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Towards an Understanding of Korean Protestantism:

The Formation of Christian-Oriented Sects, Cults, and Anti-Cult Movements

in Contemporary Korea

by

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Abstract

By looking at the typology of church, sect, and cult, this research investigates the belief system of Korean Protestantism and its organizational variations. First, Korean Protestantism displays exclusive cultural and social attitudes compared with other Korean religious traditions. A heterodox infusion of religion in the Korean tradition began with the introduction of Roman Catholicism in the 19th century. It was Protestantism, however, which shook the traditional religious culture to its core by creating strong religious boundaries. Second, in spite of its relatively short history, Korean Protestantism took root in a non-Western culture to shape it in ways that are without parallel in Korean history. In the process, it developed a far more uniform conservative religious ethos than is found in the West. Third, Korean Protestantism gave birth to various dissident new religious bodies in the form of Christian-oriented sects and cults. Although most of these new religious groups originated within this conservative religious milieu, they vary considerably. These range from new and innovative movements in high tension with the surrounding society to others with relatively little difference in terms of traditional Christianity. Lastly, the Christian anti-cult movement, as one notable response to these new religions, seeks to amplify the exclusive tendencies of Korean Protestantism. It can be argued, therefore, that Korean "Christian fundamentalism" represents a specific development of Protestantism which must be understood in the context of a complex historical process involving multiple inter-cultural exchanges. It is these exchanges and the resulting culture of Korean Protestantism that this dissertation seeks to explore.

- For a key to the Romanization of Korean words, see Appendix A.

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Chapter One

Introduction

1. The Objective of This Research

The sociology of knowledge provides an analytic framework for the study of religion which accounts for the social formation of knowledge and its mobilization. The proposition that religion is a social phenomenon**,** constructing a reality**,** implies a certain relationship between knowledge and reality. Whether or not a religion is conventional, it moves in a cycle that creates and maintains its worldview through interaction with society. In keeping with the diversity that defines "religious studies," the sociology of knowledge offers an interdisciplinary way of explaining how religions construct their worlds and maintain their unique boundaries.

The contention that knowledge can lead to (or produce) action can be applied to the study of religion as a part of social and cultural phenomenon. Thought and action may be distinguished but remain mutually intertwined and formed, offering different worldviews and different forms of knowledge (Mannheim 1936, 266; Stark 2003, 2). Similarly, religions arise and develop through mythmaking and doctrinal refinement in the process of social construction. Although myth and doctrine may be entangled in a particular religion, they can also be manifested in two distinct types of religiosity: mythmaking-oriented new religions and doctrine-oriented conventional religions. While new religious groups tend to generate new cosmologies as part of mythmaking, conventional religions often regard their belief systems as taken-for-granted and maintain them at all costs.

These two religious patterns are typically presented as the dichotomy of "orthodoxy and heresy," revealing their distinctive features. Whether in science or in religion, "orthodoxy" seeks to preserve its system of knowledge while "heresy" generates unconventional ideas. As the philosopher of science Karl Popper argues, "orthodoxy is the death of knowledge, since the growth of knowledge depends entirely on the existence of disagreements" (Popper 1997, 34). Although orthodoxy tends to foster a conventional wisdom that precludes new ideas, history shows that the clash of different cultures leads inevitably to the birth of new civilizations (Popper 1997, 38). Consequently, the controversy of orthodoxy and heresy is not simply focused on a problem of truth and falsity, but is utilized to construct and legitimize boundaries in a universe comprised of competing belief systems and theories. Popular phrases such as "clash of civilizations" (Huntington 1996) "culture wars" (Hunter 1991) and "cosmic war" (Juergensmeyer 2003) point to the persistence of ideological, political, and religious differences in our world, which give rise to new modes of thought and action. On the level of religious movements and institutions, they can develop into particular forms of groups which can be classified as church, sect, and cult-type religions (Merton 1967, 526). According to the theory of the social construction of reality, any religious group is a specified community that maintains a plausibility structure, a schema that makes the world appear believable or real (Berger and Luckmann 1966, 46). As history demonstrates, religious worldviews are constantly transformed; the process of constructing and deconstructing plausibility structures is ongoing (Merton 1968, 524). Thus, all religious groups are associated with competition and require successive generations to construct and maintain their

plausibility structures. From the perspective of the sociology of knowledge, any religious truth claim can be understood as “socially accountable” or historically and socially conditioned (Manheim 1936, 288; Merton 1968, 513-514).

The formation and development of Korean Protestantism provides an example of this transformation of thought and action within a non-Western context, and therefore offers a significant testing ground for research. On the one hand, Korean Protestantism underscores how a conservative or fundamentalist orientation can shape religious characters in a non-Western society. It was in a leading position culturally and socially to benefit from modernized Western civilization. Moreover, its militant proselytizing and social exclusiveness created a new type of religious landscape where the boundaries of religious groups became well defined. The propagation of a conservative American Protestantism fostered the establishment of strong group identity and commitment, creating exclusive social attitudes that made this religion a major social force. On the other hand, as the history of Korea demonstrates, religions constantly interact with each other, either by adopting other religious and cultural elements as their own or by adapting themselves to cultural and social norms. Christian-oriented sects and cults owed their origins to this Korean culture and became a significant culture rather than an isolated or marginal social reality.

These two types of religiosity in the Protestant tradition had historical and cultural consequences, seen especially in the production of a distinctive culture of Protestantism. First, Korean Protestantism went through the process of a “doctrinal reinforcement” heavily influenced by Western Christianity, particularly American

Protestantism. As cultural diffusion and contact were made through selective accommodation and transformation, Korean Protestantism stimulated Korean theistic conceptions of religion, produced the most exclusive religious symbolic system in the country, and became a reservoir of religious conservatism. In the religiously plural situation of Korea, conservative Protestantism provides a significant example of what is called "Protestant fundamentalism." This phenomenon supports Rodney Stark's contention that "[o]nly monotheism can generate the level of commitment to a particular faith sufficient to mobilize the rank and file to engage in missionizing activities" (Stark 2006, 13). Korean Protestantism achieved its goal by becoming the second largest religion in Korea, following Buddhism. Once it established a bridgehead in a non-Christian world, it attempted to annihilate traditional Korean religions as well as liberal Christianity. Moreover, Korean Protestantism maintained a typical monotheistic agenda such that "competition within or among monotheistic faiths can result in strengthening each" (Stark 2006, 33). It monotheistic beliefs were competitive within or among Christian groups. This religious tendency can be called a pursuit towards orthodoxy, although its specific tenets are historically and socially produced.

Second, as the history of religion demonstrates, new types of religions arose from the "genesis of new mythology." Before the coming of Christianity to Korea, there were a wide range of religious phenomena, from Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism to other folk religions. Due to their diverse religious sources, or cultic milieus, Christian-oriented new religions not only appropriated and adopted the traditional Christian worldview, but also crossed the boundaries of Christian tradition, creating new belief

systems. Within Christian circles even a literal understanding of the Bible can create a new mythology. As an attribute of literal reading, a morphological and figurative interpretation of Scripture gives birth to new religions. Reflecting varying degrees of mythological innovation, a wide range of sectarian and cultic religious groups appeared.

Lastly, in all these aspects of Korean Protestantism, Protestant fundamentalism occupies the center of the discourses and rhetoric of religious conflicts. Operating out of conservative circumstances, Christian-oriented religious groups tend to be the targets of anti-cult movements, practically, going far beyond this conceptual boundary to reach any type of religion that threatens their belief system. Due to their competing characters in the Christian market, Christian sects and cults have been the most explicit targets. This phenomenon of competition among religious individuals and groups is a new version of traditional anti-heresy movements. While anti-heresy movements are the expression of conflicts among dissident groups within a specific religious tradition, anti-cult movements are a cognitive expansion of past anti-heresy movements in a religiously plural society. Consequently, their two constructions create two different types of religious milieu: a cultic milieu and an anti-cultic milieu. While cults (new religions) have to defend themselves against outside attacks to reinforce internal solidarity, Christian anti-cult movements are a way of countering new religious groups that have different belief systems and worldviews.

All these features of religious groups explained the dynamic features of various groups and beliefs in the Protestant tradition: the establishment of Korean Protestantism, the rise of new religious groups, and their mutual competition and conflicts. Therefore, as

long as dissident groups have opportunities to flourish in society, the ongoing construction and deconstruction of religious phenomena as social interactions will remain paramount.

2. Research Methods

Two religious patterns—mythmaking-oriented new religions and doctrine-oriented conventional religions—have drawn scholarly attentions, which are reflected in the concepts of orthodoxy and heresy (or heterodoxy). John Henderson's work (1998) offers a comparative and comprehensive perspective about orthodoxy and heresy. Lester Kurtz (1986) concentrates on Roman Catholic attitudes and modernist movements in the church, explaining the importance of the interactions of different belief systems. Furthermore, Thomas Lessl suggests these concepts as a heuristic device for explaining deviant scientific approaches in science beyond their theological connotations (1988).

In religio-pluralistic societies, where new religious movements proliferate, religious counter-movements have been an inescapable phenomenon (Chryssides, 1999; Melton, 1999; Usarski, 1999). Other important scholars, such as Anson Shupe and David Bromley, have contributed to a new awareness of anti-cult movements as a legitimate field of research (Shupe, Bromley, and Oliver, 1984; Shupe and Bromley, 1985). Building on this important work, a few scholars have also begun to study Christian (or religious) responses to new religious groups (Hexham and Poewe 1987; Hexham 1992, Saliba 1981; 1999; Cowan 1999; 2003). This emerging research suggests a symbiotic relationship between movements and counter-movements, one that explains two different

types of social reactions.

When this Western scholarship is applied to the Korean context, a far more balanced work is required for understanding Korean religion in general and Korean Protestantism in particular. First, although there are a plethora of studies on the phenomenal growth of Korean Protestantism, research on its belief systems and social relationships is rare (Kang Incheol 1996; Kang Wi Jo 1997). Given that Korean Christianity plays a significant role in shaping religious culture and social relations, much can be gained by looking at Protestantism's contribution to these dynamics.

Second, although there have been many new religious movements during the last two centuries in Korea, most research has been concentrated on non-Christian-oriented groups (Kim Seongrye et al. 1999, 209-243). Moreover, while studies of Christian-oriented sects and cults in Korea exist, they have been conducted mainly by anti-cultists (Moos 1964; 1967; Noh Gilmyeong 1996; Choe Junghyeon 1999; Hwang Pilho 2000).[1]

Lastly, Christian responses to new religious movements have drawn virtually no scholarly attention in Korea. In a society where Christian reactions to new religions are predominant, it is surprising that anti-cult literature has not been treated as a subject of scholarly concern. This research on cults, sects, and anti-cult movements aims to address this deficiency, thereby providing a far more balanced view of Korean Protestantism.

Considering the Korean context, this research looks at the Protestant discourses centered on Christian-oriented sects, cults, and anti-cult movements from historical and

[1] What needs to be paid attention to here is the book *Hanguk Sinjongyowa Geurisdogyo* (Korean New Religions and Christianity), which traces Christian attempts to dialogue with new religions. However, it deals mainly with non-Christian new religions such as the Heavenly Way Religion, Dajonggyo, and Won Buddhism, even though the Unification Church, a Christian-oriented new religion, is mentioned in the text (Kim Seunghye et al. 2002).

sociological perspectives. Since this religious phenomenon is a cultural product in Korean society, it has historical and sociological consequences. The Sociologist Peter Berger's sociological approach and subsequent research by other scholars offer accounts of how religious beliefs and practices are formed and constructed in society. The sociology of knowledge provides the interrelationship between religious beliefs (knowledge) and practices (action). In this interaction, the patterns of myth-oriented and doctrine-oriented religions are embodied as religious communities (movements or institutions).[2]

Korean Christianity was contextualized in a non-Western setting, one which generated many new religions. Each of these new religions consequently exhibited distinctive relationships between religion and society. Religious communities draw upon a myriad of sources within a specific society in order to express their particular beliefs and practices. From a micro-sociological perspective, a mutual interaction between religious groups is intensified through group identity process or cognitive praxis. Ron Eyerman and Andrew Jamison call these interactions between movements "cognitive praxis," that is, "what distinguish one movement from another" which forms through "knowledge interests" (Eyerman and Jamison 1991, 54, 62). The development of Korean Protestantism, the rise of new religions, and their relationship was shaped through this cognitive praxis which accompanied social and cultural factors in Korea. In other words,

[2] Religious realities, as Ninian Smart has asserted, are composed of six dimensions: experiential, mythic, doctrinal, ethical, ritual, and social (Smart 1983). Each dimension is interrelated in a social setting, framing a unique worldview. Religious experiences are expressed in the form of myth, and are patterned through rituals; doctrines give a logically coherent structure; these all invite ethical practice in a society. Among them myth and doctrinal dimensions play important roles, distinguishing new religions from conventional religions.

Korean Protestantism was specified through their group interests and their interactions with social environments. Thus, the process of cognitive praxis reflects the formation of cognitive territory between movements. They construct not only themselves, but also others, each of which generates a new kind of knowledge (Eyerman and Jamison 1991, 55, 59).

Christian-oriented sects, cults, and anti-cult movements are products of Korean culture and society, formed through historical and cultural interactions. In other worlds, two religious patterns of mythmaking and doctrinal refinement in the Korean context were represented through the establishment of Korean conservative Protestantism and the rise of new sectarian and cultic groups, and their mutual interactions.

3. Use of Sources and Limitations Encountered

This research deals mainly with the historical and cultural aspects of the subject matter which analyzes and interprets data derived from books, life histories, interviews, and internet resources. It has a cyclical sequence, moving backward and forward and collecting new data and gaining new insight (Newman 1991, 331). With respect to the collection of sources, this dissertation is focused on three field trips: May to August 2000, May to August 2002, and May to August 2004. This field work involved a process of social construction.

While collecting historical sources was relatively easy, access to the sources of new religious groups produced two different responses. They were ceaselessly aware of anti-cultists. Some groups were supportive in interviews and in exposing their primary

sources, which others were extremely cautious. It was, however, relatively easy to obtain anti-cult literature. This phenomenon demonstrates not only the tension of the religious milieu, but also reflects the religious situation. Given the sensitivity of dealing with this subject matter, the following research does not take any theological or reductionist position in order to avoid a value-ridden approach; instead it adopts a historical and sociological approach which maintains a critical distance from the subject matter and makes no judgments about the truth of religious claims. First, this research analyzes the sources used by missionaries and Korean writers for understanding the formation of Korean Protestant fundamentalism. Second, in order to be as objective as possible, non-scholarly secondary sources on sectarian and cultic groups will be removed, even though they offer some valuable information about new religious groups. Instead, the sources produced by groups themselves and by scholars will be utilized for understanding new religious groups. Finally, anti-cult works will be treated as primary sources for explaining Christian fundamentalist responses to their target religions.

With respect to subject matter, this research is limited to the formation of conservative Protestantism, and Christian-oriented sectarian and cultic groups as the opposite side of the Korean Protestant tradition. Although liberal Christian churches and individuals play a significant role in the terrain of Protestantism, they are not a major social force in size. The selection of sectarian and cultic groups in the research is confined to those that represent typical sectarian and cultic groups in the Korean context.

4. Overview of Chapters

This research project demonstrates how Korean Protestantism developed and functions in a non-Western society, and discusses how Korean fundamentalism flourished to become a reservoir of sectarian and cultic movements. It comprises four major parts: a) theoretical and typological analyses of religion, b) the formation of Protestant fundamentalism, c) the role of sects, cults, and anti-cult groups in society, and d) their relationship to the Korean Protestant tradition.

Chapter two discusses the social construction of reality theory with particular attention to the mythmaking process and doctrinal refinement of religion. Religious subjects build their symbolic worlds and develop their belief systems within specific frameworks of socially constructed realities. While dissident individuals and groups tend to create new mythologies, conventional religions tend to reinforce their doctrines, which can be typically presented as the proactive and reactive features of dogmatic fundamentalism. This prototypical form, which appeared as orthodoxy and heresy in early Christianity, can be applied to non-Western Christian traditions. From a sociological perspective, these two types of religious knowledge can develop into movements and institutions. To explain this development, the typology of church, sect, and cult is applied.

Chapter three presents the religious terrain in Korea, with an articulation of the social and cultural status of Korean religions and the way Christianity and other religious traditions maintained their belief systems. In this setting, the typology of church, sect, and cult helps to explain the diverse organizational structure of religions in Korea. The

history of Korean religions exhibits the development of religion from a relatively undifferentiated status to a differentiated one. The traditional landscape of Korean religion consisted of the church type, the Confucianism sect type, Buddhism, and Shamanism. The rise of revitalization movements stimulated the appearance of cult-type new religions that had different beliefs and practices from traditional religions in Korea. When Korean religions were open to free competition in the religious market, the religious situation of Korea tended to resemble North America and can be identified as denominationalism. Therefore, Buddhism and Christianity can be classified as different types of denominations. These can be identified according to the degree of tension or social acceptance each exhibits. The higher the tension of religions with their social environment the more explicit the organizational boundaries become. Thus, Korean Protestantism exhibits a relatively higher tension with its social environment. With its theologically and culturally exclusive orientation, conservative Protestantism in Korea gives rise to the sectarian and cultic groups with a strong group identity. Seen in this way the Korean Protestant tradition display a strong group identity, comparable to a Buddhist church and a Buddhist sect.

Chapter four surveys the formation of Christian monotheism in Korea, the contextualization of Christian beliefs in a non-Christian society, and the formation of Korean Christian orthodoxy. In terms of proselytizing, Protestantism proved to be the most successful religion in Korea. Although Christianity began as a tiny foreign (or imported) cult, it soon became established as a major religious force in a non-Western and Asian context. The Christian monotheistic worldview was a major factor in its

phenomenal growth. What is more, the expansion of Christianity led to the systematic establishment of Christian beliefs and practices among Korean believers. As a result, it maintained an exclusive belief system towards society that promoted its conservative and fundamentalist tendencies. This characteristic appeared as an anti-syncretistic tendency that purported to promote a pure belief system which rejected and denied any permeation of heterodox beliefs and practices, although they were the products of a certain stage of religious development. This anti-syncretistic attitude practically became the hallmark of conservative and fundamentalist religion.

Chapter five focuses on how ideas about individual salvation become proactive reactions against dissident beliefs. Belief systems are not separated from their religious practices because systems of belief are always concerned with social relations (Merton 1968, 556). In other words, their anti-communist and anti-liberal attitudes were the consequences of those beliefs. Therefore, under the banner of Christian orthodoxy, they exposed schismatic tendencies and, at the same time, emphasized church unity in order to confront secular and dissident Christian liberalism. Historically, conservative Korean Protestantism showed these characteristics. The pursuit of purported “Christian orthodoxy” was an expression of exclusive tendencies by the anti-cult movements.

In Chapter six, the rise of new religions and their mythological renovation will be illuminated as the counterpart of doctrine-oriented Christianity in Korea. Although many aspects of their appearance can be discussed, mythmaking is one of most significant factors in the creation of new religions. First, the religious environment provided a wide range of religious resources which can be called a “cultic milieu” (Campbell 1971).

Christian-oriented new religions were influenced by circumstances. According to the degree of social tension, new religious groups are categorized as Christian sects or cults. Since this categorization depends on its ideal type, each group can be switched to another category. For example, a group considered a cult can move towards a sectarian group; a sectarian group can be transformed into a church-type religion. Christian-oriented new religious groups in Korea followed this pattern. The innovation of belief and practice for the genesis and development of new religions played a core role in the religious transformation that can be called a mythological turn from traditional Christianity. Because of their new and innovative nature, these sectarian and cultic groups became the continual targets of criticism and attack by mainstream Christian individual groups.

Chapter seven addresses the symbiotic relationship between conservative mainstream Protestant churches and Christian-oriented sects and cults. Those groups identified as “deviant” by their critics (because of their new features) drew counter responses from conventional Protestantism. In fact, there is a historical and theological continuity to these responses, which is the main argument of chapter five. Here the characteristics of the Korean anti-cult movement are shown to be a significant Christian response to cults and other religions. Thus, anti-cult movements are an expression of the conservative ethos of established churches. Anything threatening their plausibility structures becomes the target of attack. This phenomenon demonstrates the conservative nature of Korean Protestant culture. Even though a mainstream religious organization, it brought the tendency of cultural intolerance and theological exclusiveness to Korean religion. This religious culture produces a perpetual manufacturing of sects and cults: in

turn, the appearance of sectarian and cultic groups confers legitimacy on religious conflicts created in response to “cults” and “sects.” Therefore, sects, cults, and anti-cult movements make significant contributions to Korean Protestant identity.

The final chapter highlights the key points raised by this investigation of Christian sects, cults, and anti-cultism in Korean Protestant tradition, and concludes with some thoughts about the challenges of engaging in historical and sociological analyses. Overall, this research project addresses the formation of religious knowledge and its social role in the Korean setting.

Chapter Two

The Social Construction of Church, Sect, and Cult

In this chapter the theory of the social construction of reality will be adopted as an analytic tool for understanding myth-oriented and doctrine-oriented religions. All religious beliefs and practices are produced in conformity with other social realities. While conventional religions in a given society tend to maintain traditional mythological accounts and doctrinal refinements, new religions produce new worldviews with the creation of new mythologies. They all have historical and social consequences reflecting the procedures of religious developments. As long as a religious group maintains a particular belief, it can be sustained. Therefore, myth and doctrine, which are perceived as realities of knowledge, have to be embodied in movements and institutions. Concerns about orthodoxy and heresy show that religious knowledge is crystallized in relation to group conflict and conformity. From a sociological vantage point, this issue can be understood in terms of church, sect, and cult, which are ideal types for classifying religious beliefs and practices.

1. The Construction and Deconstruction of Religious Realities

In the sequence of the rise and fall of religion, all religious realities are in the mode of construction and deconstruction. The construction of one religious reality is accompanied by the deconstruction of another religious reality.

1.1. The Role of Myth and Doctrine in Religion

According to Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, the sociology of knowledge "must concern itself with everything that passes for 'knowledge' in society" (Berger and Luckmann 1967, 15-15; see also Merton 1968, 525). For Berger and Luckmann, society is a human creation, an objective reality, and each human being a social product (Berger and Luckmann 1966, 61). Berger develops this thesis further. For Berger, internalization, externalization, and objectification are the major processes that form a society**:** a reality is externalized through human activities; objectified through humans sharing it; and internalized through human appropriation of it (Berger 1967, 4). This world-building process differs from nature in that a constructed world is called "culture." For Berger, culture is "an ordering of experience" (Berger 1967, 19). Berger developed the concept "nomos" (order) from Mircea Eliade's "cosmos" (Berger 1967, 190, n, 32, 34; Berger 1969, 67). Following Eliade, who argued that humans try to get out of "chaos" and dwell in "cosmos" (see Eliade 1969 [1952], 37-38), Berger sees the world-building enterprise as an "ordering, or nomizing activity" (Berger 1967, 19).

For Berger, however, a cultural formation or a world-construction process is not permanently fixed. Its constructions are "inherently precarious and predestined to change" (Berger 1967, 6). Therefore, because of the precariousness of reality, the process of world-construction necessarily accompanies world-maintenance activities. Berger formulates the following proposition: "Worlds are socially constructed and socially maintained" (Berger 1967, 45). For the continuing existence of a world, a social base is required, a "plausibility structure" (Berger 1967, 45), that is, "the plausibility or

believability of the worldview" (Roberts 1984, 209). If this plausibility structure suffers from sufficient strain, it may be destroyed. In order to maintain a reality, we must maintain "an appropriate plausibility structure" (Berger 1967, 48).

Religions reflect these constructed plausibility structures, which attempt to maintain perfect worlds or "symbolic universes" for their religious adherents. According to Berger and Luckmann, the term "symbolic universe" is "conceived of as the matrix of *all* socially objectivated and subjectively real meaning; the entire historic society and the entire biography of the individual are seen as events taking place within this universe" (Berger and Luckmann 1967, 96). Symbolic universes are not a reality independent from society and history, but social products within history. Every religion is equipped with its symbolic apparatus which leads to different worldviews and is accelerated when tensions among religions increase. When a symbolic universe confronts another symbolic universe, they will both "develop conceptual machineries designed to maintain their respective universe" (Berger and Luckmann 1967, 109). Thus, mythology comprises "the naïve level of the symbolic universe" for its maintenance (Berger and Luckmann 1967, 110) and is intensified by the mutual interaction of other factors, such as theology, philosophy, and science.

According to the sociology of knowledge, the processes of mythmaking and doctrinal refinement are part of this social construction of reality. Although a religious worldview can be constituted by various factors, mythological imagination and doctrinal refinement are likely the most significant constituents of any religion.

Myth can head in a variety of directions. When a religion seeks a consistent and coherent way of thinking, it may produce a series of doctrines. Although myths may contain doctrines and ideological statements, they often embody much more than these things. Doctrines are the systematic and rational statements of myths. Doctrines, however, do not simply evolve from myths; rather, each interacts with the other. Myth and doctrine are two sides of the same coin. Human experience is expressed in the form of myth; myth provides humans with the ideas of cosmogony and cosmology through which the origin and formation of humans and the world are explained; and doctrinal pursuit is the logical embodiment of mythical accounts.

In fact, religious texts, from the Judaic and Christian scriptures to the Islamic Qur'an and Buddhist *sutras*, contain both mythological and doctrinal accounts. Scriptures themselves are produced by the interaction of beliefs and practices, and standardized canons or carefully selected texts function to identify specific religions. In the case of Buddhism, the selection of various kinds of sutras distinguishes one specific Mahayana sect from others (Smith 1993, 6). Thus, in this scheme, doctrines are a "cognitive resource" that allows people "to integrate their experiences and mythologies into a living community" (Hexham and Poewe 1997, 121). Creeds, confessions, and repeated formulae can be the source of doctrines in which theology makes a contribution to refining the mythology.

The relationship between myth and doctrine can be specified more explicitly in the Christian tradition, because mythological accounts and doctrinal statements can be distinguished but are not separable. The mythological figure is Jesus Christ as Messiah

(or the Christ) who plays a saving role and, thus, most biblical accounts are oriented towards him, and eventually, scattered stories, parables, and doctrinal statements in the Bible are incorporated into a mythological scheme about his life and teachings, a *kerygma* which contained the essential message of Christianity. Because all accounts are influenced by the *Zeitgeist,* the New Testament, for example, was far from being a pure description of Jesus, and had to confront Judaism, paganism, and deviant tendencies within itself (Dulles, 1999, 1). Passages of the Hebrew Bible, such as Isaiah 53 and Zechariah 11 and 12, were utilized by early Christians to explain the Passion of the Christ, even though these texts were not considered to be messianic passages by Jews themselves (Dulles 1999, 4). In the four gospels, the theme of Christ's Passion was explained apologetically. In fact, Jesus himself was involved in the solidification of the Hebrew Bible for his own purpose. In his arguments on the Law given to Moses by God in chapter five of Matthew's Gospel, for example, his radical interpretation is indicated as "authoritative," and his interpretation of the Law seems to be "the Law itself" (Ehrman 2005, 30). Furthermore, he justified his role through his own words, works and narratives including parables. Later, Jesus was interpreted by the early Christian community and individual authors in light of the Jewish Scriptures (Ehrman 2005, 24-25). Though it is not clear exactly what Hebrew texts the apostle Paul used, he tried to convince his hearers that his understanding of Jesus was in accordance with the Scriptures (Ehrman 2005, 21; RSV, 1 Cor. 15:3-4). More important, these statements were accepted as authoritative in the early Christian communities (Ehrman 2005, 22, 31).

Through this process, the New Testament narrowed down the possibility of various meanings that the original Hebrew Bible might invite in different contexts, which can be called the surplus of meaning. Such openness and closure are the fate of every text according to the degree of appropriation and adaptation by individuals and groups. Jaroslav Pelican indicates that Scripture, tradition, and creed are circular relations which sometimes lead to tensions (Pelikan 2003, 127). This circular relationship is essential for a specific organization, although the relationship may change in time and place. As a primal source, the Scripture played an important role not only as proof texts, but as foundations of doctrinal authority. As a core element of doctrines, a creed shows conceptual and consistent refinement through which the complicated stories and testimonies of the Bible are recapitulated in a set of propositions and in simplified story that conveys concise yet core beliefs (Johnson 2004, 54). They provide not only the so-called "authentic tradition" of the church, but also the standard of faith. Thus, the creeds function as cartography for knowing "where we are, and where we may be going" (Gaddis 1991, 102). This orientation offers the right path and direction toward which believers should follow, that is, what is called "orthodoxy."

In the process of mythmaking and doctrinal refinement religious realities are in flux, reflecting both social construction and deconstruction.

1.2. The Construction and Deconstruction of Religious Realities

Construction and deconstruction are modes that every religion encounters: one oriented towards the maintenance of traditional beliefs and practices, the other concerned with the

creation of new myths. It is not surprising that people living at a certain time and place promote a new type of worldview, so every religion endures the process of what can be called "demythicization." If an old myth does not properly serve human religious needs, an alternative myth can be produced (Eliade 1975, 111-113). Where demythicization occurs, the process of mythmaking accompanies it; thus the process of demythicization and mythmaking is a pattern presented in every religious arena. This dialectical relationship is generated in the continuity of human imagination through the interaction of cooperation, competition, and struggle with its social environment.

Therefore, demythicization is not a simple rejection of conventional myths, but should be regarded as part of the process of mythmaking. Because no culture is born from nothing, a mythological account is a refinement of an old myth in a conventional way, or a radical departure from it. That a myth is demythicized or newly generated is based on the fact that certain people or communities live by it; one may refer in this connection to a "mythic community." A mythic community is one in which myths are shared and recited in association with certain beliefs and practices, one in which people enter into a meaningful way of life. The liveliness of myth is grounded on the performance of a particular mythic community. If a myth is "mummified in priestly wisdom," it loses its pragmatic character of faith and moral wisdom (Malinowski 1954, 101). Thus, a myth is alive when it functions as "a story with culturally formative power" (Hexham and Poewe 1997, 81). In other words, in Bronislaw Malinowski's parlance, a myth is "not merely a story told but a reality lived" (Malinowski 1954, 100). If a story evokes a sense of awe and sacredness, and gives meaning and direction to believers, it is

recognized as a myth, whether or not it is historical or fictional. First, on the individual level, an extraordinary experience can proceed into a mythmaking process if a person expresses her experience in narrative form and shares it with other people. Second, on the collective level mythological imagination serves the refinement of an old myth, or the creation of a new myth. While the refinement gives a communal dynamic to a mythic community, the newly generated myth tends to foster a radical departure and create a new religious body.

The origin and formation of Christianity followed the pattern of mythmaking and demythicization. Although Christianity began as a sectarian or cultic group in Judaic society, it made a gradual departure from that society to the Hellenized and Latinized worlds, where early Christianity was immersed in Near Eastern, Greco-Roman, and Jewish cultures (Scholl and White 1970, 21). Christians adapted prayers, scriptural lessons, and other ritual elements of Jewish traditions to their religious lives in the Greco-Roman world (Scholl and White 1970, 22; Foerster 1964, 22).

In this interaction, a mutual influence can be anticipated between Judaism and Christianity. As original users of traditional rituals, the Jewish attitude towards Christianity, for example, went in multifarious directions during the development of Christian and Judaic liturgies. On the one hand, the Jews condemned the appropriation of their own heritage and even reformulated potions of their liturgy to avoid duplication of either the spirit or the occasion for the parallel Christian use. On the other hand, a number of practices, such as singing psalms between Scripture lessons, probably came into Jewish ritual from Christian liturgy during the Middle Ages (Scholl and White 1970,

23).

Thus, the direction of religious adaptation is hard to predict, but it is possible to trace its orientation and construct its pattern of mutual interaction. With respect to the formation of the Christian Scripture, it began as oral traditions about Jesus' life and teachings and developed into textual forms. Christians appropriated the Hebrew Bible (or the Jewish Scripture) as the "Old" Testament in Christian perspectives whose uses were selective "in both content and method of interpretation" (Gamble 1993, 37). In this appropriation of ancient Judaism, the new religion did not escape from "allegorical and typological interpretations which were capable of eliciting specifically Christian meanings from the ancients," which allowed the Hebrew Scripture to radically leave its historical contexts and lead to different kinds of interpretation (Gamble 1993, 37).

When early Christianity was in a fluid situation, what made this appropriation significant was the role and function of Jesus as a mythological figure in Christian communities. The attribution of the title "messiah" or "Christ" to the historical Jesus gave the communities their legitimacy in making use of the Hebrew Bible. Once the new religion was established, however, Christian mythological accounts underwent a closure for meaning because communication needs a proper code for signification between a transmitter and a receiver. In the sense of a hermeneutical circle, a problem may occur when doctrines override the area of myth. Doctrine is a major factor in this fixing of meaning, which achieves the communication of meaning at the cost of the openness of mythological accounts. Doctrines as the rationalization of mythological thinking provide mythical texts with cognitive and logical coherence, and function as the boundary

maintenance for reinforcing a conventional logic or worldview. As a myth is regarded as fixed and unchangeable entity, alternatively propositional beliefs gain the ground of legitimacy on the claim of orthodoxy.

Contrary to traditional Christianity, Christian-oriented new religions form the other side of the religious spectrum in Christian culture. Once detached from their original contexts, religious texts can result in various understanding in terms of their reception by people or communities. When the texts leave their original time and place and are translated into different languages, more radical consequences can be expected. Under these conditions, a new religion may be produced with the combination of other mythological elements such as mythic figures, accounts, or texts. For example, no more than three hundreds ago, Korea was wholly separated from Christendom, but when Christianity was transplanted in Korean soil a new religious tradition was formed. The Unification Church in Korea became a child of that new religiosity, appropriating Christian culture as well as religious elements from the Korean tradition. The *Divine Principle* (*DP*) of the Unification Church followed a similar pattern to the early Christian churches, which appropriated the Hebrew Bible as the "Old Testament" alongside the "New Testament." As Christians see the "Old Testament" as a preliminary stage for salvation, Moonies look at the "New Testament" as God's preliminary fulfillment in the last days. Thus, the providence of God is understood through their "Completed Testament" (DP) as the final fulfillment of God's salvation. This typology offers the dispensational scheme of the Old-New-Completed Testament structure under the principle of restoration through indemnity. The *DP* as the core teachings of the

"Completed Testament," reveals God's ultimate plan which is consummated in the "True Parents" (Moon Sun Myung [Mun Seonmyeong] and his wife Han Hakja).

This typological paradigm is crystallized in the thought of the Messiah. According to the *DP*, the reference to the advent of the Messiah in the book of Revelation is newly reinterpreted as a mythical account in the age of the Completed Testament. Here we read:

> In the Old Testament age, the descendants of Abraham who upheld God's will and endured persecution in Egypt were the First Israel. The Christians, who were persecuted as heretics by the Jews as they honored the resurrected Jesus and carried on the providence of restoration, became the Second Israel. Christ at his return is likely to be similarly condemned as a heretic by the Christians of his time, in accordance with the prophecy that he will suffer and be rejected by his generation…Then the Korean people, who will attend the returning Christ and support him to complete the third chapter of God's providence, will become the Third Israel (H.S.A-U.W.C 2002, 399-400).

Thus, if the *DP* is regarded as only an elaborated catechism, this may neglect its key role in the formation of the Unification Church. Frank K. Flinn, a Catholic theologian, describes the *DP* as "the symbolic narrativity of the messianic story," that is, "a pattern or plot" (mythos) which has "a beginning, a middle, and an end" (Flinn 1981, 55).

Therefore, reading or reciting myths can add to the richness of a conventional religion, or lead to the birth of a new religion. In particular, from a perspective of new religion, mythmaking is the process of demythicization, deconstructing an old symbolic world and constructing a new symbolic world. The Unification Church shows that a radical departure from mainstream Christian Churches is made possible through mythmaking. Even in the Christian tradition, there are variations such as orthodox

fundamentalism and “deviant” sectarian groups, although these groups interpret the Bible in a fixed and propositional way. But considered as a literary text, the Bible has a literary richness that goes beyond a single meaning. It opens towards new interpretations. Stories themselves consist of many metaphorical expressions and reject a solely fixed interpretation. The appropriation of meaning continues to produce the richness of meaning in a mainline religious body and also goes beyond its boundaries. Since the new way of reading of the Bible and the creation of a new mythology can be innovative in its own perspective, the birth of a new religion is the inevitable consequence of a mythmaking world.

2. Different Worldviews and Religious Conflict

Constructions and deconstructions of religious realities lead to conflicts on the level of worldviews. Orthodoxy and heresy are the typical expressions of this fact. Both appear not only in religions but in scientific communities (Lessl 1988). Cult and anti-cult as modern terms have been typically used in public spheres which represent the conflicts of different groups. The conflicts between social groups do not simply follow the logic of physical forces, but are concerned with competing claims about ultimate reality. In this sense the history of Christian belief represents the crystallization process of religious discourse in which worldviews are embedded: from the European Middle Ages, when Christianity was dominant, to our postmodern world, where different religious groups exist side by side.

2.1. The Making of Orthodoxy and Heresy

Religious discourses are not limited to the realms of doctrinal and theological articulation but move into the social dimension where different worldviews and competition are displayed. In this process, a victorious group comes to the fore as a dominant religion, presenting itself as a reality based solely on authentic and pure truth, and a defeated group is defined by the winner.

The formation of orthodoxy in Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and Confucianism is "made, not born" (Henderson 1998, 39). Orthodoxy is not established from the beginning, but made in the process of the development of religions. John B. Henderson argues that the role of creeds and the relationship between orthodoxy and heresy can be understood in the following way:

> "The orthodox creeds and theological statements of early Christianity may be read as hidden heresiographies. The importance of creeds and theology in Christianity in turn illustrates the overriding concern with right belief in the Christian faith, which implies that wrong belief, heresy, is particularly objectionable. Christianity, the most creedal of all the great religions, was also arguably the most heresiographical (Henderson 1998, 10).

Thus, when we address orthodoxy, it has been through the construction of heresy, that is, heresiography. The heresiography is "the orthodox perception and interpretation" that is deeply related to the shaping of orthodoxy (Henderson 1998, 1). Through the formation of creeds and confessions for its doctrinal unity, orthodox Christianity attempts to block deviant paths that lead to heresy. For orthodoxy, heresy is a new breed, more precisely a hybrid that cannot be accepted by the orthodox. The word "heresy" already has a negative connotation in contrast to "orthodoxy." The dichotomy of "orthodoxy and

heresy," both essentialized categories, comes up repeatedly with the rise of many dissident groups. In actuality, if there were no orthodoxy there would be no heresy. The following quotation from Lester R. Kurtz properly indicates the role of heresy:

> Beliefs are most clearly and systematically articulated when the boundaries of what is true and acceptable are marked out through a systematic identification of what is false and unacceptable. What people do not believe is often more clearly defined than what they do believe, and it is through battles with heresies and heretics that orthodoxy is most sharply delineated (Kurtz 1986, 1).

Elaine Pagels, a scholar of the Gnostic gospels, states that "[i]t is the winners who write history—their way" (Pagels 1989, 142)[1]. Pagels goes on to suggest that "[i]f God is One, then there can be only one true church, and only one representative of the God in the community—the bishop" (Pagels 1989, 44). She argues that when Gnostics challenged the hierarchy of the early church, the concept of "one God" was combined with the concept "one bishop" (Pagels 1989, 34-35). This means that the conflict between orthodoxy and heresy was not simply a doctrinal one, but was extended to the political arena. For Pagels, the structure of "divine authority" is correlated with that of "human authority" (Pagels 1980, 44).

In fact, the history of Christianity has been preserved and managed by the representatives of orthodoxy, leaving the other side of early Christianity to be accused of heresy by the orthodox. A religious conflict reveals the social condition in which political and cultural agendas are involved. However, it was not a simple power game, but accompanied religious beliefs and practices, and logical speculations by which

[1] In a similar fashion, a feminist theologian wrote that "History was made and written by the 'winner': the oppressed and vanquished of the past do not have a 'written' history" (Schűssler Fiorenza 1985, 51).

individuals and groups competed with each other in theoretical and practical ways. It is true that power relations among churches produced competition and conflict, since the Church of Rome formed "the well-knit structure of ecclesiastical organization, was the center of the "orthodox movement," and became the anti-heretical majority, (Bauer 1979, 229-231).

