival continued in the ensuing years: through the unified prayer meetings by denomination in January 1904, the special bible classes in Pyongyang in 1905, and the Mokpo revival meeting in 1906. The series of prayer meetings and revival meetings were places where people experienced Spirit baptism.<sup>7</sup>

The flames of prayer that began in Wonsan climaxed with the revival meeting of Jangdaehyeon in Pyongyang in 1907.<sup>8</sup> When a Bible class was held in this church, the fire of the Holy Spirit fell on the people gathered. They experienced deep repentance and received the fullness and the power of the Holy Spirit. The fire of the revival in Pyongyang spread to the schools and the students that missionaries taught, as well as all over the

<sup>4</sup> In Soo Kim, *A Summary of the History of Korean Church* (in Korean; Seoul: Korean Presbytery Press, 1998) 56.

<sup>5</sup> Younghoon Lee, *The Holy Spirit and the Church* (in Korean; Seoul: Church Growth Institute, 2013), 99.

<sup>6</sup> In Soo Kim, *A Summary of the History of Korean Church*, 63-64.

<sup>7</sup> Robert A. Hardie, who was a U.S. Southern Methodist missionary; A. F. Robb, who was a missionary of the Presbyterian Church of Canada; and so on experienced Spirit baptism at the Wonsan prayer meeting in 1903, and other prayer meetings continued after it. 'R.A. Hardie's Report,' *Annual Report of Korea Mission of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South*, 1903, 26; Guil Seop Song, *The Theological History in Korea* (in Korean; Seoul: Korean Christianity Publishing, 1987), 150-51; Taek Boo Jeon, *The History of Korean Christianity* (in Korean; Seoul: Korean Christianity Publishing, 1987), 158.

<sup>8</sup> See the following about the Pyongyang Great Revival Movement in 1907: William N. Blair: *The Korean Pentecost and Other Experience on the Mission Field* (New York: Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., 1910); William N. Blair and Bruce F. Hunt, *The Korean Pentecost and the Suffering which Followed* (Carlisle: Banner of Truth Trust, 1977).



nation.<sup>9</sup> The revival movement, called the ‘Korean Pentecost’, formed the spiritual tradition of the Korean church. Its characteristics include persistent prayer, Bible study, and evangelism, which brought rapid growth to the church, both in number and in its commitment to sanctified life.<sup>10</sup>

In the initial process of Japanese annexation, Koreans were in hopeless grief as the nation had lost its sovereignty. It was through Christian faith that the nation was consoled; thus, the Korean church grew in spite of this national humiliation and tragedy. In the March First Independence Movement (1919), the Christian church played an active role and consequently attained recognition that Christianity is a religion that promotes love of country and of people. This encouraged many to convert to the Christian faith, and this growth was sustained even under harsh colonial rule.<sup>11</sup>

The growth rate of the Korean church from 1920 to 1925 reached 30%, and the number of baptised believers increased from 69,000 to 89,000 people.<sup>12</sup> When Korea was filled with a feeling of hopelessness and disappointment caused by the remote possibility of the restoration of its national rights, the Korean church led the new spiritual awakening and revival through revival meetings, with Bible classes initiated by spiritual leaders like Seonju Gil, Igdu Kim, and Yongdo Lee.<sup>13</sup>

From the mid-1930s until the liberation from Japan’s colonial rule in 1945, the Korean church went through an ordeal under the coercion of Shinto worship from Japan. However, liberated from Japan’s occupation, the Korean church gave its best to the reconstruction of the church. It led a revival movement with social service activities during the Korean War (1950-53). Each denomination conducted a save-the-nation drive, refugee relief activities, and an evangelism and revival movement, which expanded the congregation. In the 1950s, the church grew as people suffering because of the war became receptive and believers from the north evangelised.<sup>14</sup>

In the 1960s, the Korean church rejected the division and confrontation incurred by theological discussion and united to hold a grand evangelism rally, which included the ecumenical movement between denominations as a way of devoting oneself to the country and its people.<sup>15</sup> Furthermore, in

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<sup>9</sup> Y.J. Kim, *The History of Korean Church*, 110-16.

<sup>10</sup> Younghoon Lee, *The Present State of the Holy Spirit Movement* (in Korean; Seoul: International Theological Institute, 1993), 103-106. Y. Lee, *The Holy Spirit and the Church*, 102-103.

<sup>11</sup> Young Heon Lee, *The History of Korean Church* (in Korean; Seoul: Concordia, 1992), 153.

<sup>12</sup> Myung Won Seo, *The History of Church Growth in Korea* (in Korean; Seoul, Korean Christian Publishing, 1966), 76.

<sup>13</sup> Y. Lee, *The Holy Spirit and the Church*, 106.

<sup>14</sup> Jin Whan Kim, *The History of Revival Movement of Korean Church* (Seoul: Seoul Logos, 1993), 208-10.

<sup>15</sup> Y. Lee, *The Holy Spirit and the Church*, 110.



the 1970s and 80s, interdenominational grand revival rallies were thriving.<sup>16</sup> With such massive rallies, each denomination concentrated on efforts for the growth of the church. Through these movements, the Korean church successfully accomplished church growth.<sup>17</sup>

It is notable that the Pentecostal Christianity, especially through YFGC's Holy Spirit movement, greatly contributed to the growth of the Korean church in the same period. Yonggi Cho and YFGC also spread the Holy Spirit movement beyond Korea to the rest of the world through vigorous activities of evangelism with the theological scheme of the holistic salvation of fivefold gospel and threefold blessing.<sup>18</sup>

## The Key Factors of the Growth of the Korean Church

### *Spiritual Renewal through Revival Meetings*

In its early years, the Korean (Protestant) church experienced a nationwide spiritual revival and church growth through the great revival movement originating in Pyongyang. During the Japanese occupation, the church experienced continuing growth through revival movements. One example is the 'One Million Soul Salvation movement'. There have been several key leaders throughout Korea's revival history: Seonju Gil, Igdu Kim, Yongdo Lee, Sungbong Lee, Jaebong Park, and so on.

The Korean church stands out with its unique scriptural tradition. First, Bible translation was initiated and conducted by the Koreans themselves. The revival, characterised by repentance and the fullness of the Holy Spirit, was based on a word-centred foundation. Through this rich Bible-based tradition, the Korean church developed a deep tradition of prayer in various forms such as praying with a loud voice, the early morning prayer, and praying all through the night.

The role of YFGC has been critical in the development of the Holy Spirit movement since the late 1950s. It has continued to carry the fire of the Holy Spirit movement through a strong emphasis on prayer and new forms of prayer programmes. It developed the all-night prayer, fasting

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<sup>16</sup> There were many interdenominational mass evangelical rallies such as the 1973 Billy Graham Seoul Grand Evangelical Rally, the Explo 1974 Evangelical Rally, the 1977 National Evangelization Rally, the 1980 World Evangelical Rally, the 1984 Centennial Anniversary of Mission Rally of Korean Christianity, and the 1988 Evangelical Rally. The 1977 National Evangelization Rally instilled the Korean church with confidence to be one and contributed to the social security. Moreover, it was not initiated by foreign missionaries invited but by Korean revivalists, which served as momentum to re-evaluate the potentiality of Korean church.

<sup>17</sup> Y. Lee, *The Holy Spirit and the Church*, 113.

<sup>18</sup> J.W. Kim, *The History of Revival Movement*, 243.

prayer, 'Jericho prayer', and 'Daniel prayer', all of which fuelled a spiritual revival and church growth.<sup>19</sup>

### *Nevius Principle*

Missionaries who entered Korea in the early days applied the so called 'Nevius mission strategy' to the Korean church. It advocated the principle that Koreans themselves should lead in financial affairs, faith, mission, and evangelism, and it helped the Korean church gain independence and self-sustainability. This indigenous church principle was widely practiced throughout the Protestant history of Korea.

Evangelistic activities were particularly emphasised, and the efforts were mainly directed towards people from the lower social strata. As a consequence, many who were underprivileged in society accepted the Christian faith and became the driving force of the growth of Korean church.<sup>20</sup>

### *Formation of Pentecostal Denominations*

As discussed above, Korean Christianity has emphasised the fullness of the Holy Spirit in its theology and practice throughout its history, and the revivals shared the characteristics of the Pentecostal spiritual experience. Also, many Charismatic spiritual leaders were drawn to the spiritual awakening and revival with the Holy Spirit movement. The first Pentecostal missionary to Korea was Mary Rumsey, who experienced Spirit baptism and tongue-speaking at the Azusa Street Revival in April 1906.<sup>21</sup> It was twenty-two years after her calling that she entered Korea, in 1928.<sup>22</sup> Therefore, she did not introduce the Pentecostal faith to Korea: the wind of the Holy Spirit had already blown twenty-five years prior to Rumsey's arrival.

It was not until the spring of 1933 that the endeavours and efforts of Pentecostal missionaries bore fruit. Rumsey participated in the establishment of Seobinggo Church with Sungsan Park, who had returned from his theological study in Japan, as its pastor. Park believed that speaking in tongues is a sign of Spirit baptism and that social participation is desirable in the Christian faith. He also insisted that Pentecostal faith is based on the Book of Acts, with the manifestation of spiritual gifts such as speaking in tongues, divine healing, and supernatural power. Thus, his

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<sup>19</sup> Y. Lee, *The Holy Spirit and the Church*, 122-23.

<sup>20</sup> Y. Lee, *The Holy Spirit and the Church*, 124.

<sup>21</sup> Regarding this, Elder Eun Shik Kwak, a son of Rev. Bong Jo Kwak, an early Pentecostal leader, relayed that there were many people speaking in tongues prior to the arrival of missionary Mary Rumsey, according to his father.

<sup>22</sup> Ig Jin Kim, *History and Theology of Korean Pentecostalism: Sunbogeum Pentecostalism* (Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum, 2003), 58.

ministry was marked by classical characteristics of the Pentecostal faith.<sup>23</sup> In spite of the strong opposition of other churches, Seobinggo Church grew to 70 adult members and 200 children in 1934.<sup>24</sup>

Early leaders of the Korean Pentecostal Church include Hong Hur (1907-91), Sungsan Park (1908-56), Bookeun Bae (1906-70), and so on. However, when Japanese colonial authorities ordered the deportation of all missionaries, the Korean Pentecostal churches were left to national leadership.<sup>25</sup> Their premature departure threatened the embers of revival with extinction. However, when the Japanese occupation finally ended in August 1945, the fire of the Pentecostal Holy Spirit movement began to revive.

The strengthening of the Holy Spirit movement after the independence was epitomised by the development of Pentecostal denominations and the subsequent growth of their congregations, especially of YFGC. The experience of the power of divine healing and the message of hope have been central to their spiritual tradition, which in turn resulted in church growth.<sup>26</sup> There was such a craving and longing for the experience of the Holy Spirit across denominational boundaries, which later contributed to the wide spread of Pentecostal faith, worship, and message.

### The Development of YFGC's Holy Spirit Movement

YFGC was pioneered by Revs. Yonggi Cho and Jashil Choi on 18 May 1958. What set apart YFGC from churches of other denominations was its emphasis on Spirit baptism,<sup>27</sup> which was also a fundamental belief of the classical Pentecostal denominations. The development of YFGC can be divided into three periods.

#### *The Pioneering Period (1958-1961)*<sup>28</sup>

This period was the formative stage of the church. One and a half years after the founding of the tent church in Daejodong, an outskirt of Seoul, the number of believers increased to more than 200.<sup>29</sup> One of the reasons for this growth was divine healing. Cho frequently interpreted for western

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<sup>23</sup> Editorial Committee for the 30-Year History of the Assembly of God in Korea, *The 30-Year History of the Assembly of God in Korea* (in Korean; Seoul: Jongryong Literature, 1981), 34.

<sup>24</sup> *The 30-Year History of the Assembly of God*, 41.

<sup>25</sup> *The 30-Year History of the Assembly of God*, 46-47.

<sup>26</sup> Y. Lee, *The Holy Spirit and the Church*, 126.

<sup>27</sup> Y. Lee, *The Holy Spirit and the Church*, 117.

<sup>28</sup> Younghoon Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea: Its Historical and Theological Development* (Oxford: Regnum, 2009), 95.

<sup>29</sup> Ja Shil Choi, *I was Mrs. Hallelujah* (in Korean; Seoul: Seoul Logos, 2010), 208, 273.

preachers in the revival meetings with a focus on divine healing. He witnessed healings take place through healing evangelists.<sup>30</sup> At that time, the Assemblies of God of the U.S.A. set Korea as a target country for an evangelism movement. With its financial support, a 'Full Gospel Revival Center' was established to support urban missions.<sup>31</sup> The tent church moved to this downtown location in 1962.

### *The Developing Period (1962-1973)*

Less than ten years after the facilities of Full Gospel Central Church in Seodaemun were completed, church membership grew to 8,000. The second period can be distinguished from the pioneering years in that, if the first period is characterised by Cho's limited experience, in the second period of development, the work of the Holy Spirit experienced in the revival and renewal became the communal experience of the church.<sup>32</sup> Because of the explosive church growth of the YFGC, Pastor Yonggi Cho constructed a system for organisation. Cho invented the cell organisation system based on Exodus 18, which became a driving force of the YFGC's development as a worldwide church.<sup>33</sup> In 1969, Cho planned another move and the construction of a church building with 10,000 seats. This was the beginning of the era of the YFGC today.<sup>34</sup>

### *Spread of the Holy Spirit Movement (1974-present)*

As the Full Gospel Central Church became a megachurch, Cho began to be involved in world mission. In 1975, he established a missionary organisation, Full Gospel World Mission, to plan and implement his desire for world mission. The Full Gospel World Mission Inc. became the foundation of his international mission. In the following year, he founded Church Growth International and opened a seminary to train church planters, pastors, and missionaries.<sup>35</sup> In January 1984, the church changed its name to Yoido Full Gospel Church to reflect its location. In 1988, Cho established the *Kukmin Ilbo*, a daily newspaper, to bring distinct Christian

<sup>30</sup> Yonggi Cho, *Do You Really Want the Church Growth?* (Seoul: Seoul Logos, 1990), 84.

<sup>31</sup> Yoonhoon Lee, *Traces of the Holy Spirit Movement* (Seoul: Seoul Logos, 2014), 148.

<sup>32</sup> Y. Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea*, 97.

<sup>33</sup> Editorial Committee of the 50-Year History of the Assemblies of God in Korea, *The 50-Year History of the Assembly of God in Korea: Great Calling and Ministry of Hope in 50 Years* (Seoul: Assemblies of God in Korea, 2005), 95.

<sup>34</sup> Editorial Committee of the 60-Year History of the Assemblies of God in Korea, *The 60-Year History of the Assembly of God in Korea with the Holy Spirit* (Seoul: Assembly of God in Korea, 2013), 93-94.

<sup>35</sup> Y. Lee, *Traces of the Holy Spirit Movement*, 171-73.

perspectives to current events. It also includes a section for Christian voices and reflections. As a result, YFGC exerts Christian influence on mainstream society while representing Korean Christianity in international settings. Younghoon Lee, who succeeded Cho since 2008, has continued and strengthened the emphases on the Holy Spirit movement and social service.<sup>36</sup>

## Characteristics and Contribution of the Holy Spirit Movement

### *Characteristics*

At least four things characterise the Holy Spirit movement in Korea, centred on the YFGC. The first characteristic of the Holy Spirit movement of the Korean church is the emphasis on prayer movements. The Wonsan revival (1903) and the Pyongyang revival (1907), both which decisively shaped the spirituality of the Korean church, started from missionaries' prayer meetings.<sup>37</sup> The Yoido Full Gospel Church's emphasis on prayer is well known because of its large international prayer mountain, which attracts an interdenominational and international crowd. In addition to the various prayer programmes of the church mentioned above, there are three early prayer meetings every day at five, six, and seven o'clock, and an overnight prayer meeting every day at the YFGC. Furthermore, every Friday night, a large overnight prayer session is held at the main sanctuary; this weekly special prayer is particularly to seek the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

The second characteristic is the experience of the fullness of the Spirit. When the great revival broke out in 1907, the word 'the Holy Spirit' appeared very often in missionary reports and messages and in their teaching and preaching.<sup>38</sup> The great revival was ignited as Hardie (in 1903); A.F. Robb, a Canadian Presbyterian missionary (in 1904); and other missionaries experienced the Holy Spirit. This spiritual experience reached Presbyterians, Methodists, and believers of other denominations. As mentioned earlier, there was a report about speaking in tongues during the spiritual revival in the early 1900s.<sup>39</sup> YFGC has brought this tradition of spiritual movement that had been set aside as a special experience occurring in revivals or on prayer mountains into everyday congregational

<sup>36</sup> Younghoon Lee, 'Looking Forward to the Next 50 Years of Yoido Full Gospel Church,' *Christian Thoughts* (June 2009), 208-15.

<sup>37</sup> K.B. Min, *The History of Korean Church*, 289-90.

<sup>38</sup> Y. Lee, *The Holy Spirit and the Church*, 64-65.

<sup>39</sup> J.S. Gale, *Korea in Transition* (New York: Young People's Missionary Movement of the United States and Canada, 1909), 216; Myoung Soo Park, *The Research of the Revival Movement of the Korean Church* (in Korean; Seoul: Institute for the History of Korean Christianity, 2003), 63.

and Christian life. The church, through Cho's strong emphasis on the person and word of the Holy Spirit, has brought pneumatology into the theological discourse of Korean Christianity. Cho's pneumatology, following traditional Pentecostal theology, includes beliefs such as the fullness of the Holy Spirit, speaking in tongues, healing, exorcism, and so on. Moreover, it is not just a theological construct: it is a live-out theology, that is, miracles and healings are meant to be experienced as part of Christian life. This has brought powerful transformation in countless lives and has significantly impacted Korean Christianity. Moreover, this influence is now globally shared through Cho's international ministries and publications.

The third characteristic is the emphasis on divine healing. Even before the appearance of the Pentecostal missionaries and early Pentecostal congregations, healing had already been deeply ingrained in Korean Christian life. In the 1920s, a Presbyterian preacher Igdu Kim was widely known for his healing ministries. According to the records, during the revival meeting in the Kyoungsaneup Church in Kyoungbook Province on 17-23 April 1920, many people experienced healing miracles. Hundreds of people also received healing at Daegu Namsungjung Church from 21 April to 1 May of the same year.<sup>40</sup> In the 1930s, Rev. Sungbong Lee was also active in healing ministry, believing that he was continuing Igdu Kim's. His revival meetings were marked by healing miracles.<sup>41</sup> However, the healing movement of the Korean church, initially led by Kim and Lee, reached a new height through Cho's ministry. With his firm theological basis of healing as the atoning work of Christ, Cho has made healing a normative part of Christian belief and experience. His theology of healing, however, points to more than sin as the cause for sickness. He regularly cast out demons through the power of the Holy Spirit as part of his healing practice.

The fourth characteristic can be termed the practice of the 'word-of-God movement'. The revival movement of the Korean church as it began in the early 1900s was the Holy Spirit movement based on the word of God. In fact, for quite some time, the common name of the revival meeting was 'Bible Class' (or sakyong-hoi). For a period of time (e.g., for a week), Christians gathered in a large centrally located church to read and study the Bible. It was also a revival gathering where they came to listen to preaching based on the scriptures they were studying. This tradition of passionate study of God's word became a prominent characteristic of Korean Christian spirituality, along with fervent and audible prayer.<sup>42</sup> The emphasis on the

<sup>40</sup> Chun Geun Han, *Kim Ik Doo, Immortal Martyr* (in Korean; Seoul: Institute of Biblical Theology, 1993), 112.

<sup>41</sup> Myoung Soo Park, *Rapid and Strong Wind: Rev. Yonggi Cho, Yoido Full Gospel Church, and the Pentecostal Movement* (in Korean; Seoul: Seoul Logos Press, 2012), 67.

<sup>42</sup> Blair and Hunt (Blair and Hunt, *The Korean Pentecost*, 67) made this observation

word has firmly grounded the Holy Spirit movement as a Bible-centred movement.

With these four characteristics as the foundation, the church has developed various teaching programmes as well as instructional material for the systematic teaching of its church members.<sup>43</sup>

### *Contributions*

From the long list of contributions of the Holy Spirit movement to Korean Christianity, three may be highlighted. The first is the growth and renewal of the church through the work of the Holy Spirit. We can gain a sense that, throughout Korean church history, whenever the church reached a point of lethargy, the Holy Spirit intervened and renewed it. The renewal restores faith from any legalistic tendencies and protects the church from obsession on traditions and ecclesial structures while keeping it more open to the Spirit's creativity. Also the Holy Spirit movement has brought numerical growth to the church as well as spiritual maturity to believers. At Yoido Church, the Holy Spirit movement has been strengthened through the powerful prayer movement and the cell system, and soon it spread across the denominational boundaries, effecting wider church growth. Some churches in Korea prioritise rationality, but they tend to be spiritually stagnant. On the contrary, the Holy Spirit movement brings new vitality as it promotes a passionate and positive attitude and faith.

The second contribution is the concern for the marginalised. Since 1907, the Holy Spirit movement has given hope and courage to those who were and are in desperate situations. It has also proven that the spiritual dynamic helps believers overcome difficulties and even achieve upward social mobility. For instance, YFGC, from its very beginning, reached out to the poor, the sick, and the marginalised with the gospel of hope (Lk. 4:16-18). The message of God's goodness and his desire for a good life for his people is summed up in Cho's unique view of holistic salvation. Based on 3 John 2, the 'Threefold Salvation' of Christ encompasses all aspects of human life, including the spiritual, physical, and material. Blessing is also

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on Korean revival meetings: '...the system of the revival was unique. ... During the revival, Korean Christians focused only on prayer and the Bible study. With this consistent Bible study brought the rapid church growth and the real revival of loving and serving'.

<sup>43</sup> In December 1978, YFGC founded the Full Gospel Educational Institute to establish and spread Pentecostal theology as well as to train laity. In 1933, it was reorganised as the International Theological Institute and expanded its ministries. International Theological Institute, *Theology and Beliefs of the Yoido Full Gospel Church* (in Korean; Seoul: Seoul Books, 1993), 192; Editorial Committee for the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Yoido Full Gospel Church (ed.), *The 50-Year History of Yoido Full Gospel Church: Great Vision of the Ministry of Hope for 50 Years* (in Korean; Seoul: Yoido Full Gospel Church, 2008), 128, 232-34.



theologically defined as a means rather than an end in itself, stressing the need to live a responsible life to serve others by sharing the blessing received. In recent years, YFGC uses approximately one-third of its annual church budget for mission and social relief work. This has been positively received by the larger society.<sup>44</sup>

The third contribution is the promotion of church unity. From its beginning, the Holy Spirit movement began as an interdenominational unity movement. The Pyongyang Revival in 1907 was an ecumenical revival meeting organised by Presbyterian and Methodist missionaries.<sup>45</sup> Korean Christianity grew through interdenominational revival meetings in the 1970s, such as the Billy Graham Crusade, Explo 74, and National Evangelization. The Assemblies of God of Korea, which YFGC is associated with, has also worked towards church unity. The denomination joined the National Council of Churches of Korea in 1996. In 2013, it also led a Pentecostal evening prayer meeting during the Tenth General Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Busan, Korea. The prayer introduced to the world church the unique spirituality and dynamic worship of the Korean Holy Spirit movement, and this is said to be the first full-scale Pentecostal worship in the history of the ecumenical movement.

### **The Future Tasks for the Korean Holy Spirit Movement**

It suffices to say that the Holy Spirit movement deeply impacted the shaping of Korean Christian spirituality and church growth. However, changing social context calls the church to be constantly journeying with the Holy Spirit as the felt needs of the people change. Just as the entire Korean church has faced a formidable challenge to remain relevant, the Pentecostal Holy Spirit movement shares a similar challenge. Here are several areas that require serious attention and reflection for the movement to continue its critical role, both within the church and in society.

The first need is for critical reflection on its legacy and future shape. In some cases, Christians influenced by the Holy Spirit movement tend to depend on or overemphasise supernatural and miraculous experiences while stressing the affective aspect of faith. Today's Pentecostal movement needs to examine spiritual experiences through the scriptures to develop a mature faith by maintaining a healthy balance between spiritual experiences and the word of God. The Pyongyang Revival began with repentance and Bible study. At the same time, the social context played an important role in the development of the Korean Pentecostal movement. Again, the Pyongyang Revival was a spiritual response to the fall of national identity

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<sup>44</sup> 'Social responsibilities: Now is the time for the Church to share more generously: An Interview with Younghoon Lee, Senior Pastor of the largest church in the world', *Weekly Dong Ah* 890 (June 2013), 30.

<sup>45</sup> Yong Goo Park, *Pyongyang Great Revival Movement* (in Korean; Seoul: Word of Life, 2000), 178-87.



as Japanese forces were moving towards the total annexation of Korea (in 1910). With recognition of this historical experience, Korean Pentecostals need to preserve its valuable legacy. These key components – the Holy Spirit, the word, and the context – already suggest how the Korean Pentecostal church should work to shape its future. This calls for a critical and appreciative assessment of the past, a careful discernment of the new context, and the charting of the future firmly based on the scriptures but widely open to the creative leading of the Holy Spirit.

The second need is for evangelistic social participation. Jesus came to earth to preach good news for the poor, to proclaim freedom for the prisoners, and to release the oppressed (Lk. 4:18). In the past, however, Spirit-filled believers tended to be individualistic and egocentric, ignoring the community aspect of God's people and their social responsibilities.<sup>46</sup> The Holy Spirit is a community-forming Spirit; through its presence and empowerment, the church was born on the day of Pentecost. Thus, Korean Pentecostal churches need to practice love for their neighbours. Denominational divisions, including those of Pentecostal denominations, are against the uniting power of the Holy Spirit. The desire for social engagement, while promoting church unity, was the main reason why the Assemblies of God in Korea joined the National Council of Churches.<sup>47</sup> The Pentecostal movement has to play a prophetic role against political corruption, financial inequality, and social injustice and offer the transforming power of the Holy Spirit both for personal and community life.

The third need is for the development of Pentecostal theology that is faithful to the scriptures and relevant to the context. Common criticism against the Holy Spirit movement was the stress on quantitative growth and the emphasis on spiritual experiences of believers while ignoring theological reflection. Theological reflection and articulation among Pentecostal churches have not been commensurate with its explosive quantitative growth. As a result, some Pentecostals were misled by dogmatic confusion and mysticism. The Pentecostal movement needs to undertake a continuous theologising process to sharpen its identity and unique calling in a given social and Christian context. As Pentecostal theology takes experiences seriously, the scriptures and the theological tradition of the church should take a central place in assessing and evaluating spiritual experiences for their theological soundness. Deep research for a sound Pentecostal theology can be helpfully aided through theological dialogues with scholars from different Christian traditions in self-critical vulnerability and humility.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Y. Lee, *The Holy Spirit and the Church*, 76.

<sup>47</sup> In May 1996, the Assemblies of God, Korea decided to join the National Council of Churches in Korea as a member church.

<sup>48</sup> Y. Lee, *The Holy Spirit and the Church*, 77.

The fourth need is for practical ministries of serving and sharing with evangelistic commitment. The early church had two ministerial foci: evangelism and caring for the needy. Evangelism is to communicate the gospel to non-believers; relief is to take care of the marginalised in need through serving and sharing. These two works were basic ministries of the early church, and are the direction of the Korean church. The ministry of sharing and serving produces the miracle of love and empowerment, as the feeding of multitude by Jesus was motivated by his compassion for the needy and the sacrificial giving of the loaves and fishes. In January 2010, YFGC made a drastic decision to release its twenty local worship places to become autonomous local congregations in the spirit of sharing instead of holding for itself.<sup>49</sup> Its allocation of a third of its total revenue for mission and social service took place after this reduction of church membership. With this commitment, the church has been particularly helping children with heart disease (both within and outside of the country), the elderly population living alone, juvenile heads of households, multicultural families, the urban homeless, North Korean defectors, and neighbours in need.<sup>50</sup>

The fifth need is for commitment to the reconciliation of (North and South) Korea and to the cooperation of the church. Today, Korea may be the only divided country in the world. By this year (2015), this division will have lasted for seventy years. The Korean Pentecostal movement has an important role in reconciling the North and the South and to contributing to the cooperation of the church. With the gospel, the church has helped Korean people overcome their sufferings and sorrows and given them hope. In the post Korean War context, the church achieved remarkable growth through a series of revivals, unprecedented in the history of world Christianity.<sup>51</sup> This took place as the church passionately shared the message of hope to the Korean people, who were in desperate situations due to the ravages of the war. In this situation of North-South conflict, the church is able to provide hope for the reconciliation and the reunification of the nation. To contribute to national peace and unification is a national priority and responsibility, which the Korean Pentecostal church is to share.

The sixth need is for the call to mission to the ends of the earth. The Pentecostal movement is by nature a missionary movement. The empowerment of the Holy Spirit is necessary for effective witnessing (Ac. 1:8). Therefore, the Pentecostal church is expected to provide leadership for mission both at home and abroad. Mission is first of all spiritual: proclaiming salvation through Christ to every people group that has not yet

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<sup>49</sup> Sang Hyun Baek, 'Yoido Full Gospel Church, the project that 20 daughter churches transfer to be independent local churches has accomplished,' *Kookmin Daily News* (7 January 2010).

<sup>50</sup> Mission Life Team, 'YFGC, spending \$35 million per year for social contribution,' *Kookmin Daily News* (29 May 2013).

<sup>51</sup> Y. Lee, *Traces of the Holy Spirit Movement*, 138-97.

heard the gospel. Over the decades, the Western church has gradually given its mission leadership to the churches in the global South. The Korean church, especially the Pentecostal movement, must commit itself to this missionary mandate, both at home and abroad. This includes not only the traditional mission fields in the non-western world but also the increasingly secularising West. Strengthening emerging missionary churches from the global South is an important missionary call placed on the Korean church. With its close geographical proximity, for example, cooperation with the Chinese church and its leaders for mission can open new possibilities. Its impact can be far reaching, since China has the largest population in the world. For this mission, the Korean Pentecostal churches need to support the emerging missionary churches by working together to train future pastors, church planters, and missionaries.

### **Conclusion**

The Korean Pentecostal movement began with the Wonsan (1903) and the Pyongyang Revivals (1907), and their influences have greatly impacted the Korean church and world mission. The Holy Spirit movement has inspired passionate faith and sent messages of hope to the Korean church, as well as to the world church.

When the YFGC proclaimed the message of holistic salvation, the fivefold gospel, and the threefold blessing, the lives of the poor and the sick have been changed. Furthermore, the church should have passion for world mission and reach out to society and its neighbours in need. Even today, the Holy Spirit is working for the church to open its door to its neighbours, who are in spiritual, social, emotional, physical, and material need. If Korean churches respond to the calling of the Holy Spirit with humility and service, they can carry out the Holy Spirit movement through the future generations and around the world.

# KOREAN CHRISTIANITY IN THE CONTEXT OF GLOBAL CHRISTIANITY

Todd M. Johnson

Both Korean Christianity and global Christianity have undergone profound demographic changes since the year 1900. The two have interacted in significant ways with one another, both positive and negative, especially at the beginning of the twenty-first century. This context leads to two questions: What is the significance of global Christianity for Korean Christianity? And what is the significance of Korean Christianity for global Christianity? These questions are important because of the very nature of Christianity itself around the world. Victor Ifeanyi Ezigbo and Reggie L. Williams state:

Christianity is not truly global by its mere presence in many countries of the world. It is truly global when two criteria are met. First, the local communities of the world's nations are given the freedom to rethink and re-express Christianity's teaching about God's relationship with the world through Jesus Christ. And second, the local communities see themselves as equals, conversing and critiquing each other and contributing theologically to Christianity's long tradition.

Korean Christianity offers a unique perspective to global Christianity, and global Christianity is where Korean Christians connect with the worldwide Christian community.

## Korean Christianity

Christianity in the Korean peninsula traces its origins to the eighteenth century, when Catholics from China first entered Korea.<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately, this early history is marked by instances of martyrdom, the earliest of which was in 1791. A vicariate was formed in 1831 and Catholics experienced modest growth over the nineteenth century; by 1900, they numbered 36,000. Protestants arrived in the 1880s and found that evangelistic activity that had originated in China provided many eager new

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<sup>1</sup> Victor Ifeanyi Ezigbo and Reggie L. Williams, 'Converting a Colonialist Christ: Toward an African Postcolonial Christology', in Kay Higuera Smith, Jayachitra Lalitha, and L. Daniel Hawk (eds.), *Evangelical Postcolonial Conversations: Global Awakenings in Theology and Praxis* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2014), 88-101.

<sup>2</sup> See 'South Korea' in David B. Barrett, George T. Kurian, and Todd M. Johnson (eds.), *World Christian Encyclopedia*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 682-87.

Korean Christians waiting for further instruction and guidance. The Presbyterians were the most successful, but Methodists, and later Pentecostals, also arrived. In 1896, the total number of Protestants in Korea was just over 4,000. By 1907, they had grown to over 100,000.<sup>3</sup>

The Pyongyang revival of 1907 began as a series of Bible study classes, spreading throughout Korea and then into Manchuria and China. This early spirit of prayer and piety has remained with Koreans, especially the particular practice of all praying aloud simultaneously.<sup>4</sup> At that time, four Presbyterian groups – from the northern and southern United States, Canada, and Australia – who had begun work between 1884 and 1898, set up a central committee. The four missions united to form the Presbyterian Church of Korea, which remains the principal church tradition of Korea up to the present time. However, many serious schisms have occurred in recent years, particularly since World War II, resulting in several major Presbyterian bodies and a host of smaller groups.<sup>5</sup> Two Methodist societies, from the northern (1884) and southern (1896) United States, worked together closely and, in 1930, established the autonomous Korean Methodist Church, the largest single Protestant denomination in Korea at that time. Seventh-day Adventists arrived in 1903, followed by the Oriental Missionary Society in 1907. The latter's activity resulted in the formation of the Korea Holiness Church, which has been self-governing since the 1940s. All of these traditions, along with other, more recent, Pentecostal and Baptist groups, have also grown rapidly in recent years. For a wide variety of reasons, many Korean churches experienced internal divisions after World War II, and, since 1945, many new missionary societies from the United States have also entered the country. Between 1950 and 1985, Evangelicals in South Korea grew rapidly, from 600,000 in 1950 to 6.5 million in 1985.<sup>6</sup> At that time, the world's largest church, Yoido Full Gospel Church in Seoul, had 350,000 members, later growing to more than 700,000, marking the apex of growth of Christianity in Korea. Over the century, Catholics also continued to grow in number and reached more than 4 million by the year 2000.

Many people have offered explanations for why Christianity grew so rapidly in Korea over the course of the twentieth century. These range from divine providence to the receptivity of the Korean people to particular methods that were used in spreading the gospel. Historian Timothy S. Lee,

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<sup>3</sup> These figures are for the current boundaries of South Korea and North Korea.

<sup>4</sup> George Thompson Brown, 'Korean Revival Movement', in Scott W. Sunquist (ed.), *A Dictionary of Asian Christianity* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2001), 453.

<sup>5</sup> In Soo Kim offers a detailed description of the election of 'competing' delegates related to the Tonghap and Hapdong split in the Presbyterian Church in 1959, but concludes, 'This can only be seen as the work of Satan.' In Soo Kim, *History of Christianity in Korea* (Seoul: Qumran Publishing, 2011), 503-22.

<sup>6</sup> Timothy S. Lee, *Born Again: Evangelicalism in Korea* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2010), 85.

while warning against identifying any one factor as explaining growth, offers a sub-thesis that Christianity ‘appealed powerfully to multitudes of Koreans as a religion of salvation ... offering a more compelling worldview and a more meaningful basis for association’ for a society in social and economic crisis.<sup>7</sup> In short, when missionaries arrived, Koreans were earnestly seeking a better way. James Huntley Grayson offers a similar diagnosis when he argues, ‘The history of the growth and spread of Christianity in Korea must be understood in terms of the challenges the Christians perceived that they faced, and that these challenges were essentially issues of faith.’<sup>8</sup> Donald Barker contrasts Protestant and Catholic church growth and concludes that Protestants grew faster because their perspective was more aligned with Korean culture than was the Catholics’. He also notes that schisms in Protestant churches greatly increased the number of pastors and churches, leading to more church members!<sup>9</sup>

By the beginning of the twenty-first century, surveys and polls showed that Korean Christianity was no longer growing as a percentage of the population. Internal schisms and other factors seemed to be at the heart of the issue; for example, by 2010, Presbyterian denominations alone numbered more than 150.

### Global Christianity<sup>10</sup>

The most significant trend within global Christianity is that, demographically, Christianity has shifted dramatically to the South. This shift has been documented by many scholars as a groundbreaking process affecting not only all religions worldwide but also how Christianity itself is practiced as a global phenomenon.<sup>11</sup> Yet, over the course of the twentieth century and already into the twenty-first, Christians have continued to make

<sup>7</sup> Lee, *Born Again*, xiv.

<sup>8</sup> James Huntley Grayson, ‘A Quarter-Millennium of Christianity in Korea’, in Robert E. Buswell Jr. and Timothy S. Lee (eds.), *Christianity in Korea* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2006), 7.

<sup>9</sup> Donald Baker, ‘Sibling Rivalry in Twentieth Century Korea: Comparative Growth Rates of Catholic and Protestant Communities’, in *Christianity in Korea*, 283-308.

<sup>10</sup> This section is derived from a longer essay by Todd M. Johnson and Gina A. Bellofatto, ‘Upon Closer Examination: Status of World Christianity,’ in Doug Priest and Steve Burris (eds.), *River of God: An Introduction to World Mission* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2012), 108-24.

<sup>11</sup> See Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011) and Philip Jenkins, *The New Faces of Christianity: Believing the Bible in the Global South* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Dana L. Robert, *Christian Mission: How Christianity Became a World Religion* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009); Mark A. Noll, *The New Shape of World Christianity: How American Experience Reflects Global Faith* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2009).

up approximately one third of the world's population. This sustained percentage masks dramatic changes in the geographical makeup of global Christianity – a process of both North-South and East-West movement stretching back to the earliest days of Christianity that is far from inconsequential.

The shift of Christianity to the global South is most clearly illustrated by the drastic changes in Christian percentages by continent between 1910 and 2010. In 1910, the majority of Christians worldwide resided in the global North, with only small representations in Oceania, Africa, and Asia; 66% of all Christians lived in Europe. By 2010, Europe's proportion of all Christians had dropped to only 25.6%. Conversely, less than 2% of all Christians lived in Africa in 1910, but the proportion skyrocketed to almost 22% by 2010. The global North went from having over 80% of all Christians in 1910 to having less than 40% by 2010. It is clear that Christianity in 1910 was largely a western phenomenon, including a strong European Roman Catholic presence in Latin America where few church leaders were actually Latin Americans. The most dramatic difference in proportion between these two dates is in Africa, which was less than 10% Christian in 1910 but became nearly 50% Christian in 2010, with sub-Saharan Africa being well over 70% Christian.

These remarkable geographic changes in Christianity also reflect serious differences between the worldviews of 'Northern' and 'Southern' Christians. In many ways Christianity has shifted to the global South demographically but not culturally. Compared to most other religious traditions, Christianity has been generally accepting of scriptural, liturgical, and cultural translation throughout its history, with the translation process of the Christian message going back nearly to its inception. Christianity is the only world religion for which the primary source documents are in a different language than that of the founder (the New Testament is in Greek, while Jesus spoke Aramaic).<sup>12</sup> Cultural and linguistic translatability are some of Christianity's greatest strengths – strengths that, in light of its recent demographic shift, ought to be seen more readily in the diverse communities of Christians worldwide. The kind of cultural translatability observed today is similar to that seen when first-century Christianity moved out of its original Jewish setting.<sup>13</sup>

The shift of Christianity to the global South is opening new possibilities for the life and health of Christianity around the world. It has been argued that the way of life in the global South actually aligns more closely with the

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<sup>12</sup> See Andrew F. Walls, *The Cross-Cultural Process in Christian History* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2002).

<sup>13</sup> For a thorough examination of this process, see Marvin R. Wilson, *Our Father Abraham: Jewish Roots of the Christian Faith* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1990).

circumstances of biblical authors and events.<sup>14</sup> African and Asian societies in particular have much in common with the biblical context, including Christianity's minority status among religions. Philip Jenkins states, 'In Africa particularly, Christians have long been excited by the obvious cultural parallels that exist between their own societies and those of the Hebrew Old Testament, especially the world of the patriarchs.'<sup>15</sup>

Christian missionaries from the global North – whatever their motivations – took the gospel to the 'ends of the earth', providing an initial spark that helped to make Christianity a worldwide phenomenon (although the vast majority of the evangelism was done by local converts). Unfortunately, in this process, western Christianity was imposed on other cultures, giving the impression that Christianity was a western religion, despite its translatability. Moonjang Lee notes, 'The subsequent globalisation of the image of western Christianity poses a problem for non-western Christianity. Though we talk about a post-Christian West and a post-western Christianity, the prevailing forms of Christianity in most parts of the non-western world are still dominated by western influences.'<sup>16</sup> It is true that western Christians have picked up habits and beliefs that are now considered normative in Christianity but do not necessarily line up with the biblical narrative. Experiences of healing, which are central to the validity of the apostles' message and are a testament to the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, are one example. Western Christianity has, by and large, pushed miraculous healing and spiritual explanations for everyday events to the periphery of Christian thought, preferring scientific theorising and other secular values and beliefs. However, healing and spiritual explanations for happenings in daily life are fundamental to the worldviews of many Christians in Asia, Africa, and Latin America.<sup>17</sup>

In addition, the transition of Christian leadership from North to South has been anything but smooth. At the onset of World War II, missionaries around the world were forced to abandon their posts with little notice, handing power over to native leaders who did not receive adequate, if any, training. Funding dried up, leaving huge infrastructure issues for fledgling Christian communities around the world.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> See Jenkins, *New Faces of Christianity*. This includes the Old Testament, which speaks directly to local conditions especially in Africa, 42.

<sup>15</sup> Jenkins, *New Faces of Christianity*, 45.

<sup>16</sup> Moonjang Lee, 'Future of Global Christianity', in Todd M. Johnson and Kenneth R. Ross (eds.), *Atlas of Global Christianity* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 104-105.

<sup>17</sup> Lee, 'Future of Global Christianity', 104-105.

<sup>18</sup> Daniel Jeyaraj, 'Re-emergence of Global Christianity', in *Atlas of Global Christianity*, 54-55.



In addition, the shift of Christianity to the global South is widening the gap between theology in the academy and theology in the congregations.<sup>19</sup> One key trend in the academy is the growth of 'identity theologies'. The twentieth century experienced the emergence of liberation theology in Latin America, which effectively encouraged the development of other identity theologies such as black theology, womanist theology, and Hispanic/Latino theology. However, despite the fact that many of the new Christians in the global South belong to such identity groupings, these progressive principles do not adequately reflect what is happening theologically in the congregations, who are generally more concerned with presenting a 'consistent witness to the nature of God and of God's relation with the world' than with the implications of God on a particular identity or subject.<sup>20</sup> The demographic shift of Christianity is accompanied by theological reflection from fresh cultural perspectives of more recent members of the global Church. Many excellent examples of indigenous Christianity around the world are available to aid in this process.<sup>21</sup>

The recent southern shift of Christianity should be placed within the context of its entire history. Christians in the global South were in the majority for the first 900 years of Christian history. This includes the churches recorded in the New Testament that were planted in Jerusalem and Asia Minor by biblical figures. From this perspective, European domination of global Christianity can be seen as a more recent phase, now passed. Beginning around 1981, southern Christians were, once again, in the majority.

Another way of viewing the southern shift of Christianity is through the countries with the most Christians in 1910 and 2010. In 1910, nine out of the top ten countries were in the global North, with Brazil as the only exception (placed at number nine). In 2010, Brazil occupied the number two spot and was joined by six other countries from the global South: China, Mexico, the Philippines, Nigeria, Democratic Republic of the Congo, and India. The only northern countries that remained were the United States, Russia (3rd, down from 2nd in 1910), and Germany (10th, down from 3rd in 1910). The fastest growth over the past 100 years and over the past ten years has all been in the global South (over the past 100 years, the fastest Christian growth was in Burkina Faso, Chad, Nepal, Burundi, and Rwanda; over the past ten years, the countries include Afghanistan, Cambodia, Burkina Faso, Mongolia, and Timor). The United

<sup>19</sup> Ian Markham, 'Theology', in Robert A. Segal (ed.), *The Blackwell Companion to the Study of Religion* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2006), 208-209.

<sup>20</sup> Markham, 'Theology', 204-205.

<sup>21</sup> Examples are often most apparent in art and music. See a wide variety of artistic works published at the Overseas Ministries Study Center ([www.omsc.org](http://www.omsc.org)). For a fine compendium on Christian worship from around the world, see Charles E. Farhadian, *Christian Worship Worldwide: Expanding Horizons, Deepening Practices* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2007).

States is an extraordinary case, as it continued to have the most Christians over the course of the century. The number of Christians in the United States has grown dramatically, despite persistent discussions about secularisation and defection in the global North. The United States will likely continue to be listed as the country with the most Christians even in 2050, due largely to the large numbers of Christian immigrants who arrive in the country, both legally and illegally.

### *Divisions within Global Christianity*

Another trend within global Christianity – mirrored in Korean Christianity – is the increasing number of Christian denominations in the world. There are now over 41,000 Christian denominations, ranging in size from millions to less than one hundred members.<sup>22</sup> Moonjang Lee opines, ‘Christianity has become too fragmented. Existing in a fragmented world, churches fail to show a united front. There are so many divisions within Christianity that it is an intriguing task to clarify a Christian identity.’<sup>23</sup> Early Christianity was far from monolithic, of course; the issue of sectarianism in Christianity goes back to the very beginnings of the religion, when converts included Hellenised and non-Hellenised Jews, Galilean and Palestinian Jews, and Roman and non-Roman citizens, among others.<sup>24</sup> Today, the vast majority of denominations are located in the Independent (more than 27,000) and Protestant (nearly 11,000) traditions. If current trends continue, there could be 55,000 denominations by 2025.

Christian denominations are often less attached to language and ethnicity than are some other world religions. The major traditions (Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant, and Independent) are globally pervasive and ethnically diverse. Nonetheless, there are correspondences between geography and those traditions. For example, many Orthodox churches are tied to ethnic lines in Europe (Greek Orthodox and Russian Orthodox, among others).<sup>25</sup> The Lutheran church (Protestant) is supported by the state in many Nordic countries (though, in many cases, this is just a formality for births, marriages, and deaths). Independent churches, many of which are found in Africa, are the fastest-growing Christian tradition.

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<sup>22</sup> See Todd M. Johnson (ed.), *World Christian Database* (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2007) for a complete listing of Christian denominations in every country of the world.

<sup>23</sup> Lee, ‘Future of Global Christianity’, 104.

<sup>24</sup> Wilson, *Our Father Abraham*, 43-44.

<sup>25</sup> See John Garrard and Carol Garrard, *Russian Orthodoxy Resurgent: Faith and Power in the New Russia* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008), 8.

### *Christian Renewal Worldwide*

A further trend in global Christianity is the appearance of unprecedented renewal movements occurring globally within all traditions. Renewal within global Christianity takes many forms, including evangelical movements, liturgical renewal, Bible-study fellowships, and house church movements. These movements are in no way limited to Protestant and Independent churches; one of the largest renewal movements worldwide is the Catholic Charismatics'.<sup>26</sup> One of the most visible and well-known movements is the Pentecostal/Charismatic renewal, described by Julie Ma and Allan Anderson as 'one of the most significant forms of Christianity in the twentieth century.... In less than a century, Pentecostal, Charismatic and associated movements have become a major new force in world Christianity'.<sup>27</sup>

Pentecostalism was already emerging in various locations around the world in the early 1900s.<sup>28</sup> Though hardly recognised as a global movement, by 1910, Pentecostalism was already operating in 40 countries worldwide. It was unthinkable that this seemingly insignificant movement would help shape Christianity into a largely non-western phenomenon by the end of the century.<sup>29</sup> Several characteristics of the movement helped catapult it onto the world stage. Pentecostalism's experience of the spiritual very much aligns with the worldviews of the global South, where spiritual and emotional experiences are integral parts of daily life. The lively music found in Pentecostal worship sessions mimics southerners' exuberance of musical expression. In addition, the movement's holistic spirituality – the belief that not only is personal identity intimately connected to spirituality but that one experiences a mystical connection to the earth and cosmos through that spirituality – actively promotes the ideals of a Spirit-filled holy life.

The numbers of Christians involved in various kinds of renewal movements include 300 million Evangelicals (enumerated with a structural definition provided by the World Christian Encyclopaedia<sup>30</sup>) and 600

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<sup>26</sup> Latin-rite Catholic renewalists stand at more than 133 million members. Other large groupings of renewalists include Baptist-Pentecostal (77 million), Chinese Charismatic (76 million), African Independent Pentecostal (26 million), and Brazilian/Portuguese Pentecostal (17 million). Almost 23% of Catholics are renewalists, 3% of Anglicans, 51% of Independents, 1% of Orthodox, and 22 % of Protestants. See Johnson and Ross, *Atlas of Global Christianity*, 102.

<sup>27</sup> Julie Ma and Allan Anderson, 'Pentecostals (Renewalists), 1910-2010', in *Atlas of Global Christianity*, 100-101.

<sup>28</sup> Allan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 35-38.

<sup>29</sup> Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*, 100.

<sup>30</sup> The structural definition of 'Evangelicals' consists of all affiliated church members self-identifying as Evangelicals. Christians are also considered Evangelicals when they are members of an Evangelical church, congregation, or

million Pentecostals. The locus of Christian renewal is clearly in the global South, where the majority of its practitioners live and where it is growing most rapidly. Some of the countries with the fastest 100-year growth rates for renewalists include Brazil, the Philippines, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mexico, and Colombia. Eighteen countries have a majority (over 50%) renewalist presence among their Christians. The largest populations of renewalists worldwide in both 1910 and 2010 were in the global South – South Africa in 1910 and China in 2010 (note, though, that the United States remained in the number three spot in both years).

### *Inequality of Resource Distribution*

Finally, the unequal distribution of Christian resources worldwide is another notable ongoing reality within global Christianity. In comparing each continent's percentage of all Christians versus its portion of all Christian wealth, it is easy to see the huge disparity in resources. Even though the global South (Asia, Africa, and Latin America) now contains the majority of the world's Christians, the majority of Christian financial resources still remain in the global North. Asia, Africa, and Latin America combined have less than 20% of Christian wealth; Northern America and Europe have about 40% each.<sup>31</sup> Christians in the South represent 60% of all Christians worldwide but receive only about 17% of all Christian income. This puts churches in the global South at a critical disadvantage in supporting their ministry staff, home missions, foreign missions, and overall holistic ministry goals of their organisations. As global Christianity continues to move southward, the global Church will be forced to develop new and creative ways to encourage global sharing and responsible giving and spending.

Table 1<sup>32</sup> compares Christians in South Korea with Christians around the globe in 1900, 2000, and 2010. In 1900, Christians made up less than 0.5% of the population of what is today South Korea, whereas Christians globally were 34.5% of the world's population. Subsequently, Christianity in South Korea has seen tremendous growth, while the percentage of Christians around the world has declined slightly. Remarkably (and coincidentally), in

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denomination. Characteristics of Evangelicals include personalised religion (being 'born again'), dependence on the Bible as the word of God, and regular preaching and/or evangelism.

<sup>31</sup> Johnson and Ross, *Atlas of Global Christianity*, 297.

<sup>32</sup> Data source: Todd M. Johnson (ed.), *World Christian Database* (Leiden/Boston: Brill, accessed July 2014). Note: Christian traditions do not add up the Christian total because the table is missing doubly-affiliated (members of more than one denomination), unaffiliated, and disaffiliated Christians. In addition, Evangelicals and Pentecostals are found within the four traditions above and should not be added to the others. '% p.a.' stands for 'percent per annum', the average annual growth rate over the period listed.

2010, both South Korea and the world were 32.9% Christian. This points to an important shift mentioned earlier: while Christianity in the global North has been declining, Christianity in the global South has been on the rise. As we have seen, Korean Christianity is part of that story.

### Comparing Korean and Global Christianity

	1900	%	2000	%	2010	%	1900-2000 % pa	2000-10 % pa
<b>World</b>								
Total Christians	558,131	34.5	1,988,399	32.4	2,272,722	32.9	1.11	1.35
Independent	8,859	0.5	301,490	4.9	378,292	5.5	3.11	2.30
Orthodox	115,855	7.2	256,628	4.2	276,898	4.0	0.69	0.76
Protestants	133,606	8.2	426,808	7.0	503,968	7.3	1.02	1.68
Catholics	266,566	16.5	1,047,224	17.1	1,172,799	17.0	1.20	1.14
Evangelicals	80,912	5.0	239,565	3.9	297,911	4.3	0.95	2.20
Pentecostals	981	0.1	460,529	7.5	585,133	8.5	5.49	2.42
<b>South Korea</b>								
Total Christians	42	0.5	14,296	31.1	15,960	32.9	5.19	1.11
Independent	0.05	0.0	11,430	24.9	12,743	26.3	11.3	1.09
Orthodox	0.05	0.0	1.2	0.0	1.2	0.0	2.80	0.00
Protestants	6.6	0.1	8,402	18.3	10,617	21.9	6.41	2.37
Catholics	36	0.5	4,122	9.0	5,120	10.6	4.21	2.19
Evangelicals	6,400	0.1	10,601	23.6	12,580	26.0	6.66	1.73
Pentecostals	500	0.0	7,211	57.7	9,165	18.9	8.68	2.43

Table 1: Christianity in South Korea and the World 1900-2010  
(unit: thousands)

#### Christian Traditions

While Roman Catholics made up more than half of all Christians globally in 2010, they made up only one third of all Christians in South Korea. Protestants and their many schisms (some classified here as 'Independents') made up two thirds of all Korean Christians (note, however, that there are very large numbers of doubly-affiliated in South Korea).

#### Evangelicals and Pentecostals

Globally, 13% of all Christians are Evangelicals and 25% of all Christians are Pentecostals. In South Korea, the figures are significantly higher: 78% of all Christians are Evangelicals and 57% of all Christians are Pentecostals. When Koreans interact with westerners (in particular) on the globe stage, they often find themselves more conservative theologically and

more dynamic in worship and practice. At the same time, they can often clash with other Christians in Asia over the strongly 'Korean' culture expressed in their Christian faith.

### **Koreans in Global Christianity**

At least five identifiable areas of intersection exist between Korean Christianity and global Christianity. While they are not unique to Korean Christianity, they are critical in the Korean context. These include (1) divisions in denominations; (2) the global diaspora; (3) missionaries sent around the world; (4) indigenous theology; and (5) cooperation between churches.

#### *Divisions*

As mentioned earlier, Korean Christianity has suffered a number of schisms. Today, there are dozens of denominations, with new ones splitting off frequently. As with global Christianity, most of these are splits from Protestant churches. Unlike global Christianity, however, an unusually large number are Presbyterian splits (over 150 denominations at last count<sup>33</sup>). In addition to denominational splits, there have been splits in umbrella organisations such as Evangelical councils.

#### *Diaspora*

Koreans are living all over the world, and it is estimated that more than 7 million now live outside the Korean peninsula, with the largest concentrations in China, the United States, and Japan.<sup>34</sup> While Koreans have the tendency to minister only to their fellow Koreans abroad, missiologist Enoch Wan offers suggestions for forming strategic partnerships with other diaspora communities (such as the Chinese).<sup>35</sup> Minho Song also suggests that 'transcultural mediators' are needed in order for Koreans to break free from deep-seated ethnocentrism. He also notes that the Korean population might be more Christian in diaspora than it is at home (e.g., 90% of Koreans in New Zealand are Christian, but only 30% at

<sup>33</sup> The most detailed study in English is Hee-Mo Yim, *Unity Lost – United to be Regained in Korean Presbyterianism: A History of Divisions in Korean Presbyterianism and the Role of the Means of Grace* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1996). Particularly helpful is a chart on page xvii that shows the origins of 42 schisms from 1945 to 1986 in the Presbyterian Church.

<sup>34</sup> 'Current Status of Overseas Compatriots', *South Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade*, ([www.mofa.go.kr/ENG/main/index.jsp](http://www.mofa.go.kr/ENG/main/index.jsp)), accessed July 2014.

<sup>35</sup> Enoch Wan, 'Korean Diaspora: From Hermit Kingdom to Kingdom Ministry', in S. Hun Kim and Wonsuk Ma (eds.), *Korean Diaspora and Christian Mission* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2011), 101-16.

home). For these and other reasons, Koreans in diaspora are strategically placed to reach non-Christians who themselves are in diaspora (e.g., Moroccans in Spain). This is true in places as diverse as Kazakhstan and the United States.<sup>36</sup>

### *Mission*

South Korea is now one of the leading missionary-sending countries. Most early Korean missionaries focused on Koreans living abroad. This began to change as early as 1967, however, when the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Korea clearly stated, 'The mission board will focus only on foreign missions, that is, only on indigenous people, not on evangelism for Koreans living abroad'.<sup>37</sup> Korean missionaries also had extensive contact with others through international movements like the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization. This led to the formation of the Korea Evangelical Theological Society (KETS), the Korea Evangelical Fellowship (KEF), and the Asia Center for Theological Studies (ACTS).<sup>38</sup> Missionary conferences, already ubiquitous in Korea, were initiated among the diaspora, particularly in the United States. In 1988, the Korean World Mission Conference began in Wheaton, Illinois, and has continued with thousands in attendance every year. Korean historian Yong Kyu Park notes that mission strategies have changed significantly over the years:

Korean churches have transitioned from missions for Koreans living overseas to intercultural foreign missions, from country-centered to ethnic-centered missions, from individual missions to an era of cooperative missions, from pastor-oriented missions to multiple missions including lay missionaries, and from deficient mission training to substantial mission training.<sup>39</sup>

More than half of all Korean missionaries are involved in church planting while only about 5% are involved strictly in social work. Pentecostal scholar Julie Ma notes that, although Koreans build strong relationships with nationals and emphasise spirituality and prayer, they tend to be very aggressive in their approach.<sup>40</sup> Bahn Seok Lee sees a major hindrance to mission rooted in authoritative leadership, where 'questions of

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<sup>36</sup> Minho Song, 'The Diaspora Experience of the Korean Church and its Implications for World Mission', in *Korean Diaspora and Christian Mission*, 117-28.

<sup>37</sup> Yong Kyu Park, 'Historical Overview of Korean Missions', in Jonathan Bonk (ed.), *Accountability in Missions: Korean and Western Case Studies* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2011), 9.

<sup>38</sup> Park, 'Historical Overview of Korean Missions', 11.

<sup>39</sup> Park, 'Historical Overview of Korean Missions', 14.

<sup>40</sup> Julie C. Ma, 'A Critical Appraisal of Korean Missionary Work', in *Korean Diaspora and Christian Mission*, 131-45.

any type regarding the leader or his use of resources are seen, at best, as impolite; at worst, they are viewed as expressions of disloyalty'.<sup>41</sup>

### *Theology*

Due to being spread out around the world, Koreans have a unique opportunity to share their theological perspective with the rest of global Christianity. Bible translation was an early feature of Korean Christianity (New Testament in 1887; Old Testament in 1911), leading to the development of indigenous theology.<sup>42</sup> Social ethics professor Chai-Sik Chung notes that Korean Christianity has deep interactions with its pre-Christian tradition, shamanism, and expresses itself as well as a means of liberation for the poor. However, he also states that Korean Christianity might have gone too far in syncretising with shamanistic practices, especially regarding prayer meetings and certain rituals. Likewise, he notes that minjung theology has been developed largely from the perspective of a limited group of individuals and has not resulted in justice for the poor.<sup>43</sup> Nonetheless, Korea has produced leading Christian theologians from all of its traditions, many of whom are now being read outside of the Korean language. At the same time, Koreans around the world highly value western theological education, often working against this trend in self-theologising.

### *Cooperation*

Korean churches hosted the 10<sup>th</sup> Assembly of the World Council of Churches (WCC) in Busan from 30 October to 8 November 2013. While there were many challenges navigating the divisions in the Korean church, the WCC General Secretary called it 'the best assembly ever' in terms of local preparation and contributions.<sup>44</sup> The conference gave Korean leaders direct contact with church leaders from 141 countries. Interestingly, it was Pentecostals who were able to bridge the gap between the WCC churches and the conservative churches.

Yet, Protestant Koreans have generally struggled when cooperating with other Christians in Korea and around the world. Shortly after the assembly in Busan, Evangelical Korean churches failed to overcome internal

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<sup>41</sup> Bahn Seok Lee, 'Accountability Issues among Korean Missions Organizations', in Jonathan Bonk (ed.), *Accountability in Missions: Korean and Western Case Studies* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2011), 187.

<sup>42</sup> Park, 'Historical Overview,' 3.

<sup>43</sup> Chai-Sik Chung, 'Global Theology for the Common Good: Lessons from Two Centuries of Korean Christianity', *International Review of Mission* 85:339 (1996), 523-38.

<sup>44</sup> Jooseop Keum, 'Shift of the Center of Gravity for the Ecumenical Movement? WCC Busan Assembly and the Korean Churches', *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 38:2 (April 2014), 64-67.



divisions, resulting in the collapse of a carefully planned global conference for Evangelicals. Initially scheduled for October 2014, the World Evangelical Alliance General Assembly (only held once every 7-8 years) had to be postponed because the Korean committee was unable to reconcile the many factions vying for control of the meeting. What is particularly instructive is that it was competing national councils (not individual churches) that were behind the conflict. Evangelicals all over the world have seen a series of splits within their own umbrella organisations, illustrating how internal forces can actually be more formidable than external ones. Unfortunately, in the press release announcing the postponement, the Evangelical church took little responsibility and failed to acknowledge the seriousness of these divisions.<sup>45</sup>

### **Conclusion**

In 2010, Christians in Korea and Christians worldwide each constituted 32.9% of their total populations. What do they offer to each other? One of the single greatest challenges to global Christianity is navigating fragmentation and diversity. Unfortunately, the Korean churches face even greater challenges in this area. Perhaps ecumenical organisations outside of Korea can speak to the fragmentation of the Korean church. But another significant challenge for global Christians is interaction with people of other religions. Here, Koreans have something special to offer. They live in one of the most religiously diverse countries on earth and are also found in 175 other countries. They can take their own experience, missiologically and theologically, and speak to the global Church about good practices and lessons learned from living in religiously diverse settings. It is this kind of interaction and dialogue that will continue to define the relationship between local forms of Christianity around the world and the global Christian community. This is both relevant and urgent for the Christian community in South Korea today.

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<sup>45</sup> Bong Rin Ro, 'Overcoming Korean Church Divisions and Encouraging Cooperation among Evangelicals Globally', *Lausanne Global Analysis 5* (May 2014), 13-15.

# THE BIBLE IN THE KOREAN CHURCH

Daniel S.H. Ahn

## Introduction

It is well known that Korea opened itself to (Protestant) Christianity 160 years ago (Catholicism, a century earlier), and it has been one of the fastest-growing churches in the world.<sup>1</sup> Koreans have turned to Christianity in unprecedented numbers; the Protestant Christian population has reached 19% of its total population. Furthermore, the Korean church has sent out 26,677 missionaries to over 170 countries as of 2014.<sup>2</sup>

What factors lie behind the extraordinary growth of Korean church in comparison with other mission fields, including China and Japan? A large number of Korean and foreign scholars have analysed the variety of theological and sociological reasons for the rapid growth of Korean church.<sup>3</sup> They commonly argue that one of the reasons may be the vernacular Korean Bible translation and the Koreans' extraordinary love for the Bible, viz. the 'Bible-Christianity'.<sup>4</sup> That is, as Charles A. Clark spelled out, the Korean church is 'built upon the Bible, upon the simple Bible text'.<sup>5</sup>

The purpose of this essay is, thus, to survey how early missionaries translated the Bible into Korean. Special emphasis will be placed on the early period of Korean Bible translation, and how the Korean Bible contributed to the rapid growth of the early Korean church.

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<sup>1</sup> Samuel H. Moffett, 'What Makes the Korean Church Grow?' *Christian Today* (31 January 2007)

<sup>2</sup> KWMA (Korea World Mission Association).

<sup>3</sup> Mahn-Yol Yi, 'The Korean Church Growth and Its Factors', in Mahn-Yol Yi (ed.), *The Korean Christianity and the National Unification Movement* (Seoul: IKCH, 2001), 173-217; Bong-Rin Ro & Marlin L. Nelson (eds.), *Korean Church Growth Explosion*, revised ed. (Seoul: Word of Life Press, 1995); Sebastian C. H. Kim (ed.), *Christian Theology in Asia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 130-134; Mark A. Noll, 'Evangelical Identity, Power, and Culture in the "Great" Nineteenth Century', in Donald M. Lewis (ed.), *Christianity Reborn* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2004), 49; Daniel H. Bays & James H. Grayson, 'Christianity in China, Korea and Japan', in Sheridan Gilley & Brian Stanley (eds.), *Cambridge History of Christianity* 8, *World Christianity c.1815-c.1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 508.

<sup>4</sup> Kim, *Christian Theology in Asia*, 131-132.

<sup>5</sup> Charles A. Clark, *The Nevius Plan for Mission Work* (Seoul: Christian Literature Society, 1937), 20.

### The Korean Bible Translation in Manchuria

John Ross and John McIntyre, missionaries of the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland (hereafter UPC) arrived in China in 1872 and were sent to Manchuria in 1876 by their senior missionary, Alexander Williamson, the China agent of the National Bible Society of Scotland (hereafter NBSS).<sup>6</sup> As Williamson inspired them to be involved in the Korea mission, they decided to translate the Bible into Korean.<sup>7</sup>

Ross visited the 'Corean Gate' in 1874 and 1876, and found a Korean assistant, Ung-Chan Lee.<sup>8</sup> With the aid of Lee, Ross first published the Corean Primer in 1877.<sup>9</sup> At New-chang in 1878, Ross gained a few more Korean assistants, including the Seo brothers – Sangnyun and Gyungjo.<sup>10</sup> Sangnyun helped Ross and McIntyre translate the Gospel of Luke and John, and was baptised in April 1882.<sup>11</sup> He became the first Korean colporteur of the British and Foreign Bible Society (hereafter BFBS), and brought the Korean Bible into Korea, particularly to Seoul where he significantly contributed to the foundation of the first Korean church in Korea in September 1887.<sup>12</sup> Thus, the early Korean Bible played an important role in forming the early indigenous Korean churches in both Manchuria and Korea without the aid of foreign missionaries.

Before Ross left Manchuria for his furlough from April 1879 until May 1881, he finished drafts of the Gospels, Acts, and Romans.<sup>13</sup> McIntyre, along with his Korean assistants, finally completed a draft of the whole New Testament in August 1881.<sup>14</sup> Of the Korean assistants involved in the translation work, four of them converted to Christianity and were baptised by McIntyre. They then formed the first Korean Christian community outside Korea (in New-chang) in 1879.<sup>15</sup> McIntyre recorded that, as '900 Coreans' visited and interacted with this Christian community, the community grew.<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, the Korean converts, including Ung-Chan

<sup>6</sup> John Ross, 'Notes of Manchuria', *China Record of Missionary Journey*, 6 (May-June 1875), 220.

<sup>7</sup> Alexander Williamson, *Journeys in North China, Manchuria, and Eastern Mongolia; with Some Account of Corea 2* (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1870), 295-312.

<sup>8</sup> John Ross, 'To the Corean Gate', *Missionary Record of United Presbyterian* [hereafter *MRUP*] (January 1877), 355-57.

<sup>9</sup> John Ross, *Corean Primer* (Shanghai: American Presbyterian Mission Press, 1877).

<sup>10</sup> John Ross, 'The Christian Dawn in Corea', *Missionary Review of the World* (April 1890), 241-48.

<sup>11</sup> Mahn-Yol Yi (ed.), *The History of the Korean Bible Society 1* [hereafter *HKBS 1*] (Seoul: Korean Bible Society, 1994), 58.

<sup>12</sup> Yi, *HKBS 1*, 89-119.

<sup>13</sup> Ross, *MRUP* (1880), 15.

<sup>14</sup> *Quarterly Report of the NBSS*, June 1881, 665-67.

<sup>15</sup> John McIntyre, *MRUP* (1881), 270.

<sup>16</sup> John McIntyre, *MRUP* (1883), 220.

Lee, became colporteurs, who brought the Korean Bible to Korean immigrants in Manchuria and the interior of Korea.

After Ross returned to Manchuria from Britain on 25 May 1881, he resumed the supervision of the translation work from McIntyre, who left to go on furlough from March 1882 to the spring of 1884. In early October 1881, Ross published the Korean translation of two booklets under the auspices of the NBSS such as the Catechism (*Yesu Seonggyo Mundap*) and Dogma (*Yesu Seonggyo Yoryeong*) of the UPC. In 1882, Ross completed the Gospel of Luke, which was the first portion of the Bible to be published in Korean, and the Gospel of John. Three thousand copies of each of the Gospels were published by the NBSS and the BFBS. At the end of 1886, Ross finally completed the final draft of the entire Korean New Testament, of which 5,000 copies were published by the BFBS in 1887, entitled *Yesu Seonggyo Jeonso*.<sup>17</sup>

### The Korean Bible Translation in Japan

While Ross and McIntyre translated the Korean Bible in Manchuria, a Korean also translated it in Japan from 1883 to 1885. Sujeong Yi, who was part of the Korean diplomatic team to Japan, arrived in Yokohama on 29 September 1882.<sup>18</sup> Yi converted to Christianity through the witness of Shen Tsuda, a Japanese Protestant, and was then baptised by an American missionary, G.W. Knox, in Tokyo on 29 April 1883.<sup>19</sup> After his conversion, Yi was requested to translate the Bible into Korean by Henry Loomis of the American Bible Society (hereafter ABS). He then translated the five books of the Chinese New Testament – the Four Gospels and the Book of Acts – into Chinese with Korean language suffixes (added to aid in the reading of Chinese texts), viz. the Hyun-To-Han-Han-Shin-Yak-Sung-Gyung in 1883, and 1,000 copies of each translation were published from 1883 to 1884 by the ABS. On 10 April 1884, Yi completed the translation of the Gospel of Mark as a Chinese-Korean mixed version, of which 6,000 copies were published in Yokohama in February 1885 by the ABS.<sup>20</sup>

Yi's translation of the Gospel of Mark was distributed in Korea by early American missionaries under the auspices of the ABS. The first two American clerical missionaries – Horace G. Underwood and Henry G. Appenzeller – arrived in Yokohama in early 1885 and were given this translation. They brought it with them to Korea when they went there on 5 April 1885. As a result, Yi's translation of the Gospel of Mark was widely distributed in Seoul and southern Korea (Pusan and Taegu), and was popularly used until 1887. His translation of the Korean Bible then played a

<sup>17</sup> John Ross, *MRUP* (1887), 226.

<sup>18</sup> Yi, *HKBS* 1, 125-76.

<sup>19</sup> Yi, *HKBS* 1, 125-76.

<sup>20</sup> Yi, *HKBS* 1, 148-49, 153-57.

key role in forming the first Korean Christian community, not only in Tokyo but also in Korea, inspiring American Protestant churches to send their missionaries to Korea.<sup>21</sup>

### The Korean Bible Translation in Korea

#### *The Formation of the Bible Translation Committee in 1887 and 1893*

American missionaries, mainly Presbyterians and Methodists, began to arrive in Korea from 1884 onwards and became dominant missionary groups in the Korean mission field.<sup>22</sup> The missionaries established a mission policy based on the Nevius Plan in 1893, a policy that led them to target mainly the lower Korean classes and women of all classes who were excluded from educational opportunity and thus could not read the Confucian Classics in the Chinese language but knew the Korean alphabet, viz. Han-geul. For this reason, the missionaries decided to translate the Bible into Korean, Han-geul.<sup>23</sup>

The missionaries then formed a Bible translation committee in 1887, namely the Permanent Bible Committee of Korea (hereafter PBCK), comprising the four American missionaries – Underwood, W. J. Heron (later replaced by James S. Gale), Appenzeller, and William B. Scranton. The PBCK proceeded with the translation from 1887 to 1892, and ‘individual versions of about two-thirds of the New Testament’ were ready for publication by the end of 1892.<sup>24</sup>

However, by the proposal of Alexander Kenmure of the BFBS, on 16 May 1893, the missionaries reconstituted the PBCK as the Permanent Executive Bible Committee of Korea (hereafter PEBCK). The PEBCK then appointed five translators as the Board of Translators: Underwood, Gale, Scranton, Appenzeller, and Reynolds, with Mark A. Trollope of Anglican Church Mission as a junior member.<sup>25</sup>

#### *The Reconstitution of the Bible Translation Committee in 1904*

At the turn of the twentieth century, Korea fell into a hazardous political situation. First, the Russo-Japanese War took place from 9 February 1904

<sup>21</sup> Yi, *HKBS* 1, 125-34, 154-55, 168-70.

<sup>22</sup> Dae Young Ryu, *Early American Missionaries in Korea 1884-1910* (Seoul: IKCH, 2001), 91-93. Afterwards, other missionaries – Canadian Presbyterians, Australian Presbyterians, and Anglicans (SPG) – soon followed them.

<sup>23</sup> Mahn-Yol Yi, *The History of the Korean Christian Cultural Movement*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Seoul: Korean Christianity Publisher, 1992), 87.

<sup>24</sup> W.D. Reynolds, ‘Early Bible Translation’, *Korea Mission Field* 26: 9 (September 1935), 187.

<sup>25</sup> Reynolds, ‘Early Bible Translation’, 186-87.

to 28 May 1905 because of the competitive imperial ambition to dominate the Korean peninsula (and Manchuria as well).<sup>26</sup> Second, the victory of Japan over the war led to the Japan-Korea Protectorate Treaty in 1905, which enabled Japan to dominate Korea's foreign affairs and all trades through Korean ports.

This desperate situation unsettled the Koreans. It made them distrust their traditional religions and become more inclined to receive a new western religion, Protestantism, opening the door of the Korean mission field to the Protestant missions.<sup>27</sup> As a result, sales of the Korean Bible were 'much improved' during the war, and Kenmure commented that 'no doubt the war will ultimately prove to have been a blessing to the church as well as the country.'<sup>28</sup> Thus, this desperate political situation led the Korean missionaries and the three Bible societies (BFBS, NBSS, and ABS) to cooperate with one another to complete the translation of the Korean Bible rapidly in response to the urgent demand for it. As a result, they formed the Bible Committee of Korea (hereafter BCK) on 1 January 1904.<sup>29</sup> The BCK then appointed four new members of the Board of Translators, namely Underwood, Gale, Reynolds, and George H. Jones. However, the translation work was mainly done by Underwood, Gale, and Reynolds, with the aid of their Korean assistants.

The Board of Translators completed a tentative version of the Authorised Version of Korean New Testament in 1904, and, thereafter, the BCK published its permanent scripts in 1906. The Board of Translators completed the translation of the Old Testament on 2 April 1910.<sup>30</sup> In subsequence, the BCK eventually published the permanent scripts of the Authorised Version of Korean Bible Translation in Yokohama in March 1911.<sup>31</sup> It was the first Korean Bible to be issued not as an individual (or private) version but as an authorised version of the official Bible committee.<sup>32</sup> The Korean Bible Society completed the Revised Version of the Korean Bible Translation in 1938, continuing to revise it in 1952 and 1961.

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<sup>26</sup> Horace Allen, *Korea the Fact and Fancy* (Seoul: Methodist Publishing House, 1904), 236.

<sup>27</sup> Elmer Cable, 'Report of Pyung-Yang Station', *Korea Mission of the PCUSA* (1904), 5-6.

<sup>28</sup> Kenmure to the General Secretaries of the BFBS, ABS, and NBSS, 9 July 1904.

<sup>29</sup> Mahn-Yol Yi (ed.), *The History of Korean Bible Society 2* [hereafter *HKBS 2*] (Seoul: KBS, 1994), 240-74.

<sup>30</sup> Yi, *HKBS 2*, 70-79.

<sup>31</sup> Reynolds, 'Early Bible Translation', 188.

<sup>32</sup> Yi, *HKBS 2*, 79-82.

### The Rapid Growth of the Korean Church

It should be noted that the three Bible societies – BFBS, NBSS and ABS – reported the Koreans' active acceptance of the scriptures and the unprecedented quick growth of the Korean churches in comparison with its neighbouring countries.<sup>33</sup> John H. Ritson of the BFBS reported that 'in no country has the wide-spread circulation of the Scriptures done more to evangelise the people than in Korea', and as a result 'there has been a great ingathering into the Church from the heathen around'.<sup>34</sup> The BFBS underscored that the Koreans were 'so hungry for the Word of God'.<sup>35</sup> Subsequently, based upon the comparative sales records of the scriptures in the world, they noted that the early twentieth century (1904-20) was 'remarkable for a substantial increase in circulation' of the scriptures in Korea, thus stating that 'these sales, averaging half a million yearly, were probably the highest in the world in proportion to the population concerned'.<sup>36</sup>

Several evangelical Christian leaders and missionaries reported that Koreans had responded phenomenally to Christian missions and Protestant churches were growing rapidly. John R. Mott, the Chair of the World Missionary Conference 1910 in Edinburgh, reported on the 'marvelous progress of missionary work' in Korea after his return from visiting Korea in 1907, expecting that Korea 'will be the first nation in modern times to be Christianised if the church will take advantage of her present opportunity'.<sup>37</sup> Underwood, as an 'Editorial Correspondent in Seoul' of the *Missionary Review of the World*, frequently reported the outstanding progress of Christian mission in Korea by remarking on the much higher growth of Korean Protestant churches than that seen in China or Japan, although fewer Protestant missionaries had worked in Korea for a much shorter period than in China.<sup>38</sup> In addition, the Commission I of the World

<sup>33</sup> William Somerville, *From Iona to Dunblane: The Story of the NBSS to 1948* (Edinburgh: NBSS, 1948), 91; James Robertson, *The Bible in Korea* (London: the BFBS, 1954), 32-33, 35; John Fox, 'Report of Korea Mission Field', 24 December 1907.

<sup>34</sup> John Ritson, *Abroad for the Bible Society* (London: Robert Culley, 1911), 164, 169, 187.

<sup>35</sup> William Canton, *A History of the BFBS, 1884-1904* (London: John Murray, 1910), 219.

<sup>36</sup> James Roe, *A History of the BFBS, 1905-1954* (London: BFBS, 1965), 150. They specifically left the sale records in Korea: 50,000 copies in 1904, the total rose to 66,000 in 1910, 280,000 in 1911-1913, 827,000 in 1915, and 483,000 in 1920.

<sup>37</sup> Horace Underwood, 'Korea's Crisis Hour', *Korea Mission Field* (September 1908), 99-101.

<sup>38</sup> Underwood, 'Korea', *Missionary Review of the World* (April, 1890), 295; he reported that, as of 1890, while there were 24 missionaries for 12 million Koreans ('one to every 500,000'), there were 550 missionaries for 300 or 400 million Chinese ('one to 300,000'). Despite this disproportion in the numbers of missionaries between China and Korea, he underscored that the results of the

Missionary Conference 1910 in Edinburgh reported that several ‘striking features stand out markedly in the work in missions in Korea; special prominence has been given to the Bible, which today is the book having the largest sale among the Korean people.’<sup>39</sup>

### Conclusion

As seen above, it is not an exaggeration to say that the remarkable growth of the Korean church can be attributed to the Korean Bible. Regarding church growth, Sebastian Kim explains that ‘the Korean education system was heavily influenced by the Confucian traditional method of teaching and learning’.<sup>40</sup> Gale stated that a Korean ‘exalts books and so the Book of all books [including the Bible] finds its pathway prepared and as by a kind of prophetic prescience, a welcome accorded which is perhaps greater than that seen in any other part of the world’.<sup>41</sup> As a result, as Kim continues to argue, when the Bible was introduced to the Koreans, they naturally absorbed it and further revered it as a sacred text.<sup>42</sup>

In addition, the early twentieth-century Korean missionaries, particularly the Board of Translators of the BCK – Gale, Underwood, and Jones – argued that one of the significant reasons for such remarkable growth could be the term Hananim, the Korean name of God in the Bible.<sup>43</sup> This is because, as Jones argued, the ancient etymological meaning of Hananim was ‘the One Great One’, which has a closer resemblance to the Christian God than did other theistic names in China. Thus, Hananim was ‘one of the first points of contact between Christianity and native religious conceptions’ of a supreme god in Korea, an indigenous monotheistic name that enabled Koreans to accept the God of Christianity more rapidly than other countries.<sup>44</sup> That is to say, this term prepared the Koreans’ minds to

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Christian missions in Korea were ‘more marked than in the opening up of any other field’ including China.

<sup>39</sup> World Missionary Conference, 1910, *Report of Commission I* (Edinburgh: Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier, 1910), 75.

<sup>40</sup> Kim, *Christian Theology in Asia*, 131-32.

<sup>41</sup> James Gale, ‘Korea’s Preparation of the Bible’, *Korea Mission Field* (March 1912), 86-88.

<sup>42</sup> Kim, *Christian Theology in Asia*, 131-32.

<sup>43</sup> James Gale, *Korea in Transition* (New York: Laymen’s Missionary Movement, 1909), 79; Horace G. Underwood, *Religions of Eastern Asia* (New York: MacMillan Co., 1910), 133-34, 242; George H. Jones, *The Rise of Church in Korea*, Chapter 5 (G.H. Jones Papers, 1915, Missionary Research Library Collection, Union Theological Seminary Library).

<sup>44</sup> Jones, *The Rise of Church in Korea*, Chapter 5.



be more ready to receive the God of the Bible within their existing religious framework than was the case of Shangti (or T'ien) in China.<sup>45</sup>

Accordingly, a number of modern Christian scholars conventionally argue that the adoption in a Christian form of the native term for the supreme being, Hananim, facilitated the Koreans' smooth acceptance of the God of Christianity, resulting in a more rapid and massive influx of converts into Protestantism than was seen in China.<sup>46</sup> For instance, Mark A. Noll argues that the 'use of the term Hananim may have facilitated early Korean acceptance of a Protestant Christianity that missionaries regarded as traditional, even traditionally Western', and so the term Hananim 'may also have helped make it possible' for the Korean indigenous religious thought 'to be incorporated with the new framework of Protestant Christianity'.<sup>47</sup> Therefore, it is most likely that the Korean Bible with the Korean name of God, Hananim, contributed to the rapid growth of the early Korean churches.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Daniel S.H. Ahn, 'The Term Question in Korea 1882-1911, and its Chinese Roots: A Study in Continuity and Divergence' (Unpublished PhD Dissertation, University of Edinburgh, 2011), 203.

<sup>46</sup> Noll, 'Evangelical Identity, Power, and Culture in the 'Great' Nineteenth Century', 49-51; Grayson, 'Christianity in China, Korea and Japan', 506, 508; Spencer J. Palmer, *Korea and Christianity* (Seoul: Holym Corporation, 1967), 5-6; Robert Scott, 'Warring Mentalities in the Far East', *Asia* 20:7 (August 1920), 699.

<sup>47</sup> Noll, 'Evangelical Identity, Power, and Culture in the 'Great' Nineteenth Century', 49-51.

<sup>48</sup> Ahn, 'The Term Question in Korea', 203.

# **WOMEN'S ROLE IN THE KOREAN MISSIONARY MOVEMENT**

**Bokyoung Park**

## **Introduction**

Due to its extraordinary zeal in missionary work, the Korean church has recently drawn the full attention of the global church. The Korean church, with more than 25,000 cross-cultural missionaries, celebrates this exceptional accomplishment in world mission. Such missionary zeal and remarkable growth within the last thirty years are often regarded as a new missionary movement in modern church history.

It must be noted that the efforts of women missionaries are an integral part of the Korean missionary movement. At present, not only do Korean women missionaries outnumber men, but they are also steadily expanding their spheres of influence in ministry. Unfortunately, however, their activities are not given due attention both in the Korean and global church; their stories are often unrecognised and even forgotten. Yet there is no doubt that their extraordinary commitment to world mission is to encourage and provide a model for the Korean and worldwide church. Therefore, it is necessary to unearth their activities and document their stories as resources.

The focus of this study is to introduce how Korean women participated in mission, and how such participation progressed. In its historical approach, this study is divided into three broad periods: the first period starts in 1908 until the liberation from Japan in 1945; the second is from 1945 to 1980, characterised by the rebuilding of the Korean church and the steady increase in its zeal for world mission; and the third is the years from the 1990s to the present, when the number of missionaries grew dramatically and the new Korean missionary movement gained momentum. The works of Korean women missionaries in each period will be briefly introduced, with a summary of characteristics.

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## **From 1908 to 1945: Missions Begun**

The first cross-cultural missionary activity of Korean women started in 1908. It was marked by the commissioning of Sun-Gwang Lee, a woman evangelist, to Jeju-Island, to assist Rev. Ki-Poong Lee, the first missionary in Korean church history. Despite it being geographically part of Korea, Koreans at the time viewed Jeju Island as virtually a foreign country: thus, the commissioning of Ki-Poong Lee to the island in 1907 is considered the beginning of Korean mission and Sun-Gwang Lee's commissioning is considered to be the first sending of a Korean woman missionary. She

ministered at Sungnae Church founded by Rev. Lee. According to Joon-Gyung Lee, her grandson, there were monuments of achievement both for the evangelist Sun-Gwang Lee and for Rev. Lee at the church even after the Korean War in 1953, strongly suggesting that her ministry was significant.<sup>1</sup>

From the 1920s, a few women began to be commissioned to minister to overseas Koreans. In 1922, Naomi Choe was commissioned by the Korean Methodist Church to Siberia.<sup>2</sup> She was the first moderator of the Korean Methodist Women's Society of Christian Service (KMWSCS). Encouraging the KWSCS to commission a woman missionary and proving to be a model moderator, she volunteered, together with her husband, to be sent as missionaries to Siberia for three years, then returned home.<sup>3</sup> The Korean Presbyterian Church also started commissioning women for mission to Koreans overseas. In 1926, Ga-Ja Han, an evangelist, was sent to Northern Manchuria and Siberia for Koreans in the region. An article in the Christian newspaper, *Gidok Gyobo*, in 1936, appreciates her ministry: 'as a mere maiden, to respond to the Lord's calling, she has devoted herself to evangelism in the regions of Siberia and Northern Manchuria, enduring unspeakable persecution and suffering up to ten times, and is praised as 'the angel of Northern Manchuria'.<sup>4</sup>

As seen above, Korean women's cross-cultural mission began in 1908, and continued with untiring zeal through the 1920s, especially to overseas Koreans. It was in the 1930s, when Soon-Ho Kim was sent to Shandong to minister to Chinese women, that the cross-cultural mission of Korean women took on its full form. She was commissioned by the Korean Presbyterian Church to cooperate with other Korean missionaries in the region. Her entire financial support came from the National Organization of the Korean Presbyterian Women (NKPW). She worked in Shandong, China until 1936, where her fluent Chinese impressed the indigenous to whom she ministered. Her ministry was especially welcomed by the Chinese women. After the first furlough in 1937, due to the Sino-Japanese War, she was forced to return home from Shandong. Then her mission came to an end finally in 1939.<sup>5</sup>

Officially commissioned women were not the only significant female contributors to world mission. Although they were not officially commissioned as missionaries, the contributions of unofficial participants, such as wives of missionaries, cannot be overlooked. For example, 1926

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<sup>1</sup> Bokyoung Park, *Mission and Women* (in Korean; Seoul: Presbyterian College & Theological Seminary Publisher, 2008), 211.