However, the anti-heretical agenda of orthodoxy put forward by Pagels seems to be exaggerated. During the first Christian centuries, there was no central authority and doctrinal unity, with the result that religious discourses were open to the public (Riley 2003, 82). The influence of the Roman Church moved on to Corinth around the year 100, and reached Asia Minor, but "east of Phrygian Hierapolis we could hardly discern any traces of orthodoxy" (Bauer 1979, 229). Furthermore, the Catholic tradition and hierarchies hardly existed until around 200 C.E., and thus it was not until the fourth century that the empire under Constantine imposed its power on the church (Jenkins 2001, 42). A long time after the post-apostolic age, heretics still outnumbered consciously orthodox and anti-heretical Christians. In fact, tensions over heresy actually increased in Christian circles after the post-apostolic era (Bauer 1979, 231).

There are two main problems why heretical movements were not successful in the early Christian era (Jenkins 2001, 103-106; Stark 2006, 153). First, from a theoretical viewpoint the movements were so weak that they could not compete with the orthodox movement. Therefore as Pagels states, the Gnostics who wrote Gnostic gospels "did not regard themselves as 'heretics' and most of the texts "use Christian terminology, unmistakably related to a Jewish heritage" (Pagels 1989, xix). On the contrary, the

historian Philip Jenkins argues that "orthodox Christians at least believed that Jesus had lived and died in a real historical setting, and that it was possible to describe these events in objective terms," but, "[f]or the Gnostic, by contrast, Christ was not so much a historical personage as a reality within the believer" (Jenkins 2001, 103). Jenkins asserts that the Gnostics neglected the strength of the historical facts about Jesus. He goes on to hold that "the Gnostics had little regard for objective historical truth, their retellings of the story of Jesus claimed not a particle of historical authenticity" (Jenkins 2001, 104). Rodney Stark comments that as a result of relying on "intuition" and lacking "worldly referents," "Gnostics did not prevail, because they did not present nearly so plausible a faith, nor did they seem to understand how to create sturdy organizations" (Stark 2006, 153-154).

Second, in practical terms, Gnosticism failed to maintain its organization. Walter Bauer indicates that "[o]nly a few heresiarchs such as Marcion were able to draw together their followers throughout the world into an ecclesiastical structure" (Bauer 1979, 231). In Marcion's case, however, he rejected procreation, so that he paralyzed "the source of natural increase for his community" (Bauer 1979, 231). Competing with the Catholic Church in general, the Gnostic religion vanishes in history (Smoely 2006, 41). Stark draws a parallel between this heretical movement and today's New Age phenomenon, which cultivates individual opinions while remaining aloof from social movements (Stark 2006, 144-155; see also Stark and Finke 1997, 245).

These religious situations offer a prototype of the construction of orthodoxy and heresy. Although it is undeniable that church policy and the combination between

religion and state caused the disappearance of Gnosticism, in fact, it seems that different religious groups compete with each other by using many theories about religious beliefs and practices, or, more precisely, religious discourses. The survival of religious groups demonstrates that their theories of reality or worldviews are a lot more competitive than others.

2.2. The Making of Cults and Anti-Cult Movements

In the religio-plural society, the dialectics of mythmaking and doctrinal refinement have been developing into various types of religious organizations. In other words, as a cultural force, various kinds of religious beliefs and practices (or worldviews) have been generated, ranging from exclusive and dogmatic statements, through radical interreligious dialogue, to the creation of new religions. In this religious milieu, while dogmatic religions attempt to maintain their perceived core belief systems, dissident groups continuously appear in social spheres and want to obtain social legitimacy. The more innovative or deviant a new religion might be, the greater the social tension. To be accepted, deviant beliefs and behavior must cross the threshold of cultural resistance. In an extreme case, while anti-cult propaganda gains social supports, its target "cults" can go underground to hide their beliefs and practices (Baumgartner 1999, 5). Both sides—cult and anti-cult agents—pursue their own plausibility structures.

The differentiation of religious groups, and the resulting boundaries between them, are explicitly delineated in movements and counter movements. The sociologist Tahi L. Mottl views the "anti" movements of the 1970s as counter movements,

describing them as "a particular kind of protest movement which is a response to the social change advocated by an initial movement" (Mottl 1980, 620). Mottl's analysis applies to anti-cult movements, which respond to new religions. On the one hand, if a new religion perishes, the target of the anti-cult movement is gone. On the other hand, if the new religion thrives and acquires social acceptance, the legitimacy of the anti-movement gravely decreases (Shupe, Bromley, and Oliver 1984, 1). Thus, the anti-cult movement can exist according to the visibility of new religions and the degree of their social deviancy.

Anti-cult activists focus on the negative image of cult leaders, group structures, and conversion processes (in an anti-cultist's phrase, coercive persuasion or thought-reform processes). The thought-reform process is incorporated into the anti-cultists' brainwashing theory, from which deprogramming projects are derived. Because cult members are said to be manipulated and exploited by their leaders and members, it is believed that they need to be deprogrammed in order to dissociate themselves from their cults. These anti-cult movements, which burgeoned in the 1970s, were soon recognized as subject matter for research. Unlike the general study of new religious movements, however, research on the anti-cult movement has remained "sketchy at best" (Shupe and Bromley 1985, 59).

Moreover, the Christian anti-cult movement has received relatively little attention compared with the secular anti-cult movement. Only a few scholars have paid particular attention to the Christian responses to new religions (Lee 1989; Hexham 1992; Hexam and Poewe 1987; 1997; Saliba 1981; 1995; 1999; Cowan 1999; 2003). With the recent

evaluation of Christian responses, scholars have begun to make a distinction between secular anti-cult movements and Christian anti-cult movements (Cowan 1999; 2003; Chryssides 1999; Melton 2000). While the counter-responses of secular societies and mainstream denominations focus on the deviance by cults from secular order, evangelical (fundamentalist) groups regard new religions as a threat to "orthodox Christian theology" (Shupe and Bromley 1985, 61-62)[2]. The anti-cult movement is not based primarily on theological considerations; it prefers "the strategy of exposing alleged illegality and exploitation" in new religious movements (Beckford 1999, 105). The measuring principle is how much the target religion deviates from specific social norms. In contrast, the Christian anti-cult movement is deeply committed to a theological agenda, where the main concern is to eliminate dissident groups and convert their devotees to traditional Christianity.

However, the distinction between secular and Christian anti-cult movements is not clear-cut. Historically, anti-Catholicism, anti-Mormonism, and those who oppose Jehovah's Witnesses display these combined characteristics When Catholics flowed into the Protestant-dominated US, anti-Catholic sentiments developed. With the rise of Mormonism, the anti-Mormon crusade arose against it. The introduction into Western society of the Unification Church, which originated in the Far East, enlarged the scope and appeal of contemporary Christian responses (Downey 1996). In principle, the secular anti-cult and Christian anti-cult movements share a premise to protect conventional social norms or belief systems. Their negative perceptions of new religions

[2] The sociologist Jeffery Hadden distinguishes between anti-cult movements as secular phenomena and counter-cult movements as sectarian and theological phenomena (Hadden 2000). For a detailed distinction between anti-cult and counter-cult movements, see Cowan 1999.

were reinforced by tragic incidents such as the People's Temple, the Order of the Solar Temple, and the Branch Davidians. Furthermore, accounts of ex-members about specific groups can be fatal to them.

In particular, since the Christian-anti cult movement gains its legitimacy and strong support within the Christian community, its crusade against cults is not limited to social incidents and atrocity tales. As in the history of anti-heresy movements, the Christian anti-cult movement tends to be theologically driven, which makes permanent boundary markers between Christianity and cults. What makes them different is the fact that the modern religious situation is not only gradually becoming equal and democratic, but also the monopoly of specific religious systems is decreasing in increasingly multicultural and multi-religious societies.

Thus the transition toward using the label "cult" instead of the word "heresy" is a reflection of this religious pluralism. The monopolistic characteristics of the Christian anti-cult movement reveal the orientation of its plausibility structure, for which it attempts to build a staunchly symbolic world. All belief systems except its own are regarded as unacceptable. Walter Martin, the most renowned Christian anti-cultist, claimed that "ecumenism had become a deadly cancer, destroying what used to be healthy Christian churches and replacing them with mutant fellowships of 'new spirituality' that embrace pantheism, polytheism, goddess worship, new ageism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and agnosticism" (Martin 1997, 21). For him, Christian-oriented cults, along with other religions, were rejected as incompatible with a belief in "the inerrancy of Scripture" and so-called "Reformed theology" (Martin 1997, 18). Thus,

whenever anti-cult polemists have encountered worldviews differing from their own, they have been perpetually forced to create new enemies in order to build up their orthodox position in the Christian world.

Historically, the word ‘cult,’ derived from the Latin word *cultus*, simply meant a religion or a specific rite; anthropologists and sociologists are still using the term in this way. The first book that labeled specific religious groups in North America as cults was A. H. Barrington's *Anti-Christian Cults*, published in 1898 (Jenkins 2000, 49). By calling "Anti-Christian" three types of religions—Spiritualism, Theosophy, and Christian Science—Barrington discriminated them from Christianity, and declared people “to be comforted by the unreal in Spiritualism, to be mystified by the wonders of Theosophy, [and] to be captivated by the deceptive cures of Christian Science” (Barrington 1898, 22-23).

Barrington’s account forms an interpretative tradition in Christianity through which the social construction of cults passes on to the next generation. In the famous series of tracts, *The Fundamentals* (1910-15), Jehovah’s Witnesses, Mormons, and the adherents of Christian Science were denigrated as “anti-Scriptural, anti-Christian,” “counterfeits of Christianity,” and as having a “counterfeit Bible” (Moorehead 2000 [1917], 110; McNiece 2000 [1917], 135, 137). Another author who wrote about Christian Science used the word “cult” in reference to it at least four times (Wilson 2000 [1917], 151, 155,161). Van Baalen's *The Chaos of Cults* (1946) and Water Martin's *The Kingdom of Cults* (1997) designated the same group as ‘cults,’ and applied the term to other groups as well.

This interpretative tradition understands ‘cults’ from a specific Christian worldview. As Earl Lee indicates, because the agenda of the Christian anti-cult movement in this interpretative tradition is to identify theological differences between traditional Christian beliefs and those of ‘cults,’ their way of classifying religious movements does not change. In the contemporary sense, the objective of the Christian anti-cult movement is based on a fundamentalist agenda. In the early stages of a religion's development, cultural adaptation or adoption is a natural phenomenon. Once institutionalized, it is likely to claim that its own religion is the only authentic or pure one, and other religions are false or contaminated, so that for anti-cultists, the differences between their targets are insignificant. *The Fundamentals*, a classical example of modern Christian fundamentalism, shows that objects to which it is reacting encompass all the items opposed to its own belief system. The boundary line was sharpened with the rise of modernism, which denied traditional beliefs and gave birth to the acceptance of the theory of evolution and Christian liberalism. Some Christians reacted against social change as such, which has often been considered the enemy of Christian beliefs. In 1923, the Princeton theologian J. Gresham Machen succinctly expressed his concern about modernism and liberal theology by saying that “what the liberal theologian had retained after abandoning to the enemy one Christian doctrine after another is not Christianity at all, but a religion which is so entirely different from Christianity as to belong in a distinct category” (Machen 1923, 6-7). Machen built a symbolic world on such statements and his other sets of assumptions. His argument fits into the evangelical or fundamentalist agenda of anti-Cultism.

Therefore, there is a correlation between the Christian-anti cult movement and Christian fundamentalism. For fundamentalists, any synthetic process seems to be a threat to its own pure belief system. For the maintenance of their plausibility structure against alternative plausibility structures, the main strategies for maintaining their boundaries are fulfilled by attacking deviant individuals or groups. Christian anti-cult literature shows how religious beliefs can be diffused as a social discourse, which is part of the apologetic enterprise. Christian apologists not only defend and maintain a Christian worldview, but are also proactively involved in attacking any "deviant" worldview. Their various types of apologetics presuppose different belief systems which compete with and judge each other; it is a way of knowing "us" and "others," that is, distinguishing between people who share a particular universe and others who do not.

The Christian anti-cult movement, as the offensive mode of Christian apologetics, tends to "re-conquer society in the name of traditional religions," getting out of their defensive mode, which is apt to result in the social isolation of a religious ghetto (Berger 1992, 43; Stackhouse 2002, 115-116). This militant mode of cognitive praxis is thereby maintained: by attacking perceived enemies a group's identity is fulfilled. Hugo Meynell, who applies Konrad Lorenz's idea of human aggression or militant enthusiasm to Christian apologetics, explains that the expression of human militant enthusiasm evokes four basic elements: a group of people, a cause, a leader, and an enemy. First of all, the first three are illustrated by the Buddhist maxim: "To the Buddha for refuge I go; to the Dharma for refuge I go; to the Saṅgha for refuge I go" (Meynell 1994, 55-57) [3].

[3] In a similar manner, Karla Poewe traces a militant aspect of Nazism and its roots: "For those who need an image, one could characterize National Socialism as a Hydra, a multi-headed

The Christian anti-cult movement has all four components: the anti-cult activist as a leader; a Christian church as a bearer of truth; a cause in defending Christian truth; and an enemy in the cult under attack. Therefore, the cognitive praxis of the Christian anti-cult movement is facilitated by the four elements because its social construction is rooted in them.

All these movements demonstrate the process of how religious organizations arise and interact with their social environments. Therefore, they have been recognized as having a symbiosis with new religious movements (Shupe and Bromley 1985, 66-67). First, negative reactions to new religions represent social tension and conflict between religious groups and the surrounding environment. Second, accounts of ex-members can reinforce the negative image which provides the “evidence” that legitimates the anti-cult crusades. Reports by ex-members of religious groups can extend its “evil" image.” Third, those crusades can prolong and amplify the negative image of the new religions to create further social tensions.

3. The Formulation of Church, Sect, and Cult

The typology of church, sect, and cult encompass, in a more precise manner, the spectrum of religious organizations and, at the same time, highlight their social tension, if any, with a surrounding social environment.

The typology of “church-sect,” generated by the sociologists Max Weber (1864-

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serpent from Greek mythology. Its neck, so to speak, consists of three vertebrate: Volk, Volksgemeinschaft, and Führer. Its body was movement (Bewegung)” (Poewe 2006, 6). The National Socialist movement did have such elements as a group of people (or a community), a cause, a leader, and an enemy which created a movement.

1920) and Ernst Troeltsch (1865-1923), has been extended to that of "church-sect-cult." This typological approach is concerned with the social aspects of religious organizations, describing the spectrum of various kinds of churches and their responses to the world.

In the sociological process of Christianity, there appears the new type of the sect, alongside the church-type organization. While the "church" is concerned with conservation and conformity, accepts the secular norms, and dominates the masses, "sects" are comparatively small groups which seek personal inward perfection, and aim at a direct personal fellowship among their membership (Troeltsch [1912] 1992, 331). It was Richard Niebuhr who first saw the more dynamic features of major religious groups in America, especially the Protestant churches compared to the European situation. In the new world, religions tended to become sects but eventually turned into churches (Niebuhr 1957, 144-145). Through "compromise," in his view, sects begin to approach the church type and, in turn, the situation provides a new environment for the rise of new sects (Niebuhr 1957, 17-25). He saw that religions in the formation of their structure were not free from geographical and racial differences, nationalistic tendencies, and economic classes. For example, the Protestant churches of Europe—such as Methodism, Congregationalism, and Presbyterianism—all had to be adapted to a new world when they were brought to America. What Niebuhr found was the rise of denominationalism in the American setting, where the incessant influx of new immigrants, with their racial, social, and cultural features, stimulated radical change. Thus, when Niebuhr argues that "[t]he evil of denominationalism lies in the conditions which [make] the rise of sects desirable and necessary" (Niebuhr 1957, 21), his statement is not simply one with

theological implications, but rather implies the degree of religious and cultural adaptation of European religions to the new world. What he observed in denominationalism was the divided cultures and divisive interests of classes. This shows how religious groups can change their level of tension with society; hence "the repeated birth, transformation, and rebirth of sect movements" (Stark and Fink 2000, 154). In this sense, Niebuhr demonstrates the dynamic character of religious organization, paving the way for a more refined typology.

While Niebuhr's explanation of the church-sect typology through the dynamics of denominationalism is applicable in the North American context, his church-sect typology, including his concept of the denomination, does not allow for other types of religious groups which are different from those found in conventional Christian culture and tradition. This means that his typology is confined to Christian traditions and neglects dealing with new modes of religiosity. Another phenomenon in America was the cult. According to Charles Glock and Rodney Stark, cult movements "draw their inspiration from other than the primary religion of the culture" and "are not schismatic movements in the same sense as sects, whose concern is a purer form of the traditional faith" (Glock and Stark 1965, 245). In particular, there has been a shift in the sources of religion with the rise of new religious movements. They have new forms of beliefs that appear through cultural innovation and importation (Stark 1996, 438; Stark and Bainbridge 1979, 125). More importantly, "unlike sects, new religions cannot claim cultural continuity with conventional religious beliefs and practices" (Stark 1996, 438). For the distinction between sects and new religions, Stark suggests the word "cult" for a typological device.

Unlike churches and sects, the cults are religious movements that represent a new or different religious tradition because of their novel and innovative features (Stark 1996, 438). Using such an explanation, Stark and Bainbridge provide the clarified definition of church, sect, and cult in terms of deviance:

A *church* is a conventional religious organization; [a] *sect movement* is a deviant religious organization with traditional beliefs and practices; [a] *cult movement* is a deviant religious organization with novel beliefs and practices (Stark and Bainbridge 1987, 124).

The definition of "church-sect-cult" by Stark and Bainbridge explains the loci of the established churches, schismatic sects, and innovative cults. Since "*deviance* is departure from conventional social norms, it incurs "the imposition of extraordinary costs from those who maintain the culture," and exposes the degree of tension among religious groups and social environments because tension is a "manifestation of deviance" (Stark 1996, 435; Stark and Bainbridge 1987, 124). Accepting Benton Johnson's definition of church and sect: "[a] church is a religious group that accepts the social environment in which it exists and [a] sect is a religious group that rejects the social environment in which it exists" (Johnson 1963, 542), Stark (with Roger Finke) refines it more specifically: "churches are religious bodies in relatively lower tension with their surroundings"; while "sects are religious bodies in relatively higher tension with their surroundings" (Stark and Finke 2000, 143-144). For Stark, since tension is equivalent to sub-cultural deviance, a cult's degree of tension with its social environment is as high as that of a sect, and thus the distinction between cults and sects as deviant and

higher tension groups can be ignored as the recent publication of Rodney Stark and Roger Fink indicates (Stark and Finke 2000, 144).[4]

Stark's typology, with that of his colleagues, offers a working definition which considers not only internal organizational factors, but also the relationship between religious groups and social environments (Shupe and Bromley 1985, 60). Therefore, the concepts of "tension" and "deviance" that Stark and Bainbridge use are almost interchangeable (Stark and Bainbridge 1987, 127). First, if a religious group is deviant from a social norm, it may cause tension; second, this tension is caused not only by the religious group, but also by intolerant conventional society or mainstream religious organizations. Thus, the cause of tension is taken into consideration as a two-way street: "Sects (and cults) not only reject society; they, in turn, are rejected by society" (Stark and Bainbridge 1985, 49).

4. Conclusion

According to the theory of the social construction of reality, any kind of religious discourse can be regarded as socially constructed knowledge. A constructed symbolic world is not an isolated entity, but an expression of social relationships. Throughout the history of religion, the social construction of religious knowledge was presented in the form of myth and doctrine. The dialectic relationship between myth and doctrine gives

[4] This is a slight change from Stark's previous account about cults which he categorized as "unusually" high-tension groups: "The negative connotations of the word cult reflect the unusually high tension between these movements and their social environment" (Stark 1996, 438). The use of the term 'cult' seems to amount to the recognition of the labeling process applied to new religious groups by conventional society.

rise to two different religious patterns. At one extreme there is doctrine-oriented conventional religions and at the other extreme mythmaking religions.

Historically these two types have been viewed under the labels of orthodoxy and heresy, but both phenomena are socially represented, reflecting certain social relations in religion. In the process of knowledge construction, heresy appears as the antithetical structure to orthodoxy. As a response, orthodoxy not only defines and redefines its inner belief system, but also attempts to impose its ideology on dissident groups by means of heresiography. The classical dichotomy between orthodoxy and heresy is represented in the Christian anti-cult movement in a pluralistic society, which is an exemplary model of the construction of the other. This proactive response to other belief systems is a new version of pursuing orthodoxy which appears as Christian fundamentalism.

Although these historical and cultural worldviews are diverse, they can be categorized under the typologies of church, sect, and cult, each of which demonstrates both the beliefs and practices of various religious groups as well as their social relationships and tensions, if any, with the wider society. This propensity continues in a non-Western society, including Korea. The development of Korean religion exhibits religious identities and their consequent conflicts. Despite its relatively short history, Korean Protestantism maintains its proactive social involvement in religious conflicts. The next chapter will demonstrate the religious spectrum of Korea, giving particular consideration to Protestantism.

Chapter Three

The Church, Sect, and Cult in Korea

This chapter examines the religious typologies of church, sect, and cult in the Korean religious setting, building upon the basic analysis outlined in the last chapter. On the institutional level, religious organizations can be divided into church, sect, and cult types. However, these ideal types do not always match social realities. For a more concrete analysis, it is necessary to delineate the different religious traditions in Korea. Unlike Western and Middle Eastern countries, where Christianity and Islam have historically predominated, Korea has been shaped by three major religious organizations: Confucianism, Buddhism, and, much later, Christianity. Consequently, it is necessary to clarify the broad spectrum of Korean religiosity, historically and culturally, in order to understand Protestantism and its place in Korean society.

1. The Typology of Church, Sect, and Cult in the Korean Context

As discussed in the last chapter, Rodney Stark's concepts of tension and deviance can be used to identify church, sect, and cult types in any society. Even so, the difficulty of categorizing religious types remains, especially when dealing with pluralistic contexts. Depending on one's working definition of religion, organizational classifications may differ. If, for example, a definition is too broad it may include all kinds of less than religious things, including the veneration of political leaders like Lenin or Mao (Cf. Smart 1969). Alternatively, if a definition is too narrow it can exclude clearly religious

phenomena like Buddhism and Confucianism. Thus, there is a need for a definition that is neither too narrow nor too broad. In order to address this concern, the research strategy followed here adopts a substantive approach, one which draws relatively explicit boundary lines between the religious and the non-religious. It also helps to demarcate religious organizations such as Buddhism, Christianity, Taoism, Shamanism, and Confucianism. In the case of Christianity, this boundary line can also be divided into sub-categories: Presbyterian, Baptist, Anglican, etc. (McGuire 1997, 10). Such a heuristic device respects the differing characteristics of religious groups.

However, it would be problematic to simply apply Stark's typology to non-Western countries (McGuire 1997, 11). As Winston Davis, a scholar of Japanese religion, points out: "Since the religious practices and historical experiences presupposed by the distinctions between Christian churches, sects and denominations are virtually without parallel in the Far East, it is highly misleading to superimpose these terms on religious affiliations in Japan, China, and Korea" (Davis 1983, 141). As an alternative for Japanese religions, he suggests Alfred Shutz's two group model—characterized by "in order to" motives (motivated conduct) and "because" motives (obligatory conduct)---which focuses on "an actor's orientation and internal movement towards a desirable future" (Davis 1983, 133). However, his types are not very far from Niebuhr's church-denomination-sect types. What is more, Davis's spectrum of organizational types—from obligatory conduct ("because" motives), through mixed motives and conduct, to motivated conduct ("in order to" motives)—does not address any tension between a

religious group and its social environment. Rather, it simply focuses on internal factors like motivation and obligation (Davis 1983, 142).

In contradiction to Davis' model, Stark's model focuses on both internal and external factors, and his proposed theory has a background of empirical research rather than a presupposed classification. It is true that since this typology is based largely on the observation of groups in the Christian-dominated West, the narrow spectrum of church, sect, and cult requires enlargement, and far more contextual and sociological consideration, within a Korean context. In Korea, Christianity is simply one major religion alongside Buddhism and Confucianism. The latter, of course, includes revered social customs as well as ancestral worship. Due to this complexity, the social domain of Korean Christianity cannot be easily categorized as church, sect, or cult type. This typological concern is reflected in the Korean sociologist Oh Gyounghwan's identification of the social status of Christianity. Since Catholic and Protestant churches did not derive from the traditional religions of Korea, it is difficult to call them denominations. Thus, he classified them as types of "cult movements" (Oh GyoungHwan 1990, 368). For him, Christian churches in Korea do not represent church or denominational types, but rather sects or cults. This implies that Christianity is considered a foreign religion or a religion that deviates from traditional social values and norms. Although Oh's thesis rightly focuses on the relational aspects of religion, and not just those concerned with doctrine, his categorization seems to be oversimplified, neglecting the historical flux of religion and the dynamics of social change.

During the Goryeo Dynasty (935-1392), Buddhism was a national religion or a church type. But when revolutionary Confucian literati built the new nation at the beginning of the Joseon Dynasty (1392-1910), Buddhism was systematically oppressed, and Buddhist monks were relegated to the bottom of the social classes alongside the butchers. Since Shamanism was not seen as institutionalized, it was regarded as a vulgar religion. In this social stratum, Confucianism, as the dominant tradition, can be categorized as a church, and Buddhism and Shamanism as sects. Although Shamanism has a long historical tradition under Confucian rule, it existed in a deviant subculture during this period (Stark and Bainbridge 1985, 49).

With the demise of the Joseon Dynasty (1905) and Japanese ascendency (1910), Confucian political and social structures almost died out. Buddhism now began to recover its previous social position and developed into a churchlike organization incorporated into Japanese Buddhism. Since missionary work was relatively free under colonial rule, Korean Catholicism and Protestantism lived in relatively low tension with their social environment, and gained a respect not unlike that of Buddhism. In contrast, Korean new religions with nationalist tendencies were treated as cult-type religions by the colonial government.

The liberation of Korea from Japanese rule and the Korean War churned up the social structure in such a way that a new religious situation came about. The religious dynamics of Korea can now be compared to American denominationalism. The organization of Christian Protestantism in Korea was similar to that of the North American Church because Korean Protestantism was the result of American missionary

efforts and therefore tied to the parent churches of the missionaries. Moreover, as in North America, there was no established state religion, and religious freedom was conferred by the Constitution. Therefore, religious development was affected by the logic of the market economy. Korean Christianity has come to the fore in this competitive religious market, forming a major religious institution alongside Buddhism to become "the mainstream of its political and social life" (Davies 1994, 795).

In this social setting, the typology of church, sect, and cult needs to be evaluated from a cross-cultural and a cross-religious perspective (Wilson 1982, 101). Even though the political system of Confucianism is gone, the Confucian value system remains socially alive and influential. David A. Martin points out that despite the lack of churches from a Western perspective, Confucianism in Korea can be categorized as a church type (Martin 1965, 6-7). Before the coming of Christianity to Korea, the organizational boundaries and doctrinal beliefs of popular religions were in continual flux. However, the Buddhist orders under the Confucian regime, which had barely maintained their structure, were transformed into a Christian denominational type of religion in the modern age. Therefore, calling Buddhist organizations sects can be misleading, coming from the translation of the Chinese character *tzung* (*jong* in Korean). The strong cognition of exclusive Buddhist identity in religions is a modern development. In Korea, two major Buddhist organizations—Jogeyjong and Cheontaejong—can be fully compared to Christian denominations. Likewise, the institutionalized level of Christianity and its degree of social acceptance has dramatically moved into the mainstream, as evidenced by the fact that more than twenty-five percent of the population is Christian and educational

and political institutions bear the influence of Christianity. Therefore, it can generally be said that Korean Christianity is neither a sect nor a cult, but a church type organization in terms of its degree of tension with the dominant social order. Religions in Korea tend to be conscious of their organizational entities, so much so that the social structure of religion is moving toward a pattern similar to that found in Western society.

However, there still remains a problem with the organizational structure of religion. Even though Christianity and Buddhism can be considered church types on a denominational spectrum, they do not share a common belief system. Unlike Christian denominations in North America, where intermigration simply means a switch from one church to another church, moving from a "Buddhist denomination" to a "Christian denomination" can only occur as a conversion process. This is far more radically and socially disruptive than when someone is re-baptized, as when an Anglican becomes a Baptist or a Methodist a Roman Catholic. Conversion from Buddhism to Christianity means a complete departure from a previous religion to a new one. In this case, Buddhism and Christianity respectively must be dealt with by using independent religious maps. Just as there are Christian churches and sects, so there are Buddhist churches and sects. This sub-classification also exhibits Stark's concepts of tension and deviance, which reflect varying degrees of tension between religious organizations (Stark and Bainbridge 1985, 51-56).

Due to their religious innovation and importation, cult groups defy easy identification, unlike Buddhist cults, Taoist cults, Confucian cults, and Christian cults. Consequently, they can be generally called cults or new religions. However, the cause of

tension between society and sects (or cults) is a two-way street. Cults having Christian elements can be major targets of anti-cultism, because Christian sects and cults share many elements with traditional Christianity and are therefore considered competitors. Accordingly, anti-cultism, as a response to these common interests, tends to follow the typology of church, sect, and cult in order to identify its target religions. In other words, "deviant" new religions and intolerant conventional religions are the main factors in religious conflicts.

When dealing with a specific religious tradition, the typology ranges from the macro level of the organizational spectrum to the micro level of the Christian church, sect, and cult. The next sections begin to apply this tripartite typology to the Protestant tradition.

2. Church, Sect, and Cult in the Historical and Cultural Setting of Korea

Throughout the history of religion in Korea there were a host of organizational changes. From ancient to contemporary Korea there have been religious shifts, defined by the dominant religions: from Shamanism to Buddhism, Buddhism to Confucianism, Confucianism to Buddhism and now Christianity itself, which is dominant among the ruling elites. However, religious identity was seriously considered for the first time during the Joseon Dynasty, when Confucian orthodoxy rose to ascendancy. Not only did Buddhism and Shamanism face great oppression, but Roman Catholicism was regarded as foreign and severely persecuted. Moreover, under the impact and influence of Western modernity, revitalization movements began to appear. This changing landscape made

Korean religions more dynamic and innovative, and consequently more reflective of the sociological categories of church, sect, and cult.

2.1. Confucian Orthodoxy as a Church Type

The martyr story of the Buddhist Lee Chadon in the Silla Dynasty, one of the three Kingdoms[1], reflects an early example of religious conflict. It describes how Buddhism gradually gained social influence at the expense of more dominant indigenous religions. During the three kingdoms and the subsequent Goryeo Dynasty (918-1392 C.E.), Buddhism permeated Korean cultural and religious life. However, this dominance was substituted by Confucianism with the advent of the new Joseon Dynasty (1392-1910 C.E.). Under Confucian rule, Buddhism and Shamanism lost their appeal among the educated elite. Practiced primarily by the lower classes and women, these religions became marginalized. Accordingly, Buddhism and Shamanism ensured their status as popular religions and were occasionally tolerated by Confucian society.

Historically, the nature of Confucian orthodoxy was exposed through its inner structure, as well as through confrontation with Buddhism and Christianity. The narrow characteristics of orthodox Confucianism led to endless factional strife and conflict in the Confucian system, and were important factors in shaping Confucian society. In the middle of the sixteenth century, with the rise of "sarimpa" (a new Confucian faction), a stricter orthodoxy was pursued, one which attempted to force the government to adopt Neo-Confucianism.

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[1] The three kingdoms were Goguryeo (- 660 C.E.), Baekje (- 668 C.E.), and Silla (- 660 C.E); later the kingdoms were unified by Silla, which became the United Silla (668 - 918 C.E.).

In the Chinese context, Neo-Confucianism appeared as a response to Taoist and Buddhist thought during the Sung Dynasty (960-1280 C.E.). Neo-Confucians confined authentic Confucian literatures to the Four Books: the *Analects of Confucius*, the *Book of Mencius*, the *Great Learning*, the *Doctrine of the Mean*, mostly relying on Chu Hsi's commentary on these four books. The Neo-Confucian teachings of Chu Hsi (1130-1200) were venerated in schools named in his honor. Meanwhile, the new teachings of Wang Yangming (1452-1529), who was critical of Chu Hsi, were ignored in Korea (Ch'oe, Lee, and de Bary 2000, 203).

Korean Confucian literati tended to maintain the Confucian tradition of the Ming Dynasty. Although the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) was replaced by the so-called "barbaric" Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), the more rigid Confucianism of the Ming was sustained in Korea. The Korean Confucian literati considered the Joseon Dynasty (Korea) to be the only guardian of orthodox Confucian beliefs and culture. In particular, after Chinese Confucian civilization (Ming Dynasty) was devastated by a "barbaric" tribe, the Manchus (Qing Dynasty), the Korean Confucians believed that the Joseon Dynasty had become the only center of Confucian civilization. Through going back to the classical Confucian literature, Korean neo-Confucian literati sought to construct an ideal Confucian society, aiming at not "[S]inification but Confucianization" (Wolf and Smith 1987, 186). This Confucian culture, the equivalent of orthodox Christian Protestantism, sought to venerate and preserve specific heritages.

Jo Gwangjo (1482-1519), a frontrunner of neo-Confucianism, wanted to realize ideal politics on the basis of the Sarim School of thought. His neo-Confucian thought,

dohak (discipline of way), was an attempt to establish a Confucian orthodox belief system based on the *dotongron* (interconnecting thread of way) of the School of Nature and Order. On this basis, the inner cultivation of morality and the social realization of righteousness and reason (*uiri*) were practiced (Geum Jangtae 1994, 37-38). His ideals sought the moralization of social networks.

According to this tradition, the concept of orthodoxy is more akin to social norms rather than religious creeds. When the country met foreign belief systems, Confucian social norms proved efficacious, appearing as reactions to Western civilization and the Japanese Empire. Korean anti-foreign Confucian literati still followed the tradition of Chu Hsi's orthodoxy, regarding Korea as a "Little China" in which the orthodox Confucian system might be preserved (Song Young-bae 2000, 8-9). The movements of *wijeong cheoksa* (defending orthodoxy and rejecting heterodoxy) in the nineteenth century was the last attempt to secure this traditional Confucian system, which lingered on in the idea of jonhwa yangi (revere China and expel barbarians), and after all resulted in an unsuccessful nationalism.

2.2. Shamanism and Buddhism as Sect Type Religions in Confucian Society

Social status can shift dramatically in the wake of social and cultural changes. Shamanism, the oldest ancient religion, and Buddhism, once a state religion, were oppressed by the new Confucian government, lost their privileged places in society, and were now treated as "deviant" religions. Under these circumstances, Shamanism and Buddhism were transformed into sects, set apart from an ascendant Confucian orthodoxy.

2.2.1. The Shamanistic Sect in Confucian Society

Shamanism is one of the most common forms of primal religion around the world (Stutley 2003, 2). However, it would be dangerous to say that Shamanism is the basis of all religions. There is no historical evidence that shamanism is the origin of all religion and the substance of all culture (Jeong Jinghong 1993, 541, 545-546). Shamanism is a specific historical phenomenon which develops in different geographical and historical contexts.

Since traditional folk religions in Korea were expressed in a cluster of cultural practices, their symbolic worlds were fragmented and unsystematic. Traditionally, villagers lived in an unstructured cultural atmosphere surrounded by shamanistic practices, ancestral rites, devil posts, and geomancy. Shamanism existed within a context of cultural variety and flux. Thus, just as Korean Shamanism cannot be understood apart from other folk beliefs, other folk beliefs and practices should not be reduced to Shamanism. In terms of religion, Shamanism comes close to reflecting primal experience. Given its unique features alongside the great religions of Buddhism, Confucianism, and Christianity, Shamanism has had a salient identity among folk beliefs and practices. On the other hand, it can be located on the continuum of folk Buddhism, because Buddha statues, terms, and paraphernalia are adopted in Shaman shrines, and Shamans even tend to identify themselves as Buddhists (Mun Gyupil 1997). However, the experience of Shaman0 possession, especially the trance, is the most important attribute for the

maintenance of Shamanistic identity. More important, Shamanism did not develop the organizational features of Sańgha communities or Buddhist monasteries.

Lee Neunghwa first looked at Korean Shamanism as a unique historical phenomenon and conceptualized Korean Shamanism as Folk Shamanism. According to Lee, Korean Shamans performed exorcisms, engaged in fortune-telling, interpreted strange dreams and incidents, offered prayers for rain, and were involved in national rituals. These activities brought criticism from the Confucian literati (Lee Neunghwa [1927] 2002, 10-57). During the Joseon Dynasty an anti-Shamanic law was enacted, which banned Shamanistic rituals within the castle of Seoul. The Confucian Joseon society labeled the Shamanic ritual *gut* "eumsa" (impure ritual), a deviation from Confucian norms (Lee Neunghwa [1927] 2002, 106-122; Kim Yeongjin 2002, 97, 100-104). Although the Confucian Joseon Dynasty employed Shamanistic rituals for national affairs, it was nothing but a niche for a few nationally appointed shamans. They were called by the government to practice pray-for-rain rituals, and "exorcize-disaster and beseech-good fortune rituals," but they were under the control of the Confucian system. It meant that though the divided role of religions between Confucianism and Shamanism existed, the polarization of the official Confucian system and popular Shamanism deepened in a rigid Confucian society (Choe Jongseong 2002, 13-29).

2.2.2. Buddhism: From a Church Type to a Sect Type Religion

Although Taoism and Buddhism respectively were introduced to the three kingdoms (Goguryeo, Baekje, and Silla), Buddhism held sway and offered them an ideology for

national integrity. Its dominance was inherited by the United Silla Kingdom (668—918) and the Goryeo Dynasty (918-1392). It attempted to embody the United Silla as an ideal Buddha Land by combining the ideas of pure land and nationalism. The Goryeo Dynasty accepted Buddhism as a state religion, appointed Buddhist leaders as national preceptor (guksa), and offered a state examination system for selecting qualified monks. While various forms of Buddhism still existed, there were two major traditions: Seon (Zen meditation) and Gyo (scriptural study). Later, they were incorporated into one tradition by the Buddhist reformer Jinul and became the major Buddhist tradition in Korea. During the Goryeo Dynasty, Buddhism and Confucianism had different social functions. Buddhism served as a religious system and Confucianism as a political system in a reciprocal relationship. With political instability and religious corruption, the later Goryeo Dynasty gradually declined and was replaced by the Joseon Dynasty (1392-1910).

With the creation of a new nation, the role division between religion and state was broken and never restored. Due to this political and social change, Buddhism lost its social and political privilege which drove it from a state religion to a sectarian status. New Confucian revolutionists attempted to establish a new national foundation on the basis of Confucianism to substitute the old Buddhist social order. The social status of the Buddhist monk was demoted to the lowest level, many Buddhist properties were confiscated, and the activities of monks were banned in Seoul.

In this Confucian setting, Buddhism, which held power for more than one thousand years, was incapable of resisting the Confucian system. During the Joseon

Dynasty no single Buddhist martyr was recorded (Kim Sanghyeon 1995, 90-93). Even so, Confucian social reform was gradual rather than radical. Since religious practices were basically allowed, severe persecution did not take place. Consequently, Buddhism managed to survive and remain secure within the Confucian system.

The regime change from Buddhist to Confucian hegemony was political rather than religious. The Joseon Dynasty chose Confucianism as the new ruling ideology. Anti-Buddhist literature was focused on the logical refutation of Buddhism, not the entire rejection of Buddhism. This attitude is demonstrated in the logic of Jeong Dojeon (1342-1398), who shaped the national foundation of the Joseon Dynasty. Through his book, pejoratively entitled *Bulssi Japbyeon* (Arguments against the Buddha), he denounced Buddhist doctrines from a Confucian perspective. Following the Tang scholar Han Yü, Jeong, he contrasted the terms "deviant/unorthodox"' with "right/ straight" for supporting a "right path' that led to an orthodoxy aimed at attacking Buddhism, Taoism, and other unorthodox Confucian schools**.** The kings of the Joseon Dynasty also did not entirely follow the social reforms proposed by the Confucian literati. As rulers, they sought to pay attention to matters like social integrity. Kings, from the founder of the nation, King Taejo (1392-1398), to the fourth King Sejo (1455-1468) and the Royal families, all partly adhered to Buddhism and allowed shamans (mudang) to perform shaman rituals (*gut)*. King Sejong, who invented the new Korean language *Hangul*, played a pivotal role in preserving the Buddhist tradition by translating important Buddhist texts into Korean (Won and Lim 1992, 60).

Nevertheless, in the Confucian social setting, the social status of Buddhist monks and shamans gradually deteriorated. The following systematic restrictions and oppressions were carried out during the third King Taejong (1400-1418):

> To merge various Buddhist sects and reduce the number of temples; force monks to leave the brotherhood; confiscate lands and monasteries for the use of military funding; limit the issuing of passports (into the capital) for monks, abolish the National and Royal Master system, and ban the construction of temples in the royal tombs (Won and Lim 1992, 56).

Consequently, the existing eleven Buddhist orders were "randomly merged" into seven. What was worse, during the reign of the fourth king Sejong (1418-1450), the seven orders were incorporated into two, Seon (Zen meditation) and Gyo (scriptural study), and the division disappeared completely during the reign of King Joongjong (1506-1450) (Won and Lim 1992, 57-58). Besides, these Buddhist monks were classified as the lowest class. Joseon society was built on the basis of three class divisions: *yangban* (two-noble classes), *sangmin* (ordinary people) and *cheonmin* (humble people). The ruling class *yangban* was the highest class, sang-min the middle class, and *cheonmin* the lowest class. Buddhist monks and shamans belonged to the lowest *cheonmin* class. Throughout the history of the Joseon Dynasty, the Confucian class tried to provide not only a political ideology but also one that met religious needs. Buddhism and other folk religions were consequently relegated to marginal status.

2.3. Cult Type Religions in Confucian Society

From a typological perspective of church, sect, and cult, the Roman Catholic Church and new religious movements were cults. On the one hand, the Roman Catholic Church in

Confucian society violated traditional Korean norms and suffered severe persecution. Later, in the wake of changes to church policy, it gradually began to compromise with indigenous culture. On the other hand, new religious movements and revitalization movements were also initially treated as cult-like. Yet, when they adapted to Korean society they became sect-type religions.

2.3.1. Roman Catholicism as a Cult Type Religion in Confucian Society

As a foreign religion, the Roman Catholic Church began as a cult. The propagation of Catholicism in Korea was unique in that Koreans embraced Catholic teachings without the aid of missionaries. This was partly due to the new intellectual climate of the time. A new wave of elites questioned Neo-Confucian orthodoxy and prompted a new intellectual position in this climate of social and political instability. This intellectual pursuit was categorized by contemporary scholars as the *Silhakpa* (school of practical learning); this was intimately associated with a Confucian faction called *Namin* (Southern faction), which was critical of Zhu Xi's neo-orthodox philosophy. The *Silhak* School was open to new ideas, including Western philosophy and science. This was accompanied by a critical attitude to Chinese cultural dominance, signaling the beginning of Korean nationalistic awakening (Yang and Henderson 1959, 268).

Korea's first modern contact with Christian missionaries came as a result of the Korean ambassadors who traditionally visited Beijing each year. Hong Daeyong (1731-1783) was the first scholar with an interest in Christianity, and Jeong Yakyong (1762-1836) and Lee Byeok also became Catholics. However, it was the trip of Lee Seunghun

(1756-1801) to Beijing, where he met Father Grammont and was baptized in 1784, which marked the real beginning of the Roman Catholic Church in Korea. He brought Christian books and studied them with other Koreans. Since he did not have enough knowledge to teach, he was helped by the *Silhak* Confucian scholar Lee Byeok, who was already acquainted with Catholic thought (Yun Mingu 2002, 43).

However, this did not mean that Catholic beliefs conformed to Confucian norms. The first major conflict between Catholicism and Confucianism occurred in Joseon Korea in 1791. It dates back to the Chinese Rites Controversies in the seventeenth century that continued into the early twentieth century (Noll 1992). A letter from Beijing in 1790 advised that Papal instructions forbade Korean Catholics to practice traditional Confucian mourning rituals. The general understanding of the Roman Catholic Church was that all religious rituals were superstitions and all religious objects were idols (Noll 1992). Such a Catholic attitude crossed the border from China and entered into Korea.

Thus, it can be easily expected that Korean Catholics might have experienced a religious conflict with conventional Confucian culture. When the ardent Catholic Yun Jichung experienced the death of his mother, he refused to participate in Confucian rituals. Following papal instructions, he burnt the ancestral tablets of his family and buried the ashes. Such behavior shocked the government and eventually led to his execution in 1791**.** This cultural clash was the beginning of Catholic persecution. In 1880, after the death of King Jeongjo (king: 1776-1800), who had favored *Namin* (the southern faction of the Confucian literati) and shown relative tolerance towards Western thought

and Catholicism, the situation worsened and severe persecution took place in 1801, 1839, 1846, and 1866, until a treaty between the Joseon Dynasty and France was made in 1887.

This persecution culminated in the following incident. Reading Catholic books that Lee Sunghun had brought, Hwang Sayeong (1755-1801) converted to Catholicism in 1791. Hwang witnessed the persecutions of 1801, escaped, and met his friend Hwang Sim. He tried to report the situation in the letter called "*Baekseo"* (An Appeal for Aid) to Alexander de Gouvea (1751-1808), the bishop of Beijing. This effort was in vain because he was arrested and executed in the same year, 1801. This incident claimed more than three hundred people. In the letter he explained the political situation and the Catholic persecution in Joseon, and requested that the emperor of the Qing Dynasty force the Joseon government to confer on Catholics the freedom to pursue their religious life. He went on to claim that a princess of the Qing should marry the Joseon King to control the nation. He did not scruple to make a traitorous suggestion without hesitation that allied Western Catholic countries should invade Joseon and force it to allow missionary activities (Kim Insu 2003, 12-52; Lee Peter 1996, 147-150).

Ultimately, Korean Catholics faced martyrdom for abandoning their ancestral ceremonies and familial spiritual tablets. In 1839, in the midst of this persecution, the Catholic Jeong Hasang wrote a memorial to Lee Jiyeong, appealing for an objective investigation of Catholic beliefs and actions, and tolerance towards Catholicism. He argued that as the Nestorian sect had been known in the history of China, Catholicism was not a strange religion. He maintained that Catholicism was the very religion that promoted submission to royalty and filial piety, the eternal and immutable moral

obligations for ten thousand generations as the Ten Commandments show. Comparing other religions (Taoism, Buddhism, and folk religions with their geomancy and fortunetelling) and their magical elements, he claimed that Catholicism was the better way. Consequently, he asked why Catholicism was not granted a benevolent tolerance by the government. Not compromising his faith, however, he argued that final sovereignty belonged to the heavenly King God, the ruler of heaven and earth. Despite his logical apologetic, his appeal had no effect on the persecution and he was executed (Kim Insu 2003, 61-72; Lee Peter 1996, 154-156). In contrast with his appeal, the royal decree issued under the name of King Heongjong, entitled *Cheoksa Yuneum* (The Royal Edict for Rejecting Heterodoxy), exhibits an exclusive attitude towards heterodox and foreign influences, claiming that Catholicism deviated from the law of nature and moral law and betrayed the fundamental values of filial piety (Kim Insu 2003, 54-60).

In 1845, Kim Daegeon, the first ordained priest of Korea, together with Jean Joseph Ferrèol, the second bishop of Korea, was smuggled into the country but arrested. Twice in 1845 and 1846, three French naval vessels dropped anchor and sent letters to the government, protesting the execution of three French missionaries in 1839 and requesting an explanation. The aggravated situation led to Kim's death in 1846 (Min Gyeongbae 1998, 89-90).

Kim's death was an ominous start for the worst persecution in the history of the Roman Catholic Church in Korea. Despite its growth, which included a number of royal family members, Catholics and missionaries were not well prepared for demonstrating their beliefs to the regent Daewongun, the father of King Gojong. In compliance with

Daewongun's policy of exclusion, about eight thousand Catholics, including five French missionaries, were executed in 1866 (Min Gyeong-bae 1998, 91-98). As a consequence, the invasion by France, called the *Byeongin Yangyo* (Foreign Disturbance of the Year 1866), took place. The victory of the Joseon Dynasty gave it a reason to drastically exclude foreign countries.

However, it is important to note that the persecution of Catholicism by the Joseon government should not be seen simply as the problem of a belief system; rather, it was due to political and cultural differences. Although Korean Confucian society was politically intolerant towards other religions, there was no parallel to the persecution of heresy in the Western Christian world, where attempts were made to wipe out deviant believers and groups. Inasmuch as people did not challenge the fundamental moral code of neo-Confucianism during the Joseon Dynasty, heterodox views were tolerated in the wider society. The Confucian word *idan* (*ituan* in Chinese), which is equivalent to "heresy" or "heterodoxy," literally means "a different thread" (Baker 1999, 201). The Confucian Classics were used to measure *idan*. Such different threads include Buddhism, Taoism, and other teachings, which are unorthodox from the Confucian point of view. According to Don Baker, however, "there were no Confucian inquisitions, either in China or in Korea, to uncover heretics who had deviated from Neo-Confucian doctrinal tenets" (Baker 1999, 205). Even though one was identified as a heretic, there was nothing like the witch-hunting or heresy hunting activities of Western countries. Yun Jichung's case shows an important factor in Confucian society at the time that the main reason for his execution was not his deviation from the Confucian canon, but his breaking of

Confucian moral norms. As Baker points out, his doctrinal understanding of Catholicism led him to a literal understanding of ritual objects and behavior (Baker 1999, 218), that is, "Yun's actions, even more than his beliefs, sealed his fate" (Baker 1999, 219).

More important, the persecution of the Roman Catholic Church by the Joseon Dynasty cannot be ascribed solely to the exclusiveness of Confucian society. At the time, the Roman Catholic Church was regarded as a cult in a sociological sense, and one which was new and foreign to Koreans. Undeniably, the religious conflict was made worse by the Neo-Confucian dominance of society, but Korean conversion to Catholicism not only involved Roman Catholic beliefs and culture but also meant the abandonment of traditional ritual objects and ancestral ceremonies. As a result, Confucian moral codes and social morality were challenged, making severe persecution inevitable. The main cause of the conflict was not doctrinal difference, but the violation of a crucial moral code embedded in the Korean ancestral ceremony.

This Catholic persecution has no parallel case in Korea, in that nearly ten thousand Catholics were killed by the Confucian government during a relatively short period of time. Korean Buddhists were submissive and Catholics were not. Catholicism offered the value of sacrifice. As Rodney Stark points out, "[m]artyrs are the most credible exponents of the value of a religion, and this is especially true if there is a voluntary aspect to their martyrdom" (Stark 1997, 174). In the "Hermit Kingdom," the cultural clashes between ancestral veneration and monotheistic beliefs were concerned with the understanding of the supernatural. By regarding the ancestral ceremony as competing with the Christian God, Catholics rejected the supernatural elements in it.

From a Confucian perspective, the Roman Catholic Church was deviant and therefore a cult.

2.3.2. Revitalization Movements as Cults in Confucian Society

R evitalization movements arose as religious responses to modernity. Not all revitalization movements qualify as new religions, but in many cases they can be transformed into new forms of religiosity. When Confucianism lost its vitality in the nineteenth century, revitalization movements arose. Thus, it was likely that religion and nationalism would be combined within this changing context. Koreans pursued new ideas for a new world that gave people a new religious imagination and developed into collective movements.

The Donghak (Eastern Learning) Movement in the late nineteenth century, which was later renamed *Cheondogyo* (The Heavenly Way Religion) in 1905, is known as the most important collective movement in the history of Korea. There were collective movements in folk Buddhism in the past, but it was the Donghak movement that had innovative ideas and created a new mode of religiosity and organizational structure. It not only appeared during the cultural encounters with Western countries, but also offered a new mode of social consciousness. Traditional religions lost their social function and ability to soothe the resentment of the people. It initially arose as a religion, yet the social situation made it combine political and religious ideas. His innovative claims, especially in the areas of human equality and social reform, appealed to peasants. These early anti-Western sentiments of the movement were reflected in the name Donghak (Eastern

Learning) as a binary opposition of Seohak (Western Learning) that was identified with the Roman Catholic Church. He regarded the Catholic Church as a competitor with a pervasive presence around the country (Cheondogyo Jungang Chongbu 1986, 93).

The founder, Choe Jeu (1824-1864), developed his primal experience into powerful myths of stories drawn from Shamanism, Buddhism, Taoism, and Christianity (Grayson 1989, 237). Myths in this context refer to stories with culturally formative power (Hexham and Poewe 1997, 81). However, this synthesis was not the simple combination of other religious elements, but involved "deliberate, conscious, organized efforts by members of society to create a more satisfying culture" (Wallace 1958, 279). As a son of a concubine, his social status was not respected by the dominant *yangban* class. In June 1861 he became sick. Afterwards, he claimed that he had contacted a great spirit called *sangje* and gained an enlightenment called the "Great Cosmic Way" (mugeuk daedo). This typically primal experience launched his career as a religious and political leader.

His experience and thought were formulized as the millenarian idea of *hucheon gaebyeok* (opening the post-heaven)[2] which became the main motto of revitalization movements. The concept *hucheon* (post-heaven) should be understood as a binary opposition to the concept s*eonchon* (pre-heaven). The latter symbolized the old order; the former the new order. In the old world, where people suffered from political corruption, social dislocation, and social upheaval, they longed for a new world. The gaebeok or new cosmic creation is the turning point from the old order towards the new order. Through

[2] Its English translations vary: "post-cosmic creation" (Cheondogyo), or the great opening of the great heaven (Jeungsando), "opening-a-new-world" (Kim Kyoung Jae 1994).

this utopian vision, the great cosmic way will be realized (Bak Yeonghak 1990, 36-42). This also means the genesis of a new religion since the roles of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism were weakened. Prior to the time of Choe Jeu there were no religious figures or religions in Korea that developed systematic views of God. His famous metaphoric concept of God was *sicheonju* (I serve God within me), which implies that God does not exist in a distant heaven, but is found in all human minds. According to a Christian missionary in 1895, his concept of God had an affinity with the monotheism of the Christian God, suggesting the influence of Catholicism (Junkin 1895, 57). The concept *cheonju* was uniquely a Catholic term that the Jesuit missionary Matteo Ricci used in his Chinese book Ti'enchu Shihi (True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven), which was known to Korea at least as early as the seventeenth century (Yu Hongryeol 1987, 52). Thus, it is conceivable that Choe Jeu adopted this concept for his theological thought, as he was familiar with the Catholic Church and Western Learning.

However, the general understanding of God by the Cheondogyo differs from the traditional Christian concept of God. It is further associated with "Man is God" (insicheon), which can be paraphrased as the claim "Treat man as God" (sainyeochon) by the second Revered Choi Sihyeong (1829-1898). The expression of "Man is God" (innaecheon) by the third Revered Teacher Son Byeonghui (1861-1922) displays a more pantheistic idea (Yun Seoksan 2003, 24-27). The theological articulation from Choe Jeu, through Choi Sihyeong, to Son Byeonghui is generally conceptualized as "pan-en-

theism,"[3] which was the first systematic attempt to theorize the perception of God in the history of Korean religion. This doctrine of God is very innovative or unique in the Korean tradition, because the Eastern religious traditions of Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism did not produce it.

It is noteworthy that the Donghak movement was not a passing phenomenon, but was followed by the rise of other new religions. Under Japanese rule, history witnessed the rise of many new religions, including Jeungsangyo, Won Buddhism, and Daejonggyo. Under the circumstances of "mazeway," people tried to revitalize their cultures for stress reduction. Anthony Wallace conceptualized this phenomenon as a "revitalization movement" that emphasized "the institution of customs, values, and even aspects of nature which are thought to have been in the mazeway of previous generations but are not now present" (Wallace 1956, 267). Among these are included millenarian and messianic movements. These were not simply a recovery of the past, but a response to different influences or impacts. Wallace divided these movements into two categories: (1) "professedly revivalistic movements"—the Ghost Dance, the Xhosa Revival, and the Boxer Rebellion; and (2) "professedly importation movements"—the Vailala Madness, Cargo Cults and the Taiping Rebellion (Wallace 1958, 275-276). The *Donghak* rebellion was close to the first category in that it rejuvenated traditional religiosity with its nationalistic sentiments when Koreans were confronted by social disorder and foreign powers armed with modern technology and ideas they had not encountered before.

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[3] "The concept of God in [Donghak] is not transcendental monotheism, nor immanent pantheism, but pan-en-theism in the creative movement of the universe" (Kim Kyoung Jae 1994, 100-101).

Therefore, it can be said that under the circumstances of complex social and religious change, a rise in the number of new religious movements can be expected. This religious phenomenon was prototypical in that it not only represented Korean new religions, but also became sources for the rise of other new religions.

3. The Shifting Nature of the Church, Sect and Cult Types

Religious organizations do not remain static, but are transformed with the change of their social environments. The social statuses of church, sect and cult in Confucian society were changed in the wake of the modern age. Each type now moves back and forth like a pendulum: a church can become a sect, a sect can become a church or a cult, and so on.

3.1. The Fall of the "Confucian Church"

The Collapse of the Confucian Joseon Dynasty resulted in the fall of the tight political and cultural system of Confucianism. As a result, the two major religious traditions of Korea showed very different features in the religious economy. The Joseon Dynasty had two religious and cultural divisions: the Confucian elite culture and the Buddhist and shamanistic popular culture. However, their paths diverged. While Confucianism lost its religious network, Buddhism was rejuvenated in the modern age.

Although one of the most frequently mentioned religious aspects of Confucianism is referred to as ancestral worship, *jesa*, it was loosely tied to the Confucian social structure in a fragmented manner. In the history of Confucianism in Korea, the development of Confucian rituals began with the introduction of An Hyang (1243-1306),

who promoted Confucianism at the expense of Buddhism (Palmer [1984], 18). His initial idea developed into the ceremony of *seokjeon* for the commemoration of Confucius and his disciples, a ritual performed with sacrificial offerings (Palmer [1984], 39-49). This ceremony, however, was not popularized, but limited to Korean literati-officials (Palmer [1984], 93). Instead, ancestral worship or *jesa*, a memorial rite for deceased ancestors, spread to the public, although its religious practice did not go beyond the realm of family affairs.

Although Confucianism had a religious orientation (e.g., the ancestral ceremony), this system failed to utilize all the religious dimensions: mythical, ritual, doctrinal, ethical, and social. When the Confucian "political system" faded away, the social structure began to dissolve. In other words, its religious significance diminished and remained as a secular institution in contemporary era. It not only lost its political power but also its religious vitality, even though some Confucian practices continued among the people. More important, even though ancestral worship had a central place within the Confucian system, only the family cult survives to this day. Instead, it tended to maintain a strong political and ethical orientation lacking in religious characteristics.

Although Confucian social values and norms still play significant roles in contemporary society, they lost the social dynamism of a religious institution. Since Confucianism was not prepared to become a religious institution like Buddhism and Christianity, it began to function simply as a civil religion influencing Korean daily life (Koh Byong-ik 1997). Therefore, the outlook of Confucianism as a religious institution

remained obscure: would it maintain a church-type status or would it head in other directions, possibly becoming a sect or even a "civil religion" (Bellah 1975, 3).

3.2. Shamanism's Organizational Development

It is remarkable that Korean Shamanism sustained specific features like possession, trance, ritual practice, and a Shamanic community, given the pervasive influence of Buddhism, Confucianism, Daoism, and other folk religions. In other words, Shamanism proved to be a pragmatic religion. A *mudang* (Korean shaman) was not a radical or a reformer, but one who remained a part of the traditional social system (Turner 1993, 73). Shamans have loose social networks with their clients in village units, but do not develop into a collective movement in which a religious leader systematically presides over a community.

Traditional Shamanism maintained a local community, a *dangol*, comprised of a *mudang* (dangolre) and her *dangolls* (regular clients).[4] In village units, shamans performed a village scale *gut,* and fulfilled their duty as priests. But if the *mudang* died and her job was not inherited by another *mudang*, the *dangoll* community was easily broken up and the community disappeared. It follows that the shamanistic community failed to develop into a strong organization, or a community like Christian churches or Buddhist *saṅghas*. In general, the Korean *mudang* consists of two types of shamans: 1) hereditary shamans who inherit and transmit their roles from generation to generation

[4] In general, a female shaman is called a *mudan*g and a male shaman is called a *baksu*. A *mudang* is also called *mu, munyeo, mansin*, *danggore,* and *dangol.* Since the word *dangol* literally means a regular customer, a mudang and her clients are both often called *dangol* by each side, denoting the two-way relationship between them (Bak Ilyeong 1999, 44-45).

and 2) possessed or charismatic shamans who experience a physical and mental ordeal for a shamanistic calling. Each has a different type of social network. Bak Ilyeong calls the former a "priestly territorial community" and the latter a "charismatic personal community" (Bak Ilyeong 1999, 47).

With the impact of modernization and urbanization, rural areas were devastated, and traditional social networks began to deconstruct, with the result that the first type of shaman community lost its social base. Consequently, a *dangoll* community tends to develop according to the charismatic ability and mobilization of the shamans, and thus, Shamanism tends to be commodified and standardized to the tastes of clients.

In the 1960s and 1970s the modernization project of the authoritarian government promoted an anti-superstition campaign, including the suppression of shamanic healing practices (Choi Chungmoo 1997, 26; Hwang Rusi 1988, 15), which culminated in the New Village Movement (Saemaeul Undong). In the 1970s, this movement, which was led by the government, destroyed traditional folk cultures. At the same time, ironically, the government accommodated shaman rituals in order to legitimize its authoritarian regime on the ground that they were part of the national tradition, and appointed some shamans as national human treasures, thereby making shamanism partially mainstream. On the other hand, in the public sphere, democracy and labor movements made use of shamanistic rituals for their nationalistic and social activism. Madanggeuk (open theatrical performance), initiated in 1963, was a transformation of traditional gut rituals, and became part of the popular culture (Choi Chungmoo 1997, 29-35).

This social change moved shaman society into various directions. First, a variety of shaman rituals were reduced to customer-demanding styles. The *gut* rituals held in a village scale began to disappear, funeral related *guts* were replaced by Christian ones, and ritual performance on public places was banned and had to find specific places. Second, there are a growing number of shamans who do not follow the traditional system of initiation rituals (Hwang Rusi 1988, 14-19). Third, the establishment of a Korean shaman association (Daehan Gyeongsin Yeonhaphoe) on January 6th, 1971 shows another feature of contemporary shamanism. This is sociologically important in that it is a nationwide organization which first intended to defend Shamanism with social practices such as anti-Communist activities, publishing works, and fellowship and welfare for members (Jang Hogeun 2000, 53). As of March 1st, 2007, this organization claims 199 branches in all parts of the country and 141,790 members (Daehan Gyeongsin Yeonhaphoe 2007).[5]The establishment of this organizational activity goes with the social mobilization of shamanism. In addition, Kim Geumhwa, the nationally-known *mudang*, who was appointed as a human national treasure, opened a school for teaching her skills for gut performance in 1995. It is an example of the social improvement of shamans in comparison with the past, when shamanism was regarded as superstition. Shamans recognized that selling Shamanism as a traditional folk culture was a good way of sustaining their social status and religion. These characteristics are more akin to a sect-type organization which has become more aware of its group identity.

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[5] The number of members is not apparent. In 1985, the association had 120,000 members, but the ethnographer Hwang Rusi estimated only 40,000 (Hwang Rusi 1988, 13). If the latter is correct, the size of its membership is still relatively large.

3.3. Buddhist Rejuvenation: From a Sect to a Church

Contemporary Buddhism in Korea resembles a denominational structure. While having a sectarian status during the Joseon Dynasty, it has now become the largest religious organization in Korea, functioning as a church-type religion.

Through observing Buddhist attempts to revive the religion in 1902, Hulbert claimed in his *History of Korea* (1905) that "Buddhism in Korea [was] dead" (In Starr 1918, 32-33). Around sixteen years later, Frederick Starr reported that "Buddhism appears to-day to be very far from dead in Korea. It shows signs of active life and there may be prospects of its future growth and large development" (Starr 1918, 34). The discrepancy between these two assessments is due to the changing religious environment. During the Joseon Dynasty the social activities of Buddhist monks were extremely limited and lay adherents were "commonly the illiterate peasants of the countryside and women, rather than the educated male elite of the cities" (Buswell 1992, 23). Under Confucian control, Shamanism and Buddhism had a religious niche in the ruling class, but social Confucianism was more influential among the ordinary people. Even though Confucianism proper had a religious orientation, such as an ancestral ceremony, it failed to fully utilize all the various religious dimensions, such as the mythical, ritual, and doctrinal; instead, it reflected strong political and ethical tendencies and remained the ideology of the ruling class.

The year 1895 was the beginning of a new era for Buddhist revival, one that saw the rise of a new type of missionary work. Whereas Buddhist *jeols* (temples) and *taps*

(*stupas* or reliquaries) built within urban areas were natural during the Unified Sylla and Goryeo Dynasty (Won and Lim 1992: 36, 39-41), the Joseon government banned their construction and propagation. However, Japan's intervention in Joseon helped to confer Buddhists with relative freedom. A Japanese *Nichiren* monk strongly appealed to the Korean Prime Minister Kim Hongjip and asked him to lift the proscription by which Buddhist propagation was confined to areas beyond Hanyang (Seoul), the capital of the Joseon Dynasty. This meant that Buddhists were now allowed to engage in religious activities in various cities around the country. Although this permission was withdrawn in 1898, due to continuing anti-Buddhist sentiments among Korean government officials (Won and Lim 1992, 68-69), the general trend was favorable to Buddhism.

This situation gave Buddhism a new challenge. Buddhist movements arose and reconstructed monasteries. First, Buddhists tried to popularize Buddhism through the translation of Chinese Buddhist Texts into Korean (Starr 1918, 39; Hackmann [1910] 1993, 263). Second, like the example of 1895, these social changes initiated a period of modern religious freedom. It was now possible for Buddhists to come into the capital and organize their religious bodies (Starr 1918, 42; Hackmann [1910] 1993, 263). Under the influence of Japanese Buddhism, Korean Buddhism gave rise to three distinct movements. One tried to cling to a "mountain" Buddhism to sustain traditional beliefs; another pursued religious innovation in a nationalistic way; and the third worked to be incorporated into Japanese Buddhism.

The second, the nationalistic movement, had to compromise with the third because Buddhism was under the control of the Japanese Colonial government. The

demise of the Joseon Dynasty did not lead to the independence of Buddhism, but only to a new subordination to Japanese Buddhism; that is, the encroachment of Korean Buddhism by a foreign Buddhist tradition. Korean Buddhism adopted a comparatively modernized Japanese Buddhism but had to endure a fate subordinated by Japanese Buddhism. However, there was a strong voice for reforming Korean Buddhism. The Buddhist monk Han Yongun, a poet and nationalist, called for innovation in Korean Buddhism. Once involved in the Donghak movement and influenced by the Chinese modernist Ling Ch'i-ch'ao, he suggested a modernized Buddhism through his writing "Joseon Bulgyo Yusinron" (Treatise on the Reformation of Korean Buddhism). He thought that Buddhist celibacy impeded reform and thus clergy marriage should be promoted. In fact, his ideas were realized through the streaming influx of Japanese Buddhism into Korea and eventually celibate monks were in the minority (Buswell 1992, 29). With the outbreak of the Pacific War in 1941, the amalgamation of Korean Buddhism with Japanese Imperial Buddhism was intensified.

After the liberation of Korea from Japan (1945), Koreans had a strong nationalist tendency. The restoration of traditional culture accompanied the purge of Japanese influence. Since the liberation of Korea, Korean Buddhism fostered a purification movement in which the anti-marriage Buddhist monk movement was preferred by Lee Syngman [Lee Seungman]'s government (Buswell 1992, 30). However, the conflict between the two sides was not settled and a serious schism ensued. As a result, the largest Buddhist order, "Jogyejong," led by celibate monks, was established (1962) and the Taegojong of married monks was also organized.

In 1972, the Jogyo Order produced a one volume Korean version of the Buddhist anthology, *Bulgyo Seongjeon* (Buddhist Holy Scripture), for the laity, making it more accessible (Buswell 1992, 34). The modernization and urbanization of Korea prompted Buddhist adaptations of Christian-style hymns and Sunday schools. The Christian influence on Buddhism is also related to the construction of Buddhist temples in urban areas (Buswell 1992, 143-144). As a bangpyeon (upāya; skill in means), the Buddhist flexibility to adopt Christian elements may change the future form of Buddhism.

3.4. Becoming a Church-Type Religion: The Catholic Compromise

As the Roman Catholic attitude towards the world gradually began to change with the turn of the 20th century, the need was felt to recognize the complicities of religious and political life which had previously been neglected. During the colonial rule of Japan, the ritual controversies were rekindled regarding Shinto, the Japanese nationalist religion. In the 1930s, Japan arranged with the Italian government to persuade the Catholic Church to accept worship at Shinto shrines. In 1938, it was proclaimed by the Church that since Shinto worship was a national rite, it should be allowed (Lee Manyeol 1985, 33).

In the following year, the doctrinal boundary of the Catholic Church was transformed with the Propaganda's *Plane compertum est* (December 8, 1939) by Pope Pius XII (Pope: 1939-1958). Maintaining a conservative stance, he encouraged biblical scholarship, including the historical-critical method and the global expansion of the Roman Catholic Church. Although he remains a controversial figure with regard to the Holocaust and his public silence about Nazism (McCarthy 1998, 9-12), his positive

evaluation of "the cultural and spiritual riches embedded in non-Christian peoples" was reflected in his two encyclicals *Summi Pontificatus* (October 20, 1939), and *Evangelii Praecones* (June 2, 1951) (Noll 1992, xvii). As a result, instead of imposing a countless number of regulations on local churches, the Roman Catholic Church allowed relatively autonomous religious practices within Catholic missionary circles and local churches. This change had already appeared in the reply from the Propaganda to Bishop Augustin Ernest Gaspais, Changchun, in Manchukuo in 1935. In the letter the words "superstitious comedy" only appeared once; instead, words like "a religious cult," "religious," "divinity" and "religious character" were used as major issues to address. The recognition of other religions as religious realities was expanded to Shintoism in Japan alongside Confucianism, distinguishing a religious character from a nonreligious one. The announcement of *Plane compertum est* was the starting point of a new Catholic attitude towards other religions. Its definition of religion also changed in the direction of flexibility. Instead of repudiating most Confucian and Shinto rituals, it distinguished between religious acts and nonreligious or civil acts, saying that "Catholics are allowed to be present at testimonials honoring Confucius, held before an image or tablet of Confucius, or in buildings dedicated to him or in schools" (Noll 1992, 88). Given the incident of Yun Jichung's ancestral tablets, it was a dramatic change in the Roman Catholic Church, because the gradual acceptance of ancestral tablets meant that it would be inclusive and fit into Korean culture and tradition in the future.

Another change in the Catholic Church followed the death of Pope Pius XII in 1958. John XXIII (Pope: 1958-1963) became a most important pope in terms of his

ecumenical spirit and his response to the challenge of modernity, reflected in the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965). Whether he was regarded as liberal or conservative depended on the situation (Aradi et al. 1961, 337), but he played a major role in forming a new era for the Roman Catholic Church. Because of this Council, Catholic attitudes towards other churches, the Jews, and other religions has changed greatly. As Hans Küng notes: "Previously the Catholic churches referred to other Churches as heretics and schismatics (implying they were not of good faith); now it calls other Christians 'separated brethren'" (Küng 1967, 283).

The theological change not only bridged the gap between Catholic and Protestant theology but also opened the door towards interreligious dialogue. The influence of the "Declaration on the Relationship of the Church to Non-Christian Religions" on society went beyond the merely religious. This statement fully acknowledged as authentic the religions of Islam, Judaism, Buddhism, and Hinduism and affirmed that the "Church rejects, as foreign to the mind of Christ, any discrimination against men or harassment of them because of their race, color, condition of life or religion" (Abbott 1966, 668). The influence of Roman Catholic history is reflected in the theology and liturgy of the contemporary Korean Catholic Church, which maintains a relatively moderate position compared to conservative Protestant churches. However, before Vatican II, the Roman Catholic Church pursued a militant and exclusive missionary policy. This attitude continued when the Catholicism was planted in Korean soil. After the Catholic Church accepted Korean ancestral ceremonies, its cultural clashes with Korean traditional culture

have been rare. The Catholic Church's new attitude meant that it was more adapted to Korean social norms.

3.5. New Religions in the Korean Tradition

Since new religions in the Korean tradition have nationalistic tendencies, they have been called "nationalist religions," and therefore distinct from the new religions imported from Japan, China, and Western countries. This was especially true during Japanese rule because most revitalization movements arose under the influence of Korean religious traditions. The colonial government believed that, as most new religions had a strong nationalistic tendency, opposing new religions was a way of controlling Korean society. Thus, they were regarded as pseudo-religions or evil religions by the Japanese colonial government.

After the liberation of Korea from Japan, new religions burgeoned into a variety of groups in a religiously free market situation, with the result that the concept of nationalistic religions no longer applied to them. Like Christian oriented new religions, Korean new religions developed divine and messianic figures derived from the Christian tradition. According to Lee Gango, as of 1975 there were more than three hundred new religious groups arising from various backgrounds (Lee Gango 1992, 27-28).

These religious groups vary because of their fluid states. New religious groups can swing between radical innovations and conservative traditional religious expressions. For example, when traditional Buddhism lost its dynamism and vitality under the persecution of the Joseon Dynasty and struggled for survival under the Japanese

occupation, Won Buddhism rose as an alternative religion. It was founded in 1916 by Bak Jungbin (Sotaesan; 1891-1943), who combined elements of Buddhism, Confucianism and other religions, incorporating them into an ultimate reality: "unitary circular form" (ilwonsang). After his enlightenment, Sotaesan tried to understand his great experience and found its ground in Buddhism (Yu Byeongdeok 1995, 31). Although the beliefs and practices of Won Buddhism were simple and innovative, he did not allow any Buddha statues and emphasized the role of the laity. The movement was eventually incorporated into the Buddhist tradition and gradually gained a denomination-like social status. Its history shows how a religion's social status can be measured by the degree to which its belief system is incorporated into the surrounding society.

4. Church, Sect, and Cult in the Protestant Tradition

Historically, Korea demonstrated that it was the most suitable place for Christian missions. In Confucian society, Buddhism and Shamanism were treated harshly and remained marginal within the religious marketplace. When Confucian society collapsed, Protestant Christianity found the opportunity to spread. In contemporary Korea, all religions are the consequences of the fall of Confucian dominance. New religions, along with Buddhism and Christianity, have had opportunities to grow or revive in a religiously free marketplace where no single dominant religion exists. In this situation, Buddhism and Christianity have developed into various religious organizations, the equivalent of denominations, and new religious groups have synthesized various religious traditions. In

this complex religious landscape, religions tend to seek their authenticity and legitimacy from traditional religions.

These tendencies have been articulated by many scholars. In his *Encyclopedia of American Religions* (1996), Gordon Melton lists twenty five different religious family groups in North America. Sixteen families are Christian, including the "Christian Science-Metaphysical Family," seven are non-Christian, and the other two are unclassified religious groups. Melton suggests that religions in North America have been predominately Christian, but have become "a microcosm of world religions" (Melton 1996, 17). Religious adherents tend to seek out similar religious groups, and only later do some devotees develop unique religious beliefs and rituals. Melton calls this tendency of new religions a "family group". He holds that most cults or new religions are "offshoots of older religious groups and tend to resemble their parent group far more than each other" (Melton 2004b, 76). In the "Forward" of *New Religions: A Guide*, Melton repeats this thesis, arguing that "most new religions are presenting old religions in a new context and to a new audience" (Melton 2004a, 10). Melton, however, recognizes that new religions do not always follow along family lines:

> Most new religions emerge within a previously existing religious context, a context which initially nurtured it and from which it draws basic insights. However, a minority of new religions have developed as the products of innovative women and men and present themselves as genuinely new phenomena even after the roots of their teachings have been explored (Melton 2004a, 11).

It is not surprising that he identifies as unclassified two religious families in North America, because some new religions are difficult to classify. The problem of classification also occurs in the book *New Religions: A Guide***,** which categorizes nine

religious traditions present in the West: Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Zoroastrianism, Indian Religions, the religions of East Asia, indigenous and pagan traditions, Western esoteric and New Age traditions, and modern Western cultures. Regarding "the religions of East Asia," this classification says nothing specific about them, neglecting particular religious traditions.

Eileen Barker is critical of Melton's classification by religious family, claiming that the concept of family traditions can be misleading. According to this type of logic, new religious groups have no social ties and elements which cannot be found on a family tree. Furthermore, when it is focused on "the actions of believers, their lifestyle, leadership patterns and organization" rather than on "the beliefs, perhaps, the institutional claims of both old and new religions," as Barker contends, it would be hard "to make scientific comparisons for similarities and differences between parent and peer religions…" (Barker 2004, 91). Since new religions tend to be "selective" when embracing beliefs and practices from other sacred paths, it is difficult to fit them into "any recognizable tradition" (Barker 2004, 91). Furthermore, Baker indicates that "social reality is an on-going process that is mediated through individuals who bring new perspective and understanding as they continuously recreate even the oldest of traditions" (Barker 2004, 92).

A similar issue in the classification of new religions is raised in the Korean context. In his masterpiece *Encyclopedia of New Religions in Korea* (1992), the Korean scholar of new religion Lee Gango places new religious groups into fourteen families: (1) Eastern Learning, (2) Southern Learning, (3) Jeungsan (the name of the founder of

Jeungsangyo), (4) Dangun (the name of the mythic founding figure of the Korean ethnic group), (5) Bongnam (the name of a founder of a religion), (6) Buddhist, 7) Confucian, (8) Gaksedo (the Way of Enlightenment of the World, (9) Ilgwando (One-Penetrating Way), (10) Shamanistic 11) united, (12) unclassified, (13) foreign (mostly from Japan), and (14) Christian.[6] Given that types 11 and 12 do not fit into a specific tradition, twelve types constitute the basics of religious family groups. Moreover, while the Buddhist, Confucian, Shamanistic, and Christian families are traditional, the others have created new traditions. Lee's classification has a specific historical context. Historically, the rise of new religions in Korea began with revitalization movements that created a cultural environment, subdivided into many cultic milieus (Barker 1999, 18-20). As Barker indicates, the development of religions owes "far more to a culture than to any original tenets," because change constantly occurs within any religious tradition, so much so that "there is also the tradition of inventing traditions" (Barker 2004, 90-91).

If a group imitates a pre-existing parent religion, the direction of its transformation will be predictable. Yet, if a group does not inherit any components from conventional religion, its future may be radically different from that of established faiths. On the one hand, new religious movements may continue to change their religious ideas through the appropriation and adaptation of mythical and ritualistic components from other religious and cultural systems, and make logical and practical coherence of their beliefs (Stark and Bainbridge 1985, 179). In the process, they can be incorporated into

[6] This classification of Korean new religions dates back to the work of the Japanese scholar Murayama Chijun, who wrote an article at the request of the Japanese colonial government in Korea (Murayama 1935, 85-86). He categorized new religions as a form of "quasi-religion" that loses the form of genuine religion.

conventional religions, abandoning their unique beliefs in order to acquire legitimacy and authenticity from society (Melton 2004, 86 n. 11). For example, the Unification Church and the Heavenly Father Religion in Korea, as Christian-oriented new religions, have a cultural inheritance far different from that of Mormonism and Christian Science in the United States. While Western new religions tend to originate from Christian and Western esoteric and pagan traditions, Korean new religions generally trace their roots to Buddhism, Confucianism, and indigenous religions.

Considering these cultural characteristics, the "family group" notion put forward by Gordon Melton and Lee Gango can be applied to the Korean religious landscape. Because the social status of a church, sect, or cult may change depending on the context, the structure of religious families will change over time. In fact, the concept of the "family group" reflects the religious terrain of the real world. As an expression of religious interaction, a church-type denomination may become a sectarian group, a sect may become a church or a cult, and a cult may become a sect or a church.

This is not a simple transition, however, because social oppression and control often follow such developments. Even though a sectarian group wants to join a mainstream denomination, anti-cult accusations may retard its social acceptance. When Korean Protestantism is observed, most religious groups identify their status in comparison to others. Therefore, although the Unification Church has always wanted to be affiliated with mainstream Christian groups, it has never been successful. Its efforts have drawn negative responses from so-called orthodox Protestant churches. In the cultural sphere, religions not only transform their features but also exchange information

in order to maintain their plausibility structures. If the demarcations of religious groups are confined to Christian traditions, the typology of church, sect, and cult can be used quite profitably.