<sup>2</sup> Timothy Kiho Park, *The History of Korean Church's Missionary Movement* (in Korean; Seoul: Asia Mission Research Institute, 1999), 92.

<sup>3</sup> Jung-Soon Lee, *World Mission and Korean Women Missionaries* (in Korean; Seoul: CLC Publishers, 2009), 225-28.

<sup>4</sup> *Gidok Gyobo*, 29 September, 1936; quoted in B. Park, *Mission and Women*, 217-20.

<sup>5</sup> B. Park, *Mission and Women*, 220-26.

Gidok Shinbo, the Presbyterian denominational newspaper, describes the various works of missionary wives in China, such as holding women's retreats every Wednesday to teach new believers, visiting houses to share the gospel, and running Sunday Schools.<sup>6</sup> They took care of their families and supported church ministries, especially women's ministry. At the time, it was remarkable to entrust women with independent ministries, but these works became models and foundations on which subsequent women could build their autonomous ministries.

In summary, the Korean church has been very mission-oriented from the beginning, not least with women, who were filled with passion to share the gospel with other nationals as well as with overseas Koreans. They were motivated to share the liberating good news of Christ from their own experience in the oppressive patriarchal society. They were devoted in missionary cooperation despite unfavourable conditions. Officially recognised or not, women gratefully participated in their given ministries. But the passion for mission died down beginning in 1938, when the Korean church suffered from the Japanese enforcement of Shinto worship. The ensuing national chaos and divisions within the church left a long lasting wound from which the church would struggle to recover.

### **From 1945 to 1980: Missions Recovered**

Korea was liberated from Japan in 1945, but subsequent national conflict divided North and South Korea, resulting in the tragic formation of two separate governments. The Korean War (1950-1953) left the land in ruins. With the truce in 1953, the Korean church began to rebuild, serving as a beacon of hope in the devastated Korean society. The first fruit in world mission ripened in 1955, when the Korean Presbyterian Church decided to send a missionary. In May, 1956, Chan-Young Choi was commissioned to Thailand as the first post-liberation missionary, soon followed by Soon-Il Kim who arrived in Thailand in November of that year. Subsequently, several more missionaries were sent to the mission field.

During this time, wives of missionaries formed the largest portion of women sent to mission fields. Their primary role was to take care of children and home. If they participated in ministry, they did so only in the capacity of assistants to their husbands. Ok-Hee Lim, the wife of Young-Jin Kim, sent to Taiwan in 1957, was a notable exception. She had been educated in theology and was a talented musician, a long-serving pianist in her church. Both of these enabled her to be a great support in her husband's mission work through teaching church music in a local theology school, compiling a hymnal for churches in the mission field, and organising a special music mission team.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> *Gidok Shinbo*, 11 November, 1926; quoted in B. Park, *Mission and Women*, 214.

<sup>7</sup> J. Lee, *World Mission and Korean Women Missionaries*, 232-36.

In addition, other women served as missionaries in their own right. In 1949, Sung-Won Jung arrived in Taiwan and worked among Korean residents. Originally an evangelist in Pyongyang, she moved to China and stayed there until the Communist takeover forced her to move to Taiwan. Drawing from her ministry experience in Pyongyang, she started Korean language education and lifestyle renewal ministries for Koreans residing in Taiwan. She evangelised a few people shortly after arriving, and they gathered as a house church, marking the beginning of the Giryung Church, the first Korean church in Taiwan. She continued her evangelistic work, founding the Taipei Church and the Kaohsiung Church, resulting in the commissioning of more missionaries to Taiwan. In 1957, she was officially commissioned as a missionary, and serving in Taiwan until her retirement in 1973.<sup>8</sup>

In 1961, three young female students, Jae-Ok Jeon, Eun-Ja Kim, and Sung-Ja Cho, were commissioned by Ewha Women's University as missionaries, a momentous event in the history of Korean women missionaries. All in their mid-twenties, they left for Pakistan, a joint commissioning of the Korean Methodist Church and the Mission Board of Ewha Women's University. Their Pakistani ministry focused on teaching in schools and helping with local churches, proving that women could work in a more independent missionary capacity. Jeon continued to work in Pakistan until August, 1973, when she moved to the United States to study. This served as a model for missionary deployment by Korean mission societies which emerged after the 1970s. In 1965, the next three graduates of Ewha were sent to Pakistan: they were Ok-Hee Kim, Nam-Soon Kim, and Mi-Gyoon Chang.<sup>9</sup>

Until 1961, most women participating in missions were wives of male missionaries, whose primary task was taking care of home and family. While there were case-specific differences, most of them entered into missionary work through their husbands' commissioning. In contrast, the appointment of three Ewha alumni provided the precedent that enabled women to serve in independent capacities. It also signalled the beginning of appointment to mission by mission societies rather than denominational mission boards. Through these mission societies, a door was open for young women missionaries.

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### From 1980 to the Present: Missions Surge

In 1979, the official number of Korean missionaries was 97. After 1980, the number rose rapidly, to 323 in 1982 and 511 in 1985.<sup>10</sup> Through the

<sup>8</sup> Wueng-Sam Kim, 'Sung-Won Jung, the Mother of Koreans in Taiwan' [in Korean], *New Family* (Nov. 1968), 61-64.

<sup>9</sup> Young-Nam Kim, 'A History and Process of Korean Churches' Mission in Asia' [in Korean], *Korean Christianity and History* 28 (2008), 94-104.

<sup>10</sup> Steve Sang-Chul Moon, 'The Current Statistics of Korean Mission, 2012' [in

1990s the increase was even steeper, with 1,178 missionaries in 1990 and 4,402 in 1998. In the year 2000, there were 5,948, finally passing the 10,000 mark in 2004. The number grew steadily to 19,373 in 2011.<sup>11</sup> The most recent statistics taken by the Korea Research Institute for Mission (KRIM) places the number in 2012 at 19,798.<sup>12</sup>

The explosive growth of the Korean church and its zeal for world mission would seem to be the primary drive behind the logarithmic increase in the number of Korean missionaries. Mission societies numbered only 21 in 1979, growing to 113 in 1994, contributing to an equally dramatic increase in commissioned missionaries.<sup>13</sup>

This period marked a fundamental change in the characteristics of Korean missions: the increase of missionaries sent by mission societies instead of denominational mission boards. Most of the missionaries affiliated with mission societies were laity, including women. The number of women missionaries grew after 1980.

From the end of the 1980s, mainline denominational mission boards started to officially commission minister's wives as missionaries, resulting in a visible rise in the number of women missionaries. For example, the Presbyterian Church of Korea (PCK, or Tonghap) started to commission wives as official missionaries in 1988. The General Assembly of Presbyterian Church in Korea (GAPCK, or Hapdong), a more conservative denomination, began to officially commission them in 1993. Although this policy did not bring immediate change, it created a big identity shift in women missionaries themselves. Previously, they had identified themselves as supporters and assistants rather than full missionaries. Official recognition made them aware of their own missionary identity and made their ministry more visible.

According to the annual statistical report of the Korean World Mission Association (KWMA), as early as the year 2000, they already outnumbered male counterparts. Then according to the 2010 research by the KWMA, there were 11,732 women missionaries with the male to female ratio of 47:53.<sup>14</sup> The numerical advantage of women missionaries was even more apparent in mission societies. For instance, in the same 2010 research by the KWMA, the male to female ratio in 2000 was 49:51, while the ratio in 2010 was 45:55.<sup>15</sup>

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Korean] (<http://www.krim.org>), accessed on 9 Sep, 2014.

<sup>11</sup> Moon, 'The Current Statistics of Korean Mission, 2012'.

<sup>12</sup> Steve Sang-Chul Moon, 'Korea Mission 2013: Micro Trends and Accountability' (<http://www.krim.org>), accessed on 9 Sept, 2014.

<sup>13</sup> Han-Sung Kim, 'The Status and Tasks of the Internationalization of Korean Mission Organizations' [in Korean], *Gospel and Mission* 15 (2011), 14.

<sup>14</sup> In-Sook Jung, 'The Statistics of Sending Korean Missionaries of January 30, 2010' (<http://kwma.org>), accessed on 9 Sept, 2014.

<sup>15</sup> Jung, 'The Statistics of Sending Korean Missionaries of January 30, 2010'.

As their number increased, their ministries also diversified. According to Jung-Soon Lee, their cross-cultural ministries cover education, health, women's ministry (including Bible School), media ministry (including Internet), Christian music, counselling, administration, sports, church planting, social welfare, and charity. In short, they serve actively in almost all spheres of missionary work.<sup>16</sup>

In the mid-2000s, as the number of female missionaries increased, mission boards began to find ways to support them. Various women missionaries' conferences have been held to encourage solidarity and fellowship, such as the Global Mission Society of the GAPCK, which has been holding biennial conferences since 2002 to promote fellowship and networking among single women missionaries. The PCK's women missionaries started a similar society in 2007 to advocate for women's voice and to hold annual conference.

Moreover, currently women are moving into positions of leadership. In 2014 a woman was elected to be the president of the Missionary Society of the PCK, a landmark change in a denomination that has 1,300 women missionaries. Another example is the Global Mission Pioneers (GMP) where, of 19 field leaders for 331 missionaries, four are women.

Recently, denominational mission boards have begun to recognise committed women missionaries with awards, with the aim of unearthing the stories of women who devoted their life to mission, applauding their efforts, and offering role models for other women missionaries.<sup>17</sup>

Although women's ministry has grown greatly over the last 30 years, there is still a need to strengthen their role. Single women missionaries are generally very active, producing tangible fruit, but they suffer because of missionary communities who devalue and ignore their ministry because of patriarchal prejudice against single women. As for married women missionaries, they must often bear the majority of housekeeping and childrearing duties, with little or no help from their husbands, thus causing their ministry to suffer.

Therefore, there must be more education among missionary communities to lessen both the prejudice against and the burden on women missionaries, and more practical and spiritual aid must be offered to help them fulfil their ministry potential.

After 1980, Korean women enjoyed wide and active participation in mission. The emergence of mission societies gave committed young women opportunities to participate in mission. Within denominations, more

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<sup>16</sup> J. Lee, *World Mission and Korean Women Missionaries*, 55-58.

<sup>17</sup> The Underwood Award was bestowed to the female missionary Jung-Yoon Kim, who served as a medical missionary since 1985 to Uganda. Also the Scranton Award of 2014 was given to the female missionary Sung-Ja Kim, who has carried out her exceptional educational ministry in the slum region of Dominica for 16 years. <http://www.christiantoday.co.kr/view.htm?id=148977>, accessed on Sep. 14, 2014.

women could participate in mission through the official commissioning of wives, and as a result, Korean women missionaries outnumber men. They work in various ministries, increasingly taking leadership roles within the missionary community. They form their own societies for mutual solidarity and fellowship, and some have been elected as presidents of the mission societies consisting both of men and women. Awards are now being given to recognise exemplary women missionaries, who then become role models for others.. While it is true that women missionaries now have a larger role compared to the past, much must still be done to strengthen their role. Married and unmarried women must be appropriately supported and encouraged and their missionary identities must be strengthened, allowing their talents and abilities to be fully developed.

### **Conclusion**

After the first seed of world mission was sown in the hearts of Korean women at the beginning of the twentieth century, it sprouted and grew to become a tall tree. Through the hopelessness of Japanese colonialism, ravages of war, extreme poverty, and economic development, even with the injustice and prejudice of patriarchy within the church, the passion of Korean women never waned.

Indeed, women's mission was the mission of the weak. They devoted themselves to mission through the harsh reality of gender discrimination in a patriarchal society. The marginalisation of women continues today, but it is through these weak agents that the mission of God persists. As the Korean church moves into the second century of missions, may the stories of women missionaries in the past century continue in the next generation!



# ORTHODOX WITNESS IN THE KOREAN PENINSULA: A HISTORICAL APPROACH

Ambrose-Aristotle Zographos (Song-Am Cho)

The Orthodox Church is already in the second century of its presence in Korea. From its official inception in 1900 to this day, it has been through many phases of rise and decline. Its historic course has been greatly influenced by national hardships and international politics. The goal of this chapter is to present the various historical phases of the Korean church in order to inform readers of largely unknown missionary activities of the Orthodox Church in the Far East.<sup>1</sup> An accurate history of the Orthodox mission in Korea cannot be complete without thorough research utilising the archives of the Moscow Patriarchate, the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, and the Orthodox Metropolis of Korea. This study is based, directly or indirectly, on these sources, together with oral testimonies of survivors and descendants of the first Korean Orthodox faithful (i.e., believers). There will also be references to the Orthodox diaspora in Korea.

## The Beginning

The idea to start an Orthodox mission in Korea came from the secretary of the Russian diplomatic mission in Seoul, Nikolai Alexeyevitch Swischy. In early 1889, he sent a detailed memorandum to his superiors, through which he convincingly proposed the creation of a Russian Orthodox Mission in Korea.<sup>2</sup> Thus, the Russian Orthodox Church officially began the work of Orthodox witness in Korea in 1900. In theory, the missionary work of the Russian Orthodox Church continued until 1949; in practice, however, it had long before stopped offering assistance to the Korean flock because of the difficulties brought about by the Russian Revolution of 1917. In 1955, at the request of the Korean Orthodox faithful, the Ecumenical Patriarchate took the Orthodox Church of Korea under its pastoral care, which has continued unabated to the present. The main historical events of the life of the Orthodox Church in Korea, under different Orthodox ecclesiastical jurisdictions, are detailed below.

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<sup>1</sup> Almost all the studies published by Russians about the history of the Orthodox Church in Korea have the same drawback: they limit their scope to the first few decades of missionary activities of Russian missionaries. Thus, the reader gets the wrong impression that the church stopped operating in 1949.

<sup>2</sup> Feodosii Perevalov, 'Rossiiskaja Dukhovnaja Missija v Koree, 1900-1925 [The Russian Mission in Korea, 1900-1925]', *Istoriya Rossiskoi Dukhovnoi Missii v Koree* [The History of the Russian Mission in Korea] (1999), 173-79.

## Under the Russian Orthodox Church

### *Under the Metropolis of Saint Petersburg*

On 2 July 1897, the Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church of Russia<sup>3</sup> founded the Russian Orthodox Mission in Korea, based on a previous decision by Tsar Nicholas II on 20 June 1897 (decision no. 2195).<sup>4</sup> Its primary aim was to ‘serve the religious needs of the Orthodox Russians who lived in Korea and the possible spread of the holy Orthodox faith among the indigenous pagan population’.<sup>5</sup> According to this decision, the Russian mission in Korea would belong ecclesiastically to the bishopric of Saint Petersburg, while the Tsar’s Fund would provide all financial support. On 9 October 1897, the Holy Synod elected Priest-monk Ambrosii Gudko (1867-1917/18) as the head of the mission in Korea, bestowing him with the office of archimandrite. The members of the first missionary group consisted, apart from Archimandrite Ambrosii, of Deacon Nicholas Alexeev and a chanter named A. Krasin. Yet, due to difficulties, they had to stay in the Oussouri province waiting to be allowed to enter Korea. Later on, the Holy Synod was forced to revoke the appointment of Archimandrite Ambrosii because of problems that had risen in Novokievsk between him and the military officials of the regiment there.<sup>6</sup> Two years later, in 1899, Deacon Nicholas (1869-1952),<sup>7</sup> the first missionary arriving in Korea, entered Seoul,<sup>8</sup> bringing vestments, liturgical books, icons, and other sacred items.

In January 1900, Archimandrite Chrysant Shchetkovsky (1869-1906),<sup>9</sup> having been appointed by the Orthodox Church of Russia as new head of

<sup>3</sup> From 1700 to 1917, the administration of the Orthodox Church of Russia was exercised by the Holy Synod. In 1917, during Lenin’s tenure, the Patriarchate of Moscow was re-established, and on 5 (18) November, 1917, Patriarch Tichon was elected.

<sup>4</sup> Alena A. Volokhova, ‘Iz istorii rossiskoi politiki na Dalnem Vostoke: Ministerstvo Inostrannih Del, Ministerstvo Finansov i uchrezhdenie Rossiiskoi Dukhovnoi Missii v Koree’ [From the History of Russian Politics in the Far East: Ministry of External Affairs, Ministry of Economy and the Establishment of the Russian Mission in Korea], *The History of the Russian Mission in Korea* (1999), 324.

<sup>5</sup> Perevalov, ‘The Russian Mission in Korea, 1900-1925’, 181.

<sup>6</sup> Perevalov, ‘The Russian Mission in Korea, 1900-1925’, 185-87.

<sup>7</sup> He served in Korea until 1903, when he left to serve the Russian Orthodox Mission in Peking, almost destroyed by the Boxers. In 1909 he returned to the mission in Korea because of the lack of priests.

<sup>8</sup> For Krasin, see Andreas Heliotis, *Ἡ Ὀρθοδοξία στὴν Κορέα, Συνοπτικὸ χρονικὸ τῆς Ἱεραποστολῆς τῆς Ὀρθοδόξου Ἐκκλησίας στὴν Κορέα* [The Orthodoxy in Korea, Concised Chronicle of Orthodox Mission in Korea] (Athens: Πατριαρχικὸν Ἰδρυμα Ὀρθοδόξου Ἱεραποστολῆς Ἄπω Ἀνατολῆς, 2005), 52-53.

<sup>9</sup> Perevalov, ‘The Russian Mission in Korea, 1900-1925’, 219 n. 73.

the mission, arrived in Korea, replacing Archimandrite Ambrosii. The next month, in a suitably decorated hall of the Russian Consulate in Seoul and on the Feast of Martyr St Theodore Tyron, the first Divine Liturgy was celebrated and a temporary chapel, dedicated to St Nicholas, was consecrated. Thus, 17 February, 1900 is considered the 'birthday' of the Korean Orthodox Church. The main concern of Archimandrite Chrysanf was the construction of an Orthodox church, and yet, in 1903, he was forced to form a temporary chapel in one of the school buildings he had managed to construct. This building, along with another house complex that housed mission staff, was erected on a plot adjacent to the Russian diplomatic missions in Chongdong (Jeongdong), in central Seoul. The church of St Nicholas was consecrated by Archimandrite Chrysanf on 17 April 1903.<sup>10</sup> The following year, however, the work of the mission was interrupted for two years due to the victory of the Japanese in the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905). All Russians, along with all missionaries, were expelled from Korea. Missionary activity restarted in 1906 with the new head of the mission, Archimandrite Pavel Ivanovsky (1874-1919).

Archimandrite Pavel arrived in Seoul with his four assistants:<sup>11</sup> Priest-monk Vladimir Skrizalin; Deacon Bartholomew Selezniouf, who had just returned from the Orthodox Mission in Manchuria; a novice monk Theodore Perevalov, who would serve as cantor and choir master; and a teacher, Constantine Siegfried. Soon more missionaries arrived, such as the brothers Constantine and Nicholas Pirozkov, sent by the Archdiocese of Vladivostok with the specific mission to sing in the church and to help with the catechetical work. Thus, in early 1907, the mission in Korea was operating with a relatively full staff. During his time, Pavel made great progress because of his charismatic personality and godly zeal for the Orthodox mission in Korea: the spreading of the missionary efforts in the provinces, the operation of missionary schools, and the translation of liturgical books into Korean. He also set to music all the translated hymns and created a church choir.<sup>12</sup>

### *Under the Diocese of Vladivostok*

According to a decision made by the Holy Synod, the responsibility for mission work in Korea was assigned to the bishop of Vladivostok by the

<sup>10</sup> Perevalov, 'The Russian Mission in Korea, 1900-1925', 206-209.

<sup>11</sup> Perevalov, 'The Russian Mission in Korea, 1900-1925', 220-22; Heliotis, *H Ὀρθοδοξία*, 40.

<sup>12</sup> Perevalov, 'The Russian Mission in Korea, 1900-1925', 220; see also Avgustin Nikitin, 'Russkaja Pravoslavnaia Missija v Koree [The Russian Orthodox Mission in Korea]', *H Ὀρθοδοξία σὴν Ἀπω Ανατολή* [Orthodoxy in the Far East] 1 (1993), 141; L. Anisimov, 'Pravoslavnaia missii v Koree. K 90-letiju osnovanija' [Orthodox Mission in Korea Marks its 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary], *The Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate* 5 (1991), 58.

bishop of Saint Petersburg in 1908.<sup>13</sup> In 1911, John Tak Kang (1877-1939), who had previously served as a teacher at the mission school, was ordained a deacon.<sup>14</sup> He was the first Korean Orthodox member of the clergy. Deacon John was subsequently ordained to the priesthood in 1912. In 1918, he withdrew from the mission in Korea and went to Harbin, where he served at the local church until his death in 1939. In 1912, Archimandrite Pavel was elected by the Holy Synod of the Russian Church as auxiliary bishop to the archbishop of Vladivostok, under the title Nikolsky-Oussourisk. He was replaced by Archimandrite Irinarhos Semanofsky (1873-1923), who was appointed as head of the mission in Korea.<sup>15</sup> During his time, Luka Hyi-Jun Kim (1881/2-1929), a Korean with Russian citizenship,<sup>16</sup> was ordained a deacon on 11 August 1913 by the archbishop of Vladivostok and Kamchatka Eusebius. Luka had been a teacher at the Orthodox mission school. The work of Archimandrite Irinarhos (1912-1914) at the mission in Korea ended very quickly without any substantial results.

After Archimandrite Irinarhos, the responsibility of the mission was undertaken by Priest-monk Vladimir Skrizhalin (1914-1917).<sup>17</sup> Although Vladimir had been in Korea since 1906 and had substantial experience concerning mission work, he was not entrusted with the authority of being head of the mission. This disappointed him because, despite having assumed all the responsibilities of the supervisor, he was not given any rights or privileges to exercise his duties. As a result, he acted only within the limits of the decisions and orders made by Bishop Nikolsk-Oussourisk Pavel, who retained the authority over mission work.<sup>18</sup>

In 1917, the priest-monk Palladii Seletsky (1917)<sup>19</sup> was assigned as head of the mission. His short stay in Korea (three and a half months) was marked with the closure of mission schools, the dismissal of Korean teachers, and the unjust campaign of some Korean Orthodox laymen against the innocent Bishop Nikolsky-Oussourisk Pavel, in which, to some extent, Seletsky himself participated.

In 1917, the priest-monk Feodosii Perevalov (1917-1930) was appointed as head of the mission.<sup>20</sup> He held this position until 1930, when he resigned

<sup>13</sup> Perevalov, 'The Russian Mission in Korea, 1900-1925', 250.

<sup>14</sup> Perevalov, 'The Russian Mission in Korea, 1900-1925', 284; see also, Nikitin, 'Rossiya i Koreya: Obzor Tserkovnikh Sbyazei' [Russia and Korea: Review of Church Relations] (2006), [http://miryanin.narod.ru/rossija\\_i\\_koreja.html](http://miryanin.narod.ru/rossija_i_koreja.html).

<sup>15</sup> Perevalov, 'The Russian Mission in Korea, 1900-1925', 251 n. 113, 252-56, 306.

<sup>16</sup> Perevalov, 'The Russian Mission in Korea, 1900-1925', 256 n. 116.

<sup>17</sup> Perevalov, 'The Russian Mission in Korea, 1900-1925', 220 n. 75, 259.

<sup>18</sup> Perevalov, 'The Russian Mission in Korea, 1900-1925', 257; see also Heliotis, *H Orthodoxia*, 90.

<sup>19</sup> Perevalov, 'The Russian Mission in Korea, 1900-1925', 259 n. 121, 260-66.

<sup>20</sup> Perevalov, 'The Russian Mission in Korea, 1900-1925', 267 n.127; see also Dionysii Posdyayev, 'K istorii rossiiskoi dukhovnoi missii v Koree' [From the

for health reasons and departed for Tokyo. His tenure as head of the mission came during a very critical period due to the Russian Revolution of 1917. The suffering Moscow Patriarchate along with the archbishop of Vladivostok, under whose jurisdiction the Orthodox community of Saint Nicholas in Seoul belonged, no longer had any communication with Korea, nor could they provide any support, as had been the case for the first two decades. Due to the lack of financial resources, not only could they not maintain salaried teachers, catechists, and employees, but the missionaries themselves also found it hard to meet their necessities for living. In a letter to Archbishop Eusebius of Vladivostok, who was in Moscow at the time as a member of the Holy Synod, Father Feodosii vividly described the hardships of the existing situation. This letter constituted the main reason for the transfer of the mission from the jurisdiction of the ecclesiastical authority of Vladivostok to the jurisdiction of the Russian Orthodox Archdiocese of Tokyo.

#### *Under the Archdiocese of Tokyo*

Archbishop Eusebius of Vladivostok presented this letter of Priest-monk Feodosii to Moscow Patriarch Tikhon and he in turn presented it to the Holy Synod. On 4 November, 1921, the Holy Synod unanimously decided (decision no. 1571) on the patriarch's proposal to bring the Orthodox Mission in Seoul under the jurisdiction of the Russian archbishop of Tokyo, Sergii Tikhomirov, who was the nearest Orthodox bishop to Korea,<sup>21</sup> with the Church of Korea keeping its previous independent status.<sup>22</sup> This decision was to take effect on the day the mission would receive formal note, which occurred on 16 January, 1922.<sup>23</sup>

From 1931 to 1936, Archimandrite Alexandr Chistyakov (1931-1936),<sup>24</sup> who had served in Manchuria, headed the mission. In 1936, he submitted his resignation to Archbishop Sergii of Tokyo and left Korea. During his era, an attempt was made to interfere with the ecclesiastical status of the mission, most probably because of the spiritual bond that had been created between the mission and the ecclesiastical province of Harbin in Manchuria. On 7 November, 1933, the Holy Synod of 'the tramontane

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History of Russian Mission in Korea], *Istoriya Rossiskoi Dukhovnoi Missii v Koree* 1 (1999), 199.

<sup>21</sup> Posdyaev, 'K istorii', 198. Posdyaev characterises this subjection as 'an interruption of the canonical relations with the Patriarchate of Moscow'.

<sup>22</sup> Mikhail V. Shkarovsky, *Russkaya Pravoslavnaya Dukhovnaya Misiya v Koree* [The Russian Orthodox Mission in Korea], <http://www.bogoslov.ru/text/465367.html>; Perevalov, 'The Russian Mission in Korea, 1900-1925', 303; Heliotis, *H Orθοδοξία*, 101.

<sup>23</sup> Perevalov, 'The Russian Mission in Korea', 1900-1925', 290.

<sup>24</sup> Maxim G. Volkov, 'Pravoslavnaya Tserkov v Koree' [The Orthodox Church in Korea], *Asiya i Africa segodnya* 4 (2009), 66.

Russian Supreme Ecclesiastical Administration' commissioned the supervision of the mission in Seoul to the bishop of Kamchatka, Nestor Anisimov, who belonged to the 'Tramontane Administration' and received the title of archbishop. On 13 April, 1934, he decided to change the title of the bishopric See of Nestor, who lived in Harbin, to that of 'Kamchatka and Seoul', thus, putting into question the jurisdiction of the Metropolitan of Tokyo, not only on the Orthodox Mission there, but also in Korea.<sup>25</sup> Through this decision, Nestor was awarded the supervision of the missionary work carried out in the northern part of Korea, which till then had been under the archbishop of Harbin and Manchuria, Meletios.<sup>26</sup>

Bishop Nestor felt terribly towards Metropolitan Sergii (who belonged to the hierarchy of the Russian Church, which had appointed him Bishop of Tokyo, and remained loyal to the Patriarchate of Moscow), because he presided in his ordination (1916) as bishop of Kamchatka, assistant of the province of Vladivostok, and had maintained friendly relations with him. Bishop Nestor even sent letters to Sergii, in an effort to justify himself and asked to be forgiven. However, under the pressure of the prelates who participated in the Synod of Karlovci, Bishop Nestor claimed the supervision of the Orthodox Mission in Korea. Ultimately, however, he was not accepted in Korea and the mission remained under the jurisdiction of the Metropolitan of Tokyo.<sup>27</sup>

As early as 1925, the 'Tramontane Administration' had begun missionary activity in the northern provinces of Korea, sending missionaries from Harbin to preach the gospel while in a neighbourhood village, near the Sino-Korean border, it built a church for Russian immigrants who had arrived in Korea from Manchuria. Among these missionaries was Pavel Afanasief, who had served in the Orthodox Mission in Korea (1915-1918) as a cantor and had gone to North Korea as an independent missionary. By 1929, he had brought to Orthodoxy 120 Koreans of Pyeongyang.<sup>28</sup> With the blessing of Archbishop Meletios of Harbin, Pavel founded a missionary station in Pyeongyang in 1931 and, in two years, he managed to catechize and bring to the Orthodox faith more than 450 Koreans, of whom 50 were active parishioners. Father Pavel received the monastic tonsure from Meletios and, in May 1933, he was

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<sup>25</sup> Shkarovsky, *Russkaya Pravoslavnaya*; see also Perevalov, 'The Russian Mission in Korea, 1900-1925', 303.

<sup>26</sup> *Public Archives of the Russian Federation*. See Shkarovsky, *Russkaya Pravoslavnaya*.

<sup>27</sup> Posdyayev, 'K istorii', 199. The information that since 1945 (until 1953) this chapel was under the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate means that it followed the accession to the Moscow Patriarchate of Nestor and the other Metropolitan of Manchuria, which previously belonged to the Russian Church of Diaspora.

<sup>28</sup> S. Bolshakoff, *The Foreign Missions of the Russian Orthodox Church* (London: SPCK, 1943), 75.

ordained as a priest-monk.<sup>29</sup> He built a private chapel in Pyeongyang to serve the needs of a small flock. No further information exists on the activities of Fr Pavel Afanasief after 1939.<sup>30</sup>

According to Fr Dionysius Posdyaev, in 1936, the Orthodox Mission in Seoul saw fit to build an Orthodox chapel near the river Oboe in North Korea,<sup>31</sup> presumably to prevent or inhibit the expansion of the actions of the missionaries of the 'Tramontane Administration' in the northern part of the peninsula.

In 1932, the Korean cantor Alexis Yi-Han Kim (1895-1950)<sup>32</sup> was ordained a deacon by Archbishop Sergii Tikhomirov of Tokyo, who in the meantime had been promoted as metropolitan by the Patriarchate of Moscow. During these very critical years, due to the political conditions in Russia, the bond of the Moscow Patriarchate with Korea was almost non-existent.

In 1936, the priest-monk Polikarp Priimak (1936-1949) arrived in Korea to begin service as head of the mission. He was the last Russian missionary to Korea. He served until 29 June, 1949, when he was arrested by the Korean Police with the accusation that he was a Soviet agent and was expelled together with his mother. Thus, the first period of Orthodox Mission in Korea under the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate came to an end.

According to Russian sources, from 1900 to 1945, 789 Koreans were baptised by Orthodox missionaries: 14 (in 1900-1904 period);<sup>33</sup> 322 (1906-1912);<sup>34</sup> 110 (1912-1914);<sup>35</sup> 181 (1914-1917);<sup>36</sup> 46 (1917-1924);<sup>37</sup> 29

<sup>29</sup> *Public Archives of the Russian Federation*. See Shkarovsky, *Russkaya Pravoslavnaya*; Bolshakoff, *The Foreign Missions*, 75.

<sup>30</sup> Posdyaev, 'K istorii', 199.

<sup>31</sup> Posdyaev, 'K istorii', 358. In any event, both private chapels in Pyeongyang and in Novina were under the jurisdiction of the Metropolis of Harbin of the Russian Church of Diaspora. See R. Rutt, 'The Orthodox Church in Korea', *Sobornost* 3:21 (Summer 1957), 488.

<sup>32</sup> Near the end of the 1930s, Fr Alexei was forced to abandon Seoul in order to avoid the censure of the Japanese Police, and for four consecutive years, he lived in the city of Cham-won, where his daughter Tatiana Sung-Duk Kim was working as a teacher. In 1938, Fr Alexei was arrested by the Japanese authorities and remained in prison for one and a half years due to his brother Michael's attempt to escape to Russia after the closure of the Soviet Consulate in Seoul (1938). On 9 July, 1950, after celebrating the Divine Liturgy, Fr Alexei was once more arrested in front of his Presbytera Lydia Hwa-Sook Kwon and his son Costa Chang-Sik Kim, this time by the North Korean soldiers. That was the last time he was seen alive. See A. Lankov, 'Christianstvo v Koree [Christianity in Korea]', *Problemi Dalnogo Vostoka* [The Problems of Far East] 2 (1999), 131; Tatiana M. Simbirtseva, 'The Orthodox Church in Korea: Pages of Modern History' (an unpublished study, 2000).

<sup>33</sup> Perevalov, 'The Russian Mission in Korea, 1900-1925', 306.

<sup>34</sup> Perevalov, 'The Russian Mission in Korea, 1900-1925', 306.



(1925-1930);<sup>38</sup> and 87 (1931-1935).<sup>39</sup> In 1940, the Orthodox flock numbered only 150 people, who were scattered across 17 areas in Korea.<sup>40</sup>

### *Orthodox Mission in Korea during the Korean War*

With the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950, Orthodox Korean believers, like most of their compatriots, suffered great hardships. Most of them fled to Busan and the southern districts of the country. In these tragic times, the Greek Expeditionary Force (hereafter GEF),<sup>41</sup> participating in the peacekeeping force of the United Nations, offered significant spiritual and material assistance to Koreans (1950-1955), particularly through military priests for its liturgical needs. Essentially, they were the first Greek Orthodox missionaries to Korea. The members of GEF visited the Orthodox faithful in Seoul numerous times, especially from the armistice (7 July, 1953) until their successive repatriation (31 December, 1955), and offered food as well as other basic necessities. They protected war orphans, strengthened the faith of Orthodox believers without a shepherd after the disappearance of Fr Alexei Kim (9 July, 1951), baptised children and adults, and performed the sacrament of marriage, Divine Liturgies, etc.

The first Greek chaplain in contact with the Orthodox Koreans<sup>42</sup> was Archimandrite Chariton Simeonides (later metropolitan of Polyani and Kilkis), who served in Korea from 5 March, 1952, until 30 May, 1953. According to his testimony, he attempted to find ways to serve approximately 50 families of Orthodox believers in Seoul.<sup>43</sup>

The second chaplain was Archimandrite Andreas Halkiopoulos (March 1953 to August 1954),<sup>44</sup> who significantly helped the Orthodox flock because most of his tenure lasted after the armistice. On his initiative, the half-destroyed Church of St Nicholas in Chongdong was renovated through a fundraiser conducted among Greek soldiers and through their own effort. The first Divine Liturgy at the renovated Church of St Nicholas took place

<sup>35</sup> Perevalov, 'The Russian Mission in Korea, 1900-1925', 306.

<sup>36</sup> Perevalov, 'The Russian Mission in Korea, 1900-1925', 306.

<sup>37</sup> Perevalov, 'The Russian Mission in Korea, 1900-1925', 306.

<sup>38</sup> Posdyaev, 'K istorii', 356.

<sup>39</sup> Nikitin, 'Russkaja Pravoslavnaja', 142.

<sup>40</sup> Posdyaev, 'K istorii', 356; Nikitin, 'Russkaja Pravoslavnaja', 142.

<sup>41</sup> See 'Τὸ Ἐκστρατευτικὸν Σῶμα Ἑλλάδος εἰς Κορέαν, 1950-1955' [The GEF to Korea, 1950-1955], *Ἐκδοσις Διευθύνσεως Ἱστορίας Στρατοῦ* (Athens: 1977).

<sup>42</sup> Fr Neophytos Baletelis (9 December 1950-19 March 1951) and Fr Elias Tratolos (23 March, 1951-28 March, 1952) served in Korea prior to Fr Chariton Symeonides, but we lack information as to whether they came in contact with the Orthodox Koreans.

<sup>43</sup> See Archim. Michael Kouraklis, *Θρησκευτικοὶ λειτουργοὶ στὸ στράτευμα διὰ μέσου τῶν αἰώνων* (Athens: 2010), 599.

<sup>44</sup> The above information was taken from the archives of the Brotherhood of Theologians 'Soter'.



on 29 November 1953, attended by the deputy minister of education of Korea and other civil and military authorities. Before leaving Korea, he managed to install a Korean priest in the Church of St Nicholas. The Orthodox community proposed as a candidate Yi-Han (Boris) Moon (1910-1977), who was ordained as a deacon in Japan on 9 January, 1954, and on the next day, as a priest by the archbishop of Tokyo, Mkekis Irenaeus. Due to the war and hostile relations between Korea and Japan, Koreans were forbidden to exit the country, particularly those travelling to Japan. With the help of the US Army, Fr Andreas managed to obtain authorisation for Boris Moon to travel to Japan for his ordination. Disguised as an African-American soldier, he was included in a dynamic group of American Marines going to Japan. After his ordination, he returned to Korea in the same manner and served the church with total dedication for 23 years and eight months until his death.<sup>45</sup>

The third and last Greek Chaplain as a member of GEF (6 April, 1954 to 30 December, 1955) was Archimandrite Daniel Iviritis, who continued the work of Fr Andreas.<sup>46</sup>

### **The Orthodox Church under the Ecumenical Patriarchate**

#### *Under the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Australia and New Zealand*

World War II, the suffering of the Korean people from Japanese occupation (1910-1945), and the political upheavals in Korea adversely affected the relations between the Orthodox community in Seoul and the Church of Japan. The same was the case with the Patriarchate of Moscow. After the Korean War, South Koreans were unfavourably disposed towards Russia because of its alliance with North Korea, and thus Orthodox Koreans did not want to have any relations with the Church of Russia. As a result, the Orthodox Community of Seoul found itself cut off from the rest of the Orthodox Church; that is, the community did not belong to any ecclesiastical jurisdiction.

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<sup>45</sup> Father Boris Moon (Yi-Han) married Maria Myung-Soon Kim and had three daughters, Anna (Soon-Ja), Natalia (Gil-Ja), Valsamo (Hye-Ja), and one son, Daniel (Jun-Sik). Shortly after his ordination in 1954, Fr Boris put in great efforts in order to have the High School for Girls running, after renovating the old big building in the area of Chong-Dong with the material help of GEF. Fr Andreas Halkiopoulos describes the personality and work of Fr Boris: 'Fr Boris has a deep conscience of his sacred Mission. He is humble, zealous, and a pious priest'. See Andreas Halkiopoulos, *Περί της Ὀρθοδοξίας εἰς τὴν Κορέαν* [On Orthodoxy in Korea], Ἐκθεσις πρὸς τὴν Ὁρησκευτικὴν Ὑπηρεσίαν Γ.Ε.Σ. (1954).

<sup>46</sup> This information was taken from the Archives of the Holy Monastery of Iviron, Mount Athos, Greece.

The ecclesiological irregularities were resolved as follows: On 25 December, 1955, after the Christmas Divine Liturgy, the General Assembly of the Orthodox Community of Saint Nicholas in Seoul unanimously decided to request to come under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople. The Ecumenical Patriarchate, under the leadership of the great Ecumenical patriarch Athenagoras I (Nov, 1948-July, 1972), accepted the request and, since then, the Orthodox Church of Korea has remained a Prefecture of the Ecumenical Throne.

In 1956, the church in Korea came under the jurisdiction of the holy Metropolis of Australia and New Zealand by a decision of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. In 1958, Theophylaktos Papathanassopoulos, the then Metropolitan of Australia and New Zealand, died in a car accident and thus he did not have the chance to exercise any of his pastoral duties upon the Orthodox Community in Seoul. During our recent research at the Archives of the Holy Archdiocese of Australia, we came across some early documents referring to the Orthodox Church of Korea that date back to 1959, the year when the Ecumenical Patriarchate elevated the Metropolis of Australia to an Archdiocese and its Metropolitan Ezekiel (Tsoukalas) was named Archbishop of Australia and New Zealand. Archbishop Ezekiel paid special attention to the flock of the church of Korea. From various official documents as well as his personal correspondence we gathered evidence that he provided moral and financial support to Korean students who studied theology in Greece and urged them to become priests in order to staff the Orthodox Church of Korea. He was also involved in salvaging the property of the Korean Church in Chong-Dong. In 1948 the entire church property was confiscated by the Korean government because they considered it to be of Japanese ownership, as the Orthodox Community in Seoul had been under the jurisdiction of the Japanese Orthodox Church since 1921. According to a court decision on 3 April, 1962, during a trial between the government of South Korea and the Orthodox Church of Korea, the property of the Orthodox Church was returned and confirmed by the Korean state. Following this court decision, the property would be sold in an auction unless the Orthodox Church of Korea paid the sum of one hundred thousand US dollars in order to keep it under its ownership.

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#### *Under the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America*

For the poor Orthodox Church of Korea, this huge amount of money (100,000 dollars) was impossible to be paid. As a result the only Orthodox Church in Korea and the Orthodox school stopped operating. In order to solve the problem, the Ecumenical Patriarchate was forced to make the decision to transfer the Orthodox Church of Korea from the jurisdiction of the Archdiocese of Australia and New Zealand to the Archdiocese of North and South America. In 1962, the Archbishop of North and South America and Exarch of Korea Iakovos (Koukouzis) played an important role for the

return of the property of the Orthodox Church of Korea during one of his local visits. He got in touch with political officials in America as well as in Korea concerning the property of the Korean church and managed to exert a positive influence. Thus, on 22 September, 1964, the Orthodox Church of Korea won the final trial and its property was secured. In 1967, the church property was sold and the money was used in order to pay for the court expenses and various other debts, as well as for the purchase of the piece of land in Mapo-gu. In 1967, Rev. Boris Moon, assisted by architect Chang Han Cho, built a new church at the new site, the Cathedral of St. Nicholas in Seoul. The inauguration ceremony of the new church took place in 1968 and its official consecration was held on 21 September, 1978 by the Metropolitan of New Zealand and Exarch of Korea Dionysios. (About him, see more information below). In 1969, Archimandrite Eugenios Papayannis (Pappas) of the Archdiocese of America was appointed as dean of the Church of St Nicholas in Seoul, in order to assist the sickly parish priest, Rev. Boris Moon. He served in Korea until 1973.

#### *Under the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of New Zealand*

On 8 January, 1970, by a decision of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the Greek Orthodox Church of New Zealand, previously being part of the Archdiocese of Australia, was established as a Metropolis of New Zealand while the newly elected Metropolitan of New Zealand, Dionysios (Psiachas)<sup>47</sup> was assigned as Exarch of India, Korea and Japan. Metropolitan Dionysios made his first pastoral visit to Korea in May, 1971.

On 1 December, 1975, Archimandrite Sotirios Trambas (1929-)<sup>48</sup> arrived in Korea on a secondment by the archbishop of Athens and the approval of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, in response to a request made by the Orthodox

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<sup>47</sup>Metropolitan of New Zealand, Dionysios (Panagiotes Psachas) was born in Chalkidon on 30 March, 1916. He graduated from the Theological School of Chalki in 1941. In the same year he was ordained Deacon by the Metropolitan of Proussa Polycarpus and Presbyter on 15 October, 1945 by the Metropolitan of Neocaesarea Chrysostom. He served at the Cathedral Church of St. Sophia in London from 1947 until 1959. On 6 December, 1959, he was elected titular Bishop of Nazianzos and later assistant Bishop of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia. On 8 January, 1970 he was elected Metropolitan of the newly established Orthodox Metropolis of New Zealand and Exarch of Korea. On July 21, 2003 he was elected Metropolitan of Proussa. He died on 6 January, 2008.

<sup>48</sup>In 1975, he was dispatched to Korea and arrived there on 1 December. He was received by the Orthodox Korean faithful with great joy and relief. In 1993, he was elected by the Ecumenical Patriarchate Assistant Bishop of the Metropolitan of New Zealand and Exarch of Korea Dionysios and was given the title of Bishop of Zela. In 2004, he was elected first metropolitan of the newly established Orthodox Metropolis of Korea. In 2008, he resigned voluntarily as metropolitan of Korea. The Ecumenical Patriarchate accepted his resignation and elected him metropolitan of Pisidia (Turkey).

community in Seoul.<sup>49</sup> Metropolitan Dionysios, with the close cooperation of Archimandrite Sotirios, who later was elevated as assistant bishop of Zela, did remarkable missionary work that was unprecedented in scope and quality. Their mission was not confined to Korea but from 1980 onwards extended to the countries of Southeast Asia (India, Indonesia, Hong Kong, Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand), which at the time were under the jurisdiction of the Metropolitan of New Zealand. Two fruits of this effort were the establishment by the Ecumenical Patriarchate of the Holy Metropolis of Hong Kong in 1996 and the Holy Metropolis of Singapore in 2008.

### *The Orthodox Metropolis of Korea*

After 1975, thanks mainly to the unceasing care and extraordinary missionary zeal of Archimandrite Sotirios and generous assistance from Greece,<sup>50</sup> the Korean church grew strong roots in Korean soil. In recognition of the maturity of the Orthodox community in Korea, on 20 April, 2004, the Ecumenical Patriarchate established the Holy Metropolis of Korea. Then Bishop Sotirios of Zela was elected as first metropolitan of Korea.<sup>51</sup> His enthronement took place on 20 June, 2004 officiated by Archbishop Demetrios of America, acting as representative of Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew.

As of today, the Holy Korean Orthodox Church has seven parishes in South Korea (in the cities of Seoul, Busan, Incheon, Jeonju, Palang-Li, Chuncheon and Ulsan) and one in North Korea (Peongyang),<sup>52</sup> together

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<sup>49</sup> In 1974, the president of the Church Council of St Nicholas Cathedral, Costas Kim, wrote a letter for a priest from Greece; when Fr Sotirios read the letter and especially when he saw the picture with the Korean children, he was deeply touched. He wept and said: 'I will go!'

<sup>50</sup> The following clergy from Greece served for shorter or longer periods of time: Protopresbyter Con. Chalvatzakis, Archim. Pangratos Mprousalis, Archim. Sophronios Gravanis, Archim. Kyrillos Christakis (later metropolitan of Thessaliotida), Archim. Theoklitos Tsirkas, Archim. Nicodemos Giannakopoulos, Archim. Georgios Stephas, Metropolitan of Acheloos Euthymios, Archim. Christophoros Rakintzakis (now Bishop of Andides), Archim. Damascenos Voliotis, Hieromonk Ignatios Sennis (now Metropolitan of Madagascar), Protopresbyter Nicholaos Galilaios, Protopresbyter Eleftherios Chavatzas, and Archim. Porphyrios Konides.

<sup>51</sup> On 27 May, 2008 Archimandrite Ambrosios Zogaphos, having served in Korea since 23 December, 1998 as dean of St Nicholas Cathedral and then as assistant bishop of Zela, was elected by the Holy Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate as second metropolitan of Korea.

<sup>52</sup> For the construction of the church of the Holy Trinity by the North Korean government in Pyeongyang, the Holy Metropolis of Korea provided great assistance. The laying of the foundation stone of the church was held on 24 June, 2003 and the consecration on 13 August, 2006.

with thirteen chapels and many other institutions. In addition, the Holy Metropolis of Korea joined the National Council of Churches in Korea and participates in international theological dialogues. His All Holiness, the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew has visited Korea three times. During His All Holiness' first visit to Korea in 1995, and through his mediation, the Korean authorities recognised the 'Foundation for the Conservation and Safeguarding of the Assets of the Orthodox Church in Korea' as a legal entity, through which the church obtained legal status. According to the approved articles, the foundation and the church property are under the joint control of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the Korean government.

### **Orthodox Diaspora in Korea**

After the collapse of communism in the 1990s, economic immigrants from Orthodox countries began to arrive in South Korea and found refuge and support in the arms of the Korean Orthodox Church. The then Bishop of Zela Sotirios embraced them all with his love and paternal affection and slowly created the first nucleus of Slavic-speaking Orthodox faithful. He himself learned how to celebrate the Divine Liturgy in Slavonic, and, since 1992, he has celebrated the Divine Liturgy in Seoul (in the chapel of the Dormition) or at the Monastery of the Transfiguration in Kapeong, where the pilgrims spent many weekends. He also held special services for Slavophones on Christmas Day and other feast days with the old calendar in order to give them a sense of familiarity and belonging. During his 1995 visit, His All Holiness the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew laid the foundation stone of the chapel of Saint Maximus the Greek. Since then all Slavophones attend prayer services and the Divine Liturgy at this chapel in their own language. In 1998, Bishop Sotirios made a special request to the Patriarchate of Moscow through the Ecumenical Patriarchate, asking for a Russian priest to undertake the pastoral care of Russians and other Slavic-speaking believers in Korea.<sup>53</sup> In 2000, the Russian-Korean priest-monk Theophane Kim was sent by the Patriarchate of Moscow. In a letter to the bishop of Zela Sotirios, the then Metropolitan of Smolensk and Kaliningrad Kirill (now His Beatitude Patriarch of Moscow), holding the Office of External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, wrote that 'He [Theophane Kim] will be under Your orders and he will implement all the diakonias [duties] assigned to him. However, jurisdictionally he will continue to belong to the Russian Orthodox Church'.<sup>54</sup> Rev. Theophane arrived in Korea in August, 2000 and took over the ministry to the Russians and Slavic-speaking faithful from Bishop Sotirios. However, on 5 October,

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<sup>53</sup> *Archives of the Holy Metropolis of Korea*. Letter (protocol no. 12/29-1-1998) written by His Grace Bishop Sotirios of Zela to His Eminence Metropolitan of New Zealand and Exarch of Korea Dionysios.

<sup>54</sup> *Archives of the Holy Metropolis of Korea*, Protocol No. 1188/3-7-2000.

2011, he was elected by the Moscow Patriarchate as bishop of Kyzyl and Tyva and left Korea. Since then the ministry was undertaken by the Ukrainian priest Rev. Roman Kavchak, who was ordained deacon and then priest in 2012 at the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople.

Today the Orthodox Metropolis of Korea has undertaken the responsibility and pastoral care of all the Orthodox faithful residing in the country as well as temporary visitors and workers such as sailors and entrepreneurs. All Orthodox believers of various nationalities (Koreans, Russians, Ukrainians, Romanians, Greeks, Serbians, Bulgarians, Americans, Western Europeans, Australians, Syrians, Egyptians, etc.) are 'under the omophoron', or spiritual jurisdiction and care, of the Ecumenical Patriarch. Having said all the above, one may conclusively argue that the Holy Metropolis of Korea approaches the strict canonical order of the ancient church on the issue of Orthodox diaspora, which is, namely, the existence of a single bishop in any place,<sup>55</sup> with the governing criterion being geographical rather than linguistic or nationalistic.

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<sup>55</sup> See the decision on Orthodox diaspora of the fourth Pre-synodic Panorthodox Conference at the Orthodox Center of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Chambesy, from 6 to 13 June, 2009.

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**SECTION TWO**

**FORMS OF MISSIONARY  
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# THE BIBLE IN KOREAN CHRISTIAN LIFE AND MISSION

Je Soon Chung

‘So the word of the Lord continued to increase and prevail mightily’

(Acts 19:20; cf. 6:7; 12:24 ESV)

The Bible has been translated into various languages for its amazing content, and has influenced many individuals, societies, and nations.<sup>1</sup> The power of Christianity surely lies in its translatability.<sup>2</sup> The Bible has also left big footprints in modern Korean history, greatly influencing the lives of Christians and their missions. In this study, in view of another study in the volume on the history of the Bible in Korea, I would like to focus on the role of the Bible in the mission formation and mission engagements of the Korean church, both at home and in cross-cultural settings.

## **Bible: Permeating Christian Life through Contextualisation**

Korean society was under the influence of Confucianism when Christianity was introduced through the Bible. Confucianism was the ruling ideology for 450 years of the Joseon Dynasty, an established ideology for the government and almost all the nation’s people.<sup>3</sup> One of the perspectives of Confucianism is the fear of the sacred book; this became ‘a guardian’ (Gal. 3:24) for understanding Jesus.<sup>4</sup> The Asian view of how to treat a sacred book was to value it with respect and to use it to become more devoted to a particular life through repetitive reading for personal discipline and teaching.<sup>5</sup> First, one would read the sacred book; next, he would read its

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<sup>1</sup> Larry Stone, *The Story of the Bible: The Fascinating History of Its Writing, Translation and Effect on Civilization* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2010).

<sup>2</sup> Lamin Sanneh, *Translating the Message: The Missionary Impact on Culture*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York: Maryknoll, 2008).

<sup>3</sup> Bong-Young Choi, *Confucianism Culture in the Joseon Dynasty* (in Korean; Seoul: Sagejeol, 1999).

<sup>4</sup> Regarding the sacred book of Confucianism, see, Dae-Il Wang, ‘Sacred Book and Faith Community of Early Korean Church’, *Canon and Culture* 1:2 (Fall 2007), 5-42; Jung-Woo Kim, ‘A Comparative Study of the Sacred Book’s Theistic Interpretation of YakYong Jung and Brevard S. Childs’ (in Korean), *Religious Studies* 38 (Spring 2005), 61-92.

<sup>5</sup> On 23 June 2014, the Christian Broadcasting System (of Korea) hosted a Bible manuscript exhibition as part of its sixtieth anniversary celebration. They were handwritten Bible manuscripts. For example, Yeo-Sun Yoon started calligraphy

author, and then he would read the reader himself through the sacred book. In this process, one reads, memorises, and participates in discussions to learn about the ideas and lives of the virtuous from older times and to seek how to live a particular life. This is far from the Western rationalistic reading of the Bible, which gradually removes the sections that the rational human mind cannot understand or accept.

Such a worldview about the sacred book opened a way for the introduction of Bible classes from the beginning of Protestant missions. *Sagyunghwe* is a compound word – a combination of ‘sakyung’, ‘investigate the sacred book’, and ‘hwe’, ‘a group of people’ – which means ‘gathering to investigate canon’. Back then, *sagyunghwe* was called the ‘Bible conference, Bible study class, or Bible class’. In the beginning of the mission, Korean Christians gathered for *sagyunghwe* to meet Jesus, to find eternal life through the Bible, and to understand Jesus’ commands in order to teach others. Early Korean Christians acquired biblical knowledge through *sagyunghwe* and were inspired to live a spiritual and prayerful life.<sup>6</sup> In this sense, Korean Christianity was called the Bible Christianity.<sup>7</sup>

*Sagyunghwe* was the setting for revivals and spiritual awakening movements in Wonsan and Pyongyang in 1903 and 1907, respectively. It also promoted continuous church growth, even under Japanese imperialism.<sup>8</sup> Since *sagyunghwe* was a gathering to read and to study the Bible, literacy programs naturally went hand in hand with it. Women, the disdained ones, and even those who were not interested in the Bible, learned the alphabet.<sup>9</sup> According to a report in 1908, Koreans endured great hardships to go to *sagyunghwe*. From 250 up to 1,180 people registered to learn the Bible for 10 to 14 days. In a northern station, more than 10,000 people opened over 192 Bible classes.<sup>10</sup> In the off-farming season, Christians dedicated themselves only to Bible classes and prayer, bringing a great revival.

Unfortunately, this beautiful tradition stultified and decayed due to difficult historical circumstances during the Japanese era and endless divisions of the church after liberation, losing its prophetic voice during the military dictatorship. The church growth movement in the 1970s and the

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when she was 70 and spent ten hours each day producing handwritten copies of the Bible.

<sup>6</sup> S.A. Moffett, ‘Evangelistic Work’, *Quarto Centennial Papers Read Before the Korea Mission of the Presbyterian Church in the USA* (August 1909), 17-18.

<sup>7</sup> Lee, Oak, & Kim, *The History of Korean Bible Society* 1, 48.

<sup>8</sup> The 1907 Pyongyang Revival was at that time simply called *sagyunghwe*. Yong-Kyu Park attributes Korean revivals to Bible studies. Yong-Kyu Park, *The Great Revival Movement in Pyongyang* (in Korean; Seoul: Life Book, 2000), 17.

<sup>9</sup> ‘Journal of Mattie Wilcox Noble’ (14 November 1898); ‘Sagyunghwe Effect’ (in Korean), *Jesus Church Newsletter* (28 March 1911).

<sup>10</sup> Underwood, ‘Korea’s Crisis Hour’, 131.

focus on praise and worship in the late 1980s<sup>11</sup> led churches to adopt a religious form-centred life instead of practicing the Bible-centred life. Only since around 1984 has there been a resurgence in Bible reading and studying. Efforts to engage the Bible and life include Scripture in Union's Quiet Time; publishing groups such as InterVarsity Fellowship; monthly Christian magazine *Light and Salt* (published by Duranno); and organisations like the Ezra Bible Institute, Growth Bible Research, and Bible Read-Through. This change is encouraging, yet still insufficient.

This problem of Bible illiteracy among Christians is not unique to Korea. U.S. churches, which still send the most number of missionaries to the world, are facing a similar challenge.<sup>12</sup> The oldest surviving missionary evangelist, Ji-Il Bang (1911-2014), who recently died, once lamented, 'It's a shame that emotional hypes took the place of *sagyunghwe*, with the church trying to excite people instead of focusing on Bible studies'.<sup>13</sup> Since the respect for the Bible and the devotion to live accordingly is in decay, the Korean Church's life is degenerating as well. Increasingly, more people are turning their backs on the Church as many ministers at megachurches get themselves entangled in scandals, financial corruption, plagiarism, church hereditament, etc. The contemporary society is overflowing with pluralism and relativism of the truth, as well as individualism, materialism, and secularism. In our society, Christians living according to the Bible in itself is the message of the truth. I dream of the day when the word penetrates and roots deeply in the Korean Church again.

### **Bible: Transforming Korean Modern Society**

In 1446, King Sejong invented the Korean alphabet in order for everyone, regardless of social class, to express themselves in writing and to exchange information.<sup>14</sup> However, because the Korean alphabet was so easy to learn, it was despised by many for about 400 years; it was called *eunmun* (oral language) and used only by the marginal population of society. In this context, the Korean Bible demonstrated the excellence of the Korean alphabet and practically revived it.<sup>15</sup> Like in many cultures and languages,

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<sup>11</sup> Rick Warren's Saddleback Church in California and Bill Hybels' Willow Creek Church in Chicago (both in the U.S.) served as benchmarks for Korean churches, with their strong emphasis on church growth.

<sup>12</sup> Kenneth Berding, *Bible Revival: Recommitting Ourselves to One Book* (Wooster: Weaver Book, 2014).

<sup>13</sup> So, 'Study of the Value of the Bible', 115.

<sup>14</sup> James Scarth Gale (1863-1937) described King Sejong as 'one of the best kings the world has ever seen'. Harry A. Rhodes, *History of the Korea Mission Presbyterian Church USA 1, 1984-1934* (Seoul: Presbyterian Church of Korea Department of Education, 1984), 91.

<sup>15</sup> Gwang-Su Lee, 'The Grace Christianity Gave to Joseon' (in Korean), *Celadon Spring* 9 (1917).

the Bible is more than a sacred book: it provides a new view of the world and of human life and its meaning. When such a book is expressed in a language that is easy to learn and to read, it brings about powerful changes among the people. The Korean Bible practically illuminated illiteracy, a necessary step for modernisation. It built the foundation for Korean literature by unifying the spoken and written language and promoted national pride under Japanese oppression.<sup>16</sup>

It is important to refute a common notion that only foreign missionaries translated the Korean Bible, with its odd expressions and vague sentences. Koreans played an active role as co-translators, especially when revising the text to include high-level expressions.<sup>17</sup> Furthermore, 'the translators not only consulted *unhaebon* (a book translated from Chinese to Korean) published during the Joseon Dynasty, but they also learned the oral language of the public, to accommodate it in the Bible'.<sup>18</sup> With such a Bible, Koreans 'interchanged faith to faith, idea to idea, and culture to culture'.<sup>19</sup> In order to help people read the Bible, Korean Christians distributed the Bible while teaching Korean, even holding a writing contest in Korean.<sup>20</sup> In the past, people could not express themselves freely in difficult Chinese characters, but they could now do so in their own simpler Korean language through *Joseon Keurisdoin Hwebo* (The Joseon Christian Newsletter) or *Keurido Shinmun* (The Christ Newspaper).<sup>21</sup> Information once available only to high-class intellectuals could now be spread quickly among the public through Christian schools, newspapers, booklets, and magazines in simple Korean.<sup>22</sup> While conservative intellectuals opposed this new culture and way of learning, some young students, orphans, and

<sup>16</sup> Chang-Kyun Yoo, 'The Influence of Korean Translated Scripture on the Development of Korean', in *Eastern and Western Culture 1* (Daegu: KeiMyung University Press, 1970).

<sup>17</sup> Hyun-Sik Min, 'Korean Development and the Influence of the Scripture', in *The Influence of the Korean Bible on the Church and Societal Korean Culture* (in Korean; Seoul: Korean Bible Society, 2011), 191.

<sup>18</sup> Sung-Deuk Oak, 'Historical Significance of Old Testament Publication and Distribution (1911)', in *The Influence of Korean Bible on Church and Societal Korean Culture*, 145.

<sup>19</sup> Duck-Joo Lee, 'Study of the Early Korean Scripture Translation', in *Korean Scripture and Gyeorye Culture: Study of Christianity and Gyeorye* (in Korean; Seoul: Christian Literature Press, 1985), 410.

<sup>20</sup> On 1 April 1928, *Dong-A Daily* reported that 90% of the population was illiterate in the 1920s, excluding children and senior citizens.

<sup>21</sup> *Joseon Keurisdoin Hwebo* was first published weekly by Appenzeller in February 1897; *Keurido Shinmun*, a weekly, was published by Underwood in April 1897.

<sup>22</sup> See Man-Yeol Lee, 'The Enlightenment of the Korean Society According to the Christian Traditions', in *Christianity in Korea and Historical Awareness* (in Korean; Seoul: Jisik Sanup Publications, 1981); Joon Choi, 'The Effects the Scripture Had on the Korean Newspapers', in *Bible and Korean Modern Culture* (in Korean; Seoul: Korean Bible Society, 1960).

landowners' children changed this perspective by forming a new intellectual class after studying abroad, giving others hope that anyone could be educated.

Joseon society was structured in such a way that discrimination and oppression were finely marked by 'the caste system, discriminative ethical standards, monopolized intellectual class and systematic distinction between respect and vulgar language'.<sup>23</sup> The ruling class was divided into high, mid, common, and low classes; the ruling and ruled classes were tied by fidelity and hate.<sup>24</sup> So the biblical teaching that all are equal before God was a revolutionary view, countering the discrimination of people by the destined class from their family lines. Catholicism, which predates Protestantism, was more aristocratic, whereas Protestantism, which started with the Bible being translated into the common language, was democratic from its birth.

Bong-Chul Park, a butcher belonging to the untouchable class in Korean society, became a Christian and later served as a church elder alongside Jae-Hung Lee who was of royal birth. It was an unthinkable revolutionary change that shocked the society.<sup>25</sup> Revolutionary changes were seen in many areas of society. Some Koreans were challenged after reading about the forgiveness of sin in the Bible, so they gathered all the slaves and burnt their slave ownership papers.<sup>26</sup> Gender discrimination lessened as female schools were founded and women were given the same opportunity to be educated as men were. The women, once disdained, were being educated with men, and becoming doctors, nurses, principals, and even leaders of the independence movement.<sup>27</sup> The concubine system was also eliminated. By applying new values from the Bible such as freedom, equality, philanthropy, and democracy, among others, outdated societal components were reformed in the last days of Joseon.<sup>28</sup> Although such reformation was limited due to the small number of Christians, it still greatly influenced society.

The Korean Bible was completed in 1910, the year of the forced and humiliating Korea-Japan annexation. When the Bible was published in the following year, it became more than just a Christian sacred book for Christians: this Korean publication had a powerful symbolism under the Japanese rule.<sup>29</sup> In an attempt to annihilate Joseon's national identity, Japan forced Koreans to use Japanese instead of Korean. Korean intellectuals then

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<sup>23</sup> Bong-Young Choi, *Discrimination and Suppression in Korean Society* (in Korean; Seoul: Jisik Sanup Publications, 2005), 41.

<sup>24</sup> Choi, *Discrimination and Suppression*, 41-51.

<sup>25</sup> Duck-Joo Lee, *Newly Written Conversion Story of Christians in Korea*, 73-84.

<sup>26</sup> *Korean Christian Newsletter*, 6 June 1900.

<sup>27</sup> Duck-Joo Lee, *The First Women in the Korean Church* (in Korean; Seoul: Hongsung, 2007).

<sup>28</sup> Kim, *Study of the Translation Culture in Contemporary Korea*, 71.

<sup>29</sup> Lee, 'The Naturalization of the Gospel', 71.

used a mixture of Chinese and Korean, while the younger generation preferred using Japanese and was skeptical about using Korean.<sup>30</sup> The sociolinguistic context for the use of the Korean alphabet could not have been worse. Nevertheless, the Church actively used the Korean Bible, the pastors preached in Korean, and the hymns were recorded and written in Korean.<sup>31</sup> The Korean Bible served as the bridgehead to counter the Japanese attempt to annihilate the Korean language, and as the seawall to protect the national identity. The pattern of learning Korean to read the Bible and reading the Bible after learning Korean not only contributed to the growth of *sagyunghwe* but also to the development of the Korean language. The introduction and distribution of the Korean Bible was also a process of theologising: Christianity as a foreign religion put down its Korean roots through the Korean Bible.<sup>32</sup> By internalising the Bible, people found new identities, overcame the class system and gender segregation, and resisted the unjust and oppressive Japanese colonialism.

When Christianity was introduced, there was a vacuum in Korea, both politically and religiously. Long-held faith in shamanism, Buddhism, and Confucianism were in decay and a new perspective was needed. The relationship between colonisation and Christian missions in Korea is unique. In Africa, Latin America, and other Asian countries, Christianity was introduced by Christian colonisers in collusion with imperialism, causing anti-Christian movements to form. However, Korea was under the imperial rule of Japan, a non-Christian nation; this helped Koreans actively embrace Christianity as a nationalistic response.<sup>33</sup> Still, it is true that early missionaries to Korea mostly held to a pious puritanical spirituality and an evangelistic perspective of the Bible that put a literal emphasis on the biblical text.<sup>34</sup> They overtly emphasised biblical inerrancy rather than the text's total message, pursuing word-for-word interpretation. This resulted in a tendency among Koreans to pursue individualistic spiritual meaning only in their present context, rather than having a more holistic and historical redemptive perspective on the Bible. For example, they put mud on their eyes to try to re-enact Jesus' act of curing the blind<sup>35</sup> and stressed

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<sup>30</sup> Lee, 'The Naturalization of the Gospel', 94.

<sup>31</sup> Lee, 'The Publication of the Completely Translated Korean Bible', 36.

<sup>32</sup> Harry A. Rhodes, 'Fifty Years of Christian Literature in the Korean Mission, Presbyterian Church', *The Fiftieth Anniversary Celebration of the Korea Mission* (PCUSA, 30 June-3 July 1934), 69.

<sup>33</sup> Seyoon Kim, 'Christianity and Culture in Korea: Nationalism, Dialogue, Indigenization and Contextualization', *ACTS Theological Journal* 2 (March 1986), 32. Kim expressed it as a marriage between Christianity and democracy.

<sup>34</sup> Duck-Joo Lee, *The Study of Korean Indigenous Church Formation* (in Korean; Seoul: Institute of the History of Christianity in Korea, 2001), 48-77.

<sup>35</sup> G.H. Jones, 'Chemulpo Circuit', *The Korea Mission of the Methodist Episcopal Church* (1901), 37.

that ten righteous men must be willing to die to rescue Korea from Japan, as if Korea was Sodom and Gomorrah.<sup>36</sup>

Word-for-word interpretation blocks the link to abundant literary views in the biblical text and hinders the practice of a balanced and integrated calling through deep Bible study. Furthermore, it encourages the separation of religion and politics, interprets the Bible incoherently, and focuses on the growth of the church.

Starting with the 1919 independence movement, liberalism and a critical mindset gradually penetrated the Korean Church, but most churches adhered to their foundational and conservative perspective on the Bible.<sup>37</sup> This perspective helped Christians under Japanese rule avoid some of the political whirlpool and accelerated the Church's growth.<sup>38</sup> However, the Korean Church, regardless of its stand on the perspective on the Bible, gradually sank under the Japanese' systematic policy of church annihilation and enforcement of emperor worship in the 1920s.<sup>39</sup> A perfect separation of religion and politics is not always possible on this earth.<sup>40</sup>

### **Bible: Calling for New Translations**

Korean Bible translation can be divided into the first edition done by missionaries and the second edition done by Korean nationals.<sup>41</sup> These editions are also distinguishable from other authorised and private versions. After the completion of the New Testament in 1906, with the transition of the Old Testament, the first authorised full Korean Bible was presented in February 1911.<sup>42</sup> But no sooner had translations been completed than revisions started. One reason for this was that the first Bible was published in a hurry in order to make it available to churches. Revisions were also

<sup>36</sup> Lee, *The Study of Korean Indigenous Church Formation*, 269-71.

<sup>37</sup> Yong-Kyu Park, *The History of Christian Churches in Korea 2* (in Korean; Seoul: Life Book, 2004), 394-50.

<sup>38</sup> The Society of the History of Christianity in Korea (eds), *The History of Christianity in Korea 1*, 253-300.

<sup>39</sup> The emperor worship introduced in 1930 was fiercely objected to at first, but eventually the Catholics (1936), the Methodists (1938), and the Presbyterians (1938) gave in to the pressure. It is reported that approximately 2,000 Koreans were incarcerated and around 30 were martyred for standing up against this demand. Sang-Kyu Lee, *History and Theology of the Korean Church*, 28-29.

<sup>40</sup> E.g., Stanley Hauerwas and William Willimon, *Resident Aliens: A Provocative Christian Assessment of Culture and Ministry for People Who Know That Something Is Wrong* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1989).

<sup>41</sup> The Korean Revised Version (1938) is considered to be the second-generation Bible, the Korean Common Translation (1977) the third, and the New Korean Standard Version (1993) to be the fourth. However, such classification depends on the criteria. See, Lee, 'The Naturalization of the Gospel', 76.

<sup>42</sup> Ryu, Oak, & Lee, *The History of Korean Bible Society 2: Translation Distribution and First Book Project*, 27-118.



done to accommodate developments in archaeological evidence, linguistics, and hermeneutics. Due to changes in the missionary community, including deaths and changes of field, inexperience in missionary succession, and disagreements about the Korean writing style, revisions took a long time. The Old Testament revision was completed in 1936 and the New in 1937. The Korean Revised Version (KRV) was published in 1938 by the Joseon Bible Society.<sup>43</sup> This Bible is still widely used. Unfortunately, the Korean Church has not been open to other versions. Instead, the Korean Revised Version was reissued in 1952 with new Korean orthography as the only change. After minor revisions in 1998 and 2006, the modernised New Korean Revised Version came to light, but the writing style and vocabulary did not change much from the 1938 version.

The Korean Bible Society published the Korean Common Translation Bible, a dynamic equivalence translation by Catholic and Protestant scholars that avoided rigid, literal word-for-word translation. This was the first common translation of Catholics and Protestants in the world. The Korean Bible Society published the New Korean Standard Version in 1993, an ambitious edition with modern language usage for better communication. However, the conservatives refused to use it at church, considering it a liberal translation.<sup>44</sup> The 2001 revised edition of the New Korean Standard Version experienced the same fate. The Korean church, which tends to hold a conservative perspective on the Bible, prefers and uses the New Korean Revised Version over the New Korean Standard Version, which is linguistically better and easier to understand.

Before being authorised, most Bible translations are private versions. They stay private until formally accepted. The process takes a long time, especially due to the word selection and the complexity of organisation or management.<sup>45</sup> Versions by Ross and Soo-Jung Lee were private since they were not formally commissioned. Other private translations include the Gospel of John (1891) by Malcolm C. Fenwick (1863-1935), who translated with the Chinese Bible as the primary source; Bible Literalism (1892), necessary excerpts translated by the Catholics; Malcolm C. Fenwick's independent revised version of The Gospel According to John (1893); Lumen ad Revelationem Gentium [A Light to Lighten the Gentiles] (1894), an excerpt translated by the Anglicans; Selected Psalms (1898), half of the Psalms translated by Alexander Albert Pieters (1871-1958); and the New Translation of New and Old Testament (1925, Christian Window) by Won-Mo Lee.

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<sup>43</sup> In the late 1930s, the British and Foreign Bible Society changed to the Joseon Bible Society.

<sup>44</sup> Six written debates between Young-jin Min representing the New Korean Standard Version and Young-Min Ko objecting its use were published in *Monthly Ministry* (in Korean) from May to October of 1993.

<sup>45</sup> Ryu, Oak, & Lee, *The History of Korean Bible Society* 2, 91-103.

Private versions after the liberation include Jae-Jun Kim's Short Bible (1958); a Catholic priest Jong-Wan Sun's Old Testament Scripture (1959); the New Translation of the New Testament Bible (1967), directly translated from the original language for the first time by Korean scholars; the North Korean Christian Federation Bible (1984), a revised version of the Korean Common Translation; the Korea Living Bible (1985), translated from the English Living Bible; New Testament Scripture (2001), the Korean Catholic Church's Bicentennial Anniversary Scripture; Today's Korean Version Paraphrased (1991), defying the Korean Living Bible by directly translating from the original language; the Easy Bible (2000, revised in 2005), translated from the original language for easy reading; the Korean Vision Bible (2002), translated using the New King James Version and the New Internal Version; and the Korean Bible (2004). Although these are only private versions, they are used in various ways for different purposes.

There are several factors that motivate various translations: 1) to meet different ministerial needs as the authorisation process takes a long time; 2) to provide a better version with improved accuracy and readability; 3) to ease the understanding of the readers, especially after an authorised version no longer reflects linguistic changes; 4) to provide more accurate expressions with the expansion of the linguistic and biblical language knowledge; 5) to be used internally by megachurches, whose denominational controls are weak; and/or 6) to avoid disputes over rights to publish the Bible.

Despite many arguments for different translations, one thing is sure: the Bible is a translated book. This means that every translation is impacted by its sociolinguistic context. Such an environment is not absolute: it changes over time. Considering this, a new translated edition should be published every 10 to 15 years. As explained above, the first Korean Bible by Ross was translated in contemporary oral language that anyone could understand. Thus, the Bible's difficult and unfamiliar content was illuminated by accessible language, allowing the text to penetrate deeply within the readers' hearts. Just as the Ross edition had to be reborn after the linguistic cultural change, modern Bibles need to be born again continuously to remain capable of genuine communication.

The issue of accuracy always comes to the fore in Bible translation. Implications of such an issue can vary greatly according to criteria of judgement. Various methods are used to judge accuracy, but the main ones are linguistic factors (lexical items, grammatical relations, discourse features), literary features (genre, stylistic expression, structural format, various literary devices, naturalness, etc.), cultural factors (cultural mismatch, equivalency, etc.), and receptors' environment (acceptability, general consensus, etc.). The Bible needs to be born again, maintaining its literary features and its message that guards the truth (accuracy) and impacting contemporary readers (linguistic and cultural communicative) as

the accepted Scripture of the Church (acceptability) that is easy to remember for a long time (orality).

### **Bible: No Language Left Behind**

In December 2004, Global Bible Translators (GBT), a Korean organisation for Bible translation, held a seminar, celebrating its twenty years of translation ministry. The theme of the occasion was 'Received Bible, Now to Be Delivered'. This expressed the commitment to pay back Korea's debt of love to the world by making the Bible available to the world. The GBT reflected on its twenty-year work since 1984 and cast a new vision for the next twenty years. GBT has been partnering with various organisations like the Summer Institute of Linguistics, the Wycliffe Global Alliance, and the United Bible Societies, fulfilling the dream of translating the Bible into all languages in use on earth (estimated to be over 6,900). GBT presently has 220 members serving in 24 countries, working in cooperation with other organisations. To date, GBT has translated the New Testament into 15 languages (one of them for both the Old and the New Testaments).

Also, in the same year, the Korean Church had another dream. With the rapid changes and incredible diversity in Asia, a need was acutely felt for a training programme for Asian Bible translators. The Asia Research Institute of Language and Culture (ARILAC) was established in Korea in 2005 for rapid church growth; improvement of local education; geographical accessibility; and increasing financial, instructional, and human resources. The project was enthusiastically supported by partners such as the Summer Institute of Linguistics, GBT (as part of Wycliffe Global Alliances), Handong Global University, and Korean diaspora churches. It has since offered an academic training programme particularly designed for future Bible translators. The Institute is within the campus of Handong Global University, working closely with it.

The institute has three objectives. First, ARILAC provides balanced and holistic training programmes for those who are interested in Bible translation, literacy, Christian literature translation, and Scripture engagement ministries. Training content was changed from being linguistic-centred to being missiology-centred, considering that Asians are not native English speakers. Second, ARILAC trains Koreans as well as non-Koreans together. It actively recruits and trains nationals who are currently working with Korean missionaries in order to build ministries led by national leaders, but not by missionaries. Third, ARILAC also operates the Asian Instructor in Training programme, so that future trainers are prepared to train future translators among their own people.

ARILAC trained 175 candidates between 2006 and 2013, and 115 of them are serving as Bible translators, translation consultants, and facilitators, or are involved in Scripture engagement. ARILAC's missional goal is clear: no language is left behind. We at ARILAC should contribute

to world missions, especially missions related to the Bible. We commit ourselves to bring the Bible to the speakers of local languages, being people who the Bible has greatly impacted and changed. It is the change brought by the living word of God to individuals, societies, and nations. ‘No languages left behind’ sounds like an ambitious and impossible dream. In fact, not all people may need the Bible in their own languages as sociolinguistic contexts are also changing. However, our ultimate goal is not translation: it is to make powerful change available through the Bible. This is not possible on our own: it has to be through God, and through working together, along with various organisations in the world and with local churches. So we continue to dream, ‘so the word of the Lord continued to increase and prevail mightily’ (Acts 19:20 ESV).

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# THE CHURCH GROWTH MOVEMENT: A PROTESTANT EXPERIENCE WITH THE RISE OF MEGACHURCHES

Sung-Gun Kim

## Korean Protestantism in Global Christianity: A Comparison with China

Although previously a centre of evangelicalism in numerical strength and missionary feats, South Korea no longer claims to be a regional Protestant ‘superpower’ in the Asia-Pacific. To understand this unexpected shift, I would argue that two aspects should be considered.

The first is an external factor: China, one of Korea’s neighbours, has suddenly become the nation with the world’s seventh-largest Christian population.<sup>1</sup> As recently as three decades ago, most researchers, even within mainland China, were unsure whether religion would survive the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976). But as of 2011, mainland China has roughly 67 million Christians, representing about 5% of the total population.<sup>2</sup> In mainland China, after the death of Mao Zedong, Christianity has grown substantially to the extent that it has been infiltrating the Communist Party’s ranks. Such massive resurgence can be exemplified in the following case: the southeastern coastal city of Wenzhou is popularly referred to by its residents as ‘China’s Jerusalem’ – a nationwide model for economic development and the largest urban Christian centre in China.<sup>3</sup>

Wenzhou reminds us of Pyongyang (now the capital of North Korea) and Seonchon (Pyongbuk Province) in the early twentieth century, which were often called ‘Korea’s Jerusalem’. Historically speaking, Protestant Christianity spread in the Korean peninsula about a century ago, initially around Pyongyang and then to the less Confucian northwestern provinces. Protestants were known to be industrious, progressive, and wealthy. With the advent of communism in 1945, however, hundreds of thousands of North Korean Christians (most of them bourgeoisie) fled to the South. The unusual growth of Korean churches after the Korean War (1950-1953) largely owes to those Christian refugees and to the Pentecostal movement initiated by David Yonggi Cho of the Yoido Full Gospel Church (YFGC).

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<sup>1</sup> Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life, *Global Christianity: A Report on the Size and Distribution of the World’s Christian Population* (Washington, DC: Pew Research Center, 2011), 58.

<sup>2</sup> Pew Forum, *Global Christianity*, 59.

<sup>3</sup> *Economist*, November 1, 2014.

In contrast to the recent consistent decline of South Korean Protestantism since the 1990s, the number of Chinese Protestants grew 3.75 times, from 800,000 in 1956 to 3,000,000 in 1982.<sup>4</sup>

Secondly, meanwhile, as an internal factor of the shift examined in my earlier paper,<sup>5</sup> Korean Protestant churches recently lost social credence or legitimacy from the public. Given that it is unlikely that Korean Protestant churches will take it upon themselves to repent, many scholars of global Christianity (including myself) would diagnose that the Korean lampstand has already been removed and given to Korea's Chinese counterpart (Rev. 2:5).

### **The Ups and Downs of Korean Protestantism in the Midst of the Church Growth Movement**

The growth of Protestantism was gradual in South Korea until the middle of the twentieth century. Since the 1960s, it has increased so rapidly that the number of Protestants surpassed that of the followers of traditional religions. When Billy Graham visited Seoul in 1973, more than half a million people gathered at Yoido Plaza. During the 'Conversion Boom' period, which ended in the 1980s, the number of Protestants increased faster in South Korea than in any other country. In *The Next Christendom*, Philip Jenkins states,

One of the great Christian stories in Asia is South Korea.... The number of Christians in the whole of Korea was only 300,000 or so in 1920, but this has now risen to 10 million or 12 million, about a quarter of the national population.... Korean Protestants outnumber Roman Catholics by about three to one, and, as in Latin America, Protestant growth has been largely Pentecostal. At the time of the Korean War, the nation's Pentecostal believers could be counted only in the hundreds, but by the early 1980s, their ranks... had been dazzling. The Full Gospel Church in Seoul now has over half a million, earning it a place in the Guinness Book of Records as the world's largest single congregation. The Kwang Lim Methodist Church reported 150 members in 1971; 85,000 by the end of the century. Mainstream Protestant churches have also succeeded remarkably: today, there are almost twice as many Presbyterians in South Korea as in the United States.<sup>6</sup>

Since the 1960s, modern Korea has experienced a so-called 'compressed modernisation', affecting a multi-religious situation under rapid urbanisation. The dynamics of religious change in South Korea is too

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<sup>4</sup> Fenggang Yang, *Religion in China: Survival and Revival under Communist Rule* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 97.

<sup>5</sup> Sung-Gun Kim, 'The Korean Protestant Church after Its Rapid Growth: A Sociological Study of Religion' [in Korean], *Christianity and History in Korea* 38 (2013), 5-45.

<sup>6</sup> Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 71.

complex to be slotted with ease into the Western conception of secularisation.<sup>7</sup> Within Seoul, modernisation and urbanisation do not appear to contradict the presence of a high level of religious consciousness and practice. What might be called 'religious urbanisation' is an important aspect of the history of and social life in Asia, especially Korea.<sup>8</sup>

With the remarkable unprecedented growth of Protestantism, a number of South Korean Christians, particularly David Yonggi Cho, have attained worldwide prominence. What are the cultural and social implications of the marvellous growth of evangelical Protestant Christianity, especially in its Pentecostal form in Korea since the 1960s? Amid the constant debate over the heretical nature of the modern Pentecostal movement, the Korean Pentecostal phenomenon starting in the 1950s has succeeded on two fronts: phenomenal church growth and the generalisation of Pentecostal beliefs within the country.<sup>9</sup>

The Church Growth Movement (1960-1990, hereafter CGM), a movement within evangelical Christianity that aims to develop methods to grow churches, began with the publication of Donald McGavran's book *The Bridges of God* in 1955.<sup>10</sup> In 1965, he organised the School of World Mission at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California, which was the institutional home base for Church Growth studies and the training ground for numerous pastors and missionaries with evangelical background until his death in 1990.<sup>11</sup> It is to be noted that at Fuller, which is near Los Angeles' Koreatown, students can pursue many degrees in Korean.<sup>12</sup> Consequently, Fuller's degrees related with the CGM have dominated the faculties of Korean seminaries and a majority of renowned Korean pastors are alumni of Fuller.

Although the CGM had good intentions, not all the results have been good. Among the several ways in which the 'Americanised' CGM was not

<sup>7</sup> Sung-Gun Kim, 'Pentecostalism, Shamanism and Capitalism within Contemporary Korean Society', in Sturla J. Stalssett, ed., *Spirits of Globalization: the Growth of Pentecostalism and Experiential Spiritualities in a Global Age* (London: SCM Press, 2006), 24.

<sup>8</sup> John Clammer, 'Secularization and Religious Change in Contemporary Asia', *Southeast Asian Journal of Social Science* 12:1 (1984), 53.

<sup>9</sup> Wonsuk Ma, 'The Korean Pentecostal Movement: Retrospect and Prospect for the New Century', a paper delivered at *Challenges and Opportunities for Asian Pentecostals*, Asian Seminary of Christian Ministries, Makati, Philippines, 25 August 2000; Sun-Gun Kim, 'Korean Protestant Christianity in the Midst of Globalization: Neoliberalism and the Pentecostalization of Korean Churches', *Korea Journal* 47:4 (2007), 147-76.

<sup>10</sup> Donald McGavran, *The Bridges of God: A Study in the Strategy of Missions* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1955).

<sup>11</sup> 'Church Growth', [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Church\\_Growth](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Church_Growth), accessed on November 1, 2014.

<sup>12</sup> Doctor of Ministry, Master of Arts in Intercultural Studies, Master of Theology in Missiology, and Doctor of Ministry in Global Ministries.

helpful to the mission of God in South Korea, the following two problems should be pointed out. First, some Korean Church Growth leaders (mostly senior pastors in megachurches) trained in America emulate sales consultants who turn anything good into a business. Richard Halverson wrote, 'When the Greeks got the gospel, they turned it into a philosophy; and when the Americans got the gospel they turned it into an enterprise'.<sup>13</sup> John Jackson, the senior pastor of Carson Valley Christian Center, has taken to describing himself as a 'pastorpreneur'. This is a good example of how the lines between religion and business are blurring.<sup>14</sup>

Second, another unintended drawback of the CGM is that it focuses too much on multiplying churches rather than improving the geographical neighbourhood of congregations. The CGM often makes the church into a fancy and convenient gathering place for Christians. Thus, the 'seeker-sensitive' megachurches in the United States often develop a wide range of activities to draw in families at different stages in their lives. According to the 'Attractive Church Model' set forth by Rick Warren's book, *The Purpose Driven Church*, programs such as daycare, sports programs, classes, contemporary music, and worship are created to attract people from the community to the church.<sup>15</sup>

Advocates of the CGM argue that the most important thing in Christianity is the salvation of souls, which means a successful church will, by definition, be a growing church. Critics, on the other hand, suggest the movement is only about numbers and success-oriented. Willow Creek Community Church recently conducted a major survey that showed heavy involvement in 'seeker-sensitive' programs and activities contributed to church growth but did not necessarily translate into spiritual growth and maturity unless the church had a clear path for believers' development.<sup>16</sup> This signifies that a proper balance between numerical growth and depth of spiritual growth is needed.