5. Conclusion

The typology of church, sect, and cult was applied to better understand the nature of this religious diversity within Korea. In fact, it turned out that this typology demonstrated the existence of various religious interactions and transformations.

The history of religion in Korea points to the changing and transforming nature of religious phenomena. In the past, however, Korean religions showed undifferentiated characteristics. Although Korean Buddhism sustained its identity through saṅgha communities or Buddhist monasteries, folk Buddhism was a vital force in religious practices, fusing with other folk beliefs. The rise of Confucianism drew new forms of group identities in religious phenomena, suggesting what has been seen as the problem of orthodoxy and heterodoxy. The Confucian system associated Buddhism and Shamanism with lewd practices and promoted the so-called right practices of Confucian rituals. This Confucian culture did not offer a wide range of religiosity and drove most Koreans toward folk religions, dividing Korean culture into Confucian elitism and popular religion.

Thus, the establishment of Confucian orthodoxy was not the sole product, because its texture came from interaction with other religions. Likewise, the present features of Shamanism and Buddhism developed under the influence of this Confucian

transformation. Therefore, no single genealogical religious development can be traced that took place without interaction with other religions. It is equally true that if there had been no persecution of the Roman Catholic Church in Korea, the country's religious landscape would have been far different from the present one. The rise of new religious groups was stimulated by Western culture and religion in a specific historical and sociological terrain.

From the establishment of a church-type religion to the formation of a radical cult-type group, the development of Korean Protestantism has been the product of a complex religious geography. The subsequent chapters will map these developments in much more detail, ranging from orthodox-type churches and sectarian groups to new cult-type religions.

Chapter Four

Becoming a Social Force: The Protestant God in Korea

Avoiding the severe persecution endured by the Roman Catholic Church, Protestantism established itself relatively easily in Korea. Before long it had created a stronghold in this non-Western country. The development of Korean Protestantism reflected the enculturation process that proselytizing religions face in foreign fields. On the one hand, Protestant missionaries to Korea attempted to adapt the Christian message to indigenous culture, searching for appropriate ways to transplant Christianity in Korean soil, often by studying native culture and society. On the other hand, as the Protestant Church took root in Korea it became a vital social force. It not only promoted Christian monotheism, thereby establishing a highly structured religious world, but also planted Christian symbolism in a non-Western setting. Ultimately, the tradition that American Protestant missionaries established in Korea was rooted in anti-syncretism. In other words, the expansion of the Korean Protestant church was defined by exclusive beliefs and forged within the framework of what missionaries considered Christian “orthodoxy”. Thus Korean Christians made their own boundaries explicit, consciously articulating their belief system in relation to an Asian context. This process essentially reflected the pattern of the church-type organization in a non-Western context.

1. Western Civilization and the Message of Progress

Since the publication of *Orientialism* (1978) by the late Arab-American literary critic Edward Said, various disciplines, from cultural and post-colonial studies to history and related humanities, have become interested in the relationship between power and knowledge in society. The scope of such research has now expanded beyond Said's initial interest, the Middle East. Although his theory remains controversial among scholars, it has been applied to various parts of the world, including the "Far East" (Teitelbaum and Litvak 2006).

Said's dyadic conception was not simply a tool to demarcate geographical and cultural differences, but played a significant historical and cultural role in uncovering the essentialized polar realities reflected in writing on the Middle East. As a counterpart to Orientalism, scholars have, in more recent times, also drawn attention to Occidentalism (Carrier 1995). While Orientalism refers to discourse about the East by the West, and Occidentalism a discourse about the West by the East, their ways of constructing images of each other and their consequences are very different from each other in terms of cultural hegemony. Although these polar aspects are not separated from each other, Orientalism represents a discourse of Western superiority, whereas Occidentalism functions as a product constructed and internalized by the East about a "superior" Western culture, expressed in slogans like the "American dream". Regardless of their differing constructions of reality, these two types of discourse have histories that can be traced. While rudimentary Western contacts with Korea began as an Orientalist construction, the Occidentalist construction of the Western world gradually turned into a

Korean historical reality. The problem of these two constructions is that their 'knowledge' is not actually based on geographical and historical facts, but has quite an arbitrary relationship with their referents (Kang Sangjung 1998, 48).

In the late nineteenth century, Korea began to expose itself to the rest of the world as a result of contact with Western countries (Rhodes 1934, 1). The Orientialist construction of Korea was deeply involved in Western modernity or civilization and thus the status of Korea and other Asian countries was measured from this angle. In his "Preface to the Eighth Edition" of the book *Korea: The Hermit Nation*, William Elliot Griffis assesses the influence of the book on Western society (Griffis [1911] 1971, vii]):

> For twenty-four years, this book, besides enjoying popular favor, has been made good use of by writers and students, in Europe and America, and has served even in Korea itself as the first book of general information to be read by missionaries and other new comers.

What Griffis found in Korea for these years was its hermit status, so that Korea was helpless in the clash of civilizations because of its sole dependence on China (Griffis 1971 [1911, 510). It was thus unsurprising that Korea, an Oriental country, was labeled a "Hermit Kingdom" or "Hermit Nation" according to the level of western recognition through western missionaries and travelers. Therefore, the word "hermit" functioned as a metaphor, referring to isolation from Western modernity and could be understood in light of it. In reality, however, Korea was never historically and culturally isolated, but was part of the cultural sphere of Chinese civilization. Yet from the Western perspective, Korea was a part of the "remnants of previously unchanging particularities" that China itself had once realized as a "'high' civilization" alongside India and Islam (Wallerstein 1991, 96). In a sense, the term "Hermit Kingdom" was a sign of the West's ignorance

and negligence. In fact, this erroneous perception remained apparent as late as the Korean War, and even persists to this day, given the isolated situation of North Korea, which is reminiscent of the isolated and secluded state of Joseon Korea.

Modernized Japan, in contrast, was different because of its successful adoption of Western culture. As James Earnest Fisher noted early in the twentieth century:

> Japan has adopted Western scientific methods in nearly every branch of national and social life. So successful have been Japan's efforts toward more progressive and scientific methods that she stands to-day as one of the foremost civilized nations of the world (Fisher [1928] 1972, 9).

As a result, Japan defeated China (1895) and its consequent annexation of Formosa (Taiwan) and even Russia, a powerful Western nation, (1905), and in the end annexed Korea (1910). In recognizing, but not admiring, Japan's military power, Fisher actually respected Korean culture, and never implied the West's superiority over Korea. Rather, he simply acknowledged that Western values were an undeniable reality that Koreans ought to accept (Fisher [1928] 1972, 9, 53-4). In the end, however, Fisher viewed a modernized Japan as an "infinite blessing" to Korea, "promoting the evolution of the modern man" and leading "the once [H]ermit [N]ation into the twentieth century" (Fisher [1928] 1972, 513). As a frontrunner of western modernity, Japan fulfilled the task of making Korea "a progressive nation" (Griffis [1911] 1971, 513).

Since Griffis's information about Korea was from the vantage point of missionary work, he found nothing wrong with Japan's imperialism and colonialism:

> The absorption of [Korea] by Japan has given the astonishingly successful Christian missionary work a new environment, and one for the better, despite the manifest dangers of misunderstanding arising temporarily from the political situation and the eager readiness of a few Japanese press correspondents to misrepresent. With full religious liberty, and under the protection of a firm

> orderly, and impartial government, the great work of raising up the new type of man and woman in [Korea], now one of the most promising of mission fields, proceeds (Griffis [1911] 1971, 519).

Regarded as a dormant and isolated country by Western powers, Korean identity was affected by attitudes of inferiority; its image became the mirror opposite of an allegedly superior West. This illuminates the other side of Occidentalism (the hidden side of Orientalism). The modernization and Westernization of Korea displayed the growing force of Occidentalism, which defined Western modernity in relation to a weaker Oriental country like Korea.

This process gradually became a reality in terms of power relations and discourses. When Western missionaries entered non-Western countries, they first had to understand and embrace foreign cultures and traditions as ways of preparation for the Christian message. In the *Foreign Missionary*, an introductory book about Christian missions, Arthur Judson Brown did not assume Occidental superiority:

> But there are Protestants as well as Catholics who need to remember that the Orient can never be Occidentalized. Asia will be Asia until the end of time, and not America or Europe. …The Anglo-Saxon of the days of Julius Caesar was far more barbarous than the Chinese and the East Indian of to-day (Brown 1950, 282).

It was, however, inevitable that powerful Western civilizations would have an impact on pre-modern societies. Western missionaries were conscious of the fact that the promulgation of Christianity often gave rise to social progress in the non-Christian world, which in turn helped to eliminate the social evils that denigrated humans. The late nineteenth century saw missionary work advance rapidly (Ray 1976, 193). Missionaries labeled many things as social evils—opium addiction, immorality, polygamy, slavery,

cannibalism, human sacrifice, cruel punishment and torture, witchcraft, uncivilized and cruel customs, poverty, corruption and bribery, massacre and pillage, idolatry, and superstition—and believed that they would disappear with the preaching of the Christian Gospel (Dennis [1897], 135-339).

Such a perspective came from a view of social progress which maintained that Western civilization could make a contribution to building progressive societies in non-Western parts of the world. Not surprisingly, James S. Dennis, a missionary and sociologist of mission, adopted the theories of social progress by Herbert Spencer and Auguste Comte for defining Christian social progress in the non-Christian world (Dennis [1897], xiv, 23-59). He argued that "Christian missions then become a guiding and determining force in the social progress of the world in proportion to their extension and success" (Dennis [1897], 43). In his scheme, the non-Christian world was inferior to the Western and Christian world in terms of social progress. He went on to apply this notion of Christian superiority to religion in general. For Dennis, religions are pervasive the world over, but due to their defects, imperfections and perversions, they hasten "social degeneracy" (Dennis [1897], 287). Western Christianity, however, was different, because it had gone through the modern enlightenment and could therefore lead the remaining superstitious world into the light of true knowledge.

There is, however, no strong evidence that missionaries in Korea combined the Christian message with the ideas of social Darwinism. Yet it cannot be denied that ideas of social progress were in vogue at the time and missionaries therefore held ideas not too far removed from those of social Darwinism, especially as they pertained to non-Western

cultures. This cultural ethos had actually been planted in Korea before Christian missionaries arrived there. The social context in Korea intermingled with complex international relations, prompting its appearance in an East Asian setting. Overshadowed by Western civilization, Japan pursued a kind of modernization in which social Darwinism played a key role in stimulating the society. As early as the Meiji era, Herbert Spencer's theory of social evolution had become apparent (Nagai 1954). In the late nineteenth century this intellectual fashion spread to East and South East Asian intellectuals, who sought to overcome the political and social turmoil of their time and found ideological weapons in social Darwinism (Nagazumi 1983).

In terms of Korea, social theory came from the publications of the Chinese intellectual Liang Chi-chao (1873-1929), who combined Darwinism with ideas of social progress (Svarverud 2001). Social Darwinism's concepts of the "survival of the fittest" and the "struggle for existence" gained wide currency in Korea (Lee Kwang-Rin 1978a, 37). What was imported, however, was the social scientific side of Darwinism, not the naturalistic side. It was subsequently used by Korean nationalists in their struggles against imperialist powers (Lee Kwang-Rin 1978a, 38; 1978b, 47). While missionaries did not convey a theology of progress, especially since the theory of evolution was unwelcome in Christian circles, Korean Christians living under the pressure of Western and Japanese powers accepted this ideology in a nationalist sense (Lee Kwang-Rin 1978a, 42).

Emphasizing the necessity of education for the younger generation of Koreans in his article "What Korea Needs Most" (1896), Philip Jaisohn [Seo Jaepil], who studied

medicine in the USA and founded a Korean newspaper, made this interesting statement: "When this younger generation absorbs the new ideas and trains itself in Christian Civilization, nobody knows what blessings are in store for Korea, and what blossoms may bloom in the national life of this now cheerless country" (Jaisohn 1895, 110). The early Korean Christian Yun Chiho (1895-1945) strove to adapt his Christian beliefs to the social situation of Korea. Yun believed that since the path of world development was based on "civilization (Westernization), Christianization and civilized education were the best for the Koreans for their survival as well as for being a great people" (Bak Noja 2005, 247-251). For him, Korean traditional religions such as Buddhism and Confucianism were so superstitious and prejudiced that they seemed to be obstacles for the progress and survival of Korea (Bak Noja 2005, 256-257). Alternatively, Christianity could be the religion to save Korea (Bak Noja 2005, 371).

In a similar fashion to some Korean Christians, there were also some missionaries who believed that the propagation of a modernized Christianity guaranteed social progress in the non-Christian world. Evolutionary expressions such as the "remnants of early paganism" and the "remnant of an ancient sun worship" in Christian literature were not unusual (Hulbert 1896, 391). Although they saw that Korea was once a civilized country, they argued that "without Christianity there [was] no possibility of enduring civilization" (Wells 1897, 58). This was what the Protestant missionaries in Korea maintained from the beginning of their missionary activities. The results of Christian influence went beyond the scope of religion to encompass politics, economics, music, science, and education. In the process, they shook the foundations of Korean worldviews

and traditional knowledge. While the sole purpose of missionaries was to "Christianize" the Korean people (Clark 1937, 38), their activities also brought Western civilization to Korea which is what they were asked to do (Brown 1950, 340). More importantly, as Western civilization was the embodiment of a Christianity that had saved "barbarian Europe," Asia could also be instructed by it (Brown 1950, 346). Thus, for the missionaries, social progress connoted Christian culture and reflected the modernity gap between Western countries and pre-modern Korea.

This meant that the Christian worldview, derived from the Western world, was far more modernized than that of the people living in the secluded world of Korea, and it helped to stimulate a pre-modern society into a relatively progressive phase. Missionaries sought to propagate the Christian message by making use of western civilization. In this sense, it is no contradiction to say that while missionaries were theologically conservative, and tried to transmit their beliefs to Koreans, they also made enough use of advanced Western technologies, medicines, and educational systems to have a significant impact upon the pre-modern culture. Thus, Western civilization was a means of propagating the Christian message. As one missionary editorial put it, the Chinese and Korean peoples may not "want our religion, but they do want our western civilization and our western science, and in presenting these as the gifts, the material benefits of our religion, we may well find an opportunity of 'preaching Christ'" (Editorial Department of the Korean Repository 1895, 479).

Thus, the following binary opposition can be seen: the civilized Western, Christian world versus the non-Civilized, non-Western world. As early as 1928, James

Earnest Fisher worried that young Koreans would lose their interest in traditional "classical literature" in Korea, and spend most of their time acquiring "Western culture," regarding "Korean" as "old-fashioned" (Fisher [1928] 1972, 126-127). He suggested that "[w]hat is objected to is the assumption of Western superiority, and the introduction of Western features of life on the basis of this assumption" (Fisher [1928] 1972, 128). What surprised Fisher was that the origin of Westernization was based on "Americanization," in that "the more the Koreans imitate America in customs and manners, the more progress they are making in cultural development" (Fisher [1928] 1972, 129). Thus, this Americanization already burgeoned before the Korean War. Fisher found that the Korean negligence of their own culture lay in their "attitude of exclusiveness in religion" (Fisher [1928] 1972, 127).

Their modernized Western views about Eastern religion were reflected within this scheme as well. The missionary Arthur Judson Brown, who visited China, Korea, Japan and other Asian Countries in the early twentieth century, advised missionaries to have a decent attitude towards Asians:

> The missionary should seldom attack and never ridicule the native religion. However absurd that faith may appear to us, it is the most sacred thing that he native has (Brown 1950, 284).

But in his Western perspective, he could not avoid a Western progressive view toward non-Western religions regardless of their own contexts:

> The real religion of Korea was Animism, and animistic people are usually the readiest to respond to the gospel message. Their lives are spent in constant fear of demons. Christianity comes to them as a blessed deliverance. Uganda, the Kameruns, and the South Sea Islands are illustrations of this. The marvelous success of the Baptists in Burma has been chiefly among those elements of the population in which animistic ideas were strongest (Brown 1919, 517).

It seemed to him that the dominant religions of Korea were identical to “Animism”. This concept was taken from the work of the anthropologist Edward Burnett Tylor (1832-1917), who divided the development of society into three stages: animism, polytheism, and monotheism. In this scheme, animism was regarded by missionaries as a primitive religious expression in non-literate societies, and thus could be easily replaced by the Christian God of Western countries: “the notable success of missionary work has been influenced in no small degree by the fact that the real religion of the people is Animism” (Brown 1919, 517). It was rewarding to introduce the Christian God to such an “uncivilized world,” where the supernatural was natural.

Even so, early Protestant missionaries in Korea were apt to complain about the Confucian dominance in society. One report in *The Korean Repository*, published in 1895, claimed that “Confucianism, knowing no higher ideal than a man, is unable to produce a godly or god-like person” (Confucianism in Korea 1895, 403). This column perpetuated the Western bias towards a non-Western society, arguing that “[a] system of ethics (Confucianism) yielding the fruit of agnosticism, selfishness, arrogance, despotism, degradation of women, cannot be pronounced a good one” (Confucianism in Korea 1895, 404).

Thus, the Christian message was conveyed through the lens of Western civilization in non-western countries. As a child of the Industrial Revolution, an explicit doctrine of social progress permeated all aspects of the culture, including science and religion. Although Christian missionaries did not bring the ideology of social Darwinism

directly into the mission field, social progress became the hidden agenda of missionaries. Social Darwinism and Christianity were not compatible worldviews in many respects, but the Christian message absorbed the motif of social progress, leading people to expect that Christianity would bring modern civilization in its train. As a result, traditional indigenous cultures and religions were regarded as outdated, pre-modern realities. This resulted in a number of consequences. From the promotion of Western culture by Western missionaries to the evangelism of contemporary Christian fundamentalism, these Christian effects still remain strong, making Korean society a religious battlefield.

2. The Contextualization of Monotheism in a Non-Western Culture

It is an exaggeration to argue, as some do, that there was a distinctive monotheistic idea in Korea before the arrival of missionaries (See Baker 2002). Actually, the concept of one God was formed under the impact of Christianity, and the idea of God's intervention in daily Korean life developed through Christian influences. F. B. Welbourn's typology of belief systems illustrated the status of God in Korea, even though his discussion centered largely on the African context: "[I]n Ankole and Marakwet, a firm belief in one God continues to exist side by side with a belief in many spirits, God ceases to be regarded as actively concerned in day-to-day affairs" (Welbourn 1968, 45). Given that Welbourn's classification of gods reflected various social structures in different societies, his observations are suitable for understanding the religious phenomenon of Korea prior to Christian influence. This type can be explained with reference to three aspects of Korean religiosity.

First, there was the idea of god alongside ancestral worship in Korea, which differed from the African Zulu religion that venerated only ancestors without the concept of God. As Irving Hexham observes, “there is no evidence that the Zulus believed in a sky god before the arrival of Europeans” (Hexham 1981, 273). It seems that the concept of a “supreme deity” or “sky god” was foreign to the Zulus of South Africa and only developed under the influence of Christian missionaries. When a missionary tried to explain an “undying Supreme Being,” Zulus could not understand it because they only thought of “God as an ancestor” (Hexham 1981, 280-281**).** In Korea, a family-centered society, ancestral veneration prevailed at the same time the Supreme Being was venerated or worshiped. Even so, a monotheistic religious institution failed to develop in this Asian country.

Second, unlike the Zulus, Koreans discriminated the worship of a supreme deity or a high god from ordinary ancestral worship. It is undeniable that there is an analogy between the Korean indigenous God and the Christian God, but they have different cultural functions. The former is found in the relationship between ancestral worship and the mountain spirits that coexisted with it for a long time. The worship of God was integrated into a cluster of popular belief systems, from mountain spirits and Shamanistic gods (what missionaries pejoratively called demons) to the Supreme Being. Within each system, all the factors played different roles. There is no evidence of a conflict between the concept of *Haneunim* and ancestral worship. The Korean God *Haneunim* was particularly venerated as a supreme being in national affairs. It was not far from the Confucian concept of “the Lord on High and Heaven” (Ching 1977, 10), but *Haneunim*

lacks the distinctively monotheistic ideas that Judaism, Christianity, and Islam have. The Christian God, regardless of geographical and cultural differences, preserved the exclusively monotheistic concept along with Judaism and Islam. While primal and *Yogic* religions underline primal ancestral worship and the cultivation of the mind, *Abramic* religions hold fast to one God who promotes group solidarity. As Rodney Stark holds: "Group solidarity is sustained primarily by a common culture—language, traditions, religion, [and] history. These same factors serve as boundaries that set groups apart" (Stark 2001, 33). In this regard, polytheistic or magical religions fail to maintain their group solidarities, resulting in the mixing of other beliefs and practices in pragmatic fashion. Korean folk religions and Japanese Shinto show a typical form of magical religion. In these religions it was not necessary to proselytize or demand exclusive commitment in order to maintain group solidarity. Instead, each readily adopted and synthesized the beliefs of others.

Lastly, worship of the Korean God did not develop into an institutionalized religion with a priesthood, sacred texts, and theology. Consequently, it was not active in, but remote from, the daily lives of Koreans. While the Korean people possessed a Supreme Being equivalent to the Christian God, the concept of one God was not distinctively separated from other cultural dimensions, especially ancestral worship. Thus, in a strict sense, there was no monotheistic God in Korea.

Under these circumstances, the introduction of Christianity stimulated a new form of religious organization, one that drew boundaries discriminating it from other religions. Thus, Christian missionaries were the ones who cultivated a monotheistic belief system.

In the process of propagating the Christian message, monotheism was planted in Korean soil and stimulated the indigenous idea of god, enabling monotheism to gradually become independent from the surrounding undifferentiated culture. As the early Presbyterian missionary James Gale observed: "Korea's is a strange religion, a mixing of ancestor worship with Buddhism, Taoism, spirit cults, divination, magic, geomancy, astrology, and fetishism" (Gale 1909, 68). Ancestral ceremonies were indiscriminately performed by Koreans, and the idea of a Supreme Being existed only vaguely as an independent reality in the cultural system. This almost reflected the concept "Deus Otiosus," the absence of temples, rites, and priests (Eliade 1958, 46-50).

The spread of Christianity was based on a belief system and worldview which expanded God's domain into a non-Christian world; it did not encourage or sanction any blending of Christian belief with the elements of other religions. As Bryan Wilson points out, "[m]onotheism justified exclusivity," fostering a theology of "no compromise" (Wilson 1982, 61, 73). This coincides with Rodney Stark's proposition as well: "If there is only one God, this necessitates an exclusive exchange relationship, there being no logical alternatives" (Stark 2001, 34**)**. Although missionaries therefore expressed some ambivalence when adopting any aspect of Korean religious culture, their uncompromising idea of God was clearly apparent.

Missionaries found that there was an analogy between the Christian God and the Supreme Being in the Korean religious system. In the relatively undifferentiated culture, missionaries attempted, in a positive vein, to contextualize the Christian God by singling out the idea of *Haneunim* among a cluster of gods, and projecting it onto the Christian

belief system. As a result, it seemed in the eyes of many missionaries that "[t]he very willingness of the Koreans to offer a costly service to pagan gods becomes transformed into a free, unreserved, full-hearted love to God and service to their fellow-men" (Jones 1908a, 29). This was also evident as early as 1894, in the "Standard Rules" for catechumens, which clearly demonstrated the agenda of early missionaries: "Since the Most High God hates the glorifying and worshipping of spirit[s], follow not the custom, even the honoring of ancestral spirit, but worship and obey God only" (Clark 1937, 111).

Therefore, it was natural that missionaries rejected any parallel between the Christian God and other gods; in an extreme case, they were regarded by the missionaries as demons, great devils, or obedient servants of Satan or simply as animistic (Miller 1906, 65; Jones 1908b, 11). Furthermore, in her writings, L. H. Underwood saw that "[o]ver other objects of worship, they believe, is the great Heavens, the personification of the visible heavens, who … is identical with the Baal referred to in the Old Testament" (Underwood 1908, 9-10). She refused to draw any parallels between "a heathen deity" and "the Eternal Jehovah" (Underwood 1908, 104). She also observed that since Chinese, Korean, and Japanese deities did not have definite articles or capitals, there was a problem with discriminating "the one only God" from the "countless other small deities" (Underwood 1908, 104).

Given this reality during the earliest stages of Christianity in Korea, missionaries played a significant role in nurturing the idea of a Christian God, both by translating the Bible and by propagating various theological teachings. It is historically apparent that this contextualization suited the process by which the Christian God was planted in Asian

soil. In the late 16th century, the Jesuit missionary Matteo Ricci had already tried to find a Chinese Supreme Being equivalent to the Christian "God." For him, Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism all failed to offer conceptions for God that he could use. In his book *T'ienchu shihi*, Matteo Ricci (1552-1610) attempted to apply the Christian God to the Chinese words *Shangdi* (Supreme Emperor), *T'iendi* (the emperor of Heaven), and *T'ienchu* (Heavenly Lord) (Chung David 57-80). In 1704, in Rome's evaluation of Maigrot's 1693 evaluation, the word *T'ienchu* was decreed by the Catholic Church, but the words *T'ien* and *Shangdi* were rejected (Noll 1992, 9, 51) because they were regarded as "the material, visible sky or at most some heavenly power residing in the sky" (Noll 1992, 12).

This theistic translation agenda had a different linguistic history in Korea. First, there was no difficulty in conveying these concepts in the Korean context. In the early stages of missionary work in Korea, *T'ienchu* and *Shangdi* were pronounced *Cheonju* and *Sangje* respectively, and were used by Korean Christians. In fact, the term *Cheonju* was widely adopted by Roman Catholics, Anglicans, and early Presbyterian missionaries. In addition to Chinese characters, Korea had a native language called *Hangeul* from which missionaries found a new concept *Haneunim.* For the Protestant Church in Korea, the transition from using the Chinese character *Cheonju* to the Korean alphabet *Haneunim* represented a new phase. The Presbyterian H. G. Underwood, along with Anglican missionaries, preferred *Cheonju*, but other Protestant missionaries, such as James Gale, Samuel Moffett, and D. L. Gifford, were determined to employ the word

Hanuenim in order to distinguish it from the term *Cheonju* of the Catholic Church, which later included the word after the Second Vatican Council (Rutt 1972, 26-27).

Second, the adoption of *Hananim* instead of *Hanuenim* by the Protestant Church was meant to provide a connection to Christian monotheism. *Hananim*, a dialect word, has, with the exception of the Jehovah's Witnesses, been used predominantly by the Protestant churches in contemporary Korea. As Paik L. George indicates: "Hana-Nim, in the present linguistic situation, is neither colloquial, nor standard, nor of Catholic sources, but the Protestant term for God" (Paik L. George 1970, 253). Interestingly, missionaries found that since the word *hana* literally means "one," this connoted a monotheistic idea of "One God," or with the honorific ending *nim* (Gale 1914, 4; 1912, 86). The projection of oneness onto *Haneunim* by using the alternative word *Hananim* was a Christian invention that made the monotheistic idea appear to be certain.

Thus, the Korean Protestant Church adopted the word *Hananim* to express their monotheistic perspective. Most scholars have argued that Korea had a monotheistic idea traceable to ancient times (Baker 2002, 107-108). But the Canadian scholar Donald Baker, who has expertise in Korean religion, argues against this mainstream view about the origins of a monotheistic God. The earliest records about the Dangun myth appeared in the books *Samguk Sagi* (the 12th century) by the Confucian scholars Kim Busik, and *Samguk Yusa* (the 13th century) by the Buddhist monk Ilyeon. The deity Hwanin, who ruled in Heaven, had a son named Hwanung by his concubine. Hwanung descended with three thousand celestial beings to earth, and mated with a woman, who was transformed from a she-bear, and bore a child who was called Dangun. Dangun established his royal

residence, called Joseon, and governed it for a thousand years. Some legends say that he became a mountain god. From this myth, Baker argues that there is no evidence that Koreans believed in "One God" in the myth; first, Dangun was the son of a heavenly concubine and Hwanung was accompanied by other celestial beings; second, after his retirement, Dangun became a mountain god; third, "there is no mention of the worship of Heaven" (Baker 2002, 111-112). Baker goes on to argue two further points: a) Koreans were historically unaware of their "indigenous tradition of monotheism," and b) early Catholic priests in Korea never reported "seeing any sign of an indigenous [monotheism]" (Baker 2002, 115).

There is, of course, still room for further debate. For example, theologian Yun Seongbeom attempts to locate the theistic idea in the ancient era, arguing that it might have developed under the Nestorian influences which brought the Christian trinity to Korea between the fourth and eighth centuries of the Common Era. According to his analysis, in the myth of *Dangun* a trinitarian idea may have been formed under the influence of Nestorianism (Yun Seongbeom 1972, 202; [1964] 1983, 68). Yun's argument, however, requires specific historical evidence that monotheism in Korea was due directly to the influence of early Christianity. Contemporary studies of *Haneunim* still do not find its monotheistic origins or development in an organizational form, and, if any, only show some monotheistic traces in history (Yun Seoungbeom [1964] 1983, 41-70).

Considering all the facts, it is clear that after the introduction of Protestantism the Korean word *Haneunim* (*Hananim*) was discussed seriously. Thus, it is important to note

that focusing on the Christian construction of *Hananim* and its function within the whole Christian belief system is more relevant than tracing its origin. The contextualization of God was not an isolated phenomenon, since other semantic projects in the realm of Korean culture were involved. When early Protestant missionaries in Korea examined the differences between Buddhism and Confucianism, they concluded in a practical way that Buddhism as a belief system was more akin to Christianity than to Confucianism. As they observed: "Confucianism, knowing no higher ideal than a man, is unable to produce a godly or godlike person. Its followers may be moral but never spiritual" (Rhodes 1934, 55). This led missionaries to draw the following conclusion about the religious nature of Confucianism:

> Strictly speaking, Confucianism is not a religion and yet it is a substitute for religion and the only religion that a majority of the Koreans have today. Its chief tenet, ancestor worship, is still the greatest obstacle to the progress of Christianity (Rhodes 1934, 53).

It seemed to the missionaries that Confucianism lacked important religious components, because many alternative concepts came from Korean Buddhist terms exhibiting a worldview similar to that of Christianity. For example, Korean Buddhism had the concept *jiok* (hell), *joe* (sin), *hoe* (repent), and *yebae* (worship) ([Ohlinger] 1892, 105). This affinity with Buddhism does not mean that the Christian worldview was absorbed into indigenous cultures. Rather, indigenous cultures were appropriated and, in a sense, absorbed within a Christian framework. Western missionaries never intended to fuse their beliefs with indigenous cultures, which were utilized only for the contextualization of the Christian belief system.

For missionaries, God was not an object for comparison, because “He” was beyond the realm of any “comparative study of philosophies and religions” (Borland 1940, 32). Furthermore, while other religions were simply “pseudo-religions” claiming objectivity, Christianity alone was considered to be the essence of “objectivity in the true and complete sense” (Borland 1940, 32-33). In this scheme, *Hananim* was isolated from popular beliefs and given a new meaning in the Christian setting, adapted to the Christian belief system while being intertwined with a cluster of Christian doctrines. What mattered was that *Hananim* was regenerated in the Christian scheme and became the unique monotheistic being, as shown in the passage “there is no other name under Heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” (New 1936, 39). This tradition has been consistent until recently. According to a poll of five hundred female members of Christian churches in Seoul, “76 % considered that *Hanamim* differs completely from the [Haneunim of Shamanism], 13.8% were unclear, and 2.8 % considered them to refer to the same deity” (Yamashita 1996, 311).

Therefore, the introduction of the Christian God into Korean culture was a process of occupying the realm of religious symbols, often by competing with indigenous religious symbols. However, the dominance of Christianity in Korea should not be attributed solely to the exclusivity of the monotheistic belief system. Other factors, particularly religious texts and related apparatuses, were also at work, reinforcing and fortifying the Christian worldview.

3. Religious Texts and Symbolism: The Establishment of the Christian World

Korea entered a bold new era when the Korean script, Hangeul, began to replace the country's traditional reliance on Chinese characters. The translation of the Bible and Christian literature into Korean not only became a medium for propagating the Christian message, but also facilitated the spread of the language among the masses. The extensive use of the Korean alphabet stimulated a cultural transition from Confucianism to modern social values, supplying both a new cosmology and a new religion in the form of Christianity.

Here it is important to indicate that Koreans had long used Chinese characters for their written means of communication. Even though the Korean language Hangeul was invented during the reign of the fourth King Sejong in the 15th century, it was not revered by the ruling class, which continued to use Chinese characters and texts exclusively. The new writing system was disdained as vulgar, called *Eonmun* (*Onmun*), and thought to be suitable only for women or the lower classes. Chinese therefore remained the official language for documentation and communication. In general, as a medium meant to knit a social fabric, language tends only to change slowly, but in the long run the Korean script was substituted for Chinese characters. This development ultimately resulted in a cultural discontinuity between the old tradition and the new era.

It was no coincidence that the popular use of Hangeul began with the dawn of modernity and the coming of missionaries to Korea. The reform movement, which lasted from July 1894 to February 1896, made possible the use of Hangeul in "major government publications" and in the "teaching [of] Korean history [at] all levels in the

newly organized modern school" (Eckert et al. 1990, 225). Hangeul, however, was not used extensively at this juncture in time. In fact, Chinese texts continued to be widely read among intellectuals, even when circulated along with Hangeul texts (Oak Sung-Deuk 2006 72). There was a historical and cultural transition from the old to the new, because now all classes had access to Korean texts, so much so that the rate of literacy was greatly enhanced.

Missionaries were therefore right to choose Hangeul instead of Chinese characters. Hangeul played a major role in the spread of Christianity and the transmission of modern, foreign culture. Even before Protestant missionaries began their work in 1884, some biblical texts had already been translated into Korean. In 1875, the Reverends John Ross and John McIntyre, with the aid of Koreans, including Seo Sangyun in Manchuria, began to translate the Chinese Bible into Korean. In 1881 they published 3000 copies of the gospels of Luke and John to be circulated to Koreans living in the border areas of Korea and China. In 1883 the gospels were revised, especially through the removal of idiomatic Chinese expressions, and the book of *Acts* was translated. The Ross translation of the New Testament was subsequently completed in 1887 (Reynolds 1916, 126; Pieters 1938, 91-92; Kim Gwangsu 1978, 30; Min Gyeongbae 1998, 169). Meanwhile, the *Gospel of Mark* was translated in Japan by the Korean student Lee Sujeong in 1885 and brought to Korea by the missionaries H. G. Underwood, H. G. Appenzeller, and W. B. Scranton (Reynolds 1916, 127; Wagner 1938, 94).

Since the two previous versions had many errors and mistranslations, a permanent Bible committee set up by the five missionaries was established in 1887 and lasted, with some changes in membership, until 1906. The New Testament was printed in 1904, reissued in an entirely revised version in 1906, and the entire Old Testament was published in 1911 (Underwood 1911, 297; Reynolds 1916, 128; Cable 1938, 97-98). As of 1938, more than 19,000,000 copies of the Scriptures had been published (Wagner 1938, 96). Given the need for further revisions, boards of revisers were organized and remained in place for many years. This new Korean Bible was revised by the Bible Societies in 1938 and became the standard Korean Bible. It played a major role in forming the modern Korean language system, paralleling what the King James Version had done for the English language in seventeenth-century Britain.[1]

After World War Two, and the discovery of the *Dead Sea Scrolls*, many new translations of the Bible appeared around the world. In Korea, a new translation committee was organized in 1960 and a new version of the Bible was published in 1967. Furthermore, a new mood of ecumenism—stirred by the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) and a number of Protestant Churches—resulted in the creation of a joint committee

[1] The Bible helped to preserve the Korean language during Japanese rule, particularly during the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity of the Japanese Empire because only churches were allowed to use Korean for worship (Scott 1975, 158). The Korean language system came into full bloom after liberation from Japan. During Japanese rule, the younger generations were gradually immersed in Japanese, which was the linguistic policy of the colonial government. After Japanese rule and the Korean War, the extensive use of the written Korean language prompted a drastic departure from the traditional culture and helped to establish a strong Christian culture.

for a new translation of the Korean Bible in 1968. This collective effort produced an updated Korean Bible in 1977 (Kim Gwangsu 1978, 125-126).[2]

The social impact of the Bible's translation into Korean was immense. From an early period, the church in Korea had easy access to the Bible and showed enthusiasm for reading it. The plain vocabulary of the people was better suited for the church than the unknown Chinese tongue (Kenmure and Vinton 1897, 63). Overall, the use of Hangeul resulted in a cultural transformation, providing Koreans with access to new knowledge and culture. As Charles Allen Clark noted in the 1930s:

> The missionaries took this (*Hangeul*) script at once and, until quite recent years, published all of their books in it. As a result, practically all of the Christians in Korea, except for a few old women, can read their Bibles and hymn books. If they could not read when they first became Christians, they learned to read in order to read their Bibles. Often those under the age of thirty were denied baptism until they had learned to read, and, quite often, baptism was denied to a husband until he had taught his wife to read the characters (Clark 1937, 82-83).

Thus the Bible became a major force, transforming lives and serving as a means of communicating new information (Jenkins 2006, 19).

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[2] This cultural activity of translation, involving the challenges of contextualization and indigenization within specific societies, is dealt with at length in *Translating the Message* by Lamin Sanneh (2001). Except for Muslim orthodoxy, which holds to the principle of the non-translatability of the Quran, Sanneh argues that most missionary religions engage in translating religious texts, an activity that takes religions from their birthplaces and spawns "worldwide pluralist movement[s]" (Sanneh 2001, 216, 233). Sanneh contends that the pluralist nature of translation can be seen in "the correlation between cultural revitalization and Christian renewal" (Sanneh 2001, 189). The translatability of the Bible into the vernacular stimulates indigenous cultures and, in turn, allows indigenous cultures to make a contribution to Christian revival. Thus, Sanneh leaves room for the rise of new religious movements such as Independent Churches in South Africa and the Yoruba religion in Nigeria. He seems to believe that the transmission of God's message can be represented equally in the vernacular beyond Westernization and thus the Christian missionary does not necessarily impose a "normative Christianity" (Sanneh 2001, 174). Likewise, the historian Philip Jenkins points out that "[t]he use of vernacular scriptures means that all Christendoms are equidistant from Jerusalem" (Jenkins 2006, 25).

The translation of the Bible was accompanied by the publication of hymn books. One was published by the Methodist Church in 1892 and another by the Presbyterian Church in 1894. Then in 1908 a united hymn book was issued by the two churches. While a new version of this hymn book was published in 1931, it was rejected by the Presbyterian Church, which came out with its own new hymn book four years later. There were theological and political debates between the two churches, and the conservative Presbyterian Church was particularly upset with the theological direction of the Methodist Church (Seo Jeongmin 1988, 20-24).

Just as the use of the Korean script led to a departure from traditional culture, the adoption of Western music further helped to stimulate cultural change. The early missionary Paul L. Glover initially experienced a difference between Korean and Western musical scales:

> That first experience outraged my every musical sense, and led me to the snap conclusion that the Koreans were hopelessly unmusical. It is three years since then, and my suffering is just as acute as ever, but my earlier judgment concerning their musical nature had changed (Glover 1915, 110).

What Glover realized was that Korea's pentatonic scale prevented Koreans from learning seven tone hymnals: "They were born with a capacity of hearing only five tones where we hear seven" (Glover 1915, 111). Thus, learning the hymnals meant the transformation from a traditional Korean music scale to a seven tone scale. Unlike adults, who were accustomed to Korean traditional songs, "children and young people can learn to sing anything that westerners can" (Lutz 1938, 77). Where a religion goes, a culture often follows. As of 1938, most churches had "organs, a few pianos, and several pipe organs"

(Lutz 1938, 77). As the Korean author Kim In Sik noted at the time: "Practically all of our hymns are imported. Most of the secular [hymns] we sing are also imported" (Kim In Sik 1938, 82). Interestingly enough, this situation has not changed substantially over the years. In the fairly recent *Korean Hymnal*, used by mainstream Protestant churches, there are only sixteen hymns composed and written by Koreans (Korean Hymnal Society 1984).