The Korean megachurches – numbering among the world's twenty largest congregations – are mostly Pentecostal, either in affiliation or in nature, by virtue of their style of worship and preaching, regardless of any denominational ties.<sup>17</sup> Since 1980, under the legacy of the CGM in which the gospel gets 'Americanised', there has been a tendency to build megachurches in South Korea, which leads some churches into

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<sup>13</sup> Richard Halverson, *The Church Between Gospel and Culture: The Emerging Mission in North America* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1997), 77.

<sup>14</sup> John Micklethwait and Adrian Woodridge, *God is Back: How the Global Revival of Faith Is Changing the World* (New York: Penguin Books, 2010), 184.

<sup>15</sup> Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Church: Every Church is Big in God's Eyes* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1995).

<sup>16</sup> Greg L. Hawkins and Cally Parkinson, *Reveal Where Are You?* (South Barrington, IL: Willow Creek Association, 2007).

<sup>17</sup> Ma, 'The Korean Pentecostal Movement', 2.



controversial excessive 'individual-churchism'. As of 2000, Seoul contains 23 of the world's 50 largest Christian congregations.<sup>18</sup> South Korean Christians, specifically those in the middle-class megachurches in the affluent Gangnam district,<sup>19</sup> subscribe to the 'gospel of success'. They view their religion as a factor in Korea's dynamic economic growth of 'compressed modernisation', believing that its success and prosperity are indications of God's blessing.<sup>20</sup>

According to the South Korean Census, the number of Protestants peaked at 8.76 million (19.7%) in 1995 after years of exponential growth, then slipped to 8.61 million (18.3%) in 2005. Catholics have grown in their share of the population, from 1.86 million (4.6%) in 1985, to 3 million (6.6%) in 1995, and to 5.14 million (11%) in 2005 (the last year when a census on religious affiliation took place). The growth of the Catholics has occurred across all age groups, among men and women, and across all education levels. The Pope's recent visit to South Korea in August 2014 cast a shadow over the nation's Protestants, who still command larger flocks than the Catholics but have been riven by infighting, scandal, and growing disenchantment.<sup>21</sup> The Protestants are atomised into countless rival denominations, split by non-religious factors – all without the unifying central authority of a papal figure. Scandals involving money laundering and squabbles over church succession have added to the damage, leaving the Protestant church in a state of weakness while raising the Catholic Church to look 'more Christian' by comparison (especially among younger professionals). Because of this, some Korean believers (especially Protestants in big cities) have migrated to the Catholic Church.

During the first half of the twentieth century, Catholics were the more pliant, owing to their long history of persecution and a belief that one had better lie low and get along with the authorities. Protestants, on the other hand, led the independence movement (1919) that opposed the Japanese occupation (1910-1945), thereby achieving some growth. However, in the post-war years, the Protestants tended to stand by the anti-communist military governments, allowing the Catholics to step up as the conscience of the country, playing a key role in the country's democratisation movement during the 1970s and 1980s. The Protestants' lack of active political involvement is partially due to the communist threat from the

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<sup>18</sup> Young-Gi Hong, 'Encounter with Modernity: The "McDonaldization" and "Charismatization" of Korean Mega-Churches', *International Review of Mission* 92:365 (2003), 240.

<sup>19</sup> The big three megachurches in the Gangnam district (renowned for the international pop singer Psy's 'Gangnam Style' and its rich residents) are the Kwanglim (Burning Bush) Methodist Church (35,000, established in 1953), the Sarang Community Church (30,000, established in 1978), and the Somang Presbyterian Church (22,000, established in 1977).

<sup>20</sup> Kim, 'The Korean Protestant Church', 12-13.

<sup>21</sup> *The New York Times*, 12 August 2014.

North. Despite South Korean Protestant churches' massive and wealthy impressions, the reality is that, with the exception of the biggest middle-class megachurches, the majority are struggling financially, hardly able to support themselves. People who flock to South Korea's bourgeois megachurches and who are often criticised for being 'religious Jaebol' (chaebol, Korean conglomerates such as Samsung and Hyundai)<sup>22</sup> are the upwardly mobile and are conservative in their political ideology.

As of 2014, the world's top five megachurches are in South Korea.<sup>23</sup> In this context, the genuinely big Protestant churches are still seen as symbols of market ideology. The Protestant Church has been large, deafening, and very competitive; people who are unhappy about the megachurch's role in the society seek a religion (Roman Catholicism) that can provide relief from secularities while connecting them to tradition, catechism, and meditation rather than modernity, competition, and prosperity.

To summarise, Protestantism today struggles with controversy and decline, while Roman Catholicism has increased its membership by 70% in the last 17 years (National Census Bureau). Korean Protestants have several challenges:<sup>24</sup> 1) to overcome increasing conflict between conservatives and progressives, 2) to rectify the problematic 'growth without depth' (in John Stott's words), and 3) to correct the issue of the megachurch facing various criticisms such as sheep stealing, polarisation, hereditary transmission of pastors, clergy's sexual scandals, goal displacement, financial dishonesty, and privatisation.

### **Megachurches, Consumer Capitalism, and the Issue of Leadership**

How can we evaluate Korean megachurches in the midst of the CGM? British sociologist of religion David Martin reached this conclusion from the discussion of South Korea and South Africa in his famous *Tongues of Fire*:

In each society the new churches reflect the authoritarian structure around them. They also create structures which are in some ways parallel to what is found in the economic sphere. Whereas the Protestant Ethic was once supposed to assist business, in these cases the business ethos helps reconstruct the churches with efficient organisation and undeniable consumer gratification. On the one hand, they ameliorate some of the problems of their respective societies by breaking down barriers and providing secure orientations which assuage anomie. On the other hand, they easily assimilate

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<sup>22</sup> *The New York Times*, 12 August 2014.

<sup>23</sup> YFGC (480,000, established in 1983), Onnuri Community Church (65,000, established in 1985), Pyungkang Cheil Presbyterian Church (60,000, established in 1964), Kwanglim Methodist Church (35,000, established in 1953), and SaRang Community Church (30,000, established in 1978); [www.leadnet.org](http://www.leadnet.org), accessed on November 10, 2014.

<sup>24</sup> Kim, 'The Korean Protestant Church', 5-45.

to the norms of consumer capitalism and defuse fundamental attacks on the social order. Of course, how you evaluate that depends on how you evaluate consumer capitalism.<sup>25</sup>

It is true that Korean megachurches as a whole tend to be apolitical and support the status quo. In the view of young progressives keen on increasing income inequality, the middle-class megachurches that emphasise the 'gospel of success' rather than the 'gospel of sacrifice' have naturally succumbed to a pragmatic accommodation towards authoritarian regimes in the 1970s and 1980s, thereby (and ironically) achieving rapid numerical growth. Because of this, Protestant Christianity represented by the rise of megachurches is viewed as controversial.

Whilst some critics dismiss megachurches as clubs of religious egoists or 'church shoppers', Peter Drucker, the doyen of management gurus, thought 'the large pastoral church' took over from the company as the most significant organisational phenomenon in the second half of the twentieth century.<sup>26</sup> In some sense, the megachurches clearly fulfil a pressing social need such as forming social bonds for the otherwise atomised urban people in a mobile society. They also do numerous social work that in other countries is done by the state: help for battered women, pre-wedding counselling for young couples, support for people in financial problems, assistance for disabled children, etc. Drucker pointed out that these megachurches are superb at motivating their employees and volunteers, and superb, also, at transforming volunteers from well-meaning amateurs (seekers) into disciplined professionals (evangelists).<sup>27</sup> How many businesses could boast such committed consumers?

Any understanding of the Korean experience with the rise of megachurches would not be complete without some knowledge of the issue of 'leadership'. First of all, David Yonggi Cho has been sentenced to three years in prison in February 2014 for embezzling \$12 million in church funds.<sup>28</sup> Meanwhile, in 1992, Pastor Emeritus Kyung-Chik Han of the Youngnak Presbyterian Church (YPC) was awarded the Templeton Prize for helping the YPC to become the largest Presbyterian church on earth in only thirty years.<sup>29</sup> But after his retirement in 1973, the second senior pastor, Cho-Joon Park, illegally smuggled foreign currency (\$4,000,000) into the United States in 1984, and thereafter resigned from his position. Continuously declining since then, the YPC has been dethroned from its famed position. In addition, in 2012, after the death of the first senior pastor of Sarang Community Church, Han-Heum Oak, the present senior pastor,

<sup>25</sup> David Martin, *Tongues of Fire: The Explosion of Protestantism in Latin America* (Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 1990).

<sup>26</sup> Micklethwait & Woodridge, *God Is Back*, 144.

<sup>27</sup> Micklethwait & Woodridge, *God Is Back*, 189.

<sup>28</sup> *Huffington Post*, Feb. 25, 2014.

<sup>29</sup> John Templeton, *The Humble Approach: Scientists Discover God* (London: Templeton Foundation Press, 1998), 172.

Jung-Hyun Oh, was heavily criticised for falsely obtaining his academic degrees and for his dishonesty. A sensational documentary film entitled *Quo Vadis*, which denounced the corruption and scandals in three infamous large churches (YFGC, Sarang Community Church, Samil Church), was released to the public on 10 December 2014.<sup>30</sup>

Regarding the leadership problems often caused by pastoral transitions in Korean megachurches where the ‘pastor cult’ is preponderant from the legacy of authoritarian Confucianism, I would cautiously suggest two things. First, churches must exercise more prudence in successor searching; what has worked for corporations for nearly forty years could be partially adopted by churches and para-churches. At present, some American search firms such as Vanderbloemen (established by a former pastor, [www.vanderbloemen.com](http://www.vanderbloemen.com)) are able to utilise all their efforts, databases, resources, and expertise to get to know an organisation, its needs, and the candidates that are available. We also need Korean counterparts. Secondly, megachurches must re-evaluate and change structures, procedures, and practices that enhance the likelihood of senior pastors falling victim to the so-called ‘Bathsheba Syndrome’.<sup>31</sup> Based on the account of King David, it is defined as the inability to cope with and respond to the by-products of ‘success’. Success is usually accompanied by unrestrained control of organisational resources. It is true that many violations committed by senior pastors of megachurches (like upper managers) are the by-product of success, and they are poorly prepared to deal with it.

### Concluding Remarks

Finally, I raise a question: Do megachurches provide a better religious experience than smaller churches? According to a recent ‘mystery church shopper’ report,<sup>32</sup> American megachurches, which are often aimed at the unchurched, fared better than microchurches (those with less than 80 in attendance). Rodney Stark concludes in *What Americans Really Believe* that the ‘mile wide and inch deep’ accusations against megachurches, taken as a whole, lack a research base.<sup>33</sup> However, the problem is that Korean megachurches are still targeting the already churchd – religious switching or horizontal switching. To understand the phenomenal rise of megachurches despite criticisms in contemporary Korea, we should consider the new findings of a megachurch study in America which propose that big congregations are powerful purveyors of emotional

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<sup>30</sup> [www.newsnet.com](http://www.newsnet.com), accessed on November 20, 2014.

<sup>31</sup> Dean C. Ludwig and Clinton O. Longenecker, ‘The Bathsheba Syndrome: The Ethical Failure of Successful Leaders’, *Journal of Business Ethics* 12 (1993), 265-73.

<sup>32</sup> *Christianity Today*, June 27, 2014.

<sup>33</sup> Rodney Stark, *What Americans Really Believe* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2008); [www.leadnet.org](http://www.leadnet.org), accessed on November 10, 2014.

religious experience.<sup>34</sup> According to Katie E. Cordonan, co-researcher of this study, 'the main reason that people are gravitating towards these churches is because they do offer a wide variety of programs, and they have very enjoyable and entertaining services with messages that a lot of people feel comfortable with'.<sup>35</sup>

In short, one basic falsehood of the CGM is the untrue premise that the church and her teachings must be popular with the world to succeed.<sup>36</sup> Conversely, Jesus told his disciples that the world would hate them. Given the 'intoxicating' worship,<sup>37</sup> I would argue that the prospects of Korean megachurches will depend on the 'integrity' of leadership (pastors and church leaders), among all other factors. We should re-evaluate the postulates of the CGM that pursue a massive worldwide church that is so attractive and successful that the world willingly embraces her.

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<sup>34</sup> James Wellman, Katie E. Cordonan, and Kate Stockly-Meyerdick, 'God is Like a Drug...: Explaining Interactional Ritual Chains in American Megachurches', *Sociological Forum* 29:3 (2014), 650-72.

<sup>35</sup> *Huffington Post*, August 20, 2012.

<sup>36</sup> Bob DeWaay, 'Faulty Premises of the Church Growth Movement', *Critical Issues Commentary* 89 (2005), 7.

<sup>37</sup> Wellman, 'God is Like a Drug'.

**‘THAT’S THE CHURCH!’**  
**THE DEVELOPMENT AND VISION OF SUWON**  
**CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH**

Joseph M.J. Ko<sup>1</sup>

Translated by Miyon Chung

Amidst experiencing rapid socio-economic changes, many people in South Korea are suffering from anguish and spiritual bankruptcy beneath the veneer of a seemingly affluent life. A high rate of suicide and a low rate of birth are only some of the symptoms of the existing social conflicts and intensified mistrust in society as a whole. The church, as the community of the disciples of Jesus Christ, knows, of course, that the solution to the world’s problems lies in the transforming power of the gospel. Therefore, the Korean church must refuse to bemoan the situation and must rise to the occasion and minister to the world. The church that proclaims the gospel and performs it in deeds is the hope of the world. The purpose of this chapter, therefore, is to share how God has planted a small church in a war-torn rural town full of displaced evacuees, and how that church has faithfully nurtured and strengthened its membership, resources, and influence over time in its continued walk with God.

**History of Suwon Central Baptist Church (SCBC)**

The Korean War (1950-1953), which had completely devastated South Korea, brought about many changes in the Suwon City area. Because the city is close to Seoul, many evacuees from Seoul began to pour into Suwon. In 1951, the total number of residents in Suwon was approximately 52,000. The following year, the population rose to 104,000 – a remarkably sharp and fast increase. As such, what used to be a small, rural, and tranquil place near Seoul became inundated with the influx of evacuees as they began to settle in the area. Whether they were from North Korea or other parts of South Korea, the evacuees built wooden shacks or thatched cottages. The wooden shacks were mostly located in Yeonmoo-dong, Seyryoo-dong hills, or in the vicinity of Hwaseong.

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<sup>1</sup> I want to thank Namwook Kim, Associate Pastor of Suwon Central Baptist Church, for his assistance through the research process, and Dr. Miyon Chung of Morling College, Australia, for translating the chapter.

To give these broken-hearted displaced a hope and a future, God began to do extraordinary things in the Suwon area that gave the broken-hearted displaced a hope and a future. In 1951, elder Soon-Ho Lee felt led by God to start a church on a hill across from the city hall, at 144 Gyodong Street.

The first pastor of SCBC was Seong-Up Choi. In 1960, Jang-Hwan (Billy) Kim, upon his return from USA, joined the church as an associate. In 1965, as Choi became increasingly ill, Billy Kim was ordained to serve as the main pastor of the church. Under Kim's leadership, the church entered into an era of growth. From its membership of 12 at the end of 1959, the church grew to be the largest church in Suwon within eight months of Kim's assumption of leadership. Also, as membership increased, the main building was expanded and additional facilities were constructed in 1970 and 1984 respectively. At the time of Kim's retirement in 2005, membership had reached 15,000.

Among several reasons attributed to the development of SCBC, the most significant was Kim's radio ministry, which began in November of 1971 when he joined Far East Broadcasting Company (FEBC). Since radio was the most popular form of mass communication in the 1970s, his radio ministry contributed to the explosive spread of the gospel, making SCBC well-known throughout the country. What is especially notable is that the Korean church at that time was unfamiliar with the Baptist denomination and many were accusing Baptists of being heretical for using the word *chimrye* for baptism instead of *seyrye*.

This accusation of heresy has contextual elements behind it. In the Bible translated into Korean, the word *seyrye* was used to connote baptism. But the word means a 'rite of washing', not 'immersion'. In Korea, the customary mode of baptism was that of sprinkling only. When Baptist missionaries arrived on Korean soil – centuries to decades after the Roman Catholics, Presbyterians, and Methodists – they began to use the word *chimrye*, or 'rite of immersion', to faithfully express their baptismal practice of immersion. Therefore, that generation of Korean Christians, who were not aware of the Greek etymology behind 'baptism' and had accepted sprinkling as the normative means of baptism, accused Baptists of heresy. It is in this rather serious atmosphere that Kim's radio ministry began to create a positive image of the Baptist tradition and, thereby, considerably helped the churches belonging to the Korea Baptist Convention to grow and develop.

In addition to the FEBC radio ministry, Kim was devoted to cultivating the next generation of leaders. Youth for Christ (YFC), a worldwide ministry that targeted teenagers, was established in Korea in 1966. Kim served as its first president. During his leadership, the organisation spread throughout the country and produced many outstanding individuals, over 2,000 of whom went into ministry.

The church developed evangelistic programs that utilised music, sports, seminars, and drama, all of which were received with enthusiasm by the

youths. As the group grew, Kim went to the U.S. and brought back a fund of US\$200,000 to construct a facility (the Christian Centre) adjacent to SCBC's main building. At the completion of the Christian Centre, he created another ministry for the youth in the area. He invited youths from poor families and offered them various educational and training opportunities such as job training programs and Bible study classes. The building was also used to create and house other educational ministries such as Central Kindergarten, Suwon Christian Night Junior High School, Korean Laymen's Bible College, and Capital Baptist Bible College. Capital Baptist Bible College grew to be a seminary that trains pastoral candidates. Additionally, in 1992, the Central Learning Institute, a government-accredited educational institution, was established for the purpose of preparing the next generation of leaders. In 1994, Central Christian Elementary School was established to teach scripture-based values to children in a Christian environment.

In December of 2004, Kim retired after 45 years of pastoral ministry as he was also about to complete his five-year term as president of the Baptist World Alliance. Since then, he has remained as the pastor emeritus of the church. Even before his retirement, however, many were interested to know who would succeed him. In January 2005, Joseph Myungjin Ko, who was Kim's disciple, assumed the role of senior pastor of the church.<sup>2</sup> This transference of leadership was lauded by the Korean church as a healthy model, for the process was constructive with exemplary ensuing results.

Under Ko's new leadership, SCBC entered into yet another era of fresh revival in the midst of a rapidly changing internal and external environment. The church soon realised that Ko brought analytical and strategic gifts, and competence in implementing set goals. With passion for the kingdom, he set a clear focus for ministry: saving souls and developing the spiritual maturity of the believers. The church was given a sharply focused purpose statement: 'To glorify God, to confer dignity upon people: That's the church!'<sup>3</sup>

Through his 'That's the church!' mission, members were mobilised for various ministries, and its outcome has been evident. Currently, SCBC is composed of an average of approximately 12,000 attendees on Sundays, with over 30,000 registered members. Reflecting the growth in attendance, another Sunday worship service (1:00 p.m.) was added to the four existing

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<sup>2</sup> Joseph Ko, after years of serving at SCBC during his seminary years, and subsequently as associate pastor, later pastored Osan Baptist Church in a small town. During his ten years of service, church membership increased tenfold and contributed significantly to the city's enhancement through diverse and holistic engagement.

<sup>3</sup> The expression 'That's the church!' is a literal translation. The intention behind this slogan or campaign is to emphasise pursuing excellence in the Lord in such a way that the world could recognise and say, 'Wow, surely that is what a true church must be all about!'



ones.<sup>4</sup> The budget also increased by 50%. In 2010, the church purchased a plot of land (approximately 32,500m<sup>2</sup>) in a newly developing zone; it is currently preparing to build facilities for worship, education, and community services.

### **Systemising the Vision of ‘That’s the Church!’**

In October 2007, SCBC invited the entire congregation and local residents to proclaim its ‘That’s the church!’ vision. Since the launch, the church has gained more stability and sound development. This section will explicate both the vision and its practical implementation.

#### *The Purpose of the Campaign*

First, the purpose of the church’s campaign is to educate the members in the reason for the church’s existence: to glorify God and to confer dignity upon people. To foster a balanced development, a church must capture God’s will for the church’s existence. SCBC’s campaign is founded upon Matthew 22:37-40:

And he said to him, ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets’.

As seen above, the two main commandments to obey are to love God and to love one’s neighbours. SCBC understands that it exists to obey these two commandments. In loving God, the church will glorify God; in loving one’s neighbours, the church will confer dignity upon people. In so doing, SCBC can continually pursue to demonstrate to the world what a true church would be like: to restore the nation by the power of the gospel through God’s grace. The motto of the church, therefore, is to become a useful model of the Korean church, the hope of the people in the nation, and a lamp of the world as the church shares the gospel within and beyond the borders of Korea.

#### Copyrighted Material *The Four Campaign Projects*

Secondly, the outcome of the ‘That’s the church!’ vision can be measured by two standards: (1) ‘How many will be added to the kingdom through the ministries of the church?’ and (2) ‘How joyfully do God’s people live while imitating Jesus Christ as they continue witnessing Christ?’ In other words, the two absolute criteria by which to create and implement all ministries are

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<sup>4</sup> Not included in the count are age-graded services and non-Korean language services such as of Mongolian, Cambodian, Nepali, Chinese, Vietnamese, and English language groups.

the salvation of souls and the promotion of the spiritual maturity of the believers.

Based on the above two core values of actualising the 'That's the church!' vision, the following four projects were launched: 1) the Jesus Project, focusing on evangelism; 2) the Solomon Project, creating a physical environment conducive to supporting ongoing ministries; 3) the BK (Billy Kim) Project, preparing the younger generation to become impactful leaders by passing on the legacy of faithful service; and 4) the Joseph Project, loving neighbours by meeting their needs holistically, thereby creating a godly influence in society as a whole. SCBC believes that through the implantation of these four projects, it can be used by God to function as a model church for the new century: a church that lives by biblical values, offers hope to the struggling people, and shares the gospel around the world.

### *The Core Values of the Campaign*

People are the foundation for achieving the vision of SCBC. Whether or not the vision is achieved depends on a personal commitment precisely because each individual has the power to influence another. As committed individual influencers multiply, the sum of influence will add up exponentially, thereby producing a vast wave of influence upon the whole. For this reason, the 'That's the church!' vision begins with a single person whose life has been transformed and is maturing.

To nurture such influencing individuals, SCBC sets four educational goals. First, the primary value in the vision is to train Christians to cultivate a devout spirituality. A disciple of Jesus Christ has to be spiritually sensitive and committed to cultivating a sanctified attitude or posture in life. The concrete expression of this can be found in a Christian who listens to the voice of God, sees what God reveals, and then obeys God's command. Second, SCBC commits to disciple its members to have a mature character so that they can demonstrate honesty and faithfulness in life. Third, the church encourages its members to excel in their work places by cultivating skills and enhancing capacities. The last value is to be good stewards of our physical bodies through a healthy lifestyle, for the body is the house of soul, mind, and character. A healthy body is essential for other internal values to have their potential to be fully realised both in the church and in the world.

### *The Church as the Lamp of the World: 'Mission 2020'*

SCBC is committed to share the gospel until Jesus returns. For this reason, in 2007, the church shifted its international mission strategy by initiating the Mission 2020 program. The church's existing strategy had been to support missionaries who had been commissioned by mission agencies and

the denominational mission department. The new approach now includes commissioning its own missionaries. To be effective, the church prioritised its focus on Cambodia and Outer Mongolia. The vision of Mission 2020 mobilises the whole congregation to send 200 missionaries, plant 200 churches, and establish 20 mission centres in these areas.

The success of Mission 2020 totally depends on the participation and interest level of the entire congregation. For this reason, the church started the Central Mission Training School, an eight-week training program. To date, over 1,000 members have graduated from the program. Also, the first Sunday of each month is set apart as a day of mission offering wherein the congregation is encouraged to participate in mission through giving. In view of the goals set by the Mission 2020 program, so far, thirty churches and three mission centres have been established in Outer Mongolia, and five churches and one mission centre in Cambodia. With these as missional base camps, missionaries have been commissioned to serve. So far, approximately 2,000 church members have participated in short-term mission trips to these areas; they've shared the gospel in words and deeds by offering medical and social welfare services, organising Bible schools, and running evangelistic outreach programs in cooperation with the local Christians.

Furthermore, SCBC annually holds world mission conferences, rotating among Korea, Mongolia, and Cambodia. When the conference is held in Korea, the focus is given to Mongolia and Cambodia; missionaries and national pastors from these countries are invited to report on the development of various ministries to the Korean congregation by sharing moving testimonies. When the conference is held in Mongolia or Cambodia, the emphasis is on medical and social welfare services and large-scale evangelistic campaigns. Through these ministries, many experience the empowering work of the Holy Spirit in extraordinary ways.

### **Creative Ministries:**

#### **A Proposal for an Alternative Church Model for the Future**

Historically, only a few churches experience conflict because of spirituality; the most frequent cause for church conflict is a pursuit of false spirituality, with symptoms such as the perversion or lack of integrity, honesty, and/or faithfulness. Thus, conflicts are moral and ethical in nature. According to a 2014 survey conducted by the Christian Ethics Movement of Korea, only 19.4% of Koreans trust the Korean church – a rather bleak forecast for the future of the Korean church. Given this situation, the important question we must ask is not necessarily 'What is the problem?' but 'How should we be transformed?' As we wrestle with such a fundamental question, we may secure an opportunity to create a new future out of the present crisis.

In light of this, SCBC has developed four goals to create an alternative church model for the future: 1) To shape an 'opinion leadership' to develop a ministry that can catch the attention and interest of society as a whole; 2) To create ministry opportunities for the members to participate in for them to feel fulfilled in their commitment to Jesus Christ; 3) To make it a priority to grasp and implement the things that God has the utmost concern for; and 4) To develop missional events and activities that can attract unbelievers to the church. In order to achieve these four, the 'That's the church!' initiative pursues to bring transformation through radical innovation and convergence. The transformation of leadership will mark the beginning of the church's transformation into a missional and evangelistic church that participates actively in societal affairs and engenders a godly impact in all areas of the life of and in the *polis*.

### *Developing an Innovative Leadership*

After the war, South Korea's most urgent task was the rebuilding of the nation, which required an adventurous, enterprising, and forward-looking leadership. That generation sought charismatic leaders endowed with a pioneering spirit; they were the role models of South Korea, and the church followed suit. However, as the nation became more complex, the social compositions and needs of the church also became diversified and complex. Church leaders, therefore, must first recognise the changing needs of the present generation and respond appropriately and innovatively. Specifically, today's church needs to reassess the existing pastoral roles and the attitude of its pastoral staff. In order for leaders to be effective, they must be open to embracing people of diverse backgrounds and needs. Furthermore, for the church to make a godly impact in a given society, its leadership must assist and build up their congregation so that each member can serve as a leader in his or her respective sphere or locality using his or her gifts and skills.

In redefining the role of pastors, the church must be reminded that pastors are no longer as highly respected as they once were. Pastoral work is now seen by the present generation as just another profession. The traditional social hierarchy and traditionalism no longer hold. The new Korea with its democratic socio-political ethos prefers equality and mutuality. Likewise, the church also emphasises lay ministry. SCBC captures an innovative pastoral role in four areas, as seen below:

The first is the ministry of the word and prayer to cultivate godliness on individual and corporate levels. Ministry of the word and prayer is the indispensable and fundamental responsibility of a church leader. Requisite to this is the correct interpretation of the scripture and the faithful proclamation of it in its entirety. In every matter of church life, the leader must enquire after God and obey the directions revealed by the Holy Spirit. Through his or her ministry of the word and prayer, he or she must help the whole church

become spiritually mature and obedient in the mission that God has entrusted to them.

The second is planning and modifying strategies to provide a framework and network for lay ministry. The leader must listen attentively to the diverse voices of the congregation and seek to facilitate sound and healthy communication on all levels in the course of developing concrete and detailed plans to implement the shared vision of the congregation. Once the vision is defined and plans are made, she or he needs to encourage the congregation to serve cooperatively and harmoniously with others, each according to his or her gifts and abilities.

The third is teaching and equipping all members for ministry. The leader must establish a partnership for ministry with the congregation. This means that the congregation is to be seen not merely as an object of ministry but as a body of partners. Members can identify their roles in the overall framework of the church's mission. To do this, pastors need to provide training programs through which new members are prepared and existing ones can grow further in the knowledge and practice of the grace of Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit.

The fourth is problem solving to minister responsibly. The leader must be prophetically prepared to anticipate obstacles in accomplishing the church's God-given visions. When the church encounters unexpected difficulties or oppositions, he or she needs to identify the root of the problem and resolve it through open communication, careful explanation, and prayer in the context of biblically sound pastoral care.

SCBC also operates the Pastoral Leadership Development Academy to facilitate healthy church development throughout the country. One approach is to create a network of continuing educational opportunities for front-line pastors and for the future and younger generation of Christian workers. Sharing SCBC's accumulated wisdom and practical experiences can contribute to bringing restoration and revival to the struggling congregations throughout the country.

### *Becoming a Gospel-Centred Missional Church*

The postmodern generation of our time is moving toward what has been identified as hyper postmodernism. If postmodernism was about deconstruction, hyper postmodernism seeks after convergence. The revolutionary aspect of a gospel-centred missional church lies in its convergence. This has to do with taking what were previously deconstructed and dissolving them down together to use as the tools for gospel proclamation. SCBC is committed to reshaping and preparing itself to be able to share the unchanging gospel to the changing world. A radical reconfiguration is an ongoing process of the church.

One such effort is the Yedarlm-Sarlm (YDS) 20-Day campaign. 'Imitating the Life of Jesus' is the literal translation of 'Yedarlm-Sarlm'. This is an innovation of the traditional early morning prayer services,

which remains an important part of SCBC's life. Special activities and concentration have been added to meet felt needs and to address the changed life context of modern urban life. The program is meant to help the congregation grow in maturity by imitating Jesus Christ in their daily lives. A more specific desired outcome of this process is to reach out to the not-yet-saved people in the neighbourhood. The campaign utilises diverse cultural contents in redemptive ways to enhance its effect.

The program has several characteristics: First, the campaign is designed to reach the participants on affective dimensions, highlighting the joy of participation. Participation and the ensuing sense of fulfilment are critical to reaching and satisfying contemporary people. Sermons preached during the twenty-day campaign focus on the practical and realistic challenges and conflicts Christians experience in their everyday life. Also, as the campaign is held seasonally (regularly), it includes commemorative and celebrative opportunities for the whole church. For example, to provide incentives to the young participants, the church gives out stickers and souvenirs for attendance. The operation of a photo zone has also been popular as the participants can take individual or group photos to mark their attendance. New members are invited to welcome events. For outreach, popular artists are invited to perform. Most importantly, the church reinforces the power of the gospel through foot-washing, baptism, communion, and ordination.

Second, the campaign is family-centred to reflect the needs of the contemporary generation. The importance of family cannot be understated or modified. Although Korea was once lauded as having strong family values, the rapid social changes have steadily eroded this social foundation and the church is grappling with this, even while it believes that the Christian message can address this issue. The hallmark of Christian education is not simply to pass on knowledge but to pass on distinctly Christian spirituality and values. Parents pass on their spirituality, habits, and attitude, which will powerfully impact the shaping of their children's life. Nurturing a biblically sound family culture, therefore, is of utmost importance. For this reason, the YDS 20-Day campaign promotes participation on a family level. It is a celebrative occasion in which the entire family can joyfully participate. The church has witnessed many family relationships improve through this campaign.

Third, the campaign is curtailed to encourage and increase participation from the current generation of the congregation. It is suited to the lifestyle of contemporary Koreans, who have to work long hours and often commute long distances. In the past, special prayer sessions were held for forty days and only at dawn. Consequently, people, especially men, who have to go to work early in the morning, were almost systematically excluded. By holding prayer services in the morning and evening during the YDS 20-Day campaign, those who normally could not come to church were able to participate. Furthermore, for people who are unable to attend physically, Internet livecasting and video-on-demand materials were created. Unlike

the previous special prayer services that were characterised by a predominantly female participation, the new campaign drew a significantly larger number of male participants to the point of almost equalling the number of female participants.

Last, at present, through the creation of the campaign's manual, the YDS 20-Day campaign is now practiced by over 300 churches in Korea, and many churches witness a spiritual renewal and numerical growth. Furthermore, the participating churches are now sharing their experiences with others and also improving the program manual.

### *Creating a Godly Impact in Society*

The scripture makes it clear that the church is called, empowered, and commissioned to participate in God's saving and sanctifying work in the world. The mission of the church, therefore, is vast and profound. The church cannot afford, thus, to be trapped in self-contained and self-protecting walls. It can be relevant and make a redemptive impact only when it reaches out to the world. South Korea as a whole has been facing new challenges in the midst of its successful economic development. It is critical, therefore, for the church to provide direction and vision from God and prayerfully propose and enact sound solutions.

Below are four ways by which SCBC engages with its local environment.

The first is SCBC's elderly care ministries. Due to low birth rate and increased longevity, South Korea has become an aging society. The elderly population is greater than its younger counterpart, and the latter has to care for the former. In response to this challenge, the church operates programmes and facilities that are dedicated to this ministry. The first elderly care ministries were first launched in 1969 by establishing Central Elderly Home. In addition, Suwon City has entrusted SCBC to manage Buhdeunae Elderly Centre and Gyanggyo Elderly Centre. Within its premises, the church also operates Yedarim Silver College. Through this programme, SCBC ministers to over 500 senior citizens in the city. The ministry includes sharing the gospel as well as offering personal enhancement classes (in skills, fitness, and hobbies).

The second is the church's significant investments in financial and human resources to care for people with various disabilities. Korea as a whole is showing increasing concern for people with special needs. The government is actively instituting ways to provide professional care for them and support for their caregivers. SCBC operates a weekday care centre to provide care for such people. The work has received positive reviews and Suwon City has entrusted several of its programmes and facilities to the church. The operation of the Goodwill store is one example; it has even received media attention. In all these, the church seeks to provide its congregation and its neighbours in need with opportunities to

improve their personal and family life instead of merely relying on handouts.

The third is the church's ministries for internationals in the city. The number of foreign workers in South Korea continues to rise, as does the number of intercultural marriages. Korea was once a mono-cultural society, but it is now going through a rapid transition to become a multicultural society. In this process, experiencing conflicts and confusion is inevitable for both the traditional and incoming members of society. The church pays attention to human rights issues stemming from the abuse of foreign workers and foreign spouses (mostly women who come from different ethnic backgrounds). There is an equally compelling need to care and advocate for the children from multicultural/multi-ethnic or mixed families, many of whom feel lost and are ill-adapted to life in Korea. In response to these challenges, the church has accepted to operate Suwon City's social welfare centre for foreigners. In addition to providing medical care, the church offers counselling on labour and insurance issues and provides diverse services and support for foreign spouses married to Koreans. The educational programmes include classes on the Korean language, marriage, and Korean culture, as well as job training.

The fourth is an education programme to prepare future leaders. Central Kindergarten, Central Christian Elementary School, and Central Christian Junior High School have been in operation for some time. The church is currently preparing to begin a high school as well.

### **Conclusion**

The 'That's the church!' campaign in its design and execution aims to glorify God and confer dignity upon people. As a consequence, the world may know that the church as the community of Jesus' disciples, relevant to the world through the power of the Holy Spirit. SCBC, as a local expression of the global church, will continually seek to be transformed to proclaim the unchanging truth that Jesus Christ is the unique and supreme Saviour and Lord and that he has called and empowered through his Spirit to function as the sign and agent of God's rule on earth until he returns.



# VATICAN II, CULTURE, AND SOCIETY: CATHOLIC ENGAGEMENT IN KOREA

Simon C. Kim

From its very origin, Christianity has been one of mission through the translatability of the gospel message, heeding Jesus' command to go and make disciples of all nations (Matt 28:19), moving into the Levant and beyond.<sup>1</sup> Since Christianity has no single revealed language, the engagement of culture for the spread the word of God is a constitutive element of its intelligibility.<sup>2</sup>

By reclaiming the ecclesial missionary nature through the translatability of the gospel message, Vatican II formally recognized the ongoing task of conversion and the Catholic Church regained a vital understanding of her duty to spread the gospel message.<sup>3</sup> Going back to the sources (ressourcement) in order to update the Church (aggiornamento) for every generation allowed young churches in places like Korea to continue to nurture the seeds of faith planted by the Korean martyrs to maintain their relevancy in society for subsequent generations. Thus, to better understand the impact of this ecclesial event on Korean church and society, a historical understanding of the Catholic faith is needed. The mission of creating disciples through the translatability of Christianity is evident at every stage from Christianity's introduction in the Korean peninsula, to the church emerging from the devastation of the Korean War, to the rapidly increasing Catholic faith of today. None can deny the impact of Vatican II in propelling Catholics to rediscover her ecclesial nature and allowing her to keep pace with the tremendous growth of the rest of Korean society.

## Catholic Korea Prior to Vatican II

The beginning of Christianity in Korea is like none other, since the faith was transmitted by the laity rather than through missionary activities in the eighteenth century. Christianity took root in Korea through the curiosity and initiative of the natives themselves through their contact with Catholicism in China from 1568-1608 when emissaries brought back Catholic texts. Out of curiosity, Silhak<sup>4</sup> scholars pursued more information

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<sup>1</sup> Lamin Sanneh, *Translating the Message: The Missionary Impact on Culture* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2009), 56-57.

<sup>2</sup> Sanneh, *Translating the Message*, 256.

<sup>3</sup> Sanneh, *Translating the Message*, 277.

<sup>4</sup> Stemming from the seventeenth century, *Silhak* literally means 'practical learning'. This scholarly movement was critical of Confucian teaching, especially

about the Catholic faith. In 1784, the son of the Korean ambassador, Peter Seung-hun Yi, encountered Catholic priests in China and his inquiries eventually led to his own baptism. With newfound faith, Yi returned to Korea to pass on the faith by sharing Catholic texts and his personal experiences, eventually leading others to be baptized.<sup>5</sup>

Although the initial encounter of Catholicism may have been born out of a desire for an alternative to Chinese system as those on the Korean peninsula sought independence from their neighbours to the east, Christianity had deeper ramifications for every aspect of people's lives. Catholicism's true appeal was based on a Catholic understanding of equality centred around an egalitarian relationship between men and women, protection of children, and the promotion of the han'gŭl language (Korean alphabet developed in the fifteenth century) along with the local culture.<sup>6</sup> Whereas Confucian society placed women beneath their male counterparts, Catholicism promoted an egalitarian understanding of gender roles based on *imago Dei*, the dignity of every human being as the bearers of God's image. Whereas filial piety put children at times at the whim of their parents' wishes, Catholicism protected the rights of 'the least among us' (Luke 9:48). Filial piety, according to Catholic teaching, needed to be observed as part of the fourth commandment; however, this particular commandment also needed to correspond with all the other commandments as well. In other words, honouring father and mother could not contradict God's law of loving one another as Christ loved us. Through Catholicism a more egalitarian social and familial order began to emerge.

Finally, whereas Confucian society promoted the structural, political and cultural ideals of a pre-modern Korean society, Catholicism promoted cultural independence and societal progress through egalitarian relationships mentioned before, but especially through the use of the native tongue, han'gŭl. By promoting han'gŭl, the Catholic Church endeared herself to those seeking independence from Chinese influence and desiring to create a modern society based on the dignity of their people, culture and ideals. Thus, Catholic ideals for a just society based on the gospel message of love did challenge some of the precepts of Confucian society, but they did not contradict Confucian ideals. What the initial encounter of Christianity shows is the unique process of translatability, since Koreans did not receive a pre-packaged understanding of the Christian worldview.

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the strict adherence of rituals in Neo-Confucianism, and sought to move away from the 'Chinese-centric' view of the world by recovering the richness of their own cultures and discovering the values in Western Learning.

<sup>5</sup> Inshil Choe Yoon, 'Martyrdom and Social Activism: The Korean Practice of Catholicism', in Robert Buswell (ed.), *Religions of Korea in Practice* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007), 356.

<sup>6</sup> Kwang Cho, 'The Meaning of Catholicism in Korean History', in Chai-Shin Yu (ed.), *The Founding of Catholic Tradition in Korea* (Fremont, CA: Asian Humanities Press, 2004), 136.

Rather, the newly baptized took up the mission of translatability so that the faith would resonate with those on the peninsula.

Christianity was suspiciously regarded in Asia because of the apparent conflict of ancestor worship with Catholic monotheistic beliefs. This was not necessarily the case with the new converts as they sought to reconcile the two. However, when forced to choose, early Christians followed Rome's directives leading to numerous Korean martyrs during the persecutions from 1785 to 1886.<sup>7</sup> After the devastating persecutions of 1886, the Catholic Church enjoyed relative religious freedom during the era of religious liberty.

The establishment of Korea as a prefecture apostolic in 1831 by Pope Leo XII allowed missionaries from the Paris Foreign Missions Society to arrive in Korea in 1836. Ironically, following years of persecution and martyrdom, these foreign missionaries disengaged their faith communities from political and social activity during the period of peaceful acceptance of Christianity in secular society. The initial believers were active in public worship and demonstration in the face of persecution, however, when relative peace was realized the Catholic Church retreated from engagement in the public sphere. This detachment had a negative impact on Catholics, as the Church had relatively small growth for the first half of the twentieth century. The void left by the Catholic Church allowed the Protestant faith to engage the Korean people politically and religiously, especially during the independence movement from Japanese occupation. In many ways, this retreat contradicted the nature of the Church, especially with respect to her mission of translatability through the engagement of society. Not until the Spirit's prompting at the Second Vatican Council would she be able to rediscover the impetus that allowed so many to give their lives in martyrdom and to enjoy the tremendous growth of the Korean Catholic Church today.

### **Pope John XXIII and the Second Vatican Council**

Soon after his election, Pope John XXIII (1958-1963) surprised the world by calling for a general council so the Church would once again experience a new Pentecost through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. To move the Church towards this vision, John XXIII called for an internal and external renewal by placing the Church in a positive relationship with the world; first, a renewal of the relationship of the Church to herself; and second, a renewal of the relationship of the Church to the world – these were the vehicles the pope envisioned for the faithful transmission of the gospel message by returning to the ecclesial essence of mission and translatability. First, by examining the internal relationships, the Church would remain true to the faith handed down. Second, by examining the 'signs of the

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<sup>7</sup> Yoon, 'Martyrdom and Social Activism', 356.

times' and dialoguing with the world, the Church would be able to communicate the deposit of faith in a relevant manner. To foster this relationship, a new way of presenting the gospel was needed. More importantly, the vision for this ecumenical council presented by Pope John XXIII was not a separation of the Church and the world as previously claimed, but a rather a healthier relationship between the two in which the Church is able to communicate the gospel message in relevant terms.<sup>8</sup>

The Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) was the twenty-first ecumenical council with over 2,500 bishops throughout the world in attendance. The Council Fathers debated various aspects of what it meant to be a world church in the 16 documents (four Constitutions, nine Decrees and three Declarations) produced at the four sessions. The ancient adage, *lex orandi, lex credendi* (literally means 'law of praying is the law of belief', referring to the connection between worship and belief), proved true again as the initial liturgical renewals led to renewals in all areas of ecclesial life. Through the four constitutions produced – Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 1963), Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (*Lumen Gentium*, 1964), Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation (*Dei Verbum*, 1965), and Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World (*Gaudium et Spes*, 1965) – the Catholic Church was able to rediscover both the nature and activity, mission and translatability, in staying faithful to what had been handed on in faith and the task of spreading the gospel message by engaging the world. 'Vatican II was an ecclesial event in the sense that in the planning and conduct of the council we see the nature of the Church itself in microcosm'.<sup>9</sup> Thus, the Council was described as an ecclesial event where the Holy Spirit breathed new life in the Church and by doing so:

[The Council] produced a much more positive assessment of modernity in its intellectual, social and political aspects. It called for an *aggiornamento* and reform of Church worship, devotion and practice, which in effect called into question the procedures by which the Church had always, at least within anyone's memory, reproduced itself. And it encouraged local Catholic Churches to engage in an active effort to achieve culturally distinct and relevant realizations of Catholicism in their several areas.<sup>10</sup>

The internal renewals of the Church were achieved in documents such as *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (1963) and *Lumen Gentium* (1964), where liturgical renewals allowed Council Fathers to re-examine the Church's

<sup>8</sup> John XXIII, 'Pope's Address to World: Month before Council Opened', in Floyd Anderson (ed.), *Council Daybook Vatican II: Session 1, Oct. 11 to Dec. 8, 1962; Session 2, Sept. 29 to Dec. 4, 1963* (Washington, DC: National Welfare Conference, 1965-1966), 19.

<sup>9</sup> Richard R. Gaillardetz, *The Church in the Making: Lumen Gentium, Christus Dominus, Orientalium Ecclesiarum* (New York/Mahwah: Paulist Press, 2006), xiii.

<sup>10</sup> Joseph A. Komonchak, 'Modernity and the Construction of Roman Catholicism', *Cristianesimo nella Storia* 18 (1997), 384.

internal relationships such as collegiality of bishops and *sensus fidelium* ('sense of the people', referring to the universal consent in matters of faith and morals held by the whole body of the faithful) of the laity. *Dei Verbum* (1965) was also of vital importance in renewal as the revelation of Jesus Christ in Scripture and Tradition was further clarified. The Old Testament recalls how God spoke to the chosen people through prophets while the New Testament speaks of Jesus as God's communication par excellence. Taking these precedents from Scripture, *Dei Verbum* presented God's Word as being communicated in the past yet continuing today as well. 'The Council did not call for a cultural [translatability] as such, but if we carry out its instructions, a cultural [translatability] will take place'.<sup>11</sup> By understanding revelation in history and handed on generationally, Vatican II highlighted the relationship between the Church and the world. The external renewals were achieved in documents such as *Gaudium et Spes* (1965) at the close of the Vatican Council. Further looking at the Church's relationship with the world, the Council Fathers set the Church on a course to dialogue with, to learn from, and to contribute to the world.

In addition, the Decree on the Mission Activity of the Church (*Ad Gentes*, 1965) called for the creation of an authentic church by the preservation of local cultures through the early forms of evangelization found in the Christian tradition. *Ad Gentes* § 22 stated:

The seed which is the word of God grows out of good soil watered by the divine dew, it absorbs moisture, transforms it, and makes it part of itself, so that eventually it bears much fruit. So too indeed, just as happened in the economy of the incarnation, the young Churches, which are rooted in Christ and built on the foundations of the apostles, take over all the riches of the nations which have been given to Christ as an inheritance (cf. Ps. 2:8). They borrow from the customs, traditions, wisdom, teaching, arts and sciences of their people everything which could be used to praise the glory of the Creator, manifest the grace of the saviour, or contribute to the right ordering of Christian life.

This question of how to incarnate the human Jesus in a particular culture and people is relevant not only for mission territories but for all communities trying to identify their own history with salvation history. The challenge of *Ad Gentes* is to assist in the development of younger communities in their rightful status as Church and for older communities to acknowledge the movement of the Holy Spirit allowing translatability of ecclesial expressions on earth to differ from locale to locale while maintaining the deposit of faith in its new soil. Later reflections would observe that Vatican II did not call for a Church in Asia but rather a Church of Asia.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Virgilio Elizondo, *The Future Is Mestizo: Life Where Cultures Meet* (Boulder, CO: University Press of Colorado, 2000), 105.

<sup>12</sup> Massimo Faggioli, *Vatican II: The Battle for Meaning* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2012), 63.

### Korean Bishops at Vatican II

Like many Asian bishops, the Korean episcopacy favoured a progressive outlook at the Second Vatican Council in order to reconcile social and religious differences in society.<sup>13</sup> However, these same bishops steadfastly held on to a conservative reading of scripture and understanding of revelation since they held safeguarding of the faith as a priority.<sup>14</sup> Their voting patterns were not contradictory, but highlighted the fact they were responding to their socio-religious context. On one hand, by voting conservatively on revelation, the bishops from Korea were preserving what was handed down in faith. On the other hand, by voting progressively on religious practices such as Marian devotions, the bishops were able to reconcile some of the cultural, social and religious differences between church, society and other religions. The move towards cultural embrace and ecumenical outreach allowed for Catholic appeal to the wider population as the faith resonated with social conditions. The voting pattern of the Korean bishops reveals the ongoing mission in the transmission of the faith while encountering the cultural realities back in Korea.

One rational why Vatican II was so influential in renewing the world church was the way the progressives were able to mobilize and organise themselves. The bishops from Asia sided with the progressive groups since they responded most closely with the needs of the Church back home. By participating with those residing at Domus Mariae, the bishops from Asia were able to partner with their counterparts from other continents in the hopes of renewing the Church through cultural and social engagement.<sup>15</sup> In Korea, conciliar renewal allowed Catholics to engage the democratic movements in politics, the struggle for economic prosperity after the devastation of the Korean War, better relations with Protestants who came to be the largest majority of Christians, dialogue with Buddhists who were once seen as a hindrance to the Catholic faith and finally, acceptance of popular religiosity by reconciling ancient practices such as ancestor worship with recent liturgical renewals. In summary, Vatican II allowed the Catholic Church in Korea to come into dialogue with society and thus, to become a more credible witness in its social, economic and political developments and less antagonistic to other religious practices especially since Catholicism was the religious minority.

In Korea, Vatican II reforms did not have the immediate and widespread impact they did in Europe or North America. One rationale for differences in reception in Korea versus the West is the fact that the Council Fathers spearheading floor debates were primarily from Europe or North America. Thus, the renewal that emerged was originally directed to their concerns.

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<sup>13</sup> Melissa J. Wilde, *Vatican II: A Sociological Analysis of Religious Change* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007), 38.

<sup>14</sup> Wilde, *Vatican II*, 41.

<sup>15</sup> Wilde, *Vatican II*, 58-59.

Even with the Korean episcopate in attendance, the reception of Vatican II back home was not as dramatic as in the West for several reasons. First, Catholicism in Korea was not as developed as in the West, recently coming out of the devastation and poverty of the Korean War, and therefore, not focused on the same social concerns. Next, Korea was a mission territory where many of the structural renewals and practices discussed halfway around the world did not necessarily apply or were already being creatively implemented according to the needs of missionary conditions. Finally, the documents of Vatican II took nearly five years to be translated into Korean. Thus, the reception of Vatican II is quite complex and still being lived out in different parts of the world including Korea.

Similar sentiments were echoed by the retired bishop of Incheon, William McNaughton.<sup>16</sup> Bishop McNaughton went to Korea as part of the Maryknoll mission in 1954. He was installed the Bishop of Incheon in 1961 at the age of 34. In addition to being at all four sessions of the Council, Bishop McNaughton oversaw the reception of Vatican II during his episcopal tenure lasting 40 years in Incheon. Being an American missionary in Korea provided Bishop McNaughton a unique perspective of the Second Vatican Council. Not only could he relate to the floor debates as an American, but he also understood the Korean cultural context The Church had to adapt to the limited resources much like the early Church in the nineteenth century because of its vast mission territories and recovery from the devastation of the Korean War. Pastoral adaptations such as the vernacular liturgy (progressive translatability) while maintaining the tenets of the faith (conservative mission) discussed at Vatican II were already being incorporated on an as-needed basis for a developing church and society starting from the 1950s.

In addition to being a developing nation in contrast to the influential countries at Vatican II, the Korean experience after the Council was also not as dramatic due to its Confucian roots. Rather than individualistic ideals of the West, the family-oriented social and religious structures in Korea allowed for a more gradual implementation of conciliar teachings.<sup>17</sup> Rather than the drastic changes coming from the top and the bottom, the Confucian ordering of society allowed for a more cautious and thoughtful implementation. Like many nations who are still uncovering the richness and deepening their understanding of Vatican II with increasing Catholic population and resources, Catholics in Korea are still attempting to live out the teachings and reaping the benefits of this ecclesial event.

Although the Vatican II event may not have had immediate impact in Korea in the 1960s, the overall renewal of mission and translatability of her ecclesial nature allowed the Catholic Church to develop in unison with the

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<sup>16</sup> Personal interview conducted on June 11, 2014 in Bishop McNaughton's home in Methuen, Massachusetts.

<sup>17</sup> Sentiments expressed by Bishop McNaughton on June 11, 2014 during an interview in his home in Methuen, Massachusetts.



development in the rest of society. Whereas the retreat at the turn of the twentieth century led the Catholics to withdraw from political and social engagements in contrast to the previous decades that produced the multitude of martyrs, Vatican II propelled the Church into the social and political struggle of a developing nation. In the second half of the twentieth century, the Church supported the democratic movement of Korea and many protestors found safe haven at the Myeongdong Cathedral in Seoul. In addition, Catholics began to engage society by building schools, hospitals and other institutions that benefitted society at large, a work that was previously neglected in the first half of the twentieth century. Thus, the translatability of spreading the good news by social engagement was not necessarily in words only but more importantly, by actions on directed toward people in times of poverty and in their struggle for democracy.

Although the sentiment of lifting the whole country after the devastation of war was the unifying cry of the nation, Vatican II in many ways helped create and amplify this cry by altering the previous ecclesial outlook and steering the Church to engage society in its religious and social developments. The lessening of social and religious distinctions between Church and society found throughout the conciliar documents was an important step in revitalizing the Church especially in this part of the world as the development of an impoverished country was neither strictly a religious nor social cause. Rather, the unifying endeavour to better conditions was a socio-religious movement where implicitly the translatability of the faith was being lived out by the faithful engaged in society.

### **The Nature of the Korean Church: Incorporating the Vernacular**

A revolutionary moment at Vatican II was when the Council fathers decided to allow local churches to use the vernacular to heighten the participation of the laity. 'Full and active participation' became the popular mantra as the faithful's liturgical engagement would be complemented with the engagement in society. Just as the Council sought to enlarge its structural understanding as a *communio* relationship of the faithful, Council fathers acknowledged the *sensus fidelium* of the laity and thereby recognized the Spirit's work in both the faithful and eventually the world.

The use of the vernacular moved the Latin-speaking church to engage other cultures throughout the world. Rather than insisting that all liturgies be conducted in a foreign language in a Tridentine manner, Vatican II moved the worship of the faithful to reflect their natural expressions of faith. In Korea, the vernacular liturgy not only helped develop local faith expressions but also made the acceptance of others an easier reality. For example, *Legio Mariae* (a Marian devotional) was imported from Ireland, the charismatic renewal from the U.S., *Marriage Encounter* from Spain, *Focolare* (a movement for unity) from Italy, and small base communities



from Latin America. These liturgical prayers are prime examples of how the vernacular directives of Vatican II allowed the faithful on the Korean peninsula to incorporate their own linguistic expressions with those of the universal faith.

Another example of translatability in the Korean acceptance of the faith is the unique Yondo prayers in the funeral rite. While adopting the Latin burial rite, Koreans have retained certain elements of their cultural prayers that were used prior to receiving the Catholic faith. Thus, Yondo has ancient cultural overtones that have been incorporated with the litany of saints and maintains the timeline derived from the indigenous understanding of the spirit world. By recalling the saints in the Catholic heritage along with the deceased loved one, the Korean faithful found a way to reconcile the Catholic honouring of saints with one's obligation to honour ancestors.

The missionary zeal of Vatican II allowed for translatability to go beyond just the vernacular as ecclesial structures were also transformed since *lex orandi, lex credendi* meant that the church prayed what she believed. In particular, rigid parochial structures gave way to small-based communities as hierarchical models gave way to communion models. Vatican II saw the need for every member of church and approached the relationship between the clergy and laity in a cell-like *communio* model upholding the institutional and communal aspects of the faith.<sup>18</sup> In the Korean experience, small communities of faith emerged in the ecclesial landscape encouraging local communities and laying the foundation for rapid church growth.

### Activity of the Church: Struggle for Democracy

Perhaps the greatest impetus of Vatican II to the Catholic faith in Korea was the encouragement to engage all aspects of society. The renewal ad extra of church allowed Catholics to not only embrace political struggles for democracy but also reclaim her rightful place as a faith of the people actively engaged in society as first witnessed by the Korean martyrs. The retreat from society during the turn of the twentieth century, influenced by French missionaries, limited social engagement and thus growth of the church after the lives sacrificed for the faith. '[T]he Korean Catholic Church's traditional framework of separating religion from politics, which had been introduced through heavy influences of French missionaries', was redacted by the Second Vatican Council especially in promoting 'the

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<sup>18</sup> Woll Ki Chung, 'Small Christian Community and Communion Ecclesiology of Vatican II in the Catholic Church in Korea' [in Korean], in *'New Evangelization' and the Catholic Church in Korea: In Commemoration of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Vatican Council II* (Seoul: Sogang University, 2012), 108.

dignity of the human person and the common good in social and political spheres'.<sup>19</sup>

With the paradigm shift in worldview, the Korean Catholic Church has shown a remarkable growth not only in demography but also in evangelical activity in the public realm of the Korean society. The Church has actively participated in solidarity actions for the marginalized, and protested against dictatorial governments for democracy's sake. As a result, the Korean Catholic Church came to gain the greatest credibility among all religions in Korea in 2008-10.<sup>20</sup>

Later realization of conciliar teachings can be attributed to the lack of crisis facing Korean Catholics versus their counterparts in the West. For example, issues in religious life for women only emerged after its peak in the 1990s when religious orders faced similar issues of the West with decline in number of candidates, aging members, etc. Only after such events did a new direction for women religious based on the renewals of Vatican II addressing the current climate begin to emerge (a translatability of religious life for Korea).<sup>21</sup>

Cardinal Stephen Sou-hwan Kim (1922-2009) was the Archbishop of Seoul for thirty years and a fierce social justice advocate in Korea's struggle for democracy and modernization. Having been originally ordained a Bishop of Masan in 1966; Cardinal Kim was a product of Vatican II and embodied the conciliar spirit of renewal throughout his episcopacy. Two years after the Council, Cardinal Kim asked a series of questions about why Vatican II was needed and if the call for internal and external renewals were truly understood.<sup>22</sup> He maintained that the liturgy had changed only passively and the 'full and active participation' called for in the Church's renewal was not embraced because the faithful did not truly understand that internal reforms needed corresponding external renewals through engagement with society.<sup>23</sup> Thus, Cardinal Kim's call for renewal through the study of Vatican II corresponded with the translation of all the documents of Vatican II, to be completed by the end of the decade. Rather than limiting the interpretation of conciliar teachings to only church 'elites' such as bishops and theologians, the laity in mutual cooperation with the

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<sup>19</sup> Seil Oh, 'Korean Catholic Church's Social Engagement after Vatican II: Religiosity and Spirituality' [in Korean], in *'New Evangelization' and the Catholic Church in Korea* (Seoul: Sogang University, 2012), 130.

<sup>20</sup> Oh, 'Social Engagement', 130.

<sup>21</sup> Hae Young Choi, 'Change of Religious Life and Women's Identity after Vatican Council II' [in Korean], in *'New Evangelization' and the Catholic Church in Korea* (Seoul: Sogang University, 2012), 143.

<sup>22</sup> In-Cheol Kang, 'The Korean Catholic Church's Social Participation and the Second Vatican Council' [in Korean], *Research Journal of Korean Church History* 25 (2005), 22.

<sup>23</sup> Kang, 'Church's Social Participation', 23.

clergy were now called upon to help the local church realize the renewals of Vatican II.

In addition to challenging the faithful to study Vatican II, Cardinal Kim's outspoken criticism against the military dictatorships of the 1970s and 80s and constant insistence on human rights and the common good endeared not only him but the entire church to Korean society as a credible witness. By vocally denouncing the imprisonments of protestors and abusive treatment of its citizens, Cardinal Kim became an iconic figure for resistance and solidarity against corruption. Myeongdong Church, the cathedral of the Archdiocese of Seoul, also became a symbolic place for protest demonstrations and a safe haven for those persecuted. Along Cardinal Kim's side were other outspoken bishops, priests and laity whose incorruptible and just presence gave great credibility to a minority church, a credibility that would attract many to conversion in later years.

Like his contemporary Cardinal Kim, Bishop Daniel Hak Soun Tji (1921-1993) of the Diocese of Wonju also advocated for Vatican II's renewals to be realized within church and society. In 1971, parishioners followed his example of protesting against government corruption in a special intention offered at mass. This prayer of protest illustrated that the church was able to identify social issues relevant to the faithful but was not yet mature enough to become the prophetic voice that Vatican II called the church to be in the world.<sup>24</sup> Eventually, the Wonju movement would get its wake up call with the imprisonment of Bishop Tji in 1974. Although the documents of Vatican II were translated by the early 1970s, the translatability of the conciliar teachings was just beginning to be realized in socio-political discourse, with Bishop Tji at the forefront. This struggle for democracy would allow the church to make sense of the gospel message in the reality confronting the Korean people.

As the church matured with the translatability of the gospel message in society called forth by Vatican II, Bishop Tji's prophetic voice reached a peak in 1977. In a series of lectures, he called forth the recognition of the dignity of the human person by considering what constitutes the essence of human beings both as individuals and as a communal being.<sup>25</sup> In addition, he called for the decentralization of both church and society through Roman decentralization towards local bishops, clerical decentralization towards God's people, and Catholic decentralization towards other religions.<sup>26</sup> Centralization, according to Bishop Tji, was the source of injustice for the masses and the obvious solution was decentralization where the people are trusted to lead whether in church or society.

Following these prophetic leaders, many priests also began to study the documents of Vatican II in the 1970s. The inspiration gleaned from the

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<sup>24</sup> Kang, 'Church's Social Participation', 23.

<sup>25</sup> Kang, 'Church's Social Participation', 37.

<sup>26</sup> Kang, 'Church's Social Participation', 40.

social teachings of the church stirred them to establish associations among the clergy and to encourage the laity to do so as well based on their reading of political, economic and social 'signs of the times' in relation to the realities of the church as called forth by Vatican II. Thus, the entire church in Korea, from top to bottom, was called upon to engage in the political, economic and social development of the country. In anticipation of the bicentennial anniversary of Christianity in Korea, a preparatory committee concluded that the social and pastoral experience of Korea was indeed a creative interpretation and application stemming from Vatican II and subsequent Catholic social teachings.<sup>27</sup> The Korean reception of Vatican II was truly an embodiment of spirit at Vatican II engaging in renewal of the Church in relation to society. Another pastoral committee created for the bicentennial anniversary commented on the implication of mission of the local church and concluded that Korean Catholics reflect the internal and external renewals instigated by Holy Spirit at Vatican II. This proud heritage would be formally proclaimed in a pastoral statement by the Bishop's Conference in 1982, culminating with the canonisation of 103 Korean martyrs by Pope John Paul II during his historic visit to Korea in 1984.

### Conclusion

Thirty years later in August 2014, Pope Francis returned to site of his predecessor for the beatification of another 124 Korean martyrs in Seoul, Korea. This gesture continues to honour Korea's unique Christian heritage while also acknowledging the faithfulness of the local church in living out the translatability in the spread of the gospel message as Catholics enjoy unprecedented growth and status (5.4 million Catholics in South Korea). In fact, a CNN Opinion presented the papal visit as Pope Francis' way of highlighting his own threefold agenda of evangelization, social justice and lay participation.<sup>28</sup> All three agenda items are evident in the Korean Catholic experience and reveal how the local church highlights the need for translatability of the universal aspect of faith in order for it to be lived out in the world. This mission of translatability was rediscovered at the Second Vatican Council and is the ongoing ecclesial task of every generation.

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<sup>27</sup> Kang, 'Church's Social Participation', 42.

<sup>28</sup> Franklin Rausch, 'Opinion: Why is Pope Francis going to South Korea?' *CNN*, August 12, 2014, <http://www.cnn.com/2014/08/12/opinion/why-pope-south-korea/index.html> (accessed September 4, 2014).

# THE GROWTH OF CATHOLIC CHURCH IN KOREA: SOCIAL EVANGELIZATION FOR THE MARGINALIZED

Seil Oh, S.J.

The Catholic Church has substantially developed and played significant public roles in modern Korean history. Since Catholicism first entered into Chosun, Korea in 1784, Catholics have experienced long persecutions which resulted in the deaths of over ten thousand martyrs. When freedom of religion was established in 1886, the Korean Catholic church had already lost many prospective lay leaders. Moreover, the doctrinal governance of French missionaries, who emphasised separation between the sacred and the profane, and between Church and the state, prevented Catholics from sharing in Korean people's suffering under Japanese colonial rule and participation in independence movements. While Protestant churches were rapidly growing, providing institutions of higher education and social welfare services like hospitals, and promoting active participation in independent movements, the Catholic Church was very inactive and did not grow until the Korean War (1950-53).<sup>1</sup> Nonetheless, it began to grow continuously and solidly in the last several decades. Table 1 (opposite) shows the changing religious landscape of Korea between 1985 and 2005.

Among the three major religions in Korea – Buddhism, Protestantism, and Catholicism – the number of Catholics is still the least; however, it has been continuously increasing since the late twentieth century. What are the major reasons for this phenomenon? This study responds partially to this question. Based on theological and sociological reflections, I will deal with changes of social doctrines of the Catholic Church from two points of view: first, the influence of the Second Vatican Council; and second, the development of Catholic social teachings. The first provides overall background, and the second presents the essence of the social dimensions of the Catholic Church. I will then highlight a Catholic experience of caring for the marginalised in Korea, focusing on the Catholic Organization of the Urban Poor as a concrete case study.

## The Second Vatican Council (1962-1965)

The Second Vatican Council (Vatican II) ignited a Copernican revolution in the Catholic church in many senses<sup>2</sup>: from condemning the world in line

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<sup>1</sup> See, Kyuhyun Mun, *The Korean People and the Catholic Church-History* (Seoul: Dulsum Nalsum, 2012).

<sup>2</sup> Kyung-hwan Oh, 'Korean Church after the Second Vatican Council', *Encyclopedia of Korean Catholicism* (in Korean; Seoul: Research Foundation for

with the ecclesial doctrines of Trent Council (1545-1563) to embracing the world in the spirit of God's love; from the perspective of 'above the world' to that of 'in the world.' Shifting from church-centred worldviews to God-centred ones, Vatican II went beyond the traditional boundary of religions to embrace all of humanity in line with the proclamation of Genesis, 'God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them' (Gen. 1:26-27). For instance, Vatican II opened the door of salvation to all people, including followers of other religions and even atheists, as long as they follow their conscience (i.e. God's voice). It invited the church to rethink what is the true fulfilment of Christ in a rapidly changing modern world.

	1985	1995	2005
Total Population	40419652 100.0	44553710 100.0	47041434 100.0
Religious Population	17203296 42.6	22597824 50.7	47041434 100.0
Non-religious Population	23216356 57.4	21953315 49.3	21865160 46.5
Buddhism	8059624 19.9	10321012 23.2	10726463 22.8
Protestantism	6489282 16.1	8760336 19.7	8616438 18.3
Catholicism	1865397 4.6	2950730 6.6	5146147 10.9
Confucianism	483366 1.2	210927 0.5	104575 0.2
Won Buddhism	92302 0.2	86823 0.2	129907 0.3

Table 1: The Changing Religious Landscape in Korea 1985-2005

Note. Data from the Korean Census by Statistics Korea.

In particular, *Gaudium et Spes* (The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World) proclaims the Catholic church's changing spirit toward modern world:

That world which the Christian sees as created and sustained by its Maker's love, fallen indeed into the bondage of sin, yet emancipated now by Christ, who was crucified and rose again to break the strangle hold of personified evil, so that the world might be fashioned anew according to God's design and reach its fulfilment. Everything we have said about the dignity of the human person, and about the human community and the profound meaning of

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Korean Church History, 1994), 487-49; Seil Oh, 'Korean Catholic Church and Socially Engaged Spirituality: The Mission of New Evangelization in the Light of the Second Vatican Council' [in Korean], *Theology and Philosophy* 22 (2012), 115-48.

human activity, lays the foundation for the relationship between the Church and the world, and provides the basis for dialogue between them.<sup>3</sup>

Vatican II thus extended the dimensions of social evangelisation to protect the dignity of human persons and restore the human community. Furthermore, it justified the church's duty on earth to face all sorts of human problems, including evangelising the political community in the light of the gospel. 'By preaching the truths of the Gospel, and bringing to bear on all fields of human endeavour, the light of her doctrine and of a Christian witness, she respects and fosters the political freedom and responsibility of citizens.'<sup>4</sup> That Vatican II puts an emphasis on political community means it is destined to make a contribution to maintaining the common good for the whole of creation.

In sum, the spirit of the Catholic Church is characterised as *Aggionamento*, the motto of Vatican II, which means 'up to date'. The Vatican II alerts the Church to be open to changes for its ongoing reform as '*Ecclesia semper reformanda.*'

### The Four Principles of Catholic Social Teachings

Catholic social teachings, with *Gaudium et Spes* as their essence, developed for over a century from *Rerum Novarum* (1891), dealing with labour problems in modern society. The four pillars of Catholic social teachings are the dignity of human persons, the common good, subsidiarity, and solidarity. The following quotations come from *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*.<sup>5</sup>

#### *Dignity of Human Persons*

As all human persons are created by God, all human beings and human life should be respected as the *Imago Dei* ('the image of God', from Gen 1:27). Therefore, 'all people have the same dignity as creatures made in his image and likeness' (*Compendium* #144). Particularly, 'persons with disabilities are fully human subjects, with rights and duties' (*Compendium* #148). The poor, the marginalized, and the vulnerable in society should be equally respected and their rights should be protected, but not excluded from a way to the realization of human dignity in life. Among the four pillars, this principle is the most significant, foundational premise (*Compendium* #160, 161).

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<sup>3</sup> *Gaudium et Spes* # 40.

<sup>4</sup> *Gaudium et Spes* # 76.

<sup>5</sup> Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* (Washington D.C.: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2004).

### *The Common Good*

The common good stems from 'the dignity, unity and equality of all people' (*Compendium* #164). This indicates 'the sum total of social conditions which allow people, either as groups or as individuals, to reach their fulfilment more fully and more easily' (*Compendium* #164). The common good as the 'social and community dimension of moral good' (*Compendium* #164) involves 'all members of society; no one is exempt from cooperating, according to each one's possibilities, in attaining and developing it' (*Compendium* #167). The church calls attention to 'the tasks of political community' to ensure the common good. The church's emphasis on the universal destination of goods relativizes private goods. The common good particularly emphasizes 'the preferential option for the poor' in favour of structural reform beyond the limits of social welfare (*Compendium* #171-184).

### *Subsidiarity*

The principle of subsidiarity reflecting social philosophy and civil society insists that 'all societies of a superior order must adopt attitudes of help (*subsidium*) – therefore of support, promotion, development – with respect to lower-order societies' (*Compendium* #186). Subsidiarity can be understood in the positive sense 'as economic, institutional or juridical assistance offered to lesser social entities'. In the negative sense, it requires 'the State to refrain from anything that would de facto restrict the existential space of the smaller essential cells of society: their initiative, freedom and responsibility must not be supplanted' (*Compendium* #186). It deals with the civil and democratic tasks of nations to enhance the initiatives of civil organisations to substantially support the marginalised to take part in the common good.

### *Solidarity*

The principle of solidarity highlights 'the equality of all in dignity and rights and the common path of individuals and peoples towards an ever more committed unity' (*Compendium* #192). Solidarity has multiple dimensions as 'an intimate bond between solidarity and the common good, between solidarity and the universal destination of goods, between solidarity and equality among men and peoples, between solidarity and peace in the world' (*Compendium* #194). It also alerts us to awareness that we are 'debtors' of the society of which we have become part, that we are constituted in interdependence and constant expansion toward mankind (*Compendium* #195).



### Social Evangelisation for the Marginalized

The Second Vatican Council and especially, recent developments of Catholic social teachings, have opened the door of the Catholic Church towards 'social evangelisation', ministering to the marginalised in a way that goes beyond ego-centric salvation. For this purpose many Catholic organisations have been established in Korea from the late 1960s such as the Catholic Organizations of Labourers (1958), Farmers (1966), the Urban Poor (1985), the Catholic Priests' Association for Justice (1974), the Catholic Committees of Justice and Peace, and so on. Here, I focus on the Catholic Organization of the Urban Poor as a case study.

#### *History of the Catholic Organization of the Urban Poor (CUP)*

Starting in the late 1960s, Catholic activists entered into urban poor areas such as Chunggye-chun, Mok-dong, Bokeum-jari (the place of the Gospel), Sanggye-dong, etc, where the urban poor were living in desperately dehumanised conditions and were facing continuous house demolitions or forced evictions by the government. The urban poor, mostly migrants from rural areas, were typically marginalised in the process of modern industrialisation and urbanisation in Korea. This was especially in the 1980s, when more than 240 districts were designated as redevelopment areas in Seoul and the military government strongly pushed for economic development and regional redevelopment projects without any solid plan for caring for poor renters. The forced evictions were so brutal and widespread that urban poor tenants and renters were expelled onto the streets, and some were killed in the struggles.

In response to such dehumanising urban redevelopment processes, the American Jesuit, Father Il-woo Jung, the future congressman Jung-gu Je, and other Catholic activists established the Catholic Organization of the Urban Poor (CUP) in 1985 to support the dignity and human rights of the poor through building of a solidarity community of the urban poor.<sup>6</sup> The mission statement of the organization reads as follows:

Following Christ who became a man, voluntarily chose to live among the poor and the alienated, and proclaimed the Kingdom of God, we live together in the same living site (*Sitz im Leben*) of the urban poor and make a solidarity

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<sup>6</sup> Fr. Il-woo Jung (a.k.a. John V. Daly S.J. 1935-2014) and Jung-gu Je (1944-1999) began to live with the urban poor in the late 1960s. They were initially influenced by Rev. Jin-hong Kim's ministry to the urban poor; however, Fr. Jung led a charismatic way of living with the poor, and many Protestant activists became his collaborators. In 1986, Fr. Jung and Mr. Je jointly received the Award of Maksaisai. Cardinal Soo-whan Kim, the highly respected religious leader as Archbishop of Seoul (1968-1998), had Fr. Jung Il-woo as his personal confessor. See Il-woo Jung, *Jung Il-woo's Story* (Seoul: Je Jung-gu Memorial Group, 2009).

community with them, to proclaim the value of the Kingdom of God to the whole Church community.<sup>7</sup>

### *Main Activities of the Catholic Organization of the Urban Poor*

The CUP's major activities were social engagements geared towards supporting the dignity and human rights of the urban poor, and fostering the common good beyond social welfare. Externally, the CUP organised urban tenants to protest against government plans for redevelopment. Internally, it cared for marginalised community members in poor urban districts.

### SOCIAL PROTESTS FOR THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE URBAN POOR

The active members of the CUP entered into the *Sitz im Leben* of the urban poor who were confronted with the forced evictions and demolitions due to redevelopment projects.<sup>8</sup> Up until the 1980s, inhumane capitalistic law systems only protected material rights of homeowners and landowners who expected to gain property higher values through redevelopment projects. The CUP defended the residential and living rights of urban tenants against the profit-oriented interests of construction companies and property owners. In particular, the CUP and the Catholic Committee for the Ministry of the Urban Poor supported the founding of an NGO, the Korean Coalition for Housing Rights, in solidarity with civil activists to systematically deal with the legislative housing issues of redevelopment plans. Their claims were gradually heard by the National Assembly through their hard struggles against governments and companies: 1) the granting of moving fees as compensation, 2) the construction of permanent rental housing, and 3) a circulatory redevelopment project with the construction of temporary housing for the evicted tenants. Still today, the Korean Coalition for Housing Rights is struggling to support the civil rights of the urban poor for people living in unstable conditions such as vinyl houses and shanty dens.

It has been a long process to claim the human rights of the urban poor to various levels of government and the National Assembly, which were overwhelmingly influenced by the capitalistic economic system and a profit-oriented mentality. First and foremost, supporting the human dignity and rights of the urban poor is inevitably connected to the common good of society. It was possible only through the building of solidarity. The exercising of subsidiarity on the part of not only the church but also the

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<sup>7</sup> Catholic Organization of the Urban Poor, *The 10 Year History of the Catholic Organization of the Urban Poor* (Seoul: Catholic Organization of the Urban Poor, 1995), 18.

<sup>8</sup> See, Mun-su Park, S.J., '40 Years of Low Income Housing in Seoul' (a lecture presentation on April 12, 2012, <http://advocacy.jesuits.kr/english/index.php>).

government is essential in order to realize the prior option for the poor. There are two particular emphases of this movement.

The first is the caring for the urban poor. The best known work of the CUP in this area was among the victims a forced eviction in Sanggye dong in 1986-87.<sup>9</sup> Many CUP members such as priests, nuns, and lay activists were engaged in the struggles of the urban poor against gangsters hired by construction companies backed up by local governments. After a long series of brutal house demolitions, 73 families lost their homes and had no place to go. Due to the CUP's intervention and Cardinal Suhwan Kim's special approval, all those evicted tenants could dwell in several big tents at the side yard of Myongdong Cathedral. Those tenants and the CUP went through a great political turmoil along Korean citizens at Myongdong (an old downtown in Seoul), participating in social movements for national election as the basis of Korean democracy in 1987. Cardinal Kim and the CUP could support not only the urban poor but also overall Korean democracy. Since then, Myongdong Cathedral has been regarded as a symbol for the holy land of Korean democracy.

Caring for the daily of those in need was always a main part of the CPU's activities. When social welfare policy did not exist for poor tenants, the CPU built a community in which members supported each other. For instance, the CPU members ran *gongbu-bang* (voluntary day care services and after-school program), and ran group home care for the children of the urban poor. They also explored the setting up of productive cooperatives, including a sewing factory.

The second is the spirituality of living with the poor. The CPU's 'engaged spirituality' was influenced by the Second Vatican Council. Their sense of holiness do not exist 'above the world', but 'in the world' in the spirit of *kenosis* ('self-emptying', Phil. 2:6-11). The sacredness and divinity of God is revealed through the mundane accidents of the world as signs of the times in the light of *Gaudium et Spes*.

Il-woo Jung was once a professor, but found a gap between living only with words and living embodied. He thirsted to become truly human, so he decided to live with the urban poor. Later, he confessed that those poor people had already become truly human.<sup>10</sup> The foundational spiritual principle of the CUP is 'living with the poor' and furthermore, 'learning from the poor'. This principle is in accordance with the emphasis of the current Pope Francis: The poor are not merely objects to be educated and awakened; rather, the church needs to learn from the poor. The poor hold the mystery of the gospel as long as the Beatitudes (Matt. 5:1-12), as the gospel message proclaimed by Jesus, are true.

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<sup>9</sup> See more details, Dongwon Kim, *Sanggye-dong Olympic (DVD)* (Seoul: Pu-reun-young-sang, 1988).

<sup>10</sup> Jung, *Jung Il-woo's Story*, 52-54.

The CUP established a community where priests, religious, and lay people might have equal rights to share their ideas and experiences before the true love of God. From 1995 on, they decided not to conduct collective activities but to serve as catalysts in the building of regional communities for the urban poor. They are still struggling against spiritual worldliness Pope Francis mentioned in *Evangelii Gaudium* ('Joy of the Gospel'), supporting the self-help of the marginalized, such as the role of 'salt' (Matt 5:13) and 'leaven' (Matt 13:33) in the light of social evangelisation.

Thus, the spirituality of the CUP is very significant for the recent growth of the Catholic Church in Korea. The CUP is an example of a Catholic organisation for social evangelisation. The influence of the Catholic Priests' Organization for Justice as the catalyst in the reformation of the national election in 1987 was another remarkable page in the history of Korean democracy.<sup>11</sup>

### Social Evangelisation and Public Trust

On the whole, the Catholic church's social evangelisation, through various organisations like the CUP and others influenced by the spirit of the Second Vatican Council and Catholic social teaching, has resulted in active participation in democracy and human rights movements as those in the church are hearing from and sharing in sufferings of the marginalised. As a result, the Catholic Church has gained a high level of trust from Korean civil society.

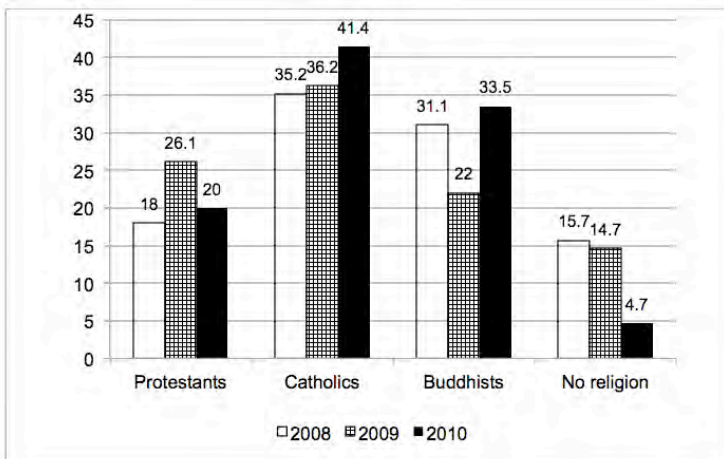


Figure 1: Korean Citizens' Public Trust of Religions 2008–2010  
 Note: Data from Christian Ethics Movement of Korea 2010: 17.

<sup>11</sup> Oh, 'Korean Catholic Church and Socially Engaged Spirituality', 133.

Figure 1 illustrates that the Catholic Church gained the highest trust from citizens among the three major religions according to the 2008-2010 survey of Christian Ethics Movement of Korea. Despite the authoritarian tendencies of the hierarchical church structure and negative aspects of clericalism, the Catholic Church's commitment to social evangelisation and support of the marginalised has made it possible to grow in society as the leaven of our times.

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# THE KOREAN PROTESTANT CHURCH'S ENGAGEMENT WITH ITS SOCIAL CONTEXT

Hong Eyoul Hwang

## Introduction

Despite its rapid church growth, remarkable missionary engagement, and landmark achievement related to *missio Dei*, the Korean church now suffers from many crises such as church decline, especially of youth and children; loss of social credibility; and church schisms. It faces two kinds of temptation: to focus only on the church (church growth for itself) or to focus only on the world (church inside out).

This chapter will deal with the issue of the Korean church's engagement with its social context. Since the Korean church is a relatively young church with only 130 years of history, the formation of its Christian/church identity and its engagement with the social context cannot be separated, which is the major premise of the writer. This chapter will examine the formation of the Korean church in the three periods: first, the period under colonisation and imperial rule by Japan (1910-1945); second, the period of the post-liberation years (1946-1987); and last, the period since the rise of formal democracy (1987-present). Since this year is the 70th anniversary of both the liberation and the division of the Korean peninsula, the reflection of these matters is to furnish clues to overcoming the current crisis of the Korean church.

## Formation of the Korean Church in the Context of Suffering

### *The Early Church (1883-1910)*

It can be said that the formation of the church in Korea was different from that of other third-world churches. First, Christian communities were built by Korean Christians before the arrival of western missionaries to Korea in 1884. Second, the translation of the Bible into Korean was pursued in both China and Japan; thus, the western missionaries learned the Korean language in Japan on their way to Korea and even brought the Korean version of the Gospel with them. Last, the identity of the Korean church was formed in the context of national crises such as the Sino-Japanese War (1894-5), the Russo-Japanese War (1904-5), and the colonisation by Japan (in 1910).

In the early years, evangelism was not forbidden, which forced the western missionaries to focus on educational and medical mission. Facing

national crises, Korean Christians played major roles in the nationalist movements such as the Independence Society Movement and the People's Joint Association, and then the New People's Society. According to the report of Robert Speer, Christianity was regarded as a religion of liberation in search of a free government and popular institutions.<sup>1</sup>

In 1907, the Great Revival Movement strengthened other aspects of Korean church identity. The movement resulted in the formation of the original faith type of Korean Christians, the experiences of the Holy Spirit such as the confession of sins and the personal repentance oriented towards social sanctification, and the establishment of the native church and native church leaders. Missionaries were amazed at the powerful outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the people: after the movement, J.Z. Moore, a missionary to Korea, came to confess that the West should learn from the East.<sup>2</sup> Although a number of Korean church historians have criticised the movement as being ahistorical and apolitical, the real problem was how to keep a balance between the personal/religious and the social aspects of the identity of the Korean church/Christians. In the ensuing Saving One Million Souls Movement, the missionaries attempted to capitalise on the national crisis, focusing on the personal identity at the expense of the social identity.

### *The Church under Japanese Imperialism (1910-1945)*

By the Education Ordinance in the 1910s, the colonial government disbanded nationalist organisations and controlled Christian schools, half of which were closed down in order to protect their Christian identity. In 1919, the March First Independence Movement was initiated through the collaboration of Cheondogyo (a native religion), Christianity, and Buddhism. Although the ratio of Christians among the Korean population was merely about 1.3%, the ratio of Christians' contribution to the movement was about 20%.<sup>3</sup> To participate in the movement, pastors and church leaders had to overcome two obstacles: the principle of separation between religion and politics and the church's solidarity with other religions, mainly viewed as idolatry. To overcome these missionary legacies, they listened to the voice of God in their prayers and underwent religious experiences. Their way of reading the Bible was by 'national

<sup>1</sup> Robert E. Speer, *Missions and Politics in Asia*, 287; quoted in Yong-bock Kim, *Korean Minjung and Christianity* [in Korean] (Seoul: Hyungsungsa, 1981), 174.

<sup>2</sup> J.Z. Moore, 'The Great Revival Year', *The Korea Mission Field* (March 1907), 119.

<sup>3</sup> Man-yeol Lee, 'The March First Independence Movement and Christianity', *Christian Thought* 375 [in Korean] (March 1990), 132.

liberation hermeneutics',<sup>4</sup> although many pastors who played a leading role in the movement were passionate evangelists.<sup>5</sup> This type of Christian identity was brand new in Korean church history. Although the western missionaries kept a neutral attitude toward the movement, they protested against the atrocity of Japan. One of the positive results was that Christianity became a Korean religion as many Christians took up the cross of the nation. One of the negative results was the division of Christianity into two types: a transcendental mysticism type and a realistic enlightenment type. In other words, there was a failure to keep the balance between the personal and social aspects of Korean Christian identity; the social aspect failed because most Christians assessed the movement as a failure.

During the 1920s and 1930s, the churches paved the way for modernisation through educational missions, medical missions, rural missions, crusades against illiteracy, and women's movements. For instance, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church set up its rural department in 1928, influenced by the International Missionary Council held in Jerusalem.<sup>6</sup> In the 1930s, facing the forced Shinto worship imposed by Japan, the Korean Christians had to choose either martyrdom or betrayal of Yahweh. The number of imprisoned Christian resisters including pastors and elders was about 2,000, with 200 churches closed down, and 50 martyrs, such as Rev. Ki-chul Ju.<sup>7</sup>

### **The Church after the Liberation from Japanese Imperialism (1945-1987)**

#### *The American Military Regime (1945-1948) and the Korean War (1950-1953)*

The liberation was followed by the division of the country and the American military regime. During the American military regime, a dramatic change took place in the relationship between western

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<sup>4</sup> Yong-bock Kim, 'The March First Independence Movement and the Process of Formation of the National Church', *The Voice of Ssial (seeds)* 110 [in Korean] (March 1990), 44-46.

<sup>5</sup> Duk-joo Lee, 'A Historical Perspective for Understanding the Faith Movement of the March First Independence Movement', *Christian Thought* 375 [in Korean] (March 1990), 143-44.

<sup>6</sup> Kyu-hong Yun, 'Main Streams and Responsibilities of the Social Movement of the Presbyterian Church of Korea', *Christian Thought* 645 [in Korean] (September 2013), 68-70.

<sup>7</sup> S.H. Moffett, *The Christians of Korea*, 75; quoted in The Institute of the History of Christianity in Korea, *The History of Korean Christianity 2* [in Korean] (Seoul: Christian Literature Press, 1995), 337-38.



missionaries and the regime. A number of them returned to Korea as staff members of the regime rather than as missionaries. This change in the relationship between the missionaries and the regime modified the Korean church's understanding of the principle of separation between church and state. Church leaders came to consider a close relationship between church and state as normal, and the Korean church involved itself positively with the American military regime and then the ensuing Seungman Rhee regime (1948-1960).<sup>8</sup> The American military regime used former colonial officials to fill the administrative vacuum. Contrary to people's expectations, it became the legacy of the American military regime and the Seungman Rhee regime.

In the same vein, the church failed to clean away the colonial legacy; there was no change of church leadership. Church leaders justified their pro-Japanese activities on the pretext that they had sustained the church. Church historians called this failure to repent for its idolatry and pro-Japanese activities the 'original sin' of the Korean church.<sup>9</sup> This was the reason why schisms in the church took place just before national crises such as the Korean War and the April Revolution of 1960.

The Korean War resulted in not only 1.5 million deaths and 3.6 million injured but also permanent animosity between the two Koreas; anti-communism was also intensified by Christian refugees from North Korea. It was the tragedy of the Korean church that it offered no theological reflection on the Korean War or the division of the country at that time.

### *Democratisation Movement and the Church*

During the Seungman Rhee regime, the first indigenous government, the church supported the regime and anti-communism unconditionally. Many Christian members, even pastors, joined the National Assembly and the Cabinet and the regime implemented supportive policies for the church, such as school/police/military chaplaincy, Christian broadcasting, and the designation of Sunday as a holiday. When, due to election fraud, the April Revolution took place and forced President Rhee to step down, the sycophant church had nothing to do with the revolution. During this period, the church became more influential but also lost social credibility.

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<sup>8</sup> In-chul Kang, *Korean Church, State and Civic Society* [in Korean] (Seoul: Institute of the History of Christianity in Korea, 1996), 171-76.

<sup>9</sup> Man-yeol Lee, 'How to See the History of the Korean Church after Fifty Years' Liberation', *Korean Christianity and History* 4 [in Korean] (1995), 9; Heung-soo Kim, 'Pro-Japanese, War and Military Regime: Reflections on the Korean Church', *Christian Thought* 560 [in Korean] (August, 2005), 40-42; Sang-kyu Lee, 'Democratization Movement and Reunification Movement of the Korean Church After National Liberation', *Korean Christianity and History* 4 [in Korean] (1995), 68-71

Before the short-lived democratic government settled down, the military coup of 1961 led by Chung-hee Park overthrew the government. The Park regime attempted to justify itself by building a material foundation for anti-communism.<sup>10</sup> Excluding the campaign against the ratification of the Korea-Japan Treaty in 1964-1965, the majority of the Korean church supported the dispatch of troops to Vietnam and even the president's election to a third term in 1969. In 1972, Park established the Yushin regime (1972-1979), the typical iron-fisted rule, for permanent presidency. Social unrest resulting from victims' protests against low wage and low rice price policies, the economic crisis originating from the global economic crisis, and the détente between the United States and China pushed Park to establish the Yushin regime. In 1971, Tae-il Chun, a member of a textile workers' union, burned himself to death after demanding that the regime comply with the labour law. This event was the starting point of the democratisation movement of the 1970s. The discovery of the *minjung* as the subject of history made the democratisation movement of the 1970s different from that of the 1960s, which had centred on nationalism and democracy.<sup>11</sup>

In the 1970s, numerous institutions and events enhanced the awareness of the *minjung* such as the Korea Student Christian Federation (KSCF) together with the Student Social Service and Development Corps, the Human Rights Committee of the National Council of Churches in Korea in 1974, the Thursday Prayer Meetings for the solidarity with victims, and the 'Theological Declaration of Korean Christians' in 1973.<sup>12</sup> It was also recognised by the student groups and, later, by Christian groups such as the Urban Poor Mission (UPM), the Urban Industrial Mission (UIM), and the KSCF. The limits of the Christian democratisation movement in the seventies were its subject and scope: its subject was not the church but Christians as individuals or in small groups; and the scope was restricted to a small portion of Korean Christianity, such as *minjung* mission workers, students, and dismissed professors. Two studies by Nam-dong Suh (*Jesus, Church History and Korean Church*) and Byung-mu Ahn (*People, Minjung and Church*) in 1975 signalled the beginning of *minjung* theology.

After the assassination of Chung-hee Park in 1979, the power vacuum was immediately filled by the military power. In the process, the Kwangju Uprising of 1980 took place, in which soldiers used extreme brutality. The

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<sup>10</sup> Dong-choon Kim, 'The Characteristics of Korean Capitalism and the Ruling Order: Security State, Market, and Family', in Institute of Industrial Society of Korea (ed.), *Changes in Korean Society: Democracy, Capitalism, and Ideology* [in Korean] (Seoul: Hanul, 1994), 224.

<sup>11</sup> Christian Institute for the Study of Justice and Development (CISJD), 'Democratization Movement of the 1970s and Christianity' [in Korean] (unpublished report of the CISJD, 1983), 40.

<sup>12</sup> World Alliance of Reformed Churches (ed.), 'Testimonies of Faith in Korea' (unpublished document, 1989), 168-73.

uprising made the democratisation movement in the 1980s different from that of the 1970s. From then on, the minjung movement, including Christian minjung mission, was influenced by Marxism and socialism, and the years of the 1980s saw the rise of anti-Americanism. Doo-hwan Chun, the leader of the military coup and the new president, perpetrated extreme violence, responding 'to his people in a manner like unto that of King Rehoboam, with the same results'.<sup>13</sup>

His dictatorship (1980-1987) was met by vigorous protests from people ranging from the minjung, middle-class intellectuals to office workers, which led to the June Democratic Uprising in 1987. This uprising resulted in the restoration of direct presidential election and the recovery of civil society, which had nearly been destroyed by the American military regime and the ensuing military dictatorship.<sup>14</sup>

In 1980, twenty-three church leaders gathered to hold the Morning Prayer meeting for the new military regime, as most of them had supported the Yushin regime.<sup>15</sup> Most churches kept silent or gave tacit consent to the Chun regime. In contrast, the UIM faced two problems: the 'Law Prohibiting Third-Party Intervention' and the criticism of its reliance on foreign Christian funds.<sup>16</sup>

To counter this situation, the Minjung Church Movement was started in the early 1980s. They used minjung theology, participated in the democratisation movement and the reunification movement, and worked for the renewal of the Korean church to realise the reign of God, by living with the minjung, working for their welfare, and making them the subject of history in their communities from the 1980s on.<sup>17</sup> Nevertheless, the results of the Minjung Church Movement were contrary to the expectations of minjung pastors: during weekdays, many minjung people visited the minjung church, and yet only a few minjung people attended Sunday worship services.

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<sup>13</sup> G.E. Ogle, *South Korea: Dissent within the Economic Miracle* (London: Zed Books, 1990), 98.

<sup>14</sup> This paragraph comes from Hong Eyoul Hwang, 'Searching for a New Paradigm of Church and Mission in a Secularized and Post-Modern Context in Korea', *International Review of Mission* 364 (January 2003), 86.

<sup>15</sup> Man-yeol Lee, 'The Problem of Liquidating the Past History in Korean Modern History', *Theological Thought* 24 [in Korean] (1996), 159-60.

<sup>16</sup> Kwang-hun Kim, 'Yesterday and Today of the Association of Minjung Church Movements in Korea', *Minjung Church* (the newsletter of AMCK) 9 [in Korean] (January/February 1992), 21.

<sup>17</sup> See Hwang, 'Searching for a New Paradigm', 85-88; his 'The History of the Minjung Church in South Korea from 1983 to 2005', in Center for Peace and Mission (ed.), *Peace and Mission in South Korea* [in Korean] (Seoul: Handl Publishing, 2006), 124-46.

*Industrialisation, Urbanisation and the Church*

Industrial evangelism began officially with the formation of the Industrial Evangelism Committee in the Evangelism Department of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Korea (PCK) in 1957 and with the organisation of the Incheon Industrial Evangelism Committee in 1961. This was evangelism-oriented, individual-salvation-centred, and denomination-centred; and it also used a 'church-based method', changing the target of evangelism from local neighborhood to factory. Ten years' experience revealed that the method was not applicable to the context. Rev. Ji-song Cho said that industrial evangelism tried to make people into churchgoers in the industrial society, but industrial mission needed to be responsible for the industrial society.<sup>18</sup> 'Social salvation' was emphasised and the term 'Urban Industrial Mission (UIM)' came into use after 1968. 'Concerns relating to human dignity, solidarity consciousness and the protection of the rights and interests of workers were integrated into the goal of mission'.<sup>19</sup>

This period was characterised by the development of regional centres, the involvement of ecumenical organisations, and the support of the union movement. Mission staff realised that the UIM should be carried out as an ecumenical movement. The United Committee of Youngdungpo UIM was organised by the PCK and the Korean Methodist Church in 1968. The UIM group, the Christian student group, and Christian youth groups from the Protestant and Roman Catholic Churches organised the Korean Christian Social Action Council. 'This made it clear that the church's mission should involve taking a stand on political, social and economic issues'.<sup>20</sup> In 1971, the council's name was changed to Korean Christian Action Organization (KCAO) for UIM, a decision that was influenced by the death of Tae-il Jun.<sup>21</sup> The training programmes of the UIM workers introduced the theory of Saul D. Alinsky and the conscientisation theory of Paulo Freire. The change from industrial evangelism to the UIM was also influenced by missio Dei theology.

As the UIM contributed to the organising of unions, the regime oppressed the UIM by detaining its staff, imprisoning its workers, attacking the UIM through the Federation of Korean Trade Unions (a yellow union), and utilising the media, one of the main bulwarks of the regime. In 1976, the regime accused some UIM staff of being 'independent (i.e., from North Korea) communists'. In 1978, the Dongil Textile Company – where the first woman union president in Korean union history had been elected with

<sup>18</sup> Sang-yoon Lee, 'A Study of the Historical Development of the UIM in Korea in the Process of Urbanization and Industrialization' [in Korean] (unpublished Th.M. thesis, Graduate School of the Seoul Methodist Theological Seminary, 1978), 25.

<sup>19</sup> CISJD, *The Presence of Christ Among the Minjung* (Seoul: Minjungsa, 1980), 48-49.

<sup>20</sup> CISJD, *The Presence of Christ*, 45.

<sup>21</sup> KCAO, '15 years' Activities and a Short History' [in Korean] (unpublished document, 1986), 6.

the help of Hwa-soon Cho, a female Methodist UIM staff – directly blocked the union election by attacking and dousing workers with human excrement and had Cho arrested.<sup>22</sup> As a result, there was a sharp conflict between KCAO-URM (Urban and Rural Mission) and the Federation of Korean Trade Unions from 1974 to 1975. The NCKK organised a Defence Committee for Mission in Industrial Society and held a study seminar for the theological defence of the UIM under the joint auspices of its Theological Study Committee and URM Committee.<sup>23</sup> The result of this 'Conference on UIM Theology' was the 'Declaration of UIM Theology' in 1978. The PCK and the Korean Methodist Church officially defended the UIM as an official mission activity of their respective denominations.<sup>24</sup> In short, the UIM movement was a root of minjung theology and the minjung church movement.

The Urban Poor Mission (UPM) began developing in the early seventies. The Institute of Urban Studies and Development at Yonsei University played an important role at the beginning of the UPM, which was founded in 1968 with the support of the United Presbyterian Church of the USA and consisted of Protestant and Catholic pastors and priests, as well as laity.<sup>25</sup> Rather than delving into urban problems, the institute put greater emphasis on the training of UPM staff as community organisers. There were two important events in the development of the Urban Poor Movement in 1971: a demonstration by the dwellers of the Citizens Apartments in June and a riot at the Kwangju Resettlement Complex in August. These events were sparked by the deceptive housing policy of the regime and they became the motive for organising the Seoul Metropolitan Community Organization (SMCO) in 1971, thus starting the UPM. In 1972, the SMCO activists were working in seven places. Under the much-worsened socio-political circumstances, the SMCO decided to change its strategy for activities from dispersed to concentrated. Its genuine change of mission strategy, however, was from organiser to prophet. It was their conclusion that 'community organizing is not possible unless political democratization is achieved beforehand'.<sup>26</sup> The Yushin regime charged the UPM leaders with embezzling mission funds from the SMCO and arrested many staff and activists for being pro-communist. Even though its members were

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<sup>22</sup> NCKK Human Rights Committee, *Democratization Movement in the Seventies 2* [in Korean] (Seoul: NCKK, 1987), 1257-77. See also Ogle, *South Korea*, 84-86.

<sup>23</sup> CISJD, *The Presence of Christ*, 71.

<sup>24</sup> CISJD, *Recognition of the UIM* [in Korean] (Seoul: Minjungsa, 1981), 136-37.

<sup>25</sup> The support from the United Presbyterian Church of the USA was 100,000 dollars for three years and a training staff (Rev. Herbert White). Rev. George Todd visited Rev. Hyung-gyu Park and discussed this matter in 1968. See NCKK Human Rights Committee, *Democratization Movement in the Seventies 1* [in Korean] (Seoul: NCKK, 1987), 133. See also CCA-URM & ACPO (ed.), *People's Power, People's Church* (Hong Kong: CCA-URM & ACPO, 1987), 16-17.

<sup>26</sup> CCA-URM & ACPO, *People's Power*, 76.

ultimately declared innocent and freed from prison, the UPM was much weakened by this incident.

One of the main assumptions of the UPM was that 'God exists in the suffering life of the minjung'. The UPM workers realised that 'the mission work for the liberation of the minjung could not be separated from the struggle to achieve political freedom'.<sup>27</sup> But the question of how to connect these two things and what was to be the mediating factor was not yet solved. As the UPM relied heavily on the single mission strategy of community organisation, the UPM workers failed to present a framework for a community people's church with concrete contents.

### *Reunification Movement and the Church*

After the liberation, there were three options for the Korean people: the establishment of South and North Korean governments, a coalition government of South and North Korea, or continued negotiations between South and North Korea. The South Korean people and the its church chose the first option. Meanwhile, the South Korean church gave up on uniting churches a year before the South Korean government was organised.<sup>28</sup> During the Korean War, the church continuously supported reunification by expanding northward. After the war, church leaders emphasised that the church and a communist government could not co-exist. From 1960 onwards, some pastors began proposing alternatives to communism, that is, values such as freedom, social justice, and human dignity. Others proposed peaceful co-existence between South and North Korea and church renewal before involvement in the reunification movement. Hyung-gyu Park criticised the Korean church's hostile attitude toward the communist system, in contrast to its tolerant stance toward evil practices and contradictions of the capitalist society.<sup>29</sup> The churches' limitation was their priority regarding the democratisation movement: they thought of democratisation and reunification as two separate movements.

The Joint Statement of North and South in 1972, issued by the South and North Korean governments, declared the importance of self-reliance, peace, and national unity. Because the statement was made exclusively by the governments, some Christian leaders criticised it, declaring that the minjung must participate in the process of reunification since the democratisation movement and the reunification movement are two sides of

<sup>27</sup> CCA-URM & ACPO, *People's Power*, 8.

<sup>28</sup> Heung-soo Kim, 'Re-examination of the History of the Reunification Movement of the Korean Church', in Soo-il Chae (ed.), *Jubilee Theology and the Movement of Reunification and Jubilee* [in Korean] (Chunan: Institute for Korean Theology, 1995), 422.

<sup>29</sup> Hyung-gyu Park, 'The Gospel of Reconciliation and Dialogue of South and North Korea', *The Third Day* (September 1971); quoted in Heung-soo Kim, 'Re-examination' [in Korean], 439.

the same coin. The Korean church recognised the issue of reunification as one of its main mission tasks.<sup>30</sup> The conservative churches, however, did not agree with the progressive churches' position that democratisation should be achieved for the sake of reunification and that the subject of reunification was the *minjung*.<sup>31</sup>

### **The Church in the Era of Formal Democracy (1988-Present)**

#### *Neo-liberal Globalisation and Democracy*

The policies of the regime Tae-woo Roh (1988-1992) – a semi-military regime – broke the unity of *minjung* and middle class that had been struck in the June Democratic Uprising; it ruled the country by supporting the civic movement while suppressing the *minjung* movement. From the early 1990s onwards, the former became more influential than the latter, and the Korean people – especially the younger generation – became de-politicised and culture-oriented. The *minjung* movement failed to adapt itself to these new circumstances. It regarded the civic movement as a rival rather than as a partner in the democratisation movement; likewise, some leading civic groups had a hostile attitude toward the *minjung* movement. By the end of the cold war, the ideological basis of the *minjung* movement collapsed.<sup>32</sup>

As Young-sam Kim's 'civilian government' (1993-1997) began its reforms of social system, the sociological basis of the *minjung* movement came under threat. The result of the presidential election – the defeat of the opposition party candidate supported by the democratisation movement – resulted in the withering of the *minjung* movement. Most *minjung* activists left their original sphere to participate in politics, civic movements, or financial unions. From 1993 onwards, the *minjung* movement in general gave up its 'revolutionary' character. In effect, the civilian government was an amalgam of elements of the old military dictatorship, *chaebol* (economic conglomerate) power elite, and conservative moderates emerging from the democratisation movement of the 1970s and 1980s, which inevitably led to the failure of its 'top-down reform' strategy. Such failure of the government, particularly regarding the *chaebol* system, resulted in the onset of a disastrous economic crisis at the end of 1997 and the eventual IMF bailout of the Korean economy.<sup>33</sup> Korea has since then been ruled by neo-liberal global capitalism. In the new context, 'the world is run by the rich and for the rich',<sup>34</sup> and real democracy is in crisis.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>30</sup> Heung-soo Kim, 'Re-examination', 447.

<sup>31</sup> Sang-kyu Lee, 'Democratization Movement', 91.

<sup>32</sup> This paragraph comes from Hwang, 'Searching for a New Paradigm', 86.

<sup>33</sup> This paragraph comes from Hwang, 'Searching for a New Paradigm', 87-88.

<sup>34</sup> Noam Chomsky, *World Orders, Old and New* (London: Pluto Press, 1994), 185.



### *Civic Movement vs. Minjung Movement*

From the 1960s to the 1980s, South Korea achieved industrialisation and democratisation. A recipient of western donations, Korea itself became a donor starting in 1992. In 1998, the people experienced a power change from the ruling party to the opposition party for the first time in the nation's political history. From 1998 to 2007, politicians who had participated in the democratisation movement took power. Politics, however, was still limited by neo-liberalism, both in the years of the Dae-jung Kim and the Moo-hyun Roh governments, which in turn led to the social polarisation and deconstruction of the middle class. Moreover, the governments failed to reinforce the welfare system. It is not surprising that Korea now suffers from a rising youth unemployment rate, the highest suicide rate, the lowest birthrate, and an aging society.

Under these circumstances, the conservative and progressive Christian sectors divided into three groupings, respectively. The conservative Christians came to include social participatory ultra-right Christians, new right Christians, and social participatory evangelicals. Their common roots were fundamentalism, pre-millennialism, anti-communism, and the principle of separation between church and state. In the context of the Korean church, the principle of separation between church and state was changed from prohibiting intervention by political power in church affairs into 'church-ism with non-intervention in politics'. This trend was reinforced by Luther's doctrine of two kingdoms: according to H. Thieliicke, it had three dangers of misuse: double morality, secularisation, and passive obedience to the secular power. These dangers came true for conservative Korean Christians.<sup>36</sup> First, ultra-right Christians became involved in social issues due to the power vacuum<sup>37</sup> they felt following the end of the cold war and the appearance of 'pro-communist' politicians, intellectuals, and pastors. Second, new right Christians emerged to confront their counterpart, the social mission/ecumenical group, as it participated in secular power. They are power-oriented, with liberalistic, anti-communist, and pro-American tendencies and a colonial view of history. Last, social participatory evangelicals appeared after the June Democratic Uprising. They were influenced by the new interpretation of 'The Kingdom of God', the Lausanne Covenant, and the Christian Worldview Movement, which offered them theological and philosophical justification for their social engagement. They established leading civil organisations such as the

<sup>35</sup> J. Comblin, *Called for Freedom: The Changing Context of Liberation Theology*, trans. by Phillip Berryman (New York: Orbis Books, 1998), 128-31.

<sup>36</sup> Myung-bae Kim, 'A Study of the Relationship Between Church and State and Its Social Ethics in the Social Participation of Korean Conservative Christian Groups', *Christian Social Ethics* 14 [in Korean] (2007), 55-61.

<sup>37</sup> Dae-young Ryu, 'Understanding Conservative Christians' Pro-American and Anti-Communist Activities in the Early Twenty-First Century', *Economy and Society* 62 [in Korean] (Summer 2004), 70-72.



Christian Ethics Movement of Korea and the Citizens' Coalition for Economic Justice. They contributed to the civil movement in two ways: they helped to establish civil organisations and they determined the characteristics of the civil movement.<sup>38</sup>

Progressive Christians also divided into three groups: 'conservatised' Christians, Christians involved in the ruling party, and Christians participating in diversified minjung mission or life-giving mission. First, in the change of contexts, some Christians who had participated in social mission, the ecumenical movement, and the democratisation movement became conservative, arguing that their past experiences were only fitting for the past. Second, other Christians joined government administrations when their 'secular' leaders from the democratisation movement became presidents. Their involvement in governments has been evaluated as 'image embellishment', since it did nothing to change the government's policy priorities of economism, neo-liberalism, etc.<sup>39</sup> Last, still other Christians participated in the diversified minjung mission and life-giving mission, to which we will return shortly.

The negative effects of these divisions have been Christianity's loss of social credibility by the ultra-right and that of prophetic distance by the Christian politicians, both from the ecumenical leaders and new right leaders. The positive effects are the development of the civil movement by the evangelicals, the minjung movement by diverse minjung workers, and the influence on Christian youth to remain in the church by both the minjung and evangelical groups.

### *Diversified Minjung Mission and Life-giving Mission*

The importance of minjung mission was revived after the IMF crisis in 1997. From the mid-1990s, minjung mission had already begun to diversify; from migrant worker mission, it now had many emphases, including differently-abled mission, homeless teenager mission, local community mission, and mission to the homeless. The Christian Women Minjung Society, consisting of women minjung pastors, wives of minjung pastors, and Christian minjung women, contributed to various areas through diverse ministries such as church renewal, the democratisation movement, the peace movement, minjung mission, and life-giving

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<sup>38</sup> Min-ah Kim, 'A Study of the Influences of the Social Participatory Evangelical Movement on the Formation of Korean Civil Movement: Focusing on the Period of the Democracy Movement in 1987' [in Korean] (unpublished MA thesis, Seoul National University, Graduate School, 2013).

<sup>39</sup> Hyung-muk Choi, 'Twenty Years of Democratization and the Christian Social Movement', *Christian Thought* 51:6 [in Korean] (June 2007), 60.

mission.<sup>40</sup> The minjung mission brought about legislation changes such as the new childcare law and the migrant workers permit law. In short, the minjung mission has extended to the public sphere.<sup>41</sup> Recently, a solidarity has emerged among a variety of Christian groups.

Moreover, minjung pastors began to move to rural areas to become farmers, with the goal of establishing farmers' communities. Some minjung churches, including some evangelical churches, have been certificated as 'green churches' by the Korea Christian Environmental Movement Solidarity for Integrity of Creation. During the last thirty years, the life-giving mission has been initiated by rural mission pastors and staff. Its focus has changed from the movement for justice to now include the life-giving agriculture movement, the life-giving and community movement, and the globalisation of the life-giving agriculture movement.<sup>42</sup>

### *Reunification Movement and the Church*

In 1988, NCKC announced the Declaration of the Churches of Korea on National Reunification and Peace, which emphasised human freedom, national participation, and the minjung, and called for withdrawal of the U.S. Armed Forces and mutual disarmament through the establishment of a peace system between South and North Korea. This elicited a harsh attack from conservative Christians and paved the way for the activities of social participatory ultra-right Christians. From the mid-1990s, North Korea suffered from a famine, worsened by the withdrawal of aid from the former U.S.S.R. and China after the end of the cold war: two to three million people were believed to have starved to death. The South Korean government, NGOs, churches, and international aid agencies all tried to provide food support to the North Korean people. From 2000 to 2007, not only the sharing of food but also the exchange of people and cultural programmes brought positive effects to North Korea, including changes in the article on religion in the Joseon (North Korea) Dictionary and North Korea's foreign policy. The South Korean people, however, were slow to change during this period, oscillating between the motto 'Korea is one' and anti-communist ideology.<sup>43</sup> The division line is not only between South and

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<sup>40</sup> Christian Women Minjung Society (ed.), *The History of Life Written by Feet: Twenty Years' History of Christian Women Minjung Society* [in Korean] (Seoul: Christian Literature Society, 2006).

<sup>41</sup> Hong Eyoul Hwang, 'The Minjung Church from the Perspective of the Missional Church', *Theology of Mission* 36 [in Korean] (2014), 518-22.

<sup>42</sup> Kyung-ho Han, 'Rural Mission in Korea Under Neo-liberal Globalization', in Center for Peace and Mission (ed.), *Peace and Mission in Korea* [in Korean] (Seoul: Handl Publishing House, 2006), 147-59.

<sup>43</sup> Hong Eyoul Hwang, 'The Mission Task of the South Korean Church to Achieve Peace and Reconciliation on the Korean Peninsula', in Richard Noake & Pauline

North Korea but also between reconciliation-oriented Christians and Christians who are captives to anti-communism and economism.

### Conclusion

We can learn several lessons from this study. First, preceding social engagement, the church should form and sustain its identity as 'church'. Second, for the sake of sustaining its identity and engaging with social/political issues, it is crucial for Korean Christians, both conservative and progressive, to keep a prophetic distance from power. Third, since the roots of the church's engagement with social issues are worship, the Eucharist, prayer, and Bible reading, the Korean churches should teach the hermeneutical reading of the Bible rather than just having their members read it through. Fourth, radical repentance is a precondition for the church's engagement with social issues. Fifth, although the minjung mission did not contribute directly to the growth of the Korean church, it was conducive to recovering the society's confidence in the church. Finally, the future of the Korean church lies in overcoming the current crisis by being 'the salt and light' rather than in focusing all efforts on sustaining and expanding the church. The only option for the church is to be on the side of 'the least' in the world.

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# THE CANAAN FARMERS SCHOOL MOVEMENT

Jangsaeng Kim

## Introduction

Yong-gi Kim (1912-1988) was a social movement leader of modern Korean Christianity. He endeavoured for the formation and development of Korean Christianity by implementing a social and mindset transforming community-based Christian farmers movement. In 1931, Kim started a Christian ideal village movement in Bongan, Gyeonggi Province. This movement was in line with a nationalistic social gospel spirit, a major aspiration of Korean Christianity, at the time. Kim recognised Japan's annexation of the Korean sovereignty and extreme poverty as two main challenges to the proclamation of Christian values and the gospel. Thus, he began this movement as a response to these challenges. In an effort to expand the ideal village movement, he briefly participated in the Preparatory Committee for National Construction and the Christian Socialist Union after the liberation of Korea in 1945. However, he soon decided to withdraw himself from all political affairs and, instead, established Canaan Farmers School, an adult education initiative based on the Christian community spirit.

The purpose of this study is to examine the historical development and significance of the Canaan movement as a Christian community movement founded by Kim.

## The Canaan Movement: History and Ideology

Kim and his Canaan movement went through three stages of development. The first was the Christian community movement stage from 1931 to 1961, during which Kim established and ran the Bongan ideal village movement, the Yongin Advanced Farmers Academy, and the Gospel Nongdo Farm. The second was the national education movement stage, during which Kim established the Canaan Farmers School in 1962 and started a community development and adult education movement. The third was the globalisation stage, during which he participated in the global problem of poverty starting with the establishment of Canaan Farmers School in Chilmari, Bangladesh in 1992.

The Bongan ideal village movement, which serves as the starting point of the Canaan movement, began as a means to solve poverty, the most serious problem at the time. The push for liberation from poverty was inevitably coupled with the nationalistic anti-Japanese movement as Koreans continued to suffer under Japanese oppression. Both movements

continued to evolve in the form of a farmers community movement. The farmers movement of Denmark, which was introduced by Heung-u Shin and Byeong-seon Hong of the YMCA and by Hal-lan Kim in 1927, can be said to have been modeled after Kim's movement. They introduced Denmark's farmers community model, credit unions, agricultural improvements, and education movement. They also emphasised the Protestant faith as a source of moral energy that would enable such movements. Using the successful model of Denmark's Christian farmers communities as a guidepost, Kim 'aimed to build an ideal nation like Denmark' through the ideal village model that was his Christian farmers community.

Built on the Christian faith, the ideal village had a communal vision:

I had a dream to rebuild the Garden of Eden where all kinds of grains ripen, flowers bloom on fruit trees, bees and butterflies dance, each family milks their own milk goats, villagers believe in God and serve each other as godly brothers in the village church,<sup>1</sup> everyone works and produces for an economically abundant life, and God grants moral and spiritual rest to all who trust in Him.<sup>1</sup>

The first part of the vision for the ideal village, which Kim called the reconstruction of the Garden of Eden, was to eradicate poverty and to achieve economic security. One of the poorest countries in the world, Korea saw a rapid increase in its number of workers due to Japan's policy on industrialising its colonies; however, working conditions worsened drastically during the global economic crisis. In addition, with the introduction of colonial landownership, the number of small-scale tenant farmers increased significantly and farm rents rose sharply, causing the farm economy to collapse. The collapse had disastrous effects on the whole nation as agriculture played a crucial role in the national economy: over 85% of the population was involved in agriculture. As evidence of the poor economic conditions of the time, the Department of Police of North Jeolla Province noted a 'high numbers of deaths from hunger and suicides', 'non-payment of elementary school fees and expulsion due to non-payment', 'decreased enrolment in elementary schools', and an 'increased number of beggars and vagabonds' as the most serious issues within the province.<sup>2</sup> In this economic environment, Kim naturally identified economic security as one of the most urgent goals of his farming community.

Second, Kim's vision for the community was for the restoration of human relationships through cooperation and symbiosis. Having been included in Japan's military industry economic zone, Korea's market economy in the 1930s continued to degrade and capitalism fuelled fierce competition, causing disunity between community members and thus the

<sup>1</sup> Yong-gi Kim, *This Is Canaan* (in Korean; Seoul: Kyujang, 1979), 44.

<sup>2</sup> North Jeolla Province Department of Police, *Taxpayers' Lifestyle Survey* [in Korean], March 1932.

collapse of communities. Kim sought to build a community of 'brotherhood' that would overcome poverty not through competition but cooperation. He believed that this was the only solution for the collapse of communities.

Third, the ideal village was to be a faith-based community. Kim believed that faith would help foster cooperation rather than competition among the villagers. Contrary to Adam Smith and the liberals, who saw profit as the fundamental motivation of work and competition in the market as the source of economic development, Kim's community vision saw the community's faith as the most fundamental motivation for work and the fundamental source of development.

### *Foundations of a Faith-Based Social Movement*

For Kim, the three parts of the community vision – poverty eradication, cooperation, and Christian faith – were not on equal tiers. Faith served as the foundation for poverty eradication and cooperation, which were expressions of the Christian faith in the society. The anti-Japanese movement and economic development activities, which were the main activities of the ideal village, were always based on faith and, reversely, the faith of the villagers was expressed in the collective action of anti-Japanese movement and poverty eradication. In this regard, Kim's social gospel movement was different from the movement for spiritual repentance and renewal of individuals and the Christian national movement that were being promoted by mainstream Christian leaders of the time.

The idea of personal salvation, which was reinforced after the Pyongyang Revival Movement of 1907, emphasised the need for the spiritual and moral renewal of each person and the completion of the Kingdom of God, not in this life but in the afterlife. This played a crucial role in establishing a paradisiacal form of Christianity as the mainstream Christian faith in Korea. However, for Kim, Christian faith was not just about focusing on inner and spiritual things or waiting for the next world. It had the power to change this world right here and right now. About Christian faith, he confessed:

Before teaching pioneering skills and farming skills to the villagers and before guiding them to improve their lifestyle, I first taught them that we were all God's equal sons and daughters. I also taught them that the spirit of work, service, and sacrifice was the spirit of Jesus and that we could become God's true sons and daughters by practicing that spirit of Jesus. I had to do that because I knew this work could only be done on that foundation. ... I kept explaining that such a high goal could be achieved not only through prayer but that we could have a foretaste of God's full blessing only by living true and good lives in this lifetime.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Yong-gi Kim, *The Road to Canaan* (in Korean; Seoul: Changjo, 1968), 62.

Here, Kim describes the nature of faith as 'a blessing savoured in this world'. Compared to the paradisiacal perspective of waiting and hoping for a blessing to come in the next life, Kim's social gospel was about promoting a life as intended by God the creator. This was the nature of Kim's faith. He believed that the failure to live a true life in this lifetime meant the failure to experience God's blessing in this lifetime because it was a sign of the absence of true faith. This meant that farming skills, lifestyle improvements and other changes in life had to be results of 'practicing the spirit of Jesus'. Since Kim always saw cause and effect as two sides of a coin, he believed that true transformation in one's lifestyle could not be achieved without practicing the spirit of Jesus. Furthermore, any action that was not accompanied by true transformation in one's lifestyle was not a true practice of the spirit of Jesus. One could only start practicing the spirit of Jesus here in this lifetime.

If we define faith as 'serving God', then true life would mean 'a life expressing Christ's righteousness and love' and community would mean 'villagers serving one God and united in brotherhood and sisterhood'. In other words, Kim believed that, without serving God, it would be impossible to live a life that expresses Christ's righteousness and love, and, therefore, it would also be impossible to build a community of people united in brotherhood and sisterhood.

Some Christians were involved in other national social movements in the early 1930s. As stipulated by the Jerusalem International Mission Conference of 1928, some of them expanded the movement into an enlightenment movement for the farmers with the purpose of reforming and restoring the entire society. However, the movement soon lost momentum and died out because of the agricultural promotion movement undertaken by the Japanese in the early 1930s. Other significant movements included the women-led temperance movement, which was characterised by abstinence from drinking and smoking, abolition of prostitution, and promotion of rational consumption and conservation; and the YMCA-led active faith movement, which aimed to overcome competitiveness, selfishness, social inequality, and unhealthy cultural customs.

All these movements aimed to solve the social issues faced by the Korean society based on the Christian faith but did not last long because their foundations were weakened by Japanese oppression, regardless of their rationale or justification. Kim, on the other hand, remained focused on his community-based movement because he believed that members of a local community could actually share a faith-based communal life and be agents of transformation. He believed that was the most effective way to solve national social issues.

On the correlation of faith, true life, and communal action, he explains further:

Here in this ideal village, we are supplying each other's needs in godly brotherhood, which far exceeds the so-called communism that proposes to

realize ideals through organizations, systems, and structures. There is no room for any ideology here because we are enjoying true equality. All the villagers serve one God and are united as one in brotherhood and sisterhood. Why would there be any class, strife or violence? Any place where Christ's righteousness and love are expressed in life is a true paradise.<sup>4</sup>

Since the March 1 Independence Movement of 1919, the educated elites of Korea began to embrace communism as an ideology of national liberation and they condemned Christianity as a tool of imperialist aggression, a 'police organization abhorring capitalism',<sup>5</sup> an 'obstacle to advancement of the society and human race'<sup>6</sup> as instructed by the Communist International. While some of the mainstream Christians with an otherworldly perspective of faith took this as an opportunity for self-examination and attempted meaningful dialogues, most of them either started an anti-communist movement or ignored communism altogether. Against this backdrop, Kim's Christian community movement represented a response of the Christian social gospel movement to the criticism of communism. While recognising the criticism of communism as valid, Kim believed that answers to such criticism could be found in Christian faith. He believed that the origin of equality was not in class strife but in faith and that the motive for social transformation was the practice of Christ's righteousness and love.

### *Foundation of the Canaan Farmers School*

Established in 1962, Canaan Farmers School used the Bongan Ideal Village as its spiritual foundation and for its operational framework. Kim's family and those with the vision of an ideal village started the construction of the community by pioneering the rehabilitation of the wasteland.

The success of our work was proven after seven years of relocating to this place. Those who laughed at us before became witnesses of our success. We flourished. The wasteland has turned into fertile soil flowing with milk and honey. In seven years, our tiny and minute things grew big, we now have the things that were not there before, and our sweat and blood became the flowers. ... Our farm has an area of 3.3 ha and we have a family of eight members. Doesn't that mean we have country of our own, with a territory of 3.3 ha and a population of eight? Since I am the ruler of the country, surely I am the president. My first son is the prime minister, my second son is the minister of agriculture, my daughter-in-law is the minister of health, my third son is the director of livestock, and my second daughter is the chief of supplies.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Y. Kim, *The Road to Canaan*, 90-91.

<sup>5</sup> Seong-ryong Bae, 'The Meaning of Anti-religious Movement' [in Korean], *Gaebyeok* 63 (1925), 60.

<sup>6</sup> S. Bae, 'The Meaning of Anti-religious Movement', 59.

<sup>7</sup> Y. Kim, *The Road to Canaan*, 274.



In contrast to the Bongan Ideal Village, which aimed to overcome poverty and resist the Japanese as a community movement, the post-liberation Canaan Farmers School sought to be a family community of national education. Canaan Farmers School's establishment goals are clearly seen in Canaan Farmers School's inaugural declaration of 1962:

At Canaan Farmers School, one household of pioneering, which is a basic unit of the nation, serves as a facilitator of dynamic education and is joined by neighbours who come voluntarily to learn the faith, the mindset, the ideology, the skills, the lifestyle, and the habits so that, when they return, they would change their families and change their communities.<sup>8</sup>

Educational subjects were mainly divided into mindset training, community development, and lifestyle training. Various community development topics, such as cooking, processing agricultural products, improving agricultural lifestyle, pioneering wastelands, building ideal villages, practicing pomiculture, animal farming, starting model farm households, and learning general farming skills as well as music, physical education, children's education, religion, how to chair meetings, and civil law, were taught for 15 to 30 days as the trainees became part of the community, alongside Kim's family. Lifestyle and education were inseparable.<sup>9</sup>

The Canaan Farmers School movement was different from the ideal village movement in terms of scope and activities. First, Canaan Farmers School was a food production and community development movement for the whole nation while the ideal village movement was only based in one local community called Bongan in Gyeonggi Province. Shortly after the liberation, Korea suffered for three years during the Korean War, which resulted in extreme poverty in all parts of the country. Food security became the most important national issue. During the initial period of the school, the trainees only came from surrounding areas, but, as the school's activities became known, people began to come from all over the country and the school soon became part of a nationwide movement.

Second, the Canaan Farmers School movement was a national education movement while the ideal village movement was a communal living movement. As stated in the inaugural declaration above, Canaan Farmers School ran programs to teach the ideology, skills, lifestyle, and habits of the Canaan community to civil servants, students, soldiers, farmers, white-collar workers, and so on. In other words, while it can be said that the Bongan Ideal Village focused on practicing and implementing the faith, Canaan Farmers School's primary emphasis was on teaching and disseminating the faith. Third, the lifestyle expression of faith at the Ideal Village evolved into mindset training and lifestyle training at Canaan

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<sup>8</sup> Yong-gi Kim, *My Way for 60 Years* (in Korean; Seoul: Changjo, 1986), 59.

<sup>9</sup> Geum-ju Ryu, *40-Year History of Canaan Farmers School (Wonju)* (in Korean; Seoul: Areumdaun Donghaeng, 2014), 210.

Farmers School. Kim's primary purpose at the Ideal Village was to live out the faith, but, at Canaan Farmers School, he standardised lifestyle expression of the faith and taught it in mindset training and lifestyle training programs.

Despite these differences, the Ideal Village Movement and the Canaan Farmers School Movement can be said to be built on the same foundation. Although Canaan Farmers School's operation was centred around training programs, the Ideal Village's community-centredness remained a core value of Canaan Farmers School. Although a family community is based on a blood relationship, Kim's family sought to be a lifestyle model for anyone coming to the community; anyone could be a member of this family community, expand the community, and in turn, be practitioners and educators of the lifestyle. The Ideal Village's correlation of the world and the faith remained unchanged at Canaan Farmers School, which continued to embrace Christ's example of work, service, and sacrifice as its philosophy of education.

#### *A National Model for International Transformation*

In 1962, President Park Chung-hee visited Canaan Farmers School and adopted its philosophy of education, curriculum, and methodology of community development on a national level. This community development strategy, named the *Saemaedul Undong* or the New Village movement by the president, played a crucial role in the economic development and social reformation of Korea. The most outstanding characteristic of the *Saemaedul Undong* was that it was a delicate balance of the top-down approach and the bottom-up approach; development was not driven by the state but implemented by the local residents, with the government providing the necessary political support. Subsequently, Canaan Farmers School continued to function as a centre of national training as over 700,000 civil servants, students, soldiers, white-collar workers, etc. were trained there.

In the 1990s, Canaan Farmers School began to expand its operation to other Asian countries. Starting with Thailand in 1990, 11 Canaan Farmers School branches are currently operating in nine countries in Asia. Their locations and years of establishment are shown in the table overleaf.

The internal factors that caused Canaan Farmers School, which had previously focused on training Koreans, to expand its operations overseas were as follows:

First, as Korea's successful economic growth became known, a number of people came voluntarily from developing nations of Asia to Canaan Farmers School to learn the secret of Korea's success. This served as a beachhead for overseas Canaan Farmers Schools. Up until the early 1980s, Canaan Farmers School provided training almost entirely to Koreans, but its global training began to expand gradually, starting with Thai trainees in 1983. While it was only in the late 2000s that various Korean organisations

such as the KOICA and Korea Eximbank began to run training programs for foreigners with the increasing ODA, Canaan Farmers School had already been running training programs for Asian visitors seeking to learn from the experience of Korean development since 1983. Such global training programs later became the basis for the training curricula of overseas Canaan Farmers Schools, the first of which was established in Bangladesh in 1991, and served as a foundation of the network of overseas Canaan Farmers Schools.

International Canaan Farmers Schools<sup>10</sup>

Country	Location	Year established
Thailand	Chiang Rai	1990
Bangladesh	Chilmari	1991
Philippines	Pampanga	1997
Myanmar	Pyin Oo Lwin	2003
Indonesia	Sukabumi	2005
	Nias	2006
China	Wangqing	2004
	Dandong	2006
India	Bihar	2008
Malaysia	Kota Kinabalu	2011
Laos	Vientiane	2012

Second, there was an awakening about the importance and pervasiveness of poverty eradication within Canaan Farmers School in the early 1990s. Bum-il Kim of Canaan Farmers School states:

It was a great turning point in my life that I started working for the eradication of poverty in Asia.... Looking back now, I think there were perhaps two main reasons that I got involved in this gigantic problem of 'poverty in Asia'. First, I continued to experience hunger even when I was in my late 40s. Whenever my close relatives treat me to nice food, I would gulp up every bit without shame. That is probably why my heart moves whenever I see people crying in hunger or stealing from others because of hunger. My heart aches whenever I meet people who've lost sight or got hunched backs because of hunger. I think I understand what they are going through. Second, I feel that God is directing me this way.<sup>11</sup>

As seen above, it was only natural for Canaan Farmers School to take its training to the global level as it became clear that the urgency of poverty and the mission of poverty eradication were not limited to Korea but

<sup>10</sup> World Canaan Farmers' Movement website (<http://www.wcm.or.kr>).

<sup>11</sup> Bum-il Kim, *Achievers Are Dreamers* (in Korean; Seoul: Kyujang, 2008), 211.

carried importance of a global magnitude. Canaan's mission stood at the juncture of poverty eradication in Korea, which was the inaugural vision of Canaan Farmers School, and poverty eradication in Asia, which was a pressing need of reality.

Third, the international community began to emphasise 'greater ownership' as a requirement of development, and Canaan Farmers School's training programs were recognised in foreign countries as an alternative to nurturing such ownership. Raised in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness in 2007, the issue of ownership of recipient countries has actually been brought up persistently since the 1970s, along with effectiveness of aid. Ownership means the recipient country holds leadership over the execution of the nation's development strategies and the recipient country is able to control the entire process from execution to completion.

Global poverty is not a simple problem that can be solved by the policies of a few international organisations, by the service of hundreds NGOs, or by the participation of millions of individual donors. The poor need to make their own effort to come out of poverty. ... The poor do not have the will to overcome poverty or do not know how. People remain unchanged because of this reason.<sup>12</sup>

All requests of various recipient countries, such as the Philippines, Palestine, Myanmar, India, and China, that sought establishment of Canaan Farmers Schools included training programs to nurture ownership. 'Gifts are enemies of the pioneering mindset.' This philosophy of education of the original Canaan Farmers School is equally at work in its overseas counterparts. Canaan Farmers School training done outside of Korea aims to leverage this philosophy of education and strengthen the sense of ownership.

The overseas schools will appropriately train the leaders of each region and encourage them to change their own communities. Poverty eradication is not only meaningful but sustainable when done by the community members themselves. This is the fundamental spirit of the Canaan Movement pursued by Canaan Farmers Schools.<sup>13</sup>

## Significance of the Canaan Movement

### *Transformational Mindset for Society*

The Canaan movement has been known to the Korean society as a social movement, a welfare movement, an agricultural education movement, or a parachurch movement during the modernisation process of Korea, all of

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<sup>12</sup> B. Kim, *Achievers Are Dreamers*, 165.

<sup>13</sup> B. Kim, *Achievers Are Dreamers*, 174.

which are characterised by the pursuit for prosperity. However, while it is true that Canaan Farmers School played an important role during the economic development of Korea from the 1960s to the 1980s and served as a foundation for social movements such as the *Saemaoul Undong*, it would be inaccurate to pigeonhole the Canaan Farmers School as any of movements above. This is because the very core of the Canaan movement is in the communal practice of Christian faith.

Kim's Canaan movement denies mainstream economics in the sense that it is not based on the human desire to commoditise the world; in fact, it calls for fundamental denial of such desire. It recognises the transcendental and fundamental value of labour and denies the commoditisation of the value of labour. The Canaan movement denies modernisation movements in the sense that it rejects a societal and humanistic evaluation of history, emphasises the spiritual intimacy between man and God through faith, and holds onto the view of non-dualism between this world and the next world. Similarly, the Canaan movement is not an enlightenment movement in the modern sense in that there is no clear division between the rural and the urban, between the teacher and the student, between the training and the life, or between inside the school and outside the school.

### *Faith That Transforms Society*

Lastly, the Canaan movement is different from the institutional church in the sense that the institutional church seeks to keep the church separated from the world and keep the sacred from the secular according to its doctrines and denominations. The Canaan movement recognises that God's grace is the sole agent of development in history and that God's grace can be discovered among the humans and their communities. Canaan communities seek to live out the faith, believing that faith is best exercised through communal life and labour within the community. The Canaan movement that Kim dreamed of was a community of discipline that seeks to perfect holiness in the midst of the secular world, to perfect the coming of the other world right in the middle of our tragedy, and to perfect a spiritual world within a physical world.

Kim's writings show us his view of the correlation between faith and suffering. He discovered the will of God in suffering, and he believed that God's will would be done in suffering.

There is so much work to do in this country that just got liberated. When we were a colony, our hands were tied and there was very little we could do. But now, we must do everything on our own. We have to build this nation, educate the people, and build the military to defend this nation. With so many things to do, the people are barely surviving with so little food to eat. ... If you, O Lord, indeed love this nation, please show your way to this people and let me do your work. This is what I pray. If this is not my work, please show

me what else I have to do. But if this is my work, I plead before you that you may cause me to take up this work and carry it to completion without delay.<sup>14</sup>

From Kim's perspective, we are slaves when we have no calling, but we become masters of history when we have our calling. Masters of history are not the ones content to read about history but the ones who work to make it. This history-making mission is not something to be grasped through one's experience. Rather, it is a transcendental and supernatural mission that is given by God through faith. When this calling or mission is understood against the background of our experience, we can then encounter God in our experience and, in turn, see formation and development of reason and awareness of the world in our experience. Ultimately, the calling that is formed in experience consolidates within the framework of econopolitics.

### *Theology of Work, Service, and Sacrifice*

Sacrifice, as defined by Kim, is a paragon of a life possessing the transcendental and supernatural mission. It is supernatural in the sense that God's compassionate death became a paragon; it is transcendental in the sense that death has invaded our world of experience. God's relationship to the human community is based on the death of God himself and, therefore, the believer discovers this sacrifice at the root of their self-awareness. Since God himself is the foundation of the Christian community, and since the community members are able to congregate and unite thanks to God's ultimate sacrifice, faith becomes the very reason for the existence of the community. Kim believed that this faith comes from God's self-manifestation, which represents love through God's sacrifice.

What I am talking about is the love of sacrifice. This love is the love of Jesus. This is the purest form of love for God and neighbours that can be realised only by sacrificing yourself. ... Jesus's sacrifice on the cross is the ultimate expression of that true love. God loved the humans so much that he sacrificed his one and only son.<sup>15</sup>

This sacrifice of God can be recognised not in our experiential world but on the horizon of the absolute. It is not an objectifiable element. It can only be seen under God's light of truth. In other words, faith opens our eyes to see God's sacrifice.

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According to Kim, the self-sacrifice of Christ is an example of a categorical mission given to the free people of the faith. If it is said that slaves are required to render humiliating submission to the orders given to them and the slavish life is a life lived according to the principle of subordination, it can be said that the mission given to the free people of the faith causes them to live according to the spirit of sacrifice shown by Christ. Kim discovered the meaning of a community's existence in the

<sup>14</sup> Y. Kim, *The Road to Canaan*, 130.

<sup>15</sup> Y. Kim, *The Road to Canaan*, 329-30.

sacrifice of Christ's supernatural and transcendental love, and he regarded it as a transcendental model for the existence of the community. Kim argues that doing the very thing that no one wishes to do is the free people's supernatural mission, which is faith.

If someone has to go through the trial, and if someone has to endure the sacrifice, it should be us. The cross, which must be carried by someone, should be carried by us instead. Surely there is retribution in every sacrifice. Is it not retribution that we are holding this nation in place, which would otherwise have fallen already? Are we not masters of this nation since this nation is still sustaining because of us?<sup>16</sup>

Now, if sacrifice is a supernatural and transcendental mission, work and service are missions that must be fulfilled in this world. In contrast to sacrifice, which dictates the vertical relationship between God and us, work and sacrifice should govern our horizontal relationship within our community and between our community and the rest of the world.

Work has traditionally been evaluated according to its economic usefulness in the production of commodities. The value of work has been determined not by the value of work itself but by the commodity that is the result of work. Also, work was given meaning only when it was transacted and exchanged in the market through the use of the currency. As a result, the exchange value of work has been regarded more important than its use value and, often, only the exchange value would be recognised in work without any consideration of the use value.

Refusing to find the value of work in the resulting commodity or in the exchange value of work, Kim regarded work itself as a sacred act of mankind. Nature does not guarantee comfortable lives for mankind. The meaning of work comes not from converting nature into produce commodities, but from harnessing nature to enrich life. For the same reason, Kim chose to get involved in agriculture and regarded farming as the most important job.

The law of agriculture is that good harvest is only possible through the hard work of the owner. Although it is true that agriculture requires skills just like any other industry, agriculture has a greater meaning because it deals with life, while the manufacturing industry, for example, handles non-living materials. This principle, that living things can grow into full maturity only under the loving care of its owner, applies to animals and humans alike.<sup>17</sup>

### *Community Movement as Personal Mission*

The goal of work is production. In this regard, we cannot deny that work is an economic activity. However, when work remains in the arena of

<sup>16</sup> Yong-gi Kim, *Should We Not Live Like This?* (in Korean; Seoul: Changjo, 1979), 46.

<sup>17</sup> Y. Kim, *Should We Not Live Like This?* 52.

currency activities, currency rules over work. Once work becomes subordinated to currency, the humans become exposed to the risk of becoming objectified and commodified. But work has a greater fundamental meaning than that. Work is a method of fundamental relationships. Work is God's mandate and a principle that we should follow.

Work is the most fundamental philosophy for all humans. ... We should not embrace religious doctrines that teach that we can go to heaven without work. That is no different from the distorted mentality that thinks one can be successful without having to work. Jesus worked. The Creator also worked to create this world. The world does not respect Christians today because they only remember the nails Roman soldiers put through Jesus's hands but forgot about the nails Jesus handled at work.<sup>18</sup>

The supernatural sacrifice is manifested in this world through work and is embodied in the relationship of community members through service. Service in this context goes beyond the meaning of servanthood in the experiential world. Service is an autonomous action in the sense that it is manifested through the actor's will but is also a supernatural action exercised in this world in the aspect that work is an imitation of God's acts, considering the fundamentals of existence. Service without free will is a subordinate and objectified act of slaves. But when one thinks for himself and works of his own accord as an autonomous being and practices God's teaching to care for others, this becomes service as a mission.

### Conclusion

Kim developed a Christian community movement through the ideal village movement during the Japanese occupation and through the Canaan Farmers School after the Korean War. The ideal village movement, which was started for the purpose of overcoming poverty and resisting the Japanese, subsequently evolved into the Canaan Farmers School, which established itself as a centre of national education. Since the 1990s, many Asian nations are actively learning about the Canaan movement. Kim's Canaan movement cannot simply be defined as a community movement or an economic development movement. While it is true that the Canaan movement contributed to community development in Korea during the rapid development phase of the country and served as a foundation for national development movements such as the *Saemaoul Undong*, the Canaan movement should be defined as a Christian social gospel movement because the vision of the Canaan community was in fulfilment of the transcendent mission. The core values of this faith movement were work, service, and sacrifice. According to Kim, the relationship between God and the community is based on the self-sacrifice of Christ; thus, the

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<sup>18</sup> Y. Kim, *The Road to Canaan*, 325.



Christian community must practice sacrifice because Christ's sacrifice is the fundamental principle of community life, and the members of the community must serve each other and work for the whole world.

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# LIVING WITH AND WITNESSING TO DIFFERENT FAITHS: THE KOREAN CHURCH'S RESPONSE TO ISLAM

Matthew Keung-Chul Jeong

## Introduction

When I was asked to write about the Korean church's response to Islam, I immediately thought of the Great Commission of Jesus Christ to his disciples: 'Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age' (Mt. 28:19-20, NIV). But what does it really mean to 'make disciples of all nations' in the context of the Korean church's response to Islam?

Prior to any response to Islam, however, the immediate challenge for Korean Christians today is to understand Islam, because what I understand Islam is will affect how I interact with Muslims as a witness for Christ. In reality, the what and the how are closely related in various ways.

For the first inquiry, a formidable challenge faces us: Islam is so diverse, complex, and often contradictory from various perspectives (such as anthropological, historical, religious, Islamic theological, regional perspectives)<sup>1</sup> that one insists: 'We should rather speak of many different Islams which must be examined as separate phenomena'.<sup>2</sup>

During the Lausanne Global Consultation on Islam in Ghana in April 2014, five faces of Islam were identified: popular Islam, missionary Islam, progressive Islam, political Islam, and militant Islam. A lively discussion followed on 'how' to interact with them. For this issue, SECAP Spectrum proves to be helpful for clarity.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Damien Kingsbury, John McKay, Janet Hunt, Mark McGillivray, and Matthew Clarke, *International Development: Issues and Challenges*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York: Palgrave, Macmillan, 2012), 23-52, esp. 33-34.

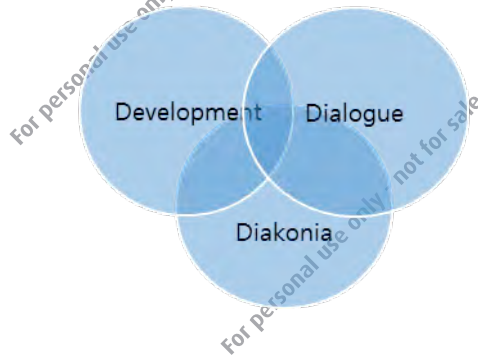
<sup>2</sup> Daniel Brown, *A New Introduction to Islam* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 4.

<sup>3</sup> Martin Accad, 'Christian Attitudes toward Islam and Muslims: A Kerygmatic Approach', in Joseph L. Cumming, Dean S. Gilliland, Charles E. Van Engen (eds.), *Toward Respectful Understanding and Witness among Muslims* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2012), 32. Accad introduces five different approaches to Islam and Muslims, namely Syncretistic Interaction, Existential Interaction, Kerygmatic Interaction, Apologetic Interaction, and Polemical Interaction, thus, SECAP.

### Development, Dialogue, and Diakonia

With these backgrounds in mind, I will focus on what it means to follow Jesus' vision by 'making disciples of all nations' in the context of the Korean church's response to Islam. Jesus' vision is for God's blessings to extend to *all* nations, not just a few individuals and nations. The Israelites and even Jesus' disciples misunderstood his vision. Thus, it is important to bring clarity to this commandment. To illustrate this, I will use three-dimensional elements (or 3 Ds): development, dialogue, and diakonia (ministry). Each will be elaborated further, particularly in relation to the Korean church's response to Islam. In this process, Jesus' 'greatest commandment', which is to 'love God and your neighbours', will be an undergirding principle. I will also present Islamic views on the 3 Ds as a counterpart to the Christian response. This will allow us to see both approaches and make fair sense of where to go from here in terms of 'making disciples of all nations in Muslim context'.

The Korean church's relationship with others may be presented as follows:



#### *Development*

Here, 'development' is defined as a concept that requires us to identify the normative conditions for a universally acceptable aim: the 'realization of the potential of human personality'. This is treated as the fulfilment or satisfaction of basic human needs.<sup>4</sup>

In Matthew 25, Jesus, three days before his crucifixion, shared three parables (stories) with his disciples: the parables of the ten virgins (vv. 1-13), of the talents (vv. 14-30), and of the sheep and the goats (vv. 31-46). These parables are about how his followers (later, Christians) should live on earth at the time between his first and second coming. His focus was on their alertness to his second coming, their faithful stewardship of resources/talents, and their sincere care for people in need. To me, this is

<sup>4</sup> Karen Armstrong, *A Letter to Pakistan* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 3.

Jesus' last 'sermon on the mount', as this took place on the Mount of Olives (Mt. 24:3).

In his first Sermon on the Mount (Mt. 5:20), Jesus taught his disciples: 'For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven'. With this in mind, Christians are expected to do good work, even in the way that they do good work, and to do more good than the non-Christian civilian who is acting out of common sense and goodness. Caring for the sick, the hungry, and the thirsty is not only the Christians' mission; any decent human being is expected to do the same.

Muslims are also asked by the Qur'an and hadiths to help people in great need. A story in 'Muslim' 18 (birr-righteousness), one of most authentic six hadiths, tells almost the same parable of the sheep and the goats found in Matthew 25:31-46:

God will say on the Day of Resurrection: 'O Son of Adam, I was sick and you did not visit me'. He will say: 'O My Lord, how could I visit You and You are the Lord of the worlds?' 'Didn't you know that My servant so-and-so was sick and you did not visit him? Had you visited him, you would have found Me there'. 'O Son of Adam, I asked you for food and you fed Me not'. 'My Lord, how could I feed You and You are the Lord of the worlds?' 'Didn't you know that My servant so-and-so was in need of food and you did not feed him. Had you fed him, you would found him by My side'. 'O son of Adam, I asked you for water and you did not give Me to drink'. 'My Lord, how could I give you water and you are the Lord of the worlds?' 'Didn't you know that My servant so-and-so asked you for a drink and you did not give him water. Had you given him to drink, you would have found him near Me'.<sup>5</sup>

It is not new to us that the poorest of countries in the world today, which do not have access to the basic social services of health care, education, safe drinking water, and adequate nutrition, are located in the Muslim world. To make it worse, most of them are directly or indirectly related to domestic conflicts and civil wars. Ten countries among the poorest Muslim countries are Senegal, Mali, Mauritania, Sudan, Ethiopia, Somalia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Burundi.

The Korean church must respond to these human tragedies in obedience to the Great Commandment of Jesus and his life model (Mt. 22:34-40). To fulfil this, some Korean churches and Christians are working in many NGOs and humanitarian organisations in Muslim countries. These are considered works of compassion in the area of 'common grace'. In a bigger picture, this area needs to include 'creation care' as part of our

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<sup>5</sup> Chawkat Moucarray, *Building Community: A Cross-Cultural Introduction to Islam* (World Vision International, 2011), 98, as one of four books of 'Exploring Islam: A guide to Interfaith Relations in Islamic Contexts' and originally from Muslim (hadith), *birr* (righteousness) 13.

responsibility (Gen. 1:27-28) until God would fully restore His Kingdom (Rev. 21, 22).

Muslims have also been working hard to help those people, especially Muslims in need. Just as Christians have developed their NGOs and organisations for this purpose, Muslims have also established NGOs and humanitarian organisations for Islamic Relief and Development such as Arab Official Development Assistance (ODA), the Muslim World League (MWL), Islamic Relief Worldwide (IRW), the International Islamic Relief Organization, the Al-Haramain Islamic Foundation, the Islamic Foundation for Ecology and Environmental Science, and Muslim Aid, etc. It is important to note that, interestingly, Islamic Relief Worldwide (IRW) based in Birmingham in the UK (established in 1984) rejects traditions of mixing dawa (Islamic mission) and aid, whereas a large part of work of the Muslim World League (MWL), the Saudi Arabia-based charity Rabita al-Alam al-Islami founded in Mecca in 1962, provides financial and material support for evangelical Islamic organisations, thoroughly intermixing the two – development and (Islamic) evangelism. The Korean church uses the same approaches as the Muslims. Some Korean Churches are purely involved in humanitarian or development work whereas other churches' development work mixes development and Christian mission together.

Confucianism, Islam, and Christianity have developed 'the Golden Rule' as below. Zigong asked, 'Is there one expression that can be acted upon until the end of one's days?' The Master (Confucius) replied, 'There is shu (恕): Do not impose on others what you yourself do not want'.<sup>6</sup> Thus, Prophet Muhammad said, 'Not one of you can be a believer, unless he desires for his neighbour what he desires for himself'.<sup>7</sup> Jesus says, 'Do to others what you would have them to do to you' (Mt. 7:12). How much more do Christians need to care for those people, especially for the Muslims?

To help those Muslims in great need, it should not only be the Korean church that supports those Muslim countries but also the Korean government, working with the churches in this effort. The Korean government has been working hard to help poor countries through its two wings: KOICA (Korea International Cooperation Agency) and ODA (Official Development Assistance). Korean Christians who are able to join either one can make vital contributions to the Muslim world.

This is part of 'making disciples of all nations', because James asks, 'What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? Faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by

<sup>6</sup> Confucius, *The Analects of Confucius: A Philosophical Translation*, trans. Roger T. Ames and Henry Rosemont Jr. (New York: Ballantine Books, 1999), 189 (Analects 15:23).

<sup>7</sup> Armstrong, *A Letter To Pakistan*, 3. 'The Prophet said, "Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day should not hurt (trouble) his neighbor"' (Bukhari 62:114, 73:47). Also see Book 8, volume 73, Hadith 48.

action, is dead, and faith without deeds is useless' (Jm. 2:14-20). Therefore, as a part of making disciples of all nations, the Korean church must firmly engage with the world in need with transparency and accountability to Christian leadership and Muslims.

### *Dialogue*

When we hear the word, 'dialogue', we are right away reminded of 'dialogue' as developed by WCC and tend to think that Christians involved in dialogue are stereotyped as liberal Christians or syncretic Christians. However, I use 'dialogue' simply to refer to 'two-way communication', as opposed to monologue, for the sake of the gospel. In this regard, I welcome the Initiative of Fuller Theological Seminary on this issue, as it has started a journal, 'Evangelical Interfaith Dialogue', published since winter 2010.

The gospel of Jesus is unique and exclusive in nature, simply because of the uniqueness of the person and the work of Jesus Christ: 'without him, there is no salvation'. However, how we communicate who Jesus is (the person of Jesus) and what he has done (the work of Jesus) must not be a monologue (one-sided communication) but a dialogue (two-way communication). A part of 'making disciples of all nations in the Muslim context' involves 'teaching them (baptised ones, in this context) to obey everything Jesus has commanded his disciples'. Therefore, to teach others, the Korean church should be involved in dialogue, not monologue.

When comparing the European and American way of interacting with Muslims, along with their approach with Muslims for the purpose of evangelism and discipleship, I have observed that the Europeans have developed their interfaith dialogue further than the Americans. This is because the European church and nations have had countless encounters with Muslims for the last 14 centuries: historically, religiously, culturally, theologically and politically between Muslim nations (Saudi Arabian peninsula, the Middle East and North Africa (MENA region) and Turkey) and European Christendom. Therefore, European countries tend to be geared towards dialogue rather than aggressive evangelism. However, the American church has engaged in more evangelistic approaches than the European church due to the American evangelistic passion stirred awake by the Student Volunteer Movement in 1886 and the evangelistic influence of Samuel Zwemer (American missionary to the Middle East, 1867-1952).

From its very early development in the 20th century, the Korean church has been heavily influenced by the American church and mission, especially by American Presbyterianism and other denominational influences. With this historical background, the Korean church tends to practice American evangelistic approaches rather than the more apologetic approach, learning from the European experiences through their encounters with Muslims. At the same time, the Korean church must not forget the rich yet painful histories of the Orthodox Church and her orthodoxy and her

orthopraxy in the MENA region (countries in the Middle East and North Africa). There, 'the church' in the region not only survived but has also been used by God to show God's love and salvation to their Muslim neighbours for the last fourteen centuries since Islam entered the country or came into their presence. The Korean church has remained ignorant of the Orthodox Church, misunderstanding their orthodox theology and orthopraxy and ignoring the historical relationship between the Orthodox Church and the Muslims in the past.

The Korean church has also gained most of her knowledge from western theology and an understanding of church history through a western perspective rather than from oriental and Middle Eastern perspectives. As a result, the Korean Church has almost forgotten the five major Christian centres and their history in the MENA region (Alexandria, Jerusalem, Antioch, Constantinople, and Rome) in the fourth to eighth century, when Islam came to being, and the current roles of the church in the twenty-first century today. Therefore, the Korean church must learn to dialogue with the Muslims, first, by studying from the European church's experience, from the American church, and from the Orthodox Church in MENA region; and second, by learning from the Muslims, to better understand Islam, its rich history, its diverse cultures and people, and their contemporary struggles.

The Qur'an says,

Invite the Way of your Lord with wisdom and good exhortation (An-Nahl 16:125).

Dispute not with the People of the Book [Christians and Jews] except in the best way (Al-Ankabut 29:46).

The Bible says,

But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer (*ἀπολογία*) to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect (1 Pet. 3:15).

From the Christian and Islamic point of view, this dialogue requires people to respect both differences and commonalities or similarities in them. I know this has been a controversial area. However, we must engage with dialogue for peace, reconciliation, justice, human rights, women and children issues in the two faith communities.

There are different spectrum in responding to the challenges of Islam, such as the polemic response on one hand and the liberal and universal approach on the other. In the middle, there has been a way of 'promoting faithful witness to the Gospel and constructive engagement with Muslims for peaceful co-existence'.<sup>8</sup> In his analysis in 'Evangelical Christians and Muslims in the British public sphere: Some sociological reflections',

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<sup>8</sup> Martin Accad, 'Programme for Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa, 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations' (19-24 November 2009), 13.

Richard McCallum has summed up these three approaches: ‘isolation’, ‘accommodation’ and ‘engaged orthodoxy’. Similarly, in my summary, the three approaches are the polemic approach, the liberal approach, and the faithful approach within the Christian circle. Martin Accad has also developed a SECAP spectrum. It helpfully shows the five different approaches to Muslims: syncretistic, existential, kerygmatic, apologetic, and polemical interaction.<sup>9</sup>

At the same time, Muslims also have the same approaches as Christians. In this relationship between Christians and Muslims, the Korean church should not give wrong witness to Islam by carrying a false understanding of Islam and Muslims or by imposing their own interpretation on the Qur’an, just as the Korean church would not want the Muslims to give a false witness to Jesus and the Bible with their own prejudice and their wrong interpretation of the Bible.

Paul the Apostle uses ‘apologia’ (ἀπολογία) (apologetic approach) for others so that they may know the Gospel of Jesus, and at the same time, he uses ‘kerygma’ (κήρυγμα) too. ‘Apologia’ (ἀπολογία) appears only 7 times in the New Testament. All of them are used by Paul for the defense (ἀπολογία) of the gospel, and his case (Ac. 22:1 and 25:16; 1 Cor. 9:3; 2 Cor. 7:11; Phil. 1:7 and 16; and 2 Tim. 4:16). Paul also learnt and knew his contemporary religious issues and languages; he spoke at least three languages – Aramaic, Hebrew, and Greek – and communicated effectively in them.

‘Kerygma’ (κήρυγμα) appears 6 times, and its verbal form, kerysso (κηρυσσω) appears 22 times in connection with Paul (in total, 28 times) in the New Testament; they are translated into ‘preaching’ (24 times), ‘proclamation’ (3 times; Ro. 10:8, Col. 1:23), and message (1 time only, 2 Tim. 4:17) in the NIV.

In my biblical reflection on Christian dialogue with Muslims, I believe that there should be two sides when it comes to dialogue. On one side, there is the apologetic nature, expressed through a ‘Firm Friendship with Muslims’; and on the other is the kerygmatic nature, expressed by being a ‘Faithful witness to Muslims’. When Stephen Bevans mentions ‘prophetic dialogue’, I believe that he rightly points out this belief:

Mission must by all means be dialogical, since it is nothing else finally than the participation in the dialogical nature of the triune, missionary God, but it must be *prophetic* as well, since, at bottom, there can be no real dialogue when truth is not expressed and clearly articulated. Only by preaching, serving and witnessing to the reign of God in bold and humble prophetic dialogue will the missionary church be constant in today’s context.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Accad, ‘Christian Attitudes toward Islam and Muslims’, 32.

<sup>10</sup> Stephen B. Bevans and Roger P. Schroeder, *Constants in Context: A Theology of Mission for Today* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2008), 398.



When we mention 'truth' here in connection with Muslims, the Bible does not speak of Christian dogma but of Jesus himself. The Apostle John clearly talks about Jesus as 'truth' in John 1:14, 8:31-32, 14:6, 18:38, not as a law from Jewish perspectives or dogma from systematic theological views (though we do need systematic theology and dogma).

This 'prophetic dialogue' is needed even more in the Muslim context when 'making disciples of all nations'. This will then lead us to understand the crucial ministry of the church of God, 'diakonia', in the next chapter. Questions such as the following will bring us to diakonia: When in dialogue with Muslims, what kind of contents does the Korean church need to discuss?

### *Diakonia*

The English word 'ministry' is commonly used to translate several words in the New Testament, the most prominent being 'diakonia' (διακονία) and its related forms. But, in Greek, the word used in relation to 'ministry' comes in five word groups: *diakoneo* (37 times), *diakonia* (34), and *diakonos* (29); *leitourgeo* (3), *leitourgia* (6), *leitourgikos* (1), and *leitourgos* (5); *hype-reteo* (3) and *hype-retes* (20); *poimaino* (11) and *poimen* (18); *oikodomeo* (40), *oikodome* (18), *oikodomos* (1), *oikonomos* (10), *oikonomeo* (1), and *oikonomia* (9).

All the verses in which these words appear talk about serving, building up, and taking care of neighbours, rather than controlling and ruling, in secular terms. Only 'poimaino' is used for 'rule' three times. But this 'rule' is used to describe Christ's ruling power in Revelation 2:27, 12:5, and 19:15.

Ray Anderson defines God's ministry as 'the revelation of God to humans and the basis for all human knowledge of God's nature and purpose'. He continues to say of it:

All ministry is grounded in God's ministry, and all theology is dependent on God's continued ministry as the source of revealed truth. So, ministry is God's way of reaffirming and expounding the truth of who is and what God wishes to reveal through what he has said and done.<sup>11</sup>

However, I also define 'ministry' as all the works as the extension of Christ's ministry given to His Church through willing and humble services of His people, not by force or control, to reveal who He is and what He has said and done. I believe that the church of God is the central agency to carry out God's ministry, supporting God's works through prayers and God's word, the written word, the Bible. For example,

When the number of disciples [of Jesus] was increasing, the Grecian Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were

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<sup>11</sup> Ray S. Anderson, *The Soul of Ministry* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1997), 7, esp. 6-7 'Ministry Precedes and Creates Theology'.

being overlooked in daily distribution (*διακονία*) of food. Then the twelve disciples [of Jesus] gathered all the disciples together and said, 'It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry (*διακονία*) of the word of God in order to wait on (*διακονέω*) tables'. Then they chose seven deacons and the twelve paid attention to prayer and the ministry (*διακονία*) of the word (Ac. 6:1-4).

Here we see the holistic nature of God's ministry in all the works the church does to reveal who God is, what God says, and what God is doing.

The picture in Acts 6:1-4 clearly shows an example of what Jesus Christ expects his church (Christians or disciples) to do as a partial demonstration of making disciples of all nations, because the ministry here is holistic, not only for the distribution of food (the ministry to meet basic human needs as we have seen in the first chapter, 'Development') but also for the ministry of the word of God.

'Development' and 'Dialogue' are primarily related to Muslims, but the 'Diakonia' (ministry) itself comes from the church of God (people of the triune God) through prayer and the word of God (between God and his church). Paul says that 'his intent was that now, through the Church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, according to his eternal purpose which he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord' (Eph. 3:10-11). Paul also explains what God has done through Jesus: 'For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him (Jesus), and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross' (Col. 1:19-20).

Therefore, in the light of the holistic point of view on 'making disciples of all nations in Muslim context' (Mt. 28:19-20, NIV), in development, what kind of content does the Korean church need to bring to Muslims? In dialogue with Muslims, what kind of content does the church need to discuss? Does 'making disciples of all nations in this discussion' mean 'making disciples of all Muslim nations'? If yes, then what does that mean? Does every Muslim need to become a disciple of Jesus? Or something else?

I do not believe that all the Muslims on planet Earth will become disciples of Jesus Christ in the future. Though Jesus wants them to be, every Muslim has his or her own free will to choose what he or she wants to be, and God respects his or her free will and choice; therefore, not all Muslims will become disciples of Jesus by the last Day of Judgment.

Then what does this mean? To shed light on this subject, the key phrase 'baptism in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit' should be considered. The Jews, for example, were familiar with the baptism of John the Baptist (Mt. 3:1-17). But it was absolutely impossible for the Jews to be baptised 'in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit' because of the Jewish belief in the monotheistic God. In the same way, it is extremely difficult for Muslims today to believe in the triune God and to be baptised 'in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit'.

When Jesus commanded this to his Jewish disciples, he was not talking about the religious ceremony of baptism (which some churches unfortunately continue to perform today), but about the very serious challenges new believers may face, having to repent of their past sins to enter the kingdom of God.

They (Jews and Christians) took their Rabbis and their monks to be their lords (by obeying them in things that they made lawful or unlawful according to their own desires and not according to the orders of Allah) besides Allah and they also took as their lord Jesus son of Mary while they (Jews and Christians) were ordered (in the Torah and the Gospel) to worship none but One God (Allah): There is none to be worshipped but He, praise and glory be to Him (far above is He) from having the partners they associate (with Him) (The Quran 9:31).<sup>12</sup>

This is very well known as the greatest sin that will not be forgiven by Allah, the unpardonable sin in Islam, as 'Shirk' in Arabic. Only the triune God can ultimately convince Muslims to come to him, through the diakonia, the ministry of disciples of Jesus.

In the Korean culture, or most Asian cultures, 'to know a name of a person' means 'to know who the person is and what the person does'. Jesus said of the 'name' several times: 'I have come in my Father's name, and you do not accept me (Jn. 5:43)'; 'He (Jesus) calls his own sheep by name and leads them out' (Jn. 10:3); 'You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it' (Jn. 14:14); 'They (Jews) will treat you this way because of my name, for they do not know the One who sent me' (Jn. 15:21); 'Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord (Jesus) will be saved' (Ac. 2:21); and 'Salvation is found in no one else' (except Jesus), for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved' (Ac. 4:12).

Therefore, 'the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit' is a touchstone for Muslims who want to come to salvation, and the Korean church must help them to understand the actual meaning of 'the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit'.

This is a very important point that the Korean church needs to take seriously. While the Korean church helps Muslims to understand Christian gospel, they should come to Jesus as others (non-Christians) do, through repentance and baptism in the faith of the triune God, without which they cannot become genuine disciples of Jesus.

When a Muslim arrives at a point where he/she wants to accept Christ as personal Saviour and Lord, both Muslims and Christians have to acknowledge that 'where there has to be a parting of the ways between the Christian and the Muslim, it is because we are faced ultimately with a choice

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<sup>12</sup> Zafar Ishaq Ansari, *Towards Understanding The Qur'an*, trans. Sayyid Abul A'la Mawdudi (Nairobi: Islamic Foundation, 2006), 386-87. This is an abridged version of *Tafhim al-Qur'an*.

between two ways (Christian and Islamic way) of thinking which cannot be reconciled.<sup>13</sup>

The Korean Church must also understand that, just as Muslims are coming to Jesus Christ, certain Christians around the world are becoming Muslims. As a result, there has been tremendous pain, tension, suffering, killing, and misunderstanding within both of these faith communities. Therefore, I like to recommend 'Guidelines for Ethical Witness' to the Korean church. These guidelines were agreed upon in June 2009 by the Christian-Muslim Forum<sup>14</sup> in the UK, a gathering of respected and representative leaders from both faiths. The guidelines give advice for both Christians and Muslims who want to share their faith in an ethical way.

1. We bear witness to, and proclaim our faith, not only through words but through our attitudes, actions, and lifestyles.
2. We cannot convert people; only God can do that. In our language and methods, we should recognise that people's choice of faith is primarily a matter between themselves and God.
3. Sharing our faith should never be coercive; this is especially important when working with children, young people, and vulnerable adults. Everyone should have the choice to accept or reject the message we proclaim and we will accept people's choices without resentment.
4. Whilst we might care for people in need or who are facing personal crises, we should never manipulate these situations in order to gain a convert.
5. An invitation to convert should never be linked with financial, material, or other inducements. It should be a decision of the heart and mind alone.
6. We will speak of our faith without demeaning or ridiculing the faiths of others.
7. We will speak clearly and honestly about our faith, even when that is uncomfortable or controversial.
8. We will be honest about our motivations for activities and we will inform people when events will include the sharing of faith.
9. Whilst recognising that either community will naturally rejoice with and support those who have chosen to join them, we will be sensitive to the loss that others may feel.
10. Whilst we may feel hurt when someone we know and love chooses to leave our faith, we will respect their decision and will not force them to stay or harass them afterwards.

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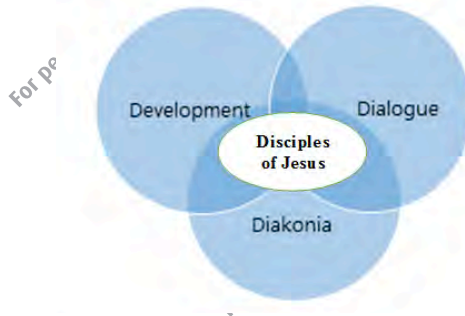
<sup>13</sup> Colin C. Chapman, 'Thinking biblically about Islam', *Themelios* 3:3 (April 1978), 77.

<sup>14</sup> 'Ethical Guidelines for Christian and Muslim Witness in Britain', *Christian Muslim Forum*, [http://www.christianmuslimforum.org/downloads/Ethical\\_Guidelines\\_for\\_Witness.pdf](http://www.christianmuslimforum.org/downloads/Ethical_Guidelines_for_Witness.pdf).

We also acknowledge that there is the freedom of religion, conscience, and choice in Christian nations, whereas there is unfortunately a greater restriction on freedom for most living within Muslim countries. It is very difficult for even the U.N. to resolve the restriction of freedom in Muslim countries due to the socio-religious and political situations in those countries.

In this environment, whatever the situations may be, new believers from Muslim backgrounds begin with the study of the kingdom of the triune God, so that they can obey the triune God and bless all nations as God has intended in the 3 Ds – the areas of development, dialogue and diakonia – which I have explained here.

I consider this holistic ministry given by Jesus to his disciples when he commanded them (1) to go, (2) to baptise them, and (3) to teach them to obey everything he commanded as core contents of making disciples of all nations, even Muslim nations. To do so, the Korean church is asked to go and baptise Muslims and to teach them in the ways that I have explained earlier, so that God can make disciples of all Muslim nations, using the Korean church for this purpose.



Finally, who are the disciples of Jesus whom we talk about? In the diagram above, the disciples of Jesus are in the centre, within the three overlapping circles.

Jesus expects his disciples to grow in maturity and multiply in number. They are the ones who understand Jesus' commandment, the 3D-dimensions (which is based on the Great Commandment of Jesus, 'to love God and to love neighbours'), and actually practice it in their lives.

The key method when making disciples of all nations is to know 'the meaning of the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit' and 'to love God and to love neighbours', even enemies, so that these disciples of Jesus can be used by God to bless all nations.

## **Partnership Strategy for the Korean Church's Response to Islam and Muslims**

### *For Muslims in Muslim countries*

By practicing the 3 Ds for Muslims in Muslim countries where a national church exists, or where there is no Christian presence at all, the Korean church and mission needs to serve them in partnership with national churches, believers from Muslim backgrounds (BMBs), and global churches.

The mission of the Lausanne Movement can be summed up as 'the whole church, taking the whole gospel, to the whole world'. In this mission, it can be said without fear of contradiction that Islam poses the greatest challenge for a number of reasons.

First, Islam is the second missionary religion after Christianity with a universal message, appeal, and a truly global reach. According to The Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life, as of 2010, Muslims constitute more than a quarter of the world's population (23.4%) and are expected to increase by about 35% by 2030. Muslims therefore remain the largest single unreached people group and should be a priority focus for the whole church.

Second, since 9/11, Islam raises a number of serious theological, missiological, ideological, and existential questions for Christian presence and witness in fresh and challenging ways. These questions and challenges are at their sharpest in the global South where about 65% of the world's Christians and 97% of the world's Muslims reside and interact in various spheres of life (John Azumah, 2013). In this climate, the Lausanne Global Consultation on Islam was held in Ghana in April 2014, where it was agreed that the main goal of our ministry to Muslims is to find the best possible ways of resourcing and equipping the Majority World church (where 97% of the world's Muslims live) to be more effective witnesses of the gospel in Muslim contexts.

It would be necessary and relevant for the Korean church and mission to be part of this movement globally. Though there are several questions about how to do mission, it is very clear that ministry is focusing on Muslims in the twenty-first century today. However, I want to emphasize again that Korean church and Missions need to do their mission, not in a narrow sense, but in ways which embrace the 3 Ds mentioned earlier as a biblical and relevant approach.

### *For Muslims in Korea and Diaspora Korean Churches Overseas*

By doing 3 Ds for Muslims in Korea, the Korean church and mission must be united together in partnership. This means that they must share their resources, networks, and strategies in Korea and overseas amongst Korean diaspora churches.

Figure 1, 2, and 3 below show changes of Muslim demography in Korea.

Year	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2014
Number	78,607	81,442	81,218	89,504	86,764	97,313	107,697

(Unit: A Person)

Growth in foreign-born Muslim Residents in Korea (2005-2014)

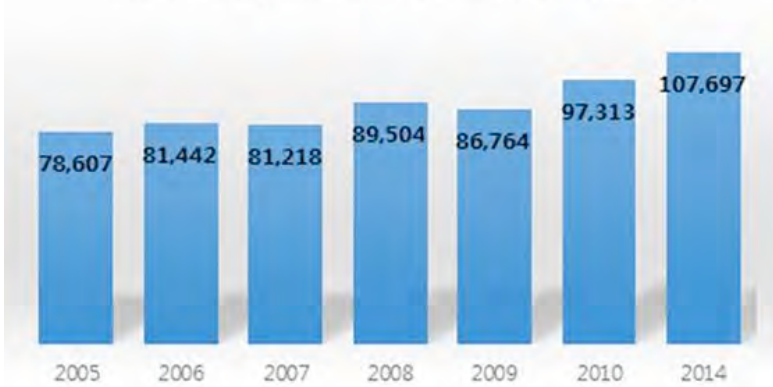


Fig 1: Growth in foreign-born Muslim Residents in Korea (2005-2014) (OIC 57 countries)

Country	Total	Legal	Illegal	% of Illegal
Indonesia	46,945	39,708	7,237	15.4 %
Uzbekistan	43,852	39,225	4,627	10.5 %
Bangladesh	14,644	10,335	4,309	29.4 %
Pakistan	11,209	8,199	3,010	26.8 %

(Unit: A Person)

Fig 2: Muslim Residents in Korea in 2014 as top four countries in number<sup>15</sup>

Region	Total
Middle East	34
North Africa	127
Central Asia	2,912
Iran and Turkey	183
South Asia	1,207
Southeast Asia	674
Total	5,137

Fig 3: International Marriage of Muslim Migrants with Koreans in Korea by Region (2013)<sup>16</sup> (Unit: A Person)

<sup>15</sup> Compiled by Matthew K.C. Jeong based on Ministry of Justice, 'Korean Immigration Service Statistics 2014' (Dec 2014).

<sup>16</sup> Ministry of Justice, 'Korean Immigration Service Statistics 2013' (2013).

The Korean church and mission should not be the only ones involved in this work; they must also engage with the Korean government to help the Muslims in socio-political areas, especially the Muslims living in Korea.

### Conclusion

I have briefly explained the Korean church's response to Islam through the 3 Ds (development, dialogue, and diakonia) in 'making disciples of all nations in Muslim context'. To simplify them, I have summarised them below:

3 Ds	Main Character	Whom to interact with?	How to do it?
Development	Compassion	Muslims in need	Partnership for humanity and creation care
Dialogue	Communication	Muslims	Apologetic and kerygmatic approach
Diakonia	Community	Church of the triune God	Prayer and the word of God in holistic ways

*Fig 4: Summary of 3 Ds: Development, Dialogue, and Diakonia*

The key players of the 3 Ds are disciples of Jesus Christ. The (Korean) disciples of Jesus should continue to do the 3 Ds in partnership with the national church, BMBs, and the global church for Muslims in Muslim countries. The Korean church and missions in Korea and in Korean diaspora churches overseas are challenged to unite to serve the Muslim neighbours at their doorsteps. And we all continue to pray, 'Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved' (Rom. 10:1).