Other translated Christian literature and theological works contributed greatly to the spread of the Christian belief system. The Korean Religious Tract Society was particularly effective in stimulating the circulation of Christian publications: 306,609 copies of forty-five different Christian books were sold to Koreans between April and December of 1905, and in 1906 this number had risen to 433,920 (Korean Religious Tract Society 1906, 22-23). According to the catalogue of books and tracts for the year 1911, a total of four hundred and eighty-eight publications were available,[3] covering topics like basic Christian faith and doctrine, Christian ritual, the Bible, Church history, hymnal music and so forth. The list also enumerated elementary sciences such as arithmetic, geography, botany, astronomy, algebra, and zoology. Several Chinese, Japanese, and English titles were included as well (Korean Religious Tract Society 1911, 33-53). The catalogue number was enlarged to one thousand and three the next year with the addition of medical books, a commentary on the New Testament, and various Sunday school lessons (Korean Religious Tract Society 1912, 31-55). As Table 1 shows, the supply of Christian-related publications in the years 1911-12 was large and stable.

[3] In cases where numbers were omitted, it seems they were out of stock or out of print.

Table 1

Years	Copies distributed	Copies published	Pages published
1911	327488	147421	3637065
1912	739141	892210	3338170
1913	1074341	907692	4188692
1914	1013036	844200	4727600
1915	1229639	749748	3402662
1916	1814829	683400	3280050
1917	1337496	1469899	5159490
1918	2058272	1321976	31593248
1919	1231004	921770	11008900

Source: (Korean Religious Tract Society 1913; Korean Religious Book and Tract Society 1916; 1919)

In situations where access to tracts and books was limited, their distribution led to a mass readership and worked as the warp and woof of forming staunch Christian lives. These publications represented a whole Christian world. Highlighting the effectiveness of the Korean Religious Tract Society in distributing Christian material, the missionary C. S. Demings noted:

> I feel that the work of the Society is supplying a great need and making our personal workers ten-fold more effective. After the Word is preached the Tract remains a quiet but persistent voice calling the soul God-ward. The work of the Society has also been invaluable in the publications it has prepared for our Christian schools, and especially the accessories to our Sunday-school work. Your Society supplies to all our churches the catechisms, expositions of Scripture, and live messages on moral and doctrinal questions which keep the Church from error and inspire to greater earnestness and devotion (Korean Religious Tract Society 1912, 18).

This supply of literature helped to construct a symbolic system, but it needs to be remembered that the religious systems exported to indigenous countries seldom

constitute finished products. Once a Christian framework, and its accompanying textual material, is introduced within a society, Christian beliefs acquire a life of their own (Jenkins 2006, 20). Depending on the strength of both missionary influence and ongoing theological elaboration, the types of local churches may differ. This can be seen in the Independent Churches of South Africa, which developed as separatist religious movements without significant missionary influence (Sundkler 1961, 38-64). While mainline Korean churches continue to have a close relationship with missionaries and Western denominations, Christian-oriented sects and new religions make use of Korean texts as major communication channels to create and sustaining their organizations. They demonstrate that there is a mutual relationship between a culture and a belief system.

4. Protestantism as an Anti-Syncretistic Religion

The characteristics of Korean Protestantism addressed above can be epitomized as anti-syncretistic. It has often been claimed that the main factor behind the phenomenal growth of Korean Christianity came from syncretism, the synthesis of Christianity and Korean traditions. However, real-life phenomena and scholarly articulation do not always converge perfectly. It is implausible, for example, to argue that the growth of Korean Protestantism is dependent on syncretism. David Chung, a notable scholar, has done so, but his work is actually more concerned with the contextualization of Christianity (Chung David 2001). Contrary to conventional wisdom, the growth of Protestant Christianity has been due to its anti-syncretistic tendencies. Even though some people continue to assert that syncretism lies behind the accelerated growth and influence of the

Roman Catholic Church, there are no reliable statistics to support this seemingly attractive argument.

In the realm of religious competition, the clear winner has been Protestant Christianity. Christianization in Korea was accompanied by a consciousness of superiority, one which sought to exclude other elements from the religious landscape. This anti-syncretism, antagonistic to all foreign elements, was concerned with the defense of "religious boundaries" that postulate an authentic and pure reality of religion (Stewart and Shaw 1994, 7-8). However, this anti-syncretism does not mean that a specific belief system remains permanently fixed; rather, it continues to be constituted and reconstituted in history (Stewart and Shaw 1994, 7-8). Even though Christian fundamentalists claim that their beliefs transcend any historical and social construction, beliefs are inevitably part of a synthetic process. Anti-syncretism means that "[s]elected forms may be identified as foreign and extirpated, or alternatively recast and retained through claims that they have always been 'ours', thereby deleting former religious syntheses from authorized cultural memory" (Stewart and Shaw 1994, 8). Korean Protestantism is a particular form of Christianity, imported largely from the USA, and selectively contextualized within Korea. While it may be dangerous to say that Korean Protestantism is almost identical to its American counterpart, both have similar social and theological features.

Theologically speaking, anti-syncretism is a species of exclusivism. The Korean theologian Kim Kyeong Jae likens it to the sowing model, a metaphor adapted from the parable of sowing (Mark 4:1-32). Kim succinctly asserts that conservative Protestantism

in Korea is puritanical, conservative, and orthodox. In this model the indigenous culture is seen as the soil and treated as a "dead reality," while the Christian message is regarded as the "good seed with life-giving power" **(**Kim Kyoung Jae 1994, 120-121). This Protestant conviction is derived from absolute beliefs about the authority of the Bible and the exclusivity of Christianity. It was the position of American missionaries and continues to find support among conservative Korean Christians to this day.

Kim's alternative theological method is the grafting model (Romans 11:11-27). Explaining his "pluralistic" theological view, Kim suggests that "[t]he purpose of grafting is to produce good seeds or fruits, with an increase of harvest by inserting a good gene into an old tree" (Kim Kyoung Jae 1994, 135). When Christianity encounters non-Christian cultures, Kim argues, its purpose is to graft the gospel, containing a "superior genetic quality," onto a tree already growing on the land (Kim Kyoung Jae 1994, 144). In order to support his argument, he finds a parallel metaphor in Hans-Georg Gadamer's hermeneutical term "fusion of horizons." Aware that this model can be labeled syncretistic, Kim points out that "the real task for the grafting model is found not in religious syncretism or the relativity of the Gospel, but rather in the question of whether the different expressions of other religions can fuse horizons" (Kim Kyoung Kae 1994, 141). From an anti-syncretistic viewpoint, which presupposes the existence of a pure form of Christianity, his arguments could be criticized as syncretistic. According to the Canadian theologian Harold Wells, Kim's hermeneutic scheme seems to be inclusivist rather than pluralist, due to Kim's resistance to syncretism (Wells 1998, 72). However, Wells goes on to add that "Kim knows he has not resolved the hard issues about

syncretism and interreligious encounter in East Asia" (Wells, 1998, 71). Whether or not a "fusion of horizons" represents syncretism, as Wells seems to indicate, the fact remains that "Kim must be seen as a minority voice in Korean Christianity, even in his own relatively liberal Presbyterian Church" (Wells, 1998, 60).

In addition to Kim's theological viewpoint, there are other liberal theologians who attempt to interpret non-Christian religions and cultures positively. In fact, they see Shamanism and other religions as the cultural ground on which Korean culture and religion developed (Yun Seongbeom [1964] 1983; Yu Dongsik 1965). The Korean Methodist theologian Yun Seongbeom argues that Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, and Christianity were indigenized on the foundation of Shamanism (Yun Seongbeom [1964] 1983, 161). More radically, *minjung* theology (Korean liberation theology) consciously attempts to accommodate Korean traditions and incorporate them into a form of Christian unity.[4] In terms of synthesis, its theological orientation is more syncretistic than that of evangelicals and fundamentalists. In terms of their theological influence, however, they have been confined chiefly to academic circles, making their theological influence in the wider society negligible.

In contrast, the anti-syncretistic tendency, representing a type of cognitive territory, occurs more extensively in conservative Protestant churches. It has been wrongly held that Christianity in Korea, a newly imported religion from the West, has followed the path of syncretism. In grounding this argument, scholars have sought a

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[4] That theological scheme was well represented in the metaphor "the confluence of two stories" by the *minjung* theologian Seo Namdong. He believes *minjung* theology is like a streaming process where the liberating traditions of Korea and Christianity merge in the mission of God (Seo Namdong 1986, 271).

commonality in Shamanism and Christianity, assuming that an imported religion must adapt to native cultures, consciously or unconsciously, in order to survive or grow. The main syncretistic target for the purposes of this discussion has been Pentecostalism in Korea. Since there are some possible analogies between Shamanism and Pentecostalism (or Charismatic churches), it is believed that an analogy can be made between the power of the Holy Spirit and the experience of the shaman during trance states**.**

As for the mutual relationship, a popular argument is that Shamanism is the main force behind the growth of Pentecostalism. This reductionistic perspective impedes any adequate understanding of Pentecostalism in Korea and distorts the nature of the concepts that help to describe or explain the subject matter. As Irving Hexham and Karla Poewe point out: "The exaggeration is predictable because in South Africa it tends to be focused on politics, in the United States and Canada on financial and sexual corruption, and in Korea on [S]hamanism" (Hexham and Poewe 1994, 51-52). Discussing Cho Younggi [Jo Yonggi] and Kim Kidong [Kim Gidong], Mark Mullins argues that "[a]lthough Pentecostal church leaders would deny the influence of 'pagan religion,' most scholars agree that Shamanism has been the central force shaping the development of Korean Pentecostalism" (Mullins 1994, 91-2). As he goes on to say: "Whether regarded as 'syncretism' or 'contextualization,' it is undeniable that this shamanistic orientation has permeated Korean churches (Mullins 1994, 92). Mullins' argument is based mainly on theological sources using evidence supplied by Korean Presbyterian and Methodist theologians and scholars who are frequently cited by Western scholars (Mullins 1994; Cox 1995). Most Korean theologians who are theologically oriented and

anti-syncretistic in attitude tend to project the negative side of Korean churches onto Shamanism. Yu Boo Woong, a missiologist, enumerates the negative features in Shamanism: "The characteristics that Koreans have developed in the practice of Shamanism are fatalism, moral indifference, self-centered interest, escapism, and also fanaticism in its ceremonial rites" (Yu Boo Woong, 1986, 72). Criticizing this "Shamanizing Christianity," Son Bong Ho, a philosopher and Presbyterian preacher, claims that "[a]s one of the most primitive natural religions of the world, Shamanism has almost no ethical teachings" (Son Bong Ho 1983, 337). In fact, the views of Yu and Son are not so different from how Korean Pentecostal Christians regard a Korean shaman or *mudang*. Yamashita Akiko has observed that "Korean Pentecostals, other Christian sects, and 'new' religions for the most part consider *mudang* to be manifestations of Satan" (Yamashita 1996, 303).

Another similar argument about the relationship between Christianity and Shamanism is made by the theologian Harvey Cox. He sees a positive relationship between Korean Pentecostalism and Shamanism. For him, Pentecostalism incorporates the cultural subconscious into a modern perspective whereas Shamanism functions as the cultural subconscious and is embedded in culture, reminiscent of the collective unconscious put forward by Carl G. Jung. This being granted**,** its correlation with Shamanistic possession appears certain to Harvey Cox. He argues that "[d]espite its own protestations to the contrary, [P]entecostalism in Korea seems to be able to incorporate many of the characteristics of [S]hamanism and also to prepare people remarkably well for modern political and economic survival" (Cox 1995, 219). In this case, however,

Shamanism is transformed into a universal reality which dwells in the human mind. For Cox, Shamanism is a synonym of primal experience, since it is a universal phenomenon embedded in the human psyche. Thus, "[S]hamanism never really dies," Cox continues, for "[i]t is just too deeply lodged in the inner recesses of the human psyche, and it frequently survives by wrapping itself in the ceremonies of other traditions. [Even] certain rituals that appear on the surface to be Buddhist or Shinto are essentially shamanistic in content" (Cox 1995, 227). For Cox, the historical modes and practices of Shamanism in a uniquely Korean context have a psychological dimension, one that becomes "an inherent part of the Christian mystical tradition" (Cox 1995, 224).

Cox goes even further, stating that "what we think of [S]hamanism is an inherent part of the Christian mystical tradition" (Cox 1995, 227). Thus he could say that "I am attracted to this recent understanding of Paul, who appears now to have been something of a shaman himself. It also strengthens my conviction that the primal spirituality now surfacing in Korea (and elsewhere) under Pentecostal inspiration also underlies the original biblical faith as well" (Cox 1995, 226). Cox claims that he discovered the correlation between Shamanism and Pentecostalism when he traveled to Korea and visited the Yoido [Yeoido] Full Gospel Church. However, Cox's account falls into conceptual error.

If Shamanism appears in every religion, or is a universal phenomenon, it is contradictory to claim that Shamanism's influence on Pentecostalism in Korea is unique. It seems that for him the Pentecostal movement is the Shamanization of Christianity, not the Christianization of Shamanism and, thus, Christianity is resolved in Shamanism. It

naturally follows that the issue of conceptual validity casts doubt on Cox's thesis. From this perspective, Shamanism, as an historical, cultural, political, social and religious reality in a specific context, disappears, and resides in the timeless human psyche. Cox confuses primal experience with Shamanism as a primal religion. Primal experience can appear in every religion, but every primal experience is not always Shamanistic. With reference to the Shamanistic influence on Pentecostalism, the arguments made by Mullins and Cox raise several issues.

First, it should not be ignored that the leaders and members of the Yeoido Full Gospel Church tenaciously reject the notion that Shamanism has influenced Pentecostalism (Cox 1995, 224, 226), and in fact have worked enthusiastically to convert shamans to Christianity. In the early stage of his mission, the founder of the church, Jo Yonggi, along with his mother-in-law Choe Jasil, even burnt the ritual tools (or paraphernalia) of shamans and the amulets used for averting evil (See photos in Choe Jasil 1982). Another case shows Christian hostility towards Shamanism. The experience of Ms. L, a female shaman (mudang), who converted from Christianity to Shamanism, is meticulously described in Yamashita Akiko's ethnographical work. Ms. L experienced hostile treatment from her family and from relatives who belonged to the Yoido Full Gospel Church:

> I came to realize that my and my mother's ways are different, even though we are parent and child. But I can't understand why a parent would say to her child, "You are possessed by the Devil! *You* are Satan!" She said that she could see that I had demons and devils attached to my body. Well, [i]f I am a devil, what is my parent—that is the question! (Yamashita 1996, 309-310).

Second, the church leader Jo Yonggi, who had a Buddhist background before converting to Christianity, complains that "these days churches are so corrupt that they invite fortunetellers to preach in churches" (Jo Yonggi [1976] 1990, 67). In addition, he claims that

> Many people ask me "Pastor, is there salvation in the Catholic Church, or not?" There would be of course many people who would be saved with their pure faith. Institutionally, however, the feature of the Virgin Mary holding the child Jesus is the syncretism with the Babylonian religion. Thus, the religion itself deserves to be judged by the words of God (Jo Yonggi 1990, 60).

This shows the typical attitude towards the Roman Catholic Church by conservative Protestant churches.

Third, a question can be raised from another standpoint: if religious discourse is accompanied by power relations, how can shamanic discourse and practices have a superior position ruling over Christian beliefs and rituals? In terms of cultural contact, Shamanism is in the position of recipient rather than donor in the Korean setting. Although Shamanistic forms are subsumed in Christianity, they are minimal or "low syncretism" in James H. Grayson's term (Grayson 1992).[5] This means that there is a weak correlation between Shamanism proper and Christianity.

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[5] Grayson tries to measure the degree of syncretism in Korean religions from a comparative perspective. According to him, the syncretistic processes of indigenous and imported religions can be considered in a twofold manner. Given the Korean context, Shamanism is regarded as an indigenous form of religion, while Buddhism, Confucianism, and Christianity as imported religions:

> When there has been a high degree of syncretism by the transmitted religion with the indigenous religion, the result will be that the core values of the indigenous religion will constitute the center of the new religion, with the missionary religions providing many external or superficial features. On the other hand, when there has been a low degree of syncretism by the missionary religion with the autochthonous

Shamanism and Pentecostalism have different boundary markers or core elements for sustaining their structures. Trivial and superficial elements do not affect the essential structure. There are some parallels between Korean Pentecostalism and Shamanism, yet they have different cosmologies and symbols, embedded in divergent myths and rituals. Korean Pentecostalism is associated primarily with traditional Pentecostalism. Thus, any analysis of Pentecostalism ought to consider major components such as myth, ritual, and doctrine—the symbolic system—that comprise a religion. For Pentecostals, the major boundary markers are the Bible, Christian beliefs, rituals, and symbols.

In a non-Christian context, Korean Pentecostalism has competed with Shamanistic gods, mountain gods, and other spirits. The exorcist practices of Pentecostalism are not simple imitations of Shamanistic exorcisms, but are ways of confronting Shamanistic and other Korean gods on the basis of Christian beliefs. Korean Christians think that while they believe in the existence of gods and demons, they are objects that can only be expelled by the superpower, that is, the Christian God and Jesus Christ. For these Christians, the Christian God is so powerful that it can destroy inferior gods, demons, and evil spirits, as shown in the four Gospels. Christianity in Korea appeared as the destroyer of traditional Korean culture and beliefs, not as something subordinate to them. The Christian claim that Shamanism is superstitious and selfish reflects the presumed superiority of Christianity. As shown in early Korean Protestantism,

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> cults, the core values of the missionary religion will form the central aspect of the new religion, with the indigenous religion providing certain superficial features or details (Grayson 1992, 202 -203).

Grayson's theory of high and low syncretism is based on his hypothesis that every religion has "a certain core set of values, concepts, or beliefs" by which the degree of syncretism can be measured (Grayson 1992, 203).

Christianity was the symbol of progress and civilization. When a belief system has a superiority complex, its symbolism tends to become “imperialistic,” so that the acceptance of other cultural elements is peripheral at best.

Thus, the recognition of a structural center and periphery in religion is significant. Looking solely at traditional Korean elements in Christianity will lead one to miss the core system of Christianity. It is wrong to assume that because Shamanism is so spiritually powerful, it infiltrated Christianity and contributed to Christian growth. Apart from Christian oriented new religious groups—such as the Unification Church, the Heavenly Father Religion (formerly Jeondogwan or known as the Olive Tree Movements), the Church of God (a cultic movement derived from the Seventh Day Adventist Church of Korea), and other small groups parallel to African Independent Churches—there is no successful indigenous church in Korea. In the history of the Korean church, the most notable syncretistic movements within Christian circles were the Heavenly Father Religion and the Unification Church. However, both religions eventually became fringe movements in competition with traditional Christianity. Both the Heavenly Father movement, a magico-religion, and the Unification Church, a highly intellectual religion, claim no more than 50,000 members respectively. Previously, the first claimed more than 1.8 million and the second 300,000 (Moos 1964, 112). Here again, one needs to pay attention to the statistical fact that folk religions, including Shamanism and new religions, are very small, as shown in Table 5.1. The argument that Shamanism’s influence on Christianity is substantial ought to be reconsidered. There has,

incidentally, been no national survey on Shamanism's contribution to the formation and growth of Korean Christianity.

Table 5.1 Korean Religion

	Non-religious	Protestant	Catholic	Buddhist	Others
1984	55.8	17.2	5.7	18.8	2.6
1989	51.0	19.2	7.0	20.9	1.9
1997	53.1	20.3	7.4	18.3	0.9

Source: (Gallup Korea 1998, 55)

What is important here is that people who identified themselves as "non-religious" explicitly rejected the Shamanistic category. As evidence of syncretism, the dual allegiances of believers and sub-cultural deviances may occur in cultural transition. However, without building a strong religious economy, sociologically speaking, it is impossible to become a leading religion. Tables 5.2, 5.2, and 5.3 demonstrate how Christian activities are far more intensive than Buddhist ones. This not only means that the religious boundaries of Christianity are much stronger than those of Buddhism, but that the scale of folk Christianity (if any) is much lower than that of folk Buddhism.

Table 5.2 The Frequency of Religious Ritual (more than once a week)

Year	Buddhist	Protestant	Catholic
1984	10.1	61.8	66.2
1989	3.8	72.9	66.4
1997	1.2	71.5	60.4

Source: (Gallup Korea 1998, 28)

Table 5.3 The Frequency of Prayer (more than once a day)

Year	Buddhist	Protestant	Catholic
1984	16.3	62.6	57.1
1989	13.7	67.6	57.8
1997	10.7	62.6	41.2

Source: (Gallup Korea 1998, 29)

Table 5.4 The Frequency of Reading the Bible or the Buddhist Sutras (more than once a day)

Year	Buddhist	Protestant	Catholic
1984	10.5	44.8	33.7
1989	8.3	49.6	38.6
1997	9.0	50.4	33.5

Source: (Gallup Korea 1998, 30)

It appears that the development of Christianity is based on the weakness of traditional religions. Where the traditional religious economy collapsed, the cultural and religious resilience of traditional religions proved to be very low against Christianity. As a consequence, Christianity formed a social base and conquered the country religiously in a fashion far different from that of India and Japan, where the traditional religious economy and cultural resilience remained strong and steady. With this matter, a rational choice model of religious belief and sacrifice, formulated by Rodney Stark and others, provides the evidence for the success of Korean Christianity. First, Korean Christians are far more sacrificial than other religionists in their commitments. Second, Korean Christianity proved that its “collectively produced commodity” was much better than that of other religions. Third, their strong commitments to, and involvement in, churches blockaded free riders, who tend to weaken the ability of a group “to create collective

religious goods" (Stark and Finke 1997, 253). Sociologically speaking, Shamanism is definitely not a church type. There are no strong organizational and doctrinal boundaries in Shamanism. What most Korean theologians mean by Shamanism is, in fact, the cultural ethos of the Korean people.

If there are some Shamanistic influences within Protestantism, they may be part of an undifferentiated cultural ethos. James H. Grayson, one of the leading theorists of syncretism, and a United Methodist missionary to Korea from 1971 to 1987, outlines several very important characteristics of Korean Protestantism:

> Given the fact that Protestant Christianity was numerically strong, had a notable association with Korean patriotism during the Japanese colonial period, and can be shown to have had an extensive influence on the other religious traditions of Korea, it seems strange to me as a new missionary in the early 1970s that there was not a greater degree of Protestant accommodation to the forms and practices of Korean culture. If anything, it struck me there was a strong disjuncture between Korean Christianity on the one hand, and Korean culture on the other. An examination of the union hymnal used by all the Protestant denominations showed that only a very small number of the hymns had been composed by Koreans. Of this small number, only one or two hymns could be said to show any direct influence from the musical traditions of Korea. With the notable exception of a few Anglican churches, Protestant churches showed no influence from Korean architectural traditions in formal shape, arrangement, or decorative motifs. Christian symbolism used inside the churches likewise gave no evidence of any influence from the rich tradition of Korean symbols and designs. The order of the services of worship, the elements of the service, the type of meetings held outside worship, and all other ritual matters appeared to be so Western that apparently there was no visible difference from American religious practice other than the use of the Korean language (Grayson 1995, 47).

It is surprising that when it comes to Christianity, he does not use the word syncretism compared to his analysis of low and high syncretism in folk Buddhism and Shamanism. In stark contrast, he finds no difference between Korean and American churches except for the "Korean language".

Grayson divided Protestant accommodation to "Korean culture" into three categories: behavioral, ritual, and spiritual. First, looking at Korean Christians in churches, he found that their behavioral pattern is very similar to the Confucian, exhibiting aristocratic and hierarchical features such as an elected eldership (Grayson 1995, 50-51). Such accommodation can be considered a cultural affinity between two cultures rather than an example of synthesis (Jenkins 2006, 45). Second, at the ritual level, Grayson mentions the Christian accommodation of the ancestral ceremony, *jesa*, into a memorial service, *chudo yebae*. This rite could be viewed as an instance of how Korean Christians borrowed from their indigenous tradition, but as a matter of fact it has major biblical support from the Ten Commandments "where God directs believers to honor their fathers and mothers" (Grayson 1995, 52). This accommodation is not different from the Christian adoption of Christmas day, December 25th, from a pagan tradition which eventually lost its original cultural roots. The other two examples, of *buheunghoe* (Christian revival movement) and *gidowon* (Korean prayer retreat center), could be regarded as Christian accommodation to Korean culture. Third, the spiritual level of Christian accommodation to Korean religious culture is concerned with *gibok sinang* (a belief in prayers for blessing), which Grayson thinks was "derived from Korean folk religious practices" (Grayson 1995, 55). These accommodations are, however, implicit rather than explicit. First, when Korean society is democratized, churches will also follow this democratizing pattern. The second and third elements also would be incorporated into traditional Christianity, losing their original cultural and religious roots. Horace G. Underwood, a third-generation missionary in Korea, serving

since 1939, observes this Christian movement away from Korean religious traditions: “As matter of fact, as Korea draws further and further away from its Buddhist and Confucian and Shaman roots, there has been a growing tendency to ‘Christianize’ some traditional forms, as they no longer have such strong religious implications” (Underwood 1994, 71).

The contextualization of Christianity differs from a syncretistic process that is concerned with the Christian adoption of traditional religions and cultures in Korea. Even though syncretism might happen, it represents, at best, only a transient phase in the contextualization of the Christian message when cultural contacts first take place. In other words, the acceptance of indigenous cultures and languages in Korean Protestantism could happen in the early stages of proselytizing activities. Therefore, the theory of syncretism, which attempts to explain the success of Korean Christianity, must be abandoned. Instead, anti-syncretism, the opposite of syncretism, seems most applicable to Korean Protestantism.

5. Conclusion

It is irrefutable that the success of Protestantism in Korea relied on a situation where other religions were weak. More important, its monotheistic nature prompted its growth. Thus Korean Protestantism was not created in Korea but was imported to Korea where it took root in Korean soil. More precisely, Korean Protestantism was derived from American Protestantism and grafted onto Korean society. In the process, it undermined traditional Korean cultures, which were rejected and destroyed by the new converts.

First, missionaries brought the progressive ideas of Western civilization, along with an attitude of superiority, to pre-modern Korea. Their work promoted a Westernization project that gave Protestantism a tremendous boost. Second, in this period of social and cultural flux, Korean Protestantism fostered a strong Christian monotheism. Although the monotheistic concept *Hananim* (including *Haneunim*) was not a Christian invention, its monotheistic idea and institutionalization was effectively Christian. Third, it is evident that the wide-ranging use of the invented Korean script, Hangeul, substituted for Chinese characters, gave Protestants a powerful communication tool. The translation of the Bible and the extensive circulation of Christian hymnals and books written in Hangeul all helped to transform the religious landscape, allowing Christianity to play a leading role.

All these characteristics can be viewed as anti-syncretistic. The growth of Korean Protestantism did not derive from compromise with local cultures; rather it resulted from the total rejection of indigenous religious cultures. Therefore, the contention that the general features of Korean Protestantism followed a syncretistic process is shown to be implausible. Given the fact that Pentecostal churches have heavily influenced the shape and growth of Korean Protestantism, it is important to remember that mainline Presbyterian and Methodist churches were a major force for church growth, comprising more than fifty percent of Korean Christianity (Underwood 1997, 75 n. 1). The next chapter will explore more specific efforts, especially the theological efforts of local churches, to promote Protestant Christian beliefs in Korea.

Chapter Five

Christian Orthodoxy and the Formation of Protestant Fundamentalism

As long as local Christian churches maintain strong ties with global Christian networks in the world system, the possibility of remaining within traditional Christianity will be high. It is, however, also plausible that if the cultural resilience of traditional cultures is high, the genesis of new religious movements will be stimulated. The former will be the main subject of this chapter, while the latter will be the focus of the next chapter. In both cases, of course, the context continues to be Korea.

Historically, conservative Protestant Churches in Korea have displayed three distinct characteristics. First, missionaries helped to shape Korean Protestant churches, especially through the introduction of American conservative beliefs and an emphasis on individual salvation. Second, schism became a general phenomenon in conservative churches. Lastly, given these two tendencies, conservative churches became theologically anti-liberal and socially exclusive. As a result, they not only promoted individual salvation but also encouraged cultural narrowness and conservative religious, social, and political beliefs.

1. Piety and Individual Salvation

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, a new political, social, and cultural environment paved the way for the consciousness of modernity. Confucianism, which had maintained a solid social position, failed to foster a religiosity among the masses.

When its political system collapsed, Confucianism lost its social power, leaving a void that was filled by Protestant churches. Under these circumstances, Protestantism grew into a strong religious organization, aided by the zealous dedication of its church members.

From the beginning of the twentieth century, North American Protestantism played a leading role in establishing mission stations and spreading fundamentalist Christianity. This was particularly true of Presbyterian churches, which provide an exemplary model for understanding Protestantism in the Korean context. In this situation, American Presbyterian missionaries held the leading position, followed by the Methodists, Anglicans, Lutherans, Baptists, and Pentecostals, who had very few missionaries. The Salvation Army, Seventh-Day Adventism, and the Oriental (Holiness) Mission were even smaller in missionary terms. In Korea, therefore, they made little impact (Chun Sung Chun 1955: 39-40).

Early Presbyterian methods, along with those of other church bodies, mirrored conventional missionary practice around the world. Such a strategy consisted of itinerant tours for propagating the Gospel and collecting information about Korea (Rhodes 1934, 82-86). Simple itineration work—such as visiting villages and making converts—gradually demanded more comprehensive missions. While Methodist missionaries were actively engaged in education, hospital work, and social activities like the YMCA (Mallalieu 1892, 286-287; Chun Sung Chun 1955, 48), Presbyterian missionaries searched intensively for a more effective method of evangelization and eventually adopted the so-called Nevius Plan, named after John L. Nevius, an American missionary

in China. Visiting Korea in 1890, Nevius spent two weeks with Presbyterian missionaries, suggesting that missions draw up territorial boundaries and promote systematic Bible study, self-support, self-government, self-propagation, and strict discipline among their converts. It turned out that volunteer Koreans and their labors were more powerful than foreign financial aid and paid native agents for the growth of the local church. As the missionary W. L. Swallen commented in 1914: “In Korea the Self-support method succeeds” (Swallen 1914, 109). It prohibited “mercenary Christians” depending on the “great inrush of foreign funds; instead, volunteer Christians were encouraged to generate their own social networks (Nevius 1958, 15, 87; Welbon 1915, 43).

Nevius’ recommendations helped to seed a number of local churches led by Korean lay people, who used their web of family connections to create a wide range of Christian networks (Shearer 1965, 463; Clark 1937, 117-119). Korean colporteurs were also dispatched to sell tracts and spread the Gospel, providing new information to the local people. Through such networks, Korean Presbyterian churches established a unique tradition, comprised of Bible study, strict discipline, evangelical zeal, observance of the sabbath, prohibitions against alcohol and tobacco, and a general ban on ancestral worship. Charles Allen Clark succinctly captured the fervor of Korean Christians as they came under this influence: “Discipline is far more severe than in American churches, but it nearly always seems to have had a salutary effect” (Clark 1937, 128). A successful part of Nevius’ new method was its focus on community; such an idea served as a catalyst, moving Christians beyond the street and market preaching that had defined the early stages of Korean missionary work. Nevius was no supporter of older missionary methods,

saying: “I prosecuted the [itinerating work] laboriously, making long tours over the same ground every spring and autumn, but for five years [I] had not a single convert” (Nevius 1958, 86). On the contrary, tight networking activities, the strong commitment of church members to their own communities, and an enthusiasm for Bible study were factors that contributed to church growth in Korea. These factors facilitated the rapid contextualization of Christianity. Under missionary influence, native Koreans moved into Christian revival movements similar to the Welsh Revival where **“**each person was asked to pray for himself out loud, disregarding everyone else in the room” (Clark 1937, 164). This kind of prayer was typified by Rev. Gil Seonju, who first created a “morning prayer session” and made a unique tradition in Protestant Korean Churches. He claimed to have read through the New Testament one hundred times and the Old Testament over thirty times. Later he said that he read the *Book of Revelation* over ten thousand times and the Book of 1 John five hundred times. His major theological ideas were apocalyptic millennialism and mystical piety (Min Gyeongbae, 1998, 396-398)[1]. Gil’s beliefs were not new however. During the early years, Protestant missionaries in Korea had held premillenarian views, kept the Sunday Sabbath, and deemed higher criticism and liberalism to be dangerous heresies (Conn 1966, 26; Min Kyeongbae 1998, 276; Brown 1919, 540).

Alongside this Christian social network, pious individual and other-worldly beliefs prompted the growth of Protestant churches. As early as 1907 or 1912, a

[1] In another article, we learn that he “read the Old Testament through from Gen. to Mal. thirty times and from Gen. to Esther more than five hundred times. He read the entire New Testament more than a hundred times and memorized Revelation and recited it several thousand times” (Bernheisel 1936, 30).

missionary happened to overhear a Korean convert's prayer in a church service: "O Lord, we are a despised people, the weakest nation on the earth. But thou art a God who chooses the despised things. Wilt thou use this nation to show forth Thy glory in Asia!" (Brown 1919, 532). This prayer was represented in revival movements, with the revival movement of 1907 demonstrating how a conservative belief system was generated during social and political upheaval. Missionaries hoped that such other-worldly and individual revivalism would keep converts away from political movements provoked by the Russia-Japanese War (1904-5), the Korea-Japan Treaty (1905), and the Japanese annexation of Korea (1910). In 1910, the official annexation of Korea by Japan meant that most Korean economic, political, and social policies were regulated and governed by Japan. In the name of land reform, Koreans were deprived of their land by the Japanese. Missionaries worried that the Koreans were so deeply frustrated by colonial oppression that they might go in unexpected directions if a collective psychology against the Japanese erupted. For missionaries, it was deemed best to suppress any political agendas that might arise among their Korean followers. Bible study, prayer meetings, and Bible conferences were to be limited to religious contexts (Scott 1975, 56-579).

Two factors help to explain the apolitical attitude of missionaries and Korean Christians. First, missionaries generally did not want to interfere in politics, and concentrated on the propagation of the Gospel (Brown 1950, 278-279). Missionaries promoted individualistic beliefs, keeping Korean Christians from involvement in politics. The missionaries did not seriously respond to the Japanese annexation of Korea and accepted as an established fact the assimilation (amalgamation) policy of Japan. Second,

colonial policies were not on their side. In fact, the colonial government made frequent attempts to control mission churches, particularly those that sponsored schools. In these educational institutions religious teachings were forbidden in the name of the separation between church and state, even if the schools were private. The purpose of controlling religion in education was in line with Japan's nationalistic interests (Brown 1919, 593-594; Scott 1975, 79-82).

In this "conform or close up" environment, missionaries felt that conformity to the colonial government was the only practical choice. The missionary attitude towards colonial Japan was captured by Arthur Judson Brown, who urged his peers to "scrupulously respect and obey the lawfully constituted authorities … as far as possible [since] the Korean churches [were] wholly apart from all political matters [and should] recognize the Japanese nation as the absolute legal master of Korea" (Brown 1919, 582). Brown's views anticipated the Japanese Empire's eventual annexation of Korea. Despite his somewhat sympathetic attitude towards Koreans, he could not overcome his colonialist viewpoint: "Conquerors and conquered have seldom mingled as equals anywhere in the world, and then after the lapse of many generations" (Brown 1919, 583-584). Although Korean Christians seemed to have embraced missionaries as liberators of a so-called demon-possessed and superstitious Korea (Brown 1919, 574), and as representatives of "the so-called Christian West" (Sauer 1935, 131), missionaries ultimately succumbed to Japanese colonialism and its systematic control over Korea.

Under these circumstances, missionaries were primarily concerned with protecting their churches. As a result they compromised with Japanese in a situation

where most publications were screened by the Japanese police. As one missionary made clear: "[As] conditions become settled and as we become accustomed to the situation that prevails in Korea, we find it easy to believe that it was the Providence of God that brought the Japanese and the Koreans onto this peninsula" (Smith 1917, 146). Thus, missionaries considered any agendas for Korean independence off limits. The Gospel was supposed to be confined to the apolitical arena. As one writer has observed: "Indeed it has often been said that if it had not been for the missionaries, a revolution would have broken out when Korea was annexed to Japan" (Brown 1919, 574). Therefore, it can be assumed that obedience to power was frequently preached by the missionaries and that Korean Christian leaders were taught to "[l]et every soul be subject unto the higher powers" (Brown 1919, 566).

In the 1910s, as colonialism spawned nationalism among the colonized, Japanese military rule drove Korean Christians into the political arena, notwithstanding the efforts of Western missionaries to keep converts aloof from politics. The Nevius method may not have encouraged Christians to defy missionary authority, but Korean churches became involved in the political arena nonetheless. Since Christian churches had forged a strong national network, many Korean converts participated in the nationalist movement, which began with the March First Independent Movement in 1919. Stimulated by the American President Woodrow Wilson, who had spoken about the "self-determination of small nations," and by the growing mood of independence around the world in the wake of World War I, Koreans began to experience a nationalist awakening (Nahm Andrew 1991, 262).

This nation-wide independence movement gave momentum to the Korean churches, the missionaries, and the colonial government. In general, Korean churches gained the respect of the public, and missionaries became more sympathetic to Koreans and played an important role as information channels for promoting the cause of Korea all over the world. The new Governor-General, Makoto Saito, changed Japanese policy by replacing a military style of rule with more subtle, cultural forms of rule, conferring on Koreans relatively free activities, including reforms such as the relative relaxation of press restrictions and church-related regulations (Scott 1975, 87). While younger generations of Koreans were gradually assimilating Japanese culture, Korean independent movements became more systematic by organizing the Korean Provisional Government in Shanghai, China (1919). In this situation, missionary attitudes were ambivalent. While they sympathized with Koreans, they realistically needed to be acquainted with Japanese culture and language (Fisher [1928] 1972, 80-82).

Prior to this independence movement, history saw the establishment of the Republic of China in 1912, ending the Qing Dynasty by Sun Yatsen, a Chinese modernist, and the rise of Communism with the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 in Russia. Under these circumstances, the 1920s were pregnant with social change, particularly the intellectual environment, which was wed to a complex new political wave. Following the independence movement, the May Fourth Movement in China proved to be another anti-imperialist movement. Korean students had many more chances to study in Japan and China and soon brought modernist and secular knowledge back to Korea. Thus, missionaries could not block this trend of the times. The spirit of modernism was not

only anti-Christian but also anti-Confucian, anti-Buddhist, and anti-Old Korean (Fisher [1928] 1972, 167).

In this intellectual mode, Korean church members moved in two directions. First, some tried to embrace social reforms and separate themselves from the missionaries (Scott 1975, 86-87). From the 1920s, the church as a whole could not escape socialist criticism and therefore came to believe that the ideas of social progress and reform were not incompatible with Christianity. In responding to this social change, Protestant churches sought to keep abreast of the times and began to take an interest in the social application of the Bible. Second, since most missionaries did not embrace secular modernism and Biblical criticism, the issue of modernity was still problematic. Their beliefs were primarily individualistic rather than social, so much so that the message of social progress was lost in their other-worldly individualistic worldview. In addition, Japanese colonial rule and aggressive secular thought such as socialism intimidated Korean Christians, barring them from moving towards the new intellectual mood (Fisher [1928] 1972, 55). “In the midst of this intellectual revolution,” wrote James Ernest Fisher, a Professor of Education at Chosen (Joseon) Christian College, the missionaries of the time possessed an “other-worldly outlook on life” and expressed a Christianity that was “fundamentalist” (Fisher [1928] 1972, 55, 59, 167). In a very real sense, Fisher pointed out that “the missionary would have had much more in common with the old non-Christian Korean than with the modern youth, since the modern youth in Korea, as well as elsewhere, [were] not holding any opinion ‘without debate’” (Fisher [1928] 1972, 167).

The difficulty in Christian mission lay not only in this intellectual mood, but also in a new educational environment where mission schools had to compete with a colonial government that offered a better educational system (Fisher [1928] 1972, 76-78). That was not historical irony. It meant that Koreans, after being exposed to Western and modern culture in many ways, felt that Christianity was no longer the best carrier of Western civilization. Criticisms against Christianity came from many directions. Christianity was seen to be connected with imperialism, "an opiate to lull the senses of the submerged classes," and "a system of obscurantism" (Fisher [1928] 1972, 168).

Two strong winds, "The North Wind" of Communism and "The West Wind" of secularism, continued in the 1930s. Conservative Christian churches saw countless winds surrounding them: scientific agnosticism, materialistic determinism, political fascism, moral iconoclasm, and atheistic revolution (Warnshuis 1930, 221). Stagnant churches and competing social ideologies threatened Christian identity: "Is it possible that the great Church in Korea may go the way of other Churches which had their day and ceased to be?" (MacDonald 1930, 233). Churches began to recognize the necessity of apologetic scrutiny, given the threat of "Secular Civilization" or "Humanism" (MacDonald 1930, 235). For missionaries, a Western civilization severed from Christian perspectives was no longer a Christian civilization. Undeniably, Koreans were being increasingly exposed to dangerous secular humanisms and ideologies. Thus, a crisis of consciousness prevailed:

> The revolt against authority, so characteristic of the present age, and the insistence on the scientific method, which demands experiment rather than faith, have reached Korea and are bound to influence [greatly] the minds of thinking people. The tendency will be to find it hard to believe in a personal God

> and to refuse to accept any unchanging standard, whether Bible, Church or Jesus, as unique or finally authoritative (MacDonald 1930, 234).

This social mood challenged the institutional pattern of the churches, which had sought to control their inner structures during earlier missionary and revival phases (O'Dea 1970, 243). While the number of missionaries decreased and their works were gradually reduced, the roles of Koreans began to increase in the governing of churches. Since 1919, no missionary has been a moderator of the Korean church assembly, and as early as September 1922 a complete Constitution written by Korean Christians was adopted (Clark 1937, 190-200). This routinization of the church was shown in the "Sunday-centered" work. The missionary F. J. L. MacRae was convinced that "like our churches in the West, a great deal of our Christian activities are being crowded into the Sunday" rather than into itinerary work and revivalism (MacRae 1930, 243). Many missionaries sensed the crisis, concerned that "[t]here [was] a frightful danger of getting away from the revival idea; of putting the emphasis on education, on social work and forgetting the main business of saving souls" (Ridout 1929, 121). The nostalgia for the growth of the early church did not guarantee a conservative ethos.

2. War, Division, and the Formation of a New Christian Ideology

The liberation of Korea from Japan (1945), the official division of Korea into North and South Korea (1948), and the Korean War (1950-53) brought countless social changes and upheaval. After the war the two Koreas were permanently divided, politically, geographically, and religiously. While the communist North became an atheistic country,

the capitalist South became one of the most important Christian countries in the non-Western world.

Koreans had little time to savor the joy of liberation from Japan in August 1945, because the Soviet Union soon began to occupy the northern part of Korea. Furthermore, the United States of America (USA) took control of the southern part of the country (below the 38th parallel). Korean expectations of unification were dashed. While North Korea was shaped by the Soviet Union, the USA began to have a significant impact on Koran culture and religion. Kim Il Sung [Kim Ilseong] was appointed the leader of the North by the Soviet Union, and the United States Army Military Government (USAMGIK) assumed responsibility for the South.

In March 1946, the Communist North issued a law on land reform, which became the significant turning point for communization by 1949. This involved the confiscation of farmland and other lands previously owned by the Japanese, Korean landlords, and religious bodies (Nahm Andrew 1991, 337). In August 1949, such activities developed into the North Korean Workers' Party, a full-scale communist organization, which suppressed and purged the existing leaders from society. This political situation in the North was unfavorable to Christians. Christian churches were regarded not only as supporters of capitalism, but also as agents of the USA and supporters of Rhee Syngman [Lee Seungman] of the South (Jang Byeonguk 1983, 33-39). Even though religious freedom was ostensibly allowed, the Communist agenda was based on the annihilation of religion. Soon after this, North Korea systematically dissolved Christian political parties and eventually occupied the entire political arena. Church activities were restricted and

mission schools were closed. The authorities put guards and shadows on church activities such as sermons, church ministries, and church meetings. What is worse, many Christians, particularly Protestant ministers and Catholic priests, were killed or disappeared before the Korean War. As a way of controlling Christians, the Christian Federation inspired by Communists was formed alongside the Buddhist Federation and the Religious Office of the Heavenly Way Religion in the North. As a social body supported by Communists, the Christian Federation made a statement that non-members were not allowed to preach and late entries were prohibited after April, 1948. As a result, as of September 1, 1948, its membership reached 85,118 (Jang Byeonguk 1983, 33-39).[2] In 1949, all church properties, including church lands and buildings, were confiscated, although the church remained open until the Korean War (Jang Byeonguk 1983, 35, 77; Cumings 2005, 231). From October 1945 to April 1948, between 800,000 and 2 million Koreans in the North, seventy percent of whom were Christians, crossed the 39th Parallel into the South (Jang Byeonguk 1983, 35, 97). Although the statistical numbers are significantly different, one can only imagine the severity of the Communist persecutions.

In the South, ideological conflicts also arose between the Communist left and the conservative right. Although freedom of the press was conferred on the general public in 1946, three Communist newspapers were closed down by the USAMGIK (Nahm Andrew 1991, 349). The reform of the education system and the promotion of motion pictures, including newsreels, were its major means of confronting Communism

[2] Contrary to the previous involvement of the Catholic Church in Shinto Worship, it stubbornly refused to join the federation because the Vatican had a different attitude towards the two social activities. While the former was regarded as a national ceremony, the latter was regarded as an unacceptable engagement (Jang Byeonguk 1983, 66-68).

(Armstrong 2003, 76-82). However, it was not successful compared to the North, led by the Soviet Union. Numerous uprisings in the South were not only due to the activities of Communists, but also to the misunderstandings of Korean culture and society by the USA. Despite the fact that Korea was liberated from Japan, pro-Japanese figures, so-called "national traitors and collaborators," were not punished by society, but became involved in politics and the military, and swayed power and worked for right wing organizations backed by the USAMGIK. Many people believed that the liberated country had degenerated to chaos, creating a hostile climate among the people.

Many demonstrations arose to protest the separate elections in the South.[3] In April 1948, an uprising in Jeju-do (the Southern island) created such a political climate. By making use of pro-Japanese Koreans and right wing organizations under anti-Communism, the USAMGIK tried to oppress and eliminate the communists, the result of which was a tragic massacre of innocent people on the island, claiming more than thirty thousand dead.[4] After taking power from the USAMGIK on July 18, the new South Korean government (the Republic of Korea) faced the difficulty of managing the nation because of frequent riots and persistent strikes. A mutiny by Communist soldiers in October 1948 in Yeosu and Suncheon, Southwest Korea, was a sign that the external outbreak of an ideological war had begun to mobilize. The ideological conflicts from

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[3] Under the surveillance of the United Nations (UN), the general election was held on May 10, 1948 and gave birth to the Republic of Korea (South Korea). On June 20, Rhee Syngman [Lee Seungman] was elected the first president of the Republic of Korea. Following these events, on September 9, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea) was established with the support of the Soviet Union.

[4] According to sources, the number of casualties varies, ranging from 15,000 to 60,000. As of 1948, the population of Jeju Island was estimated at circa 100,000 (Cumings 2005, 221).

liberation to the Korean War (1945-1950) are striking examples of the on-going conflict and cold war between the two Koreas.

The Northwest Youth Corps (Seobuk Cheongyeondan), organized by youth refugees from the North on November 30, 1946 (until it was dissolved on December 19, 1948), was notorious for its cruel treatment of people. Labeled “White Wing Terrorists,” and functioning as paramilitary soldiers, the members of the corps arrested or killed people assumed to be pro-Communists. This led to the countless torture of innocent people. On Jeju Island, in particular, corps members joined forces with the police and constabulary and were said to have “exercised police power more than the police itself and their cruel behavior invited the deep resentment of the inhabitants” (Cumings 2005, 220).

In 1949, the US Army was withdrawn from South Korea, leaving only a unit of five hundred soldiers. Emboldened by the speech of the US Secretary of State, Dean Acheson, who stated in January 1950 that South Korea and Taiwan were not included in the defense perimeter of America, the North Korean Leader Kim Ilseong conspired with Joseph Stalin to attack South Korea. On June 25, 1950, North Korea invaded South Korea. It was the beginning of three years of civil war, ending with the Armistice Agreement of 1953. In three days, Seoul was taken by North Korean troops and the fate of the citizenry lay in the hands of the Communists for ninety days. Innocent people were executed without lawful procedures by people’s courts. The invasion spread all over South Korea, except for Busan and its outskirts. During this period, approximately 30,000 to 100,000 people were kidnapped and taken to North Korea or died. The loss and

damage to Christian churches was extensive. Two hundred and twelve Protestant church ministers were abducted or killed, and over one thousand church buildings were completely or partially destroyed (Jang Byeonguk 1983, 244-245, 326). The Korean Catholic Church was not excluded: it lost one hundred bishops, priests, and nuns, including foreign missionaries (Yu Hongyeol 1990, 453-454).

With the successful landing of 50,000 United Nations troops at Incheon, on the west coast of Korea on September 17, 1950, led by General MacArthur, the UN troops recaptured Seoul and moved up towards the border between North Korea and China. The intervention of the troops of the People's Republic of China, however, drove the UN and South Korean troops back. North Koreans had to run for their lives and for their freedom to South Korea. For Christians, it was a Korean Exodus. In particular, Pyeongyang, called the Jerusalem of Korea, was emptied and permanently occupied by the Communist regime. As a result, North Korean refugees came to comprise one third of the Christian population in South Korea (Jang Byeonguk 1983, 304).

This war left Korean Christians with grave scars and had an immense impact on church beliefs. During the war, a number of Christian ministers and leaders were killed or abducted and sent to North Korea. The other-worldly and apocalyptic faiths formed during Japanese rule were reinforced. Korean churches that had nurtured a deep-rooted resentment towards Communism displayed an affinity with the authoritarian regime that supported anti-Communism as a national policy.

US aid from 1953 to the mid-1970s amounted to about $ 6 billion, without counting 7 billion dollars in military assistance (Macdonald 1990, 195-196). Moreover,

many war orphans were adopted by American families. The aid for reconstructing church buildings, orphanages, and schools came from Christian missionary societies and the US Army (Ryu Hyeonggi 1992, 63-64). In Korea the first military chaplaincy was established by the navy in 1948 and was expanded to the army and air force during the war (Ryu Hyeonggi 1992, 66-67; Hanguk Gidokgyo Yeonhaphoe 1957, 69). With its establishment in 1957, the number of Christian Korean troops increased from five to fifteen percent (Hanguk Gidokgyo Yeonhaphoe 1957, 70). Thus, the most favored American organizations were Christian churches, often labeled “dollar” or “relief goods” churches (Kim Gyeongrae 1957, 92).

The new cold war between South and North Korea became an unchangeable reality, permeating the daily lives of the people. This allowed the South Korean government to justify dictatorship and “red hunt” (anti-communism) activities. Black and white arguments became common, leading to red scares similar to those spearheaded by Joseph McCarthy in the USA.

In this post-war situation, South Korea was worse off socially. When the post-war recovery was still far away and the political and economic situation unstable, the authoritarian and corrupt regime of President Rhee Syngman [Lee Seungman] failed to manage a society faced with student democratic movements. The 419 Revolution in 1960 was an inevitable reaction against the first Korean President Lee Seungman and his Liberal Party, resulting in his resignation. The political turmoil, however, did not end. A democratic government was precariously established, and was ousted by the military coup of General Park Jung Hee [Bak Jeonghui], who eventually became an authoritarian

President of South Korea. The coup was initially suspected, but was endorsed by the US government in the end. Since the world was divided into two camps of capitalism and Communism, Bak's anti-communist agenda took the side of the USA and became its ally (Kemp 1989, 206-7).

After his successful international relationship with the USA, Bak Jeonghui prompted modernization projects which triggered rapid social change. This economic drive produced drastic social change, the movement from an agrarian economy to an industrial one. This had immense costs for rural areas, where people left their homes for urban areas in order to better their lives. Under the banner of his idealized modernization, democratic movements were severely oppressed until Bak's assassination by Kim Jaegyu, the chief of KCIA, in 1979. Previously, in 1972, Bak had proposed a new constitutional system called *yusin* (revitalizing reforms). In order to extend and justify his authoritarian regime, he proclaimed martial law. Because his authoritarian policy disturbed the American idea of democratic rule, he tried to become free of foreign political dominance. As a result, the political status quo existing between the USA and Korea began to fade. His successful development of the Korean economy outweighed the need for democracy and human rights, despite resistance from the opposition party and the people. The *yusin* system was a government-led nationalistic agenda. Bak's assassination was not the end of dictatorship in Korea however. The 1979 military coup was engineered by General Jeon Duhwan, and resulted in thousands of casualties in Gwangju in May 1980. It was reportedly said that the Gwangju massacre occurred with the tacit approval of the USA. Labor and human rights organizations had to wait until 1988, when the regime promised

to revise the constitution at the request of the democracy movement. Although the next presidency was succeeded by Jeon's military comrade Noh Taeu, Korean society began to move towards freedom.

Given these social and political circumstances, Koreans were driven in authoritarianism and anti-Communist directions. In fact, this went back to the days of liberation from Japan. The Soviet Union, which occupied northern Korea, suppressed Christians and thousands of people fled to the South. Religious activities were repressed by the Communists. The outbreak of the Korean War accelerated the number of people coming south over the border. More than one million North Korean Christian refugees swelled the population of South Korea. Most of these became fanatical anti-Communists. This ideological Christian attitude has been made use of in order to justify dictatorship. Therefore, anti-Communism (Christian) and authoritarianism shaped the history of contemporary Korea. In this context, political and religious conservatism were correlated with anti-Communism. Christian conservatism developed under the ideological umbrella of anti-Communism (Kang Wi Jo 1997, 97-98).

During Japanese rule, Seoul was the center of Methodism, while Pyeongyang in the North became the most important place for the Presbyterian churches. With the Communist occupation in the North, and the outbreak of the Korean War, Christians in the North were forced to leave their homes and cross the 38 parallel into the South. By combining their conservative beliefs with a red-scare psychology, the anti-Communist agenda was aligned with conservative beliefs and formed a staunch boundary in protecting traditional Christian values. This anti-communist agenda permeated the

conservative Christian ethos, further driving conservative Christians to concentrate on the notion of individual salvation. Social movements against dictatorship were regarded as communist, and political theology was criticized as dangerous. Moreover, liberal theology, neo-orthodox theology, liberation theology, political theology, and the theology of religion all became targets of such criticism. As was evident during the period of Japanese colonialism, the post-Korean War era witnessed the strengthening of conservative beliefs and an individual salvation estranged from the social gospel movement.

3. The Characteristics of Conservative Korean Protestantism

The characteristics of conservative Korean Protestantism are like those of conservative American Protestantism: church schism, the rejection of biblical criticism, and anti-Christian liberalism generally form the conservative Christian culture in Korea.

3.1. Excuses for Orthodoxy: Schism and Unity

During the early Protestant period in Korea, denominational lines were not priorities, nor were sectarian teachings a theological issue. Presbyterian and Methodist missionaries cooperated in the mission field, fostering what could be called a “missionary ecumenism.” The General Council of Protestant Evangelical Missions was organized and published the monthly *Korea Mission Field* and textbooks for Sunday schooling. With the establishment of the Federal Council of Protestant Evangelical Missions in 1911, collaboration in church activities was discussed (Yun Seongbeom [1964] 1983, 144). In

the tradition of missionary comity, territorial divisions were made by the four Presbyterian and two Methodist missions between 1892 and 1909. At this early stage, a small number of Northern Presbyterian and American Methodist Episcopal missionaries could not cover the whole nation (Morris 1914; Sauer 1839). With the growth of the churches, upward social mobility, and the coming of other missionaries, the old agreement on territorial division became ineffective and had to be changed. In 1892, a new comity agreement was reached.

Despite some overlap, the divisions followed provincial boundaries. The Northern Presbyterian Church USA was assigned Seoul and parts of Hwanghae, Pyeongan, and the Northern Gyeongsang provinces. Meanwhile, the Australian Presbyterian Mission accepted Pusan [Busan] and the South Gyeongsang Province, the Southern Presbyterian Church USA occupied the South Jeolla Province of Southern Korea, and the Canadian Presbyterian Church accepted the North and South Hamgyeong Province of Northern Korea. Complications soon arose with the Southern Methodist Episcopal Mission set up in 1896. Continuous territorial divisions between Presbyterians and Methodists occurred between 1904 and 1909. The Methodist Episcopal Mission was active in Seoul, Chungcheong, part of the Gangwon Province (southern area), Pyeongyang and Yeongbyeon (cities in the Pyeongan Province, northern area) and the Methodist Episcopal Mission South received as its mission field Gaeseong (a city in the Hwanghae Province), the Hwanghae Province (northern area), and the Gangwon Province (northern area) (Lee Manyeol 1985, 63). The territorial agreement by the mission groups continued until 1935 (Sauer 1939, 205).

Under this division, there were slight theological conflicts between missionaries, but they were not theologically serious. Any unrest was in line with the rise of progressive theology. The United Church of Canada represented the progressive theology. Extremely conservative missionaries did not want to work with the United Church of Canada's Korean mission, a substitute for the Canadian Presbyterian Church's mission in Korea. However, this conflict did not last because the Canadian mission ensured its harmony with "the standards of the Presbyterian Church of Chosun [Joseon]" (Scott 1975, 10). On the other hand, the Korean Methodist Church fostered a relatively moderate theology. In terms of church unity, the two Korean Methodist Churches, the General Conference of the Methodist Church and the General Conference of the Methodist Church South, were united in the Korean Methodist Church in 1930 (Welch 1931, 2). This church worked in a spirit of ecumenism, as shown in an article by J. S. Ryang, the first General Superintendent of the Korean Methodist Church. He insisted that "[w]hile we are hoping and trying to have all denominations … united, there is no reason for Methodism in Korea to continue as [a] separate organization" (Ryang 1931, 6). After the liberation of Korea from Japan, however, the Methodists once again split and reunited.

During the height of Japanese imperialism, religious freedom was restricted in both Japan and colonized Korea. The empire passed the National Mobilization Law in 1938 and the Religious Bodies Law in 1939 to control all religious organizations, making Shinto the state "super religion." In 1941, when Japan waged war against the USA, the situation was aggravated. Japanese churches were forcibly incorporated into one

denomination called Kyodan, the United Church of Christ in Japan (Francis and Nakajima 1991, 30-31). Following church amalgamation in Japan, this policy was applied to the Korean churches. The first victims of the antireligious policy of the colonial government were the Holiness Church and the Baptist Church, which held premillennial Adventist beliefs. On the ground that during May to October 1942, thirty-two church ministers of the Baptist Church taught Adventism, the church was ordered to dissolve on May 10, 1944. Likewise, in May 1943, around two hundred church ministers of the Holiness Church were put in jail, and on December 29th the church was completely dissolved (Kim Gwangsu 1978, 100). Korean Presbyterian and Methodist Churches had to unite with the United Christian Church in July of 1945 (Scott 1975, 179). After the liberation of Korea, the United Church was renamed the Christian United Church of South Korea for a while; yet it was never approved. In 1946, church unity was broken, which caused the Presbyterian, Methodist, Holiness, and other smaller churches to revert to their original denominational forms.

Korean liberation from Japan and the Korean War brought immense social change. Given the historical context, it is not surprising that churches came back to their previous statuses. The totalitarian policy of religion by the later Japanese Empire, which pressed all religions into one religious organization, disappeared. Missionaries deported to their own countries between 1941 and 1942 returned to their own old churches. Moreover, the Korean War and its resultant social upheaval left Protestant churches with many challenges. Although church activities were confined to the South, territorial divisions dotted the religious landscape, pinpointing various degrees of theological

narrowness and sectarian orientation. The Korean churches were no longer under the guidance of missionaries. The major schism among conservative churches owed more to separatist and exclusivist tendencies than it did to any theological split between conservative and liberal camps.

In 1952, a Presbyterian body called Gosin broke away from the main church over the issue of worship at Shinto shrines during Japanese rule. Its stronghold was the South Gyeongsang Province, which was the mission field of the Australian Presbyterian Church. Although they were in an ultra-conservative wing, the main factor behind the schism was the matter of Shinto worship. Recently freed church ministers, who had been put in prison because of their rejection of Shinto worship during the Japanese occupation, soon demanded that church leaders who had been involved in the worship of Shintoism repent. This created a conflict with major church leaders. Eventually, the so-called "released saints," who were a minor voice in the General Council of the Presbyterian Church, were driven out. As a result, the Gosin, a new denomination (Goreyo), was founded (Lee Yeonghean 1983, 238-241; Bae Boncheol 2002, 249-252).

The birth of the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea (Gijang) in 1954 was mainly related to theological issues. The leader Kim Jaejun, who taught a relatively liberal theology in the Joseon Seminary, was excommunicated in 1953 by the Presbyterian Church. Although such theological conflicts naturally resulted in a new foundation of the church, it was not free from the problems of geographical church division in which the Gijang church was heavily influenced by the theology of the United Church of Canada, a mainstream denomination in Canada.

The division in the major Presbyterian denomination in 1959 was concerned with membership in the World Council of Churches (WCC), which was accused of pro-Communist sympathies by the ultra right wing side. It was triggered by a case of money fraud. Bak Hyeongyong, the principal of the Presbyterian Theological Seminary, was tricked by a swindler and lost a substantial amount of money donated by American churches. This incident forced him to resign in 1958. However, this unfortunate development did not diminish his theological influence on conservative churches. In the 44th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in 1959, the anti-ecumenical side accused the ecumenical side of pro-Communism and new theology (Kim Insu 1995, 349-352). It was the Korean version of the conflict between the WCC and the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE). In the end, the major Presbyterian Church was divided into Hapdong, the side of the NAE and Tongghap, the side of the WCC (Bae Boncheol 2002, 253-5).

These three distinctive schisms continued and spread schismatic ideas to other churches (Chu Weon Yeol 2006, 212-224). According to the Korean Christian yearbook of 1957, seventeen Christian denominations are listed, including the Roman Catholic Church, the Russian Orthodox Church, the Salvation Army, the Seventh Adventist Church, and the Jehovah's Witnesses (Hanguk Gidokgyo Yeonhaphoe 1957). As a subdivision of the denomination, only three Presbyterian Churches (or denominations) were listed: Yejang, Gosin, and Gijang (Hanguk Gidokgyo Yeonhaphoe 1957, 76-125, 159-183). In the *Handbook of Korean Religion*, published by the Department of Culture and Communication in 1984, there are twenty-one denominations under the category of

Protestant churches, including the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the Unification Church, and Jeondogwan (The Heavenly Father Religion). Surprisingly, the Presbyterian category lists thirty-four churches, most of which were the result of schism. Division, however, was not confined to the Presbyterian churches. The Methodist Church has four denominations, the Holiness Church three, the Baptist Church four, the Pentecostal Church six, and the Seventh Adventist Church two. However, the schism of the Presbyterian churches is most salient. Given the fact that core doctrines were offered by individual Presbyterian denominations in this handbook, it is surprising that there seemed to be no theological differences between all the Presbyterian churches, the theological and doctrinal basis being overwhelmingly Calvinism, particularly maintaining the Westminster Confession and biblical inerrancy as their tenets (Ministry of Culture and Communication 1984, 187-188; Noh Chijun 1995, 307).

The Korean sociologist Noh Chijun summarizes five kinds of theories of schism in the Presbyterian churches in Korea: a) the theological discrepancy of churches; b) the contest for hegemony within churches; c) the individual unit church structure without strong central governance; d) factionalism as the influence of a distorted Confucianism; and e) the ethical lack of church unity (Noh Chijun 1995, 307-310). According to Noh, while the theories of a) and b) are generally accepted, sociological research on them is rare. Based on the secularization thesis, he explains that religious schism occurs as traditional religious forms evolve; schism in Korea reflects the resistance or accommodation of religions to secularization (Noh Chijun 1995, 339). In other words, since the degree of the secularization of churches determines their social attitudes,

schism occurs in denominations which strongly resist secularization. Noh's thesis agrees with the fact that the more conservative a religion is, the more frequently schism occurs. While the cases of Gosin and Hapdong reflect an effort to sustain or recover traditional beliefs, liberal Gijang and moderate Tonghap demonstrate a relatively high degree of secularization.

He is unclear, however, about why schisms occur exclusively within conservative church circles (Noh Chijun 1995, 335-338). Responses to secularization or modernity do not always result in schism. Secularization can also stimulate church unity in conservative Christian bodies. Like the NAE, a counterpart of the WCC, conservative churches cooperate with each other in fighting against secular society. Jerry Falwell's Moral Majority in the USA went so far at to seek an alliance with the Jewish Orthodox Church and other different religions. Likewise, the Christian Council of Korea (CCK), organized in 1989, is the largest conservative Christian association in Korea, comprising sixty-one denominations; among them are forty-nine Presbyterian denominations.

The overwhelming number of Presbyterian churches demonstrates that their schismatic tendencies are theologically oriented, and given the minor doctrinal discrepancies among them, the schism centered on the competition for so-called orthodoxy. The evidence suggests that even in the presence of mutual accusations, most splinter sects remain within the camps of conservative and orthodox churches. In this sense, these factional or splinter groups can be categorized as semi-denominational in that they have theologically common ground to share. On the other hand, other deviant Christian sects and cults can be excluded from these factional categories. Across the

religious spectrum, groups in a denominational category can be classified as churchlike organizations as long as they maintain traditional and mainstream beliefs. Thus, schisms within conservative church circles are concerned with denominational matters, especially the pursuit of theological orthodoxy, rather than with the creeds of deviant sectarian movements (cf. Stark and Bainbridge 1987, 121-128).

3.2. Liberalism versus Fundamentalism in the Korean Context

The exclusive tendency of conservative theology in Korea appeared as a reaction against theological liberalism and deviant Christian groups. In the beginning, most Presbyterian missionaries from the USA displayed a strong fundamentalist bent by controlling theological discourse and education in Korea. The missionaries failed, for instance, to provide Korean Christians with higher education. This only strengthened the fundamentalist climate of theological and social isolationism (Chun Sung Chun 1955, 71-72). From the outset of Korean missions, the missionary attitude towards Koreans followed the general tendency of almost all Christian missions in the nineteenth century. There was, overall, little enthusiasm for educating indigenous people at higher academic levels. At a missionary conference in Liverpool in 1860, some missionaries even argued that "'native' agents of the Church should be kept away from the English language!" (Neill 1962, 6). In a similar fashion, W. D. Reynolds, a missionary to Korea, exclaimed (Reynolds 1896, 201):

> 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 labor. Missionaries often

> deplore the chasm in modes of thinking and living between them and the natives. Don't cleave chasm where as yet none exist.

This statement was echoed by W. L. Swallen, another missionary of the period (Swallen 1897, 174):

> [N]ever think of sending a bright, and apparently earnest Christian native off to America to be educated on foreign money, unless you want to spoil him. That will be the surest way to blight his future usefulness.

These statements likely reflected a mission strategy more than any assumptions about racial inferiority. Most missionaries simply had no interest in educating natives. In the early stages of Korea missions, they wanted to be spiritual advisers for biblical instruction and did not intend to maintain a permanent authoritative body for controlling mission churches (Swallen 1897, 172; Brown 1950, 297). In other words, as long as native churches remained financially dependent on foreign funding, they required oversight (Brown 1955, 311). As it turned out, however, such control continued until the missionaries were forced to leave Korea by the Japanese government.

According to the missionary belief system, any theological discourse that differed from a literal understanding of the Bible was unacceptable. Canadian missionaries, who understood the critical study of the Bible, did not want to be involved in theological debates because their collective voice was relatively weak (Scott 1975, 206). The Presbyterian Theological Seminary of Korea [The Pyeongyang Theological Seminary], founded in 1907 as the official school of the Presbyterian Church in Korea, was a major center for producing conservative church leaders under the control of missionaries. For example, the courses in systematic theology mirrored the convictions of Southern

American Presbyterian missionaries. Because even ultra-conservative missionaries from the Northern American Presbyterian Church were regarded as “liberal,” they could only be involved with courses on Biblical theology. The Australian and Canadian missionaries were confined to teaching other less dogmatic courses such as church history and Biblical languages (Mun Yeonggeum and Mun Yeongmi 2006, 99). In contrast, the Hyeopseong Theological Seminary, run by the Methodist Church, offered relatively progressive theologies. Thus, in general, historical criticism of the Bible was introduced by Korean theologians who had opportunity to study theology and who came from the Methodist tradition (Mun Huiseok 1980, 51-56).

Until the 1930s, theological debates were still limited to missionaries. They were cognizant of theological and social controversies in the 1910s and 1920s: the distribution of *The Fundamentals* (1910), the Scopes Trial (1925), and J. Gresham Machen’s resignation from Princeton Theological Seminary. This changing theological climate was reflected in the two major sources generated by missionaries. One was the five volume *Korean Repository*, published in 1892, 1895, 1896, 1897, and 1897, while the other was the *Korea Mission Field*, published between 1905 and 1941. They provided a steady stream of Korean works dealing with the early state of the missionary and colonial periods. In the former source, theological debates or discrepancies were not seriously mentioned, given the fundamentalist backgrounds of the missionaries. Since they were predominant in the Korean mission field, they did not address any major discrepancies in the Bible.

Missionaries, however, were not free from the period's theological trends. In the latter source, comments on biblical criticism or higher criticism**,** and other types of liberal theology, began to appear. An anonymous article "The Decay of Higher Criticism," citing several conservative assessments about Biblical criticism, was particularly critical of Wellhausen (1844-1918), who discussed the various sources of the Pentateuch under the headings of J, E, D, and P (Decay of Higher Criticism 1911, 140-141). In an article appearing in 1912, L. H. Underwood made a critical issue of four missionaries who graduated from Union Theological Seminary. He argued that they were "uncertain about vital foundation truths of our religion, like the reliability of the Bible, and the birth, nature and work of our [L]ord" (Underwood 1913, 207). He straightforwardly asserted that they "cannot affirm their faith in the virgin birth of Christ or the raising of Lazarus," warning "what they hold as a fallible Bible is undeniable" (Underwood 1913, 207). This conservative propensity was reflected in a strict Confession of Faith**,** which according to Charles Allen Clark was borrowed from the "Church of India" and then accepted by the Korean Presbyterian Church in 1908, becoming the "Doctrinal Standard" of the Church (Clark 1937, 159). Their attitude towards the Bible appeared in Article I: "The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and duty" (Clark 1937: 326). With this confession, the Westminster Shorter Catechism was adopted as the "Catechism" of the Korean church (Clark 1937: 159).

In this transforming world, missionaries and Korean Christians were not free from theological debates. Although missionaries carefully censored radical and so-called

liberal theologies through the publication and translation of books with conservative perspectives (Ryu Hyeonggi 1992, 128), they could not control all Christian activities. In the 1930s, the theological isolationism of the Korean Churches began to be exposed to new theological trends by people who had studied modern theology in Japan and Western countries. Prior to that, Pyeongyang Theological Seminary, the only theological institution in the South Pyeongan Province, was not seriously challenged by modern theological methods; thus, the conservative Korean churches were not ready to respond to liberal theology and the higher criticism of the Bible or other cultural differences. In the early stages of Korean missions, there is no evidence that liberal and conservative camps engaged in theological battles; missionaries, who usually had Presbyterian origins, exhibited conservative theological tendencies, and dominated the missionary society.

This tradition was inherited by Korean theologians. Park Hyung-Nong [Bak Hyeongyong], a professor at Pyeongyang Theological Seminary, became a pivotal figure in the conservative wing of the Presbyterian Church in Korea and a successor to the beliefs of conservative missionaries by providing the cardinal tenets for fundamentalist and evangelical movements in Korea. In 1933, serious conflicts occurred between Bak Hyeongyong and Kim Jaejun, the chaplain of the Sungin Commercial High School. Called the “Charles Hodge or J. Gresham Machen of Korea,” Bak studied theology (1923-1926) at the “old” Princeton Theological Seminary, where the influence of the theologians Charles Hodge (1797-1878), A. A. Hodge (1823-1886), and B. B. Warfield (1851-1921) was predominant. Bak was a student of the conservative theological leader J Gresham Machen, who later established Westminster Theological Seminary in 1929. Bak

received his doctoral degree from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary at Louisville, Kentucky in 1933.

On the other hand, Kim Jaejun studied theology in Japan and the United States in a relatively liberal theological environment. In 1925, Kim started his theological education at Aoyama Seminary in Tokyo**,** which had theological sympathies with Union Theological Seminary in New York City (Kim Jaejun 1992b, 92-93). He studied for a short period of time at Princeton Theological Seminary, where he met Machen and read all his books; yet, the school had a theologically liberal spirit (Kim Jaesun 1992b, 105-106). He then moved to Western Seminary in Pittsburgh and received the degrees of S.T.B. (1931) and S.T.M. (1932). Before he returned to Korea, theological strife was already simmering in Korea. According to Kim's memoir, during his studies in the USA he received a letter from an American missionary in Korea, asking for a quick reply as to whether he was a "fundamentalist or liberal" and saying if he were a fundamentalist, his teaching job would be guaranteed. His choice apparently did not please the missionary (Kim Jaesun 1992, 92-119). When he returned to Korea, fundamentalists quickly criticized his theological works. In fact, Kim denounced the literal inspiration of the Bible and Bak's theological position.

In 1934, Bak attacked two pastors, Kim Yeongju and Kim Chunbae, demanding that they be deprived of their ministries. Kim Yeongju was accused of denying the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, and Kim Chunbae of promoting a feminist interpretation of the Bible. In particular, Kim Chunbae maintained that St. Paul's claim about "women not speaking in church" was not universally applicable, but confined to

the apostle's time (Scott 1975, 206). In 1935, the translation of the *Abingdon Bible Commentary* was criticized as an example of the application of destructive higher criticism and an evolutionary analysis of the history of revelation (Min Gyeongbae 1998, 468-470; Mun Huiseok 1980, 73).

Each of these accusations was closely concerned with the problem of biblical inspiration. Bak Hyeongyong's theological approach to the Bible was "verbal-plenary inspiration," based on a theory of biblical inerrancy that had appeared earlier in his doctoral dissertation "Anti-Christian Inferences from Natural Science." Like other fundamentalists, who relied on the divine authorship and infallibility of the Bible, he rejected modernism and evolutionism (Bak Hyeongyong 1983, 54).

The establishment of Joseon Theological Seminary only intensified the theological conflict. On the one hand, Pyeongyang Theological Seminary was closed in 1938 as a protest against the colonial government's request that all schools observe Shinto worship. On the other hand, during the war between Japan and America, missionaries were forced to leave Korea. In a situation where there was no single seminary and no missionaries, the establishment of new seminaries resumed. As a result, in 1939, one year before the establishment of Joseon Theological Seminary, a new "Pyeongyang Theological Seminary" was founded. Elder Kim Daehyeon of Seungdong Church in Seoul donated US $ 250,000 at the time, prompting the creation of a new Korean-run seminary. However, pro-missionary Christians rejected the proposal, and its opening was therefore delayed. Most church leaders graduating from Pyeongyang

Theological Seminary were suspicious that a new school would generate a liberal theology (Kim Jaejun 1992b, 177).

When Korea was liberated from Japan and later divided into two countries, Pyeongyang Seminary in North Korea could not function as the official school of the Presbyterian Church. Thus, Joseon Seminary Theological Institute (later renamed Joseon Theological Seminary in 1945 and Hanguk Theological Seminary in 1950) remained the only seminary in South Korea where Kim Jaejun and Song Changgeun taught a "progressive theology." On April 18, 1947, Professor Kim of Joseon Theological Seminary was accused by his students of so-called "heretical teachings." In a course on the Old Testament he applied historical criticism to the Pentateuch. Fifty-one students who had transferred from Pyeongyang Theological Seminary opposed Kim's "non-fundamentalist" theology and submitted an appeal to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church. This conflict was compounded by an unstable political situation. As large numbers of Christians in the North came to the South in search of religious freedom, in what can be called a "Korean Exodus," they were immediately involved in church politics. The General Assembly was under the influence of the delegates from the Communist North, who attempted to remove Professor Kim from the school. The General Assembly of the Korean Presbyterian Church requested him to make the following statement in writing to all Presbyteries, which he did (Scott 1975, 209; also see Bak Bongrang 1991, 58-59):

1) I believe in the Old and New Testament as the Word of God and the only infallible rule of faith and conduct.
2) I believe that the Bible is inerrant in the sense that it brings testimony to Jesus our Lord, and teaches us the way of salvation through and in Him.

3) I express my regret that some disturbance has been caused in some parts of the church because of my Biblical interpretation.

However, he and the assembly held different interpretations of the statement "the only infallible rule of "faith and conduct". Kim's understanding of the Bible's infallibility was concerned with "faith and conduct," not with a literal reading of the Bible. He argued in a later writing that a critical approach to the Bible ought to be embraced by Christians (Bak Bongrang 1991, 60). In spite of the fact that Kim Jaejun was not theologically liberal, but mainstream or evangelical, he was critical of both "an over-optimistic 'liberalism' and an over-dogmatic 'fundamentalism'" (Scott 1975, 225). His appeal, however, was ineffective within this Christian fundamentalist environment. While his theological position was said to be heresy, it was very similar to that of Emil Brunner. In 1949, while visiting Korea on a lecture tour, Brunner observed "that the students at large, particularly those trained in science and medicine, find the fundamentalist theory of verbal inspiration of the Bible [an] insurmountable obstacle to becoming Christians" (Scott 1975, 168). Even though Brunner was regarded as a "neo-orthodox" theologian, along with Karl Barth, his lectures were boycotted by "ultraconservative missionary and Korean church groups" (Scott 1975, 169).

In 1950, Kim Jaejun's articles clearly presented his theological attitude towards the problem of orthodoxy, biblical inerrancy, and biblical legalism. He criticized "orthodox theology" as a "Pharisaic legalism" that went against the nature of the Gospel (Kim Jaejun 1992a, 31). He went on to argue that the concept of orthodoxy is so arbitrary that every religious tradition—Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox—can claim to possess the truth (Kim Jaejun 1992a, 33). He believed that a creed was not conferred as an

unchangeable and objective authority for judging the conscience of faith. Nor was it an object to be neglected by radical liberals. In this manner, he made a major contribution to the ecumenical spirit of the Auburn Affirmation document of 1924, produced by the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (Kim Jaejun 1992a, 34). Kim's criticisms of so-called "orthodox theology" culminated in a reevaluation of Bak Hyeongyong's understanding of Karl Barth. Kim argued that Bak's argument was based on tautology: "new theology is bad because it is new theology, and orthodox theology is good because orthodox theology is orthodoxy" (Kim Jaejun 1992a, 55). For Bak, the "new theology" meant liberal theology. Thus, Kim held that anything which did not agree with Bak's scheme of biblical inerrancy was an enemy (Kim Jaejun 1992a, 55).

On the other hand, after their failure to remove Professor Kim, Kim's opponents established Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Seoul in 1949**.** The purpose of founding a new school was apparent. They called it "The Presbyterian Orthodox Seminary," labeling Joseon Theological Seminary a "Heretic Seminary," and its theology a "heretical-liberal theology," or simply a "new theology" (Bak Bongrang 1991, 54). The conflict between the two groups was not, in fact, grounded on the problem of liberalism and fundamentalism, but on that of "fundamentalist Calvinism and non-fundamentalist Presbyterian theology" (Bak Bongrang 1991, 55). No Professors at Joseon Theological Seminary held the theological position of German liberal theologians like Schleiermacher, Ritschl, Harnack, and Troeltsch. However, Bak Hyeongyong was deeply involved in this new school.

Meanwhile, when Bak returned from Bongcheon Theological Seminary in Manchuria, he was initially invited to Goryeo Theological Seminary in Busan (Gosin). It was established by pastors and elders who had not succumbed to Shinto worship and had been imprisoned during Japanese rule. The released ministers demanded that the churches and individuals implicated in Shinto worship repent, but when the demand of this minority failed to convince the majority, they went on to establish a new synod and school without the consent of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church. Since Goryeo Theological Seminary was not ratified by the General Assembly, and the new church demanded he be separated from the assembly, Bak was greatly disturbed and left the school for Seoul in 1948 (Kim Insu 1995, 325-326).

During the Korean War, Presbyterian Theological School became the designated seminary of the Presbyterian Church (September 18, 1951). It was initially opened in Daegu. In 1953, Bak was appointed principal of the school. After the armistice between North and South Korea, the school moved back to Seoul. As mentioned above, in 1959 the Presbyterian Church divided into the Tonghap (WCC side) and the Hapdong (NAE side). As a result, the Tonghap side founded Presbyterian Theological Seminary in 1960, and the Hapdong side the General Assembly Theological Seminary, with financial support from Carl McIntyre of the International Council of Christian Churches. It was reasonable that Bak Heongyong should become the leader of the latter school, which was the main source of fundamentalism.