# THE GROWTH OF THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT IN KOREA, FROM EDINBURGH TO BUSAN

Kyo Seong Ahn

## Introduction

It is common knowledge that the ecumenical movement was the child of the missionary movement.<sup>1</sup> This is the exact word for the World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh in 1910 (hereafter Edinburgh Conference) in that the Edinburgh Conference formed the watershed of the modern ecumenical movement. Its ensuing Continuation Committee became the International Missionary Council (hereafter IMC) in 1921 and, in turn, the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism of the World Council of Churches (hereafter WCC) in 1961. The Edinburgh Conference also inspired the birth of the Faith and Order in 1927, and the Life and Work in 1925, both of which merged themselves into the WCC in 1948.<sup>2</sup> In short, the Edinburgh Conference was the incubator of the modern ecumenical movement.

As regards Korean Christianity, it was also at the Edinburgh Conference that it made its first appearance on the stage of the worldwide church. The purpose of this chapter is to review the growth of the ecumenical movement in Korea, roughly covering the years from the Edinburgh Conference in 1910 to the General Assembly of the WCC in Busan in 2013. Due to limited space, this chapter will deal with the growth of the ecumenical movement in Korea, focusing on its institutional and theological changes.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, since the modern ecumenical movement was born mainly as a movement among Protestant churches in the West, this chapter by and large deals with the Protestant churches in Korea, while also bearing in mind the indigenous, Anglican, Orthodox, Pentecostal, Lutheran, and Catholic churches.

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<sup>1</sup> William Richey Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations: A History of the International Missionary Council and Its Nineteenth Century Background* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1952), 15.

<sup>2</sup> The formation of the World Council of Churches was delayed from 1938 to 1948 due to the outbreak of World War II.

<sup>3</sup> The periodisation of the history of the ecumenical movement in Korea mainly follows my chapter on 'Korean Christianity and Cooperative Works' [in Korean], in Heung-su Kim and Jeong-min Suh (eds.), *The Study on the History of Korean Christianity* (Seoul: Christian Literature Society of Korea, 2011), 152-58.

### **The Primordial Ecumenical Movement (Before the Opening of Korea to 1905)**

Owing to the isolation policy of the Korean government in the late nineteenth century, the introduction of Protestant Christianity to Korea was implemented through the encounter and then cooperation between missionaries and Korean nationals in neighbouring countries such as China and Japan, which initiated the long-standing history of unity between missionaries and national Christians. Since the opening of Korea to western countries, with the Korean-American Treaty in 1882 at the head of the list occasioning the missionaries to arrive in Korea, western missionaries were eager to cooperate in various ways to break the deadlock of mission of the first decades. They did this by capitalising on the Gwanghyewon, a government-mission joint hospital founded by H.N. Allen, the first resident missionary, to secure a common bridgehead for both Presbyterian and Methodist missions; establishing cooperative organisations such as the Bible Translation Committee, the Korean Tract Society, and the Korean YMCA; aligning the British and Foreign and American Bible societies; and forming the intra-denominational Presbyterian mission council, such as the Council of Missions Holding the Presbyterian Form of Government. Such unity ushered in the tradition of the Korean church, with one common Bible and one common hymnbook, and enhanced the primordial ecumenical spirit of the Korean church. During the period under consideration, the Ecumenical Missionary Conference in New York in 1900 had already shown interest in the Korean church's remarkable growth, in particular its policy of self-support, although the church itself did not participate in the meeting.<sup>4</sup>

### **The Birth of Missionary Ecumenism (1905-1918)**

The ecumenical movement at the turn of the last century can be called 'missionary ecumenism' in that the leadership of the movement was in the missionaries' hands. The beginning of the last century saw the rise of the spirit of unity among missions, which led to the establishment of an interdenominational ecumenical body in 1905 called the General Council of Evangelical Missions in Korea. This council facilitated the ecumenical movement in Korea in great measure, producing a number of fruits such as the interdenominational missionary journal *The Korea Mission Field*, a missionary comity, and joint educational institutions; and yet it failed to establish the interdenominational national church, the Daehan Yaso Gyohoe (the Jesus Church of Korea). However, the dream of the united church left its trace in the names of the ensuing denominational churches: for example, the title of the Daehan Yasogyo Jangrohoe (the Jesus Church

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<sup>4</sup> *Ecumenical Missionary Conference, New York, 1900, vol. II* (London: Religious Tract Society, [1900]), 289-324, esp., 301-307, 308-309.

of Korea, Presbyterian branch; now the Presbyterian Church of Korea [hereafter PCK] and its siblings) means that there is one church in Korea, with groups having denominational backgrounds.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, the above-mentioned Korean Presbyterian Church adopted the so-called 'Twelve Creed' as its first creed, which had originally been made for the united Indian church and was recommended by Presbyterian missionaries as a way of augmenting the ecumenical spirit in Asia. However, in 1911, as ecumenical enthusiasm gradually cooled, the General Council of Evangelical Missions in Korea changed into its successor, the Federal Council of Protestant Evangelical Missions in Korea, an ecumenical body with a more modest purpose, ruling out the issue of doctrine and church polity.

On the other hand, ecumenical works were also carried out outside of the country, in particular in the areas of mission to overseas Koreans and cross-cultural mission to Shandong, China: in Hawaii, the Presbyterians decided not to initiate their mission since the Methodists had already taken root there; in Japan, the Presbyterians and Methodists jointly established an interdenominational ethnic church, the Korean Christian Church in Japan; and in Shandong, the PCK's mission to the Chinese started as a kind of primordial ecumenical mission among the four parties concerned, such as the PCK, the Chinese church, and the American Presbyterian missions in Korea and China.

Nevertheless, it must also be noted that, during the period under consideration, the Korean church could participate for the first time in the worldwide conference, the Edinburgh Conference in 1910, although in the capacity of a guest delegate invited by missions, not as a delegate of the national church. Hon. Chi-ho Yun suggested the possibility of the cooperation in the decision-making process regarding missionary funds, which undoubtedly challenged the hegemony of western missions in mission, as much as it did the issue of friendship in mission argued by V.S. Azariah (later Bishop Azariah).<sup>6</sup>

### **The Birth of Church Ecumenism (1918-1924)**

The early years of the twentieth century witnessed the transition from missionary ecumenism to church ecumenism to the extent that national churches, Presbyterian and Methodist, officially joined the ecumenical movement by establishing an ecumenical body among themselves or a

<sup>5</sup> See Kyo Seong Ahn, 'Mission in Unity: An Investigation into the Question of Unity as It Has Arisen in the Presbyterian Church of Korea and Its World Mission' (Unpublished PhD Dissertation, University of Cambridge, 2008), 38; for a similar case, see A. J. Brown, *The New Era in the Philippines* (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1903), 189.

<sup>6</sup> For this, see the chapter on 'The Edinburgh Conference and the Korean Church' of this book.

council of churches, the Korean Church Federal Council in 1918, although affiliating missions were also members of the organisation and they continued to maintain their Federal Council separately. This means that there was a parallelism between missionary ecumenism and church ecumenism. This ecumenical body provided the national Christians with opportunities for taking initiative in and learning to how to lead the ecumenical movement.

### **The Birth of Christian Ecumenism (1924-1945)**

This era marks the establishment of an official relationship between the Korean church and the world ecumenical body. In the first half of the twentieth century, the IMC endeavoured to establish national counterparts of the IMC. Finally, in 1924, the Korean National Christian Council (hereafter KNCC; later, the National Council of Churches in Korea) was formed and included churches, missions, and other Christian organisations, although the missions still held their Federal Council separately.<sup>7</sup> In 1928, the IMC meeting was held in Jerusalem, to which Korean churches, Presbyterian and Methodist, officially sent their delegates for the first time. The Jerusalem Meeting had a great influence on the Korean churches to the extent that the report of the Jerusalem Meeting was translated into Korean, and commenced rural mission in earnest. In addition, facing national crises, the KNCC worked hard to do its duty as an ecumenical body: for example, in 1932 it formulated the so-called 'Social Creed', which showed interest in social concerns, and at the same time revealed anti-communism.<sup>8</sup>

As regards Korean ecumenism in the period under consideration, it is worth remembering the following two issues. First, in spite of its participation in the world ecumenical movement, it seemed as though the Korean church had not learned<sup>9</sup> enough to handle ecclesiastical and missionary conflicts: in the 1930s, the Korean churches faced both intra-denominational and inter-denominational quarrels, and yet they largely drew out and covered up the quarrels rather than resolving them.<sup>9</sup> Second, Japanese imperialism overshadowed the ecumenical movement in colonised Korea. From the beginning of its colonial rule, Japan made

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<sup>7</sup> The Korean National Christian Council (KNCC) and its successor, the National Council of Churches in Korea (NCCCK), often use the same abbreviation of KNCC, and yet it needs to note that the former is a Christian council including both church and missions and the latter is a council with the membership of churches only. When the latter uses the abbreviated form of KNCC, its full title is the Korean National Council of Churches. This chapter, however, does not use the abbreviated form of KNCC for the latter to avoid unnecessary misunderstanding.

<sup>8</sup> Taek-bu Jeon, *The History of the Korean Ecumenical Movement* (in Korean; Seoul: National Council of Churches in Korea, 1979), 140-41.

<sup>9</sup> Yong-gwon Park, *A History of the Presbyterian Church of Chosen of the 1930s Focusing on Its Submission to Japanese Statism* (in Korean; Seoul: Grism, 2008).

efforts to erase the distinguished identity of Korea even in the realm of religion: for example, it continuously attempted to undermine ecumenical organisations, such as the Korean YMCA and the Korean YWCA, and finally disbanded the KNCC in 1937. Due to the disbandment, the Korean church could not participate in the IMC meeting in Tambaram, India, in 1938, where the question of the establishment of the regional ecumenical body, that is, the plan to establish a Far Eastern Office of the IMC, was raised for the first time.<sup>10</sup> At the same time, the Korean church was isolated from and lost international connection with worldwide churches; without any outside help, it succumbed to Japan's ruthless religious policy, including the enforced Shinto shrine worship. This case is in contrast to those of the democratisation movement in Korea and the anti-Apartheid movement in South Africa in the second half of the twentieth century, both of which could capitalise on international ecumenical solidarity. In 1945, the Korean church was disbanded and was forcibly merged with the United Church of Christ of Japan as a Korean branch, which reminds us of the danger of uniformity rather than unity.

### **The Rebirth of Church and the Ecumenical Movement (1945-1970)**

Not surprisingly, the liberation brought about the rebirth of nation and church, and also that of ecumenism. The KNCC was re-established in 1946. In the aftermath of the liberation and the Korean War, the KNCC greatly helped the resuscitation of the country through diverse ministries. First, it became the major funnel of international aid to recover devastated Korea. Second, it began participating again in the world ecumenical movement including the IMC and the newly born WCC, the latter of which prompted the United Nations to initiate police action against invading North Korea.<sup>11</sup>

Nevertheless, the KNCC was not always on the government's side. In 1965, when the government attempted to sign the Seoul-Tokyo Normalisation Accord, the KNCC protested against the measure.

On the other hand, the ecumenical movement in Korea gradually began to maintain a diverse outlook. Internationally, the merge of the IMC into the WCC as the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism in 1961 occasioned evangelicals to form their own ecumenical bodies, which penetrated into the Korean scene. Furthermore, although the post-colonial years were also the period in which new types of missions emerged, such as partnerships in obedience, ecumenical mission, *missio Dei*, and mission in six continents, the Korean church was generally underdeveloped in this

<sup>10</sup> Kyo Seong Ahn, 'The Asian Context and the Ecumenical Movement of the Korean Church', *Korea Presbyterian Journal of Theology* 45:3 (September 2013), 37-62, esp. 48.

<sup>11</sup> *The First Six Years 1948-1954: A Report of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches on the Activities of the Departments and Secretaries of the Council* (Geneva: WCC, 1954), 119-120, 121, 134.

kind of innovative missiological thought and practice, which helped to intensify the tendency of Korean churches to prefer traditional mission to ecumenical mission. Domestically, after scandalous church disruptions, mainly in the 1950s, a number of denominations joined the KNCC to make it represent denominational demography more comprehensively. For example, during the period under consideration, besides the incumbent members such as the PCK and the Korean Methodist Church, new churches such as the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea, the Anglican Church of Korea, and the Korea Evangelical Church became new members in 1956, 1960, and 1966, respectively.<sup>12</sup> Meanwhile, the Second Vatican Council in the 1960s paved the way for the ecumenical relationship between the KNCC and the Catholic Church in Korea, although the latter never became a member of the KNCC.

### **The Birth of the Full-Fledged Ecumenical Body (1970-2013)**

In terms of theology, in particular missiology, the second half of the twentieth century can be named the age of polarisation. In Korea, famous for its compressed modernisation, the Korean church was largely divided into two groups, conservatives and progressives, both struggling to accomplish their own goals of church growth and democratisation. The KNCC evolved into the National Council of Churches in Korea (hereafter NCKC) in 1970, according to the new missiological understanding that church and mission cannot be separated and that the church, not missions, should be the subject of mission and ecumenism. The newly emergent NCKC became the mastermind of the democratisation.

Meanwhile, however, through the hegemony of the national reunification movement that arose in the 1980s, evangelicals merged to form an evangelical ecumenical body, the Korean Christian Council, in 1989.<sup>13</sup> This signalled the beginning of the age of diverse ecumenical bodies. On the one hand, the NCKC began to lose the initiative in the leadership of the ecumenical movement in the age of multiple ecumenical bodies. Nevertheless, the denominational representation of the NCKC became even more comprehensive when new members joined, such as the Korean Orthodox Church, the Assemblies of God of Korea, and the Lutheran Church in Korea in 1996, 1996, 2011, respectively. Interestingly, the Assemblies of God of Korea decided to join the NCKC despite facing

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<sup>12</sup> In the 1950s, the Presbyterian Church divided itself into the four major denominations such as the Kosin Presbyterian Church in Korea (Kosin PCK), the PROK, the PCK, and the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Korea (GAPCK). The Presbyterian churches since then has continued to divide itself into various denominations, most of which belong to the GAPCK family.

<sup>13</sup> The Korean Christian Council calls itself a Christian council including both church and missions as members.

the objection of the headquarters of the American AOG.<sup>14</sup> On the other hand, the autogenous evangelical ecumenical movement started to reveal the lack of its own ecumenical theology, to be disrupted and to be involved in ecclesiastical strifes.

In the late twentieth century, the Korean church became one of the major mission forces; thus, the relationship of mission and ecumenism re-emerged in a different context. First of all, despite its remarkable success, the Korean missionary movement left much to be desired, in particular regarding disunity in mission, mainly due to the above-mentioned lack of understanding of ecumenical mission. Second, as the world entered into the age of globalisation or the era of migration, the Korean church faced new mission challenges. This global demographic change exacted the multi-directions of mission, transforming Korea into both a home base of mission as well as a mission field. The Korean church was also required to do various ecumenical ministries and to be an ecumenical church overcoming numerous barriers of race, class, gender, disability, etc. In other words, the Korean church faced endless ecumenical agendas: from the unity of the church to the unity of humanity to the unity of the eco-system.

### **The General Assembly of the World Council of Churches, Busan (Since 2013)**

Within the span of one century, the Korean church advanced from a church sending an unofficial delegate to the Edinburgh Conference in 1910 to a church hosting the General Assembly of the WCC in Busan in 2013. Besides, the Korean church, in particular the missionary circles, was enthusiastic to celebrate the centenary of the Edinburgh Conference in 2010. The centenary of the Edinburgh Conference occasioned the various ecumenical bodies such as the World Evangelical Alliance, the Lausanne Movement, and the WCC to have numerous gatherings, in which the Korean church, conservatives and progressives, actively participated. All of those activities undoubtedly confirmed the privileged status of the Korean church as a globally renowned church and a major mission force. Nevertheless, it can be said that, in a sense, the first two decades of the twenty-first century saw the so-called 'winter of ecumenism' even in Korea. The Busan General Assembly sparked a fierce debate about ecumenism, which has been closely related to the history of denominational disruptions. Such debates in the preceding and even ensuing years of the Busan General Assembly impeded the development of ecumenism in Korea, both in theology and practice; for example, it is said that the issue of national reunification, a burning interest of the Korean church and society, did not reach a consensus that would satisfy both conservatives and

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<sup>14</sup> Allan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 139.

progressives. The assertion has even been frequently made that the Busan General Assembly caused local churches to be suspicious of ecumenism, which strongly suggests that the ecumenical movement miserably failed in local ecumenism.

### **Conclusion**

In this chapter, we have reviewed the growth of the ecumenical movement in Korea over the last century divided into seven periods. Within such a short span of time, the ecumenical movement has tackled various challenges, both ecclesiastical and national, until Korea could finally host the epoch-making Busan General Assembly. The history of this growth testifies, however, that the ecumenical movement in Korea, and perhaps anywhere, should be a movement of the people, not merely that of the elite.

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# THE KOREAN CHURCH'S CALL FOR NATIONAL RECONCILIATION

Eunsik Cho

## Introduction

After the division of the Korean peninsula, we Koreans have cried out for the unification of the nation. But we had no clear concept of what peaceful unification was. Korean Christians cried out for peaceful unification in words, yet prayed for the destruction of North Korea. Because of persecutions both before and after the Korean War, most Korean Christians were strongly anti-Communist and saw the North Korean regime as a group of atheists and even as a satanic group,<sup>1</sup> and thus felt that North Korea deserved destruction.

The unification which the Koreans want embraces a concept of peace that is beyond the absence of war.<sup>2</sup> Restoration of land and political, economic and social integration are surely important in unification, but the most important thing is whether North and South Korean people will live in harmony afterwards. In the case of Germany, there were interchanges between the East and the West after the division. There were various preparations and practices for unification, both on the governmental level and on the civilian level, particularly the church level. In spite of these sustained exchanges, the hearts of East and West of the unified Germany were not completely integrated. It took a long time until East and West Germans understood, trusted and made harmony with each other. Korea will be more difficult. In fact, there has been almost neither interchange of people nor cultural interchange between the North and the South. Integration of people is more important than the restoration of land.

At the present time, political circles, anticipating various kinds of conflict that will occur after unification, are discussing plans and measures to resolve conflicts in political, economic and social areas. It is necessary for the Korean church to analyse these problems in order to prevent or minimize the conflict and confusion after unification, and to form a theological base for reconciliation between the North and the South. This paper will focus on the differences and conflicts between North and South

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<sup>1</sup> Kyu-Tae Son, 'Theology of Unification for Peace' [in Korean], *Christian Thought* (January 1990), 51-52; Mahn-Yol Yi, 'A Developing Process of Korean Christian's Reunification Movement', in *Christians Who Prepare National Unification* (Seoul: Tyrannus Press, 1994), 18.

<sup>2</sup> Eunsik Cho, 'Peace Education in the Korean Context' [in Korean], in *Peace and Mission in Korea* (Seoul: Handl Publishing House, 2006), 81-101.

Korea, conflicts of a unified Germany, and issues on the unification of the Korean peninsula and reconciliation.

### Raising an Issue

What is Korea's national image? The Nation Brand Committee, part of a Presidential Advisory Committee, and World Research conducted a public opinion poll in September, 2010 on the image of Korea to one thousand foreigners in Korea. They included resident workers, international students, multi-cultural families and so on. The results showed that 30.4% responded that kimchi (pickled cabbage) and bulgogi (marinated beef dish) are the image of Korea, 34.9% replied that information and communication are positive images, and 29.7% answered that politics is a negative image. The research also reveals that the major reason for the negative image of Korea is confrontational conditions with North Korea. (48.4% duplicate response).<sup>3</sup> This outcome is in accordance with other similar surveys in the past.

How are the internal and external conditions of Korea related to confrontational conditions between North and South Korea? Various elements that require serious consideration for the process of a national reunification may be called the unification environment. The unification environment puts stress on the changes in North Korean situation and dynamics in international relations.<sup>4</sup> An essential process is concrete studies on what South Koreans think of unification, what to prepare for achieving unification, and what kind of countermeasures to work out to minimise conflicts after unification.

### *Conflicts between the North and the South*

Conflicts exist at any time in any society as a universal phenomenon, and they reflect various living aspects in a particular time and society, and Korea is no exception.<sup>5</sup> The division of the Korean peninsula brought partition of land, followed by a division of the system. The division of the system brought severance of interchange, and severance of interchange brought discontinuity of human relations. Ideological confrontation produced tension, hatred and hostility in this division.

After the division, North and South Koreans experienced a fierce war and ensuing military confrontations. After the establishment of a military

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<sup>3</sup> <http://alcom.tistory.com/127>.

<sup>4</sup> Woo Young Lee, *A Plan to Solve the Generation Conflict about the Issue of Unification* (in Korean; Seoul: Research Institute for National Unification, 1995), preface.

<sup>5</sup> Han-bum Cho, *A Study on Resolving Plan on South-South Conflicts* (in Korean; Seoul: Korea Institute for National Unification, 2006), 21.

government in the 1960s in the South, a military culture began to form, which has gradually been disappearing since the rise of a civilian government in the 1990s. On the other hand, the characteristics of a barrack culture appeared in the North after the Korean War, and military terms are used in daily life, and thorough information control is enforced. Furthermore, the South pursued democracy and capitalism, while the North followed socialism and communism, creating two ideologically opposed systems which developed isolated from each other during the Cold War.<sup>6</sup> In the South, the hostile feelings toward North Korea arose from damages due to the Korean War and through ideological indoctrination by state and school. North Korea restructured the social system to focus on war victims, giving them preferential treatment, so fear and hatred of imperialism in the North did not simply arise from ideological differences, but were internalised through experiences with family and blood relationships. 'Particularly North Korea shows phenomena of collective autism through the experience of the war, and it has had an effect on regional self-supporting systems'.<sup>7</sup> It is suspected that this structural hostility toward the South is great.<sup>8</sup>

Interchange between the North and the South have been non-existent for decades, and a lack of understanding and tension have continued. After the South-North Korean summit talks in June 2000, interchange and cooperation between the two have increased, though North Korean visitors to the South are few, while many South Koreans have visited the North.

North Korea was the stronger economy from 1953-1970, when the Korean reached an economic balance in the beginning of 1970. However, South Korea began taking the lead in the GNP per person beginning in the mid-1970s and the gap has continued to widen.

After the division, North and South Korea have diverged on the interpretation of history.. In addition, though both speak the same language, usage has become different since the division, making communication more difficult.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> H. Cho, *A Study on Resolving Plan*, 3-4; Jong-Chul Park, et al, *A Plan of National Integration for Resolving Conflicts after Unification* (in Korean; Seoul: Korea Institute for National Unification, 2005), 20.

<sup>7</sup> Philo Kim, 'Reconciliation and Cooperation between the North and the South on the Christian Perspective: Sociological point of View' [in Korean], in *The 10<sup>th</sup> Regular Academic Symposium of the Christian Unification Society* (November 27, 2010), 82.

<sup>8</sup> P. Kim, 'Reconciliation and Cooperation', 78, 79.

<sup>9</sup> For more detail, see Soo Tae Chun, 'How Different between Seoul and Pyongyang' [in Korean], *North Korea* (May 1996), 206-11; *Kyung Hyang Daily News*, 8 August 1996; 9 August 1996; Woo-Taek Jeon and Sung-Kil Min, 'A Problem of Psychology and Adjustment of North Korean Defectors' [in Korean], in *Measures for Adjustment of Defectors in South Korean Life* (Seoul: Research Institute for Unification, Yonsei University; Unpublished Manuscript for a Forum for Defectors, 1996), 13.

### *Conflicts of Unified Germany*

In order to approach the issue of conflict between North and South Korea, it may be helpful to examine conflicts between East and West Germany. In order to prevent heterogeneity with East Germany, the West German government began to let its people know about East German life through 'The Report on National Situation' from 1968 onwards.<sup>10</sup> Despite these efforts, conflicts between East and West Germans were severe when the country was unified.<sup>11</sup> A wall of the heart formed between the 'two societies in one State'.

To summarise, the East German prejudice can be quantified as follows: 1) West Germans conquered the East as a form of colony; 2) While enjoying social welfare, West Germans did not learn how to share; 3) West Germans regard the East as a commodity market, and invest lightly in making a producing district; 4) Some people in the West did not want unification; and 5) The federal government did almost nothing to help the unemployed.<sup>12</sup>

West German prejudice about East Germany could be delineated as follows: 1) What the East German residents did was so basic; 2) East German region residents wallowed in self-pity; and 3) East German region labourers and office workers are not mature enough to product good results like West Germans.<sup>13</sup>

The West German government discussed the differences between the East and the West, making efforts to overcome them. After unification, however, the situation was completely different from the one anticipated. West Germans were displeased with excessive burden of unification expenses, while East Germans had difficulties adapting to the new system. Despite this, they never forgot the unification consciousness: 'We are one!' (Wir sind ein Volk!).<sup>14</sup> Germany resolved inner conflicts through national consciousness and citizens' education.

In the case of Korea, it is difficult to achieve unification by peaceful means within a short period under the present situation, since the differences between the North and the South have been in place for a long time.<sup>15</sup> If there is no national integration after unification, class conflict, regional conflict, and generation conflict will vividly come out.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Jong-Chul Park, et al, *A Plan to Build Synthetic System for National Agreement Relating Unification* (in Korean; Seoul: Korea Institute for National Unification, 2004), 90.

<sup>11</sup> J. Park, et al, *A Plan to Build Synthetic System*, 44, 90.

<sup>12</sup> J. Park, et al, *A Plan to Build Synthetic System*, 44-45.

<sup>13</sup> J. Park, et al, *A Plan to Build Synthetic System*, 45.

<sup>14</sup> Do-Hong Jhu, 'Opening Message of Reconciliation and Cooperation between the North and the South on the Christian Perspective' [in Korean], in *The 10<sup>th</sup> Regular Academic Symposium of the Christian Unification Society*, 8.

<sup>15</sup> H. Cho, *A Study on Resolving Plan*, 43.

<sup>16</sup> J. Park, et al, *A Plan to Build Synthetic System*, 95-102.

So how can solve these severe differences and hostile conflicts? First, mutual trust must be a premise in order to resolve differences, various social conflicts, and primary factors of tension between the North and the South. The North and the South must acknowledge their differences and make efforts to create an atmosphere of tolerance. This means that acknowledgement of differences and tolerance should be the dominant value.<sup>17</sup> Then, it will be necessary to anticipate the different kinds of social conflicts and primary factors of tension that might occur, present concrete countermeasures in various fields, and prepare institutional policies to integrate the two systems. To make progress in the socio-cultural integration of the North and the South, it is necessary to begin with an affirmation that the two sides share the same cultural, historical, linguistic, and anthropological heritage. Restore. Then it is crucial for the affirmation to lead the two peoples to the integration of values.<sup>18</sup> If not, a unified Korea will be faced with social disruption and serious conflicts.<sup>19</sup>

### Reconciliation<sup>20</sup>

Theologically, the term *reconciliation* often means salvation through the atoning death of Jesus Christ. Reconciliation is a significant Christian doctrine and the most important element for peaceful unification. According to Schreiter, there are two faces of reconciliation: social and spiritual. Social reconstructs a fractured society as truthful and just; spiritual rebuilds shattered lives.<sup>21</sup> There are also two types of reconciliation: one is personal and the other is social. 'Personal reconciliation is about the restoration and healing of a damaged humanity; social reconciliation is about the reconstruction of a more just and safe society'.<sup>22</sup> Social reconciliation on a national basis has to follow the process of repentance, then forgiveness, and finally reconciliation.<sup>23</sup> Thus, some insist that churches of the two sides should open the way to reconciliation by confessing their sins as the first step of reconciliation. Forgiveness is one of the most difficult parts in the reconciliation process.<sup>24</sup> Thus, it is

<sup>17</sup> H. Cho, *A Study on Resolving Plan*, 63.

<sup>18</sup> This is an application of social integration principle by Durkheim. A mechanism of resolving conflict is divided into the integration of system and the integration of value. J. Park, et al, *A Plan to Build Synthetic System*, 218.

<sup>19</sup> J. Park, et al, *A Plan to Build Synthetic System*, 21.

<sup>20</sup> Eunsik Cho, 'A Wholistic Mission Approach toward Peaceful Reunification of Korea' [in Korean], *Peace and Unification Theology 2* (Seoul: Peace and Mission, 2004), 166-168.

<sup>21</sup> Robert J. Schreiter, *The Ministry of Reconciliation: Spirituality and Strategies* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1998), 4.

<sup>22</sup> Schreiter, *The Ministry of Reconciliation*, 65.

<sup>23</sup> Schreiter, *The Ministry of Reconciliation*, 64.

<sup>24</sup> Schreiter, *The Ministry of Reconciliation*, 56, 55.

difficult to realise either social integration or justice building through forgiveness. Forgiveness is not forgetting the past. Rather, forgiveness is a process of learning a way of remembering the past in a different way, and an ability to live with the past without being bound by it.<sup>25</sup> Human forgiveness is a decision for a different future.<sup>26</sup> After going through the process of repentance and forgiveness, reconciliation is achieved.

However, Christian reconciliation is different. God initiates reconciliation through Christ, because reconciliation is the work of God. He restores the damaged humanity of the victim through a life-giving relationship with God. Forgiveness by the victim and God's grace can lead to the repentance of the offender. Christian reconciliation is as follows: from reconciliation, through forgiveness, and then repentance.<sup>27</sup> According to this diagram, 'repentance and forgiveness are not the preconditions for reconciliation, but are rather the consequences of it'.<sup>28</sup> By following Schreiter's diagram, we must experience restoring our damaged hearts through God's reconciliation toward us.

### *Church's Role for Reconciliation*

Let us examine the church's role in the process of German unification. First, the church contributed to the policy making process of unification by raising a prophetic voice. Second, the church played the role of an agent for the dignity of humans and promotion of human rights. Third, the church led relief works beyond political ideologies. Fourth, the church provided a religious shelter to those who have a different political standpoint. Fifth, the church played the role of an agent of change on the perspective of God's kingdom. Sixth, the church contributed to unification by taking responsibility on the perspective of Christian ethics. Finally, the church contributed to unification in the role of reconciler.<sup>29</sup>

The Korean church is also capable of carrying out the roles that the German church played for the national reunification. In fact, it has already begun its role. First, the Korean church led the unification movement in the 1970s and 1980s. The 1988 Declaration of Reunification by the National Council of Churches of Christ in Korea has had a positive influence on the unification policy of the government. However, the role of the church became less significant on the issue of unification after the civilian government took charge. Second, that a human being is created in God's image and human dignity has been recognised as an important theological

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<sup>25</sup> Schreiter, *The Ministry of Reconciliation*, 66, 124.

<sup>26</sup> Schreiter, *The Ministry of Reconciliation*, 58.

<sup>27</sup> Schreiter, *The Ministry of Reconciliation*, 14, 15, 16, 64-65.

<sup>28</sup> Schreiter, *The Ministry of Reconciliation*, 15.

<sup>29</sup> V. Kuester, 'The Role of the Protestant Church in Germany (Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland – EKD) in the Reunification Process', *Church and World Mission* 19 (2000), 34-36.

basis for the church's engagement with society, including the reunification issue. As the Korean church has regrettably silent about the eroding sense of human dignity in the midst of increased materialism, the Korean church has been divided on the issue of human rights in North Korea. Third, the Korean church has been in the forefront of relief works in North Korea. Due to the sensitive nature of this activity, the churches have not been diligent in sharing this information with the public, which in turn failed to affect the public opinion and action. Fourth, the Korean church is generally conservative, so it has a tendency to avoid relating with political issues, which includes the inter-Korean issues. Fifth, the Korean church has a distinct role in bringing a social and cultural transformation, as North and South Koreans have lived in totally different societies and cultures, in spite of their shared roots. Sixth, in order for the Korean church to build its credibility in taking up this social responsibility, it needs to and ethically. Last, seeing a time of unification get mature, the church as a reconciler should proclaim the message of reconciliation in word, action and its mission.

The church should participate positively in the reconciliation movement. The Korean church should establish a theology of reconciliation that fits the Korean context. Schreiter proposed that reconciliation is more spiritual than a strategy. In order to accomplish reconciliation, it requires a certain spiritual orientation.<sup>30</sup> A church that is based on the spirituality of Jesus Christ can be a community and basis of reconciliation.<sup>31</sup> It is a nation task given to Korean nation and a mission given to the Korean church.

### Conclusion

Johan Galtung once proposed a theory of T+40, in that it takes 40 years to resolve a trauma.<sup>32</sup> In more recent history, Germany took thirty years to heal from the wound of Nazis, Spain took forty to cure the scars of their civil war (1936-1939), and China took forty years to recover from the pain of their civil war.<sup>33</sup> In some aspect, the Korean situation is similar to these. More than a half century has passed since experiencing the division (1945) and the Korean War (1950-1953). That is why reconciliation between the two after the division has been a mission task as well as historical task. Now, the old generation who directly experienced the Korean War is gradually disappearing, and the new generation is becoming the mainstream of society. A central force is shifting to the post-war

<sup>30</sup> Schreiter, *The Ministry of Reconciliation*, vi.

<sup>31</sup> Hee-Mo Yim, 'The Korean War and Mission of Reconciliation between the North and the South: Pain, Remembrance, and Reconciliation' [in Korean], *Christianity and Unification* 1 (2007), 67-73.

<sup>32</sup> J. Park et al, *A Plan of National Integration*, 332.

<sup>33</sup> J. Park et al, *A Plan of National Integration*, 332.

generation. It is very suggestive to us that Joshua led the wilderness-generation into the land of Canaan, not the exodus-generation.

In a sense, unification process has already begun. The most important question is how to affect the process intentionally and complete it. North and South Koreans should get rid of their hostility, distrust, and misunderstanding, restore national homogeneity and cooperate for national unification. Above all, the unification must fulfil national reconciliation and unity. The ultimate goal of unification is to establish one nation and one state. Unification is the way of bringing peace on the Korean peninsula, the reunion of the separated families, restoration of national homogeneity, and national prosperity. This is a national agenda, and the church has an important role to place. At the same time, the church has a kingdom mandate, which makes this national agenda and a missional task. The church is called to be prophetically proactive, and this remains a serious challenge to the church.

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# GLOBALISATION OF THE KOREAN PENTECOSTAL MOVEMENT: THE INTERNATIONAL MINISTRY OF DAVID YONGGI CHO<sup>1</sup>

Myung Soo Park

One of the biggest milestones in the history of modern Christianity is that Christianity does not revolve around the Western world anymore. While Christianity is losing its strength in Europe, often regarded as the centre of Christian civilisation, it is gaining momentum of growth in the traditionally non-Christian countries of South America, Africa, and Asia. Korea is sending out the most missionaries around the world next to the USA, and at the heart of this influential growth of Korean Christianity is David Yonggi Cho.

The international ministry of Cho is connected to the spread of the Pentecostal movement. The Pentecostal movement is spreading as a worldwide phenomenon, and it is being accepted more fervently in the non-Western world. Cho invited pastors from around the world who longed for church growth to Korea and acquainted them with his ministry as an example of success. They would then return to their home countries and graft their findings into their churches. There has been no precedence of such an influential Christian leader in the non-Western world. This study aims to investigate his remarkable international ministry.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This is a revised English translation of Myung Soo Park, 'Globalisation of the Korean Pentecostal Movement: The International Ministry of David Yonggi Cho' [in Korean], *Yongsan Theological Journal* 12 (2008), 7-63.

<sup>2</sup> The only English article on the world ministry of Yonggi Cho, Mark R. Mullins, 'The Empire Strikes Back: Korean Pentecostal Mission to Japan', in Karla Poewe (ed.), *Charismatic Christianity as a Global Culture* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1994), 87-102. A bibliographical resources on Yonggi Cho is available in English: Chang-soo Kang, 'Resources for Studies of David Yonggi Cho', in Wonsuk Ma, William W. Menzies, and Hyeon-sung Bae (eds.), *David Yonggi Cho: A Close Look at His Theology and Ministry* (Baguio, Philippines: APTS Press, 2004), 285. Various useful information on the world ministry of Yonggi Cho is available through the homepage of DCEM, [www.davidcho.com](http://www.davidcho.com), and the online mission magazine of DCEM.

## The Beginning

Cho's Christian faith was conceived and developed through successive encounters with missionaries.<sup>3</sup> From them, he learnt English, Pentecostal faith, and methods for leading large gatherings. These experiences became the basis for Cho to become one of the most influential ministers of our time. His Pentecostal ministry also grew steadily under the influence of Korean culture. After the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950, the proclamation of miracles by Cho was a dream for war-stricken Korean Christians. During the early 1960s, when tens of thousands flocked to the city because of the rise of industrialisation, his positive messages provided a new mindset for Koreans, who had become accustomed to a pessimistic outlook on life.

The year 1964 was an important time for Cho's international ministry. The (U.S.) General Council of the Assemblies of God celebrated its fiftieth anniversary in 1964, to which Cho was invited as a Korean representative. Afterwards, Cho toured around North America for nearly two months, spreading news about the Korean Church.<sup>4</sup> In 1970, he attended the Pentecostal World Conference held in Dallas, Texas, USA, and decided to host the 1973 Pentecostal World Conference in Korea.

In fact, 1973 was an important year in the life of Yoido Full Gospel Church (hereafter YFGC). Due to a rapid increase in membership that year, a new church building was needed. On 23 September 1973, the dedication service was held, and the very next day, YFGC housed the Pentecostal World Conference. The conference was attended by 2,000 worshippers and pastors from 39 different countries around the world; this occasion was said to be the largest influx of foreigners since Gimpo Airport was opened.

After the success of the World Conference in Korea, Cho more actively turned his eyes to the rest of the world. He also felt that he needed to unfold his plans more systematically. Therefore, he established the World Full Gospel Mission (hereafter WFGM) in April 1975. The conception of this mission group coincides with the history of Korean worldwide migration. There is one group that we cannot omit when talking about Cho's international ministry: the Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship (hereafter FGBMF), originally founded by Demos Shakanan and imported to Korea. This group has given the most significant financial support to Cho's international ministry. In the 1990s, after the 1988 Seoul Olympic games and the liberalisation of international travels, Cho started taking interest in extending his ministry to the non-Western world. The mission groups for Russia, West Asia, South East Asia, India, China, and South

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<sup>3</sup> For more information, Myung Soo Park, 'David Yonggi Cho and International/Charismatic Movements', *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 12:1 (2003), 107-28.

<sup>4</sup> David Yonggi Cho, *A 40-Year History of Yoido Full Gospel Church* (in Korean; Seoul: World of Faith, 1998), 114.

America were established in succession. The FGBMF helped Cho's ministry financially and accompanied and supported him during the mission tours. They also made acquaintances with each country's entrepreneurs and sometimes provided help to countries with difficulties. Along with the FGBMF, groups as medical or entertainment groups sometimes accompanied Cho as well.<sup>5</sup>

Cho studied how to help the growth of the churches around the world. The result was the establishment of Church Growth International (hereafter CGI) on 4 November 1976. In order to lead this group, Cho invited his old co-worker John Hurston to become the organisation's chairman and its dean.<sup>6</sup> In 1977, YFGC built the ten-storey World Mission Center, to which well-known pastors from all over the world came to lead various seminars. The seminars had two aims: to invite ministers from other countries to Korea and to hold the seminars by each group. However, visiting Korea is not easy both in terms of finance and time; thus, from the beginning, CGI held its conferences in various countries.

CGI contributed decisively to Cho's international ministry. Most of Cho's international gatherings were held through the invitation of the church in the host nation. Most of the local church leaders who invited Cho had already participated in a CGI Korean gathering or in a regional gathering, and they invited Cho by an inter-church host body.

The most important channel of Cho's international ministry is the world Pentecostal movement. However, he was not confined to it. It was in 1983, during the Amsterdam Conference, when Cho began his intimate relationship with the rest of the evangelical world, stepping over the Pentecostal barrier. Cho participated in this meeting, which was led by Billy Graham, its main speaker, so the CGI also attended as the main host. This gathering was also very important for evangelicals, and thus this occasion helped to raise Cho's prestige.<sup>7</sup>

Cho's position in the Pentecostal movement was very important. When the World Assemblies of God Fellowship was established in Oslo, Norway, in 1992, Cho was inducted as the group's first president. His activities actually changed the direction of YFGC's world mission. Until then, the church had targeted Korean migrants to other countries around the world, for which the above-mentioned WFGM was organised. However, from the early 1990s, YFGC changed its mission focus: from Korean migrants to missions for the non-Western world.<sup>8</sup> This is not unrelated to Korea's economic growth. After the Seoul Olympics in 1988, Korea developed

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<sup>5</sup> Cho, *A 40-Year History*, 184-85.

<sup>6</sup> Nell L. Kennedy, *Dream Your Way to Success* (Plainfield, NJ: Logos International, 1980), 219.

<sup>7</sup> Cho, *A 40-Year History*, 255-56.

<sup>8</sup> Cho, *A 40-Year History*, 339. Because of this mission strategy, a theological college for indigenous people was established mainly in Africa, South America, former communist blocs, and Southeast Asia.

rapidly and Koreans began doing business around the world and increasing tourism to other countries. This coincided directly with the collapse of the Eastern Bloc. Korean churches have a special concern for communist countries, as they have been directly affected negatively by communism.

As we entered the new millennium, Cho planned for more active evangelism tours. He established the David Cho Evangelistic Mission (hereafter DCEM) in March 2000. If CGI is a ministry that connects with the world's church growth specialists, DCEM is more focused on Cho's personal evangelistic ministry, similar to Billy Graham's evangelistic association. Nonetheless, CGI and DCEM complement each other.

## **American Continent**

### *North America*

Cho was largely influenced by the American Pentecostal movement. His missionary orientation was informed by American Christianity, and America was his priority region for ministry when he started. At first, his mission was for Korean immigrants in the United States, but from the 1980s, he began to penetrate into American churches. He held seminars exclusively for American pastors, often hosted by CGI. This further helped Cho expand his ministry, and influence, in North America.<sup>9</sup>

Cho's influence in the U.S. increases through his expanding network. In 1979, when he held a special service to mark the growth of his congregation to one hundred thousand members, he invited Pat Robertson, a well-known Pentecostal preacher and the founder of Christian Broadcasting Network. Naturally, Cho introduced his work via the Christian Broadcasting Network. As a result, he emerged as one with equal status to Oral Roberts and Jack Hayford, well-known leaders of the Pentecostal movement.<sup>10</sup>

Cho continued church growth seminars and evangelistic services in the 1990s. In particular, he held a large-scale evangelistic service in 1997 at Madison Square Garden. In Pennsylvania, in 2003, Cho also preached to Indian immigrants from the region of Kerala. They were holding the twenty-first Pentecostal Conference among the North America Keralites. Since they had already heard Cho's message in India, they invited him. Recently, he spread the Pentecostal faith to American Christians, particularly among newly established independent American churches. They often view Cho's YFGC as their role model.

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<sup>9</sup> Cho, *A 40-Year History*, 175.

<sup>10</sup> Cho, *A 40-Year History*, 166, 257.

### *Central and South America*

It was in 1979 when Cho turned his focus towards Central and South America. In January 1979, he led large-scale crusade and ministry training in Guatemala, Costa Rica, El Salvador, and Mexico. He continued with a large conference in Argentina in March 1987, which is still being heralded as one of the largest Protestant gatherings in South America. Argentina had been a traditionally Catholic nation, but the people, who were looking for more than formalistic faith, began turning to the Pentecostal movement. This trend made Cho more welcome in South America. More importantly, some Marxists and liberation theologians thought of American Christianity as an agent of imperialists, and yet Cho had introduced Christianity to South America as one who comes from the third world, like the South Americans themselves. His mission continued in Panama and Columbia in 1991. In Columbia, Cho emphasised that Christ freed us from condemnation and poverty. He explained that Korea had overcome poverty and despair by the power of the gospel.<sup>11</sup>

In Costa Rica and Guatemala, in 1992, the conferences raised the morale of Korean immigrants in South America.<sup>12</sup> The Chile and Paraguay conferences in 1994 followed the patterns of earlier South American conferences. Up until then, Cho's South American mission conferences had been overseen by CGI, but the 1994 conference was initiated by the South America Mission team of FGBMF of YFGC. Additionally, this conference shared Korean culture by introducing Korean dance and gospel songs to the South Americans. Cho always preached the evangelistic message with prayers for healing. This kind of revolutionary service challenged the formalistic South American Catholic faith.<sup>13</sup>

In Paraguay, Cho received the most enthusiastic welcome. Juan Carlos Wasmosy, then president of Paraguay, invited Cho to his presidential palace. Wasmosy, along with all the members of his cabinet, received prayer from Cho and requested Cho to give the people of Paraguay hope and courage.<sup>14</sup>

The very climax of Cho's South American ministry came in 1997 in Brazil, at the second World Assemblies of God conference.

In the new millennium, an important South American ministry was the crusade held in Honduras and El Salvador in November 2002. A crowd of a hundred thousand gathered in Honduras, in a country whose population is 98% Catholic. In El Salvador, Cho held a lecture on church growth at the

<sup>11</sup> 'Cho's South American Conference' [in Korean], *Full Gospel News* (3 February 1991), 1.

<sup>12</sup> 'New Wave of the Holy Spirit in Central and South America' [in Korean], *Full Gospel News* (23 February 1992).

<sup>13</sup> 'Possess Productive Faith that Constantly Changes' [in Korean], *Full Gospel Family* (13 March 1994), 1.

<sup>14</sup> 'Prayer of Blessing for the President and the Paraguay Cabinet, [in Korean], *Full Gospel Family* (20 March 1994), 1, 12-13.

Elim Church, with church leaders from fifteen countries in attendance. The church, established in 1977, had a gathering of one hundred ten thousand worshippers and the key to its success was a cell system inspired by Cho's. The minister of this church, Pastor Mario Vega, had previously visited the YFGC, learned about its cell system, and adapted it to suit his own country.<sup>15</sup>

Cho tried to find ways to help the poor in a sustainable manner rather than simply giving them sermons on the message of hope. This was realised in the form of Kingdom Business Forums. In Central and South America, he had emerged as not just a Pentecostal movement leader, but as the Korean representation of the one who had overcome poverty through faith.<sup>16</sup>

The Pentecostal movement of Central and South America received much attention from many scholars. In his book *Tongues of Fire*, David Martin explains the role of the Pentecostal movement in the process of the region's modernisation. He claims that the Pentecostal movement contributed to the region's modernisation, just as the Protestant ethic contributed to capitalism. Neither traditional Catholics with ties to the privileged class nor liberation theologians insisting on revolution for the poor had power to give hope to the poor and help them join the middle class.<sup>17</sup> In this manner, Cho's campaign in Central and South America fits nicely into Martin's argument. Cho preached how Korea overcame poverty with the gospel. This message was something the political leaders challenged by liberation theologians would have wanted to hear. Cho spread a message that both the public and their political leaders could support.

## Asia and Oceania

### *Japan: 'Save 10 Million Souls' Campaign*

At the end of the 1970s, Cho's most important world ministry was to Japan. Although the country is known for its notorious resistance against the gospel, it is the country closest to Korea. Ja Shil Choi, Cho's mother-in-law and a ministry partner, always endeavoured to minister to the Japanese. In 1978, returning from a European crusade, Cho felt he heard a voice commanding him to go and evangelise Japan. He launched the 'Save Ten

<sup>15</sup> 'Christ of Hope That Came to Central America', *DCEM* (December 2002), 7-9, 13.

<sup>16</sup> 'Guatemala Meetings: The Message of Hope Resounded in the Center of Maya Civilization', *DCEM* (Winter 2004), 8-11.

<sup>17</sup> David Martin, *Tongues of Fire: The Explosion of Protestantism in Latin America* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1991).

Million Souls' campaign to evangelise 10% of Japan's one hundred million.<sup>18</sup>

For his Japan mission, Cho partnered with WFGM and CGI International. First, in 1977, Cho established the WFGM Japan United Committee in 1976 in Osaka, and held a large conference in Tokyo. However, it was in 1978 that Cho's mission in Japan gained momentum. That year, he established the Far East Theological College in Kobe and held a large-scale gathering at the Tokyo Habiya Public Hall. The following year (1980), Cho also began a new broadcasting ministry.

The most epochal event of the Japan ministry took place in August 1983 at the Tokyo Martial Arts Hall crusade. Until then, Japanese Christian gatherings had rarely exceeded 500 people; during this crusade, nearly 8,000 attended each day. In fact, Cho was the first to hold a religious revival conference in this prestigious hall. Through this successful ministry, he established a church where Korean immigrants and Japanese locals worshipped together. As at YFGC, the church emphasised the cell group service, fasting, and healing.

As the Japan mission grew, the Full Gospel Church of Japan wanted to bring together the whole national Full Gospel family and hold a crusade, so the 'Jesus Festival' was launched.

Cho spread the gospel in Japan in a very direct manner. His message had two emphases: first, that while Japan had been economically successful, without the gospel, their success is empty; and second, that the idol worship must stop.

Many scholars claim that the majority of Japanese believers have a sort of primitive and elemental religious sense; it is difficult for Japanese Christianity to expand as an overemphasis is placed on morality and on faith. However, Cho's Pentecostal movement let the Japanese see miracles, healings, and blessings, which were the sort of gospel experiences the Japanese wanted to see and that could also compete with the Japanese primal religious sense.

### *Southeast Asia*

Cho's mission for Southeast Asia began in December 1978 with the large-scale spiritual gathering in Bangkok to commemorate the 150<sup>th</sup> year of Christianity in Thailand. In the following year, he held a Southeast Asian revival tour, holding conferences in countries such as Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, Pakistan, and Hong Kong.

His Taiwan evangelism began in 1980, and he frequently visited Taiwan afterwards. In 2003, Cho even met Taiwan's President Chen Shui-bian and discussed the Korean-Taiwan cultural and economic relationship. He

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<sup>18</sup> 'Official Ministry 30', *DCEM* (Spring 2007), 7.

invited Taiwanese businessmen to the conference and talked to them about becoming successful by faith.<sup>19</sup>

Cho's full-scale Philippine missions started in February 1982. The conference attracted the attention of Filipinos by the fact that the conference was being led by an Asian, not a Westerner. In this meeting, Cho received approval from the president to establish a Christian Broadcasting Service in the Philippines, fulfilling a long-awaited wish of the Christians in the Philippines.<sup>20</sup>

In May 1982, he was invited to the evangelistic conference organised by the FGBMF International and the Singapore Businessmen, to which Loren Cunningham, the founder of Youth With A Mission, was also invited. In this gathering at the Singapore National Stadium, Cho recommitted himself to the evangelisation of Asia; he had made a similar resolution at the 1978 Billy Graham conference. India has a long Christian history, but since the mid-1980s, it had been rejecting foreigners' evangelistic activities in the country. Cho was credited for reopening India's doors to Christian preaching. In February 1994, he held a gathering in Madras Mariner and a large number of Hindu believers received Christ.

In April 2000, he held an official conference by the invitation of the Myanmar Government. Cho funded \$200,000 worth of medical supplies to help the country, an example of how Cho's mission work includes material support for the nation. Cho went to Singapore from Myanmar and held gatherings in the same month at the Singapore Indoor Gymnasium. Fifty thousand attended each day, and 2,000 were reported to have accepted Christ and experienced healing.<sup>21</sup>

Southeast Asia is a region of traditional religions, such as Hinduism in India, Catholicism in the Philippines, Islam in Indonesia, and Buddhism in Thailand. However, Cho testified on living faith shown through miracles. The responses were fervent. He also provided material aid to countries in poverty. This played a crucial role in gaining the support of the local government.

### *Australia*

In 1979, Cho began an Australian mission. In September 2000, while the Sydney Summer Olympics was ongoing, a crusade was held in Gold Coast, Australia to counter corrupt modern culture and spirit. It is of note that he takes advantage of natural gatherings of people around large events.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>19</sup> *David Cho Evangelistic Mission*, [www.davidcho.com/neweng/Main\\_News.asp?nse1=&no=58](http://www.davidcho.com/neweng/Main_News.asp?nse1=&no=58).

<sup>20</sup> Cho, *A 40-Year History*, 176.

<sup>21</sup> 'Yonggi Cho's Success of Myanmar Mission', *United Church News* (30 April 2000), 10.

<sup>22</sup> 'Gold Coast Profile', *DCEM* (October 2000), 5-8.



### *Middle East*

YFGC's interest in the Middle East started from Israel. In 1966, Cho planned to celebrate 2,000 years since the coming of Christ and to hold a celebration ceremony in Jerusalem with 5,000 Christians from 31 different countries. This gathering, which Robert Schuller also attended, was about celebrating how the gospel began in Jerusalem, went around the world, and came back to Jerusalem. Although Israel does not allow Christian evangelism, Cho, CGI executives, and other participants marched through Jerusalem celebrating the birth of Christ. Through such a public display of Christian faith, Cho intended to communicate the gospel of Christ. This programme also included a trip through the Holy Land for the participants.<sup>23</sup>

Cho's full-scale Middle East mission began in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. This is the most liberal country amongst the Arab nations. Even more full-scale Middle East assemblies were held in Jordan in 2001, where Mohammed Halaiqa, then vice-president of Jordan and the minister of tourism, welcomed him and the delegates. The conference attendees and Cho toured the holy sites in Jordan, and the minister himself guided the Korean delegates. This shows a new pattern in Middle East missions: the nations are eager to attract economically prosperous Koreans as tourists and the governments recognise that Christians have a particular interest in ancient sacred sites.

## **Africa, Europe, and the Communist Bloc**

### *Challenging Nominal Christianity*

Cho was mainly based in Germany for his European ministry. In October 1990, he held the Berlin crusade to celebrate the unification of Germany. This was the first conference where the Christians from both West and East Germany met, significantly led by a pastor from Korea. Cho preached that the recovery of European Christianity would come through obedience to the Holy Spirit.<sup>24</sup> Nevertheless, his European campaign was not always warmly welcomed.

The Pentecostal message hit Scandinavia. Cho held conferences in Oslo, Norway, in 1983 and 1994. The 1994 gathering witnessed powerful healing, which was followed by a street march to serve as wake-up calls to European churches. He also thanked the people of Norway for helping

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<sup>23</sup> Cho, *A 40-Year History*, 345.

<sup>24</sup> 'Berlin Conference Celebrating the Unification of Germany' [in Korean], *Full Gospel Family* (December 1990), 24.

Korea during the Korean War.<sup>25</sup> In December 1994, he continued his ministry in Stockholm, Sweden, where hundreds of thousands attended during each day of the event. In this gathering, singing praise was emphasised and a 300-member gospel music team from Korea and America attended the conference. In this way, the conference provided not only Christian messages but also varieties of Christian celebration.<sup>26</sup>

The European churches wanted to learn from Cho so Cho visited England and France in 1995, and afterwards, in 1996, he also visited Helsinki, Finland. While, in poor countries, Cho emphasised hope through the Holy Spirit, in rich countries, he called for an awakening through the Holy Spirit.<sup>27</sup> The conference became a sound stimulant to dull Northern European Christianity.

In June 1998, a church growth seminar and a faith revival conference were held in Zurich, Switzerland. Cho pointed out the spiritual destitution behind the economic growth of Europe and the fact that European culture was moving towards becoming anti-Christian. As a believer in pre-millennialism, Cho predicted that the European Union would become an enemy of Christ in the last days, emphasising that, in light of this, the European Christians must become the army of Christ.<sup>28</sup>

The most recent conference was held in Germany in 2005. His conferences in Europe were not as successful as those in other countries. However, according to Harvey Cox, the Pentecostal movement is rising anew in Europe.<sup>29</sup> Cho's missions are thought to give courage to the people in this region, emphasising spiritual renewal instead of material blessings.

### Africa

Cho's starting point for his African crusades was in South Africa. In 1993, the first conference was jointly led with Robert Schuller. Cho preached about prayer and Schuller preached about hope.<sup>30</sup> Following the South African campaign, the mission immediately continued in Kenya. After the conference, Cho invited 800 Kenyan leaders to a hotel and spoke to them

<sup>25</sup> 'The Scene of the Holy Spirit Celebration that Awoke Norwegian Churches' [in Korean], *Full Gospel Family* (June 1994), 25-27.

<sup>26</sup> 'Yonggi Cho's Sweden Assembly', *Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship* (January 1995), 44.

<sup>27</sup> 'Flame of the Holy Spirit in North Europe', *Christian United News* (29 June 1996), 1.

<sup>28</sup> Oh Sik Lee, 'Understand Clearly that Being Spiritual Rich Takes Precedence over Material Abundance', *Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship* (July/August 1998), 23-25.

<sup>29</sup> Harvey Cox, *Fire from Heaven: The Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the Twenty-First Century* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1995), 187.

<sup>30</sup> 'David Cho: South Africa Evangelistic Crusade', *Gospel News* (28 March 1993).

about the growth of Korea, emphasising that Kenya had the same hope. He proclaimed hope to the general public, church growth to the pastors, and the national development (of Korea) to the leaders.<sup>31</sup>

In December 1996, an inter-church evangelistic crusade was held in Mauritius, a small African island in the Indian Ocean. This gathering was led by the missionary Wun Kyo Jung, with an invitation extended to the Assemblies of God members of this region. However, the real players behind this crusade were FGBMF and the African Mission. The gathering was a major success for a country with a population that was 60% Hindu.<sup>32</sup>

In June 2000, a large-scale gathering was held in Zambia and Gabon. The Zambian crusade was realised through the personal invitation of the president of Zambia, Chiluba, himself a Christian, who had met and invited Cho in Stockholm. Cho was asked to bring the message of hope and courage to the nation. He proclaimed that Christianity is not just another religion but a life-changing reality, and preached the gospel of hope to the continent of Africa, which was full of despair and disappointment. The president attended the conference, together with his whole cabinet. He also invited Cho to his office and asked for the 'laying on of hands'.<sup>33</sup> In Gabon, Cho emphasised that the gospel can liberate the Africans from AIDS and other diseases. This is the gospel that Africa needs.<sup>34</sup>

In August 2001, gatherings were held in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana. The gathering in Côte d'Ivoire was co-organised by the DCEM and the region's evangelical union. The president himself attended the conference. He invited Cho to his presidential palace and held a special prayer session. The Ghana crusade was similar, except that this time the Ghanaian president offered his private jet to Cho.

The Nigerian crusade was also similar. The Nigerian president, Olusegun Obasanjo, thought that Nigeria needed hope and courage for the country's growth; thus, he invited Cho to hold a large-scale conference. The Nigerian campaign is noteworthy, like other African ventures, because of the fact that the crusade was held with the blessing of the central government. The positive Korean Pentecostal faith that had helped the country overcome hardship had become a great model for Africans.<sup>35</sup>

Africa is in the process of becoming a new Christian continent. The growth of the Pentecostal movement is worthy of close attention in the midst of the poverty and hardship in Africa, just like in South America. Cho also gave practical advice, such as secrets of success to business people. These meetings were greeted most enthusiastically, and the fact that those were organised at the national level is noteworthy. The African

<sup>31</sup> '93 Africa Holy Spirit Assembly', *Christian Culture* (15 April 1993).

<sup>32</sup> 'Small Island Nation and the Wind of the Holy Spirit that Shook the Black-White Conflict', *Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship* (1 October 1996), 32-35.

<sup>33</sup> 'Zambia, Stand Up and Advance', *DCEM* (August 2000), 6-7.

<sup>34</sup> 'Explosion of the Holy Spirit in Bongo Stadium', *DCEM* (August 2000), 10-11.

<sup>35</sup> 'Epic Tale that Broke the Wall of Conflict', *DCEM* (September 2002), 6-11.

people desired Pentecostal positive thinking along with the 'New Community Movement' of Korea.

### *Former Communist States*

The collapse of the Communist bloc opened a new era for missions. The Russian missions began in June 1992 at the Kremlin crusade. However, the unexpected success of Cho's gathering threatened the Russian Orthodox Church and they forbade the Kremlin crusade on the last day. The organisers then had to install temporary outdoor speakers so the conference could continue outdoors.

In 1993, Cho put much effort into former communist countries. He held a conference in Budapest, Hungary, invited by Hungarian Protestant Unions and the Eurasia Mission Group of FGBMF. The conference was attended by the people from the surrounding Eastern European countries. There, Cho emphasised his hope to see this region become the outpost for the Holy Spirit movement, as Hungary was the outpost for democracy in the Eastern Bloc. Healing miracles took place: the deaf could hear and a person who could not use his right arm was healed. The living and powerful truth was demonstrated to the people of the region. As 60,000 people gathered each day, ten large-screen monitors were installed (through a sponsorship by Samsung Electronics Hungary). It became impossible for the large crowd to get a direct view of the stage. The East European Bloc missions happened alongside the development of Korean corporations.<sup>36</sup>

In August 1996, Cho held conferences in the Czech Republic and Ukraine organised by the Eurasian Mission Group. Cho preached the message of hope at the Czech conference, which took place in Prague. During this conference, many Christian entertainment personnel participated and performed Korean traditional dances along the Prague roadsides to evangelise the nation. For the Ukraine conference, held in Dynamo Stadium in Kiev, the conference opened with the performance of the national anthems of both Korea and the Ukraine.

The wind of the Pentecostal spirit blew across Central Asia as well. In 1998, conferences were held in Kazakhstan, organised by Korean churches in the country. In August 2004, the 'Mongolia Harvest 2004' crusade was held at the Ulaanbaatar Central Stadium in the capital city.

At the collapse of Communist bloc, Cho initiated the Pentecostal movement in the region. His Pentecostal message was welcomed by the people, but could not develop fully due to the interference of the government and the Orthodox Church. However, it achieved exceptional success in Mongolia because of the good relations with the government.

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<sup>36</sup> 'Opening of the Hungary Gospel Crusade for the First Time in East Europe' [in Korean], *Full Gospel Family News* (5 December 1993), 1; 'Grace of God to Hungary' [in Korean], *Full Gospel Family News* (12 December 1993), 1.

### Analysis and Evaluation

David Yonggi Cho is one of the most representative evangelists in the world of our time, along with Billy Graham. He was born into a family of a non-Christian religion and received Jesus Christ as his Lord and Saviour when he was close to death. After experiencing divine healing, he overcame poverty and despair through the hope given by Jesus Christ. Thus, his message of God's favour for his children comes from what he experienced in his own life.

His pastoral ministry also coincides with the national process of overcoming poverty. With his experience, he could highlight that Jesus Christ is the true hope to the world, especially for the Third World. This fundamentally distinguishes him from traditional evangelists of Western countries. Nonetheless, the successful ministry of Cho requires more adequate investigation and explanation. The author breaks down this point of explanation into several areas.

First, Cho's international ministry is intimately related to Korea's globalisation.

Second, his international ministry is carried out by well-structured organisations such as CGI. Harvey Cox maintained that Cho's church demonstrated 'the absolutely dazzling organizational genius'.<sup>37</sup>

Third, his conferences always satisfied a variety of demands. His gatherings were basically in two forms: church growth seminars for pastors and large-scale crusades for the general public. It is interesting that he sometimes holds separate meetings for business entrepreneurs or local leaders, depending on the situation. This is because, in his mind, by fostering change in the nation's leaders, society can also experience transformation. By meeting with national leaders (premiers, presidents, etc.) during the conferences, he also emphasises his message that the nation can overcome poverty through faith, while also drawing the attention of the media. This demonstrates that his influence surpasses the religious realm and affects the general society as well. Allan Anderson asserts that the most important characteristic of Cho's ministry was that it contextualised the gospel according to a certain time and place.<sup>38</sup>

Fourth, Cho's messages are fundamentally Pentecostal, strictly evangelical, and, at the same time, situational.<sup>39</sup> Unlike traditional evangelistic conferences, his gatherings demonstrate the Pentecostal faith as Cho powerfully acts out the healing services. This is something that differentiates his ministry from that of Billy Graham's, for example. In

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<sup>37</sup> Cox, *Fire from Heaven*, 231.

<sup>38</sup> Allan Anderson, 'The Contribution of David Yonggi Cho to a Contextual Theology in Korea', *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 12:1 (2003), 85-105.

<sup>39</sup> Seung Hwan Lee, 'Missiological Evaluation of the Twentieth Century World Revival Mission' (ThM thesis, Hansei University Youngsan Graduate School of Theology, 2004), 114-25.

addition, as a Korean Christian who has overcome poverty by faith, he can proclaim to the Third World that Christ is not only a spiritual saviour but he also has the power to liberate us from poverty and condemnation, here and now. Cho also challenges traditional faith with his Pentecostal beliefs. He stresses that Christianity is not a mere religion but the living truth. With this living faith, he challenges the Catholics of Africa and South America and the Protestants of Europe, who are deep into formalistic practices of faith and not are experiencing the living power of faith. Also, in the former communist blocs, he warns about the danger of atheism and proclaims the power of faith. Phillip Jenkins argued that global Christianity of the twenty-first century in South America and Africa prefers primitive messages of divine healing and liberation from poverty in the Bible to the intellectual and moral interpretation of Western theology.<sup>40</sup> Cho's messages reflected this global theology.

Fifth and finally, his international ministry is closely related to the world expansion of the Pentecostal movement and is also connected to the Charismatic movement. He has deep fellowship with evangelicals such as Billy Graham and he has spoken at the National Association of Evangelicals (of USA) by invitation.

The English philosopher John Locke claimed that religion of the modern period should include miracles and morals.<sup>41</sup> In modern society, where no one can depend on the government's compulsory power over individual religion, supernatural miracles of God will confirm Christianity as the true religion; in the morally degenerated modern society, religion must perform the role of maintaining basic social morals. The Pentecostal movement and Cho succeeded in the first aspect, but failed in the second. The power of the Spirit is not only in the performance of a supernatural miracle but also in the moral force, encouraging the pursuit of new life in a sinful world. Cho mentioned success but did not generally stress the right means to achieve success and how successful people should spend their blessings. Christianity is being globalised more than ever before, and it is the Pentecostal movement which is leading this globalisation of Christianity. In this respect, Cho is an important subject in the study of the Christian history of the twenty-first century.

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<sup>40</sup> Phillip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity* (New York: Oxford, 2002), 124-31.

<sup>41</sup> John Locke, *The Reasonableness of Christianity with a Discourse of Miracle and Part of a Third Letter Concerning Toleration*, ed. & abridged, with intro. by I.T. Ramsey (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1958).

# MISSION ENGAGEMENT OF A LOCAL CHURCH THE CASE OF ANYANG FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, ANYANG CITY, KOREA

Sung-wook Hong

## Introduction

The rapid growth of the Korean church in the twentieth century is a story that's widely known to the world. Much research has been undertaken on this rapid growth, saying that one of the major factors for it is the characteristic of the Korean Protestant church to be mission oriented. Historically speaking, the Korean Protestant church was started on the basis of the so-called three-self principle: self-supporting, self-governing, and self-evangelising. In this spirit, from the early days of the Protestant church in Korea, it has sent missionaries to Jeju Island, to China, and eventually all over the world.

However while the Protestant churches in Korea achieved record growth in the past, today many of them have lost their missionary spirit. In this personal reflection, I would like to issue a wake-up call for the Korean church to recover and regain the missionary spirit of its early era. The main purpose of this study is to share our experience of church growth by a missional church model so that the Korean church in its present state of stagnation or recession may regain its revitalisation, not only to grow in number but, more importantly, in its spirituality. If the church longs for and allows the Holy Spirit to ignite every believer and church in Korea, the Korean church will certainly be reawakened to be a unique instrument for God's kingdom.

In this study, I plan to begin with a brief discussion on the theology of a missional church and a short introduction of the church, then apply the theology of the missional church to Anyang First Presbyterian Church where I have been serving as senior pastor since 2003. The study concludes with suggestions for local churches that desire to embrace the posture of a mission-oriented church. According to the recent statistics of the Protestant Church of Korea (PCK), to which Anyang Church belongs, the PCK ranks among the three fastest growing churches in a ten-year period out of 8,800 congregations. This growth is primarily the work of God's grace; I argue that, secondarily, it is due to the mission-oriented ministry of the church.

### *Anyang First Presbyterian Church*

Since 1392, the town has functioned as a suburb of Seoul, located about ten kilometres south of the nation's capital city. In recent years, the population has grown dramatically, reaching 6.4 million today. Anyang First Presbyterian Church began in 1930 at the building of Anyang Youth Club near the rail station. While most churches in Korea at that time were established by western missionaries, Anyang Church was initiated by around fifteen Korean Christians. Many were workers and small shop owners who worked near the rail station, which also served as the centre of the business district of this small town.

As Christianity as a whole expanded in the past, Anyang Church also grew quite quickly consistently. However, the church began to lose its energy and vision and soon stopped its growth around the year 2000. There were two major reasons. First, this phenomenon of stagnation was widespread throughout the nation. Korean Christianity, especially Protestantism, stagnated and began to decline at the end of the last century. Second, there were several internal issues in the church, particularly concerning church leadership. In fact, the combination of these two factors seriously impacted church life and had a devastating effect on its growth. Consequently, church membership decreased rapidly, church finance was in trouble, and there were endless divisions and tensions among church members.

With the installation of a new senior pastor in August 2003, the church began to gain new momentum with a new vision and enthusiasm. Also, several significant changes to church life and ministry were introduced by the new leader. The most prominent has been the introduction of the missional church values and its application to its ministry. The church has been introducing a number of new holistic mission work in different parts of the world, and these are all new to the church.

### **Theology of Missional Church**

According to Leonard Sweet of Drew University, there are four types of churches in the world (the 4-M church models):<sup>1</sup>

1. Missional Churches: The purpose of these churches is totally committed to mission, so all ministerial programmes are oriented towards holistic mission work. To Sweet, this church model is the closest to the model of the church presented by the scriptures and is, thus, regarded as the highest model of the church. Consequently, budgets and human resources of the churches are focused on mission work rather than on internal ministries.

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<sup>1</sup> Leonard Sweet, *Soul Tsunami: Sink or Swim in New Millennium Culture* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1999), 308.



2. Ministerial Churches: The main purpose of these churches is ministry to their own people; thus, a priority for all efforts and programmes is placed on church member care. All worship services, pastoral visitations, prayer meetings, fellowships, summer outings, and other ministries are aimed at the care of existing members. The response (or 'satisfaction rate') of the church members is the most important indicator in evaluating the effectiveness of the ministerial programmes and personnel. Budget and facilities are oriented to facilitate this priority.
3. Maintenance Churches: These churches are committed to the maintenance of church traditions and properties, having lost enthusiasm and energy for engagement with society while increasing its ministry. In fact, this type of churches runs the risk of becoming less than a church.
4. Museum/Monument Churches: They are the worst model. There is no energy and will to move forward as a group of God's people. They live in the glory of the past, often recalling past stories and glory, but there is no present reality that suggests having vision or desire. They remind one of the church in Sardis in Revelation 3:1 '...I know your deed; You have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead'

Every theology should be based on text and context; that is, the concept of a missional church should begin with the Bible. Traditional studies of what the church is have mostly been done through systematic theological approaches. However, quite a number of missiologists have studied the church on the basis of the Book of Acts more than any other book in the Bible, providing a substantial amount of resources regarding the nature of the church.

In the Book of Acts, we see two representative models of the church: the Jerusalem church (ch. 2) and the Antioch church (ch. 13). In simplistic terms, the Jerusalem church would be the representative model of a traditional church, which puts its emphasis on worship service and member care. In comparison, the Antioch church was fully oriented towards mission vision and mission work. In other words, the Jerusalem church moved inwardly, while the Antioch church took an outward direction.

At the dawn of the new century in Korea, I contend that the Korean church needs to follow the Antioch model, as most Protestant churches in Korea are now stagnant and Christian faith has been challenged and even attacked by secular media. Under these circumstances, Korean churches must stand firm and begin to deeply commit to mission and to engagement with society.

The Anyang First Presbyterian Church used to represent the ministerial church in its outlook and orientation. When I assumed the leadership of the church as senior pastor in 2003, I changed the direction of the church based

on the missional church principles: from a ministerial church to a missional church.

### **Application of the Missional Church Concept: Mission Engagement**

Under the new vision and leadership, and with God's favour upon the church, Anyang First Presbyterian Church's registered membership has increased drastically from 5,400 in 2003 to 16,000 in 2015, including children and youth. Its annual budget also tripled during the same period. The main sanctuary was completely renovated, while several nearby properties were incorporated into the church campus, including a new building dedicated to the youth and young adults ministries. This external growth is a natural outcome of an internal transformation: the mind and attitude of the members is more focused on serving others and the world in the name of the Lord through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. The correlation between the missional church approach and its rapid numerical and spiritual growth has generated a positive reputation as a model church with a missional orientation. The church now receives many visitors and observers, not only from various parts of the nation but also from many different countries. In addition to an increasing number of individual visitors, the church hosts an average of ten group delegates representing ten churches per year. Here are the major missional ministries of the church.

#### *Sending Missionaries to the World*

In 2003, Anyang Church sent only one missionary, to Brazil. With much emphasis on the importance of mission through sermons and Bible teachings, many members have since dedicated themselves to missionary work in various modes. They range from ordained ministers to medical professions, church planters, and relief workers. They also serve as either short term (less than one year) or long term (over 1 year) workers. Now the church sends missionaries to various parts of the world.

In Anyang Church, the theological value of missionary commission is found in Acts 1:8: 'But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth'. Following this missionary paradigm, mission candidates are prepared both spiritually and ministerially through a training program. They are commissioned for missionary work locally and internationally.

Anyang Church has developed a particular commitment to missionary work for North Korea. Currently, three mission workers are actively ministering to border areas between North Korea and China. Annually, approximately 7,000 to 10,000 North Koreans are estimated to visit their relatives in the northeastern part of China, the so-called 'east-north three provinces' in China. The visitors usually stay in the area for three months.

Our missionaries establish contact with them in various ways to communicate the gospel to them. Through this ministry of the church, between ten and twenty North Koreans receive the gospel and are baptised each year. To date, through this ministry, more than 200 North Koreans have been baptised in China. Anyang Church has a special mission group called the 'Riverside Mission Support Team' to support and participate in this work. The team maintains a group of 20 to 30 members ready at any time to go to the northern part of China to provide support to this mission. The members of the support team stay with North Korean visitors, living, eating, talking, and walking together on a daily basis in order to present the gospel to them. Usually the team brings used clothes collected by church members for the North Korean visitors to take with them to sell in North Korea in the form of a cash gift.

Recently, it was reported that several underground churches have surfaced through those who became believers during their visit to China. According to another report by a mission organisation working in North Korea and among its people, there are approximately 500-700 underground churches in North Korea, even though the state secret police has been furiously canvassing the whole country to search for and stop them from emerging.

### *Deploying Outreach Teams*

Every year, approximately 20 outreach mission teams are sent by the church to various countries. In general, the duration of their ministry is between one to three weeks. For the average Christian in Korea, mission work in a cross-cultural setting comes with high anxiety. Thus, group evangelistic outreach is a good entry point to missionary work without unduly heavy commitment. Once successful in short-term mission work, members can consider a long-term mission commitment in due course.

For the preparation of such mission engagements, the church usually requires and provides four-month training. The candidates study the culture, traditional religion, and societal characteristics of the target mission field. The group also organises prayer meetings and sessions to share experiences of mission work. Through the training, they not only acquire a better understanding of the target culture and people, but also deepen their commitment to the saving grace of Christ and love for the people.

A surprising development took place when some members of the disabilities congregation of the church began to join our outreach mission teams. In 2013, ten deaf members went to the Philippines for a week to undertake an evangelistic ministry to the Filipino deaf. The process and outcome of this ministry was extremely effective, empowering, and encouraging.

### *Holistic Ministries in the Church*

The church has embraced the holistic vision of ministry as found in the Bible. God gives privileged attention to the poor, marginalised, and needy. Jesus' life demonstrates this: he spent most of his time with them and cared for them. On this foundation, the church has put its emphasis on holistic mission work. The following are specific mission programmes that express this conviction.

#### MINISTRY AMONG THE DISABLED

Anyang Church has organised three disability groups: deaf, blind, and mentally disabled. There are around 100 who are part of these groups. They are an integral part of the main congregation, as central rows in the main sanctuary have been carefully reserved for them and their volunteers. Around 200 volunteers have been trained and assigned to assist them. Each Sunday, the volunteers worship with them and participate in all their activities in the church. Volunteer training continues throughout year, both for new and existing volunteers. This not only encourages and increases members with disabilities, but has also exerted a significant impact on the whole congregation. The church made a subtle but important theological reform, as the weight of emphasis transferred from fellowship (*koinonia*) to serving (*diakonia*). Also the church began to recognise the diversity in the body of Christ and that weak members have a rightful or even privileged place in the church. This further affected non-believers throughout the city. As a result, a number of non-Christian volunteers joined the church, and eventually became Christians.

#### MINISTRY AMONG INTERNATIONAL MIGRANT WORKERS

As the Korean economy has grown rapidly in the last thirty years, many international migrant workers have rushed to Korea, mainly from Asia and Africa. Also observed in recent years is an increase in international marriages; thus, many families with non-Korean spouses, such as Filipino and Vietnamese, are found in Anyang and its vicinity. To respond to this changing social demography, Anyang Church has organised international congregations for worship services and activities in English, Chinese, and Vietnamese. Approximately 120 internationals worship each Sunday with 80 volunteers. The church also arranges any necessary legal and medical assistance for internationals and their families.

#### CARING FOR TEENAGER ORPHANS AND BROKEN FAMILIES

As in many developed and developing countries in the world, Korea today faces a steady erosion of family values and structure. This is particularly true in urban centres like Anyang. An alarming number of children and

youths are living without parents. Sometimes they are looked after by elderly grandparents, but many survive all by themselves. Their main source of income is an extremely inadequate government grant. The church began to create support groups to provide for them, not only economically but also spiritually. Furthermore, the church operates academic support programmes for them so that their family and economic difficulties would not negatively impact their academic performance. The church firmly believes that education is one sure way to cut the cycle of poverty. The groups also organise regular outdoor activities and camp meetings. The volunteers fully participate with them in all the programmes.

#### MINISTRY FOR THE SINGLE ELDERLY

Traditionally, an extended family system functioned as a social security provision for the aged. However, as the traditional family system has eroded and practically collapsed in urban settings, the elderly population in extreme poverty has surged. The most challenging are those who live alone. This is the most vulnerable population that central and local governments struggle to handle. The society as a whole has not yet developed any adequate public social care system, and the elderly generation is left with no safety net. To provide meaningful assistance, the church has built a partnership with the city council and Christian business establishments. Applying the holistic vision of Christ's ministry, the church provides food and bathing service with specially equipped facilities for the disabled elderly. The church also pays for their medical insurance so that they can avail of medical services. The church also provides social and spiritual support, knowing that the most devastating challenge for the elderly single is loneliness. The church runs a school for them every Thursday, where various social sectors provide helpful information while the elderly can interact and fellowship with one another. The church also plans and supports overseas trips for selected members of the group.

#### FAMILY RESTORATION MINISTRY

The church takes the family as the foundational unit of society and Christian life based on scriptural teachings. In order for the church to undertake an intentional ministry to strengthen and transform vulnerable and broken families, a special department was created with three pastors specifically dedicated for the family recovery ministry. They minister among families whose marriage relationships are in danger of breaking. The church also organises various seminars on healthy married life and communication skills, as well as sessions for targeted groups, such as pre-marital couples, newly married couples, single moms, widows, and widowers. Counselling services are also offered throughout the year. Sound biblical teaching is creatively communicated through various activities,

both indoor and outdoor. Any group activity involving couples promotes an intimate relationship and restores communication.

These ministries have been welcomed by both church members and non-Christian families. Many families that are either already broken or about to break have been fully restored or are on the way to restoration. Also, through such experiences, the family's Christian life grows stronger, while others (for example, non-believing spouses) in the family became Christians.

#### SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME

The church has built a sizeable scholarship fund and runs a scholarship programme. From this revolving fund, more than 100 Korean and international students in various levels receive assistance each year. The beneficiaries include the young and the youth orphans (as seen above).

The fund continues to grow as many church members donate towards the fund, often to mark a special life event. The most common of them are in a form of a memorial at the death of parents, to celebrate marriages, to mark anniversaries of marriage and death, or as a gesture of thanksgiving on birthdays. By the end of 2014, the fund had reached two million US dollars.

#### *A Summer Week of Evangelism*

Since 2004, the church has instituted an evangelistic program for a week every August. A large number of members are trained and commissioned to parts of the nation where the evangelisation rate is low, often islands and mountain communities. In 2014, around 1,000 church members joined this ministry. The church believes that mission is not a matter of words but of practice. Many members spend their summer vacation by participating in this mission programme. Actual activities include medical service, hair cutting and dressing, house repairing, and Bible camp for children, fully utilising the various professional gifts of the participants. All mission work in this week are undertaken in close cooperation with local churches. As a result, the local churches are encouraged and strengthened while new members are added. This programme also benefits Anyang Church in a significant way: the mission-oriented church life is strengthened. It is observed that, after this week of mission, attendance to mission prayer meetings and evangelistic activities markedly increases.

#### *Strategic Global Ministries*

The church has also carried out several strategic programmes to contribute to the shaping of tomorrow's global Christianity and its mission. The academic experience of the senior pastor in a global setting has brought his

global perspective and international network to the scope of the church's missionary vision. There are two particular examples to be mentioned to illustrate this dimension of mission engagement. First, as an extension of the church's commitment to the nurturing of next generation Christian leadership (see above), the church has adopted global Christian leaders pursuing PhD studies. One of them is a Pakistani church leader doing his studies in the United Kingdom. The church's partnership with this leader will have a strategic impact on the theological institution and the large denomination in Pakistan, where he already exercises his leadership. The church is committed to similar global partnerships.

Second, the church also regularly hosts international conferences of church and mission leaders. As recently as 2014, the Stott-Bediako Forum of the Gospel and the World Today was held at the church. A global scholarly conference jointly hosted by the Oxford Centre for Mission Studies and the International Fellowship for Mission as Transformation, the forum drew key mission leaders and scholars from around the world and explored new mission agenda for global Christianity. As the delegates joined the church's Wednesday evening worship, the church as a whole shared the global vision of the church leadership and the delegates.

### **Application of Missional Church Concept: Towards Mission Formation**

How to re-orientate Christian life, both individually and corporately, around mission is an ongoing quest for the church. Mission programmes and activities are only external expressions of internally shaped missional life. The church, thus, reconfigured its entire ministry programme as part of an ongoing missional formation. Some of the mission-specific discipleship programmes are shared here.

#### *Prayer Meetings for Missionaries*

As the 40 missionaries of the church work in different social and religious contexts, the prayer meetings are organised according to their contextual challenges. Thus, each group takes up one focus, such as Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu, and Communist worlds. The monthly prayer meetings for missionaries provide personal information of the missionaries in the particular context, general information on culture and religion, and insight on particular challenges posed to missionary work. The prayer groups pay specific attention to the prayer requests sent by the missionaries. When any missionary is in the country during the prayer meetings, he or she and his or her family are invited to share their experiences and prayers.

This programme is important on at least two levels. First, the church members are connected with each missionary in a personal way. Second,

this powerfully reminds the church that missionary work is spiritual in nature; therefore, prayer is the bedrock of all missionary activities.

### *Gospel Festival of the Youths*

Various youth groups of the church plan for and host an evangelistic programme for non-believing youths. Usually the main event takes place at a local theatre, to which target friends are invited. They watch a pre-selected movie together. This is followed by the presentation of video clips or letters prepared by group members, often sharing the gospel to friends. Then, in a small group setting, youth members share their testimonies with the invited guests, focusing on the impact of the gospel in bringing transformative power to our life. This session is followed by an open question and answer session on Christian faith. Each year, two or three 'festivals' are organised, and the church witnesses the addition of 200 to 300 new youth members to the youth groups.

This experience helps the church in three particular areas: First, the unchanging gospel should be communicated to the changing world. The youth generation has a unique way of connecting and communicating with each other. Second, everyone has a story to tell; thus, every believer, young and old, is called to share the good news of Christ. Third, the church should go to places where people are, instead of waiting for them to come to the church building. The whole process may be termed an incarnational model of evangelism.

### *Missionary Programme of the Children's Church*

As I have written already, the church's missional orientation includes the entire age range, and the children's church is not an exception. There are two annual programmes that are specifically designed for the participation of children and for their missional formation. On Parent's Day (as Korea honours both mothers and fathers) in May, the children of the church invite their non-Christian parents to the church. As the children and their parents worship together, the church gives a small gift to each parent, while stressing the importance of Christian values to the growing children. This is indirect evangelism as love for children is a common value. After the worship, they also enjoy a meal together, prepared by the church. This is, first of all, for them to appreciate the church's care for their children, especially through moral and spiritual teaching. A good number of the parents later join the church, although the programme's main objective is not evangelism. On Teachers' Day (a national holiday), the children invite their school teachers to the church, especially those who are not Christian (as they are available on Sundays). They participate in a similar programme with their students: worship, a shared meal, and other activities. The main purpose of this is, again, not evangelism, but to express a warm



appreciation for the teachers' dedicated work in educating their children by the members of the church. As part of the community, the church joins in this act of gratitude. Also, the church wishes to help them to appreciate its efforts in child development, especially in holistic formation. These programmes help the church connect with the local community, while making the church a place both for believers and non-believers in the area.

### *'Open House' Day*

Today, the church has about 400 house cell groups for its adult members. The church designates an 'open house' day to invite non-Christian neighbours, relatives, and friends to the cell groups. It is much easier for non-believers to come to a friend's house than to go to the church. The 'open house' day's programme is intentionally geared to the invited non-believing friends. They select songs carefully. Much time is allocated for open sharing among the members where they freely speak of their daily life in the Christian faith. The highlight of the day is sharing a meal together. Each member family of the cell group prepares food to share. As all programmes come to end, the cell leader expresses his or her appreciation for everyone's presence and briefly shares his or her experiences with Christ. The general mood of the meeting is rather casual and informal, with enough space for personal interaction. Therefore, the invited guests hear the presentation of the gospel with relative openness. Often, they are invited to come to the church on the following Sunday.

All the programmes, including the message, songs, and the entire worship services, are specifically designed and planned to receive the invited non-believers. The guests are accompanied by their hosts and they sit together at worship. A small gift is presented and the whole congregation welcomes them. The worship is followed by a community meal. Through this regular event, the church adds an average of 300-500 new believers to its church family.

### **Towards the Full Vision of a Missional Church**

In recent years, churches in general have experienced stagnation and decline as the social context becomes more secular and materialistic. The desires and lifestyle of the general population have shifted over the decades, and churches struggle to find the right way to relate with people. These challenges, formidable as they are, should have been taken as an opportunity to revitalise the missionary call of the churches. Unfortunately, however, the general mood of the churches is towards survival; thus, many churches in Korea can be categorised as ministerial or maintenance churches. They predominantly focus on the internal ministries within the church, such as worship services and fellowship among its church members. Because of this attitude, further worsened by a public rage

against the moral failures of some church leaders, churches in Korea have been losing the trust of society. In a recent survey on the accountability index, among three major religious groups of Korea, the Protestant church ranks the last, while the Roman Catholic ranks the first, followed by Buddhism.<sup>2</sup>

This is in stark contrast to the role of the church in its early years. Korean Protestant Christianity was internally dynamic with a clear missionary vision. With its moral awareness, it set a moral standard for society, as Christians embodied this ideal. Christians were trusted and respected even if they were often marginalised and even persecuted. Their honesty and integrity earned the respect of merchants, politicians, and government sectors. Although the Christian population was still marginal, for example, in the Independence Declaration against the Japanese rule in 1919, Christians were disproportionately represented in the movement's official signatories.

In the fast-changing society, the Korean church is called to regain its respect through moral integrity and bold commitment to the transformation of Korean society. There may be several different ways to achieve this radical vision of the church, but I argue that applying the missional church concept is a priority. Holistic mission is a teaching of the scripture. Churches in Korea have no time to hesitate: there is an urgent call to rise beyond the current challenge, change attitude and orientation out of maintenance mode, and move towards becoming missional churches and practicing holistic missions. The experience of Anyang First Presbyterian Church in the past ten years gives me, and the church, full confidence that our conviction on the missional church vision is rightly placed. Our journey as a local congregation will continue as new opportunities open before us. At the same time, we will constantly discern the changing landscape of society both here and abroad, and rely on the empowering work of the Holy Spirit. This gives me strong hope for the future of the Korean church.

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<sup>2</sup> Heung-shik Cho, 'A 2013 Survey of Social Attitude towards Religions' (a plenary presentation at the seminar of Action Movement for Christian Ethics, Seoul, February 2014).

# **EVANGELISM AND CHURCH PLANTING: A STRATEGY FOR THE GROWTH AND MISSION OF THE KOREAN CHURCH**

Julie C. Ma

## **Introduction**

It has been 130 years since the Korean church received the gospel through Western missionaries. Although its history of having a Christian presence is relatively shorter than other Asian countries (such as India, China and Japan), its growth and missionary consciousness have made it stand out among them. These two phenomena (growth and missionary commitment), however, grew out of one and the same desire: its eagerness to share the gospel both within and without the country. This was expressed in two missionary actions: evangelism and church planting.

Korea, like many Asian nations, is multi-religious: Buddhism and Confucianism are historic religions, but Shamanism prevailed as an indigenous religious foundation. When Christianity was introduced, Korea was already crowded with both organised and imbedded religions. Catholicism, which was introduced in 1779, had to face harsh state persecution as the Yi Dynasty had been founded upon Confucian philosophy. This created a direct religious conflict between Christianity, a new arrival and very Western in its outlook, and Confucianism, now the state religion and fully incorporated into Korean society. Christianity, Catholicism, and Protestantism had to survive this inclement and often harsh social context.

This socio-religious context must have played an important role in its missional formation and the shaping of the understanding and practice of the church's missionary engagement. Because of the challenging circumstances, one had to make an intentional decision to be a Christian. Those who did became acutely aware of the 'price to pay to follow the Lord'. One tangible outcome of this unique missional formation was eagerness in evangelism and church planting. As a result, Christianity grew rapidly in number and a major missionary movement was born in Korea. In the cross-cultural mission work, this missional formation produced an almost predictable outcome: the highest proportion of Korean missionaries was involved in evangelism and church planting.

This study is an attempt to explain why the Korean church has placed its primary missionary emphasis on evangelism and church planting, both inside and outside of Korea. This emphasis, I contend, has fuelled the growth of Korean Christianity and its missionary movement. This study

begins with a short list of possible factors that have influenced the missional formation of the Korean Church to concentrate on evangelism and church planting as Christianity established its roots in the Korean soil. Then, it will observe the Korean missionaries' primary emphasis on evangelism and church planting. Finally, my study concludes with a reflection on this focus and the issues arising from this narrow focus. An assumption that runs throughout the study is that the focus on evangelism and church planting inside and outside of Korea shares its impetus from the same passion for evangelism.

### **Elements of Influence on Evangelism and Church Growth in the Korean Church**

In this section, I will discuss several influencing factors that made the Korean Church focus on church growth and evangelism.

#### *Role Model of Early Protestant Missionaries to Korea*

Horace G. Underwood (Presbyterian) and Henry Appenzeller (Methodist) arrived from America in the same year, 1885. They were among the earliest missionaries to Korea. Often they had a time of prayer with other missionaries and made evangelistic mission trips into the northern part of Korea. Underwood made frequent mission trips to this area and gradually established forty churches across the country. His chief desire was to establish churches in different regions and cities. His mission vision was not only to evangelise individuals, but also to Christianise all of Korea. Along with evangelism and church planting, Underwood's other desire was to be involved in advancing education and building hospitals through which Christians could demonstrate the love of Christ to those who suffered from diseases. He was also interested in being involved in social politics, economics, and publishing.<sup>1</sup> He served for thirty years in Korea.

The other missionary who was devoted to mission work in Korea was J.C. Crane (Presbyterian) from America. He arrived in 1913 and learned the Korean language rapidly and soon was able to speak at youth conferences and churches. His language abilities were so good that 'he spent seven years working with the British and Foreign Bible Society on a translation of the Bible into Korean'. Afterward, he was assigned to move to Soonchun, one of the cities dedicated to evangelism, church planting, and education. During periods of his mission work in that city, Crane established more

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<sup>1</sup> 'Trace of Mission Work of the Earliest Missionaries: Underwood and Appenzeller in Korea' ([http://www.yeslaw.org/sub\\_read.html?uid=4912](http://www.yeslaw.org/sub_read.html?uid=4912), April 2013).

than seventy churches, and many of those churches are now big, flourishing congregations.<sup>2</sup>

### *Revival and the Spread of the Gospel*

A correlation between revivals and evangelism is generally known. The most known early revival in Korea took place in 1907 and was the watershed of expansion of the Korean church. The process of this revival actually began in Wonsan four years earlier (1903) among missionaries serving in Korea.<sup>3</sup> Word of this revival and its effect spread and reached Pyongyang. A huge revival broke out at Jangdaehyun Church, when the yearly men's Bible class met for two weeks with a daily average attendance between 800 to 1,000. When national leaders began to publicly confess their sins, including bitterness towards the missionaries, the revival spread like wildfire. Following this climactic event, the revival continued across the country for several more years before finally coming to an end.<sup>4</sup> A missionary recorded his eyewitness account:

Like an uncontrolled wildfire the revival spread and increased in intensity until the entire country was affected. Even the missionaries became involved. By the time the revival came to an end, thousands of persons had experienced an intensity of religious emotion that had previously seemed impossible.<sup>5</sup>

The timing of the revival was critical. According to missionary historian Allen Clark, "These were thrilling and important years in the development of the Korean Church.... The Korean Church was benefited because, in a time of political crisis, it was engaged in an absorbing campaign which, amid the defeated temporal, raised aloft the spiritual and eternal."<sup>6</sup>

This 'movement of the Holy Spirit of God' brought spiritual rejuvenation, reconciliation between missionaries and national leaders, a movement of repentance, and most significantly, a commitment to sharing the gospel with fellow Koreans.<sup>7</sup> An all-out evangelistic movement was born, called the 'Million Souls Movement'. Its goal was to increase total church membership by one million persons, although the outcome was far from this ambitious goal. Nonetheless, throughout the post-revival period,

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<sup>2</sup> Daniel J. Adams, *Korean Theology in Historical Perspective* (Delhi: Allianz Enterprises, 2012), 38.

<sup>3</sup> Dukju Lee, *The Early Story of the Korean Church* (Seoul: Hongsungsa, 2007), 158-62.

<sup>4</sup> D. J. Adams, *Korean Theology in Historical Perspective*, 26. See also Younghoon Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea: Its Historical and Theological Development* (Oxford: Regnum Books, 2009), 24-33; Sungdeuk Oak, *The First Great Revivals: Pictorial History of Korean Protestant Christianity, 1900-1910* (Seoul: Hongsungsa, 2009), 232-40.

<sup>5</sup> D.J. Adams, *Korean Theology in Historical Perspective*, 27.

<sup>6</sup> D.J. Adams, *Korean Theology in Historical Perspective*, 30.

<sup>7</sup> D.J. Adams, *Korean Theology in Historical Perspective*, 27, 31.

there was a strong emphasis on evangelism by mobilising all believers with a natural result of establishing new local congregations. Through this primary focus on evangelism and church planting, the Korean church developed its 'ecclesiastical focus', which has continued to date. Everything that the church did, including the education and social campaigns, was to contribute to this ultimate goal of evangelism, church planting, and church growth. Methodist educator James E. Fisher exemplified this emphasis: 'We may say, therefore, that the primary aim of mission education in Korea is to bring as many as possible of those who come under the influence of education to a full acceptance of the Christian religion as the true and completely adequate guide for human life.'<sup>8</sup> Although Korean Christianity did not see one-million new souls come to its fold, this theological positioning has had a lasting impact. Striking figures within a two-year period are as follows.

In 1905 there were 321 churches, 470 evangelists, 9,761 believers, and 30,136 catechumens. In 1907 there were 642 churches, for an increase of 200%; 1,045 evangelists for an increase of 222.3%; 18,964 believers for an increase of 194.2%; and 99,300 catechumens for an increase of 329.5%.<sup>9</sup>

### *Conversion Experiences*

Until recently, most adult Christians in Korea experienced conversion from other religions, as Protestant Christianity is over a century old. Because of its deep-seated religious traditions, especially the wide-spread Shamanistic beliefs, a resistance to Christianity as a new and 'western' religion was fierce. The famous state persecution and beheading of many Korean Catholics in the late nineteenth century exemplifies this resistance. My own context, conversion experience, and subsequent commitment to evangelism typify the general attitude of Korean Christians in my time.

I grew up in a family where my parents and grandmother had mixed religions: Buddhism, Confucianism and Shamanism. I spent my growing-up years in Chungmu, a southern port town of Korea, where taboos and shamanistic beliefs prevailed due to frequent mishaps in the sea, especially among fishing families. The most religious in my family was my grandmother, who was also a famous medium, known among her villagers for her ability to call upon the spirits of the deceased. As the first grandchild in the family, I was especially loved by her, thus, she took me almost everywhere she went, including to the Buddhist temple on special occasions. I remember how frightened I was by fearful pictures of gods and spirits on the walls of the temple. However, I enjoyed playing by myself, either in the garden or inside the temple, until she finished her work.

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<sup>8</sup> James E. Fisher, *Democracy and Mission Education in Korea* (1928, rpt. Seoul: Yonsei University Press, 1970), 41.

<sup>9</sup> Kyoung-Bae Min, *A History of Christian Churches in Korea* (Seoul: Yonsei University Press, 2005), 228.

When she was invited by a family to perform a special ritual, she often took me with her. I enjoyed accompanying her because the host or client family prepared sumptuous food for spirits (and for her). I closely observed how she would call a dead spirit of the family, with whom the family wished to speak. My grandmother shook a bamboo branch for a lengthy time until she reached a state of trance. When she was in full trance, she called the spirit of the deceased, either that of the husband or wife, and began a conversation. By then, suddenly, she had two different voices: one her own and that of the spirit. To a young girl, it was extremely intriguing to watch her, and this must have planted in me an awareness of the spiritual world. Besides this, I saw my parents practice filial piety for the deceased, and later I learned that this was a Confucian influence. After an ancestor passed away, a tiny table was set in a corner of the living room with a picture of the person on it. My parents bowed down to it every morning and evening for several years. On their death anniversary, an elaborate ritual was offered, believing that the spirit of the deceased accompanied by other spirits visited the home and the table for feasting.

My exposure to Christianity was quite drastic. In my teen years, I and my family went through a very stressful time, due to the failure and bankruptcy of my father's business. My high school teacher, a devout Christian, invited students to an auditorium after school. He played a recording of a conversation of a Christian lady in a trance-like state with "angels" and Jesus. The woman described the beauty of heaven, while the angels and Jesus spoke as well (through her, but in different voices!). It was completely strange, but also warmly inviting. I was drawn into the Christian faith. Later I found myself in an empty local church in prayer, and I again felt the warmth of a mysterious presence, and I firmly believed it to be Jesus. My following years were filled with hardship as my parents were strongly against my new-found 'foreign' faith. They tried hard to stop me from going to church through obstruction and persecution.<sup>10</sup> But their hostility and opposition strengthened my faith, defiance, joy, and resolve to serve him.<sup>11</sup> When I was nearly disowned by my family, I made up my mind to begin my theological education away from home. My immediate prayer was for the salvation of my family. For this reason, my greatest Christian achievement is the conversion of all four siblings, and three are full-time ministers!

There is no doubt that evangelism as my mission priority was borne of my own experiences. Details of conversion experiences can vary widely, but its radical impact to one's life, spirituality, and mission awareness is commonly shared by millions of Christians in Korea. This also shaped the collective spirituality of Korean Christianity. The outcome is not just an

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<sup>10</sup> Some details of my own early faith journey are found in 'Jesus Christ in Asia: Our Journey with Him as Pentecostal Believers,' *International Review of Mission* 94 (2005), 493-506.

<sup>11</sup> Wonsuk and Julie C. Ma, 'The Making of Korean Pentecostal Missionaries: Our Personal Journey', in Arto Hämmäläinen and Grant McCung (eds.), *Together in One Mission: Pentecostal Cooperation in World Evangelization* (Cleveland, TN: Pathway, 2012), 159-76.

interest in evangelism: it is unbending perseverance and resolution to bring the 'lost' to the grace of salvation.

### *The Birth of a Missionary Movement*

In 1907, the Presbyterian Church was organised, and seven graduates of the Pyongyang Theological Seminary were ordained for the first time. Significantly, in April 1908, Gipung Lee,<sup>12</sup> one of the seven, was commissioned for missionary work to Jeju Island, located in the southern part of Korea. This large island was, at that time, considered culturally and geographically outside of the Korean Peninsula, and was also a new frontier for the gospel. In 1909, the Presbyterian Church sent its second missionary, Gawnhul Choi, to Siberia in Russia to evangelise Korean immigrants. In the same year, Sukjin Han was sent to Japan to preach the gospel to Korean students studying in Japan.<sup>13</sup> In 1913, even after the annexation of Korea by Japan (in 1910), more missionaries – Taero Park, Younghoon Kim, and Byungsoon Sa – were sent to Yantai, China to evangelise Chinese. Their adjustment to culture and to a new language was a challenge, but they persisted. This may have been the first cross-cultural and cross-linguistic missionary work for the Korean church. Missionaries were also sent to Hawaii in North America and even to Latin America. Thus, from the beginning, the Korean church was involved in both foreign and diaspora mission.<sup>14</sup> Apparently there were other denominations, besides Presbyterian, who sent missionaries overseas. Today's strong commitment of the Korean church to world mission, therefore, is not a new awareness. From the inception of the Korean church, missionary fervour was part of its spiritual formation.

It is, however, difficult to establish any direct correlation between the revival and missionary consciousness. It is likely that those graduates from the Theological Seminary were interested in local mission, and subsequent commitment to 'overseas' mission was a gradual process. It is also possible that the church leadership, both missionaries and nationals, built a consensus to include cross-cultural evangelism and church planting as part of Korean church life. At the same time, the rapidly spreading zeal for evangelism throughout Korea must have reinforced the commitment to mission by the first missionaries, as well as church leadership. The subsequent batch of missionaries could have been influenced by the effect

<sup>12</sup> 'Acts of Jeju of Gipung Lee who was the first Korean missionary' (<http://www.newspower.co.kr>, August 2012).

<sup>13</sup> '120 Years of Korean Mission and Future of Korean Mission' (Centre for World Mission, April, 2011, <http://www.cwmpcts.org/199>). See also D. J. Adams, *Korean Theology in Historical Perspective*, 30.

<sup>14</sup> '100 Year of Korean Church Mission: The First Korean Missionary Went to Yantai in China,' *Kukmin Daily News*, Sept. 2011 (<http://missionlife.kukinews.com/article/view.asp?page=1&gCode=all&arcid=0005450020&code=23111815>).



of the revival, in their commitment to evangelism in general and to cross-boundary missionary work in particular.

### *Faith in Millennial Eschatology*

In the nineteenth century, the pre-millennial movement swept throughout conservative evangelicals, especially in North America. It is commonly known that, at Holiness camp meetings, the imminent return of the Lord was regularly preached. It is also said that Princeton Seminary at that time maintained a position of Dispensationalism and pre-millennial eschatology. This widespread theological tendency made an impact on the missionaries in Korea and on the Korean church in the shaping of its eschatology.<sup>15</sup> This theological orientation further fuelled a missionary impetus based on Matthew 24:14, understanding that the coming of the Lord can be hastened only by a missionary expansion.<sup>16</sup> Also, many of the missionaries to Korea were drawn from the pietistic circles that tended to be inclined towards the other-worldly disposition.

The process of theological formation is always complex. It is quite possible that official theologies of the missionaries may have included varying forms of eschatology. One historian, for example, argues that the missionaries intentionally guided the Korean church towards the other-worldly focus after the epoch-making Pyongyang revival.<sup>17</sup> Christianity had already become the base for nationalists' resistance movements against colonial oppression, and the missionaries feared that the church might be caught in a political crossfire. They were very conscious of the pressure coming from the Japanese colonial authorities. It would be fair to say, however, that it was the Korean church that showed a general inclination towards the pre-millennial eschatology. This inevitably had a substantial implication to mission: soul-winning had become the focal point of church life and missionary work, creating an alternative world in its religious life. It also had equally powerful influence on the understanding of the church (ecclesiology):<sup>18</sup> the church is to preserve saints away from the world. This dichotomy between the church and the world fuelled evangelistic and missionary zeal on the one hand; on the other hand, any engagement with the world was not actively encouraged.<sup>19</sup> Naturally, preaching the gospel was the most significant task for the purpose of evangelism. This

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<sup>15</sup> Yongkyoo Park, *Evangelical Movement Which Awakened Korean Church* (Seoul: Duranno, 1998), 37, 42.

<sup>16</sup> David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shift in Theology of Mission* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1991), 315-16.

<sup>17</sup> Y. Lee, *The Holy Spirit Movement in Korea*, 33.

<sup>18</sup> George Marsdon, *Fundamentalism and American Culture* (Seoul: Word of Life Press, 1997), 27.

<sup>19</sup> A.J. Brown, *The Mastery of the Far-East* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1919), 37, 42.

theological orientation was consistently reinforced, especially by American Evangelical missionaries. In turn, this theological orientation around the imminent return of the Lord naturally influenced Korean missionaries to be involved in the mission of evangelism.<sup>20</sup>

### *Experience of Church Growth*

The exponential growth of the Korean church from the 1970s through the 90s critically impacted church life and its mission. The core of this phenomenal growth of Korean Christianity was aggressive church planting programmes by almost all the denominations, particularly from the 1970s to the 1980s. Protestant Christians, for example, grew from 623,072 in 1960 to 6,489,282 in 1985, a staggering ten-fold growth in twenty-five years.<sup>21</sup> Equally staggering is the ten-year growth between 1985 (6,489,282) and 1995 (8,760,000).<sup>22</sup> At the same time, large congregations began to appear. Such an experience became the foundation for the growing consciousness of Korean Christianity in mission, especially beyond the Korean ethnic boundaries.<sup>23</sup>

In fact, the growth of the Korean church was at the heart of the church growth movement and research. Pioneered as a discipline by Donald A. McGavran (1897-1990), the founding dean of School of World Mission and Church Growth at Fuller Seminary, church growth studies flourished in the 1970s and 80s. He developed a paradigm of church growth based on his missionary experience in India, and based on Matthew 28. He also drew from Acts 5:14, '...more and more men and women believed in the Lord and were added to their number.' He argued, based on the meaning of the Greek verb *auxanics* ('add' or 'to multiply and spread out'), that winning souls was an essential part of mission.<sup>24</sup> This new movement impacted the evangelical world globally; one of the effects is the sharp focus on church-centred mission strategies. This movement, whose mantle was later transferred to C. Peter Wagner, was not without criticism. However, for pastors and mission practitioners, especially those from evangelical circles, this was extremely popular. This should be understood in the context where an emphasis on social service as a major mission strategy had sidestepped evangelism and church planting in ecumenical circles. Western churches observed the steady decline of the strength of these churches, both inside

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<sup>20</sup> Dongsun Kim, 'Korean Church and Mission Theology: Realistic Approach to Overcome Limited Ecclesiology' (A Paper Presented at Sorak Forum, Korea, November 2007).

<sup>21</sup> National census date published by the Ministry of Statistics.

<sup>22</sup> National census data published by the Ministry of Statistics.

<sup>23</sup> '120 Years of Korean Mission and Future of Korean Mission'.

<sup>24</sup> McGavran was strongly influenced by the Student Volunteer Movement (John Mott) during his studies at Yale University, especially by the SVM's Motto, 'The evangelization of the world in this generation'.

and outside of the country. The goal of the evangelisation of the world, according to the church growth circles and adherents, can be achieved only through the multiplication of local churches.<sup>25</sup>

In many ways, if McGavran pioneered and Wagner developed theories of church growth, it was Korean Christianity that provided field data. Yoido Full Gospel Church, and its founder David Yonggi Cho, was and is at the forefront of church growth in Korea. Cho's church in downtown Seoul experienced a rapid growth to 3,000 members within three to four years of its founding. By the early 1970s, when Cho decided to move the church to Yoido as the downtown facility was no longer able to accommodate the growing congregation, the church reached the 10,000 mark. Although there were at least two other churches in Seoul whose congregations were considered large, Cho's church was the first that made church growth intentional. Also, his was unique in that the growth was achieved through the preaching and experiencing of the dynamic work of the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, Cho established Church Growth International in 1976 to promote and encourage the growth of local congregations. Its emphasis on 'spiritual church growth' cannot be overlooked as attested to by his own experience through Yoido Full Gospel Church.<sup>26</sup> The impact of this movement was felt first in the birth of large and mega congregations. By 1999, Young-gi Hong estimated around 400 large churches (with Sunday attendance between 1,000-10,000 worshippers) and 15 mega churches (with Sunday attendance of over 10,000).<sup>27</sup> And he concluded that twelve mega churches out of fifteen are charismatic in their spiritual life and worship, emphasising the work of the Holy Spirit in daily life.<sup>28</sup> These churches are not just Pentecostal in ecclesial affiliation: they are also Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, and Holiness. Annual conferences of Church Growth International have attracted participants from all over the world, who learn through experiences of church growth, and in turn, take with them the passion and knowledge of church growth to their own pastoral settings.

There is no doubt that this focused effort of church growth and church planting was the major contribution to the explosive growth of Korean Christianity. However, it also came with several serious defects. The first was fierce competition among congregations. Frequent charges of 'sheep stealing' and church growth through 'horizontal transfer' had become common place. This has seriously hurt the theological vision of Christ's

<sup>25</sup> Donald A. McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), 5-8.

<sup>26</sup> 'The Church Growth International Ministry' (<http://churchgrowthint.homestead.com/home.html>), checked on 26 September 2014.

<sup>27</sup> Young-gi Hong, 'The Background and Characteristics of the Charismatic Mega-Churches in Korea', *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 3:1 (2000), 100.

<sup>28</sup> Y. Hong, 'The Background and Characteristics of the Charismatic Mega-Churches', 100.

church, as well as its unity and fellowship. Second, what is called the 'Wal-Mart effect' has also been found in Korean Christianity. The presence of a large or mega church in one area often suffocates smaller congregations through its beautiful and expensively large buildings, elaborate and professional programmes, and aggressive evangelism activities. As a result, only a smaller number of large churches thrive, and these tend to be more community-imbedded and grassroots engaging. In the end, there is hardly any net gain in Christian growth, especially since the 1990s. Third, repeated ethical misconduct by mega church leaders and the construction of lavish buildings by mega and large churches have come under intense criticism and scrutiny by both Christian and secular watchdogs. Leadership of large churches, transferred to their children, has been another contentious issue. Fourth, ultimately the vision of church unity has been seriously undermined by this local church-centred ecclesiology. It is a theological irony that the more spiritual and conservative claiming of Christian truths, the more divisive it tends to be. Fifth, it was a common belief that a concentrated focus on evangelism and church growth inevitably neglects the social role of the church.<sup>29</sup> This was strongly demonstrated during the military dictatorship era, when only a handful of 'progressive' churches paid attention to human rights issues and political oppression. However, since the 1990s, evangelical and Pentecostal churches, especially among large congregations, began to formulate their social programmes serving their own communities.

In spite of these successes, in a religiously pluralistic society, the growth of the Korean church is hailed as a miracle of twentieth-century Christian mission. It is unmistakable to notice a correlation between the growth of churches and the maturing of its mission awareness, and this was evident from the middle of the 1970s. But this has also impacted the priorities of Korean missionaries.<sup>30</sup>

### **Evangelism and Church Planting as the Primary Focus of Korean Mission**

The annual statistics published by the Korean World Mission Association (KWMA) discloses that, in 2008, 19,413 missionaries were at work from 58 denominations and 217 mission organisations.<sup>31</sup> This number increased to 20,445 in 2009, temporarily dropped to 20,014 in 2010, but picked up to 23,331 in 2011. The missionaries were serving in 169 countries.<sup>32</sup> These

<sup>29</sup> D. Kim, 'Korean Church and Mission Theology', 5.

<sup>30</sup> D. Kim, 'Korean Church and Mission Theology', 4.

<sup>31</sup> Sungsam Kang, 'Basic Missionary Training: Bible and Disciple' [in Korean], *Korean Mission Quarterly* 8 (2009), 29-40.

<sup>32</sup> Taejin Shin, 'Number of Korean Missionary in Overseas, Assemblies of God Church, Intercob and Great Leap Forward', *Christianity Today*, Sept. 2012 (<http://www.christiantoday.co.kr/view.htm?id=252905>).

figures have positioned the Korean church as the second largest Protestant missionary-sending church in the world. KWMA further expects the total number of Korean missionaries to cross the 100,000 mark by 2030.<sup>33</sup> This ambitious expectation, however, has been questioned due to the recent decline of Korean Christianity, particularly in missionary recruitment. Nonetheless, it is still an unprecedented achievement for the Korean church with its short history to have emerged to this significance.

As mentioned above, experiences of Korean Christians as individuals and also as a church have a profound effect on spirituality and mission. As one's own personal conviction is that Christian conversion revolutionised one's life's goals, values, and directions, it is rather natural that missionary motivation and goals are influenced by such experiences. Such personal experiences also contribute to the making of a collective mission spirituality and ethos. This is exactly what we see among Korean missionaries. Researches show that more than half of the Korean missionaries were involved in a ministry of church planting and evangelism. This section thus investigates the transfer of this priority from Korean church life to missionary engagement. As I served as a field missionary in the Philippines, my own story is presented as a case.

### *Church Planting*

According to published 2010 statistics, 53.3% of Korean missionaries are involved in church planting.<sup>34</sup> Through their efforts, there were 6,585 new churches in operation in various parts of the world. Church planting naturally involves evangelism. This priority of church planting is found not only among Korean missionaries but also among western missionaries according to historical reports.<sup>35</sup> This is confirmed through my personal observations. In Cambodia, according to a Korean missionary who has been working there for more than 10 years, there are around 500 Korean missionaries in the country, and more than half engage in church planting work.<sup>36</sup>

Our missionary work in the Philippines (1979-2006) had two ministries: leadership training through seminary teaching and evangelism and church planting among the tribal groups in the northern Philippines. Without much reflection, we were drawn into a church planting ministry. Now I reckon that two factors played a critical role. The first is the socio-religious context of the region. The mountainous area called The Cordillera was excluded

<sup>32</sup> S. Kang, 'Basic Missionary Training', 29-40.

<sup>33</sup> S. Kang, 'Basic Missionary Training', 29-40.

<sup>34</sup> T. Shin, 'Number of Korean Missionary in Overseas'.

<sup>35</sup> Julie Ma, 'A Critical Appraisal of Korean Missionary Work', in S. Hun Kim and Wonsuk Ma (eds.), *Korean Diaspora and Christian Mission* (Oxford: Regnum Books, 2011), 131-45.

<sup>36</sup> An email message from Wanik Jang, a missionary in Cambodia, on 6 April 2014.

from the long Spanish occupation, thus maintaining its traditional animistic religion, yet socially and economically marginalised. Second, our own Korean experience must have orientated us towards this. The following is a summary of part of my experience, published elsewhere:

[The national mission workers] laid rather a heavy emphasis on church planting. For various reasons, a church dedication becomes an important opportunity to encourage the local congregation to replicate the efforts. In this special and joyous occasion, the service rightly consists of lively praises, thanksgiving and a long chain of testimonies. However, in the midst of this celebration, we make it a regular habit to challenge the church to open daughter churches in neighboring communities. In fact, our covenant with the congregation is that only through the reproducing work, will our partnership continue. This is our commitment to assist or work with them in developing new churches. Such a covenant frequently serves to motivate them to start a new house church in a nearby village where there is no established Bible-believing church. In fact, some churches, expecting our strong emphasis on reproduction, have already started new works before their church building is dedicated.<sup>37</sup>

We insisted on the national workers taking the leading role, as seen above, and this required full trust in their sense of calling and their ministry plans. Directly and indirectly, this emphasis on church planting continues among local congregations. By the time we concluded our missionary work in the Philippines, there were around 150 new congregations throughout the region.<sup>38</sup> But it is important to stress that it was through the initiative of national leaders and workers. This partnership through mutual trust was required in every aspect of church planting and development: initial church planting, continuing evangelism of the community, the construction of church building, and leadership development. In the 'lowland' of the Philippines, where Catholicism dominates (around 80% of the population), church planting was actively implemented both by Korean and other missionaries, mostly from Evangelical traditions. And this can be a point of theological reflection. Albeit various contentious issues and challenges, passion for church planting among Korean missionaries resulted in the birth of a large number of local congregations.

### Copyrighted Material Evangelism

Evangelism is a critical component of church planting. Other ministry types (46.7%) that the Korean missionaries are involved in relate to evangelism directly or indirectly: discipleship training (5,301), campus ministry

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<sup>37</sup> Julie C. Ma and Wonsuk Ma, *Mission in the Spirit: Towards a Pentecostal/Charismatic Missiology* (Oxford: Regnum Books, 2010), 131.

<sup>38</sup> Rose Encoy, 'A Historical Sketch of Wonsuk and Julie Ma', in Teresa Chai (ed.), *A Theology of the Spirit in Doctrine and Demonstration: Essays in Honor of Wonsuk and Julie Ma* (Baguio, Philippines: APTS Press, 2014), 17.

(2,002), education (1,047), children's and youth ministry (846), and other church work (462).<sup>39</sup> It is safe to assume that more than 40% of Korean missionaries are involved in direct or indirect evangelism ministry. Furthermore, reflecting on our ministries in the Philippines, it is right to say that relief, children's education assistance, health work, and others were undertaken with evangelism in mind. That is, almost all the ministries were done to support evangelism and the eventual establishment of a local congregation.

This case study is again drawn from the northern Philippines. The Kankana-ey tribe is concentrated in Benguet Province of the Cordillera region, or northern Luzon. Evangelism among this tribe has been characterised by what is called 'power evangelism'. As traditional religionists, they worship gods, spirits, and deceased ancestors, thus, they developed extensive rituals and religious practices. Like most animists, they believe that the spirit beings are deeply connected with, and thus influence, human life. Their rituals are performed primarily to meet their life's needs – healing, blessing, and preventing misfortune.<sup>40</sup>

Several Catholic churches established by early Roman Catholic missionaries were burned down because of their strong religious traditions.<sup>41</sup> To counter this strong religious resistance, an American missionary, Elva Vanderbout, started her work among the Kankana-ey tribal people in 1947. After being recently widowed, she preached of God's power that is greater than the spirits, especially malevolent ones that cause misfortunes according to the Kankana-ey belief. In revival meetings and open-air services in different mountain regions, God revealed His great power, particularly in the form of healing various diseases. In one public meeting, the Holy Spirit convicted with power so that many accepted the lordship of Christ and, after, 150 were baptised in water.<sup>42</sup> The word spread far and wide through many testimonies of healings and miracles and a number of new churches were established in various towns of Benguet Province. Over the years, Vanderbout also trained national leaders and pastors for such ministries.

One of these ministries is Abatan Assembly of God in Abatan town in Benguet Province. A young boy, Juanito Ricardo, could not walk for years; his parents performed many rituals for the healing of their son's leg, but to

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<sup>39</sup> S. Kang, 'Basic Missionary Training', 29-40.

<sup>40</sup> Julie C. Ma, *When the Spirit Meets the Spirits: Pentecostal Ministry among the Kankana-ey Tribe in the Philippines* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2001), 103.

<sup>41</sup> In 1565, the Augustinians came to this land as the earliest missionaries, beginning work in evangelism and sharing the gospel. In 1577, the Franciscans arrived in the Islands. The Jesuits came in 1581 (Henry 1986:10). The primary purpose of their ministry was to help the needy and protect the innocent (Anderson 1969:13). The Dominicans came in 1587, and finally the Recollects arrived in 1606 (Phelan 1959:32).

<sup>42</sup> J. Ma, *When the Spirit Meets the Spirits*, 78.



no avail. Out of desperation, the family brought this boy to the gathering of believers in a house church. The pastor and members laid their hands upon the boy and offered earnest prayer for his healing. To everyone's amazement, in less than a month, the boy's health improved significantly.<sup>43</sup> This attracted additional people, while the congregation's faith was strengthened. They were able to construct their first church building in 1965, which was enlarged in the following year due to the growth.

### Reflective Conclusion

This study has attempted to build a link between the experiences of Korean Christians from their conversion through spiritual life and the concentrated focus of Korean missionaries on evangelism and church planting. This in turn suggests that most missionaries maintain an evangelical theological tenant regardless of their denominational affiliation. Having observed this unique missionary emphasis, as concluding thoughts, I would like to offer comments on areas of warning as this focus on evangelism and church planting continues, and then I will offer a thought on the future.

### *Issues to Watch Out For*

In this section, I will discuss several practical issues that frequently arise while Korean missionaries are working in various mission fields. Issues observed within Korea during the heydays of Christian growth have been arising in mission settings.

The first is the growing tendency for dependency on outside resources among nationals. Unlike evangelism, church planting eventually involves the concerned missionary in church construction. This is where outside funding is often anticipated and where an attitude of dependency begins to develop. Although the missionary makes such a decision in good faith, this is exactly against the long-standing indigenous church principles of self-support.<sup>44</sup> In order for the nationals to own the ministry, missionaries have to teach and practice a healthy partnership from the very beginning. This is not just in the matter of money: the issue of ownership or dependency matters in almost all the areas of ministry. As Paul Hiebert notes, 'Equality means equal opportunity.'<sup>45</sup> The missionary needs to regularly assess who holds the major weight of church leadership: the missionary or the national leader. When the missionary brings funding, the dynamic can change

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<sup>43</sup> Osio Ricardo, 'A Personal Interview with Author', Abatan, Benguet, Philippines, 15 May 1994.

<sup>44</sup> Glenn Schwartz, 'Is There A Cure for Dependency among Mission-Established Churches?' (<http://www.wmausa.org/page.aspx?id=83812>).

<sup>45</sup> Paul G. Hiebert, *Anthropological Insights for Missionaries* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991), 127.



immediately, and this requires extreme sensitivity on the missionary's part. Ultimately, the missionary must build a national leadership by taking an absolutely secondary role.<sup>46</sup>

Competition was a serious issue that had already surfaced in Korea and the situation in the mission field is no different. First of all, Korean missionaries tend to concentrate in a small number of places. By region, 56.2% work and live in Asia. Within Asia, nearly two-thirds live and work in Northeast and Southeast Asia.<sup>47</sup> Due to a high concentration in certain locations, while almost everyone plants churches, competition occurs among them. Research shows that the number one reason for attrition among Korean missionaries is human relations.<sup>48</sup> Aside from ineffectiveness in ministry, missionary competition will likely produce national workers in competition among themselves. A solid and healthy ecclesiology has become an ever urgent matter. Paul's rule not to build on someone else's foundation may be adopted as a missionary agreement.

Related to the issue of competition are several ethically-flawed practices such as sheep stealing as a consequence of intense competition, both among missionaries and nationals. This is often done unintentionally, but the net result is still damaging to the gospel witness and God's kingdom. An even worse case may be 'worker-stealing'; an effective national Christian worker is 'bought out' from someone else's ministry. If a missionary can 'entice' by offering a better worship environment or providing various support to members, ultimately the church cannot be led by a national leader who would be able to afford such benefits. In the end, the integrity of the gospel is seriously damaged. Again, Paul's resolve was not to move to a new territory if a ministry was already present. His desire was to bring the gospel where there was no faith in Jesus Christ (Rom. 15:20-21).<sup>49</sup>

### *A Way Forward*

As discussed in this study, evangelism and church planting has been the primary mission focus for the Korean church, both inside and outside of Korea. And this undoubtedly has contributed to the growth of Christianity in many parts of the world, especially as the western missionary contribution has been steadily decreasing. The concentration of Korean missionaries in Asia is not a negative phenomenon considering that this largest continent is the least evangelised (at less than one-third of the world's average evangelisation rate). Furthermore, as already observed in

<sup>46</sup> Ma and Ma, *Mission in the Spirit*, 130.

<sup>47</sup> S. Kang, 'Basic Missionary Training', 29-40.

<sup>48</sup> Peter W. Brierley, 'Missionary Attrition: The ReMAP Research Report', in W. D. Taylor (ed.), *Too Valuable To Lose: Exploring the Causes and Cures of Missionary Attrition* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1997), 94.

<sup>49</sup> Ed. Lindemann, 'Sheep-Stealing: What Is It and When Does it Occur' (<http://www.wlssays.net/files/LindemannSheep-Stealing.pdf>, Sept. 1973).

the role of missionaries in shaping Korean missionary orientation, this focus on evangelism and church planting will inevitably influence the formation of missionary awareness and priorities among nationals. An increasing number of national churches are now undertaking ambitious evangelism and church planting plans, both within and outside of their countries.

In the future, among Korean missionaries, four areas of missionary engagement may receive major attention, as a mission scholar contends. First, the focus on winning souls through spreading the gospel will continue as many are motivated to 'save souls'. Second, an increasing number of missionaries will be involved in holistic mission, although some will continue regarding relief and social service as a means to the evangelistic goal. Third, a small group, but increasing in number, will take up issues of justice, tackling issues like corruption, gender, economic injustice, environment, religious oppression, etc. This category also includes ethnic and religious conflicts, matters of reconciliation, state-religion issues, and social transformation. And fourth, still a small number may take inter-religious matters deeply, especially in Asia and Africa. Fostering a dialogue between religions will have to become a critical component of Christian mission where religious tensions are high and often prone to erupt into full-scale social unrest and conflict.<sup>50</sup> I may add church cooperation and unity as another important mission agenda for Korean missionaries in their host nations. The successful contribution to this will predicate a unity and cooperation among missionaries, and this will remain a formidable challenge. The large grouping of the world's Protestant Christianity between Evangelical and Ecumenical should not mean a division, but a call for complementing and cooperating with each other.<sup>51</sup>

The Korean church has been blessed with missionary impetus from its very infancy and the 'flowering' of its missionary vision in recent decades. It is now called to mature in its missionary awareness: from 'what it can do' to 'what it can enable others to do'. The Spirit-anointed mission is to bring good news to the needy and to enable them to become good-news bearers. In this way, we can truly become 'followers of Christ':

The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach, and he has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour (Lk. 4: 18-19).

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<sup>50</sup> Moonjang Lee, 'Seeking a New Mission Paradigm: From Korean Mission Perspective', *Mission Korea Forum*, August 2004.

<sup>51</sup> '120 years of Korean Mission and Future of Korean Mission'.

# THE EDUCATIONAL MINISTRIES OF KOREAN MISSIONARIES<sup>1</sup>

Steve Sang-Cheol Moon

## Introduction

### *Background*

According to the most recent survey on Korean missions that was conducted at the end of 2013, there are currently 20,085 Korean missionaries working in 171 countries through 166 mission agencies. In 2013, 287 new missionaries were added, marking an annual growth rate of 1.43%.<sup>2</sup> Though the dynamics are slowing down, Korean churches are still sending out many missionaries.

The author's 2013 report on Korean missions indicates that 10.4% of Korean missionaries in the field are involved in running mission schools, universities, and institutes (together hereafter 'mission schools') and 6.6% are doing theological education. In total, 17.0% of Korean missionaries are involved in educational ministries.<sup>3</sup> These missionaries seek to evangelise a certain area through educational ministries.

### *Research Questions*

The research project on which this report is based was driven by three questions, all of which concern the educational institutions established overseas by Korean missionaries:

1. What are the realities of the mission schools?
2. What are the needs of the mission schools?
3. How can their level of effectiveness and efficiency be raised?

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<sup>1</sup> This paper is an English summary of the full report in Korean published in 2014. The research project was sponsored by Asian Mission, a ministry of the E-Land company group.

<sup>2</sup> Steve Sang-cheol Moon, 'Missions from Korea 2014: Missionary Children', *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 38:2 (April 2014), 84-85.

<sup>3</sup> Steve Sang-Cheol Moon, 'Missions from Korea 2013: Microtrends and Finance', *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 37:2 (April 2013), 96-97.

### *Research Design and Methods*

This research project on the educational ministries of Korean missionaries began in March 2013. The research design was completed by the end of April partly using different suggestions for evaluating non-profit organisations.<sup>4</sup> A screening process to identify the positive models of educational institutions was finished by the end of June with primary recommendations from mission agencies; additional recommendations from senior missionaries were also reviewed by the end of August.

Beginning in September 2013, the research team visited six countries for interviews and observation: Mongolia, Bangladesh, Nepal, Indonesia, Cambodia, and Cameroon. Altogether, 14 educational institutions were visited and 112 persons (71 students, 20 educators, and 21 administrators) were interviewed, resulting in recordings and transcribed interview notes amounting to 269 pages (single space in A4 size).

A questionnaire survey was conducted from December 2013 through February 2014 to figure out the overall status of mission schools established by Korean missionaries. Data gathering for this research was done through a pilot project, a qualitative field study, and a quantitative questionnaire survey. Quantitative data was primarily gathered online through QuestionPro, but additional means were used to complement the process. Quantitative data analysis was done using SPSS and qualitative data analysis (QDA) was done through the process of manual coding, concept mapping, and pattern analysis.<sup>5</sup>

## **Realities of Educational Ministries**

### *Statistical Overview*

According to the survey conducted from December 2013 through February 2014, there are altogether 810 mission schools established overseas by Korean missionaries. This number was based on the reports of 50 major

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<sup>4</sup> Peter K. Drucker, *The Drucker Foundation Self-Assessment Tool* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1999); Peter K. Drucker, Max De Pree, and Frances Hesselbein, *Excellence in Nonprofit Leadership (Facilitator's Guide)* (New York: The Drucker Foundation, 1998); Scott Johnson, and James D. Ludema (eds.), *Partnering to Build and Measure Organizational Capacity: Lessons from NGOs around the World* (Grand Rapids, MI: Christian Reformed World Relief Committee, 1997); Suresh Srivastva and Frank J. Barrett, 'Appreciative Organizing: Implications for Executive Functioning', in Suresh Srivastva and David L. Cooperrider (eds.), *Appreciative Management and Leadership: The Power of Positive Thought and Action in Organization* (Euclid, OH: Williams Custom Publishing, 1999).

<sup>5</sup> Vincent E. Faherty, *Wordcraft: Applied Qualitative Data Analysis (QDA)* (Los Angeles: Sage, 2010).

mission agencies and denominations, so it could well be over 900 including those that were not officially identified and reported.

The 810 educational institutions include 389 seminaries/theological colleges, 183 after-school learning centres, 104 primary schools, 55 secondary schools, 44 universities/colleges, and 35 vocational training centres. The geographical locations of these institutions are as follows: 62.4% in Asia, 18.0% in Africa, 13.0% in Latin America, 3.3% in Europe, 10.9% in former USSR, and 1.4% in Oceania.

The ratio of the total number of schools in Asia is 62.4%, which is much higher than the ratio of the total number of Korean missionaries in Asia (52.9%).<sup>6</sup> A majority of the after-school learning centres are located in Asia (65.0%). In Africa, the ratio of the total number of mission schools (18.0%) is much higher than the ratio of Korean missionaries in Africa to the total number of Korean missionaries (7.3%). (See Table 1 below).

	Asia	Africa	Latin America	Europe	Former USSR	Oceania	Others (Insufficient info.)	Total
Primary	31	18	8	1	1	0	45	104
Secondary	21	6	6	1	0	2	19	55
University/ College	10	3	2	1	1	0	27	44
Seminary	60	5	12	9	3	4	296	389
Vocational Training	23	9	2	1	0	0	0	35
Learning Centre	119	35	25	1	3	0	0	183
Grand Total	264	76	55	14	8	6	387	810

Table 1: Mission Schools Established by Korean Missionaries

### Selected Schools

Among the many primary and secondary schools, six were selected for field study and analysis: Bright Future Global Academy (principal: Sung Hye Heo; [www.bfschool.net](http://www.bfschool.net)); Mongolia International School (Young Jun Tak); Livingstone Academy (principal: Geum Rae Kim); Covenant

<sup>6</sup> Moon, 'Missions from Korea 2013', 97.

Academy (principal: Tae Hoon Jin; [www.covenantnepal.com](http://www.covenantnepal.com)); Antioch High School (principal: Saltence Mel Nesimnasi); and All Nations School (principal: Sung Hee Choi). Below is the basic information on the schools (Table 2).

School	Location	Year Started	No. of Students	No. of Staff	Budget (US\$)
Bright Future Global Academy	Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia	1997	80	20	200,000
Mongolia International School	Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia	2010	33	12	140,000
Livingstone Academy	Kathmandu, Nepal	2001	535	60	200,000
Covenant Academy	Kathmandu, Nepal	2002	364	30	60,000
Antioch High School	Ketapang, Indonesia	1987	59	16	n/a
All Nations School	Yaounde, Cameroon	2009	152	30	50,000

Table 2: Primary and Secondary Schools

Among the many universities and colleges, two universities in Mongolia were selected for the field study: Mongolia International University (president: Oh-Moon Kwon; [www.miu.edu.mn](http://www.miu.edu.mn)) and Mongol Huree University (president: Sun Hoon Jung). The basic information is below (Table 3).

School	Location	Year Started	No. of Students	No. of Staff	Budget (US\$)
Mongolia International University	Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia	2002	1,040	60	2,500,000
Mongol Huree University	Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia	2002	1,450	45	n/a

Table 3: Universities

Four seminaries were selected for the field research: Mongolia Presbyterian Seminary (president: Byung Il Roh); Cameroon Faculty of Evangelical Theology (academic dean: Samuel Yeo Kyung Kwak); Cambodia Presbyterian Theological Institute (president: Ho Jin Jun); and ATI (Sekolah Tinggi Theologia 'Abdi Tuhan Injili' (president: Moris Takaliwang). Table 4 provides the basic information on the seminaries.

One vocational training centre, ISAC School (Institute of Sustainable Agriculture & Community Development; director: Ki Dae Kim), and one after-school learning centre, Wing Wing Center (director: Seok Bong Lee)

were visited for the research. Their basic information is provided below (Table 5).

School	Location	Year Started	No. of Students	No. of Staff	Budget (US\$)
Mongolian Presbyterian Seminary	Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia	2005	39	17	30,000
Cameroon Faculty of Evangelical Theology	Yaounde, Cameroon	1997	91	24	85,000
Cambodia Presbyterian Theological Institute	Phnom Penh, Cambodia		2		0
ATI (Sekolah Tinggi Theologia 'Abdi Tuhan Injili')	Pontiakak, Indonesia	1985	122	16	126,000

Table 4: Seminaries

School	Location	Year Started	No. of Students	No. of Staff	Budget (US\$)
ISAC School	Ta Keo, Cambodia	2003	27	17	n/a
Wing Wing Center	Daka, Bangladesh	2007	500	3	36,000

Table 5: Other Institutions

### Needs of Educational Ministries

Field research on the above institutions led to an analysis of the needs of educational ministries. The needs of educational ministries can be conceptually divided into common needs and particular needs in particular areas. They can also be understood more clearly and distinctively by differentiating between felt needs and real needs.

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#### Common Needs

Mission schools in the field have common needs regardless of the location and the type of the school.

The schools need to recruit good educators (professors and teachers) and administrative staff. Frequent changes in the composition of the staff are undermining the quality of education. Librarians and webmasters are also urgently needed.

Mission schools need to have proper buildings and facilities, with many of them in need of their own buildings. Dormitory buildings are important

because there is much interaction there between members of the community. Faculty housing is an urgent need because it has many advantages in terms of raising support on the part of the foreign faculty members. Library space is a requirement for the development of an educational institution.

Building up the library collection is an important common need of mission schools. As they find books too expensive, it is not easy to purchase books as required. In many contexts, an online library service is a solution for students who commute from distant places. Good information service is a requisite for the development of mission schools in this ever-globalising age.

Facilities and equipment are important needs as well. Furniture, computers, LCD projectors, copiers, musical instruments, experimental equipment, and others are needed in mission schools. Some mission universities receive the used equipment from Korean universities when they replace their equipment with new ones.

Financial needs are significant in mission schools. The schools visited by the author are more stabilised financially than other schools, but there are still significant financial needs to be met by external sources. Construction projects and scholarship funds need to be subsidised by outsiders.

Mission schools cannot exist without students. The schools our research team visited were all successful in recruiting the proper number of students, but many other schools have problems in this area. The leadership of each school needs to properly set the optimal size of the student body and to effectively recruit students.

The success of mission schools is related to the exchange with other educational institutions in Korea and elsewhere. They need to establish mutually beneficial ties with other schools. Programmes for student and faculty exchange need to be promoted all the more.

Further education for teachers and professors is a critical element of education quality. Long-range investment and effort in this area will contribute to the future success of educational ministries. Some of the selected schools are setting good examples in this respect. Sometimes, experts from Korea volunteer to lead seminars for the teachers or professors of the mission schools.

It is not easy but it is important to educate the parents of students according to the educational philosophy of the school. It is a necessary part of a holistic Christian education, which is pursued by most mission schools. A big question is how to do this in a foreign country where the major religious or ideological background is Hinduism, Islam, or Communism.

Software development is another significant need of mission schools. Although it is not easy to meet such a need, mission schools should make conscious efforts to invest in this area for the future of the Christian



education in the field. Experts in Korea need to assist the mission schools to develop software programs effectively and efficiently.

Another neglected area of need is the food of dormitories. Students are not satisfied with the food quality, especially in the dormitories of seminaries. There are misunderstandings between managers and students primarily caused by the hard realities of the schools.

Cooperation with the local communities is an important factor for the success of a mission school. When a mission school is well received in a local community, it will not only survive but also thrive and influence the community. Cooperation with the government and local authorities is important, too.

### *Particular Needs in Particular Contexts*

There are needs that arise in particular contexts. They are not common needs, but they are significant needs that should be addressed in a particular ministerial context.

The mission schools need to pursue specialised education with distinctiveness in one area. It is not enough to have a Christian educational philosophy and background. The whole curricula should lead to a specialisation in one area. Specialisation as an international university or a university of science and technology would be good examples.

Academic qualification is an important need for some kind of schools. Seminaries in Indonesia urgently need qualified faculty members to meet the government requirements. Many universities need doctorate holders on their faculty.

Mission schools need to strengthen their expertise in their area of specialty. Seminaries in Africa need to develop expertise in youth education, AIDS/HIV-related ministry, and refugee ministry, for example.

Denominational ties are very important for a seminary. Seminary leaders need to maintain good relations with denominations in their countries of service. Through the network with denominations can come the personnel and financial support. A solid denominational relationship will contribute to the success of the indigenisation of a seminary in many contexts.

Securing quality water and electricity is an important agenda for many mission schools in Africa. This kind of need is directly related to the conditions of living and education on the campus. Korean churches need to pay attention to such a significant need and to support the mission schools in this area.

Seminaries in the francophone African countries definitely need theological books written in French. The level of awareness of this need is very low among the churches in Korea. A group of committed people should work together continuously in order to meet such a need.

Mission schools in remote areas find it hard to meet and spend time with supporters. It is not easy for the school leaders to travel back and forth to

the places where the supporters and potential supporters are. They need advocacy by other representatives.

Vocational training centres are in need of not only technical expertise but also marketing expertise. They need special equipment for practical workshops; they also need to know how to make a profit using their technology and skills.

After-school learning centres need committed teachers who are devoted to children's education and evangelism. Cultural sensitivity is a must in running a learning centre in an Islamic cultural background and much flexibility is required in terms of system and method.

### *Felt Needs and Real Needs*

The mentioned needs are felt needs in the sense that they are urgent concerns in the minds of the educators that should be addressed directly. The concept of real needs is different in that they are the deeper and long-term concerns underlying the surface. It is helpful to conceptually distinguish between these two kinds of needs.

One important real need in educational ministries is for an educator to build up trusting relations with the students and fellow educators. Like the notion of a relationship or a friendship that evangelism implies, a successful educational ministry presupposes a good relationship and an intimate network. The educators can influence the students spiritually only on the basis of a healthy and sound personal relationship.

Developing curricula for holistic education is another real need in educational missions. The educators need to be more specific in explaining their vision of holistic education, so they need to design curricula based on their vision in concrete terms. Teachers and students are supposed to be on the same page in understanding the educational tasks from this perspective.

Another significant need related to the previous points is the necessity of a communal atmosphere in a school environment. Personal interaction in a community setting is a very important element of holistic education and is also the next phase of relationship building. Communities provide people with a sense of belonging.

Preparing local educational leaders should be a long-term goal worked on from the outset. Without leadership development, educational missions cannot be indigenised with the initiative of the local people. It is a felt need for school administrators to find teachers and staff needed right now, but a long-term perspective will point to the need to identify potential leaders who can continue the mission in the next generation.

Building and maintaining a knowledge base is another important real need that should be addressed properly. This task includes the issues of integrating compartmentalised knowledge and synergistically sharing the knowledge in different areas. It is also important to systematically accumulate the know-how of educational missions.

The ultimate purpose of educational ministries is to transmit the Christian worldview. The essence of Christian education is to help students to indoctrinate and embody the Christian worldview in their lives. Understanding the nature of Christian education from this perspective comes before discussing the issues of attitude and direction in real situations.

### **Effectiveness and Efficiency of Educational Ministries**

The performance level of educational ministries of Korean missionaries can be evaluated in two ways. The first approach is an objective evaluation by mission executives on a quantitative research mode. The second approach is an insiders' evaluation by the students on a qualitative research mode.

#### *Opinions of Mission Executives*

Ten questions were directed to Korean mission executives in a questionnaire survey.

The first question was about the effectiveness of the educational ministries of Korean missionaries. More than half (58.2%) of the respondents evaluated the ministries positively. More than one in five (21.8%) evaluated the ministries as very positive, and 16.4% answered that they are average. Only 3.6% gave a negative response, and nobody answered that the ministries are very negative.

The second question was about the most positive aspect of the educational ministries of Korean missionaries. The majority opinion (62.5%) highlighted that the educational ministries seek to provide students in the lower class with opportunities for learning. The aspect of specialised education at least in one area was supported by 12.5% of the respondents. Only 5.4% of the respondents replied that the ministries are worthwhile because they pursue elite education in the field. The aspect of a Korean-style education was not supported much either (5.4%). A significant number of respondents (14.3%) considered other aspects to be important.

The third question concerned the most negative aspect of the educational ministries of Korean missionaries. Almost half of the respondents replied that the financial dependency of mission schools is the most negative aspect (46.4%). Almost one in five pointed out the lack of stability due to the fluctuating socio-political situations (19.6%). Another 12.5% indicated the low cost-efficiency of educational ministries. More than one in ten respondents pointed out the negative aspect of competition with local schools (10.7%). Another 10.7% did not specify, but considered other aspects in general to be negative.

The fourth question was about important points of improvement to advance the educational ministries of Korean missionaries. More than half suggested running schools of an optimal size based on the assessment of

the educational needs in the field (50.9%). More than one in five emphasised cooperating with local schools and avoiding duplication (22.6%). International exchange according to global trends was pointed out by 13.2% of the respondents. Applying the Korean educational experience in the field was not a viable option (1.9%). A significant number of respondents were not specific, but marked other categories (11.3%).

The fifth question was about financial self-support. More than half of the respondents emphasised the need for flexibility in applying policies (56.0%). Another important opinion was that there was a need to reach a level of self-support within ten years from the start of the ministry (20.0%). Less supported was the idea that the educational ministries need to be supported by Korean churches and organisations on a long-term basis (12.0%). The least supported idea was self-support through tuition and internal income from the start (4.0%). Others had different ideas in general (8.0%).

The sixth question discussed the desirable ways to transition leaders. The most supported suggestion was to recruit local educators to the faculty from the outset and develop leaders step by step (37.7%). Less supported than the previous suggestion, but still important, was to plan leadership transitions from the very beginning and complete them within ten years (28.3%). Another realistic opinion was to apply the rule of flexibility considering different educational environments in different countries (26.4%). Least supported was the opinion that the founder of the school remains in that position until retirement (1.9%). The remaining opinions took up 5.7%.

The seventh question concerned property ownership. A majority opinion was to be flexible in applying policies (53.7%). Another significant opinion was to register the property as a legal body from the beginning – otherwise they should not purchase real estate (33.3%). Registering the property with co-ownership by multiple local individuals (1.9%) or ownership by the missionary where it is permitted legally (1.9%) was not supported much. Unspecified answers were 9.3%.

The eighth question was about the qualification of educational missionaries. The majority of respondents pointed out the importance of educational philosophy and beliefs (67.3%). The second most important qualification was passion for student care (19.2%), while third was administrative experience (7.7%) and teaching experience (3.8%). The remaining 1.9% were not specific about their opinions.

The ninth question was directed at the issue of future prospects of the educational ministries. The majority outlook was that the educational ministries will be needed more due to the influence of globalisation on the educational market (69.2%). Another significant outlook was that educational missions will be limited to certain areas and will need small-scale projects only (19.2%). Some believed that educational missions will no longer be needed as indigenous educational initiatives gain momentum

in many countries (7.7%). Some reserved answers or had other answers not specified in the questionnaire (3.8%).

The tenth question discussed the niches of educational ministries. A significant number of respondents replied that regular mission schools are still needed at different levels (32.7%). Another significant number pointed out that vocational training centres are much needed for poor children (32.7%). Specialisation of regular schools was supported by 15.4%. After-school learning centres were seen as a niche by some respondents (11.5%). Other opinions made up 7.7%.

The above analyses show that Korean mission administrators are well aware of the issues and concerns of educational missions. They have different opinions and suggestions on specific issues, showing the complex reality of mission schools. Those opinions are important to give an *etic* view.

### *Student Response*

Interview questions were directed to the students of the mission schools to evaluate the quality of the education they were receiving. The analysis from an *emic* view was done with a distinction between the quality of the academics and the quality of religious education.

Not only school administrators and educators but also students of the mission schools in six countries evaluate the quality of their academics as superior to most other educational institutions in their respective countries. In particular, school leaders who pursue specialisation in education emphasised that their schools perform better than the local schools in their neighborhoods and cities, although they still have concerns regarding school facilities, equipment, and other matters. The students whom we interviewed supported this observation in their responses to the interview questions.

Most of the 71 students interviewed expressed their gratitude to the school leaders and Korean churches for the benefits they receive through the schools, although they also talked about problematic areas that should be improved. The optimistic attitude of students as influenced by their cultural heritage may have affected their statements, but their positive evaluation resonated the servanthood of the missionaries.

The educational institutions that showed a comparative advantage in their contexts were characterised by the good qualifications of the school leadership. The missionaries were recognised in their ministries for their spiritual leadership, educational expertise, and intercultural competence. When a top leader was not well prepared in one area of leadership, other members of the leadership complemented the personal weakness.

Most of the mission schools advocate the cause of holistic Christian education, making religious education an important part of their purpose and curricula. The performance evaluation needs to cover the religious

aspect as well as the academic aspect of education. It was not easy to approach this matter during our short visit; however, a narrative analytical approach was attempted with some results.

The students expressed their satisfaction and gratitude toward the religious education offered in the schools. Their statements showed trust in the teachers and the staff. Many respondents, especially the middle school students, confessed that their faith in God began in school.

The processes of interviewing and analysing data centred on the theme of value transmission from the educators to the students. The overall observation is that the emphases of the school leaders have been well transmitted to the students' values. For example, Sung Hee Choi's emphasis on the lordship of Christ was naturally expressed in her repeated use of 'God said', 'God led', 'God willed', and other similar phrases (24 times in an interview session of 45 minutes and 53 seconds). Another key word she used was 'love' (4 times). These words had some connection with her students' repeated use of words such as 'disciple' and 'obedience'.

The author's interpretation of these words is that Choi's faith in God's sovereignty and Christ's love affected the students' values, and the students' application of the values is a disciplined and obedient life in a school context where harmonious relations with fellow students are important. She was also considering the dark side of the African context where many socio-cultural problems are rooted in poor spiritual condition. Students often expressed their future vision of serving their countries and region practicing God's *agape* love. Many said that their vision is to serve poor people as doctors. Won Roh Yoon, Sung Hee Choi's husband, recently started a medical college in Yaounde, Cameroon to advance the medical service in Africa, and the high school students are highly interested in entering the college after graduating from high school.

Other important values carried from the educators to the students in other educational institutions were 'worshipping God,' 'Christian worldview', 'community', 'optimal technology', 'evangelicalism', 'reformed theology', and 'saving lost souls'. Many students confessed that their dream changed from pursuing worldly achievement to having missional vision, or from the prosperity of their own family to a commitment to the kingdom of God.

The mission schools showed a sense of balance between academic excellence and religious faithfulness in their task of education. However, many mission schools other than the ones we visited tend to lean toward elite education emphasising the academic side of educational purposes too much. Therefore, they are losing the focus of the founding vision with time, just like many mission schools established in Korea by American missionaries many years ago. We observed that the schools we visited are maintaining a balance in their own way.

Both the quantitative evaluation by the mission executives and the qualitative evaluation by the students are positive about the performance

level of the mission schools the research team visited. This evaluation, however, does not mean that they perform well in all domains of their practice. Instead, they do have problems and weaknesses in some areas. One school's strength is lacking in another school. The point is how each school must learn from other models to maximise each other's strengths and complement each other's weaknesses.

### **Recommendations for Further Development**

It is important to share the experiences of other educational ministries to prevent repeating the same mistakes. The issues of attitudes and know-how will be fleshed out before making recommendations for further development in the future.

#### *Desirable Attitudes*

Seven points are made below as a summary of the desirable attitudes and attributes required of a missionary involved in an educational ministry:

- Must be filled with unconditional love to care well for students.
- Must be able to see the potential of students.
- Able to wait patiently.
- Makes a listening attitude a disciplined habit.
- Can cooperate and collaborate well with other people.
- Has a creative mind.
- Has the power to motivate and influence people.

#### *Shareable Know-how*

The accumulated know-how of educational ministries for missionaries is summarised in the following seven points:

- Understand the educational policies of the country of service well before planning an educational ministry.
- See the niches of educational needs and make a specific plan to meet the need even in a country where the educational environment is stable.
- Take the geographical conditions into consideration in strategising the ministries.
- Set up a strategic information system with other educational institutions, especially with Korean institutions, to recruit faculty members and to receive swag for equipment.
- Cooperate with NGOs to get subsidies for poor students.
- Diagnose and evaluate the educational ministries from a marketing perspective.

- Monitor the changes in the Korean society, especially the changes in the education sector, to keep the field ministries up-to-date.

### *Recommendations*

Supporting churches, mission agencies, and NGOs/companies in Korea are given seven recommendations each.

The supporting churches need to do the following:

- Show more interest and loving concern than before for the educational ministries. The educational ministries are as important as the church-planting ministries in unreached areas.
- Encourage young mission volunteers to consider educational ministries overseas.
- Provide information and support to retired professionals so that they can serve in mission schools.
- Support the construction projects of mission schools, especially in their countries of special interest. Mega-churches need to pay more attention to such a need.
- Upgrade the vision trip programmes to assist mission schools.
- Sponsor scholarship programmes of mission schools.
- Continuously support seminaries and theological colleges established by Korean missionaries.

Mission agencies need to do the following:

- Show more concern and care for their missionaries in educational ministries.
- Conduct a needs-assessment before their members attempt an educational project.
- Periodically evaluate their mission schools in each developmental stage.
- Recruit support groups for their educational ministries. Sometimes, each project would need a separate support group.
- Help their missionaries to extend their networks.
- Show more concern and care for the students who live and attend university in Korea on an exchange programme.
- Maintain a database to effectively recruit needed members of faculty and administrative staff.

For NGOs and companies, the following points are made for NGOs and companies with a Christian background:

- Show more interest and concern for the educational ministries of Korean missionaries and contribute more.
- Support the construction projects of mission schools and universities.
- Sponsor scholarship programmes of mission schools and universities more.



- Contribute to the advancement of educational ministries in their countries of special interest and also in their areas of specialty.
- Support the socially less-privileged children in poor countries.
- Support social enterprises partnering with mission universities.
- Assist with member care for the missionaries in educational ministries.

### **Conclusion**

Field research and data analysis lead to the conclusion that the educational ministries of the Korean church have good cases that can be shared for benchmarking. Not all the mission schools are positive cases and the good cases are not perfect. What is important is to share the accumulated knowledge and know-how of educational missions across boundaries and generations to advance their practices. More efforts for organisational learning are desirable.

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# MOBILISING NATIONS FOR MISSIONS

Andrew B.Y. Kim

With the rapid growth of churches and missionaries in the global South, the Asian church has begun to assume a greater responsibility for world mission.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, contemporary mission is from everywhere to everywhere. Steve Hoke and Bill Taylor, therefore, have predicted that ‘as we move into the third millennium, the church of Jesus Christ had become truly globalized, and missions is now from all nations to all nations’,<sup>2</sup> while Paul Pierson notes the rapid growth of the non-western Christian missionary movement as ‘the greatest new fact of our time’.<sup>3</sup> In this brief study, I would like to explore the role of Asian churches in mission. This discovery took place through the Asia Vision Short-Term Missions Project (AVSTM) and the Global Connections for Advancement project, both of which I launched to multiply missions for Asian churches.<sup>4</sup>

## The Importance of Mission Planting in the Fields

As a missionary, I have struggled with the chronic problem of ‘dependency’ in national Christian leaders that weakens Asian churches and causes missions to be considered an enterprise of ‘high costs with low efficiency’. Evangelical missionaries and local pastors in the Philippines, for instance, planted a great number of churches between 1975 and 2000, but most of these churches are still weak and even dying. They struggle with both financial shortages and leadership problems. With 51,625 evangelical churches in the Philippines as the result of the Disciple A Whole Nation (DAWN) 2000 project, not many pastors are being paid enough to survive.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, the average attendance of each church is only about thirty-five people. I have also planted several churches among

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<sup>1</sup> David Harley, *Preparing to Serve: Training for Cross-cultural Missions* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1995), 4.

<sup>2</sup> Stephen T. Hoke, ‘Paradigm Shifts and Trends in Missions Training – A Call to Servant-Teaching: A Ministry of Humility’, *Evangelical Review of Theology* 23 (October 1999), 39.

<sup>3</sup> Paul Pierson, ‘Non-Western Missions: The Great New Fact of Our Time’, in Patrick Sookhdeo (ed.), *New Frontiers in Mission* (Exeter, UK: Paternoster Press, 1987), 9.

<sup>4</sup> Global Connections for Advancement is the follow-up project of the AVSTM that aims to multiply missions throughout Asia and beyond.

<sup>5</sup> According to the 2000 survey of the Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches, about 80% of pastors in Luzon received about \$18 a month as honorarium from their churches.

the Igorots in the northern Philippines and I have seen those churches struggle to survive in similar ways. Therefore, it was obvious that Filipino churches could not send missionaries out to the world because of their financial shortages and the mindset of dependency.

Reflecting on this gloomy picture of national churches in places like the Philippines, I have reread the Bible and tried to find reasons why the Asian churches (especially Filipino churches) remain 'so dependent'. In the past, the western churches and agencies were seen as the torch bearers who led and funded missions. Non-western churches were considered 'dependent' entities, not adequately developed or resourced for the task of cross-cultural missions. It became obvious to me, though, that church planting is not the end goal of missions; mission planting is. I believe that the local church will be healthier when it takes ownership of the gospel and shares the good news to the world. In reality, the problem is not a shortage of money or fund-raising strategies because even early churches took the initiative of missions though they were not financially affluent.

### **A Mission-Planting Model: The Asia Vision Short-Term Missions Project**

In 2002, after visiting the Tuol Sleng genocide museum and one of the Cambodian 'killing fields', I wanted to move my mission station from the Philippines to Cambodia. Somehow, my mission field had become my comfort zone and I thought the Lord was challenging me to rededicate myself to him in a new field. I decided to move to Cambodia to plant churches among the poor. However, when I brought my family to see the country, we could not find a school where we could send our second child. We did not push through with the move. This bothered me because I felt it meant that I wasn't committed enough to the Lord.

When I shared this feeling in one of my mission classes, some of my students said, 'If you cannot go there, can you not send us instead?' I laughed to myself because I thought that would be impossible since the Philippines' economic situation is weak and many churches struggle with the lack of finances.

As a teaching missionary, my thinking was that I just needed to train Filipinos to be good Christian workers; I never thought of sending them as missionaries. The Lord, however, continually touched my heart whenever I prayed to him. So, sceptically, I asked my students, 'Who would love to go to Cambodia?'. Some raised their hands. I asked them to submit application forms if they were willing to serve as short-term missionaries (STMers); 34 applications were turned in! With these in my hand, I had to make a trip to Cambodia and other countries in Indochina to arrange mission fields for those applicants. I spent a month travelling for the lining up work.

However, in reality, many seminarians in the Philippines are not even able to eat three times a day due to lack of financial support. Just as I

thought, only nine out of the thirty-four applicants could pay the \$10 application fee on time when we launched the AVSTM project for the year 2003. Some Filipino faculty members said that not more than half of the STM applicants could join the mission trip due to finances. It was troublesome for me because I had already lined up travel arrangements to Cambodia and other countries in Indochina where we could assign all 34 STMers to work. If they could not raise enough support, what would happen to the hosts in these countries?

I had challenged the STM applicants to proactively attempt great things for God rather than to passively wait for great things from God. I also encouraged them to put their faith in God and prove that our God is a living God. The STM applicants, mostly Filipinos, started a dawn prayer meeting and cried out to God. To prime the pump, I invited Ms Ched Arzadon, a Filipina with over 20 years of support-raising ministry experience, to share with the STM applicants how to develop partners in missions.

Indeed, it was a big challenge for the applicants, but the Lord graciously and faithfully answered their prayers. They experienced God's miraculous provisions for their plane tickets and for their mission expenses. All 34 STM applicants were able to leave for Cambodia and countries in Indochina, and served the Lord with great joy. This was a breakthrough for their lives and ministries. Kevin Daugherty, a faculty member of the seminary, described the AVSTM as a blessing to the seminary that brought 'transformation of the seminary'.

The STMers successfully served the people in the mission fields with the word of God and some evangelistic tools because they identified with their hosts. The STMers changed their perspectives on Christianity and their role in missions, not in the seminary classrooms but in the mission fields and among the locals. The Lord blessed and used Filipino STMers when they eagerly offered their tears and sweat for his people. It has been said that 'it is not great men who change the world, but weak men in the hands of a great God!' and the Lord greatly used Filipinos as effective missionaries.

Since then, I have served as a mission catalyst to encourage not only seminarians but also local church members to join the Great Commission. By sending these Filipino and Asian STMers out to mission fields, we could correct their long-time 'dependency' and foster a new 'ownership of the gospel' among Filipino and Asian Christians.

From these humble beginnings has emerged the Asia Vision Short-Term Missions Project. From 34 STMers in 2003, the AVSTM (with its mission partners) grew to about 1,200 STMers in 2010. The project has a vision of sending 3,000 STMers from Asia to Asia by the year 2015, so that more people in Asia can hear the good news and enjoy salvation through the work of committed Asian missionaries. In addition, all STMers and their mission partners could have ownership of the gospel and create a new image of Christianity in Asia.

Though leaders have tended to view Filipino Christians as weak and dependent, through sending them as STMers, I have found that they possess some strategic strengths for missions. Filipinos are

1. Multilingual: Most Filipinos speak Tagalog, English, and one or two additional languages. Thus, they can easily learn a new language or teach a language (such as English) to others.
2. Multicultural: Centuries of colonial rule and their country's multiracial composition helps them to adapt easily to a new culture.
3. Versatile: They easily blend in with other Asian cultures without being noticed. One of the most important values in Filipino culture is SIR (Smooth Interpersonal Relationships).
4. Resilient. They have been made strong by hardship and are able to adjust without complaint to contexts without electricity or sufficient water.
5. Highly educated: Most have an opportunity to study in colleges and they can teach effectively in various mission fields.
6. Non-threatening: Since the Philippines has no history of aggression, they are welcomed in many Asian countries. Even visas are waived, especially among ASEAN countries in Southeast Asia.
7. The Philippines has experienced rapid church growth in the last 35 years. The Evangelical churches have grown from 5,000 in 1975 to 51,625 churches in 2000. They even try to double the numbers of the church by this year 2010. This sort of church growth experience could be shared and applied in many Asian countries.

These particular advantages do not make Filipino Christians better suited to missions than members of other Asian churches. What they illustrate, however, is that the supposedly 'weak' members of the global South churches are often equipped with unique strengths of their own.

I have also challenged the underground Chinese churches to offer their people and financial support for missions. The Chinese church started to send their missionary candidates to me and I deployed them to various countries in Asia as missionaries after a year of missionary training. The Chinese church formed their own mission agency and it fully supports its own missionaries. The Chinese church is new to missions, so I am helping it by lining up missions fields, selecting and supplying selected missionary trainers, and doing mission consulting. I am also working closely with churches in Northeast India, Indonesia, Japan, and Papua New Guinea, among others in the area of missions.

### **Some Lessons from the Missional Movement in the Global South**

I have mobilised, trained, and sent over 2,500 short-termers and long-termers out from 35 countries to over 30 countries. Since 2002, I have spent approximately 300,000 US dollars to promote, mobilise, and operate missions in non-western countries such as the Philippines, China,

Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, and India; moreover, over 18 million US dollars were raised for missions in those countries. Some lessons I have learnt from the missional movement are as follows:

### **Paradigm Shift I: New Missional Avenue for Asian Churches**

The right relationship with the local people has to be anchored in identification with them (cf. 1 Cor. 9:20-22). A genuine love for the local people is what makes this identification possible.<sup>6</sup> This kind of deep relationship with the people can be called ‘incarnational ministry’.<sup>7</sup> Just as ‘the Word became flesh and dwelt among us’ (John 1:14), so missionaries must identify themselves with the people they serve. Jesus’ own missionary work included entering into the culture of the Galilean people. He lived with the inconveniences they experienced, even travelling all over the land of Israel on foot to preach the gospel. As a good shepherd, he even lays down his life for the sheep (John 10:11). Jesus’ incarnational model (Phil. 2:4-8) has to be the basic principle of cross-cultural missions. Modern missions, however, omitted the incarnational missional approach in the fields. Throughout mission history, most missionaries have tried to identify with the locals but there are still big gaps between the missionaries and the locals. They must fully bond with the people in the target culture, experiencing a sense of belonging with the local people.<sup>8</sup>

The little success that the AVSTM has had has been possible because of its workers’ incarnational approach among the people in their respective fields. One challenge facing the AVSTM, however, has been poor financial support. Since Asian churches are still financially weak, it is hard to support their missionaries on the high-cost western mission system. It was obvious to me that Filipino churches could not afford \$1,000 to \$2,000 a month to support their missionaries. On the other hand, the affluence of such financing might be a hindrance in the missionaries’ relationships with the local people, too.

To meet that standard, I developed a new approach to funding missions. I line up work for each STMer in the host country. I also arrange for the STMers to stay in the houses of local people and encourage the hosts to cover board and lodging for the STMers while they work. In most areas of Asia, this allows STMers to serve for no more than \$100 a month. Besides lowering costs, though, this system is also very effective in helping the STMers identify with the host people in the fields. Almost all of our

<sup>6</sup> Paul G. Hiebert, *Anthropological Insights for Missionaries* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1993), 110.

<sup>7</sup> E. Thomas Brewster and Elizabeth S. Brewster, *Bonding and the Missionary Task* (Pasadena, CA: Lingua House, 1992), 6; William D. Reyburn, ‘Identification in the Missionary Task’, in W.A. Smalley (ed.), *Readings in Missionary Anthropology 2* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1978), 746-60.

<sup>8</sup> Brewster and Brewster, *Bonding and the Missionary Task*, 6.

STMers enjoy life-changing experiences through living with the local people, and on their return, STMers find themselves missing the people whom they served. Many decide to return to serve as long-term missionaries. Many churches have been planted across Asia through the incarnational ministry of these STMers, and they have helped to create a new image of Christianity as a religion of all, not just of the westerners.

Since the STMers live in the areas where the people are, I have challenged them to do ministry activities for at least 8 hours a day. Most labourers work 8 hours a day, but it seems that the average Evangelical missionaries do not work that much in the fields while the Mormon missionaries work 8 hours or more a day. Hence, the Mormons experienced 173 times the remarkable growth between 1960 and 1990 while the Evangelicals had only 11 to 25 times the church growth in the Philippines. Mormons were known and characterised by their zeal and admirable missionary spirit. Tens of thousands of Mormon missionaries (mostly, short-termers) actively work today. For instance, they visit every prospect (and church members) at least twice a week and meet about 20 people a day; thus, they have very strong relationships with the locals.

### **Paradigm Shift II: New Missional Partnership between the Global North and the South**

If we are to foster ownership of the gospel among the churches in the global South, the role played by missionaries from the West in these partnerships also has to change. Since most non-western missionaries are in need of proper training and care, western missionaries can often contribute best by equipping them as trainers, coaches, consultants, and encouragers in their fields. Western missionaries also need to prepare for multi-cultural and multi-lingual teamwork. The individualistic missionary of the colonial era is no longer viable. An ability to work with, and under, the leadership of other nationalities is essential.<sup>9</sup> The ideas of interdependency (in contrast to independency) and accountability must be central to the emerging paradigm for contemporary mission.

Mission agencies are already responding by becoming more pragmatic about whom they will accept as missionaries from the global South. Many show an increasing interest in the actual competencies of their candidates rather than in their formal credentials or degrees. The key question asked is this: 'Can they do the ministry they will be assigned to do?' This means, in some cases, requiring less formal theological education before the first term and providing more practical, mentored, on-the-job training.<sup>10</sup> Individuals previously excluded from mission can then be valued for the unique life

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<sup>9</sup> Patrick Johnstone and Jason Mandryk, *Operation World*, 21<sup>st</sup> century ed. (Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster Lifestyle, 2001), 12.

<sup>10</sup> Hoke, 'Paradigm Shifts and Trends in Missions Training', 336.

experiences, which may have prepared them for reaching out to growing segments of the population.

Missiology is responding with several trends that promise to reshape the discipline. An attempt is being made to capture a more global perspective, acknowledging the dynamic and potential of the churches in the global South. In theological and mission training, an increasing emphasis is also being placed on a more holistic approach to ministry, one that highlights the interlocking causes of poverty, oppression, and hopelessness. Perhaps most significant is the emergence of global South missiology and the willingness of western thinkers to take seriously the perspective of their non-western brothers and sisters.

There may still be a role to be played at times for financial support from western churches, provided it is rethought in ways that are less paternalistic and that do not foster dependence. Steve Murdock, for example, suggests that ‘if the support is seen as “seed money” and not as a perpetual lifeline, and there is an exit strategy that is viable and realistic, then monetary support can be healthy’.<sup>11</sup> He then exhorts western missionaries: ‘[D]o not create a ministry or structure that is not duplicable within the cultural or social context in which you are working; do not begin funding a work with no growth strategy plan or exit plan; and do not do all the work yourself.’<sup>12</sup>

Most important though, is the basic shift that is taking place in the way western missions agencies understand their relationship with their global South counterparts. The buzzword in missions today is ‘partnership’, as opposed to ‘sponsorship’, which suggests an unequal relationship. Western churches and mission agencies are recognising how, if they are willing to work closely with their non-western counterparts, resources can flow in *both* directions. Sponsorship and paternalism can be replaced by mutual recognition of selfhood and cooperation as equals.<sup>13</sup>

## Conclusion

We are facing increasing challenges and hostility from Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, and many other groups in the various mission fields, thus, we need to find new avenues in mission and bring more mission forces into the fields. The AVSTM proved that Asian churches could spread the gospel throughout Asia with their own people and finances. The Asian churches’ humble involvement in mission creates a new image of Christianity and brings transformation even to their own churches, but this does not mean an end to western involvement in cross-cultural missions. Instead, we need to

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<sup>11</sup> Steve Murdock, ‘Cutting the Purse Strings: How to Avoid and Overcome Paternalism’, *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 45:1 (January 2009), 66-71.

<sup>12</sup> Murdock, ‘Cutting the Purse Strings’, 66-71.

<sup>13</sup> Pierson, ‘Non-Western Missions’, 9.



maximise our mission forces for the sake of the world because the remaining task is too great.

Whenever I meet and share the mission with Asian church leaders, I have learned that they also would like to be involved in mission, but their role models are western churches, which shapes their mindset in mission so they are not able to partake in the Great Commission. Through the AVSTM project ministry, I have developed new avenues in mission that fit the context of Asian churches and even of dying European churches, so I am trying to multiply mission through a 'low costs with high efficiency' principle in both the global North and South.

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# MISSION FORMATION AND HOLISTIC MISSION AMONG THE POOR: A RWANDAN EXPERIENCE

Jeffrey J. Lee

This essay is a personal reflection on the process of my missionary formation and the form of missionary engagement that I am currently involved in. I hope that this reflection serves as a useful window into the Korean missionary movement as a lay professional. I served the low-income population of Rwanda through a Christian microfinance bank called Urwego Opportunity Bank of Rwanda (UOB) for more than five years, until May 2015. Thus, the thoughts presented here will be focused on the holistic aspect of this missionary work utilising business, specifically microfinance, for the alleviation of chronic poverty and the facilitation of holistic transformation in the lives of the underprivileged people of Rwanda.

## A Journey of Life and Missional Formation

### *My Journey*

My missionary awareness of, and eventual commitment to, mission developed through my lifetime, through the close work of the Holy Spirit. I was born in Korea after the Korean War, which had left the nation as the second poorest in the world. As a boy, I used to line up for food. Poverty was not an abstract concept to me but a reality that affected my daily life in a debilitating and degrading way. I was born into a Christian family, but going to church was all that Christianity was about to me without any meaningful and personal sense of faith.

Then, in May 1978, during my military service, I accepted Christ as my personal saviour and Lord. One Sunday, I was teaching at a Sunday school near my military base, and while recounting the story about Deacon Stephan, I was awakened to this hypocritical life of mine: the stark contrast between my day-to-day life and my projected self before the children. I felt a deep spiritual poverty. I also sensed the Lord reach out to me with his saving grace. I repented of my sinfulness and experienced a newness of life. As my faith in him grew, my Christian journey took shape primarily through Bible studies and service for others.

A significant transition took place in 1983: I married Kristin while she was living in New York; thus, I immigrated to the United States. We began

our life together with few financial resources: \$1,900 to be exact. She was a registered nurse and I was a banker in California. We appeared to be reaching the 'American dream': self-sufficiency, a house, and secure jobs. However, as a young immigrant family, we struggled to survive and to establish a life base. We worked extremely hard. At one time, I had three jobs, working both day and night. Even in the midst of such a hectic work life, I was sincerely and actively involved in church activities, perhaps guided by a belief that it was the best way to please God.

We also made a few financial mistakes in the late 1980s and early 90s, which led us to sink into heavy debt. At that time, the debt overburdened us with little prospect of overcoming it, no matter how hard we worked. We were depressed and felt hopeless.

During this period, I committed myself to a 100-day early morning prayer habit, waking up at four in the morning for one hundred days. While I pleaded for God's help, he helped me see the peace he promised to his people and I heard God's call to be thankful in all circumstances (Phil. 4:6-7). My prayer began to change from asking for his help for my immediate needs to learning to have peace in him. Once my spirit was properly positioned, my prayer for financial help was also answered just weeks after the prayer.

Then God planned an important move: He took us to Colorado in 1996, to lead a department of Premier Bank. This start-up community bank was specifically reaching out to Asian immigrants. Soon, I was appointed as CEO of this struggling operation, although I lacked any CEO experience. In spite of my sense of inadequacy, God affirmed his hand through a song in the middle of the night: 'Do not faint for I am with you. Do not be dismayed for I am your God. I will strengthen you. I will help you and uphold you with my righteous right hand' (words from Isa. 41:10). I was assured of his presence and help as I knelt down in tears in repentance for my lack of faith and in thanksgiving for his grace.

After surrendering myself to his sovereignty and power, his favour began to manifest in my work. In the eight years under my leadership (until February 2004), the bank not only turned around its situation, but even became highly reputable in the community. We successfully raised capital twice and started making profits in just three months. For the ensuing seven years, the bank was highly regarded by all stakeholders: staff, shareholders, bank regulators, and the media. In 2001, *Business Week* described Premier Bank as 'What a Bank Should Be' in its six-page feature report on the bank.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Kimberly Weisul, 'What A Bank Should Be: A Colorado Startup Reinvents Small-Business Lending with Fanatical Service', *Business Week*, 15 July 2001 (<http://www.businessweek.com/stories/2001-07-15/what-a-bank-should-be>).

### *Serving and Learning*

While we were enjoying the success, I knew that God was at the centre of everything that was happening. So I took care to maintain humility and attribute the success to the Lord. When my compensation increased, we intentionally scaled down our household budget and lived simply. We counted every penny before spending and shopped for secondhand goods if a purchase was really necessary. Our two daughters also took on our frugal lifestyle, for which I was grateful to them. For our surplus, we put most of it, including our year-end bonuses, into a donor-advised fund of The ISA 4110 Foundation (after Isa. 41:10) to assist those who experience hopelessness and destitution. Spending it on ourselves would have been like stealing from the Lord. At the same time, we gradually emerged out of debt, even though most of our bonuses were put in the donor-advised fund. While we were witnessing his marvellous work in our lives, God also helped me realise that I could help others manage their finances more responsibly. Thus, I started writing articles for a weekly Christian newspaper, *Christian Home*. I wrote a series of 25 pieces titled 'Good Steward's Financial Management'; this led to another ministry as I was asked to lead workshops and seminars in different churches.

In 1998, I was ordained as an elder of the Korean Central Presbyterian Church in Denver. As a local church leader, another ministry opportunity opened up: world mission. Beginning my first year as an elder, I joined the church's summer mission trips to Mexico. This ministry continued for six years. In 2001, I took my entire family on a mission trip, including our younger daughter, who was 14 years of age at that time.