Bak's theology offers a model for understanding Korean conservative theology. In dealing with liberalism, he followed the dualistic style of J. Gresham Machen, who

rejected liberalism as Christianity. Bak Hyeongyong identifies fundamentalism as Christian orthodoxy, claiming "Fundamentalism is Christianity itself" (Bak Hyeongyong 1981, 280). This claim parallels Machen's contention that "modern liberalism is not only a different religion from Christianity but belongs in a totally different class of religions" (Bak Hyeongyong 1981, 280; Machen 1923, 7).

It was not a surprising theological position. Even in the Presbyterian Theological Seminary of the Tonghap Church, the teaching of biblical criticism was the target of fundamentalist attack. Keith R. Crim, a professor of the school and missionary of the Northern Presbyterian Church of the USA, was referred to the 51st General Assembly of the church (1966) on the ground that in teaching a course on the *Book of Jonah* he had advocated biblical criticism. As the author of the important book *The Royal Psalms*, he had to apologize for making trouble, and eventually returned to America of his own free will. In 1973, Professor Mun Huiseok, a graduate of Emory University in Atlanta, was faced with the same issue over his publication of *The History of God's Redemption* (Mun Huiseok 1980, 87-88).

In October 1992, the General Assembly of Korean Methodist Churches expelled two professors at the Methodist Theological Seminary, Professors Byeonn Seonwhan and Hong Jeongsu, "accusing them of teaching religious pluralism and post-modern theology in the seminary classes" (Kim Kyoung Jae, 1994, 126 n. 32). It is important to note that this school teaches a relatively liberal theology such as historical criticism, neo-orthodox theology, and liberation theology. However, fundamentalist churches and ministers in the denomination claimed that liberal theology could no longer be taught at the school and

thus these two professors ought to be removed. In 2006, Professor Lee Chansu, in the Humanities School at Kangnam University, an interdenominational Christian school, was laid off for bowing to a Buddha statue and teaching religious pluralism.

In the Korean setting, three theological types have colored the Christian spectrum: (1) liberal, (2) moderate evangelical, and (3) fundamentalist. The dominant power of Protestantism gravitates towards the conservative wing, creating two extreme theological camps: liberals and conservatives. While the first tends to pursue the social application of Christian theology, inter-religious dialogue, "*minjung* theology" (a Korean political and liberation theology), and the contextualization of theology, the other tends to emphasize individual salvation and orthodox doctrines in general. In the Korean context, *minjung* theology was thought of as a seedbed of radial theologies. *Minjung* theology articulated everything that conservative churches abhorred. It adopted biblical criticism, worked with other religious and secular organizations, and pursued radical social reform. According to Na Yongwha, a critic of the theology: "Negatively, *minjung* theology is never the biblical Christian truth, but the syncretistic thought which put together Christianity and the Donghak movement as one and thus nothing but a revolutionary social movement" (Na Yonghwa 1984, 101).

4. Conclusion

Even though the collapse of the social and cultural system of Confucianism helped the spread of Protestantism in Korea, it did not mean that the American style of conservative Protestantism was transplanted to Korea in its entirety. Instead, there was an ongoing

selective contextualization of Christian belief systems into an essentially non-Western culture. A variety of political and social factors influenced the shape of modern Christian culture in Korea. Japanese colonialism, the Korean War, and the modernization project launched by several authoritarian governments all helped to generate and express conservative Christian beliefs.

To understand this we need to recognize several things. First, there was a religious factor in the growth of Korean Protestantism. From the outset, Christian missions to Korea were led predominantly by American Protestant missionaries with theologically conservative (or fundamentalist) backgrounds. As was discussed in chapter four, Korean Protestantism has been extremely successful in forming tight knit social networks for the fostering of its established beliefs.

Second, this religious success has been magnified by other social variables. Its conservative and evangelical tendencies helped to meliorate the severe clashes between Christian beliefs and colonial polices. Even after the liberation of Korea from Japan, Korean Protestantism has maintained a relatively good relationship with the government. Christian experiences of Communism served to promote red-scares and increased the emphasis on individual salvation. Thus, the Christian social base was established by means of a conservative belief system.

Lastly, when taken together, these two religious and social factors led Korean Protestantism to promote individual salvation and pietistic beliefs, generating a highly conservative (fundamentalist driven) religion. Thus, in fact, its religious characteristics were consistent with present ones, given its historical and social sequence. The teachings

of conservative missionaries were handed down to Korean Christians, who became the committed allies of American churches. The experience of Communism and the anti-Communist policies of authoritarian governments fuelled the burgeoning conservative churches of Korea. In these circumstances, they became predominant and mainstream, marginalizing moderate and liberal churches. These characteristics of Korean conservative Protestantism represent a doctrine oriented religion, even though its history is a relatively short one. In other words, it took root in non-Christian soil and became one of the most successful established religions in Korea.

However, conservatism and fundamentalism do not represent the entire spectrum of Korean Protestantism. It also gave birth to new religions that are historically alien to traditional Protestantism. The next chapter will examine these new forms of religiosity, looking at when and how they emerged from the Korean Protestant tradition. Just as importantly, it will analyze the numerous religious conflicts that new religions have had with conservative Protestant churches.

Chapter Six

Sects and Cults in the Christian Tradition

Despite the fact that Christian sects and cults arise from the Christian tradition, they have been criticized, attacked, or simply ignored, with few scholarly exceptions (Min Gyeongbae 1998; Kang Wi Jo 1997; Noh, Gilmyeong. 1996). It is, however, important to pay attention to the role of new religious groups, because sects and cults serve as counterparts to Christian "orthodoxy." Although seen as "deviant" by established churches, they function as significant communication channels through which religious practitioners leave conventional beliefs and create new types of religiosity. Consequently, although conservative Koran Protestantism tends to be anti-syncretistic, rejecting any elements foreign to the Christian tradition, the birth of various new religious expressions indicates that specific cultural and social factors affect religious change and transformation.

Religion in Korea has interacted with various social contexts, helping to stimulate new religious groups ranging from revitalization movements within established churches to completely new Christian-oriented religions. Any religion is susceptible to change, especially when exposed to new social and cultural milieus. How Christian-oriented sects and cults in Korea have been influenced by these social and cultural dynamics is the focus of this chapter. It argues that sects and cults need to be understood in relation to their differing mythological and doctrinal characteristics. The more a group fits the category the "orthodox" define as "deviant," the more it departs from the dominant

Christian tradition. A sect is somewhat "deviant" but remains essentially Christian. A cult, however, tends to move further and further from "Christian orthodoxy," ultimately retaining few traces of the Christian tradition that gave it birth.

1. New Religions in the Korean Cultic Milieu

The formation of modern Korean society was defined by three phases: 1) the impact of the West; 2) Japanese annexation and rule; and 3) the Korean War and its aftermath. During the first and second phases, a number of religious revitalization movements arose, filling niches where conventional religions were weak. Prompted by the impact of modernity and western culture, a number of collective and systematic social movements arose towards the end of the nineteenth century, each of which helped to drastically change the religious terrain. This was followed by Korean nationalistic movements under Japanese rule. To say nothing of the Korean War (1950-3), governmental drives towards capitalization, modernization and urbanization played significant roles in shaping the Korean religious environment.

Thus, as Wade Clark Roof points out, "religious shifts closely follow cultural shifts" (Roof 1985, 79). The patterns of cultural and religious change exhibit a mutual relationship. In this interaction, a cultic space is generated in a particular society which Colin Campbell calls a "cultic milieu" (Campbell 1972). This cultic milieu not only provides a religious environment, but may become the source of new religions. According to Campbell, a cultic milieu is "the cultural underground of society" which is deviant from or suppressed by mainstream cultures (Campbell 1972, 122). That

underground culture is continuously transformed and becomes the source of ferment and a reservoir of future religious movements.

For Campbell, therefore, the cultic milieu is more important than the cults themselves. For although cults are continuously created and disappear, a cultic milieu functions as the reservoir out of which cults are composed. He holds that “whereas cults are by definition a largely transitory phenomenon, the cultic milieu is, by contrast, a constant feature of society” (Campbell 1972, 122). This milieu is a society of seekers who pursue the truth, but the truth is fragmented. When fragmented claims for the truth are not satisfactory, the seekers “explore new cultic regions”; throughout this dynamic and ongoing process, cults appear and disappear (Campbell 1972, 128). From the perspective of the cultic milieu, cults are created in specific cultural environments. Their religious elements are not fixed, but, depending on the specific religious subjects or mythic figures, may differ in style and format. In these religious circumstances, cultural and religious contacts and social change function as stimuli for the formation of a new cultic milieu where new religions are born.

The formation of the cultic milieu in Korea has followed a certain historical sequence. As a historical and social phenomenon, Korea offered a plethora of religious and cultural sources from Shamanism, through Buddhism and Taoism, to Christianity. When this religious reality combined with other cultural elements, it formed a particular milieu for the creation of new religions. Prior to the Josoen Dynasty, religions were in a relatively harmonious relationship, but the situation changed with the rise of a new Confucian government that oppressed other religions. That social situation fostered a

repository of rejected culture in which “alternatives to current orthodoxy are kept alive, perhaps to re-emerge when the demands of orthodoxy have changed” (Dolby 24, 1979). While a small portion of Confucian literati governed the society and formed a high culture, Buddhism, Shamanism, and other folk religions constituted a stratum as a low culture. Even Buddhism shared channels of communication with popular beliefs outside the strict Confucian structure.

In this setting, the prophetic book *Jeonggamrok* (Jeong’s Prophesies) gained popularity during the late Joseon Dynasty within an underground culture where Taoist and folk religious elements were fused, becoming a perpetual source of millenarian movements. Kim Gu (1876-1949), an independence activist once involved in the Donghak movement, observed that natural and social disasters, along with unidentified epidemics, were prevalent throughout Korea during this period. According to Kim, there were rumors that a *Jinin* (True Man) blocked a steam ship and forcibly collected a traveling tax and doled them out to exploited people. In the *Jeongamrok*, the hero, Jeongdoryeong (Sir Jeong) would appear as a savior, and choose Mt. Gyeryong as the capital city for a new nation in the near future (Kim Gu, [1929] 1993, 31). This book foresees the advent of a savior called *Jinin*, who was also known as Jeongdoryeong in the popular culture. The *Jinin* will save the Korean people in the future and become a catalyst for the advent of a number of new religious movements in contemporary Korea.

These ideas were maintained through popular communication channels and were combined with supernatural figures such as Jeongdoryeong (Sir Jeong), Maitreya, and Amita Buddha. Mythological ideas for a new world arose from these kinds of sources,

and helped to transform the climate of political oppression and economic exploitation, spawning new collective movements.

Such an environment was particularly significant in generating new religions. As discussed in chapter three, the first collective new religious movement, the Donghak (Eastern Learning), appeared in this cultic milieu. This was an era when Western powers and foreign cultures were flowing into the country. Social change and upheavals, from Japanese rule and the Korean War to industrialization, contributed to the creation of new cultic milieus. Christian-oriented religious movements, which represented another layer of new religions, combined traditional religious cultural sources with some aspects of Christianity. While the Donghak movement sought to revitalize traditional spirituality, the Unification Church emerged as a Christian adaptation to Korean tradition. Choe Jeu, the founder of the *Donghak* movement, experienced spiritual possession in the religious milieu of Confucianism, Catholicism, Buddhism, and Shamanism. Mun Seonmyeong [Moon Sun Myung], the founder of the Unification Church, had spiritual visions through the channels of Christianity, Shamanism, and Confucianism.

As indicated above, however, a cultic milieu can be continuously created and at the same time conditioned by social, cultural, and political situations because it is a fluid social space where various kinds of cultic elements are generated and disappear. Not only religious traditions, but also geographical and historical peculiarity can promote specific religious environments. The cultic milieu not only offers religious sources, but also is itself a zone where recruitments are made, and provides cultic figures with many opportunities to test their religious competence. Seekers are not simply consumers, but

producers. Spiritual gurus tend to meet and compete to display superior skills they have practiced for a long time. This feature is particularly strong in popular Taoist tradition. Christian-oriented cultic figures also join the religious market (Kim Haegyeong 1993, 60-72).

In this milieu, secrets texts with prophetic accounts help us to understand the cultic context. They are interpreted differently and appropriated readily by individuals and groups for their own purposes. Recently, the popular book, *Gyeokam Yurok* (The Writings of Gyeokam), was circulated amongst the public. The claim was made that this book was written around 450 years ago, and has been made use of as a companion work to the classical prophetic book entitled *Jeonggamrok*. Gyeokam, to whom the writing of the *Gyeokam Yurok* is attributed (1509-1571), is known as the quintessential scholar and sage. The catalogue of the National Library of Korea says that Gyeokam's book was created in 1944, yet indicates that it was originally written in 1496, therefore, classifying it as an ancient book. Kim Hawon, however, insists this book is a recent counterfeit that has nothing to do with the scholar Gyeokam. According to his analysis, it was not until July 7, 1977 that the first version of the book was registered at the National Library (Kim Hawon 2004, 46). He goes on to insist that it is spurious because the text uses modern Chinese characters such as *cheolghak* (philosophy), *gongsan* (commune), and *wonja* (atom). Furthermore, there are many Christian words such as *bokeum* (gospel), *sipja* (cross), bangju (ark), bohyesa (Counselor), including some similar references to biblical verses (Isaiah 35:5-10, Romans 2:6-9, 29-32; I Corinthians 6:18, 7:10-14) (Kim Hawon 2004, 48-59). He particularly emphasizes that he uncovered the origin of the text when

he met an old man who copied (or wrote) the text and donated it to the National Library of Korea. This author lived as a member in one of the faith villages of the Heavenly Father Religion, a new religion. This encounter solved many puzzles. Discovering that the major focus of the text is Bak Taeseon, a messianic figure, Kim presumes that it was written between 1975 and 1977 (Kim Hawon 2004, 69-77).

Since 1987, the book has been widely circulated among the public and at least twenty kinds of expository books on it have been published. Individuals and groups competed to interpret it for their own. Whether or not it was written by Gyeokam, this text is frequently appropriated as an authentic prophetic book by individuals and groups. Since it contains an apocalyptic vision and the expectation of a messiah, it is used not only by Christian cults but also by non-Christian cults. The text, originally written in Chinese, has two significant functions for seekers. First, even though the Korean language, *Hangeul*, was officially invented and circulated in 1443, most books were written in Chinese until the 19th century. Thus, the authenticity of the text was supported by the fact that it was written in Chinese and looks ancient. Second, since Chinese is a foreign language to Koreans, it makes various interpretations possible. Where it gains a reputation for authenticity among seekers, the text is venerated as a sacred text. With no critical approach, their reading method is as figurative as that of conservative Christians. This book and many other prophetic texts have gained quite a number of followers through Internet cafés which have a membership of 151, 346, and 779 respectively.[1]

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[1] http://cafe.daum.net/rurdkafhrdusrnth, http://cafe.daum.net/messiahs, and http://cafe.daum.net/jhchoe1128, accessed 21/09/2006.

Although such numbers in themselves do not prove that people actually revere these texts, their activities and involvement are equivalent to what Stark and Bainbridge call “audience cults” and “client cults” (Stark and Bainbridge 1985, 27-28, 33-34), which are still in a fluid state. According to Stark and Bainbridge, there are three types of cults: audience cults, client cults, and cult movements. First, an audience cult is the most loosely organized, since participation here comes mostly through the mass media. Second, a client cult serves to satisfy very specific and limited demands, but “cannot involve the client in long-term membership in a large, stable organization” (Stark and Bainbridge 1985, 209). Lastly, a cult movement is a full-fledged religious movement, although some cults are very weak organizationally speaking (Stark and Bainbridge 1985, 26-30).

The entities of a subculture in a particular society do not fully explain the emergence of particular cults. As explained in chapter three, a sect can become a cult and a cult can be transformed into a sect or a church. It is more common, however, for new religious groups to rely on specific religious, cultural, and social contexts.

In the case of Christian-oriented sects and cults, they tend to take advantage of the religious resources associated with the Christian tradition. With the growing establishment of Christian traditions in Korea, sects and cults have appeared as responses to Korean culture and society. Although the same Christian Bible is used, religious experiences with different referents often lead to different religious orientations. This transition can be called a mythological turn; that is, new myths are used to reinterpret religious beliefs. While social scientists have paid careful attention to religious

organizations and their social boundaries, they tend to neglect the significance of religious experiences concerned with mythological transformation and ritual innovation. These internal factors, as social products of religious knowledge, play important roles in the formation of religion. In the case of messianic groups derived from the Christian tradition, the mythological turn has had a tremendous impact on the genesis of new religions.

2. Sects and Cults in the Christian Tradition

In 1955, the president of Union Theological Seminary, Henry P. Van Dusen, who had visited Korea during Japanese rule (Ryu Hyeonggi 1992, 76-77), categorized a new pattern of Christian movement—comprised of Adventist, Pentecostal, and Holiness churches—the "third mighty arm of Christian outreach" (van Dusen 1955, 947). A few years later, he called the phenomenon "the third force," repudiating the "fringe sect" label often ascribed to them. As a liberal theologian, he tried to embrace this new form of spirituality from an ecumenical perspective, indicating that "[m]any features of this 'new Christianity' bear striking resemblance to the life of the earliest Christian churches as revealed in the New Testament" (van Dusen 1958, 122).[2] However, he was cautious about the future orientation of this type. He wrote: "Whether this 'third type' will persist into the long future as a separate and mighty major expression of the Christian faith, or whether…it will ultimately be reabsorbed into classic Protestantism, no one can foretell," adding that "it will continue a permanent principal variant of Christianity" (van Dusen

[2] For a more thorough discussion, see McCloud 2004, 25-54.

1955, 948). Van Dusen's argument highlights an important factor. The third force was not simply a collection of fringe groups, but was growing into a major Christian organization, and would play an important role in shaping the future forms of Christianity.

In a similar manner, this new religiosity can be explained through theologian Harvey Cox's polarization between fundamentalism and experientialism. The first tends to venerate the past or retrieve a tradition for a "firm grip on absolute truth," and the last emphasizes experience while also venerating the past (Cox 1995, 302-305). Since Pentecostalism has both propensities, Cox argues that it can be used to illustrate two opposite tendencies: "Because the organizational pattern of Pentecostalism is so anarchic, or so lacking, it is not easy to discern the battle lines" (Cox 1995, 312). The future orientation of fundamentalism or experientialism depends on two key features of Pentecostal life and theology: "experience" itself and the idea of the "Spirit" (Cox 1995, 312).

However, in spite of their useful theological framework, the typologies of van Dusen and Cox do not explain the rise of new religious movements. As seen in revitalization movements, the direction of religious movements is not circular. They can return to a traditional form of Christianity, remain as a sectarian group, or turn into a wholly different type of religion. The creation of new religions is concerned with the process of mythmaking and ritual innovation, without which religious experiences are eventually incorporated into conventional religious structures. Unless groups and individuals in conventional religions are satisfied with certain types of religious goods,

new types of movements can arise and go in different ways. Victor Turner suggests that the relationship between structure and community moves in a circular process. In his argument, the concept "communitas" is important because it connotes communal life, with anti-structure as a liminal or transitional stage. Turner holds that "Communitas breaks in through the interstices of structure, in liminality; at the edges of structure, in marginality; and from beneath structure, in inferiority" (Turner 1977, 128). The liminal stage is in transition from structure to *communtas* (anti-structure), that is, a phase of "betwixt and between." More specifically, Turner pays attention to the liminal stage, saying that "[l]iminality, marginality, and structural inferiority are conditions" in which "myths, symbols, rituals, philosophical systems, and works of art" are frequently generated (Turner 1977, 128). Ritual process as the cycle of structure-communitas-structure does not mean that it always moves back to conventional cultural and religious structures. For instance, myths, symbols, and rituals generated in a liminal stage can produce different results. A new community may develop or be incorporated into a larger structure. This transformative status reflects a mutual relationship between the *communitas* and its social circumstances. If the movement is attacked by outsiders "it tends to become even more firm in its deviant stand," but if this voluntary movement is accommodated by a larger organization through alternative structures such as monasticism and retreat centers, it remains within the conventional structure (Moberg 1962, 274).

In Korean Christianity, the spectrum of religious movements has ranged from orthodox conservative churches to new religions. Although a number of religious and

cultural factors contribute to these religious orientations, mythological agents such as texts, figures, and symbols play significant roles in forming a particular group. Myths about Jesus in Christianity, the Prophet Muhammad in Islam, and the Prophet Joseph Smith in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints all helped to generate new religions. Since religious variations rely on certain types of social conditions, the color and shape of religious groups differ in time and space. The Donghak (Eastern Learning) movement, for example, was not only a response to Western forces but also a reaction to revitalized Korean traditional beliefs. While many new religious groups are transient, as Colin Campbell points out, a cultic milieu that offers religious sources will allow them to persist. In Korean history, the perpetual appearance of millenarian figures like Amita, Maitreya and Jeodoryeong encouraged the rise of millenarian movements. These revitalization groups included Cheongdogyo (the Heavenly Way Religion), Won Buddhism, Jeuongsando, and other new religions.

Unlike non-Christian new religious movements, it was after the Korean War that Christian-oriented new religions flourished. Choe Joong-Hyun [Choe Junghyeon] attempts to explain this in terms of his “disaster-origin hypothesis” (Choe Joong-Hyun 1993, 91). This hypothesis, however, fails to demonstrate the uniqueness of Christian-oriented new religious groups, which can be distinguished from the rise of other revival movements. In other words, while Na Unmong, Jo Yonggi (Cho Yonggi), and Kim Gidong remained in the Christian tradition, Bak Taeseon and Mun Seonmydong (Moon Sun Myung) departed from traditional Christianity and created new religions. It is plausible that social changes and vicissitudes in a social environment can have an impact

on the formation of religious movements. Yet, these variables do not explain the creation of specific mythologies or worldviews. In order for a new religion to be formed, a mythological turn is the core factor that guides the direction it takes. Without a mythological change, constituting shifts in cosmology and worldview, most Christian movements remain within Christian circles, whether or not they are sectarian-oriented. If there is a mythological figure, alive or dead, a group may form a new religion, creating a new belief system. Although new religions take their major sources from the Bible and Christianity, often in an effort to authenticate their belief systems, a new mythology provides such groups with an alternative worldview or cosmology.

Therefore, one can say that messianic figures in Christian millenarian movements are a key factor in the creation of new religious groups. Christian-oriented messianic groups draw their authenticity from the Korean tradition, the Christian Bible, and other spiritual sources. However, the formation of a new religious body can be gradual or sudden. While Bak Taeseon and Mun Seonmyeong both broke away from conventional religions and established new ones, their starting points were very different. Even though Bak Taeseon was active as a Christian revivalist and then turned his movement into a messianic group, Mun Seonmyeong's new movement was, from the outset, a messianic group that deviated from orthodox Christianity.

3. Sectarian Revival Movements

Van Dusen's third force may have different colors in the Korean context where non-Christian traditions and Christian worldviews are pervasive and offer different communication channels.

3.1. The Prayer Mountain Phenomenon and Christian Experiences

Mountains in Korea cover around seventy percent of its landmass, providing Koreans with mythical experiences and spiritual shelters. Mountain gods and spirits, shrines for their worship and prayer, and a number of Buddhist temples are general expressions of Korean religiosity. Therefore, it is not surprising that many retreat centers were established for Christians in the mountains, or that these places played an important role in shaping Christian culture and fostering a dynamic spirituality. Such prayer retreat centers offered Christians religious resources and spiritual experiences. Since these movements began as non-denominational organizations, they were not under the control of hierarchical church structures, thus allowing lay people to become involved in preaching and proselytizing activities. Due to their locations in remote mountain areas, popular communication channels flourished.

The phenomenon of mountain prayer is a typical form of spiritual retreat for Korean Christians. Generally, prayer retreat centers are built in mountain areas where Christians visit, attend worship services, read the Bible, and have special prayer sessions. Prayers are performed individually or collectively. Yohan Lee, who has conducted research on this phenomenon, challenges a conventional assumption that prayer mountain experiences are related to shamanism and "cannot be accepted as authentic"

(Lee Yohan 1985, 38). He argues that Korean Christians who oppose the practice tend to understand "the prayer mountain phenomenon by considering only the negative aspects and automatically attributing [these] influences [to Shamanism]" (Lee Yohan 1985, 38, 40). Instead, he accepts the Korean church's appropriation of mountain retreats, viewing them as valuable aids to spiritual development.

In his research, conducted in May of 1981, Lee documented a denominational spectrum, magical elements, and lost consciousness (or possession) in mountain prayer. He tried to identify magical elements in mountain prayer, but his interpretation was misleading because the results were not much different from those found in conventional Christianity. First, participants in mountain prayer retreats and similar activities did not show any variation in denominational affiliation. In fact, the denominational affiliation rate of participants approximately agreed with the general range of the denominational spectrum in Korea.

Table 4.1 Category Label of Denomination

Denomination	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency (%)
No answer	11	13.17
Presbyterian	39	48.8
Methodist	18	22.5
Full Gospel	2	2.5
Sung Kyeol [Holiness]	5	6.3
Baptist	3	3.8
Others	2	2.5
Total	80	100.0

Source: (Lee Yohan 1985, 149)

In order to measure the utilitarian value [of] magic, the following question was given:

> What is your special (important) purpose at this prayer session?
> a. Economic (job, money, business, physical health (including family members), social success [*sic*] (human relationship)
> b. Repent[ance]
> c. Church growth and problem-solving
> d. To get reassurance of Christian faith
> e. Other

Table 4.2 Utilitarian Value

	a. no answer	b. practical blessing	c. repent[ance]	d. church growth	assurance	Other
Total	2	19	15	12	31	1
Percent	2.5	23.8	18.8	15.0	28.8	1.3

Source: (Lee Yohan 1985, 154)

As shown in Table 4.2, the statistical numbers show that the belief in prayer for practical blessing is not relatively high. The next question is the most relevant for measuring a shamanistic factor (i.e., the degree of possession):

> Did you ever lose consciousness during prayer at the mountain center?
> a. often
> b. occasionally
> c. once or twice
> d. never

Table 4.3 Lost Consciousness

	no answer	a. often	b. occasionally	c. very often	d. never
Total	5	2	5	5	63
Percent	6.3	2.5	6.3	6.3	78.8

Source: (Lee Yohan 1985, 158)

Table 4.3 demonstrates that the rate of spiritual possession is not relatively high either. Thus, the phenomenon of mountain prayer is not an isolated reality from the broader

Korean society, but forms a part of the social system. In Victor Turner's scheme, it is in a liminal stage. Leaving a conventional society or a church structure to visit a mountain retreat center and returning to a conventional society is a ritual process not unlike a pilgrimage (Lee Yohan 1985, 7-8). This pilgrimage initially started as a spontaneous *communitas*. Mountain prayer centers are a spatial aspect of liminality because people come together spontaneously and stay for prayer. This movement developed into two types. One is that when this movement is integrated into society, it can also be a normative factor in social control.

A prayer movement started in Yongmunsan. Mt. Yongmun can be a good example for demarcating the development and transformation of mountain prayer movements. The mountain prayer center founded in 1950 by Na Unmong (1914-)[3] had a major impact on the culture of prayer retreat in mountains. Na experienced the Holy Spirit in 1942 through reading the Bible, by a kind of self-proselytizing, and began to preach as a lay person. He then started the Aehyangsuk movement (love-country-class) as a community for "a country of love" on Mt. Yongmun (Na Suh Young 1997, 147). He was put in jail on July 1, 1943. Since Christian practices seemed to be against the worship of the Japanese founding god, the colonial Japanese government persecuted Koreans. After several days in jail, Na was released and left Korea for Manchuria in order to escape persecution. In January 1945, he came back secretly to Korea and hid until the liberation of the country. After liberation, he was involved initially in publishing a monthly magazine, and then made a decision to resume his previous movement, the

[3] The following description of Na Unmong is constructed mainly through his autobiographical accounts in 1990a, 1990b and 1990c, and through his son's dissertation.

Aehyangsuk, in 1947. The Korean War kept him from continuing his activities, and he was put in prison again by the communists in 1950, but upon his release on January 8, 1951 he resumed his Holy Spirit Movement, which soon spread around the country.

The community held worship services four times a day. Na practiced "laying hands on the body with prayer" in order to heal people through the fire of the Holy Spirit. As his vigorous evangelism attracted a number of people, he seemed a serious competitor of conventional churches. Soon he was charged with heresy. In 1955, he was arrested on suspicion of embezzling church money. When he was found innocent, the prosecutor accused him of communist activities under the pretext that Na's preaching was pro-communist and anti-governmental. In fact, he was anti-communist and nationalist. Twenty-seven days later, he was proclaimed innocent.

On April 29th, 1956, the Gideon Bible College was established in order to teach the Bible and to control excessive mystical orientations among Na's followers. In 1962, he had to endure a six month prison sentence but was released after being found innocent. The Yongmun Mountain Retreat Center, the first Protestant one, was built in 1961. Hard work and strict regulation defined the lives of the nuns who worked here. Their communal daily lives are well described by a nun called Kang Aeja:

> Get up at 2:40 a.m. and wash my face by 3:00 a.m.; pray for the country from 4:00 to 5:30 a.m.; mounting on the Prayer Altar for the Salvation of the Country and have an early morning worship from 5:30 to 6:30 a.m.; have a morning sleep after the morning worship to 8:00 a.m.; have breakfast by 9:00 a.m.; read the Bible until noon; after taking a midday nap by noon for an half hour, mountain-pray until 2:30 p.m.; read the Bible until 4:30; indoor-prayer until 5:30; have supper by 6:30; meditation from 6:30-7:30 p.m.; have evening worship by 9:00 p.m.; have an individual worship by 9:30; personal free time and ready to sleep by 10:00 p.m. (Kang Eaja 1990,93).

With the spread of his movement, the Korea Pentecostal Holiness Church was founded as a denomination in 1979. Following Na's mountain prayer center, a number of prayer centers with denominational backgrounds were established, reaching around eight hundred (Na Suh Young 1997, 166).

Na's beliefs were not wholly different from those of contemporary charismatic leaders in North America, who claim prophetic visions from God, practice glossolalia (speaking in tongues), perform exorcisms (demon ousting), have end of time expectations, and participate in clapping, dancing, jumping, shouting, and drumming. Although he was a Methodist elder, his revival movement was non-denominational and emphasized the work of the Holy Spirit. During his tour in 1958, he confronted different traditional beliefs such as the belief of *Jeongamrok* (Jeong's Prophecies), Confucianism, and Buddhism. While he was Korean, he initially had difficulty in communicating with the local people, who were not familiar with Christian teachings. His mission strategy was first to acknowledge their beliefs, then compare them to Christian beliefs, and finally to explain that the final truth was accomplished with the way of the Cross. For him, the way of the Cross was the final and ultimate truth in which human salvation is accomplished. For instance, in *Jeongamrok*, a Korean prophetic book, the word *sipseung jiji* (ten places of refuge) is regarded as the earthly paradise where the prophecy would be accomplished. Thus, people came together there and waited for the coming of the prince who had supernatural powers. Na explained that the shape of the Chinese character "十" (which literally means ten) is identical to the Christian cross which

designates the victory of the cross of Jesus the Christ (Na Unmong 1990b, 115-117). This theological articulation matches his stress on God's providence and the Korean expectation of the true messiah in figures such as Jeongdoryeong and Mireuk (the Korean Maitreya) (Na Suh Young 1997, 208). He was also struggling to find a solution to the soteriological problem of infant death, and people who lived before the coming of Christianity to Korea, through the concept of the spirits in prison described in 1 Peter 3:19 (Na Suh Young 1997, 216). He claimed that people who died in the condition of a spirit in prison can be saved.

Na's theological stance shows that he is still within the circle of traditional Christianity, but more flexible than fundamentalist Protestant theology. Na Suh Young, Na's eldest son, who graduated from United Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio, classifies Na's theological position as "hospitable exclusivism", one that "is hospitable toward other religions, not exhibiting hostility and ignorance, by recognizing that they have some value" (Na SeoYeong 1997, 221). For Na Unmong, the morality of Confucius and the prophecy of Gautama Buddha laid a foundation for Jesus' Gospel and God's providence, and thus the Christian God is also the God of Confucianism and Buddhism (Na Unmong 1990c, 87-105). Yet, his beliefs and practices were the combination of his experiences and Christianity and are similar to those of theologians engaged in inter-religious dialogue. In this sense, Na's theological position was very different from that of conservative theology (Na Suh Young 1997, 172-178; Na Unmong 1990c, 36-37, 106-117).

The transition from a non-denominational movement to a denominational one came as a result of the Governmental order of 1978, which stipulated that all prayer mountain centers without denominational affiliations be removed. At the time, any groups without denominational affiliations were treated as cults or pseudo-religions. Due to fears that his prayer center and many others would be removed, a new denomination came into existence (Na Unmong 1990c, 193-203). Na's case shows, as Richard Niebuhr points out, that a sectarian movement can move in the direction of a denomination (Niebuhr 1957, 3-6). Na's prayer movement spread to the whole country and provided a spiritual fund for the rise of various religious groups. His influence included Bak Taeseon, who went in a different direction (Na Unmong 1990b, 170; 24: 79-81).

3.2. Modernization and Mega-Churches

In this section Na's Holy Spirit movement is compared with the Yoido [Yeoido] Full Gospel Church, the largest congregation in the world, which was established by Jo Yonggi (known as David Yonggi Cho). There are clear similarities between them, because mountain prayer meetings, hand clapping, speaking in tongues, and drumming are evident in both churches. According to Na Suh Young, Jo was influenced by Na, and was even assisted by him in the construction of Jo's church (Na Suh Young 1997, 159-160). Although Na's spiritual base was the mountain center and Jo's activities were focused on urban areas, their future paths did not diverge significantly. Both continued to be linked to the Christian tradition.

Rev. Jo Yonggi started his church with the aid of his mother-in-law, Choe Jasil, in 1957, and became a major figure within the Pentecostal movement in Korea. While this movement may date back to the 1930s, during the period of colonial rule, its organizational development only began in the 1950s. The first Pentecostal Conference was organized in April 1950. With the visit of Arthur B. Chestnut of the American Assemblies of God in 1951, the Korean Assemblies of God began to emerge. In fact, they were established in 1953, the same year the Full Gospel Theological School was founded. The principles for the new theological school display the features of Pentecostalism: the Bible as inspired by God, the Trinity, the virgin conception, miracles, the victorious redemptive death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, his second coming, rebirth through the Holy Spirit, God's healing, and baptism in the Holy Spirit (Han Yung-Chul 1998, 494-495). The leading agent of the church's growth was Rev. Jo Yonggi, who established the Yoido Full Gospel Church.

With respect to Pentecostalism, the Yeoido Full Gospel Church (named in 1984) has always been the center of discussion because of its growth and social influence. It started as a tent-church in 1958. Rev. Jo's message appealed to the Korean people, who were devastated by the Korean War and suffered from disease and poverty. In 1967, the cell group system, which began to educate people within small groups, was a major factor in the church's growth. This system prompted the involvement of lay people, male and female, and cemented strong social bonds. These social ties, together with Jo's theology, represented a "Five-fold Gospel" (renewal, the fullness of the Holy Spirit, divine healing, blessing, and the Second Coming) and the "Three-fold blessings"

(spiritual prosperity, prosperity in everyday life, and health). These became the church's major doctrine and creed (Han Yung-Chul 1998, 521).

There are two factors which promoted the growth: the social environment and the internal structure. First, church growth coincided with the modernization project led by the authoritarian government. Modernization in Korea meant separation from traditional social values, institutions, and worldviews—in essence, the deconstruction of Korean traditions. Shamanism and folk religions were considered superstitious and incompatible with the modernization projects designed by governments and intellectuals; modern styles were substituted for traditional housing and roads, and the education system was Americanized. From the 1960s, government modernization swept over the entire country and destroyed or renovated traditional houses, and simultaneously supported the formation of conglomerates (Jaebeul). In establishing big companies, "the entrepreneurial talents of the company founders and the lead of employees were important factors" (Steers, Shin and Ungson 1989, 19). Accordingly, the growth of the church followed this anti-traditional pattern of modernization. It is symbolic that the Yeoido Full Gospel Church moved into the Yeoido area, located in the area of the south Han River. It was once open land, but soon became the center of modernization, urbanization, and social mobilization.

In the newly established town, which was free from traditional social structures, the church attracted rural migrants, who had already lost their social ties and traditional religious beliefs. As Rodney Stark indicates, where traditional values and networks are weak, new religious forms tend to flourish. Yeoido Full Gospel Church exploded into a

mega-church in this new place. The mega-church as a religious conglomerate followed the pattern of the economic and social conditions (Brouwer, Gifford and Rose 1996, 117). The church membership reached 100,000 in 1979, 200,000 in 1981, 500,000 in 1984, and 666,000 in 1994. In the process of this social mobilization, Pentecostalism combined successfully with the enterprise culture and created what might be called "spiritual capital" (Cox 1995, 230).

On the one hand, the spiritual capital was derived from prayer and fasting. The Full Gospel Prayer Mountain in Onsanri in Gyeonggi Province, which was later renamed Ohsanri Choe Jasil Fasting Prayer Mountain in honor of Rev. Choe Jasil, became the center of religious revivalism in 1973. The cofounder of the church, the mother-in-law of Rev Jo, makes the following claim:

> Through fasting and prayer there is healing for all kinds of distresses such as emotional diseases, anxiety, neurosis, and depression. Physical sicknesses such as cancer, arthritis, tuberculosis, neuralgia, heart trouble, gallstones, asthma, epilepsy, and diabetes are healed by God's miraculous power. Church problems are solved. [Revival celebrations] cause the church to grow in numbers. It also assures individuals of a victorious faith in their Christian life. In this wicked generation, God has shown us in His Word that by fasting and prayer we can enjoy a closer relationship and access to His miraculous power (Choi Jashil 1980, 5).

The combination of spiritual values and a modernization project created a new type of church, the mega-church. Other factors—such as the establishment of a tight-knit social network, well-organized worship services, and cell meetings—also contributed to this growth. As of 1978, more than 65,000 members attended Sunday worship services, and 3,500 homes stretching over the metropolitan area had cell meetings.

Eventually, the church followed the typical transition from a sect to a denomination. In 1981, Professor Chung Chin Hong [Jeong Jinghong] at Seoul National University conducted participant observation research at the church. What he found was that while theological teaching was generally lacking, magical practices, positive thinking, and a business style of church management were prevalent. He anticipated that in the future this church would embrace fundamentalist-like beliefs (Jeong Jinhong 1988, 211-267). In fifteen years after his initial field research, he realized that while magical practices had been weakened, the church's business style of management had been strengthened (Chung Chin Hong 1997, 204). The church not only operated a tight-knit organization through 'home cell groups,' but also established branch sanctuaries to accommodate new church members. When faced with increasing Sunday traffic, it began to establish local branch-churches where Rev. Jo's sermons were delivered through satellite communication or video tapes (Chung Ching Hong 1997, 205-205). Though Rev. Jo was still leading the church, it was already making the transition from a sectarian to church-type organization. The church launched outreach programs for social welfare, founded the national daily newspaper *Gukmin Ilbo*, a theological institute, mission schools, and encouraged foreign missions (Chung Ching Hong 1997, 207-212). By the summer of 2002, it was observed that the church had lost the dynamic that Pentecostal or Charismatic churches tend to show in their early stages. According to a researcher in the academic institute of the church, what was most challenging to the church was the theological articulation of its doctrine (Interview, 2002). By becoming a member of the KNCC (Korean National Council of Churches) on July 1, 1996, it demonstrated that it

had changed from a sectarian organization into a full-fledged denomination, moving from marginal to mainstream status**.**

3. 3. Demonology and Healing

While Jo's Pentecostal movement incorporates both the Christian message and the modernization project, Kim Gidong's emphases on healing and demonology are more consciously religious and therefore akin to Shamanism. The idea of demon possession, however, is not unique to Koreans. The four gospels in the New Testament are filled with stories about demons and exorcisms, as are many churches in North America. In 1960, the Moody Bible Institute of Chicago published a book about demon possession in countries like Korea. This book argued that demon possessions paralleled "those in the New Testament, where the cause is clearly stated as demon possession" (Moody Bible Institute of Chicago 1960, 8).

In the past, the casting out of demons was not only a main part of Christian evangelism, but was also a matter of concern for missionaries in non-Christian countries. In the early twentieth century, A. J. Smith (1887-1960), a missionary to China, witnessed the casting out of demons, proclaiming "The Great Galilean had conquered again. Praise God forever!" (Smith 1929, 52). Furthermore, exorcism has a long history in the Anglican, Eastern Orthodox, and Roman Catholic churches.