In August 2001, we were deeply moved by Jesus' teaching in Matthew 24:14: 'This gospel of Kingdom will be preached to all nations as a testimony to the world. Then, the end will come'. Realising that the Lord's Great Commission requires all his people to bring the gospel to all nations until the Lord returns, we, along with a few missionaries and pastors, founded Project BGAN, or Bringing the Gospel to All Nations. This ministry developed a network to mobilise believers who desired to respond to God's Great Commission, primarily in Colorado, California, and Pennsylvania. Project BGAN organised consultations, forums, and a symposium, and also published their proceedings to benefit those who were committed to mission.

This journey of learning continued: I later joined the Integral Mission Alliance for mutual learning and encouraging through sharing. There, I was exposed to business as mission (BAM) as an effective way to reach out to unreached nations. This is particularly true for restricted access nations (RANs) and creative access nations (CANs). Mats Tunehag, Senior Associate of BAM with the Lausanne Movement, argues:

The BAM concept is holistic in nature, believing that God has the power to transform people and communities: spiritually, economically, and socially. The dichotomy between sacred and secular is not Biblical, but this false

dichotomy has deeply affected our views on work, business, church, and missions. BAM is a part of a wider global movement, recognizing and responding to God's call to take the whole gospel to the whole man in the whole world.<sup>2</sup>

One of the ways God helped me grow spiritually was through long-term service in Christian education. From 1983 until 2004 when I moved to New York, I was involved in Christian education programs of all shapes and sizes at all the churches of which I was a member. I have served as a youth teacher, a teacher at a college department, a teacher at three English ministries, a Bible study teacher for young adults and adults, a coordinator for teacher training, a preacher for children ministry, and an elder responsible for Christian education. Through these experiences, God helped shape my worldview and grow my faith. Teaching the Bible to others was God's way of tending to my spiritual formation, taking me out of darkness and leading me into his light of truth. These roles contributed to the shaping of the biblical foundations for me to engage in world mission.

I studied business administration for my bachelor's and master's degrees. Thus, I felt I was in the wrong profession – banking – for the first 16 years of my career. But God opened my eyes and helped me see how my 30 years of banking experience were part of his careful plan for his kingdom. Now I can speak credibly and convincingly on various subjects of financial stewardship based on financial management principles. Also, now I see that my experience as CEO at three banks allowed me to gain knowledge and skills of financial services that could easily be adapted to microfinance. In the process, God also trained me in management and leadership.

Tithing is a key subject of my 'Good Steward's Financial Management' seminar. But I also expand this to spiritual life, based on Jesus' life: thirty years of preparation for his three years of public ministry. So I promised to devote 10% of my time in life fully to God's work, whatever it may be. When I reached the thirtieth anniversary of my spiritual birth (in May 1978), I made the following two requests to the Lord when I made this pledge: (1) 'Lord, I would do anything you tell me to do, but if you could use the 30 years of education, training, and experiences in the financial services industry, that would be great!'; and (2) 'Lord, again, I will do whatever you lead me to do, but would it be possible to serve the least of the brethren of yours?' (Matt. 25:40).

While I was busy with my professional life and spiritual ministries, God was preparing me for another powerful tool to empower the poor. An email message arrived in August 2007 from Sammy Mah, then CEO of World Relief, a Christian international relief and development organization, with

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<sup>2</sup> Mats Tunehag, 'Transformation of People and Societies: Spiritually, Economically and Socially – to the Greater Glory of God' (Business As Mission White Paper, Lausanne Movement, 2006).

whom I once shared my ‘spiritual tithe’ commitment. In the message, he asked if God had shown me the way to fulfil my pledge. My answer was ‘no’, although my thirtieth anniversary (that is, May 2008) was approaching. He then asked if I would be interested in leading a Christian microfinance bank in Rwanda.

At first, it was a shock. Honestly, Africa was not on our radar, and my wife and I were hoping that the Lord would lead us to a country in Latin America. We had already been exposed to a Spanish-speaking culture through mission trips to Mexico, and we both liked Latin culture. However, it was not my will that mattered, but his. I was obediently discerning his will. I responded diligently to all of Mah’s requests, including an intensive personal profiling, another web-based profiling, inter-cultural readiness assessment, and a series of interviews.

I later learned that the board of UOB had been looking for a seasoned banker with a missionary heart when it became a microfinance bank in July 2007 from an NGO engaged in microfinance. This was for both the purposes of regulatory compliance as well as the organisation’s mission. But we were not quite ready to relocate to Rwanda due to various issues, including family matters and my commitment to Shinhan Bank America in New York through the end of 2008.

When I almost gave up on the Rwandan possibility, we were offered a six-day trip to Rwanda in April 2008 to decide whether or not we would go. We were encouraged to evaluate if Christian microfinance was what the Lord had prepared for the next chapter of my life. It was an open-ended opportunity for us to explore and validate God’s will. But no sooner had we commenced our trip than Kristin and I felt convinced strongly that it was God’s plan for us to serve the poor through the provision of microfinance. Graciously, UOB’s board decided to wait for me by hiring a temporary CEO for eight months. A month after I completed my commitment at the bank in New York, we arrived in Rwanda. The very next day, I went straight to work. The temporary CEO trained me for just four days, and the following week I had to lead the first microfinance bank in Rwanda without any prior experience in microfinance and in Africa, let alone in Rwanda. It was a challenge, but I also learned that no challenge is bigger than God who reigns over everything.

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## **Context for Our Mission Engagement**

### *A Recent Journey of Rwanda*

Rwanda is a small mountainous and hilly country in central and east Africa with a population of approximately 10.5 million, giving it the highest population density in Africa. It is one of the poorest countries in the world with its per capita gross national income at \$560 (according to a 2012

estimate), ranked at 203<sup>rd</sup> among all nations. About 90% of the population engage in subsistence agriculture and some mineral and agro-processing.<sup>3</sup>

To many, Rwanda is known for its horrible genocide. The 1994 Tutsi genocide is recorded as the fastest progressing incident of manslaughter in history, murdering 10,000 people a day for 100 days.<sup>4</sup> The genocide was carried out not with machine guns but with machetes, evidence of cruel and merciless human depravity. The conflict left a deep scar among both the minority Tutsi and the majority Hutu.

But Rwanda has experienced a tremendous transformation over the past twenty years. In April 2014, Rwanda commemorated the twentieth anniversary of the Tutsi genocide with a slogan: 'Never Again'. It was a solemn resolve for all Rwandans not to repeat the same tragedy. Further, the nation celebrated the twentieth anniversary of the liberation from the genocide called Kwibohora 20. The celebration was joyous with big smiles, but their determination not to repeat the same historical mistake remained strong.

The twenty-year journey is filled with emotional stories of healing and forgiveness, particularly between the perpetrators and the victim families. Through this painstaking process, diverse people have been brought together. Rwanda's reconciliation story demonstrates well how human reconciliation can work even in an unthinkable circumstance, close to Joseph the biblical hero of reconciliation (Gen. 50). God turned despicable human hatred and manslaughter into an opportunity to demonstrate his goodness through incredible forgiveness, inconceivable reconciliation, and tremendous healing among both victims and perpetrators. It is a transformation indeed.

The story of the past twenty years is also that of a nation rebuilding from its ruins, finding forgiveness amidst a pile of bones, as described by Bishop John Rucyahana in his book, *The Bishop of Rwanda*.<sup>5</sup> It is also a nation that has been successfully reborn not only in economy but in the national attitude. They decided not to blame the genocide for their poverty, the western nations for not responding to their pleas for help, and God for allowing it to happen to them. Instead, Rwanda chose to stand up and rebuild itself into one nation, with no more division among its people. The renewing of minds is the only sure way for transformation (Rom. 12:2), which in turn would cut the chains of revenge. Willing to forgive, living and letting live, the nation pursued self-reliance with strong determination and adopted rigorous discipline to apply what seemed unthinkable to their lives. It was the grace of God, indeed.

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<sup>3</sup> Central Intelligence Agency, 'Rwanda Economy 2014', *The World Factbook 2014* (<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/rw.html>).

<sup>4</sup> Modern Genocide Project 2012, 'The Rwandan Genocide' (<http://modernhistoryproject2012.wordpress.com/genocide-facts/>)

<sup>5</sup> John Rucyahana, *The Bishop of Rwanda: Finding Forgiveness amidst a Pile of Bones* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2007).

In 2008, Rwanda implemented the Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS) programme to eradicate its poverty. After the first five-year phase, the second phase began in 2013. It has since remarkably achieved all its economic, social, and political objectives. The World Bank named Rwanda ‘The Most Reforming Country’ in 2011. The nation has shown tremendous improvements in their Ease of Doing Business rank over the past several years, recently leaping from the 54th in 2013 to 32nd in 2014.<sup>6</sup> Many media outlets have praised Rwanda’s success as a role model from which other developing nations can learn.<sup>7</sup>

But reform is not without challenges. The biggest was the lack of available human, capital, and technological resources. Along with the lack of access to capital, the lack of financial and business literacy and the challenge of market volatility associated with agricultural crop prices were a formidable roadblock to the national efforts to move past the chronic poverty. Rwandans needed easier access to capital, knowledge to manage their finances and businesses better, as well as improved access to the market to sell their products and services.

### Poverty

As the nation was facing this daunting challenge, and as I had become part of this struggle, I spent much time trying to ‘unmask’ poverty from theological and sociological perspectives. The scriptures repeatedly stress God’s concern for the widows, the fatherless, the oppressed, and the impoverished (Matt. 4:3-5). God specifically calls his people to take care of those in poverty, as it is a chronic condition (Deut. 15:11). Therefore, often the poor are the primary target for missional work. Don Fanning contends, ‘The vast majority of the Unreached People Groups (UPG) are extremely poor, live in difficult circumstances, and are located in regions where traditional evangelical missions are not allowed or wanted’.<sup>8</sup> Then what does it mean to be ‘poor’? Although the definition of poverty varies widely, at the heart is economic poverty. According to David Hesselgrave, ‘To be “poor” means to be economically impoverished, devoid of the necessities of life, and very often, part of an underclass... disenfranchised and helpless to do anything to change prevailing circumstances’.<sup>9</sup> Evidently poverty extends beyond economic needs: it encompasses the social and the spiritual.

In 2011, the World Bank estimates that there was 17% of the world population, or more than one billion people, who lived on US\$1.25 or less

<sup>6</sup> World Bank, *Doing Business 2015: Going beyond Efficiency*, 12<sup>th</sup> ed. (2014).

<sup>7</sup> Roux Anton, Joe Onsando, and Maurice Amogola, ‘Rwanda: An African Success’, *Aon One*, Sept 2011.

<sup>8</sup> Don Fanning, ‘Holism and TentMaking Ministries’, *Trends and Issues in Missions* 2 (2009).

<sup>9</sup> David J. Hesselgrave, *Paradigms in Conflict* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 2005).



per day. This statistic was an improvement from 43% in 1990 and 52% in 1981. However, even at this rate of progress, the World Bank estimates that more than one billion people will still live on US\$1.25 or less per day in 2015. In a broader measure, there were 2.2 billion people who were living on US\$2 or less a day in 2011, well evidencing the biblical illustration.<sup>10</sup>

Many times, economic need is crippling and inherited from former generations. It is not easy or just impossible for the poor to rise above this disadvantage. In certain countries, these burdens are attributed to 'karma'. Once entrapped, people are choked with ties that try to bind them in poverty for good. This entanglement does not affect the poor just in economic terms, but also in social, psychological, and spiritual terms. Poverty is comprehensive to the poor.<sup>11</sup> Thus, the remedy for the poverty should also be holistic, addressing all aspects of human life by mobilising everyone called to serve. In this sense, alleviating poverty is an economic part of the salvation process.

Fanning asserts:

World mission must take into account the whole of human needs: spiritual, social, and personal: i.e. holistic mission. In other words, holistic mission includes both evangelism and church planting as well as development and social transformation. The amount of involvement will depend upon needs in specific environments, the need of the missionary to establish credibility in a community, and skills and resources that can be brought to bear on a local situation.<sup>12</sup>

However, one must note the danger inherent in this type of mission. Hesselgrave understands the often desperate need for holism in many areas, yet concludes with four warning statements:

1. Without having to tailor it to special needs or interest groups, the gospel is both 'true' and 'good' news – quite apart from anything that we may do.
2. This good news should be announced through a generous offer of salvation to the spiritually sinful and needy, regardless of their economic or social status.
3. The focus of the Christian mission has to do with making the 'true and good gospel of Christ known to those who are most separated geographically, ethnically, and religiously from centers of gospel knowledge and influence'. Though the commands to 'love your neighbour' and 'do good to all people' (Gal. 6:10) and the fact that spiritual and literal poverty often go together, they cannot get confused, paralleled, or equated.

<sup>10</sup> World Bank, 'Poverty Overview' (<http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/poverty/overview>, Oct 2014).

<sup>11</sup> Ronald Sider, *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2005).

<sup>12</sup> Fanning, 'Holism and TentMaking Ministries' (2009).

4. Our task is to seek out individuals and people groups who, ‘by whatever means’, even poverty, have been made open to hear, understand, and respond to the gospel of Christ. If economic or social help is to be provided, it should never be seen as a conditional benefit of having received the spiritual ‘bread of life’. Other forms of assistance may effectively lead individuals to be open to spiritual assistance, which is the primary and best hope to offer anyone.<sup>13</sup>

## **Holistic Transformation through Microfinance**

### *Holistic Transformation*

If it is God’s mandate to help the poor, then any aid should be holistic to address the comprehensive scope of needs. As part of this effort, developed countries have historically poured money into developing and underdeveloped countries. Although some successes are known, they are the exception rather than the rule. In most cases, foreign aids have proven to be ineffective and, to a certain extent, wasteful. Aid also produces significant negative side effects, such as dependency, expectation, and worse yet, entitlement. I am sure that aid is helpful and at times necessary to people with desperate needs. But it is clear that aid is not a long-term, let alone permanent, solution. It is only a temporary treatment before a sustainable cure emerges.

One proven response to chronic poverty is development, which can take a variety of forms and shapes. One of them is microfinance, whose primary expected outcome is microenterprise development (MED). Christian microfinance aims to assist the economically active poor with microcredit, microsavings, microinsurance, and affordable remittance services in Christ’s name.

This is a form of sharing God’s good news in the demonstration of God’s love by providing tangible help to enable the poor. Microfinance, thus, has to identify not only economic and physical but also social and spiritual needs. Accordingly, the sector has to design products and services with the intention that their provision will eventually result in holistic transformation, spanning economic, social, and spiritual change.

As the saying goes, ‘Give a man a fish, and you feed him for a day; show him how to catch fish, and you feed him for a lifetime’. Stimulating job creation is a more effective solution than providing free aid. It also helps psychologically to restore dignity and empower those served, as they become active participants in the development process and learn to stand on their own feet.

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<sup>13</sup> Hesselgrave, *Paradigms in Conflict*, 2005

Microenterprises play the same role as large entrepreneurs in creating jobs. Yet they have the crucial advantage of being based in communities and stimulating crucial growth precisely where it is needed. However, like their bigger counterparts, microenterprises also need access to capital. Microfinance thus becomes inevitable to assist microenterprises in accessing capital. Stretching beyond just making small loans, microfinance is a broader concept than microcredit. It additionally includes microsavings, microinsurance, and affordable remittances, accompanied by sustainable education and training.

Another note about development work is that it should not be transactional but sustainable. Considerations of sustainability can extend to multiple perspectives, for instance, environmental, commercial, etc. Commercial sustainability includes operational sustainability (revenues are sufficient to cover operating expenses), financial sustainability (revenues are sufficient to cover operating expenses and even subsidy components benefitting the microfinance institution), and market sustainability (pricing for services is comparable to the market without apparent subsidy for the beneficiaries).

When microfinance is established and operated as a counterpart to mission, it can help serve the holistic needs of the economically active poor. Furthermore, it helps fulfil the Great Commission of bringing the gospel to all nations – not necessarily only through preaching and teaching, but through godly lifestyles (Matt. 28:19-20).

To me, UOB was BAM. It provides the poor with access to capital, access to improved quality of life, access to business and financial literacy, as well as access to microinsurance that mitigates life risk. Moreover, UOB is sustainable, producing transformational impact on the people and communities it serves. For these reasons, I was honoured and privileged to lead UOB for more than five years.

### *UOB*

UOB dates back to 1997, when World Relief Rwanda began to offer group loans to the most vulnerable as post-genocide relief work. This microfinance ministry was separated from World Relief Rwanda and became an independent microfinance institution (MFI) in 2004 as Urwego Community Banking (UCB).

UCB developed into an effective Christian provider of microloans to groups of the most vulnerable, mainly women. But it often ran into challenges with funding shortages and an unreliable data processing system. Meanwhile, Opportunity International, the largest Christian microfinance network in the world, established a green field microfinance bank in Rwanda. It had capital, technology, and management, but did not have the market recognition nor the staff dedicated to the Christian faith.

UCB and Opportunity International were perfect complements to each other.

Both dedicated to the same purpose of transforming the poor people in Rwanda in Christian spirit, two organisations agreed to merge in July 2007. Together, they created the first and largest microfinance bank in Rwanda, called Urwego Opportunity Bank. It was an ideal, synergistic combination of two mission-driven Christian organisations.

Nevertheless, the resulting entity required an internal transformation of its own, needing a new corporate culture, business practices, and a reliable management information system in compliance with enhanced requirements from the central bank. UOB's own sustainability was also expected in a certain time frame, but it was not in close sight. Moreover, most of the staff was familiar with NGO-style management and had to change to an institutional mindset, driven by effective and efficient organisational management. Further challenges included expanding the delivery channel and upgrading the institutional image as a bank.

But as of 30 April 2014, UOB was serving more than 200,000 clients with a variety of credit products, savings products, microinsurance products, remittances, and most importantly client training and education through holistic life improvements (HLI) modules that were designed and developed on biblical principles. UOB has distributed more than 13,000 Bibles and produced a version of 'God Provides' DVDs in the local language, Kinyarwanda, to be used for church engagement and empowerment. UOB developed and provided a variety of specialty products, such as agricultural input loans to rice and maize farmers, energy loans, school development loans, and tuition fee loans. To expand the client access points, UOB also partnered with VISA, Inc. to introduce the world's first interoperable mobile banking solutions, called mVISA. Truly, it was God's abundant grace for a microfinance bank to be used as an instrument for providing holistic financial services to alleviate poverty.

There are numerous transformation stories among the clients whom UOB has served, but I would like to share a particular one: the story of Apophie Nyirabaziga. Apophie joined UOB's trust group in 2009 for a RWF50,000 (US\$77) loan. She is now borrowing over twenty times that amount, at an amount of RWF1.2 million (US\$1,765).

Over the five-year period as a UOB client, Apophie has transformed holistically. When she first joined a UOB trust group, she was in the cowhide business, but now she runs an auto spare parts business. Economically, she has been able to grow her working capital from RWF300,000 to RWF2.5 million, buy two cows, a small forest, a banana plantation, and a water tank for her family. She employs two permanent staff and eight temporary staff.

Socially, she has played several important roles in community service as well, including president of her trust group, local sanitation board member, sector-level savings and credit cooperative member, and local cell-level

female representative. Spiritually, she has transformed from a churchgoer to a committed member of her church, now an elder. Furthermore, her husband has been converted from Islam to Christianity because of her faithful life. She has also adopted three orphans and takes good care of them, in addition to her three biological children.

The changes across all these aspects exhibit a wonderful example of holistic transformation that has taken place in her life. This story is also an example of how business plays a role in alleviating poverty, sustainably and achieving holistic mission.

### **Next Chapter**

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose (Rom. 8:28).

Looking back, it is evident that God worked toward all that has been good in my life, with or without my knowledge. It is a privilege to look back and see him holding my hand throughout my life. However, I stepped down as CEO of UOB as of 30 April 2014 for the following reasons: First, Rwanda is not among the CANS or RANs, although it may provide a springboard to reach out to CANS and RANs in Africa. I needed to be relieved from the country-specific responsibility. Second, I have sliced my life into three segments, each approximately thirty years. The first segment was for active learning, from schools and places of work. The second segment was active living, with high productivity for success. The third segment is named active legacy-building, through coaching, teaching, mentoring, and nurturing.

I am still waiting to hear from God on what my next step will be. The ministries will likely involve BAM since it is an effective way to reach those in need holistically. But whatever it may be, I will continue to love and serve the Lord. As it is written:

‘For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways’, declares the Lord. ‘As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts’ (Isa. 55:8-9).

I am delighted to surrender to his will and guidance as an instrument for his kingdom to advance on earth, until all have heard.

# LESSONS FROM A PAN-ASIAN MULTI-ETHNIC CAMPUS MINISTRY

Min Chung

## Introduction

The world is changing. No longer must we cross oceans by boat or wait weeks to communicate with someone on the opposite side of the earth. Instead, we have airplanes to fly over oceans at altitudes and speeds previously unimaginable, and technology that allows us to communicate with someone in a different country in seconds. Just as the methods of transportation and communication have significantly changed over the years, so must our perspective on mission. It is essential for twenty-first century missionaries to adapt to match the differences in paradigm and methodology.

One of the major changes seen in mission recently is the shift from global north to south. Many historical former mission fields are now sending their own missionaries to many parts of the world. Some describe this phenomenon as ‘reverse mission’ – defined by Ojo as the ‘sending of missionaries to Europe and North America by churches and Christians from the non-Western world, particularly Africa, Asia, and Latin America’.<sup>1</sup> This definition should be expanded to include diaspora churches in immigrant communities.

The diaspora church’s role in mission has significantly changed over the past few decades as immigrant communities are becoming more established in their host countries and immigrant numbers continue to rise. For example, in the United States in 2013, the nation’s immigrant population hit a record 41.3 million, the highest percentage in 93 years.<sup>2</sup> Thus, as discussed at the Lausanne Congress of World Evangelization (LCWE), diaspora communities cannot be viewed as just a mission field. God is using these immigrants to evangelise their own people groups, either in their host countries or in their homelands.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> P. Preston, ‘Reverse Mission: A Discourse In Search Of Reality?’ *PentecoStudies: An Interdisciplinary Journal for Research on the Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* 9:2 (November 2010), 153-74.

<sup>2</sup> United States Census Bureau / American FactFinder. *2009 – 2013 American Community Survey* (U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey Office, 2013), <http://factfinder2.census.gov>.

<sup>3</sup> Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization (LCWE), *Scattered to Gather: Embracing the Global Trend of Diaspora* (Manila: LifeChange Publishing, 2010), 25.

With this dramatic shift of the role of the diaspora church in mission, it is not surprising to find both ardent proponents and critical sceptics of this movement. Freston argues that 'reverse mission via diaspora churches is unlikely to work' and that, instead, 'attention must now shift more to non-diasporic modalities'.<sup>4</sup> Commenting specifically on diaspora churches in Europe, he refers to researchers such as van der Laan, who states that 'the native Dutch...do not respond to their evangelistic efforts', and Adogame, who states that 'white converts form a "negligible percentage"'.<sup>5</sup> In response to the optimistic argument that the second generation of the immigrant Christians may revitalise native churches, Freston pessimistically believes that they will either 'assimilate or secularize, or else remain in a spiritual ghetto'.<sup>6</sup> He even goes on to question the motive of diaspora churches using reverse mission as a 'sort of historical self-reparation, rather than a thought out, reflexive, cross-cultural missionary strategy'.<sup>7</sup>

On the other hand, Hanciles paints a starkly different picture and argues that diaspora congregations have a missionary function and 'represent the most effective instruments' because they 'model religious commitment, apply the message of the gospel directly to daily exigencies, and comprise communities that interact on a daily basis with other marginalized segments of society'.<sup>8</sup> He comments on the immigrant church impact, specifically in America, citing examples from the African, Korean, and Chinese churches. For instance, he uses historical evidence to show that African-American 'initiatives and spirituality contributed to the development of the holiness movement and acted as a major stimulus in the emergence of American Pentecostalism'.<sup>9</sup>

In terms of the Korean and Chinese immigrant churches, Hanciles' major points can be summarised as follows:

- 'Adaptations made by children of Korean and Chinese immigrants...allow them to evangelize other second-generation Koreans more effectively and even attract non-Koreans and non-Chinese American' and 'increase their capacity to reach others like them'.<sup>10</sup>
- 'By evangelizing other immigrants – many of whom are far more open to religious conversion than they were before they migrated and would not otherwise be won to the Christian faith – these congregations represent a cutting edge of Christian growth in

<sup>4</sup> Freston, 'Reverse Mission', 169-170.

<sup>5</sup> Freston, 'Reverse Mission', 158.

<sup>6</sup> Freston, 'Reverse Mission', 160.

<sup>7</sup> Freston, 'Reverse Mission', 161.

<sup>8</sup> Jehu Hanciles, *Beyond Christendom: Globalization, African Migration and the Transformation of the West* (Maryknoll: NY: Orbis Books, 2008), 278.

<sup>9</sup> Freston, 'Reverse Mission', 161.

<sup>10</sup> Hanciles, *Beyond Christendom*.

America. They are Christianizing groups whom American missionary agencies expend enormous amounts of resources and effort to reach in distant lands, often with modest results'.<sup>11</sup>

- 'The new immigrant congregations often represent the main forms of evangelical ministry and outreach within the areas and sections of the American population least impacted by the dominant culture.'<sup>12</sup>

This is only a representative sample of two perspectives in this complex issue. But both sides have validity in their positions. Nevertheless, God is working in unique ways, in different circumstances, and in different countries, and I hope to share my years of experience in ministry to add to this dialogue.

### My Story

Korea in the 1970s was filled with many families eager to move to America – the distant but well-known land of opportunity. My parents immigrated to America during this time, driven by the desire to educate their two sons. They worked daily in various factories and at various dry cleaners with the goal of sending their children to universities. Their hard work enabled them to fulfil these goals and helped to produce a successful dentist and a pastor.

However, the transition was not so easy. I came to America when I was twelve years old and struggled through an identity crisis. Rather than believing I was both Korean and American and utilising both potential cultural assets and the unique position in which I was placed, I felt I was neither Korean nor American. I submitted to the pessimistic view of 'neither nor' instead of focusing on the optimistic thinking of 'I am both' and utilising it for the kingdom of God.

I eventually learned to focus on the positive aspects of belonging to two different cultures: Though I am deficient in both, I am adequately capable in both languages and cultures. I realised the great advantage of this when I saw that it was a gift not everyone receives and one I could use for the kingdom. My perspective changed from crippling confusion to enabling versatility.

### My Church and Ministry: Covenant Fellowship Church (CFC)

College ministry is extremely important because it is during this time that people are heavily shaped into who they are to be. It is also an optimal time for people to be trained for a lifetime of ministry in the world. As young men and women enter the workforce, get married, and have children, their availability to do ministry generally decreases. They become more immobile and are weighed down by the busyness and commitments of life.

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<sup>11</sup> Hanciles, *Beyond Christendom*, 281.

<sup>12</sup> Hanciles, *Beyond Christendom*, 288-89.



It is important for college ministries to train these young people while they are still mouldable and mobile so that they can later have an increased capacity to serve God. Impacting them while they are still growing establishes a strong foundation and enables them to grow in the right direction for the kingdom.

I attended the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign from 1982 to 1987, and attended Biblical Theological Seminary in Philadelphia from 1987 to 1990. A year before I graduated from seminary, God convicted me to plant a church back at the University of Illinois. I fought against this conviction for an entire year. I was 26 years old with no financial security and with a wife who was pregnant with our first child. I did not think I was ready. I wanted to spend time with and learn from a more seasoned, experienced pastor to grasp what it really meant to do ministry. But I could not fight what I knew God wanted me to do.

While I was praying in the morning, the Lord convicted me with a verse, Matthew 9:37-38: 'Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field"' (NIV). The word 'workers' burned in my heart and mind. God wanted our church to produce workers for his kingdom.

In 1990, we planted a church in the heart of the campus of the University of Illinois with the vision of producing workers out of the students who arrived and left in 4-5 years. Our aim was to train immature freshmen and have them leave campus as spiritually mature workers capable of building up local churches all over the world.

In 2014, we celebrated the twenty-fifth year of our campus ministry in God's faithfulness. Here is a brief overview of the demographics of CFC in 2014:

1. It is a multi-ethnic church with about 1,300 members.
2. The congregation is made up of 70% undergraduate students, 10% graduate students, 10% young adults and families, and 10% youth students and children.
3. In terms of ethnicities, it is 55% Korean-American and the rest is made up of 23 different ethnic groups, including Caucasian, Chinese, Taiwanese, Indonesian, Indian, African, Latino, Egyptian, and Pakistani.
4. Various ethnic ministries have started within the church and include Japanese, Indian, Indonesian, Taiwanese, and Hispanic ministries, as well as several ministries for different ethnic Muslim groups.
5. Of the church attendees, 30% are brand new to Christianity or had never attended a church before.
6. Thousands of church alumni are currently serving local churches and ministries all over the world, with about 10% in full-time vocational ministries. Alumni are serving in various countries

including the U.S., Korea, China, Indonesia, Thailand, Egypt, Jordan, and many more.

7. CFC is currently supporting financially and through prayer over 70 missionaries and ministries across the world.

### **Philosophy that Caused Diversity**

Diversity was never on the agenda. CFC started out with the name ‘Korean Christian Fellowship’, but as non-Koreans began to come within the first few months, we changed the name to Covenant Fellowship Church (CFC).

So how did this multi-ethnicity arise? We never encouraged people to build relationships particular to race; instead, we encouraged people to build relationships with whomever they would *naturally* build relationships with in their daily lives. Though we encourage people to build relationships with anyone regardless of ethnicity, we challenge people to go beyond their comfort zones and build friendships outside of their own ethnicities. As a result, CFC naturally became a multi-ethnic church.

The goal of CFC was never to be ethnic for the sake of being ethnic, but to be *strategically ethnic*. We constantly evaluate the makeup of the congregation and strategise to effectively reach the people who God places around us. For example, it is much easier for a Korean to be able to reach other Koreans, since Koreans tend to naturally congregate with each other. Thus, we take advantage of this by reaching out to other Koreans on campus. Of course, we do not disregard or neglect other ethnic groups; we are simply looking at the advantages of cultural attraction. It is the same for other races as well: when a Vietnamese individual becomes a Christian, he or she is encouraged to start praying for other Vietnamese people. Some church members have developed different ethnic ministries under the umbrella of CFC as an outreach group. Through this process we are able to become naturally, spiritually, and strategically multi-ethnic as a church.

Some argue that being as diverse as possible is the ‘best’ way to be multi-ethnic as a church. Of course there is validity to this point in saying that heaven will be like this. But not all local churches are called to reflect the diversity of heaven. It is rather the call of the universal church to embody this. Each local church is to be diverse in vision, gifts, and ethnicity so that the local churches *together* can reflect the diversity of the population of heaven. If each local church is strategically different, together we can effectively reach all the nations.

Some people’s definition of multi-ethnic is ‘multi-coloured’. This may be true from a white, Anglo-American’s point of view, as they learned historically from American churches. Their push is to be multi-coloured, with more non-white attendees. The problem with this arises when other ethnicities learn this principle from other denominations, seminaries, and church-planting groups and try to be multi-ethnic from a white Anglo-American perspective. It is not strategic for a pastor with a predominantly

Korean-American and even pan-Asian church to forcibly spend time to reach out to more whites, blacks, and Hispanics while, strategically, he might be able to reach ten times more Asians for the kingdom.

However, being strategically ethnic cannot be an excuse for ethnocentrism, exclusivity, and laziness, or as a justification of selfishness to avoid reaching out to people with whom we are not comfortable. We need to honestly evaluate our role and position in the big picture and strategize how to be maximally effective for the kingdom.

### **Discovery**

There are so many kingdom advantages of ministering to a multi-ethnic group in America. This was not planned, but discovered during the past quarter century of ministry. I can see the following advantages:

1) Ministering to Americans is possible. It is very possible to minister to all kinds of ethnically diverse American citizens. This includes multi-ethnic citizens in America, from Caucasian to all kinds of Asians, Africans, Latinos, and more.

2) The college ministry multiplies our ministry reach. Students who come to our ministry are trained during their college years and go back to serve in the local churches in which they grew up. We are able to indirectly minister to these other immigrant churches because they send their young people (1.5 or second generation) to college.

3) The second generation is already starting to minister to its own second-generation ethnic people within the U.S. These biculturally, often bilingually, trained members can complete their studies and possibly work with people of their specific ethnicity in the U.S. For example, in our church, we have many Indian members who grow a heart for the Indian people and return home to serve various Indian churches and ministries. This is just one specific example to show a common pattern seen among people of various ethnicities.

4) Both Asian and Anglo church attendees are sent to different parts of the world as missionaries. Alumni from CFC of various ethnicities are currently serving in countries all over the world.

5) God uses people to plant churches in the U.S. Many of our alumni have planted churches on college campuses in the U.S., from Minneapolis to Boston, and they are mostly pan-Asian and multi-ethnic. Ten percent of our church members in the past have become some sort of missionary or pastor. Many previous members become lay leaders in these churches as well.

6) The second generation is actively participating in mission work through prayer, financial support, and short-term or long-term missionary work in their home countries.

7) The 1.5, second, and third generations can minister to migrants and international students coming to the U.S. A record high of 886,052

international students attended U.S. institutions in the 2013-14 academic year. In the last ten years, the number of international students increased by around 75%. The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign is the top public school for international students, with the number attending reaching around 10,000 from more than 110 nations.<sup>13</sup> God is bringing students from all over the world, including countries where open evangelism is nearly impossible. They are now at our doorsteps allowing us to participate in the big picture of what God is doing.

### Challenges and Critical Views

In response to the pessimism about diaspora missions, I encourage us not to look at only the limitations, but envision the incredible potential. When evaluating the first-generation churches, they seem very limited to and focused on themselves. It appears that they are not able to contribute much to missions in America; however, an important factor to consider is that these churches are ministering to their own people and are involved in missions to different parts of the world. They send short-term and long-term missionaries and give financially to ministries in various countries. Most importantly, they function as a breeding ground for the 1.5, second, and third generations. In our church, we are witnessing the result of what the 1.5 to third generations can do. The promising thought is that this movement has not yet fully developed; this is merely the beginning of what can happen in the future.

However, many real challenges still exist. For example, a number of second-generation, English-speaking Korean-Americans have been leaving Korean diaspora churches, commonly referred to as the 'silent exodus.' In a recent survey of second-generation Korean-Americans, 54.2% left Korean diaspora churches after high school, 26.1% during their college years, and 10.7% after college. Of those who left, 45.7% did not go on to attend any church.<sup>14</sup> How can we capture the second and third generations spiritually and train them to be workers for God's kingdom? Can we challenge them to reach out and be mission-minded?

### Suggestions for the Future

Being amidst a culture and world of instant results, it is easy to become discouraged when thinking about the role of the diaspora church in mission. Change is not readily apparent and objective measures of success are lacking. However, from my twenty-five years of ministry experience, I can

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<sup>13</sup> Institute of International Education, *Open Doors Report on International Educational Exchange* ([www.iie.org/opendoors](http://www.iie.org/opendoors), 2014), accessed in January 2015.

<sup>14</sup> Chandler Im and Amos Yong (eds.), *Global Diasporas and Mission*, Regnum Edinburgh Centenary Series 23 (Oxford: Regnum Books, 2014).

testify that the diaspora church has incredible potential to impact both local communities and missions abroad. I can think of several suggestions for this unique calling to become fully realised:

1) Share information with other immigrant churches: Can immigrant churches share what they are doing with other immigrant churches? There are many immigrant churches in various stages of development. Are they going to be able to learn from one another? For example, immigrant churches in the U.S. are older and are more developed than immigrant churches in other countries. Even though the context might be different, will they be able to learn from one another? Immigrant churches should learn from their own experiences and share what they have learned with younger, developing churches.

2) Strengthen immigrant churches: Non-diaspora churches can strengthen and encourage immigrant churches with financial or human resources. Many diaspora churches are small in number and lack experience and resources, and many are just trying to survive. The more established non-diaspora churches can significantly support these smaller diaspora churches by providing financial support or even sending workers to these churches. It is another great avenue to reflect the partnership in the kingdom of God. For example, can an established church train people and send them, like missionaries, to support first-generation immigrant churches? This would also allow people in diaspora churches to learn from people of different cultures and experiences.

3) Focus on young people: It is important to train people at an early age, when they are able to be more easily shaped and mobile. We need to produce Daniels and Josephs, who were immigrants in their own countries in the Bible.

4) Have a missionary mindset: Can first-generation churches have the mindset of doing missions in the U.S. and encourage their second-generation ministry to be missional? First-generation churches planting or helping plant churches in the U.S. is just like helping churches overseas.

5) Work together: Can the first-generation church work together with the second-generation or multi-ethnic church? Recent surveys and statistics clearly show that many second-generation Korean-Americans are leaving the church. Can the first-generation church share its experiences and resources to build up the next generation?

God is faithfully working and using the diaspora church to advance his kingdom. Let us have spiritual eyes for the twenty-first century and strategically embrace this potential so that more people will be raised up for the kingdom of God.

# MISSIONS IN THE PUBLIC FIELD: A CASE FROM ROMANIA

Hong Key Chung

'Each person should remain in the situation they were in when God called them' (1 Cor. 7:20)

'There is not a square inch in the whole domain of our human existence over which Christ, who is Sovereign over all, does not cry, Mine!' (Abraham Kuyper)<sup>1</sup>

Occasionally I am deeply reflecting on my calling when my wife asks me, 'Are you a pastor? If so, then why are you engaging in international policy-making in Romania as your mission?' A position in the public sphere goes quite far beyond a pastor's traditional role and responsibilities, mostly circumscribed to the church and its community.

A short description of my ministry is in order. First, I have been forging a network of politically involved Christians by mobilising, organising, and challenging them to apply Christian values in all areas of their public life, including administration and politics. This is done through different channels: prayer breakfasts, conferences, workshops, and gatherings. I also work closely with international Christian politicians in order to exchange knowledge and to practice with Romanian stakeholders to promote mission and Christ-centred values applied in all spheres of life. Second, I am active in the academia, offering lectures and seminars on various topics regarding communication and society, the areas of my specialisation. These are conducive spaces where I bring the gospel message to those who are in the formative and learning stage of their views, beliefs, and values. Third, my most recent endeavour is organising a Christian business leaders' association to encourage cooperation among, and support of, each other in bringing the gospel to their workplaces. I have been in these 'public' spaces for more than a decade and this public engagement is expected to expand in the coming years.

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## The Public Arena in Mission Thinking

How did all this happen to such a typical Korean missionary? I was educated in a small, conservative Presbyterian Bible college, with a certificate from the Open Theological College in the United Kingdom and a postgraduate diploma from the Oxford Centre for Mission Studies. A

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<sup>1</sup> Abraham Kuyper, *A Centennial Reader*, ed. James D. Bratt (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998), 488.

typical, traditional Korean missions practitioner would focus on evangelism, church planting, discipleship, and Bible studies. If there is any social engagement, such as humanitarian work, sports, and medical assistance, it is done purely for the sake of saving souls.

When I started to work in Romania in 1993, a typical missionary challenge rose: how to adapt to the Romanian culture that had been shaped predominantly by Orthodox Christianity and communist atheism. My wife and I finally settled down in Bucharest after a few years of short mission work elsewhere. Other typical missionary challenges were part of our life: the difficulty of language learning and the challenge of having almost zero knowledge of our host nation, Romania. I could find no useful model among Korean missionaries for working with Orthodox Christians who had gone through a communist experience. Although we knew about communism from North Korea, this knowledge was simply not relevant in the Romanian historical and political context.

When I arrived in Bucharest, democracy was at its very beginnings and traces of communism could be seen and felt at each and every step. First of all, finding essential information about obtaining visas and on registration and accommodation procedures proved to be extremely difficult. Rules were unclear even to the civil servants themselves and it took quite a long time to figure out what needed to be done. People were sent from one office to another and back until the necessary papers were done; they often had to queue for hours and then start all over again the following day. Finding our basic needs for day-to-day life was also quite an adventure. We had to search the whole city for rice, milk, or fruits. And once we found something, it was like discovering a treasure. We even had a slogan for this: 'Everything you see, buy it'. We did not know when it would be available the next time.

The public transportation and communication systems in Bucharest were poor. Damaged public buses often blocked the streets, and public telephones were either busy or dysfunctional. Getting a home telephone meant waiting for over a month, especially when it was for a foreigner. The rental system was problematic even for private accommodations, not to mention for finding and renting a space for church meetings. Our neighbours and the police became very suspicious. Actually, fear and suspicion could be seen and felt everywhere. People were still in captivity; although they claimed to be finally free, it was a freedom that still could not reach their minds and, most importantly, their hearts. When it came to their spiritual life, people were attached to the Orthodox traditional customs and values, religious practices, rituals, and superstitions. For most of them, communism shaped their mentality; their deep-rooted Orthodox religion shaped their very being, including their worldviews and their way of doing things.

Under such circumstances, one could say I was either brave or ignorant, if not, faithful to the training in transcultural mission that I had previously

received. However, as life went on in Romania, I realised that nothing I was trained for, and had studied about missions, worked. In mission training, one mostly operates with models, with patterns that you apply to a specific context while slightly adapting it to the on-the-ground reality. In the Romanian culture, there were no common patterns, or if there are, I have yet to find them. Every individual had a different understanding of reality and different ways of approaching things. This confusing reality was similar to the postmodern attitude that you must do as you feel, as there is no norm or standard pattern. This made it difficult to know how to approach and to get close to people, especially as there was no common ground and no way to share their values or beliefs.

Our first mission work for our Romanian ministry was evangelism in markets, parks, and restaurants. We also invited people to our home to share the gospel with them. There were, of course, times when we were disappointed as people failed to show up, even though they had promised to join us for lunch. But, little by little, we learned to be patient and we won their trust. We held Bible studies at home using an English translator; we prepared Korean food; we invited homeless people to our home so that they could wash their clothes and have a shower; we did several acts of humanitarian grace as needs arose. In every occasion, we made sure to share the gospel.

Not too long after I started our home Bible study with five regularly attending poor youths, I share my plan at the first Sunday morning service of the Romanian Presbyterian Church. It was a very cold winter morning on 16 January 1994. We had no heating, hot water, or toilet. The floor of the small room was covered with a carpet and I preached my sermon from a small lectern. But it was a significant day as I could finally proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ in an organised formal service. This was how the church began.

As time went by, I got better in understanding Romanians and the specific problems they were facing. This also helped me to relate to people and to set a direction for my missionary work. For example, I noticed that in each institution everything was under the responsibility of one person, which resulted in a lack of responsibility delegation and control, a lack of trust, and, in effect, a lack of democratic decision-making. I could still feel the communist mentality in the lack of information and communication, the suspicion, the low spirit of initiative, as well as the abstention from assuming responsibilities and from staying accountable for decisions they made. There was a spirit of destructive criticism that bred pessimism and inaction. This attitude was pervasive: 'There is no point in doing this', or 'it makes no sense doing that'. Sometimes I was shocked by the lack of hope and trust; I wondered whether positive change was at all possible.

The problem was further worsened by an economic crisis. Many families were not able to afford the basic means to sustain their daily life. When basic survival is at stake, people had little room for spiritual or religious



matters. The consequence was a superficial level of spirituality grounded on superstitions and a poor, ritual-based religious life with little biblical teachings.

The typical understanding of missions in the fledgling Korean missionary movement is that it involves various activities and programmes or enterprises carried out to communicate the gospel in cross-cultural contexts. As in George Peters' definition of missions, I was committed to the proclamation of the gospel to win converts and establish local congregations.<sup>2</sup> In this sense, the church is the designated institution for missions. Peters neatly provides a three-stage development of this missionary enterprise: 1) saving people from their sins (believing), 2) encouraging them to join a local church (belonging), and 3) teaching them to be responsible persons in the given society (behaving). We were faithful to follow this definition of the traditional view of missions.

However, when I witnessed and grieved over injustice, illness, corruption, and social disorder, my understanding of missions was seriously challenged. The priority in the given context became to bring people together to work together; to create connections; to encourage them to overcome fear, suspicion, or isolation; and to develop mutual understanding and trust. My view of missions as proclamation, fellowship, and service was soon replaced by a focus on communication, relationship, and cooperation.

My introduction to, and engagement with, the public sphere was not well planned or strategically designed. It was rather a gradual induction to new mission frontiers as I tried to respond to urgent human and social needs. A reflection on the new understanding of missions emerged slowly but steadily. Throughout the process, I took two things seriously: the social context and a careful reading of the scriptures. I soon had to admit that Christ's vision for missions is bigger than our theology, our orientation, our culture, and the church that we belong to.

As I look back, I can affirm that my missionary journey was radical. My wife's puzzling question was more than reasonable: 'Are you a pastor?' I spend far more time now on the ecumenical parliamentary prayer group, which opens a vast arena of politics, administration, academics, and economics to my missionary engagement. In my frequent engagements with political leaders, I noticed that spirituality is a subject that is important to everyone. Whether I directly speak the gospel or not, my mission engagement always brings Christian values to them. Our church shares the same vision of missions: bringing the transformational power of the gospel to individuals, families, communities, and the nation.

How have I accomplished these? The only explanation is God's providential guidance and care. Our congregation is accepted by the people and our public ministries are recognised by political leaders, theologians,

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<sup>2</sup> George Peters, *A Biblical Theology of Missions* (Chicago: Moody, 1972), 11.

and other stakeholders. Now they call me their friend, and for this I feel privileged.

### **Impacting Present and Future Leaders of Romania**

Many times in my life, God's will was unclear, especially when I sought his direction before an important undertaking. His silence, I later recognised, did not mean that he was not listening. Indeed, oftentimes God's leading is inconspicuous, and I am assured of his close presence. Three things were directing me in my mission practices: (1) my understanding of the Bible as sovereign in all dimensions of human life and society (the biblical view); (2) the contextual situation of Romanian society and the people's problems and needs; and (3) my fellowship with Dutch evangelical leaders, with whom I have close contact as they share with me a similar mission work in politics, academics, and media.

#### *Political Arena*

The collaboration with the Dutch Reformed Party (a Calvinist-oriented party) was essential to my missions in the Romanian political field. The Dutch party offered to collaborate with me for the democracy movement in Romania and I was honoured by their invitation. Dutch speakers and spiritual leaders came to Romania and offered exceptionally good training, covering key subjects from a biblical viewpoint. The professional organisation and management of the events, coupled with the high quality contributions of the Dutch speakers stirred the political circle in Romania. Financial requirements were shared between the Dutch partners (80%) and my mission support group. This successful experience was crucial to establishing vital links with Romanian politicians and the academia. The subsequent events I organised to bring Christian values into politics gained and established our good reputation in the country.

One example is a conference that I organised with the Romanian conservative political party in 2003. Our guest speaker was Graham Weeks, a former politician and the current moderator of the International Presbyterian Church in England. His involvement was more than welcome because he laid out ways for individuals to actively participate in the local administration. Since the Romanians had had no previous opportunity to hear a Reformed perspective on the issue of spiritual life in politics, it had an ice-breaking effect, resulting in an unexpected level of openness from the participants.

Another example is the 'Christianity and Society' conference series from 2004. There was a growing openness towards the teaching of the gospel in the public sphere. We also allowed the participating leaders to develop a fellowship and network around Evangelical faith and mission. From the first conference, different Christian confessions, churches, and

denominations were brought together under the same roof, along with the local administration. The conferences also encouraged Christian involvement in politics. As a result, a new party, the Romanian Christian Democratic Union, was founded, although its influence is rather small at present.

The second 'Christianity and Society' conference provided a personal opportunity to build a strong relationship with the top leadership of what was then called the Peasants' Christian Democratic National Party (PNTCD). The cooperation with this political party was unique, leading us to a new dimension of mission work. It became an open ecumenical conference, run by a Korean Presbyterian minister/missionary. Topics such as 'how Christians could bring their values in the socio-political life' were discussed without any doctrinal conflict among different confessions or churches. Its success can be attributed to at least two factors: (1) the teachings of the representatives from the Dutch Reformed Party that were seen as neutral in the Romanian religious context, and, (2) a focus placed on fundamental and biblical teachings universally accepted by various confessions (such as the teachings of Jesus Christ and the Ten Commandments) and their impact on the civil and political life. The purpose was to draw people to the centrality of Christian meaning in their public engagement. This was particularly crucial as Romania was known both as one of the most religious countries in Europe and also as the most corrupt society. These two cannot exist side by side.

It was a new paradigm of mission proposed by this conference that without Hongkey would have not been possible. He, Hongkey, has transformed the traditional Christian mission in Romania, which mostly involved humanitarian work, and redirected it towards leaders. The neo-Protestant church has no idea how to involve the Christian mission in the socio-political world while the Orthodox majority is, very often, not guided by Christ-centred principles. Thus, Hongkey's exploration to do mission among the academic, politics and administration, that is, the so-called 'untouched district', widely opened a new paradigm which will greatly contribute to a next generation.<sup>3</sup>

Further, PNTCD has developed a focus on developing Christian leadership through national networks, evening prayer meetings, and training.

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The subsequent 'Christian and Society' conferences brought other approaches to promote a Christ-centred political life. For example, in 2007, the speakers were John Ashcroft from the Bush administration and Steve Magee, a Presbyterian leader. The focus of the conference was on family leadership and social justice. Around 200 leaders from all confessions spent several days together in a mountain location. With no communication

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<sup>3</sup> A statement by Vasile Suci, former member of the Romanian Parliament (2000-2004) made in June, 2006 in Cluj Napoca, Romania.

facilities available, the participants gave their full attention to lectures, discussions, fellowship, and worship.

### *Universities*

My story of missions among universities begun with the training I received at the Oxford Centre for Mission Studies. My study at the Centre opened my eyes to holistic missions, and challenged me to embrace transformation as the heart of missions. Transformation through the power of the gospel encompasses the whole life, including, of course, politics. The study also strengthened my commitment to work for a complete social transformation in politics through the formation of value-driven Christian leadership in public life.

My research was on the effect of media on politics. I was invited to speak on the topic at various conferences; this enabled me to develop relationships with academics and politicians. Soon we began to develop programmes in several universities. For example, with the Babes Bolyai University from Cluj, a series of conferences, seminars, and forums were organised to discuss leadership, democracy, and economics. My collaboration with Prof. Vasile Boari, the founder of the Faculty of Political Sciences of the university, proves to be critical. Strong relationships have been established with many leaders of different churches; with some of them I further developed new projects. Christian themes were also brought to the table where students, politicians, and other public figures met to become more responsible in public life. As a result, the Romanian Democratic Convention (CDR) was founded, a party which played a critical role in catalysing a strong opposition against the one-party political system. This was the norm until 1996, when CDR formed a new coalition government.

### **Exchange between Romanian and Korean Christian Politicians**

I vividly remember when Peter Dugulescu, a Baptist pastor and politician, organised an ecumenical event more than ten years ago. It was my first experience with the Romanian parliamentary prayer breakfast. I saw how good connections were established between Evangelical leaders, who are more Bible-oriented, and the Catholics and the Orthodox, who are more liturgically oriented. I had previously met the Baptist pastor, and through his invitation, I joined the event, which brought me closer to the political environment.

Another opportunity that got me more deeply involved in Romanian politics was the visit of the president of the Baptist Union Federation, Billy Kim in 2004. Kim was my acquaintance, thus, he invited me to join his meeting with the Romanian president of the Senate, the Minister of Culture, and other cabinet members, and Parliament leaders. At such a

meeting, you would expect that hard topics would be put on the table, and such was the case. And yet, an act of grace had a stronger impact on everyone. Kim offered to pray for the people he had just met. For him, as a pastor, it was natural to pray. But for most participants, especially in this 'secular' setting, it was an unusual moment. This act of grace had powerful effects on the participants: opening their minds to one another and helping them to overcome barriers and formalism and to embrace a spiritual reality in every human endeavour.

From the beginning of my missions in politics, the Lord opened doors for me to connect serendipitously with key Christian political leaders such as Rev. Dugulescu and Christian parliamentarian Vasile Suci. Billy Kim's visit in Romania was also pivotal in introducing me to Romanian Christian leaders and political stakeholders.

When I became a permanent member of the prayer breakfast, the idea of an exchange between Romanian Christian political leaders and their Korean counterparts came up naturally. The desire was expressed by both sides and I was also invited to prayer breakfast meetings in Korea.

I arranged visits to Korea for the Romanian leaders. At private gatherings, I also invited them to Protestant church services so they could connect with my Korean Christian friends. Their experience with Korean worship and preaching caused them to rethink their spirituality and their Christian responsibility as politicians. Such experiences proved to be more effective than formal meetings, as they were exposed to the Korean social context and to the influence on society of Protestant Christianity.

In August 2014, at the Romanian Parliament in Bucharest, an international conference on human rights in North Korea took place. I was involved from the preparation stage. This was a great opportunity for leaders in human rights work from all over the world to meet one another and to share experiences. The conference brought to light the most severe cases of human trafficking, disappearances, and grim violations of human rights. The conference aimed to raise awareness and press governments and national parliaments for more concrete actions to protect the vulnerable. This was also a unique space where leaders from different churches and various parts of the world could come together in solidarity.

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### **A Mission Theology that Embraces All Aspects of Human Life**

How one understands 'missions' determines his or her actions and aspirations, whether in evangelism or in political and social engagement. I believe that Christian mission is a means to make the gospel known to everyone and is for every part of human and social life. I promote an idea of 'missions' that does not translate itself in 'activities', but rather a 'mission' that literally means the communication of the gospel, on which every 'activity', as instrument but not as goal, should be focused.

Every Christian is a ‘message’ of the One who has sent him or her. Yes, in missions, ‘the medium is the message’.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, the most basic act in missions is to give away *our own selves* as the representation of the gospel in the way the Holy Spirit specifically reveals to each of us. We are more credible in our missions when we identify ourselves with the gospel. This act of missions does not represent an external message or a part of ourselves; the ideal is that we are so changed by the gospel that we become its incarnation. Of course, we will never succeed perfectly, like Jesus did, but we can become more and more like Him.

The gospel is neither changeable nor perfectible. Truth carries eternal life on which I, as a Christian, stand in faith. Our message that we embody is determined by the way we understand and commit ourselves to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The audience varies in terms of their needs and ways of processing a message. This requires customised communication channels. This means there is a wide range of ways to communicate the message, but all have the common goal of bringing the gospel message and spreading it based on the audience’s needs and through the guidance of the Holy Spirit. This is what I like to call ‘the sky channel’.

My audience has been Romanians who were in transition. In every sphere of their personal and social life, changes were taking place: from communist ideologies to capitalism, from dictatorship to democracy, from state-centred economy to market economy, or from singularity in culture and religion to pluralism. Being radically different from the context that I grew up with, my initial perception of post-communism Romanian worldview primarily consisted of communism with a particular dictatorship and a long Orthodox religious tradition.

In regards to learning and understanding spirituality and orthodoxy in Romania, Timothy Ware was inspired by the Orthodox worship and called it ‘heaven on earth’. He identifies the holy liturgy as something that embraces two worlds at once, for both in heaven and on earth the liturgy is one and the same: one presence, one sacrifice.<sup>5</sup> The Orthodox Church mostly focuses on right belief and right worship, and indicates Christianity as a liturgical religion in which worship comes first, and doctrine and discipline second. If worship is the centre of the liturgy, what is the object of the worship? Of course, God is the object, but who is He, what is He in the heart of the believer? What is the relationship – if there is one – between the believer and God, in the act of prayer and worship?

In my view, the traditional Orthodox Church was neither able to replace atheist communism as a system of the nation’s ideology nor fill the ideological and leadership vacuum left after the collapse of communism.

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<sup>4</sup> Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (New York: New American Library, 1964), 15.

<sup>5</sup> Daniel B. Clendenin, *Eastern Orthodox Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1995), 12.

One problem was the church's passive attitude towards social ills. Closing its eye to corruption and exploitation by institution structures may come from what I would call an 'ivory tower model of spirituality'. A disconnection from the rest of the society may provide a space for one's spiritual satisfaction while evading the real world. Values were spread every time in the same ritualistic, traditional approach with no place for society intervention and change. This gap also produces a superficial form of faith with disparity between Sunday (for worship) and the rest of the week (for work and family life). However, although often ugly and messy, the world is a place where ones Christian calling is to be lived out.

Thus, my urgent mission is to restore a Bible-grounded and Christ-centred form of Christian faith in the Romanian social context. In this society, which has been deeply influenced by Orthodox traditions, my continuous challenge is how to stimulate the socio-political leaders to overcome shadows of the past.

Regardless of the direction for mission work, one needs to understand the host culture in itself without being tied to a certain 'wannabe model' that one wishes to implement. This has to do with the 'sky channel approach': the search for the best way to communicate and share the message of the gospel, and for how to do so holistically. The latter means one needs to touch the many areas of a person's being and life: heart, mind, will, profession, family, community, etc.

The Christian churches before and after 1989 and mission activities after 1989, mostly from countries with democratic traditions, may have been a unique antidote for the nation. Hope in Christ was fuelled by faith in the truth and grace of the gospel in such a difficult socio-political era.

As a Protestant mission practitioner I come with my own theological perspective. When it comes to the relationship between the believer, God, and society, my Reformed orientation quickly takes me to my Calvinistic roots. In Calvinism, there is no division between the believer and the world, between gospel and culture. However, there is a common Christian affirmation regardless of one's theological leading: to stay faithful to the biblical doctrine of the Creator-creation relationship in which all of life, including culture and society, has a full meaning only if we bring it under the lordship of God. In this relationship, the power of the sovereign God embraces the entire course of history, and one can discern God's revelation and God's mission in affecting culture, both personal and corporative. God wants his children to be present in each and every context of everyday life, communicating his love and salvation. Thus, Christian missions must not be limited to religion or spirituality: it must reach every aspect of human existence.

As a Korean missionary, my understanding of missions has come a long way, and it still continues to evolve. Although social context changes, as do communication methods (e.g., social media), my endeavour in the given context has been finding ways for Romanian leaders, both political and

religious, to rethink their spirituality and their mission in the place where God has put them. Today, I am a political catalyser, but I believe this to be only part of my calling. In the future, I do not know what missions arena will unfold before me. I suspect that it may be the education sector, where I can produce 'multipliers' who will share a Christ-centred model in all areas of work and society. It has been the Holy Spirit who has enabled me so far, and it will have to be his guidance and empowerment that will raise leaders to bring transformation to the nation.

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# SECTION THREE

# LOOKING AHEAD...

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# A PASTOR'S REFLECTION ON KOREAN CHURCH'S CRISIS AND HOPE: EXPERIENCE OF KWANGLIM METHODIST CHURCH

Chungsuk Kim

## Introduction

The influence of Christianity as a global religion has long been recognised, especially its influence on western civilisation. Its impact is found, for example, in music, fine arts, science, and society in general. Nonetheless, it is also true that present-day Christianity suffers the loss of its former influence. The church no longer commends the world's attention, and is now viewed with suspicion by increasingly secularised societies and people. Its calling in the world is to provide guidance with spiritual and moral authority, but in reality, it is subjugated to a secular disposition. Often this crisis is caused not by external threats or issues but by internal dynamics, especially when the church has gained respectability and enjoys a degree of influence and affluence. Eventually Christianity becomes deprived of its essence; this is a total crisis.

Korean Christianity has been facing a 'crisis' situation for more than two decades. Its challenging or even grim future has been illustrated by several studies.<sup>1</sup> One overarching factor is the rapid decline and aging of the population of South Korea. Internally, the steady erosion of the general confidence in the Protestant church, particularly in comparison with other religious groups, has been pointed out as a major factor contributing to the decline of Christianity in number and influence.

How can we address this grim prospect and overcome it? Is there any hope for the future of Korean Christianity? I would like to share my own struggle as a pastor and my reflections from it. I will examine the ongoing crisis of Christianity in South Korea and propose several directions for dealing with the challenges at hand. I do this not as an academician but as the front-line pastor of a local congregation. Therefore, the context of my reflection is Kwanglim Methodist Church (KMC) in Seoul. My main focus is Korean Protestant Christianity, but this discussion can also be applied to Catholicism and even to other religious groups.

KMC began in 1953 as a daughter congregation of Kwanghee-mun Church in post-war Seoul. When the construction of a sanctuary began in

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<sup>1</sup> For example, Yoonshik Choi, *The 2020 2040 Future Map of the Korean Church* [in Korean] (Seoul: Word of Life Press, 2014), 39-44.

1954, the church adopted its current name. When the church moved to its current location (Gangnam District) in 1978, it began to grow exponentially, and so did its missionary activities around the world. Today, KMC is recognised as the largest Methodist church in the world.

### **Today's Korean Church**

In the span of 130 years, Korean Christianity achieved unprecedented rapid expansion. However, just as its growth has been expeditious, so has been its decline. It was once expressed by Korean pastors in the United States that if the American church recedes at a rate of thirty kilometres per hour, the Korean church declines at a rate of sixty kilometres. That being said, the Korean church is experiencing a serious challenge in its religious identity in the midst of the loss of religious authority and integrity.

Many Korean theologians and futuristic scholars have suggested a crisis theory and advanced their own solutions to it. Some approach the issue from sociological and psychological perspectives. Generally speaking, many of them tend to focus on a simple methodology instead of addressing underlying causes; hence, the practicality of their proposed solutions is questioned by practitioners.

#### *A Decline in Number and Horizontal Mobility*

The number of Korean Christians has seriously declined in recent years. And many watchers argue that this numerical decline is an outcome of the ongoing crisis of the Korean church. At the core of this crisis is the Korean society's diminishing confidence in Christianity. Various solutions have been proposed in response to this challenge, yet, in spite of this, none of them has a decisive answer to this question.

The horizontal mobility of Christians between local churches is perceived as another challenge. It is reported that (Protestant) Christians make two to three moves during their faith period. In doing so, they no longer maintain their sustained attachment, abandoning their commitment to their ecclesiastical communities. Hence, the great crisis is a reduction not in the number of new converts but in the number of devoted Christians. Horizontal mobility can be interpreted as the loss of a communitarian spirit among Korean Christians. In my pastoral perception, horizontally mobile Christians occasionally experience more difficulties than new converts in adapting themselves to a new Christian environment and, thus, cause more troubles.

#### *Loss of Positive Influence*

A recent survey on the public's attitude towards Korean major religions – Protestantism, Catholicism, and Buddhism – dominantly reflects an

increase in distrust towards Christianity and a decrease in its positive influence.<sup>2</sup> Such a finding can be attributed to the Korean church's pursuit of its expansion rather than of the truth, the clergies' unethical behaviour, and the weakening of its focus on the evangelism of society. The Korean society is thought to value social justice and ethics more highly than development and growth. As the Korean church was unable to prepare itself for such societal attitudes, it began to exhibit various problems. The Korean church did not have a particular issue but simply failed to meet societal standards, thus giving it a negative image and causing the loss of its positive influence. Such an outcome was precipitated by the anti-Christian attitude of the media and certain organisations' groundless criticism of Christianity. More significantly, the Korean church failed to keep itself intact by easily becoming schismatic. Its cleavage was perceived by non-believers as negative and problematic.

### Identity Crisis

The ongoing challenge to the Korean church can be defined in various ways, but the most serious challenge is its identity crisis. It shows the loss of the Christian nature and call, or the deprivation of the gospel. The Christian church is not merely a gathering of people nor a social club for individuals with common interests. The church is a people with a deep connection with Christ, the saviour, and with one another, who share the same life. This very nature of the church makes it simply impossible for an outsider with a secular framework to identify and assess ecclesial problems, let alone provide solutions to them.

Therefore, it is important to ask ourselves several key questions: How does our church understand the scripture? Does it recognise the authority of the Bible? Does it really confess that Jesus is the only path to salvation? Does each Christian worker perform duties even at the risk of his or her life? How we respond to such questions determines the state of today's church. Ecclesial activities have become heavy burdens to Christian workers. If we consider them burdensome, it can be said that we concentrate not on the gospel itself but on other matters. We all should focus our attention on the 'redemption of life'. If the church pays attention primarily on growth or expansion and primarily cares about its own existence instead of the gospel, it has a serious identity crisis. If we ourselves struggle with our identity and call, it is certain that the world will no longer trust us.

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<sup>2</sup> For example, Institute for the Study of Buddhism and Society, *A Survey of Attitudes towards Social, Political, and Religious Issues in Korea* [in Korean] (Seoul: Jogye Order Institute for the Study of Buddhism and Society, 2014). Also Wonkyoo Lee, *Crisis and Hope of the Korean Church* [in Korean] (Seoul: KMC, 2010), 85.

This identity crisis is also connected to the subtle or obvious deviation from the faithful teaching of the gospel. Some of them I observe are that (1) the church does not hold unto the scriptural teaching but formulates ambiguous doctrines in accordance with social demands; or (2) its priority is not on evangelising people, but on taking on social issues. While both can be important emphases of the church, when social issues and society's demands become the church's priorities, the church loses its 'saltiness' to the world.

### **Responses to Crisis as a Local Congregation**

The following are specific responses of KMC as the church faces the onslaught of social pressure and internal challenges on a daily basis. I firmly believe that it is the front-line pastors of local congregations who hold the key to the battle. Of course, theologians and ecclesiastical leadership play their own critical roles, but the daily engagement with, and responses to, the challenges will have to come from those who lead local congregations. Therefore, this reflection is clearly from a pastor's perspective.

#### *Prayer-Oriented Ministry*

The church at risk does not necessarily indicate a reduction in the number of believers, a diminution in its influence, or a structural downsizing. The identity crisis of the church, that is the distortion of its original nature, can be perceived as the true crisis. There has always been a crisis throughout the history of the Christian church. At each time, the church adopted various measures, but the most effective measure was the return to the basics. At the outset, modern society seems to move away from religions. However, a close look will reveal that this is not always the case. As highlighted in the study of modern Pentecostalism by the theologian Harvey Cox, our society actually becomes more spiritually conscious.<sup>3</sup>

Prayer is central to Christian spirituality; through prayer, humans are connected to God. It unites our community as a whole. Christians experience spiritual restoration and attain a new vision for life through prayer. At KMC, there is a forty-day spiritual journey called 'Mt. Horeb Prayer Meeting'. During this period, an average of four thousand Christians gather in the sanctuary for prayer every day at 4:45 a.m., at dawn. Prayers are focused on the nation and the people, the church, and individual spirituality. Through this prayer meeting, many experience supernatural miracles. More importantly, however, the congregation becomes keenly

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<sup>3</sup> Harvey Cox, *Fire from Heaven: The Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the Twenty-First Century* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1995), 35.

aware of the need for prayer, and through this process, each member experiences transformation in their spiritual life. For the whole congregation, this special prayer fosters its own identity that is clearly distinct from that of other secular groups. Pastors themselves need to grasp the importance of prayer and experience it. As the church leaders devote more time to prayer, they can constantly ask the following questions: For what do we need to pray? What are priority prayers for our community? What is the power of intercessory prayer? Only when the church achieves spiritual wellbeing can it begin to exert positive influence on society. And it all begins with prayer.

### *Ministry of Communication*

Jesus communicated in the form of parables, but he interpreted them for his disciples. When Jesus went to pray, he was accompanied by some of his disciples. His ministry was based on communication. He communicated with his disciples by sharing his vision, history, and experience.

Communicating with today's generation is extremely challenging, especially with instantaneous communication technology and changes in how people now relate with one another. Thus, several key words are often used, all connected to 'communication': 'communicative stagnation', 'expressive accuracy', 'society and culture', and the like.

People do not get easily exhilarated by purposeless matters. Today a commonly asked question is 'Why?' instead of 'What?' If the lead pastor's ministry philosophy or vision is not clearly and accurately communicated to the congregation, it is impossible to mobilise the whole church for a focused goal. The challenge is that the congregation as a whole uses different modes of communication, e.g., between the older and younger generations. When the flow of communication is not smooth, division, distrust, misunderstanding, and negative rumours may emerge within the church.

KMC hosts a lay leadership training conference in January. This is where the lead pastor shares his ministerial directions with lay leaders. He also shares with them the church's important annual activities and proposes a new vision or goal. In turn, the lay leaders communicate the vision and goal of the church to their small groups. They hold weekly meetings and plan annual events, and these are reported to their parish pastors. As parishes are formed based on municipal districts, parish ministries, in addition to the church's main programs, can be developed in response to the distinct characteristics of each area.

### *Scripture-Centred Preaching*

The Bible is the foundation for our Christian life, and every programme of KMC reflects this value. And the church urges its members to live



everyday life according to the teachings of the Bible. All the sermons delivered at KMC are specifically required to be scripture-centred. As a church, KMC holds firm to this requirement as listeners can be easily distracted by stories and discussions. Social and psychological insights may be used to aid the understanding of the scripture, but they cannot be central to a sermon. A church worker should seek to be a spiritual director and Bible student before being a preacher. When pastors lose this identity, they face a serious challenge, which often renders their churches with a crisis. To avoid this, they should submit to the author of the Bible in every aspect of their life and ministry.

KMC conducts the Trinity Bible Studies programme, which lasts twelve-weeks and is open to all the members of the church. This Tuesday class is conducted biannually. It takes fifteen years to study the whole Bible, thus, requiring a deep, long-term commitment. When the members study the Bible and share with one another, their spirituality is deepened. We witness that heretical ideas are unable to intrude into our church. Although we sometimes seek to overcome our crisis with nonessential things, the knowledge of the Bible provides a sure foundation for Christian life and the church's ministry.

#### *Small Groups and Care through Pastoral Visitation*

One common challenge for a large congregation such as KMC's is the lack of koinonic opportunities among its members. The church's programmes tend to be more collectivistic, and it is easy for some attendees to be lost or neglected in the crowd. In spite of carefully planned and well-organised worship services, it is possible that some churchgoers do not have their spiritual needs met. Methodism has a brilliant tradition called 'classes' to provide individualised ministry to each person. In eighteenth-century Britain, especially in the middle of rapid urbanisation, the classes fostered intimate interpersonal relationships and care for one another, overcoming the problem of isolation.

To increase a sense of connectedness and encourage ministries among the members, KMC has actively organised and developed classes. This small group (or Methodist 'class') brings a dozen families from the same geographical region together for worship, fellowship, and ministry. At the centre of this weekly gathering in a home is a Bible study, which encourages more interaction rather than one-way preaching. Much emphasis is placed on the participation of the members, and on the application of the word to daily life. The net result is the cultivation of spirituality.

One of the most important features of KMC's ministry is pastoral visitation. Each parish pastor visits each member's home or business, shares the word of God, prays for the family and for its members' work, and provides pastoral encouragement and guidance. Through the visitation,

pastors can form close relationships with members; the pastors can also bring pastoral concerns to the church leadership, as they are able to monitor the overall maturity of the church and its spiritual growth. As the members receive spiritual and pastoral care, their sense of belonging to the church is strengthened.

### *Investment in the Future Generation*

People tend to focus on the present when confronted with a crisis. Churches react by reducing a budget and downsizing personnel. This is a 'natural' way to overcome a crisis. What is the biblical teaching on countering a crisis? Should secular methods be equally applied to a living faith community such as the church? In a situation where church membership and financial resources are dwindling, it is a challenge to invest resources in the future generation. This is exactly what KMC is doing, as will be discussed below.

## **Ministry of Hope that Overcomes Crisis**

### *Evangelising Church and Church-Planting*

Every believer accepts that evangelism is an important part of the mission of the church. Evangelism is a broad concept, ranging from the sharing of the gospel with another person to the expansion of the kingdom of God through church-planting or missionary work. Even though each member may not always be in agreement with others, we can unite ourselves by reaching out and sharing Christ's good news with our neighbours. Thus, evangelism can help us to grow in maturity in Christ. Through this maturity of faith, the spiritual fruit can be born within us, as we witness new lives born into the kingdom of God. Thus, evangelism benefits both us and others.

KMC has also been planting one new church every year. The whole church is involved in supporting a new congregation. First of all, the church 'commissions' several families who live in the area where the new church is to open. They become the 'seed' members. They, with the pioneering pastor, visits houses in the target area for evangelism. They also assist the pastor in organising each worship service and prayer meeting, as well as each house visitation. They also teach children's church and youth groups. As the church grows in membership and maturity, the mother church (that is, KMC) helps to construct a new church building. This church planting has been meaningful to many members as they become 'pioneers' of a new church, perhaps a once-in-a-lifetime experience. When the construction begins, the whole church contributes to the process. The biggest contribution to the whole process, according to one pastor, is the

evangelism ministry of the members. For them, evangelism is not an abstract notion but an invitation to participate in the blessed Christian life. Just as an individual can live an evangelising life, so can an ecclesiastical community become an evangelising church.

### *'Walking' with the Younger Generation*

The church should ponder its influence on society. Is the world the enemy of the church? Should the secular culture be the object of the church's criticism? Of course, the church should maintain its own identity with clear standards. However, it is impossible to evangelise or live a missional life without an open heart to the world. Why do we treat the world as our adversary? Are they not the object of our love and the sharing of Christ's good news? If this is the case, then we need to be intentional about communicating with the world. In his book *Reinventing American Protestantism*, Donald E. Miller, Professor of Religious Studies at the University of Southern California, suggests that one of the explanations for the growth of American churches is cultural adaptability. These churches are theologically conservative but culturally liberal. They utilise culture to the fullest.<sup>4</sup> We do not necessarily have to imitate the American churches, nor can we consider all of their claims accurate. However, in order to effectively communicate with present and new generations, races, and people of varying values, it is critical to think about cultural adaptability and the effective use of culture.

For quite some time, there was a strong request by the congregation to reconstruct the main sanctuary, which seats around 4,500. Instead, the church built the Social Service Center, which is seven times larger than the main building. Church leadership was convinced that the era when the church expresses its influence by expanding and embellishing the sanctuary had passed. We already had a sanctuary that accommodates 4,500 people. Albeit aged and less modern, the leaders believed that the facility was adequate, and enduring minor inconveniences would be part of prudent Christian living. The construction of the Social Service Center was an act of sharing God's blessings upon the church with society. This was part of the church's efforts to be able to communicate with the new urban generation. In addition to the relief programme of the church for the poor in the area, it was convinced that sharing a physical space in the heart of an urban centre with the neighbours was an important expression of God's love. To foster the younger generation's artistic development, the church provided a 1,000-seat musical concert theatre, called BBCH Hall. This is in addition to the existing Chang Cheon Hall, a classical music theatre with a seating capacity of 650.

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<sup>4</sup> Donald E. Miller, *Reinventing American Protestantism: Christianity in the New Millennium* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1997), 149.

The primary motive for constructing such theatres as part of the church campus is to culturally communicate with the younger generation. When the church shares its spaces with its neighbouring community, particularly with young people, it becomes a public space. Also, an art gallery in the church premises is used to display young artists' works. Students can freely come to our library for personal study and discussion. There has been an implicit evangelistic motif in these efforts, but the primary interest of the church is to communicate with the younger generation, which in turn enables the church to share God's blessing with more people. As the church continues its efforts to be part of, and rooted in, the community and its changing culture, we are convinced that Christians can contribute to the creation of a future culture.

*Network with Local Churches  
(Mutual Ministry with Dependent Churches)*

KMC, recognised as the world's largest Methodist church, has taken its responsibilities seriously. As a megachurch, KMC has been subjected to criticism for their growth-oriented ministry, individual-churchism, institutionalisation, bureaucratisation, and marketing evangelism. Such criticism can be understood as a loving chastisement to encourage the church to sharpen its true identity and to deepen its call as God's people in a given social context. Surprisingly, the world desires the church to maintain its radical vision of an alternative worldview, deeply rooted in the gospel. In fact, it despises the kind of church that is indistinguishable from the world. Only when the church is radically different from the world, can it provide an alternative solution to the world's problems. My point is that the church has a responsibility towards the world, regardless of its size.

KMC has been operating the S.A.L.T. ('Support, Alliance, Love, Trust') Plan, to form a network of local congregations. As an urban megachurch, KMC has felt that it owes its growth to rural communities; thus, it supports twenty-five rural churches with financial, personnel, and intellectual resources. More than 20% of the churches that participated in the programme report fast growth both in number and maturity. Many of them used to suffer from serious conflicts, but they have been revitalised through the programme. More importantly, this programme enables our own congregation to restore the basics of faith from nominalism. It also helped our church to develop a meaningful relationship with small-size rural churches. Borrowing the analogy of a cell, when a healthy cell is implanted into wounded tissue, as it divides and multiplies, the tissue is revitalised. In the same way, the DNA of a growing church can be shared with struggling ones through an intimate relationship of sharing, and it will bring vitality to result in new life in many churches. As the Korean church faces serious challenges, doing nothing would be the worst option. When human and financial resources are freely shared, in the midst of its own needs, the

church can rejoice in seeing new vitality in struggling churches. In God's kingdom, there is enough for everyone!

### *Global Network*

No one, whether an individual or a community, can exist in a vacuum; we are all children of our own history, shaped by our time and space. A living history also generates something new. Cooperation and partnership are, therefore, important because one's experience today can be a valuable resource for another in the future. In this interconnected world, global networking is no longer a rare luxury but a sheer necessity to remaining fully informed and to being able to impact the world. As a Methodist community, KMC has inherited the tradition of Wesleyan theology from the Methodist Church in England, and learnt from the dynamics of the American Methodist Church. At the same time, at present, we witness the significant decline or even the loss of the church's influence in Europe. Moral and spiritual degeneration is part of this decline. The development of the Wesleyan history in the United States also provides valuable lessons for the Korean church. Often, issues that were faced by the western churches would surface in the Korean context later. A spiritually awakened church always ignites the light of salvation, while those that indulge in religious comfort have already fallen or are collapsing. Thus, becoming part of the global network is essential, helping us to stay alert.

This serves as the primary motive for KMC to maintain deep interests in the global network. The church has worked with churches in Asia, with a mutual effort to discover Asian values. KMC also built several strategic alliances with key global theological institutions, both at home, and in the West. As we encounter fellow Methodist churches in different social and cultural contexts, we affirm common faith, but always learn something new. Christian principles always operate between common universality and local peculiarity. The global network provides an opportunity to find an intersection between these two.

### **Preparation for Future Ministry**

There are several key areas which are considered by KMC to be essential for the building of tomorrow's Christianity in Korea and beyond.

#### *Concerns about Ecclesiastical Tradition and Legacy*

One of the Methodist Church's core values is tradition. It considers vital the apostolic tradition of the primitive church. However, not everything in the past becomes tradition. Sometimes, a certain tradition burdens the gospel. In other words, it may turn the church into a mere religious institution. It is particularly likely in cases when the church attains

respectability, power, assets, and authority that the church begins to institutionalise and sacralise customs in traditions. Then, people are more likely to experience a religion instead of God. Consequently, the church obstructs a personal experience of God by individuals and societies. Why does such a customary tradition come into existence? It is because the church focuses on its own existence. Traditions are created in order to maintain its hierarchical structure and control. From this historical perspective, it is critical for us to study the tradition and legacy of the church so that we can discern between the work of the Holy Spirit and that of humans.

### *Restoration of Liturgical Worship*

As the current generation tends to pursue entertainment, worship now contains many entertaining features. Instead of searching for the meaning of being in the presence of God, Christians are more inclined towards emotional and sentimental experiences. We admit that they are important, yet often they can be mistaken for genuine spiritual experiences. The congregation's enthusiastic reaction may seem to bring a new revival to the church. However, we witness that such external signs do not persist; they soon become extinguished.

At least in the Methodist tradition, most churches in the United States have eliminated liturgical elements from worship and replaced them with a simplified modern form of worship. Many young adults welcome it, and the Korean church also embraces this form of worship, and it has gained popularity. Korean young adults were enthusiastic about such a modern form of worship. However, its net result is rather disappointing. There is no boundary between worship and a concert. A sanctuary and a concert theatre are indistinguishable. Music borders between secular and sacred; sermons are more like lectures on self-improvement.

Then what is church? What is worship? It is those outside the church asking these questions. What the world wants to see from Christianity is a radically different set of values and lifestyle. For this reason, the gospel has a firm relevance to today's world. Because of this, KMC began to pay attention to liturgical worship. Liturgical worship can imply worship that is not sensitive to trends. We are called to proclaim the eternal kingship of God and his invitation to his kingdom. We do not have to be sensitive or frustrated about people's reaction to worship. The missional call for the church should have an impact on the culture through truth, but not to ride on a popularity wave. Clearly, Christianity possesses something precious that the world is searching for. How many times have we forsaken it just to follow a secular trend? If we feel liturgical worship is archaic, it is our fault for making it too ceremonial. In order for liturgical worship to avoid the trap of ritualism, it has to accompany the presence of the Holy Spirit and the clear proclamation of truth. The restoration of liturgical worship means

the pursuit of worship that promotes spirituality instead of expediency, rationality, and sensibility. The object of worship is God. If we pay excessive attention to size and ambience, we will be more likely to lose God in our worship.

### *Timely Response to Epochal Changes*

While maintaining the seemingly archaic liturgical form of worship, sensitivity to changing needs and culture is equally important. To be relevant to the contemporary culture and to make it approachable to non-believers, various forms of worship have been employed at KMC without compromising their liturgical component. On a firm foundation of the word of God and a spirituality-oriented principle, the church has actively operating age-oriented small groups and geographically organised classes.

This sensitivity to changes also includes offering services to the local communities, as mentioned above. Needs assessment, therefore, is one of main tasks of the pastoral leaders of the church. Feedback from various classes proves to be valuable, as members are rooted in their own local communities. Needs assessment also includes feedback from the members on their spiritual and pastoral needs. In spite of its megachurch nature, KMC has worked intentionally to become a community church so everyone in the area can feel it is their church.

### *Beyond Growth: Toward Maturity and Ministry of Renewal*

Through my own studies, I observed a general pattern among growing churches, not only in Korea but also around the world. Normally there is a growth period of three decades, especially under the charismatic leadership of founders. After reaching the peak, there is a period of stagnation, often around leadership changes. During this critical period, occasionally the church is subjected to an internal division, the loss of its impact on society due to ethical deviation, and the depletion of growth force. A growth theory or a quantitative expansion theory leads to such problems.

At the core of any pastoral ministry is caring. What are pastors called to care for? They need to care for their members, their spiritual and daily life. One's spirituality is concretely expressed by his or her love for God more than the love for the world, placing a higher value on spiritual and eternal dimensions of life. Often, this is where a church's spiritual erosion takes place: a priority is placed on worldly matters instead of on spiritual concerns, and on employing secular approaches to life. When church leaders do not live according to scriptural teaching, failing to exhibit their deep spiritual commitment, they will soon face moral and ethical problems.

Therefore, church leaders should not place church growth as the end goal of their pastoral work, but should constantly renew themselves and focus on spiritual matters. Only then will the churches they serve grow in

maturity and influence (as well as in number), renew themselves and exert significant influence on the world. This is what I would call the 'ministry of renewal'. It requires self-discipline in diligent spiritual practice and learning. The spiritual theologian Henri Nouwen suggests that we need to go to the desert for our spiritual life.<sup>5</sup> Hence, we need not only discern between the meanings of secular and biblical growth but also to move towards maturity.

In order to achieve this, the leaders need to aspire to achieve a deeper spiritual experience, which will be expressed in honesty and truthfulness in their daily lives. We can manifest ourselves as the witnesses of Christ through our lives. Therefore, without such deep spiritual experiences, our ministry will become a professional duty. Only internal and spiritual growth and maturity will make any external growth and expansion genuine and sustainable. This is how a spiritually sound and healthy congregation can be developed, courageously and discerningly distancing itself from the world, but seeking things of the Lord, for the sake of God's people and his kingdom. Paul admonishes his people:

Be very careful, then, how you live – not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is. Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit... (Eph. 5:15-18).

### *Ministry of Christian Unity*

Each church cannot exist on its own. The kingdom of God is a unified reality. When churches exert their efforts to increase and expand their membership and influence, they may succeed, but this will eventually breed a spirit of competition and even sheep-stealing, ultimately hurting the body of Christ. This individualism among Protestant churches has become a scandal in Korean society, hurting Christian witness amid a religiously pluralistic society. The endless divisions have now resulted in, for example, hundreds of Presbyterian denominations. The two largest of them both use 'united' as their identifier ('Tonghap' [통합] and 'Hapdong' [합동]), a matter of only one dot difference in Korean characters.

Without discouraging diversity, a spirit of unity is an urgent necessity in Korean Christianity. Churches should strive to achieve unity with one another. This will require a broader kingdom vision to govern church life, humility, and recognition of others with respect. KMC, as an evangelical congregation of a main-line denomination, has played an important mediating role to bring the evangelicals and mainline churches together. As a member of the National Council of Churches, KMC also works closely with the evangelical network, the Christian Council of Korea.

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<sup>5</sup> Henri J.M. Nouwen, *The Way of the Heart: The Spirituality of the Desert Fathers and Mothers* (New York: Seabury, 1981), 20, 91.



A commitment to Christian unity will require serious theological reflection. As a Methodist church, in the revivalistic tradition, KMC has been supporting a theological inquiry on revivals and church unity (or lack thereof). Why do many churches fall apart after experiencing revivals? Is it because they fail to spend time and resources on theological reflection? A house built on sand may easily collapse. When the fervour of revival wanes out, it is a firm theological foundation that will sustain the congregation. This requires pastors and church leaders to be diligent in their theological studies. They need to take advantage of theologians whose research can help the church move forward. Ultimately, pastors and church leaders need to find a common place and time to study together, so that, while deepening their understanding of God's will, Christian unity and cooperation will be achieved.

### Conclusion

In Matthew 28:20, Jesus promised, 'I am with you always, to the end of the age'. Do his words not provide us with hope? In the context of this overwhelming promise, a crisis is a very small matter. More importantly, God is always with us in the midst of a crisis, and his dwelling presence will continue until the end of the age. However, we should not underestimate a crisis and its impact on our life. A crisis points clearly where we are heading. A change is not a crisis, but when the church fails to recognise change, and especially what the Holy Spirit is saying through it, then there is a crisis. History informs us well that not learning from past mistakes is a grave mistake.

Indeed, we need to sensitively act on the changing culture, carefully discern elements that are against Christian values, and recognise what the Spirit is doing through the change. This will require not only a careful study of history and contemporary culture but also deep prayer for discernment. Then, a new pastoral paradigm will surface. It will need to be deeply rooted in the scripture and guided by the Holy Spirit, instead of relying on a simple change in approach or employing secular approaches. The key is to ponder the core of Christianity and its expression in the changing cultural milieu. This will affirm the centrality of worship, and through upholding the core values of Christianity, the church will not only overcome the crisis but also renew itself to provide moral and spiritual guidance to the world.

Hitherto, the pastoral ministry of the Korean church, including KMC, has focused primarily on numerical growth. We now experience what Charles Swindoll predicts: 'A rapid growth causes a dilemma'.<sup>6</sup> In the midst of stagnation or even a decline, our spirituality may have also

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<sup>6</sup> Charles R. Swindoll, *The Church Awakening: An Urgent Call for Renewal* (New York: FaithWords, 2010), 20.

degenerated. KMC, as a member of Korean Christianity, does not claim its immunity from the onslaught of secularisation and increasing materialism, in spite of its continuing growth. We need to constantly learn from the past and remain open to new things that the Holy Spirit prompts us to try. The programmes that KMC have been doing to date will have to change in the near future as society goes through a rapid change. What should not change and remain constant is the claim of the gospel and the moral and spiritual mandate of the church towards the world. This will require a kingdom vision, courageously abandoning the spirit of competition, and affirming our oneness in Christ. In Korean (and in Chinese), a crisis (위기, 危機) is composed of two letters: risk and opportunity. The Holy Spirit is trying to do something new, and that's the Christian meaning of our crisis!

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# THE CHALLENGE OF SECULARISATION: A SELF-REFLECTION BY A BRITISH ECONOMIST-THEOLOGIAN

Andy Hartropp

‘One of the major reasons why people reject the Gospel today is not because they perceive it to be false but because they perceive it to be trivial.’ (John Stott)<sup>1</sup>

## Introduction

As a British economist and theologian, I am very concerned that the church in the West has been severely weakened by secularisation and materialism. Can the church in economically advancing countries, such as South Korea, avoid this weakness? I trust and pray that the answer to that question can be ‘Yes’. However, if the church in South Korea and elsewhere is to avoid this severe problem, lessons from the West need to be learnt as a matter of urgency.

The first part of this chapter argues that one of the main ways in which secularisation has weakened the church in the West is *via* growing materialism and prosperity. Of course, economic prosperity is in many ways to be welcomed, as are all gifts from God; but the concern in this chapter is for the *consequences* of that growth in prosperity, and the *processes* by which these consequences have occurred. Materialism is a tool used by secularisation. The second part analyses how secularisation operates, in tandem with privatisation and pluralisation. This section uses the framework offered by Os Guinness (2010). The third section suggests some ways in which economic and materialistic factors have been prominent in undermining the church in the West, and in Britain in particular. The last section draws out some lessons for the church – with a particular eye for how the church in South Korea could carefully examine its own context, dangers, and opportunities.

## How Secularisation Uses Materialism to Undermine the Church

By ‘secularisation’, I mean the process of separating religious ideas and institutions from the public sphere.<sup>2</sup> Because of the influence of the public

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<sup>1</sup> [www.licc.org.uk/about-licc](http://www.licc.org.uk/about-licc), accessed 27 March 2015.

arena in our lives, the Christian social critic Os Guinness points out that ‘secularisation ensures that ordinary reality is not just the official reality but also the only reality. Beyond what modern people can see, touch, taste and smell is quite simply nothing that matters’.<sup>3</sup>

Note that secularisation is a process taking place in a society. It is different from *secularism*, which is a philosophy. Naturalism and atheism are examples of a secularist philosophy. But the process of secularisation does provide a perfect setting in which secularism (the philosophy) can seem to flourish.<sup>4</sup>

The impact of secularisation on the church’s effectiveness in the West is severe: for most people in Britain today, for example, Christianity is simply *irrelevant*. They live their lives without noticing God. Secularisation does not have to claim that Christianity is *untrue*. Instead, all that it needs to do is make Christianity irrelevant: irrelevant for ordinary people as they go about doing whatever they do. For most people in the UK, then, life is about work, leisure, family and friends, holidays, social media (Twitter, Facebook, and so on), trying to keep healthy (for many), having a good time, music, films, following celebrities, and other activities of these kinds. *But God is not on the list!* In surveys, the majority of British people still say that they believe in God: very few people in Britain claim to be atheists. However, they live their lives *as though* God does not exist. ‘God’ – whoever he might be – is simply not part of their lives. Christianity and the church are irrelevant. That is the impact of secularisation.

This secularisation, argues Guinness, is unique to modernity. Secularisation never happened until modernity arrived. Even worse for Christianity, modernity itself was hugely influenced by the Christian faith; yet the modern *secularised* world now comes to undermine Christianity. This is the ‘gravedigger thesis’ as set out by Guinness:

The Christian faith contributed to the rise of the modern world, but the Christian faith has been undermined by the modern world it helped to create. The Christian faith thus becomes its own gravedigger.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> See Os Guinness, *The Last Christian on Earth* (Ventura, CA: Regal, 2010), 57. The subtitle of this book by Guinness is very significant in conveying the primary means by which the author makes his case: ‘Uncover the Enemy’s Plot to Undermine the Church’. The ‘Enemy’ is, at the deepest level, the evil one (Satan). In the main part of the book, Guinness uses the (literary and fictional) device of one spy, who is in the service of the Enemy, writing memoranda to another on how to undermine the Church. The central weapon used to bring about this undermining is secularisation. This literary fiction brilliantly depicts the real-life reality.

<sup>3</sup> Guinness, *The Last Christian on Earth*, 63.

<sup>4</sup> Guinness, *The Last Christian on Earth*, 59.

<sup>5</sup> Guinness, *The Last Christian on Earth*, 20-21. This understanding of how secularisation undermines the church draws strongly on academic analysis by social theorists and sociologists, especially Peter Berger and David Martin. See Peter L. Berger, *The Social Reality of Religion* (Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin, 1973),

The claim, then, is that Christianity has been severely undermined, in practice – and has been undermined precisely by the modernity to which Christianity was a key contributor. The thesis seems extremely plausible: certainly, the fact that Christianity is largely irrelevant to most people's lives in the West is very hard to dispute.

I argue here that one of the key tools used by secularisation is materialism. The case is made well by David Wells, a theologian at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, Massachusetts. For example, in his 1995 book *God in the Wasteland*, Wells explains the conquest of modernity: modernity is now ubiquitous – it is everywhere.<sup>6</sup> In addition, crucially, the material-economic dimension is a key part of this conquest. The following quotation puts it well:

The public sphere, dominated as it is by the omnipresence of bureaucracy, systems of manufacturing, the machinery of capitalism, and the audible confetti spewing out of countless radios and televisions, makes it virtually impossible to think that in *this* world God has any meaningful place. He may have a place somewhere, but not here, not in the public square!<sup>7</sup>

This modernity has invaded the church, as well as the world. And modernity has invaded in substantial measure through *economic* life. Market forces, economic forces, play a highly significant role in permitting a thoroughly secular culture to push Christianity right to the margins.

One example of how this works is the festival of Christmas. In Britain, the build-up to Christmas (celebrated on the 25th of December) is, for many people, dominated totally by the acquisition of material goods – primarily as presents for family and friends, but increasingly as purchases for oneself as well. Thus, in 2014, we witnessed the biggest 'Black Friday' (the Friday following the American Thanksgiving Day) in Britain so far. Many people sought out and purchased (alleged) bargains offered by retailers. This also marked the beginning of the big build-up towards (retail) Christmas four weeks later. During those weeks, there were continual references on the television and in radio news to how much people would be spending, and whether the stores would sell record amounts of goods. The person of Christ, by contrast, had very little mention. In many ways, all that is left of the 'Christ' is the term 'Christmas'. Christ himself is barely noticed.

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published in the USA as *The Sacred Canopy* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Anchor Books, 1969); David Martin, *The Dilemma of Contemporary Religion* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1978).

<sup>6</sup> David Wells, *God in the Wasteland: The Reality of Truth in a World of Fading Dreams* (Leicester: IMP, 1995). More recent books by Wells deal with post-modernity.

<sup>7</sup> Wells, *God in the Wasteland*, 10 (emphasis in the original).

### Secularisation, Privatisation, and Pluralisation

Earlier, secularisation was defined as the process of separating religious ideas and institutions from the public sphere. This is the fundamental process that has deeply undermined the church in the West. But secularisation works closely with two other related processes: privatisation and pluralisation. We must recognise how these three work together.

By *privatisation*, I mean the restriction of religion to our private worlds. This is a direct consequence of secularisation. Guinness writes: 'Today, where religion still survives in the modern world, no matter how passionate or committed the believer, it amounts to little more than a private preference, a spare-time hobby, and a leisure pursuit.'<sup>8</sup> If, for example, a community of Christians in the UK were to decide to share their income and possessions in a radically new way, then UK society would have no problem with that as a *private* initiative. But if a Christian were to claim that Christ is Lord over *everyone's* money and wealth, then such a claim would be dismissed as irrelevant. Religion is restricted to our private world only. This is an example from the realm of money/materialism that illustrates the reality of privatisation in a Western context.

It is vital to see how secularisation and privatisation work together. Secularisation does not *abolish* religion, but, in conjunction with privatisation, it relegates and marginalises religious faith to a place where its impact and relevance is merely private and thus peripheral. There is now a great gulf between, on the one hand, the public sphere (the macro world outside the home), and, on the other hand, the private sphere (e.g., family and leisure). In the public sphere of large corporations and politics, ordinary people have little say or influence; their freedom is minimal. Freedom exists only in the private sphere. It is only in the private sphere that people can be themselves. The crucial point is that religious faith is restricted (by privatisation) to the *private* sphere. Increasingly we hear statements along the following lines: 'You are free to practice your religion *in private*, but not in public.' Therefore, religious faith has no meaningful engagement with the public sphere. This means that Christians and the Christian churches find it very difficult to get a hearing in the public sphere. Again, we see that Christianity is deeply undermined.

*Pluralisation* is 'the process by which the number of opinions in the private sphere of modern society rapidly multiplies at all levels, especially at the levels of worldviews, faiths and ideologies – decisively affecting the consciousness of what choice means and how the chooser sees it'.<sup>9</sup> Pluralisation is not new: the early experience of Christians in the first century AD was marked by a similar degree of pluralism to that which we see today. What is new, however, is the church's disastrous response in the present day. Consider this stark analysis in Guinness' book:

<sup>8</sup> Guinness, *The Last Christian on Earth*, 72.

<sup>9</sup> Guinness, *The Last Christian on Earth*, 92-93.

You might think that this early experience of pluralism would have prepared Christians for resisting pluralisation today. On the contrary, they have completely forgotten what it was like. Whereas pluralism once left them more sure of the truth and superiority of their faith in contrast to others, it now leaves them less sure. Indeed their moral and intellectual caving-in resembles the notorious 'failure of nerve' of the pagans that characterized the popular mood of the first century when the classical religions failed.<sup>10</sup>

What is new, then, is not pluralisation but its impact. This impact comes about because of the link between pluralisation and secularisation. In previous eras, any given society had substantial differences within it, e.g., differences of work, status, or tradition. At the same time, however, most societies have also had an underlying cohesion; crucially, the most cohesive force in any community has usually been its religion.<sup>11</sup> In Europe, what is usually termed 'Christendom' is an example of this: 'despite the enormous diversity (such as the differences of language and the presence of Jews, Muslims and atheists), the underlying cohesion was provided by the Christian faith.'<sup>12</sup> In today's secularised West, by contrast, religion – including the Christian faith – has been pushed to the sidelines. Therefore, the combination of secularisation and pluralisation means that Christianity is both marginalised and effectively silenced.

Christians could, of course, seek to counter this. At least they could keep trying to engage with the secularised/public sphere from a distinctively Christian and biblical foundation. All too often, however, this does not happen.

### **The Impact of Economic and Materialistic Factors in Britain**

We have seen, briefly, how secularisation, privatisation, and pluralisation work together to marginalise and weaken the church in the West. Now let us consider some ways in which specifically materialistic (or economic) factors have reinforced this disastrous undermining of the Christian church. One of the clearest ways is through the growth of markets and a 'consumerist' mindset (mentality) *across all aspects of life*. We talk of the 'market for ideas': the language itself reveals that 'markets' (an *economic* reality) have had an influence far beyond themselves. Again, consider the insights penned by Guinness:<sup>13</sup>

We have reached the stage in pluralisation where choice is not just a state of affairs but also a state of mind. Choice has become a value in itself, even a priority. *What matters is no longer good choice or right choice or wise choice, but simply choice.*

<sup>10</sup> Guinness, *The Last Christian on Earth*, 93.

<sup>11</sup> Guinness, *The Last Christian on Earth*, 93.

<sup>12</sup> Guinness, *The Last Christian on Earth*, 94.

<sup>13</sup> Guinness, *The Last Christian on Earth*, 97 – emphasis added.

Note again the role of consumerism in this: faced with a huge array of different types of shampoo in a supermarket, it is very difficult for a shopper to evaluate the products in terms of wisdom or goodness – instead it comes down simply to choice.

When ‘choice’ and ‘freedom’ become cultural absolutes, something even more serious happens. Instead of obligations, people think in terms of *options*. Rather than considering what *duties* (responsibilities) they might have, people focus on the *decision*. The overall impact is a major *decrease in commitment*.<sup>14</sup> This decrease in commitment is seen not only in wider society but in Christians, too. ‘Belief has been severed from behaviour. Commanding truths have softened to inviting choices. In the world of the smorgasbord and the supermarket, people pass down the line and choose “the church of their choice” and “the principles of their preference”.’<sup>15</sup> Churches and church leaders in Britain often struggle nowadays to persuade people to come to prayer meetings, discipleship groups, and so on. This is a symptom of the lack of commitment. However, this lack of commitment is no accident: it is a consequence of the surrounding ‘choice is all’ culture impacting the minds and lives of Christians.

A second materialistic factor that has undermined Christianity in the West is *the power of large corporations*. The enormous size and power of the biggest banks and of corporations such as Google, Apple, and the largest oil companies is astonishing. In addition, most, if not all, of these corporations are thoroughly secularised in the way they operate: God has no meaningful part in their life. They have no meaningful Christian content in their foundations, values, and practices. God is irrelevant to them: they behave as if God does not exist. Put those two things together – their enormous power and their secularised nature – and it is easy to see how these companies are themselves vehicles for further secularisation of the peoples and cultures of the West.

I am *not* arguing that these corporations necessarily do wrong and evil things. Instead, the point is that these companies are a key part of the process of secularisation: pushing religious, and especially Christian, influence to the very margins of public life, and thus of most people’s daily lives.

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### **Lessons for the Church – Especially the Church in South Korea**

We must not lose heart. God is still on his throne, and he still rules his world with truth and grace. Even if people do not notice God, he is still God! However, churches and Christians must urgently learn the lessons from the impact of secularisation and materialism. In this final section, I draw out some key lessons, based to some extent on the experience in the

<sup>14</sup> Guinness, *The Last Christian on Earth*, 97.

<sup>15</sup> Guinness, *The Last Christian on Earth*, 103-104.



UK, with a particular eye for how the church in South Korea could carefully examine its own context, dangers, and opportunities. Clearly one cannot draw direct conclusions from the UK for South Korea: contextual difference means that such conclusions would not be warranted. Nevertheless, there are lessons to be learnt. Make no mistake, secularisation and materialism will try to undermine Christianity in economically advancing countries such as South Korea. So the lessons must urgently be learnt.

### *Think*

Paul's message to the Romans is very timely: 'Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind' (Rom. 12:2). If the church in South Korea is to resist the impact of the world – in the form of secularisation – then it must have its mind renewed: it must think. Of course, this means *prayerful* thinking and *biblical* thinking. But it must think.

This will be the kind of thinking that leads to whole-life discipleship and whole-life reformation: Christ ruling *all* of our life, in *every* dimension. We must urgently become alert, in our minds, to the pressures of secularisation and materialism. We must be determined to *understand* what is happening around us and how it impacts us.

In the UK context, for many years, John Stott led the way in encouraging Christians to *think* and to think *biblically*. (The quotation that opens this chapter serves to demonstrate Stott's awareness of secularisation.) In 1984, he wrote a book entitled *Issues Facing Christians Today*. Based firmly on the authority of the Bible, Stott tried to understand the ethical principles that the Bible teaches, and then – crucially – apply them to the various and often complex challenges of our time. This book had, and continues to have, a major influence on the thinking of Christians, and it has been updated and revised several times.<sup>16</sup>

In the academic world, another initiative to enable Christians to *think* is Developing a Christian Mind (DCM, based in Oxford). DCM is a programme that provides space for postgraduate students, post-doctoral scholars, and faculty, to integrate their Christian faith and academic life. The programme is structured around two annual conferences. This programme aims 'to foster the development of a Christian intellectual community within and emerging from Oxford'. The goal, then, is to enable 'discussion, thought, and writing on relevant themes at a level consistent with the academic standards of the University [of Oxford] as a whole.'<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> John Stott, *Issues Facing Christians Today*, 4<sup>th</sup> rev. ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2006). This edition was thoroughly revised and updated by Roy McCloughry, with a new chapter (on medical ethics) by John Wyatt.

<sup>17</sup> [www.oxford-christianmind.org/about](http://www.oxford-christianmind.org/about), accessed 27 March 2015.

This is an impressive and very important goal. Academic thinking that is properly integrated with Christian faith will not in any sense be ‘second-best’, but instead will be sufficiently rigorous, consistent with the academic standards of one of the world’s leading universities.

In the light of the UK experience, here is the challenge to churches in South Korea: encourage the thinkers. Where are the books about these vital topics of secularisation and materialism in Korea? Write them! Where are the institutions and agencies in which this transformative thinking can occur? Start them up, and establish them!

### Act

Thinking is vital, but by itself, it is not sufficient. Christians and churches must demonstrate their faith in Christ *in action*: we must act in love, compassion, justice, and creativity. This must include action in the public square, especially as managers and employees in companies and corporations, and as consumers. If we as Christians are truly following Christ, then surely our behaviour as consumers, for example, will not simply be a replica of those around us who are not Christians. Christians in large corporations, especially those in senior positions, must think and act as followers of Christ, as salt and light (Matt. 5:13-16): they must act with prayerful discernment; their moral integrity as Christians must be evident to all. Instead of being moulded and shaped by the multinational corporation of which they are part, they should be seeking to mould and shape that corporation in ways that please God and that are driven by a desire to give glory of God. As it did with Daniel and his friends (Daniel chapter 1), one can expect that the secular world around us will notice something different and attractive in the way we live.

John Stott’s book *Issues Facing Christians Today* was one of the ways in which Stott tried to counter secularisation. Another influential initiative, which he founded in the UK, in 1982, is the London Institute for Contemporary Christianity (LICC) – founded on ‘the core belief that every part of our lives comes under the Lordship of Christ, and that all of life is a context for worship, mission and active Christian engagement.’<sup>18</sup> Again, the link from Christ-focused thinking to Christ-focused action is crucial.

One of the key features of LICC is that it is run in a way that will serve local churches. It is not an organisation that sets itself apart from churches up and down the country; instead, it aims to enable churches themselves to help equip Christians to live as whole-life disciples of Jesus Christ every day of the week.<sup>19</sup> LICC is non-denominational, and so it is in a position to

<sup>18</sup> [www.licc.org.uk/about-licc](http://www.licc.org.uk/about-licc), accessed 27 March 2015.

<sup>19</sup> The current Executive Director of LICC is Mark Greene. He has written two books, which are also important resources for Bible-based thought and action. See Mark Greene, *Thank God It’s Monday*, 3<sup>rd</sup> rev. ed. (London: Scripture Union, 2001); and Mark Greene, *Fruitfulness on the Frontline* (Leicester: IMP, 2014). See

work across the boundaries that can often divide churches. LICC has an emerging focus on what it calls 'two core streams of reality': the 'frontline' of the contemporary workplace where large numbers of Christians spend so much of their waking life; and the gathered community of the local church, which disciples people for the whole of life. 'The relationship between the gathered and dispersed people of God is, we at LICC believe, key to releasing Christians for fruitful discipleship in today's world.'<sup>20</sup>

Thought and action, combined, are a powerful way to counter the impact of secularisation, privatisation, and pluralisation.

### *Proclaim*

We must proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ to everyone, making good use of every opportunity. Secularisation throws many messages at people, and these can all too easily drown out the sound of the gospel. So we must work hard, intelligently, and creatively to communicate the message of Christ to those around us. Again quoting from Paul's letter to the Romans: 'And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?' (Rom. 10:14). Only Christ can save! Only Christ can bring transformation from the inside. Actions and words, arising from prayerful and biblical thinking, belong together for the cause of the kingdom of God and for the glory of God.

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also Timothy Keller, *Every Good Endeavour: Connecting Your Work to God's Plan for the World* (London: Hotter & Stoughton, 2012).

<sup>20</sup> [www.licc.org.uk/about-licc](http://www.licc.org.uk/about-licc), accessed 27 March 2015.

# THE FUTURE OF THE MISSIONARY ENGAGEMENT OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN KOREA: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Irene Yung Park

## Introduction

This study intends to be a strictly personal essay on the missionary future of the Catholic Church in Korea. Accordingly, the sources for this article are not only the scholarly papers and statistics used to support some affirmations, but also my direct perceptions as a lay person during the past six years spent in this country. On account of my academic background, my approach is not going to be sociological but theological, more specifically, stemming from a pastoral theology perspective.

As is widely known, the term ‘mission’ comes from the Latin verb *mittere*, ‘to send’, ‘mission’ thus meaning ‘the act of sending’. In the case of the Christian mission, the sender is God himself, and we are partakers of the mission of Jesus Christ given by the Father (cf. Mk. 6:7-13, 16:15; Jn. 17:18, etc.). Therefore, mission cannot be reduced to an individualistic enterprise or to a purely human undertaking. Besides, if the Christian mission is a participation of the Christian faithful in the mission of Jesus Christ, it should receive its impulse and be nourished by the same source as Christ’s mission, that is, by the Holy Spirit (cf. Lk. 4:1, 4:14, 12:12, etc.).

Now let us focus on our topic: the missionary future of the church in Korea. From a theological point of view, it seems of little use to try to prophesy about it. The notion of mission involves both human and divine activity, but neither God’s action nor human freedom can be subjected to any valid prediction. My attempt will, therefore, examine the current state of Catholic Christianity in Korea and, based on its present assets, point out directions for development and work for the efficacy of its mission in the future. In a word, I will try to respond to the crucial question: what is God expecting from the Catholic Church in Korea today?

It might be necessary to add a further clarification. I will consider the notion of mission in a broad sense, as involving not only the sending of dedicated missionaries to ‘mission territories’ for the first preaching of the gospel and the establishment of the church, but as indicating the general activity of all Christian faithful, called to exercise the Christian mission in and through their ordinary daily work and their familial and social duties, by living with a Christian sense of life and by spreading this spirit around them and to the structures they help to create. It is the meaning referred to by Pope Francis in his latest document, ‘*Evangelii Gaudium*’: ‘Being a

disciple means being constantly ready to bring the love of Jesus to others, and this can happen unexpectedly and in any place: on the street, in a city square, during work, on a journey.<sup>1</sup>

Here, mission is understood as a habit, that is, as a habitual state rather than as a specific or delimited activity. A habit will certainly generate actions and the spirit behind it will be manifested through them, but the spirit will also be there even in times of apparent inactivity. However, the reverse is not necessarily true. Not all activities that appear to be mission activities are necessarily expressions of being on a mission, whereas if the spirit is really there, it cannot but manifest itself somehow.

### Brief Summary of the Path Walked until Now

It is a well-known fact that the Catholic Church in Korea has developed to its present state only in the recent past and in an unusually short period of time. In 1961, the diocese of Seoul had one bishop and 151 priests. By 2013, there were five bishops and 1,084 priests in a territory much smaller than the territory the diocese of Seoul occupied in the 1960s.<sup>2</sup> Something similar can be observed when considering the proportion of Catholic faithful in the total population. In 1961, Catholics represented 1.9% of the Korean population. That number suddenly increased starting in the last years of the 1970s and continued to swiftly increase all throughout the 80s to the early 90s. Since then, the proportion has kept growing, but at a slower pace. By 2013, Catholics represented a total of 10.4% of the population.<sup>3</sup>

We can now consider the development of the church from a qualitative point of view, focusing on the relative position of the Catholic Church in the Korean society during the different stages of its history. From this perspective, we can divide the past into three periods:

1. An initial period of putting down roots, translating the faith into the local language and mental categories, and winning over the cultural opposition that led to the persecution of Catholicism: 1784-1886.
2. A period of institutional establishment and organisation that begun with the declaration of religious tolerance and continued throughout

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<sup>1</sup> Pope Francis, *Apostolic Exhortation 'Evangelii Gaudium'* (Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2013), 127.

<sup>2</sup> S. Oh, 'Korean Catholic Church since its Constitution of the Sacred Hierarchy: Focusing on the Seoul Archdiocese' [in Korean], *Research Journal on Korean Church History* 40 (2013), 109-17, and Catholic Bishops' Conference of Korea, *2013 Statistics of the Catholic Church in Korea* (2014), 12: The territory that constituted the diocese of Seoul in 1961 is now divided into 3 different dioceses: Seoul, Suwon, and Euijeongbu.

<sup>3</sup> Oh, 'Korean Catholic Church', 109-17. The only case of negative growth is in the number of religious vocations, which, after a similar trend of sudden growth, have started to decrease from 2006 onwards.

the Japanese occupation of the peninsula: 1886-1945. This time is characterised by many as being strongly turned towards the purely spiritual, resulting in a private religiosity indifferent to the transformation of society and foreign to the political struggles of the time.<sup>4</sup>

3. A period of national modernisation and consolidation of democracy, when the Catholic Church assumed a growing public role alternating periods of cooperation with the political authorities with moments of outright opposition whenever human rights and other similar issues were at stake: 1945 onwards. These years correspond to the decades of sudden numeric growth of the church. By this time, all residuum of 'foreignness' labelling the church became something of the past, not only in the composition of the clergy but also in the public positioning of the church in the midst of the Korean society.

Let us now consider the church's growth from the point of view of its resources. In the mid-1980s, the Catholic Church in Korea had changed from being a church that was financially aided by foreign churches to a church sending monetary assistance abroad. Also, and not unrelated to this fact, the Catholic Church's faithful composition changed from being primarily middle to low class to being predominantly middle to high class.<sup>5</sup>

An interesting indicator is the fact that there is a greater proportion of Catholics in the big cities, especially in Seoul, and that, within Seoul, the concentration is notoriously higher in the wealthier areas.<sup>6</sup> Evidently, this is not purely a matter of economic status. Statistics show that Korean Catholics belong increasingly to the higher educated and professionally specialised population. An interesting sign of this development can be seen in the changing proportion of Catholic MPs within the National Congress. If in the period 1973-1979 there were 17 Catholics out of 219 MPs elected into the Congress, in 2008 their number had grown to 81 out of 299.<sup>7</sup> This fact is noteworthy since it means that the proportion of Catholics in the Congress is 2.7 times higher than that of Catholics in the total population. This could well be interpreted as an expression of the fact that there is a

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<sup>4</sup> K.H. Oh, 'Nation and Korean Catholic Church' [in Korean], *Journal of Buddhist Professors in Korea* 15:2 (2009), 129-63. According to Oh, this was due to the fact that many Church authorities were foreigners, more precisely French, who applied the principle of separation from State affairs in a rigid way. It was also a defence mechanism to counter the attitude of the occupying Japanese forces towards religion.

<sup>5</sup> Oh, 'Korean Catholic Church', 118-19.

<sup>6</sup> Oh, 'Korean Catholic Church', 128-29.

<sup>7</sup> J.Y. Park, 'The Question of Political Empowerment of the Catholic Church' [in Korean], *Journal of Religion and Culture* 10 (June 2008), 91-92.

high proportion of Catholics who belong to the governing groups of society.<sup>8</sup>

In relation to its missionary resources, with the term 'mission' now taken in a strict sense, the church in Korea has become a sender of local missionaries to foreign countries. This is actually the area in which the biggest growth is registered. According to 2011 data, in ten years the number of diocesan priests sent abroad as missionaries had increased by 229%.<sup>9</sup> By 2013, the total number of missionaries had reached 979.<sup>10</sup>

### Present Situation of the Catholic Church

So what is the situation of the Catholic Church today with its missionary possibilities and challenges? As shown in the summary offered above, throughout its short history, the Catholic Church in Korea has expanded not only numerically but also qualitatively, increasingly becoming a locally rooted reality and augmenting its presence and importance as an authoritative voice in defence of the common good. We also mentioned how this growth was not limited to the church's public influence and prestige, in such a way that this might be the time in history where the church in Korea is at its best in terms of material and social resources.

In trying to identify some of the assets amassed by the Catholic Church in Korea during this time, and on which she could count for her future mission, I want to highlight a few aspects.

First, the Catholic Church in Korea is a strongly local church, in the sense that it can be said to be part of the nation's life and identity. This is worth mentioning since in countries that possessed a dominant religious tradition of a certain complexity – be it Buddhism, Islam, or Hinduism – before the introduction of Christianity, the latter was frequently seen as a foreign religion, or as a sectorial reality at best. In Korea, none of the two characterizations hold true, probably because of the origins and history of Christianity. In the first place, the faith was not introduced by colonising western powers, but by locals who were deeply involved in their times and had a directing role in the community.<sup>11</sup> Later on, the Catholic Church's involvement in the education and assistance of the poor, and in the struggle

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<sup>8</sup> The 2005 national census produced this result: 22.8% of the total population declared themselves to be Buddhists, 18.3% (non-Catholic) Christians, 10.9 % Catholics, 1% of other religions, and 46.9 % of no religion (Park, 'The Question', 92).

<sup>9</sup> The Catholic Pastoral Institute of Korea, *Analysis of the 2011 Statistics of the Catholic Church in Korea* [in Korean] (2012), 18.

<sup>10</sup> Catholic Bishops' Conference of Korea, *2013 Statistics*, 52.

<sup>11</sup> Later on, Korea was colonised by Japan, a non-Christian nation, and consecutively 'saved' from that domination by Christian nations such as the U.S.

for human rights and for democratisation, was determinant in firmly positioning her in the public arena.<sup>12</sup>

Second, the Catholic Church in Korea enjoys considerable moral prestige and a good image as an authoritative voice and a moral reference for the public on local issues.<sup>13</sup> Even if this prestige might partly be a side effect of the problems that have affected the two other big religious groups of Korea, the impression of unity and institutional discipline is still strong in the Catholic Church. Catholicism has also been more accommodating of existing traditions than the non-Catholic Christian churches, thus presenting an option where traditional culture and values could be reconciled with modernisation and change.<sup>14</sup>

Third, the Catholic Church has been quite successful in keeping her independence from the established powers, be they political or of some other type.<sup>15</sup> The history of martyrdom and the modern history of Korea are both expressive of this reality. The fact that the church is not perceived as part of the establishment but as one of the few public institutions that maintains its independence has contributed greatly to the respect with which it is considered, even by non-Catholics.<sup>16</sup>

Fourth, Korea possesses a tradition of strong lay leadership and participation. Its history of martyrdom and heroic fidelity to the faith shows how the lay faithful never considered themselves any less responsible for their faith and for the church than the ordained Catholics. Traces of this could be found everywhere until two or three decades ago<sup>17</sup> and, even today, the Korean faithful are relatively more engaged in church activities and organisations than might be the case among their counterparts in other parts of the world.<sup>18</sup>

Furthermore, for contextual conditions that can also be considered for mission, I would like to mention the following two: First, as with many other Asian peoples, the Koreans still keep their strong religiosity and sense of the sacred. Contrary to the Western part of the world, where respect for the religious is no longer a cultural feature, in this country, a highly

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<sup>12</sup> J.W. Lee, 'Stephen Cardinal Kim and Democracy in Korea', *Research Journal on Korean Church History* 36 (2011), 113-14.

<sup>13</sup> The Jogye Order Institute for the Study of Buddhism and Society, *Nationwide Public Opinion Poll on the Society, Politics and Religion of Korea. Report* [in Korean] (Seoul, 2014), 18 and 21, and Gallup Korea, *The Religion of Koreans 1984-2014* 1 (2015), 30-31.

<sup>14</sup> Oh, 'Korean Catholic Church', 119-20.

<sup>15</sup> Oh, 'Nation and Korean Catholic Church', 150-55, and Kang, 'Social Participation in Conflict: The Case of the Korean Catholic Church' [in Korean], *Journal of Religion and Culture* 10 (June 2008), 99-137.

<sup>16</sup> The Jogye Order Institute, *Nationwide Public Opinion Poll*, 18, 119-23.

<sup>17</sup> Oh, 'Korean Catholic Church', 127.

<sup>18</sup> H.S. Han, 'The Participation of the Lay Faithful in the Church's Life and the Second Vatican Council' [in Korean], *Research Journal on Korean Church History* 25 (2006), 94-96.



developed scientific and technical civilisation is compatible with the generality of its members keeping their openness to the religious.<sup>19</sup> Even if one could be tempted to discredit such collective character as being credulous and sentimental, I tend to value it as a positive feature deriving from a sense of the limitation of human rationality and from a certain idealism not yet irremediably stained by scepticism and delusion. Obviating some of the negative manifestations of this character (superstition or fideism, for instance) this inheritance can be an asset for a less arrogant, more balanced, and more humane society. Furthermore, such idealism could also be a source of enthusiasm and apostolic energy that a more deluded and calculating society might easily lack.

Second, a high level of religious tolerance has characterised the recent history of the nation. It is not unusual for members of the same family to follow different religions, in most cases, without that diversity becoming a cause of conflict. In a country with a recent and long history of cruel religious persecution and where the authority of the parents and the cohesion of the family or group are still strong, this fact is worth noticing. More specifically, the public opinion tends to perceive Catholicism as tolerant and respectful of other creeds and less inclined to conflict than other Christian churches.<sup>20</sup>

Together with these positive conditions, however, symptoms of stagnation are also appearing in the church, connected to its numeric growth. This can be easily perceived in the changed proportion between the number of faithful and the number of parishes, the geographic units for the basic pastoral attention of the Catholic faithful. In the five decades prior to 2011, the number of parishes in the diocese of Seoul had increased 3.5 times and the number of priests 7 times, whereas the number of faithful had increased 10.5 times. So if in 1961 the average size of a parish was 360 members, by 2011 that number had rocketed up to 6,350. Anonymity and bureaucratisation are expectable downsides of such sudden numeric growth.<sup>21</sup> The decline in Mass attendance, an easy parameter by which to measure the level of commitment to the faith, is also another worrying aspect of the present situation.<sup>22</sup>

There are also signs of quantitative decay. Even if in absolute numbers the Catholic population is still steadily growing, the growth rate is actually slowing down. Similarly, the age range of the Catholic faithful in recent statistics reveals how the church not only does not escape the general trend of society towards aging, but in fact goes faster in that direction than the

<sup>19</sup> The Jogye Order Institute, *Nationwide Public Opinion Poll*, 107-24; 188-97.

<sup>20</sup> The Jogye Order Institute, *Nationwide Public Opinion Poll*, 19, 105-106; 129-32.

<sup>21</sup> Oh, 'Korean Catholic Church', 122-23.

<sup>22</sup> Catholic Bishops' Conference of Korea, *2013 Statistics*, 36. The rate of Sunday Mass assistance dropped from 30% in 1996 to 21.2 % in 2013. See also, Gallup Korea, *The Religion of Koreans*, 43-44.

rest of the society.<sup>23</sup> In addition, the rate of growth is outright negative in the case of some sacraments such as marriage.<sup>24</sup>

But these are not the only challenging aspects. The church is probably facing one of the most drastic transformations in moral codes and values ever experienced by a traditionally conservative society such as Korea's. If until recently the dominant social values and the moral teachings of the church shared a fundamental attitude of respect for authority, traditional marriage, and natural law, this might not be the case anymore in a near future or even today, at least among some social milieus. It could well happen that the values defended by the Catholic Church cease to represent the feeling of the majority and to contribute to its acceptance. It could very well happen that the church becomes the only defender of unpopular or untrendy and burdensome moral orientations. The church might need to exercise, more than it did before, its capacity to counter trends that might look inevitable and progressive, and swim against the current, as has happened in the Western world.

True enough, most of the signs of stagnation in the Catholic Church mentioned above are also present in the other two big religious groups in Korea – Buddhists and non-Catholic Christians – which indicates that the decreasing rhythm of growth and other similar phenomena are partly a result of the social and cultural change affecting the attitude of Koreans towards religion.<sup>25</sup>

However, that fact should not keep us from looking for those aspects in the church's internal life that might contribute, actively or passively, to such situation. Since no one can give what he or she does not possess, missionary fecundity would require, as its first and fundamental requisite, the inner growth and strengthening of the church itself. Maybe it is time to turn the focus away from numeric growth and external expansion, towards increased depth and qualitative maturation. The spiritual service that the Catholic Church can render to the nation and beyond would be measured by the quality of her service to its members and by the sanctity that results from it, that is, by their closeness to the gospel and the realism of their *sequela Christi* ('following of Christ').

The Catholic Church in Korea is thus placed at a crossroads. The church, being composed of humans and journeying through history, is constantly exposed to the limitations and downfalls that are natural to humans and, therefore, needs to continuously purify itself, ceaselessly turning towards God. However, the present situation carries some features that make this request especially timely, beyond the perennial need for it. If there are crucial times, that is, moments where fundamental resolutions are required

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<sup>23</sup> The Catholic Pastoral Institute of Korea, *Analysis of the 2011 Statistics*, 1-5: In the past 10 years the number of Catholics younger than 19 had decreased in 24.4 %, whereas those older than 70 had increased in a 127.5%.

<sup>24</sup> The Catholic Pastoral Institute of Korea, *Analysis of the 2011 Statistics*, 15-16.

<sup>25</sup> Gallup Korea, *The Religion of Koreans*, 37-38.

that will decide far into the future where the church stands, this seems, for Korea, one such time.

We should then ask ourselves: Where is it that the church needs to correct itself, in order to improve her missionary service? What are the areas in the church's life where a step ahead is required? Space constriction forces me to mention simultaneously the weaknesses and the challenges they pose, without providing a detailed description of the first.

### **Some Indications for the Future**

#### *Spirituality over Structure*

The first and foremost challenge, as I see it, can be expressed as follows: 'spirituality over structure'. Actually, this seems to me of such fundamental importance that it comprises all the other aspects needing attention, making them subtopics within this big topic.

The church in Korea might be facing the risk of becoming an 'established' church. As mentioned before, the church in Korea might be at its peak moment in terms of organisational or worldly resources. These are good, since they can make possible or at least greatly facilitate the spiritual mission of the church. But attention is needed to make sure that the system or structure that has been created serves life – divine life – instead of suffocating it.

I will explain myself: It is desirable that the church is well 'established' if by this one means deeply rooted in history, concerned with the local issues, and present among its people. The problem comes when 'established' becomes synonymous with overly accommodating, settled down, and too confident in its own visible resources, as if they were enough to grant the mission and efficacy of the church or, even worse, as if they were its true purpose. When that happens, the real source of vitality for the church, which is the divine life in it, becomes secondary, and what should be the beating centre of its action is debased to bureaucratic routine. The church might continue to be a respectable institution then, but it might also lose its novelty, attractiveness, and capacity to inspire.

We will not dwell on the obvious temptations of materialism and worldliness that might affect the church representatives when Jesus is displaced from the central position, nor on the risk of accommodating worldly standards, nor on the readiness to compromise that could result from the fear of losing some of the conquered positions. Nevertheless, these risks are real and they require a stronger effort to put all hope and trust in God, more so than in times of less prosperity. So a redoubled commitment to faith and to the spirit of poverty is in order, never losing sight that all the human means, be it prestige, authority, influence, material

and human resources, are only means to achieve the real important thing: the service of souls.

What is needed, in sum, is more centrality given to Jesus. As Pope Francis recently reminded, evoking the words of his predecessor Pope Paul VI, Jesus is the perennial model by which the church should mirror itself.<sup>26</sup> That would mean that, somehow, Jesus should be transparent in each aspect of the life of the church, in each church member as well as in the action and character of church groups and authorities, including in decisions, policies, and orientations, and even in the way in which church bureaucracy works.

This being said, I will develop more extensively another facet of this topic that might be less familiar to other cultures in an attempt to illustrate what recovering the centrality of Christ in the church might mean in the Korean context.

The importance given to external manifestations and forms, stemming from Confucianism, has provided the Catholic Church in Korea with an admirable discipline manifested in collective piety and in liturgy. The recent visit of Pope Francis was again an occasion to make this reality manifest to the world.

But there is the risk of giving forms an importance that is independent from the Christological contents they are trying to express or that even surpasses the importance given to those contents. Even in the best of cases, an insistence on form without attending to increasingly deepening in its true spiritual significance, without a continuous effort to foster the core Christian attitudes, and without the catechetical work needed to connect the exterior forms with such spiritual content could lead to the reduction of religion to a set of rites. Something similar can happen when following external moral prescriptions or other behavioural 'group expectations'.

In all of the above cases, the Christian spirit, that is, the spiritual closeness to Christ, is lost somewhere along the way. Actually, the predominance of a punctilious and demanding attitude among church representatives and members is not an uncommon outcome of giving a disproportionate importance to customary things.

Voluntarism and activism are only some of the possible effects of this. Arbitrariness, lack of flexibility and understanding might follow. All of these have one feature in common: they tend to contradict the spiritual and pastoral nature of the church. Religion can then be perceived and exercised as a burdening or judging reality rather than an inspiring and liberating one. There is also the risk of Korean-ising the church too much, at the expense of its catholic ('universal') character. In the worst case scenario, the above could lead to the subtle substitution of a genuinely religious attitude with a superstitious attitude, when the living God is no longer seen behind the rites.

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<sup>26</sup> Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, 26.

A greater focus on the essential, that is, on Christ and on his desire to reach out for souls, is needed. As a pastoral approach, this implies risking more, consciously choosing openness and inclusion versus security, always taking the benefit of souls as the ultimate criteria, and making mercy the style of the church. In that sense, although far from being the ideal situation, half participation is better than no participation. Keeping faithful to the fundamentals, sometimes it might be better to renounce the enforcement of little things in the common discipline if those might deter the faithful from coming closer.

To this purpose, let us recall some recent words of Pope Francis:

Everyone can share in some way in the life of the Church; everyone can be part of the community, nor should the doors of the sacraments be closed for simply any reason.... Frequently, we act as arbiters of grace rather than its facilitators. But the Church is not a tollhouse; it is the house of the Father, where there is a place for everyone, with all their problems.<sup>27</sup>

### *Christianising Authority*

The second challenge would be that of 'Christianising authority', that is, interpreting in a more Christian sense the discipline and verticality typical of hierarchical subjection. The notion of authority in the church cannot simply mirror that of the surrounding culture. It needs to be enriched and interiorly transformed according to a revealed pattern, which is God's paternity (Rom. 13:1).

In Korea, the implantation of the Catholic Church with its hierarchical structure has availed of the societal features stemming from the Confucian tradition that permeated society. But as many observers point out, such paradigm applied without purification to the church organisation is problematic.<sup>28</sup> Hierarchy in the church is justified as a means of conveying the unity of God to the great variety of its people. It is in the service of the people and instrumental to God's action. When it is exercised as pure verticality, it can easily become instrumental of an individual's action, stop being a service and start becoming domination, even possibly turn into tyranny. In the best of cases, authority thus understood creates distance and miscommunication and makes personal initiative and cooperation difficult. The worst consequence is actually the corruption of the sacred.

A notion of authority mirroring that of God the Father should include trust and friendship as integral parts of it. Within the church, authority should allow the development of all the potentialities in lay tradition and contribute to a stronger reality of ecclesial communion. We could make it a point to examine whether the exercise of authority and discipline in the

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<sup>27</sup> Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, 47.

<sup>28</sup> Oh, 'Korean Catholic Church', 133-34, and Han, 'The Participation of the Lay Faithful', 99.

church fosters growth and freedom or dependence and control, sharing of responsibilities or concentration of functions in one single person, small group mentality or a spirit that is truly catholic, universal, of unity in diversity.<sup>29</sup>

### *Pastoral Care First*

The third challenge is to always place 'pastoral care first'. The challenge that numeric growth presents is actually a challenge of pastoral care, of being able to provide effective spiritual attention to every faithful. This requires that the clergy be formed, first and foremost, with a clear sense of their priestly identity. Priests are not parish leaders or administrators, nor are they social workers, much less political activists. They are pastors and soul curers who are responsible for the spiritual growth of every faithful under their care. The greatest amount of their time and energies should be devoted to these duties. The necessary organisational or bureaucratic tasks, as well as other activities unrelated to the care of the faithful, should be kept to a minimum, so that they do not lead to the clergy losing sight of the basic purpose of the church. In this sense, parishes and other church structures should become more pastoral in their focus and priorities.

In relation to the quality and contents of this pastoral attention, I want to restate here the need to recover the centrality of Jesus. The education of the faithful should aim at provoking a personal encounter with God in Jesus and at reinforcing that encounter with the necessary intellectual tools, thus avoiding the risk of a moralistic or ritualistic reduction of the faith. Without falling into the defect of an individualistic faith, the aspect of friendship with God should not only be more stressed but expressly helped.

In concrete application, pastoral attention cannot be anything but personal. In this sense, all collective or group activities should be accompanied by a personal, individual component, starting where the person is. This is what the church has traditionally done through the practice of spiritual direction, which frequently takes place together with the sacrament of penance. Unfortunately, spiritual direction is now rarely encouraged or practiced, just as frequent confession, which contributes to anonymity before God.

To face this challenge we should count on all the proven resources of spirituality that are found in the church, avoiding the temptation of centralisation and control, save for the ordinary jurisdiction of the bishops of each place. In this sense, more flexibility in existing structures, more diversification, and a stronger spirit of cooperation seem pertinent. This is especially needed in Korea where, due to historical reasons, the Catholic

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<sup>29</sup> Critical observations about the Catholic Church in Korea regarding this aspect can be found in Oh, 'Korean Catholic Church', 124-28.

Church is strongly institutionalised around its secular clergy.<sup>30</sup> The authorities in the church should never discourage any initiative blooming for the service of God, but rather make sure that all the energies available to do pastoral work are maximised without exclusivism.

### *Towards a Laity-and-World-centred Church*

Finally, the field where the fruits of Christian life should be ultimately borne should move back from the internal life of the church to the civil and secular life outside. The insistence upon *ad intra*, self-referential church participation of the lay faithful, as convenient as it might seem, could lead them to ignore their responsibilities in social and civil life, distracting them from what is their fundamental task: the reformation of the world.<sup>31</sup> Besides, the concentration of the laity in specifically ecclesiastical tasks might lead them to fall into clericalism, that is, to the erroneous idea that the clerical life and its functions are paradigmatic of religious perfection.

Referring to this danger, Pope Francis says, 'The formation of the laity and the evangelisation of professional and intellectual life represent a significant pastoral challenge.'<sup>32</sup> Here, a radical option might be needed: a conscious passage from the church activity-based, parish life-centred pattern of faith common in Korea to a more personal, intellectually illustrated, and world-centred faith. In other words, a less 'ecclesiastical/structural', more 'spiritual' faith. Then the influence of the church in society would depend less on the clergy and hierarchy and more on the lay faithful. It would not be limited to punctual interventions or official declarations in defence of this or that cause but would be as constant, intensive, and extensive as the daily lives of the faithful. The focus on formation and pastoral attention mentioned before and the transfer of some religious activities to the extra-ecclesial space of the family and of professional life could contribute to this.

For this aspiration to become a reality, the formation of the laity should permit them to include their professional and social activity within the wider horizon of their faith, habilitating them to influence those fields with a Christian spirit. The changes that are affecting the Korean society indicate that many mature Christians, with a solid preparation both in their profession and in their faith, will be needed in all fields to more effectively realise the mission of the church.

<sup>30</sup> Oh, 'Korean Catholic Church', 117.

<sup>31</sup> Han, 'The Participation of the Lay Faithful', 100-102. This temptation is not unique to Korea, as shown by the following words of Pope Francis: 'Even if many are now involved in the lay ministries, this involvement is not reflected in a greater penetration of Christian values in the social, political and economic sectors. It often remains tied to tasks within the Church, without a real commitment to applying the Gospel to the transformation of society.' (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 102).

<sup>32</sup> Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, 102.

### **Conclusion**

I will finish this brief essay with a wish: that a missionary church renewed in each one of its members spreads its riches to the surrounding culture through the modest but bright lives of many anonymous Christians who, in their family and professional life, become moral references and sources of hope and person-centred development. Then the church in Korea will have been faithful to its mission and will be instrumental to extending the Kingdom of God effectively to other Asian nations.

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# GLOBAL MISSION LEADERSHIP IN THE THIRD CHRISTIAN MILLENNIUM: A CALL TO THE KOREAN CHURCH?

Wonsuk Ma

## Introduction

I became part of the first wave of the recent Korean missionary movement, when I began my 'missionary life' in 1979 in the Philippines. My missionary career was an 'accident', as it was never planned. In that year, the missionary force of the Korean church was under 100, according to Nelson's study. I am certain that I was not included in that number because my denomination did not yet have an organised mission department, nor was I properly commissioned as a missionary. More serious than the administrative details, however, was the complete lack of missionary consciousness on my part. 'Missionary work', in the middle of my graduate theological studies in the outskirts of Manila, was a minister's *pastime*; witnessing in a penitentiary, helping a church plant in an urban slum, or preaching in village churches were all spare-time 'hobbies' for a Christian minister, but nothing more than that. I did not feel called to this hot and humid place, nor to its people.

The realisation of my own missionary 'identity' occurred when Julie, my wife, did not recognise her 'usual' husband when she and our son joined me some two years later. (This was the situation in Korea: it did not permit a whole family to 'waste the precious foreign exchange'.) To her, the shock came from a completely strange, morphed man, who acted, thought, and lived like a missionary, but he (I) did not think he was such, nor did she have any idea of a mission consciousness.

This gradual missionary awareness took place around the time (that's 1981) that Todd Johnson believes that the balance of global Christians began to sway towards the South. As a member of one Christian community, that is, the Korean church, how do I view this experience (both individual and corporate), in that the whole church began to gain steady and even explosive missionary awareness through the 1980s and 90s? Some specific questions will be asked: 'How did the growth of the church and mission movement in Korea in that period indicate any role in the global Christianity and mission?' 'If [it did] so, what specific role, especially in leadership, did it play in reshaping the understanding and practice of Christian mission?' 'What will be the grade sheet of its generation-long missionary work?' Finally, 'Based on the critical evaluation, what tasks are

ahead of it within the global missionary movement?’ For a short study such as this one, these questions are too broad. Nonetheless, they are critical for the Korean missionary movement to assess itself and chart its future for the sake of global Christianity.

This study will begin with a brief introduction of the shifts that global Christianity experienced in its two-millennium history. *Atlas of Global Christianity*, an important publication to commemorate the centenary of the Edinburgh Missionary Conference, will be the main reference, although the accuracy of presented figures and the usefulness of categories should be taken with discernment. Then, the Korean church will be placed within this context. This will be followed by a simple ‘inventory’ of gifts that the Korean church is believed to have been entrusted with to serve the global church. These three areas of investigation then lead to the question at hand: Does the Korean church have a global mission leadership call in this time in church history? If so, then why is it so, and what particular area is it called to serve? The study concludes with a brief thought on how the Korean church can faithfully fulfil this call.

It will be helpful to speak a little bit on ‘leadership’. This will become apparent in the course of the discussion: the concept espoused in this study is a serving and empowering role in order for others to realise and fulfil a God-given call. When this is fully realised, it is possible that the served will grow even taller than the server (in this case, the Korean church). This concept is based on the body analogy of the church worldwide: each member is uniquely gifted to serve other members and ultimately the body itself. Although the serving party appears to be in a privileged position, it also comes with vulnerability necessitating the hospitality of gifting from other members of the body. In this discussion, this can be churches in other parts of the world, both of the North and the South, and a variety of church families throughout history, often shaped by specific socio-religious contexts.

### Shifts in Global Christianity

An increasing number of studies have appeared to present the macro view of the movement of global Christianity in two millennia. The emerging picture can be summarised as follows: In the first millennium, Christianity that was birthed as an offshoot of Judaism quickly spread, thanks to its missionary nature, building several strong centres along the Mediterranean, especially along its southern (that is, North Africa) and eastern coastlines (or the Holy Land and beyond). The adoption of Christianity as the Roman state religion accelerated its spread throughout its territories, especially westward and northward, while the rise of Islam pushed Eastern Christianity to further frontiers, northward and eastward. The latter reached the south Asian coastlines and the Tang Empire of China. Throughout the first millennium (until 923, according to *Atlas*), the centre of Christian

gravity remained in Asia Minor (or today's Turkey).<sup>1</sup> This formative period can be divided into the pre-Christendom and Christendom eras (from the fourth century, and the rise and spread of Islam from the seventh century). The shape of the church and its mission went through radical changes respectively.

The missionary movement in this period took several forms. In the pre-Christendom era, Christianity spread under harsh marginalisation and persecution, thus, from the position of weakness. Without idealising the era, this element of 'weakness' is critical to the nature of Christianity and its mission, and this has been under threat from, and yet survived through, the fringe Christian movements. While the Christendom shift from the fourth century radically altered the church by moving it from margins to the centre of society, endowed with power, the church's mission was often part of imperial territorial expansion. The monastic model of mission, which was responsible for the reaching of far-flung areas such as China and India, existed along with the imperial model of mission.

The second Christian millennium, spanning from 923 until 1981 according to *Atlas*, puts Europe at the centre of global Christianity. The loss of North Africa and Asia Minor, primarily due to the expansion of Islam, was compensated for by the opening of Eastern Europe and today's Russia. The rise of maritime empires also helped in the discovery of new continents (including the Americas, East and Southeast Asia and Oceania) and the spread of Christian faith. The Reformation in the sixteenth century approximately coincides with the breaking up of the Christendom into mini-Christendoms in Western Europe. The close alignment between the state and the church helped the spread of Christianity as the different states actively colonised the new lands. Today's Africa is an outcome of this, although the marriage between the church and the state was not always a happy one. This Christianisation via colonial rule curtailed the steady spread of Islam in a number of places, such as Sub-Saharan Africa and Southeast Asia, while Christianity continued its spread in Eastern Europe, Central Asia, and elsewhere.

With a growing need to Christianise the new territories, an intentional missionary movement emerged: first, the Jesuit order was instituted by the Catholic Church as a missionary order in the sixteenth century, followed by similar communities. The organisation of Protestant mission societies in Europe and, later, in North America and Oceania opened a great missionary era. The Edinburgh Missionary Conference in 1910 signifies the flowering of this missionary movement among the churches in the 'North' (which should also include Oceania, the southernmost continent). This is the moment, according to *Atlas*, when global Christianity peaked (34.8%) in

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<sup>1</sup> Todd M. Johnson and Sun Young Chung, 'Christianity's Centre of Gravity, AD 33-2010', in Todd M. Johnson and Kenneth R. Ross (eds.), *Atlas of Global Christianity* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 50-51. AGC henceforth.

terms of Christian proportion against the world's population in its two-thousand-year history.<sup>2</sup>

After the initial northward move of global Christianity, it soon gained a westward momentum as the American continent was added on the global Christianity map. However, rapid changes in geopolitical landscapes worldwide ushered in a new Christian era. The two world wars, mostly fought among Christian nations, and the subsequent closure of colonialism by the middle of the twentieth century brought independence to most former colonies. Growing nationalism, the rise of new forms of Christianity – often as a result of sweeping revivals – and the onslaught of secularisation in the West have impacted global Christianity, not only in its numerical distribution but also in the very nature of being Christian.

The third Christian millennium dawned not long ago (1981 to be exact, per *Atlas*)<sup>3</sup> and we are the first-generation 'millennialists'. It is too early to predict much about this third Christian era, and this will be the focus of our reflection. At the same time, there is a flood of literature on Christianity and its mission in the new global context.

Here are some of the things often talked about. First, we are living in a 'post' world: post-Christendom, post-colonial, and post-modernism. All these terms come with different shades and nuances of meanings. Second, the southward shift of global Christians will continue. It took only 30 years for southern Christianity to grow from 50% of the world's Christians in the early 1980s to 63% in 2010. If the same rate is applied, by 2040, more than 75% of the world's Christians will be found in the southern continents! Third, due to the distinctly different socio-cultural and political-economic context in the global South, Christianity will be mainly a religion of the poor instead of one for those in the powerful, developed, and civilised first-world nations. This will inevitably affect theologising and mission approaches. Fourth, the influence of the northern (or western) church will continue into the foreseeable future, in spite of its waning strength. This is due to the northern church's capabilities in theological discourse; the enormous resources in knowledge, experience, finance, and institutions; and the deposit of traditions. It will require serious dialogue between the North and the South to bring their respective resources (that is, the growth from the South and the resources from the North) to the same table to partner together in serving global Christianity.

### **Gifts of the Korean Church: Received and Ready to Be Given**

I will do a quick inventory of the gifts that the Korean church has received from God and from its engagement with its contexts. This exercise is to explore if these gifts are unique and valuable enough to be shared with

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<sup>2</sup> Johnson and Ross, *AGC*, 57.

<sup>3</sup> Johnson and Chung, 'Christianity's Centre of Gravity', 51.

other churches, especially in the global South. The latter question is raised based on an assumption that the Korean church finds itself in the middle of the millennial shift of global Christianity, especially in the last quarter of the twentieth century. How the uniqueness of the locus of the Korean church in our time is explored without a triumphalistic claim is a spiritual challenge. With this awareness, I intend to mention only a few.

### *Growth*

The first gift is the growth of Christianity in South Korea from the late 1970s through the 1990s. If an earlier growth period was led by Christian refugees from North Korea, especially before and after the Korean War, the growth became a general phenomenon for at least two decades following this earlier period. Christianity continued to draw the socially and economically marginalised as megachurches began to appear. Several mass evangelistic gatherings and active campus evangelism accelerated the speed of growth.

Select megachurches also advocated their growth experiences among church leaders in Asia, Africa, and North America; this was an important contribution to the development of global Christianity. Yoido Full Gospel Church of David Yonggi Cho's Church Growth International led this initiative, while Onnuri Community Church of Yongjo Hah focused its efforts on Japan through its innovative culturally adapted presentation of the Christian message.<sup>4</sup> Han-eum Oak, the founder of the powerful Discipleship Movement of Sarang Community Church, impacted a broad spectrum of Korean Christianity, including overseas. This growth and discipleship strategy has been introduced in various languages including English and German, expanding its influence further.

If we follow the trajectory of the movement of global Christianity suggested in *Atlas of Global Christianity*, the decisive tilt occurred in 1981, from which point onwards more Christians were found in the South. The movement of the 'centre of the gravity of global Christianity' also indicates that, from 1970, the southward move of global Christianity also began to experience a pull from the East, occasioned by the growth of Asian Christianity. As a member of the global church, phenomenal growth and its active evangelism and church-growth mentoring have contributed to the continuing southward and the new eastward movements, especially from the early 1980s.<sup>5</sup>

Now, it is also important to admit that its numerical growth, especially among Protestants, has plateaued in recent years. With the decline in the

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<sup>4</sup> Wonsuk Ma, 'Asian Pentecostalism in Context: A Challenging Portrait', in Amos Yong and Cecil M. Robeck, Jr (eds.), *Cambridge Companion to Pentecostalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 154-55.

<sup>5</sup> Johnson and Chung, 'Christianity's Centre of Gravity', 51.

general population, the church is also expected to stop growing or even decline, with its members aging rapidly. With approximately one-third of the national population, Christianity in South Korea is learning to co-exist with other religions while trying to remain missionally committed. The recent growth of the Catholic Church, according to a study found in this *Atlas* volume, has slowed and will eventually give way to the general population decline. Korean Christianity in this century will be quite different from Korean Christianity in the previous era.

### *Missionary Movement*

The second gift is the growth of missionary consciousness and the birth of a robust missionary movement. As several chapters of this volume have stated, the Korean Protestant Church has been a missionary church from its very beginning. After the Korean War, this missionary impetus continued, but the number of missionaries before the 1970s was still relatively small. But it was from the late 1970s when the missionary movement became 'democratised' and a dramatic missionary consciousness took root in ordinary congregations and believers. Among the Protestants, in less than two decades, the Korean church became the second largest missionary-sending entity, only after the United States.

Mission watchers suggest several important contributions to this missionary movement in mass. The first is the general growth of the church, especially among youths and young adults on campuses. They became a powerful pool for missionary recruitment in later years. The second is the economic growth achieved approximately from the same period. Considering the missionary model that the Korean church inherited and adopted from the western church, it was a general assumption that proper economic development was a prerequisite for any serious missionary movement. Now, the Korean church could 'afford' its missionaries. The third, related to the point above, is the growing recognition of South Korea as a nation of importance. Again, this is based on the common perception that only 'developed' countries (that is, the West) did – and thus, can do – mission. The nation hosted the summer Olympic Games in 1988, joined the Organization of Economic Development and Cooperation in 1996, and hosted a G20 summit in 2010. As the nation began to perceive itself as a member of the 'rich' club, so did the church. Emerging as a major missionary-sending church means a drastic change in its status: from a missionary-receiving to a missionary-sending church. This positions the Korean church as a forerunner of the emerging new missionary movement among the non-western churches.

Korea's rise in the global missionary chart has been impressive since the mid-1980s. Among the Protestants, it has been ranked number two in missionary-sending, with the United Kingdom long overtaken by this new church. As several studies in this volume present, the missionary zeal of the

Korean church stunned the world. They quickly filled the vacuum left by the West's dwindling missionary resources. However, a missionary movement can only be sustained by a strong national church. As Christianity in general now experiences challenges to maintain its current state and faces several critical challenges including the shrinking general population, missionary resources, both human and financial, will soon be affected. Signs of this change are already being felt among mission leaders. The Korean missionary movement, as a consequence, has begun to ask some hard questions concerning its future.

### *Theological Shapings*

Korea's Christianity, including Catholicism, went through the nation's drastic and often painful experiences. These include the fall of a dynasty, the introduction of modern governance and civilisation, wars fought among the region's superpowers in its own land, harsh colonial oppression, independence, a war, military dictatorship, a struggle for democracy, a divided nation and divided families, chronic poverty, and economic and political developments. All these took place within the span of a century! Inevitably, these experiences have become an integral part of the spiritual, theological, and mission formation of Korean Christianity.

Early Catholic encounters with the Joseon Dynasty were particularly bloody, primarily because Confucianism was more than a religion – it was a state philosophy. Refusing ancestor rites was viewed, therefore, not as an action against a dominant religion but one against the state law. One theological outcome was a high regard for martyrs. On the contrary, during the Japanese occupation, refusal to participate in Shinto worship was viewed as a patriotic action by fellow Koreans, but viewed by the Japanese as treason against the Japanese emperor. Theologically speaking, Christianity was closely identified with nationalism. After the independence and nation-building process under a Christian president and vice president, Christians had a short period of triumphal optimism for a Christian (South) Korea. Christianity was brought close to political and social power, a position that was quickly shattered by the destructive Korean War. After public officials, Christian leaders in any occupied area were the primary target of the Communist North. Many were killed or captured by the North as they retreated. Thus, the majority of Korean Christians are strongly anti-communism. The nation owes its survival to many nations who fought the war along with South Koreans. The nation-building process was heavily aided by western grants and loans.

Throughout this development, to Korean Christians, the West was seen as 'Christian', civilised, rich, benevolent, and willing to help, while persecutions came from either among our own (including the Joseon Dynasty and Communist North) or a close neighbour (that is, Japan). Korean Christianity, consequently, looks extremely western, in its



theology, architecture, orientation, and behaviour. Mark Noll singles out Korean Protestantism for having been disproportionately influenced by American evangelicalism.<sup>6</sup>

One recent period presents a snapshot of the theological formation process of Korean Christianity. The 1970s and the 80s were a turbulent era of military dictatorship and a struggle for democracy. With the alleged threat from North Korea and the grinding poverty as the main political arguments, the military government ran the nation like a military camp. Its economic plan brought improvements in daily life, but at the cost of millions of hard-working but underpaid (and with human rights violations) labourers, while a small number of business conglomerates received the government's preferential treatment and took much of the riches. Christianity responded in two opposite ways. The majority of evangelicals endorsed the oppressive government, accepting its pretext of economic drive and anti-communism. In fact, church leaders and the governing body became extremely close as they were regularly invited to pray for the president and assembly members. Blessing had become a major theological agenda for both believers and clerics. A record growth of Christianity took place during this period. On the other hand, a small number of churches and Christian activists began to raise a prophetic voice on behalf of the suffering and the voiceless. *Minjung* theology was born as a response to the oppressive political, social, and economic context. *Minjung* theologians, activists, and churches were soon marginalised by the government and the majority of evangelical Christians. These were radically different theological responses to the social needs of the time. Nonetheless, these are examples of the Korean church's engagement with its immediate social context.

### Summary

Then what is so unique about the expansion of Korean Christianity, its missionary movement, and its theological process? Even in our time, there are a good number of churches that have experienced at least two of these three, often growth and theologisation. What is significant for the Korean church is the birth of an intentional, substantial, and sustained missionary movement. If other practical means are added to these conditions, such as financial resources, national reputation, ease of travel, and others, the church will emerge as a major missionary-sending entity.

However, critical as they may be, I would argue that the timing of this development during this period makes its role unique and critical. Its growth and missionary development almost exactly coincides with the decisive moment of the shift of global Christianity. When we follow the

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<sup>6</sup> Mark A. Noll, *The New Shape of World Christianity: How American Experience Reflects Global Faith* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2009), 151-68.



trajectory of the statistical centre of the gravity of global Christianity, it is in 1970 when Asian Christianity began to grow substantially. It was before the re-emergence of Chinese Christianity, the outbreak of the Charismatic movement in the Philippines, and the appearance of megachurches in Indonesia, with a number of countries still under the socialist or communist regimes (such as Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Burma, and Mongolia). It is arguable that it was only in a handful of places that churches began to grow in this period. The proliferation of theological institutions in Korea was another contribution to the training of future workers, both in Korea and beyond it. The development and characteristics of Korean Christianity in this period have been studied in various chapters of this volume. As observed in later decades, the Korean missionary movement played a role in leading other nations, especially from the global South, in evangelism, church growth, and mission. Its location in Asia has been, therefore, critical, for the continent with the highest population in the world but the lowest evangelisation rate.

### **Two Potential Areas of Mission Leadership**

Given the unique giftedness of the Korean church, I will single out two areas where it can serve the world church, especially the global South. They are closely connected, but one is theoretical and the other practical. It is important to remind ourselves that leadership in this discussion is not an issue of power and control but of service and empowerment.

#### *Revisioning Christian Mission*

The 'received' mission paradigm was a product of the western church within its socio-political context. The long process of Christendom order had gradually but conspicuously eradicated mission from the church, theological training, and Christian discourse. The birth of a missionary movement in the Catholic Church in the sixteenth century was motivated by the expansion of territories of the western maritime superpowers, such as Spain and Portugal. The formalisation of a missionary order was a breakthrough in the church's life as mission was taken with intentionality. 'Missionaries' (again a new term) were selected, specially trained, and commissioned with a specific 'mission'. This pattern was replicated by Protestants among the Christian West: special missionary societies were established to undertake mission.

Among others, several distorted understandings and practices were shaped. The first is the elitism of mission. Local parish congregations, let alone ordinary believers, did not have much to do with mission, as it was perceived to require highly specialised training. The most that they could do was to pray and make financial contributions. Mission was far removed from daily Christian life, even though every believer is called and sent into

the world to be Christ's witness. The second is that mission was, and has been perceived as, a task only churches/nations with power can perform. It was the western nations that were Christian, advanced in civilisation, politics, and economy; thus, they were the only ones that could and did do mission. The unintended outcome of this practice is the paradigm that mission can be sustained only with large financial resources. The third is the perceived unidirectional nature of mission: from the West to the 'Rest'. This thinking persists even with the drastic shift of global Christianity towards poorer, less developed, and less powerful churches/nations.

This notion of mission that requires power is foreign to the life and teachings of Jesus, and also to mission practices found in early records (including the Book of Acts). The kenotic life is the core of incarnation and is also the basis of Christian discipleship. The persecuted believers of the Jerusalem church spread their faith in Christ as they ran away from persecution. If mission, as we read in Matthew 28:19ff., is an important part of following Christ (thus, discipleship), then our understanding and practice of mission should embody this. Thus, a radical reappraisal of mission is called for. This includes fundamental issues of mission, including the questions: 'What is mission?' and 'Who is called to mission?' The mission leadership of the Korean church includes a pivotal role to facilitate the global church, both of the South and of the North, to run this process. In addition to the 'gifts' we observed above, it also has the drawing power of both communities for dialogue and interaction and the financial resources to aid churches requiring assistance. As the world church comes together to a common table, the South, with its challenging social, religious, economic, and/or political contexts, can bring its underrating of mission from their reading of the scripture and engagements with its contexts. The North can bring its long history of mission and its critical reflection of it.

### *Empowering New Churches to Become Missionary*

This received mission paradigm, which makes power a prerequisite for mission, has a devastating effect both to the 'new' churches in the South and the declining ones in the North. Even though there are many 'mega Christian' nations in the global South, the missionary impetus from the South does not correspond with its numerical growth. This common notion challenges the global church in two dimensions. First, a simple reality that many 'new' churches have not yet been awakened to their missionary call. This unfortunate perception has not been shaped through a theological process, nor through a close reading of the Bible, but through their experiences with (western) missionaries around them. Second, many churches simply do not have the financial resources to launch a typical missionary operation, as they find themselves struggling economically. This high-maintenance missionary system has become a heavy burden on

many western churches. As Christianity declines in Europe and North America, so do their missionary operations.

Correcting this long-standing anomaly will not be a simple task: it will take sustained global and local efforts. Along with a robust and critical study of mission theology and history, an actual model will serve a useful purpose. This is the area where some experiences of the Korean church have an important role to play, while bringing similar experiences from other countries together. In my view, one significant contribution of Korean missionary practice in a generation is its work facilitating the transformation of national churches into missionary churches. I have noticed that there is a general desire among Korean missionaries to see their partner national churches become viable missionary churches. Although the number who are systematically experimenting and implementing the desired ideas may be small, there are several noticeable and encouraging initiatives.

One example is Mission Korea's efforts to facilitate the adoption by several Asian nations of its successful programme in mobilising Christian youths and young adults for mission. Launched in 1988 after the model of the Urbana programme in the States, this biannual conference has produced a large number of missionary candidates and mission supporters (both individuals and churches) to undergird the growing Korean missionary movement. However, several Asian churches worked with Mission Korea to begin a similar programme in their own country. India's Mission Naga was directly and indirectly modelled after the Korean programme, and the new youth program has significantly strengthened the existing mission movement in Nagaland, India. Indonesia is another Asian nation that was influenced by Mission Korea in the development of its own mission mobilisation programme, particularly among university students.<sup>7</sup>

Another example is the birth of the Asian short-term missionary movement, called Asia Vision Short-Term Missions Project.<sup>8</sup> This challenging missionary initiative was spearheaded in 2002 by Andrew Kim, a Korean Pentecostal missionary scholar and practitioner. It was the first among the Southern Baptist churches in the Philippines and the initiative gradually spread to other churches and Asian countries. Through this programme, local congregations, denominations, and national churches have been challenged theologically and practically to take God's missionary call to heart and take specific steps towards the vision for a missionary church. This programme first empowered and challenged both the people in the pews and the young Christians, with the following tenets: 1) every believer and every congregation has a missionary call; 2) through the empowering presence of the Holy Spirit, each has sufficient resources

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<sup>7</sup> It is to the editor's regret that a planned chapter on Mission Korea was not realised. Its website provides useful information: [www.missionkorea.org](http://www.missionkorea.org).

<sup>8</sup> See Andrew B.Y. Kim's chapter, 'Mobilizing Nations for Missions', in this volume.

to undertake a mission programme; and 3) each one must explore creative ways that do not require heavy financial resources. Through this initiative, long-term missionaries are now at work in various countries in Asia and Africa, including Central Asia and the Middle East.

This may be the full vision of missionary work, as argued elsewhere, as a 'Full Circle Mission': a missionary's work is completed only when the national church is helped to become a missionary church.<sup>9</sup> These anecdotes are but a few of many efforts, often emerging from close partnerships between missionaries and national churches. At the same time, the rise of various missionary movements is one outcome of the generally increasing missionary awareness among the churches in the global South. The role of missionaries, therefore, must have been complimentary to the already existing work of the Holy Spirit.

### Conclusion

The rise of the Korean missionary movement was hailed as a successful case of modern Christian mission precisely because of its growth, missionary movement, and theological process. However, the most important blessing that the Korean church has experienced is the exact timing of this development. This places the Korean church in a unique position to serve the global church.

Both the older churches in the North and the new ones in the South agreed that the re-evaluation of mission thinking and paradigm is an urgent task. It is also expected that this process should be led by the churches in the South. Critically lacking is leadership to bring the world mission communities and churches together for this process, with sufficient missionary experience, strong church resources, and 'extra money to spare'. Its ability to create a space for the world church has been recognised as a special gift. The West is reluctant to set any agenda-setting initiative, even if it has the will and the money.

On the ground level, overall, the Korean missionary movement has continued the long and established mission paradigm. In fact, with enthusiasm, cultural challenges, and imperialistic mission orientation, its general grade sheet for a generation of missionary work is disappointing. A good number of studies included in this volume reflect on this.

However, its potential for global mission leadership is still valid, although we do not know how long this window of grace will remain ajar to the Korean church. After all, if we follow Christ closely, we should diminish, while others flourish. In the end, Christ will be lifted high.

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<sup>9</sup> Julie C. Ma and Wonsuk Ma, *Mission in the Spirit: Towards a Pentecostal/Charismatic Missiology* (Oxford: Regnum Books, 2010), 40-58.

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**CONCLUSION**  
**AN UNFINISHED POSTSCRIPT**  
**ON AN UNFINISHED TASK**

Kyo Seong Ahn

Perhaps the best way to conclude this kind of book is to finish without a conclusion like the Book of Acts, which abruptly finishes without a proper conclusion unlike other books in the New Testament. The reason is that, like the early church, the Korean church is still a young church with such a short history of a few centuries, which has much to be desired. Its history will and should go on and on until the return of our Lord Jesus Christ.

At any rate, this book can be said to be the first full-fledged anthology of post-Edinburgh Korean Christianity of its kind. Above all, this book is proud of its diversity in authorship and the coverage of themes, as well as its outstanding interdisciplinary character. The contributors are so diverse that the book reminds us of a kaleidoscope: nationally, they range from expatriate scholars to Korean experts overseas to professors based in Korea; confessionally (or denominationally), from the Roman Catholic to the mainline Protestant, from the Orthodox to the Pentecostal; and professionally, from historians to sociologists of religion to missiologists to mission practitioners and even to churchmen. The diversity seems to be even more apparent in the themes it tackles: the book covers the history of post-Edinburgh Korean Christianity, discusses numerous cutting-edge issues, and illuminates new areas that have rarely been researched or have been freshly approached from a different perspective.

It is not to say, however, that the diversity of authors and themes eclipses the variety of the styles of chapters: the chapters run the gamut from self-confessing narratives, bringing up the image of *Bildungsroman*, to prophecies extrapolating future changes based upon what the authors understood, not to mention impassioned and evaluative first-calibre professional articles, all of which reveal to us the ins and outs of the Korean church in the aftermath of the landmark World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh a century ago. In effect, this book is a success-and-failure history of the Korean church, which has dramatically soared from a fledgling church having sent only one guest delegate to the 1910 Edinburgh Conference to a world-class church organising an international meeting in commemoration of the centennial of the Edinburgh Conference in 2010 and then hosting the General Assembly of the World Council of Churches in 2013. Just a glance through the book will be enough to impress on readers

how important the subject of this book is: post-Edinburgh Korean Christianity's thoughts and practices, accomplishments, pitfalls, and potentialities.

Regarding the past of the Korean church, the authors almost unanimously agreed that the most remarkable common thread running through its history is the missionary spirit of the Korean church. In short, it can safely be said that its history is virtually that of mission. As regards the origin of the Korean missionary movement, Julie Ma seeks to freshly answer the time-honoured question of the relationship between evangelicalism and Korean mission, focusing on the fact that the more one had to pay for a new faith, the more one dared to pay for its propagation.

Meanwhile, a number of chapters review the whole history of the Korean church and mission. Timothy Kiho Park's chapter on the history of the Korean missionary movement enables readers to have a rough picture of it. In his analysis of Korean mission, he points out the following assets and problems: the growth of church, nation and Korean diaspora, worldwide diplomatic networks, highly educated people, missionary experiences, and the passion and commitment for the cause of the Great Commission, on the one hand; the neglect of social responsibility, church-oriented-ness, cultural blindness, and poor missionary equipment and policy, on the other hand. In sum, he emphasises the importance of balanced mission theology, sophisticated mission policy, and advanced mission infrastructure. Reviewing almost the same period of Korean church history, Eunsoo Kim probes how the Korean church participated in the historical Edinburgh Conference, appearing on the international stage for the first time, and how the Edinburgh Conference has since then affected Korean Christianity. Kyo Seong Ahn concentrates on a more specialized area of the history of the Korean ecumenical movement, which can be traced back to the Edinburgh Conference and beyond. By depicting its development, opportunities, challenges, and legacy, he unravels the riddle of how the ecumenical identity is embedded in the so-called evangelical Korean church and why the themes of church, unity, and mission cannot be seen separately. Remembering the fact that women are a pivotal but neglected asset of mission, it is not surprising that Bokyoung Park's chapter on the role of women in the Korean missionary movement is included in this anthology. Besides her argument that Korean women were not merely main supporters but the major pool of Korean missionaries, she pinpoints numerous obstacles that Korean women missionaries had to overcome, such as devaluation and marginalization. Bishop Ambrose Aristotle Zographos, Cho Song Am in his Korean name, enormously contributes to this book by portraying the hitherto barely unearthed history of the Orthodox mission and church in Korea, which itself is a moving story about the sacrifice of missionaries and which also raises the question of mission and politics in that the Orthodox church continuously suffered from ecclesiastical and political transformations over Korea.

Not surprisingly, the mission of the Korean church has a wide variety of manifestations both within and without the Korean peninsula. A number of contributors focus their attention on the evaluation of these diverse ministries. Daniel S.H. Ahn exquisitely describes how expatriate missionaries, together with Korean nationals, devoted themselves to Bible translation ministry; how important the issue of indigenisation, particularly regarding the controversy over the name of God, was in the ministry; and how the Korean church came to love the Bible, so much so as to be nicknamed 'Bible Christianity'. In a similar vein, Je Soon Chung illustrates how the Bible and the legacy of Bible translation ministry affected the development of the Korean church and finally contributed to the rise of the Korean church as one of the centres for worldwide Bible translation mission.

During the Japanese colonial rule, according to Jangsaeng Kim, the Canaan Farmers School movement emerged as an idiosyncratic Christian social experiment to face the cruel fate of colonised Korea. This movement inspired the government-led *Saemaoul Undong* or the New Village Movement in the devastated post-liberation Korea, and then developed into a way of doing mission, spreading into various corners of the world.

The second half of the twentieth century saw the remarkable growth of church and mission. Sung-gun Kim painstakingly paints the light and shadow of church growth explosion, in particular the megachurch phenomenon, and deals with the problem of leadership utilising the Bathsheba syndrome theory that, without self-control and awareness, success itself makes leaders vulnerable to scandals.

In this book, there is a couplet on the globalisation of the Korean Pentecostal church, which took the lion's share of the church growth movement in Korea. Myung Soo Park's case study on the international ministry of Yonggi Cho, the icon of the Korean church growth movement and the Korean Pentecostal movement, clarifies how he almost equals Billy Graham in his range of ministry, how the message of the Gospel is accompanied by that of health and wealth, and how missionary proclamation and the themes of nationalism and capitalism can be inexorably entwined. Interesting, however, is the fact that, in many cases, Cho's message was sought rather than given by the people, particularly political leaders, of the countries that he visited. Alternatively, Younghoon Lee's chapter portrays how the Pentecostal movement gradually dominated the spiritual landscape of Korean Christianity towards the end of the last century. Among his suggestions for multi-faceted future tasks such as self-criticism, social engagement, the development of authentic Pentecostal theology, practical social ministries, the ministry of reconciliation including reunification, and world mission, what draws special attention is the fact that the Pentecostal church, an evangelical church *par excellence*, dared to join the National Council of Churches to promote Christian unity. On the other hand, however, the Korean church was busy with tackling the varied



agenda of *missio Dei* during the period. Hong Eyoul Hwang exposes how the Korean church struggled to implement social ministry and serve *minjung* in spite of the opposition rather than supporting the authoritarian governments. Furthermore, the Korean church has spared no effort to break the deadlock of the reunification movement, the history and task of which Eunsik Cho cautiously describes. He argues that, in Christian reconciliation, reconciliation precedes forgiveness and repentance; moreover, exploiting Johan Galtung's theory that it takes 40 years to resolve a trauma, he maintains that a central force for national reunification is shifting to the post-war generation from the old generation who directly experienced the Korean War.

Indeed, we are fortunate to have a triplet on the theology and ministry of the Korean Catholic Church in this book. Simon C. Kim maintains that, although the Korean Catholic Church was slow to appreciate the significance of the Second Vatican Council, the council fundamentally transformed the Korean Catholic Church in its church life and mission. As a result, the church, having been known to be a largely foreign and introverted church, dramatically transmuted itself into an indigenised and social-participating church. In contrast to the wide-brushed portrait of the church drawn by Simon C. Kim, Seil Oh provides an updated explanation of Catholic social ministry by employing traditional social teachings, as well as Pope Francis's brand new social teachings such as *Evangelii Gaudium* (Joy of the Gospel). His main contention is that the social evangelisation of the church for the marginalised brought about public trust, and the latter in turn triggered the rapid growth of the church starting from the end of the last century. Irene Park's study on the missionary movement of the Korean Catholic Church emphasised the fact that, as regards world mission, the Korean Catholic Church came of age since it changed from a church financially aided by foreign funds to a church sending money and personnel abroad. Nevertheless, she stresses that the reformation of Korean Catholic mission requires the rectification of the church's own inner life. She, thus, suggests four important changes for the future: spirituality over structure, Christianising authority, pastoral care first, and movement towards a laity-and-world-centred church.

The years at the turn of the millennium occasioned a number of innovative mission experiments, which challenge both thought and the practice of Korean mission. Hongkey Chung shares his mission experience in Romania, in which he connected mission and public space and outgrew his narrow conservative missiology that merely focused on evangelisation. Jeffrey J. Lee testifies how God unexpectedly used one's lifelong career development for missional formation, giving a testimony from his own life as a case study of BAM (Business as Mission). Min Chung also witnesses that overseas Koreans gradually extend mission from the ministry for compatriots to multi-cultural and even global ministry, particularly in the area of campus ministry. Sung-wook Hong, senior pastor of a fast growing

local church, Anyang First Presbyterian Church, affirms that the faithful application of the missional church concept that mission is the essence of church, not vice versa, can bring about not only the reformation of church and mission but also the growth of church and mission, illustrating his point with examples drawn from the ministries both within and without the church he served.

Naturally, the impressive growth of Korean mission draws scholarly analysis and speculation. Claiming that the case of Korean mission provides fertile ground for mission studies, Kirsteen Kim summarises its characteristics as follows: missionary resources both of men and money, mission from the East, mission-motivated Christianity, a singular history of mission illuminating the issues of mission and nationalism as well as mission and migration, and Korean theology of mission associated with pneumatology, theology of prosperity, political theology, and self-sacrifice. Todd M. Johnson addresses the question of the mutual interaction between Korean Christianity and global Christianity and insists that five identifiable areas of intersection exist between them: divisions in denominations, the global diaspora, missionaries sent around the world, indigenous theology, and cooperation between churches. Among other things, he suggests that the experience of Korean Christianity that lives in a multi-religious society can be conducive to the development of global Christianity, which also faces the same challenge. An expert on Korean mission statistics, Steve Sang-cheol Moon concentrates on educational mission, which is one of the major areas of Korean mission. The results of case studies covering six different mission fields – Mongolia, Bangladesh, Nepal, Indonesia, Cambodia, and Cameroon – reveal that, in spite of problems, the evaluation of the performance level of mission schools is overall positive and that it is the time to share the accumulated knowledge and know-how for the development of educational mission and to improve organisational learning. In contrast to the theory of European exceptionalism, Andy Hartopp applies the theory of secularisation, together with the problems accompanying it, such as privatisation and pluralisation, to the Korean society, a developed and secularised Asian country. For the authentic future of Korean Christianity, he advises that the Korean church is supposed to think biblically, to demonstrate their faith in Christ in action, and to proclaim the gospel to the world. It is against this historical backdrop that Wonsuk Ma chooses the issue of global mission leadership in this new millennium as the focus of his chapter. In fact, considering how the rise of the Korean missionary movement overlapped with the emergence of southern Christianity, he suggests that the Korean church is one of the important mission forces upon whose shoulder is laid the responsibility of world mission.

All in all, what the authors uphold in this book can be summarised as follows: the indefatigable spirit of mission, the ambivalent influence of church growth on mission, the polarisation of missional thought and

practice, and the missionary malaise from which Korean mission has neither been exempted. The dramatic and tumultuous history of Korean Christianity, however, can be seen as a long-term learning process through which the Korean church came to be a mature church and responsible mission force. In a sense, the Korean church, which arrived as one of the latest participants in the history of church and mission, can be likened to a worker invited to the vineyard in the eleventh hour (Mt. 20:1-16). In a sense, the history of the Korean church fleshed out the saying of Jesus that 'the last will be the first, and the first will be the last'. Yes, it was a history full of grace and thanksgiving. Indeed, the world churches, even the world, did not hesitate to appreciate the being and doings of the Korean church in mission over the last hundred years. Nowadays, however, the renowned Korean church suffers the decline of church and mission on the one hand and the defamation regarding church life and mission on the other. If the question of the Korean church a century ago was how the last would be the first, now it is how the first can continue to be the first, being faithful to the Greatest Commission of our Lord Jesus Christ, until he comes again. Come, Lord! Maranatha.

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Once considered as a Cinderella in church growth and mission in the post-Edinburgh Conference era, the Korean church is given its due in this book. As a guide to Korean Christianity, it contains more than thirty chapters, written by historians, missiologists, sociologists, mission practitioners, pastors, and church leaders. They come from a wide range of church traditions, and also from within and without South Korea. This volume assesses the legacy and place of Korean Christianity and its mission, provides insightful and self-critical accounts in topics ranging from theories, policies, practices, and prospects, and offers a useful overview of how the Korean church grew into a missionary church. As a non-western major mission force, it has been equipping itself and others for service by broadening the understanding of God's mission throughout the turbulent years of imperialism, post-colonialism and globalisation. The book, concluding with reflections on the future challenges and possibilities, is intended as an important gift to the Korean church and to world Christianity.

*"...excellent...and one of the most important of the Series: assuming a holistic definition of mission, it provides a panoramic view of the Korean missionary movement, in historical, missiological, and practical perspectives. Authors from multiple ecclesial traditions bring wide-ranging scholarship and experience... I highly recommend...and will use it in my classes."*

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*'...the breadth of the studies found in the book is astonishing, and there has been no resource of this magnitude in authors, themes, and perspectives'.*

Jung Woon Suh (from Foreword 1)

*'For now, it is enough to say that the Korean churches and their missionaries are God's instruments "for such a time as this".'*

Jonathan J. Bonk (from Foreword 2)

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