In the Asian context, the phenomena of demon-possession and exorcism were observed extensively by John L. Nevius, a missionary to Chefoo (Yantai), China. Upon visiting Korea, he guided young American missionaries in his missionary methods. Not

only did he observe many cases of demon-possessed phenomena, but he also received many similar responses from other missionaries responding to his questions about demon possession**.** In his book *Demon Possession*, he describes how many Chinese people afflicted and possessed by demons were saved in the name of Jesus Christ. For him, demon possession was not superstition, but a genuine reality, making the casting out of demons a counter method to the saving of people from demons and evil spirits (Nevius [1894] 1968, 254-255). In his part of the mission field, the expression "I command you in the name of Christ to come out of him!" was not unusual (Nevius [1894] 1968, 13). With the coming of Christianity to China, controlling demons became a Christian's work. The early missionaries in Korea likewise observed that there were parallels between the demons in the Bible and those in Korea.

James S. Gale's work contains vivid descriptions of Christian exorcism, demonstrating how missionaries confronted demonic phenomena in Korea:

> Some of us have come East to learn how wondrously Jesus can set free the most hopeless of lost humanity. We have come to realize that there are demons indeed in his world, and that Jesus can cast them out; to learn once more that the Bible is true, and that God is back of it; to know that his purpose is to save Asia, and to do an important part of the work through young Americans, Canadians, Britons, and others, who will humbly bow before Him and say, "Lord, here am I; send me" (Gale 1909, 89).

Through this analogy, they tried to find a method of confronting demons, and a solution to the overcoming of demonic phenomena in Korea. For them, only Jesus could rule over demons: "Never before in the history of Korea was the world of demons seen smitten hip

and thigh." Now at last there was reason for "rejoicing for victory over the evil one" (Gale 1909, 89; Battles 1918, 92).

Thus, historically, there is no concrete evidence of Shamanistic influence on Christian exorcism in Korea. If the skills of exorcism came from Shamanism, there should be evidence that the early missionaries and Korean Christians had learned it from them. Rather, Christian exorcism involved a clash between Korean traditional cosmologies and Christian worldviews. It is true that Korean shamans expel evil spirits relying on a god, but this god is very different from the Abramic understanding of deity. In fact, what is mainly characteristic of Korean Shamanism is not exorcism, but controlling and mediating with spirits for people afflicted by them, and appeasing "spirits who died unhappily or who did evil in this world" (Yamashita 1996, 317).While in the Shaman world experiencing gods is a matter of conversion, becoming a Christian is a matter of being relieved from the so-called Shamanistic Satan. Kim Haegyeong, who founded a Shamanistic religion, Dangungyo, later converted to Christianity, and published a book about his conversion experience, *Lord, I Put off the Crown of Satan* (Kim Haegyeong 1983). As the title of the book indicates, he escaped from his possessed state and became a Christian.

From the outset, the tradition of Christian exorcism in Korea derived primarily from Christian teachings. When this exorcism combined with revival movements, it became a major practice among Korean Christian revivalists, including Jo Yonggi and Na Unmong. This practice is well established by Kim Gidong (Kim Kidong). Known as a Christian demonologist and a spiritual child of the Rev. Lee Yongdo (Byeon Jongho

1993c, 255), Kim started his ministry in 1961 and practiced demon expulsion extensively. He claimed to have cast out demons from four hundred thousand people, including 59 cripples who were healed, stood up, and walked away (Kim Kidong 1997, 21). Founded in 1973, his Berea Academy, taking its name from the place mentioned in Acts 17:11, produced a plethora of theological and apologetic studies about his work. His Berea movement focuses on spiritual realities in which his demonology comprises an important part.

Mark Mullins contradicts the facts when he argues that "the spirit world of Shamanism can be seen clearly in the demonology of Kim Gidong and the Berea Academy" (Mullins 1994, 93). Mullins is correct, however, when he claims that traditionally "[S]hamanism discovers the identity of the ancestor or spirit responsible for causing the illness or disease through trance or divination. In the case of Christian shamans or exorcists, this seems to occur primarily through dialogue with the possessed person" (Mullins 1994, 93). Contrary to Mullins, it is more relevant to argue that the role of Christian exorcists is based on what the early missionaries thought about demons; they confronted "demon-possessed" people on the basis of biblical accounts rather than under the influence of Shamanism or indigenous religion, the latter of which is strongly rejected by Kim himself (Kim Kidong 1997, 33-34).

At this point, it is significant to indicate that Kim Gidong deliberately uses the term 'demonology,' for which he was frequently accused of being heretical. For him, the sources of demonology are the Bible and human experience. The Scripture informs people about the reality of the devil, and human experience confirms it. In the English

version of his work, entitled *Biblical, Theological and Phenomenal Studies on Demonology*, he claims that the purpose of his demonology is "to unveil the identity of demons whose business is solely to interfere with human bodies and lives and to reveal how to get power with which we shall be able to resist them" (Kim Kidong 1997, 8). While devils as fallen angels are "spirits of seduction," he goes on to argue that demons are " unbelievers' spirits after death, who cause sickness by attacking human bodies directly and tend to become the gods of human curse (*sic*; he probably means 'malevolent' gods)" (Kim Kidong 1997, 8). He prefers the term "demon" or "Satan" to the term "devil" because the "devil" is always used in the singular form in the Bible, and thus only one devil exists in this world, controlling a number of demons. It follows, for him, that the term "demon-casting" is more proper than "devil-casting" (Kim Kidong 1997, 32-33).

Thus, the analogy between Shamanism and demon-ousting does not support the case for a shamanistic influence on Christian exorcism. Rather, Shamanism is a way of confronting demonic realities foreign to the Christian belief system. Kim's demonology is the outcome of a cosmology which dates back to Jesus. He constructed his cosmology on the basis of his literal reading of the Bible, combining his Christian beliefs with magical ideas. For him, therefore, the devil and demons are not imaginary constructs, but realities vividly experienced. This seminal idea about demonology is developed from 1 John 3:8: "He who does what is sinful is of the devil because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work." Kim thinks that Jesus is in diametrical opposition to the devil. Therefore, "the

Bible says that humans killed Jesus and they belong to the devil. God sent His Son to destroy the works of the devil and save humans from these works" (Kim Kidong 1997, 15). In this sense, his cosmology is dualistic in that there is a cosmic battle between God and the devil.

His practice of "demon-ousting" is a major target for heresy hunters, because to them it indicates that his skill in this matter has a parallel with Shamanistic beliefs in Korea. Actually in the conservative theological climate of Korea, Kim firmly maintains his thoughts and practices on the basis of the Bible. His demon-ousting is grounded on his philosophy of healing, which implies that it is derived from divine power. He claims that the "term 'demon-possessed' employed by Jesus, for example, covers everything as in 'being bent over, being blind, being deaf,' etc. (Luke 13:11, Matt. 12:22, Mark 9:25)" (Kim Kidong 1997, 29).

Therefore, his demonology and practice of demon-ousting do not reflect the creation of a new religion. His experience and mythology are centered on the Bible. A female ex-member of his church, who was asked about her church, said her strongest memory of attending the church was "Bible study!" (Interview, 2004). In actual fact, as we will discuss later, Bible reading does not guarantee that people will remain in Christian circles. When a mythological framework gains control over the Bible, the resulting reading of scripture differs astonishingly from conventional understandings.

4. Becoming God: The Rise of Cultic Movements

The following cases demonstrate that the combination of religious experiences and religious beliefs do not always produce a new type of religion without mythological transformation. In particular, mythological accounts of religious leaders play a major role in creating new religions. Specific beliefs and practices can be applied to different objects and figures, and even the "literal reading" of biblical verses with obvious referents may generate different interpretations (Bartkowski 1996, 269). Although the earliest Christians used the Septuagint, a Greek version of the Hebrew scripture, they appropriated it through the image of Jesus. When a text combines with a new mythological account, its interpretation can go in a multitude of directions. These variations may involve political, cultural, social, and geographical factors, but the organizational spectrum follows the pattern of church, sect, and cult.

In the Korean context, the results range from sectarian to cultic movements. With respect to this spectrum, the next section deals mainly with two types of religious groups, including some splinter groups: a sectarian group that is transformed into a cult, and another group that still remains a cult (Stark and Bainbridge 1985, 186-187).

4.1. Historical and Cultural Sources of Christian Cults

During the colonial period, Korean Protestant churches grew steadily under the guidance of missionaries. Korean Christians showed both the legalistic and revivalistic aspects of Christianity (Smith 1917, 146). The revival movement of 1907 led Protestant churches in more dynamic directions. It is significant that Koreans such as Revs. Gil Seonju and Kim

Ikdu began to lead this emerging revival. Rev. Gil was believed to have performed miracles and guided people to repent in tears for their sins. As revivalism in Korea grew, they were warned to stay within the boundaries of orthodox Protestantism. Yet, beginning in 1920, Rev. Gil was accused of sexual abuse, monetary fraud, and spreading superstitious beliefs. He was also attacked by his church members and by communists due to his healing activities and anti-communist attitudes (Min Gyeongbae 1998, 399-401).

Alongside the revival movement within Protestantism in Korea, the challenge of communism, anti-missionary tendencies, and social and economic turmoil brought a new type of religiosity. It differed from imported sects like the Seventh Day Adventist Church, the Jehovah's Witnesses, and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. Beginning in 1910, an independent church called the *Jayu Gyohoe* (Freedom Church) movement appeared around the country. One prominent member, Pastor Kim Jangho, was charged as a heretic and excommunicated by the Presbyterian Church in 1918. Ironically, such sectarian movements were initially tolerated by the colonial government, for while well-organized Protestant churches were objects of surveillance by the government, schismatic groups were considered to be anti-missionary and pro-Japanese.

More radical sectarian groups developed over time. In 1935, the *Bokeum* Church (Gospel Church) was founded by Choe Taeyong. He was influenced by modern theologies and by the Japanese figure Uchimura Kanzo, who led a non-church movement and emphasized "Christian freedom and the independence of Japanese Christianity from the West" (Francis and Nakajima 1991, 29). Instead of joining a Korean non-church

movement, Choe had an interest in organizing an authentically Korean church. He claimed the autonomy of Korean churches and the continuity of revelation about Jesus. He had an anti-dogmatic, revolutionary faith**,** but his radical thinking and anti-missionary attitudes resulted in charges of heresy in 1931. Choe's church movement was nationalistic rather than religiously fundamentalist; it developed into the Korea Evangelical Church, a member of the National Council of Churches in Korea. Other sectarian groups, such as Jeokgeuk Sinang Dan (Positive Faith Group) and Hananimui Gyohoe (the Church of God), arose (Min Gyeongbae 1998, 404-433). This was the beginning of a Korean consciousness that wished for an end to missionary dominance and control in the churches.

However, the indigenous characteristics of Christian religiosity began with the revival movement of Rev. Lee Yongdo (1901-1933). Born in 1901, in Geumcheon County, Hwanghae Province, he was involved in the "March 1st National Independence Movements like other nationalist students" in 1919, and jailed four times. His theological education began with entering the Hyeopseong Theological School, a Methodist institution. He had a divine healing experience which drove him to become a revivalist. Upon graduation from this school in 1928, he was sent to a church where he held a mammoth prayer session and ten day fast (Byeon Jongho 1993b, 34-37). His revival meeting started at the Pyeongyang (Pyongyang) Central Church. As a Methodist minister and itinerary revivalist, he emphasized a mystical experience and identified himself with Christ's Passion. With his growing reputation, he was regarded as a competitor of church ministers. He was not a dogmatist in his conception of the nature of revivalism, and in

some ways was a mystic (Beon Jongho 1993b, 104, 126-127). His fame as a revivalist and mystic made him a historical figure of heretical and cultic movements; at the same time he was respected as an authentic spiritual leader. While he did not attempt to build a new church, his sympathetic attitude and behavior towards cultic figures stimulated new religious movements.

One of the most infamous cases known to the public was the extraordinary mysticism of Hwang Gukju, who claimed to have received a special revelation that Jesus' head was grafted onto his neck, and thus his head, blood, and mind were those of Christ. Since his appearance was like Jesus with a mustache, his claim gained popularity (Kim Gyeongrae 1957, 165). His pilgrimage from Manchuria to Seoul was followed by approximately sixty people, including young girls and married women. Rumors circulated around him that he even claimed to be Jesus Christ, and sexual promiscuity accompanied the pilgrimage, resulting in a heresy charge in 1930 by the Anju Presbytery of the Pyeongan Province in Northern Korea.

Another cultic form of religion began around 1927 with Yu Myeonghwa, a female Methodist. Her divine oracles were circulated among many spiritual seekers. This mystical practice developed into the foundation of Yesugyo (the Church of Jesus), in which the leading figure was Baek Namju, who was interested in Swedenborg and Sundassing (Choe Junghyeon 1999, 95). He put forward the typological idea of the Old Testament Era, the New Testament Era, and the Way of New Life; which influenced Kim Baekmun's theory of the Complete Testament Era (Choe Junghyeon 1999, 101). After he was exposed to the members of the church as scandalous and expelled, Baek joined the

Saejupa (New Lord) movement that was later registered as the Seongju Church (the Church of the Holy Lord), serving the female mystic Kim Seongdo as the new lord. After being excommunicated from a Christian church due to her claim that she received a revelation from God, Kim Seongdo started meetings at her home with her followers. Yet, beginning in 1938, the Japanese colonial government began a full-scale campaign of oppression against Korean-born new religions. Kim Seongdo was jailed for three months in 1943, and the next year she died at the age of sixty-one (Choe Junghyeon 1999, 38-390). As a disciple of Baek Namju, Kim Baekmun founded the Israel Monastery (probably in 1943), and theorized his typology of the Old Testament Era, the New Testament Era, and the Complete Testament Era. This scheme was derived from his three principles: creation, fall, and restoration. Jeong Deukeun occasionally attended worship services at Kim Baekmun's Israel Monastery, where she learned the ideas of the loss of pure bloodline and its restoration. As the source of the new blood, she left her blood to her three disciples**,** brought about through sexual relationships with them (Choe Junghyeon 1999, 195-197). Bak Taeseon was the Jeoung's bloodline (Choe Junghyeon 1999, 201, 235). Likewise, Mun Seonmyeong, the founder of the Unification Church, stayed at the monastery. His theory of the Divine Principle was very similar to Kim's typological scheme.

In his pioneering work, *A Study on the History of the Korean Messianic Movement* (Choe Junghyeon 1999), the historian of religion Choe Junghyeon demonstrates that this religious environment provided a long-lasting cultic milieu. Spiritual seekers tend to seek shared spiritual elements or bonds. Choe explains the

messianic movements through Peter Worsley's concept of "coterie," denoting a small and closed mystical group with strict membership requirements (Choe Junghyeon 1999, 308). Since a coterie has "[n]either the mass characteristics [n]or the intransigence towards the orthodox world" (Worsley 1968, xl), its spiritual seekers tend to remain in small groups of ten people or less, except for Bak Taeseon's Olive Tree Movement (or Heavenly Father Religion) and Mun Seonmyeong's Unification Church.

Religious movements, however, can arise on a large scale in the wake of natural disasters and social upheavals (Choe Junghyeon 1999, 308-309). The liberation from Japanese rule and the division of Korea into two countries represent two significant instances of this tendency**:** the Korean War caused social hardship and dislocation, reallocated human resources, and changed the social order. Under these circumstances, Protestant churches experienced phenomenal growth. Consequently, Protestantism became a major religion, and sectarian and cultic movements also responded to the social setting, filling a spiritual void in the process. It was within this context that Bak's Olive Tree Movement and Mun's Unification Church appeared. Unlike other seekers, Bak's personal spirituality in a cultic milieu was combined with traditional Christian revivalism; his cultic belief remained undifferentiated for a while within the Christian tradition. Even though his religious pursuits were only somewhat akin to the cultic tradition, after no more than two years he was found to be heretical. The Unification Church, founded by Mun Seonmyeong, was a new religious movement from the outset and became a target of attack by conventional churches. This is a familiar social pattern faced by new collective movements with high social profiles. While missionary-related

churches, sponsored by major religions, received social recognition, independent Christian sects and cults became the targets of anti-cultism. The following section will examine Christian cults in light of mythological transformation.

4.2. The Heavenly Father Religion and the Birth of God

The development of the Heavenly Father Religion (Cheonbugyo), also known as the Olive Tree Movement, has a parallel with Rev. Jim Jones' Peoples Temple in that the two organizations started within the Christian tradition, broke away from it, and established their own communities (Stark and Bainbridge 1985, 186). Rev. Jones started his religious career in a revival movement, and founded an interracial community in 1952. By 1964 it had developed into the Peoples Temple Full Gospel Church, affiliated with the Disciples of Christ. Moving to Redwood Valley, California in 1966, it also established branches in San Francisco and Los Angeles during the 1970s. Embracing an apocalyptic view, Jones pursued a communal society. Moving to Guyana, South America in 1977, the members of the Peoples Temple attempted to establish an ideal community. Obsessed with the belief that they were threatened by the outside society, their end came with the collective suicide or murder of more than nine hundred people in November 1978. As a prophet, Jones had practiced miracles and faith-healing, and established a special form of communal life. His new religion ceased in Guyana (Hall 1996, 365-375). This religion gained notoriety as a very dangerous cult (Moore 2000, 135). Although it is not explicitly known if Jim Jones or his followers had a new mythology, they had a

radical vision of the creation of a new ideal community which gradually evolved into a cult (Stark and Bainbridge 1985, 187).

In contrast to the Peoples Temple, in which a new religious mythology was not explicitly stated, the Heavenly Father Religion of Korea generated a distinctive mythology on which the religion developed. The Korean War provided a cultic environment like other social calamities and changes that have stimulated the rise of social movements. It prompted social migration and deconstruction. Like the religious movements of Na Unmong, Jo Yonggi, and Mun Seonmyeong, Bak Taeseon was a child of the age. As the founder of the Heavenly Father Religion, Bak Taeseon started his revival movements as a Presbyterian evangelist, and established his own religious body Jeondogwan (The Korea Evangelist and Revivalist Association for Jesus Church) in 1956. In 1981, the religion was named the Cheonbugyo (Heavenly Father Religion) and developed into a full-fledged new religion, departing radically from conventional Christianity. After his death (1990), this organization divided into several factions, the largest of which is Chunbugyo (Heavenly Father Religion). It worships Bak Taeseon as the omnipotent God.

Bak was born in 1917 in Yeongbyeon, located in the North Pyeongan Province of Northern Korea. His father inherited a fortune yet squandered it by fast living, and when he was nine years old his mother died. He then moved to Deokcheon, in the Southern Pyeongan Province, and began to attend Sunday school. He graduated from an elementary school, but due to a lack of money he could not continue his junior high education. Soon after this he went to Tokyo, Japan, in order to make some money. While

there he experienced tough times, delivering newspapers and milk, but he had a chance to attend a technical high school, and managed to graduate from it. In 1945, he returned to Korea, ran his Korea Precision Machine Company at Susaek in Seoul, and became a member of the Namdaemun Presbyterian Church, where he received a warm welcome from Rev. Kim Chiseon. During a revival meeting in the church, he experienced the Holy Spirit and repented of his sins (Kim Seongnyeo 1955, 32-34). In May 1945, he first practiced healing and quickly gained fame as a revivalist. He helped Elder Na Unmong, who was already known to the public as a famous revivalist, and journeyed with him from Daegu, through Busan and Seoul, to Daejeon during October and November. On December 19, 1945, he was ordained as an elder at Changdong Church (Bak Taeseon 1956, 8).

When the Korean War broke out, Bak took shelter from Communist persecution by digging a hole under the floor heating system of his room, where he hid from the authorities. There he had a mystical experience to the effect that he drank “living water” from God. This later became an essential element of his revival meetings (Kim Seongnyeo 1955, 63-67). In January 1955, he began a full-scale revival movement and soon became a nationally known preacher (Bak Taeseon 1956, 9; Kim Seongnyeo 1955, 3). He led tent revival meetings that paralleled Elder Na Unmong’s revival movement. Although the responses of conventional churches to the movement were ambivalent—some acclaimed his practices and others were suspicious—his movement was widely accepted by Christians because of his successful revivalism and evangelistic enthusiasm. He emphasized the reality of sin and hell, keeping the Ten Commandments, and tithing.

His revival activities quickly developed into a new organization called Hanguk Yesugyo Buheong Heyophoe (The Korea Revivalist Association for Jesus Church), which was inaugurated in April, 1955, and was at the same time criticized as pseudo-religious by the National Church Council. On Christmas Day of the year he founded *Jeondogwan*, his first evangelism center, and the next year (1956), he established many centers around the country. He had established an independent organization competing with others in the Christian religious marketplace. Since this sect was attacked by conventional churches without exception, there was a wide gap between them. He reportedly proclaimed that he was the gamram namu (olive tree), and emphasized his role as the righteous man from the east, though he publicly denied this (Bak Taeseon 1956, 60). In his words, the olive tree in the Scripture was figuratively reinterpreted and regarded as the righteous man at the end of time. His position as a charismatic leader was not clear, however, and was evidently misunderstood. In fact, he was called Yeongmo (Spiritual Mother); this was derived from a female follower's story about her religious experience (Singang Cheheomgi Sujip Wiwonhoe 2001, 38-39, 69). He was also embellished with other appellations such as Messenger of Fire and Victor the Olive Tree. Elder Bak began to build a Christian community town called Sinangchon (Faith Village) at Sosa (1957), and another at Deokso (1962) in Gyeongggi Province, and another at Gijang (1970) in the Geyongnam Province. The faith villages were a combination of religion and industry, and the industries became some of the fastest growing industries during the Korean modernization process. While they were suspicious of exploitation from outside, the

villages formed a communal society where beliefs, industrial plants, and produced goods were well managed through Elder Bak's leadership.

With the growth and visibility of his organization in society, he was charged as a heretic in 1956 by the Presbyterian Church Assembly of Gyeonggi Province. This was a predictable outcome, given that conventional churches viewed him as a competitor. He was also frequently accused and jailed on charges of communism, murder, and violence (Moos 1967, 18; Choe Joong-Hyun 1993, 89-90). On December 27, 1958, he was jailed for embezzling church funds and for fraud associated with the practice of *anchal* (touch of peace). Sentenced to prison for two and a half years, he was released on March 26, 1960. He was put in prison again (January 27, 1961 – January 10, 1962) after being implicated in a scandal connected with the vice-presidential election of March 15, 1960. On December 10, 1960, another incident occurred. His followers violently demonstrated against the Donga Daily Newspaper, which claimed that the photos of the holy dew spirit taken by the church were fabricated.

In his article of 1964, anthropologist Felix Moos offers important information about the future direction of this group: "As to the future of the movement after the death of [Bak], the writer was informed: 'The Olive Tree is immortal, the last day of the world will come within his life time'" (Moos 1964, 120). Although doomsday did not come, the religion claimed it saw the birth of God. In fact, from 1979, Bak began to criticize the Christian Bible. It was not until 1980-1981, however, that he claimed ninety-eight percent of the Bible was wrong, denounced the role of Jesus as Christ, and proclaimed that he was the creator God himself (Sinang Cheheomgi Sujip Wiwonhoe 2002, 164;

Baek Haengung 1989, 59-83). With this radical divorce from Christian beliefs, the number of his followers, which was claimed to be more than one million, was reduced substantially. When he died in 1990, a schism occurred, and among the resulting organizations Cheonbugyo (the Heavenly Father Religion) developed into the largest organization, which now claims to have tens of thousands of members. This religion worships Elder Bak as God, and consequently amounts to a new religion, in which the Elder Bak is the core figure in the process of mythmaking. Not only has he provided mythmaking sources, but his followers have refined their leader's life and teachings. The official weekly newspaper of this group, *Singang Sinbo* (The Chunbukyo [Cheonbugyo] Weekly), is now attempting to authenticate them, and his sermons are repeatedly offered through video and cassette tapes during worship services.

In the beginning of the religion, Bak emphasized mystical experience and performed magical healings, but his teachings were not far from traditional Christian beliefs. Like other Christians, he read the Bible literally, accepted the stories of signs and miracles, and the divinity of Jesus Christ. As early as 1955, he was aware of the Unification Church and the Jehovah's Witnesses, and called them heresies; in particular, he labeled Mun Seonmyeong as "Jesus Mun" and saw his appearance as the "work of Satan" (Kim Seongnyeo 1955, 119). He was influenced by apocalyptic and premillenarian perspectives which regarded the Korean War as the "the judgment of God's wrath" (Kim Seongnyeo 1955, 118, 122).

Although it is not clear how or why he left traditional Christianity, there are some factors that transformed his beliefs, practices, and charismatic leadership into a new and

innovative cosmology. There were two important magical practices in his revival movements: *anchal* (literally the touch of peace) and his blessings. First, his faith healing (*anchal)* was exercised by putting his hand on people's bodies and curing them. This is a process of cleansing sins because "sin is a haven where disease can hide" and "a germ is a weapon of demons" (Kim Seongnyeo 1955, 97, 102). Elder Bak based his arguments on Acts 8:7, 9:17, and 19:6 (Kim Seongyeo 1955, 101). The other novel feature is his blessings, which make up a major part of his religious practices. Water is consecrated by his blessing, and even long distance blessings were given on water, which was then regarded as the "water of life." One who ate caramel produced in the villages or applied boiled (and thus liquid) caramel to his or her wounded body, recovered from illness if Bak had blessed it. His pictures, and other materials, such as handkerchiefs, underclothing, cotton wool, cosmetic cream, and soybean sauce, had magical effects when blessed by him.

These magical practices were combined with biblical verses to create a new symbolic cosmos. Elder Bak claimed that his charismatic power came from the Holy Spirit, as referred to in John 22:22: "Receive the Holy Spirit." This is associated with other biblical verses such as John 4:10 and 7:38, Isaiah 41: 2, Hosea 14:4-5, Zechariah 4:11-14, and Revelation 7:2, from which the popular expressions "living water, "the righteous man from the east," "dew," "fragrance," and "olive trees" are derived (Singang Cheheomgi Sujip Wiwonhoe 2001, 129). In this religion, such expressions as "dew spirit," "fragrance," "dew grace," "blessing," and "water of life" constitute a symbolic system. On the ground that he received the Holy Spirit, Elder Bak practiced the ritual of

cleansing people's sins, relying on the authority of the Gospel of John 20:22-23. In proclaiming himself to have divine attributes, he appealed to his own authority.

First of all, theologically, his new charismatic authority was associated with two important phrases, "the righteous man from the east" and "the olive tree," which appear in his early publication *Sermons* (1956). He argues that "the east" in Isaiah 41:2 is "Korea" (Bak Taeseon 1956, 59-60). Given the fact that Isaiah 59:19 refers to "his glory from the rising sun," the east could be an island country. But since 42:1 says "Keep silence before me, O islands," the east cannot be an island. Though he did not explicitly remark on Japan, it is reasonable that the island country he indicates would be Japan. Thus, the biblical verse "from the ends of the earth" (41:9) affirms that the east is Korea. This righteous man is the true Israel whose name was changed from Jacob to Israel (Bak Taeseon 1956, 59-63). Since the people of the land of Judea deserted Jesus Christ, the chosen land and people are the ones that obeyed God's will. Another important element is Bak's interpretation of "you" (thee) in Isaiah 41:10-14, which is in the second-person singular and here refers to "one righteous man." On the basis of 41:14, he claims that since the one righteous man is a redeemed person, Jesus must not be "you," but one who is redeemed by the holy blood of Jesus' cross (Bak Taeseon 1956, 64-66). The task of the righteous man of the east is "a new sharp threshing instrument" (Isaiah 41:15) that can separate wheat from chaff, connoting separation between truth and lie, and good and evil (Bak Taeseon 1956, 66-68). The one righteous man from the east will be given a "white stone" (Revelation 2:17), become the delegate of God who is not Christ yet a human being, and will govern the millennial kingdom (Bak Taeseon 1956, 71).

This righteous man from the east is identical to “two olive trees” (Revelation 11:4). According to Elder Bak, the two olive trees are “two anointed ones” (Zechariah 4:14) and as God’s witnesses they will prophesy for 1260 days (Revelation 11:3), but will then be killed by the beast and ascend into heaven. One of the two olive trees who is powerful and sits upon a white horse, according to Elder Bak, will come with a group in white to the earth (Revelation 19:11) and fulfill the number of chosen people. Although this olive tree is not God’s Word itself, he will soon fit into God’s Word (Bak Taeseon 1956, 90, 98). While there is a logical jump here, given that he does not provide details about the other olive tree at this point, Elder Bak claims that the two olive trees perform the same task on the earth as the witnesses of the holy blood of Christ, but the one who sits on the white horse will come to judge and govern all nations as the delegate of Christ (Bak Taeseon 1956, 91). The two olive trees (the one righteous man from the east) will be given the cosmic task of separating good from evil, truth from lies, wheat from chaff, and justice from injustice (Bak Taeseon 1956, 96, 112). The “hidden manna” like dew (Revelation 2:17), which is actually “living water (John 4:10), will also be given to them (or him) as a special gift of God to the righteous man (Bak Taeseon 1956, 90).

As mentioned above, it is not certain whether the righteous man from the east and the two olive trees are identical with Elder Bak. Given the development of the group, however, his messiahship as the two olive trees is also apparent as seen in *Omyo* (Profundity), a textbook for bible study published by the religion, which indicates that the olive trees have a parallel with other elements in the Bible (Je Gu Jungang Jeondogwan Cheongyeon Cheonseonghoe 1979, 37). While Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob

are the material Israel, God, Jesus, and the olive trees are the spiritual Israel. Thus the olive trees are on the same level as God and Jesus in the doctrine of salvation. More important, as the place for his messiahship, this book certainly indicates that the ends of the earth are not Japan but Korea (Je Gu Jungang Jeondogwan Cheongyeon Cheonseonghoe 1979, 40-41). Besides, since the Spiritual Mother claimed that "[i]t is the olive tree that can grant grace like dews and generate fragrance," it is natural to infer that the olive tree is Elder Bak (Je Gu Jungang Jeondogwan Cheongyeon Cheonseonghoe 1979, 44).

The charismatic leadership of Elder Bak changed in 1980 when he denounced the authenticity of the Bible and Jesus Christ, saying that "Ninety five per cent of the Bible is a lie," and "There is no eternal life in belief in Jesus"(Baek Hangung 1989, 127-129). In a long sermon, on May 2, 1981, Elder Bak claimed that "many parts of Jesus' teachings were written through my manipulation," "I am the God of the earth," "the savior is not Jesus, but I, and thus the hymn "Joy to the world! The lord is come" should be sung as "Joy to the world! The olive tree is come" (Baek Hangung 1989, 60-61). Thus, according to Elder Bak, in John 14:6, "I am the way, the truth, and the life," "I" is Elder Bak himself and the hero in the sixty-six books of the Bible is the olive tree (Baek Hangung 1989, 69). His fanatical anxiety and hostility towards conventional doctrine help to explain the negative responses he has received from ministers, theologians, and anti-cultists. Clearly, his paranoid mentality seems to be obsessed with the outside world. Eventually, he was led to the total rejection of the Christian God who created heaven and earth. The God in the Bible is, in fact, the king devil of arch-devils (Baek Hangung 1989,

20). The birth of the Heavenly Father Religion offers a case of mythological transformation. The rejection of Christianity and the creation of a new religion are not only the result of his belief, but also reflect the coherent process of his Messianic career.

In the Heavenly Father Religion, Elder Bak's sermons and teachings, as videotaped and tape-recorded, have been used as a major part of worship services. This religion has three core belief systems: God, magical practice, and community. First, Bak is the revered *Hananim* (God in Korean) just like the Christian God. All religious experiences are attributed to *Hananim*. In this religion, Christian symbols and rituals are given different meanings in the Korean context. Two volumes about religious experiences published by the religion (Singang Cheheomgi Sujip Wiwonhoe 2001; 2002) are excellent sources for analyzing the role of mythological transformation in a specific religion. For his followers, there is no discontinuity between Bak's early revival movement and his creation of a new religion.

Second, magico-religious performances are significant. After "his ascending into heavenly paradise" in 1990**,** the miracles he performed in this world continue. Bak still reveals himself as *Iseul Seongsin* (holy dew spirit) that looks like waterfalls, drizzles, fire pillars, or shooting stars, and particularly functions as the sign of his present status as God. The consecrated living water is used for curing people and washing corpses. Not only can it cure people, but when it is applied to a human corpse its dark blue face turns back to one with white skin and red lips, blossoming like a white flower and resembling a living body, while the room is filled with the fragrance of flowers (Singang Cheheomgi Sujip Wiwonhoe 2001, 46-48).

Lastly, the central myths of this community are the stories of miracles that happened during Elder Bak's revival movements and the religious experiences of his followers, which are connected to Bak in Paradise as God. These mythological narratives constitute the core beliefs of present followers. Even though his followers inherited Christian traditions or beliefs to some degree, Bak's mythology entirely controls these beliefs. Thus, the creation of new myths with new referents is the core element for generating a new religion. In this scheme, doctrines like sin (original sin and self-committed sin), tithes, celibacy, the banning of tobacco and alcohol, and magical practices have an entirely different meaning from that of traditional Christianity (cf. Moos, 1967, 16-27).

The transformation of Elder Bak's religious organization in terms of cosmology or worldview was gradual, but when he became the self-proclaimed God, a drastic change occurred. In other words, it may have started as a Christian revival movement, but this sectarian group, with its new mythology, was transformed into a full-blown new religion. Bak's 'divine stance' offers his followers a channel of religious experiences, and incorporates his paradise and this world into one domain.

4.3. Mun Seonmyeung as a Bearer of Salvation

Mun Seonmyeong, widely known as Sun Myung Moon to the West, was born in Jeongju in the North Pyeongan Province, Northern Korea on January 6, 1920 (lunar calendar). He was the second son in a family of eight children. At that time, Korea was under the colonial rule of Japan, which began in 1910. Between the ages of 6 and 13, he studied

Chinese characters with Confucian Chinese texts. The Mun family converted to Christianity in the 1920s. At the age of fifteen, he converted to a modern education system by entering Osan Common School as a grade three student in Pyeongyang in 1934. When he was eighteen, Mun came to Seoul and entered the Kyeongseong Commerce-Technical High School. He became a Sunday school teacher at Myongsudae Christian Church. In 1941, he went to the technical high School at Waseda University in Tokyo, Japan, and studied electrical engineering for three years. After graduation in 1943, he came back to Seoul, Korea, and got a job as a mechanic, but soon he was arrested and put in prison until January 1945, charged with anti-Japanese activities.

After Korean liberation from Japan in 1945, Mun entered the Israel Monastery led by the cult leader Kim Baekmun. This became a controversial period for Mun. Later his opponents claimed that he had appropriated Kim's teachings for his *Divine Principle* (DP).[4] After a six months' stay at the monastery, he went to Pyongyang [Pyeongyang], the capital of the communist North (1946), and began to teach the messages of his principle at Mr. Kim's house. His group began with approximately 10 followers and later grew to around 20. His daily life centered on Bible-reading and prayer. After the division between North and South Korea, mandated by the USSR and the USA, North Korea was put under the anti-religious regime of communism. Due to his cultic activity, Mun was arrested on August 2, 1946. He endured torture and beatings until his release on

[4] Kim Baekmun's major theological work is *The Fundamental Principle of Christianity*. According to Mun's opponents, Mun plagiarized Baek's teachings and built upon his theological system. In fact, Mun's concept of "the principle of creation, fall and restoration is almost identical to Kim's; however, his *Divine Principle* is read as original in terms of its structure and contents.

November 21. On February 22, 1948, he was arrested again and sentenced to five years in prison on the charge of breaking Communist social norms. One and a half months later, he was moved to the Heugnam Prison in the South Hamgyeong Province, where he endured forced labor (Segye Gidokgyo Tongil Sillyeong Hyeophoe 1979, 37-71).

On June 25, 1950, the Korean War broke out. After an attack by United Nations' troops destroyed the prison, Mun managed to escape. The intervention of Chinese communist troops into the war forced him to leave Pyeongyang for South Korea. Crossing the 38 Parallel, he and his few followers moved to Pusan [Busan], where he recruited other followers. Starting in May, 1951, he wrote for a year *The Original Copy of the Principle*. Its revised and completed version was published in 1966, titled *Divine Principle* (DP), with the collaboration of his disciple, Yu Hyowon. In March, 1954, Mun returned to Seoul, and on May 1st he officially founded the Holy Spirit Association for the Unification of World Christianity known as the Unification Church (Tongil Gyohoe in Korean). Mun and his followers soon established their first permanent headquarters at an old Shinto shrine they had renovated (Segye Gidokgyo Tongil Sillyeong Hyeophoe 1979, 71-117).

By locating all figures in Korean history, the Unification movement seeks authenticity and legitimacy. Mun Seonmyeong traces the genealogical line for his calling and God's providence back to esoteric and marginalized Korean Christian figures, who began to appear in the 1930s and 1940s during Japanese rule. For Mun, they are regarded as channels to the spiritual world, clearing a path for the advent of the new Messiah. He divides these cultic figures into male and female sides, regardless of their gender, the

sum of which legitimate the advent of the Messiah in Korea. For God's mission, male figures performed external works, while female figures were assigned internal activities. Each side has a three-generational line of groups which divide symbolically into the west part, Kim Seongdo, Heo Hobin, and Mrs. Bak (symbolically female figures) and the east part, Baek Namju, Lee Yongdo, and Kim Baekmun (symbolically male figures), according to the geographical division of Korea. These two sides constitute three crossed pairs. The first pair of Kim Seongdo and Baek Namju plays the roles of Eve and Adam respectively. Since they work together, but fail to unite for their work, their roles moved to the pair of Heo Hobin and Lee Yongdo, who assumed the roles of Mary and Jesus, but they met the same fate as the first pair. The other pair, Mrs. Bak and Kim Baekmun, adopted the roles of Anna and John the Baptist, but also failed to secure their calling. In this context, all three pairs play a part in the expectation of the coming new Messiah (Mun Seonmyeong 1999, 29-50, 69-75). Here, Mun Seonmyeong appears as the second coming of the Messiah.

This historical and mythological articulation was reflected in the *Divine Principle* (DP), which consists of mythic accounts and doctrinal claims. Together, these myths and doctrines form the basis of the Unification Church's belief system:

> Since ancient times, the nations in the East have traditionally been considered to be the three nations of Korea, Japan and China. Among them, Japan throughout its history had worshiped the sun goddess, Amateasu-omi-kami. Japan entered the period of the Second Advent as a fascist nation and severely persecuted Korean Christianity. China at the time of the Second Advent was a hotbed of Communism and would become a communist nation. Thus, both nations belonged to Satan's side. Korea, then, is the nation in the East where Christ will return (H.S.A- U.W.C. 2002, 399)

According to the *DP*, Korea will become the center of salvation for all peoples with the news of the second coming of Christ. The coming of the Christ is also supported by the mythological story of Korea:

> The hoped-for Righteous King foretold in the [Jeonggamrok] has the appellation [Jeongdoryeong] (the one who comes with the true Word of God). In fact, this is a Korean prophecy of the Christ who is to return to Korea. Even before the introduction of Christianity to Korea, God had revealed through the [Jeonggamrok] that the Messiah would come to that land…When the second comings of the founders of the various religions appear in Korea in fulfillment of the diverse revelations, they will not come as different individuals. One person, Christ at the Second Advent, will come as the fulfillment of all these revelations. The Lord, whose coming has been revealed to believers in various religions, including the Maitreya Buddha in Buddhism, the True Man in Confucianism, the returning [Choe Jeu] who founded the religion of [Cheondogyo], and the coming of [Jeongdoryeong] in the [Jeonggamrok], will be none other than Christ at the Second Advent (H.S.A-U.W.C. 2002, 404-405).

As mentioned above, the theology of the Unification Church centers upon its leader. In a commentary on the popular prophetic book *Gyeokam Yurok*, Mun is described as the Messiah**,** replacing Jesus himself. Mun's messianic role is equally clear in another publication:

> The Messiah. Then who is he? When heaven with him down to earth in secret, his name was [Mun]…Who is he? Is he not the Rev. [Mun Seonmyeong], whom all humankind is to attend is as the True Parents? All secret messages and prophesies are meant to testify to this very moment and to this hitherto hidden heavenly secret. Oh. God! Oh, our protector! Thank you, we can only thank you!
> The Lord's Prayer
> Our Father, who art in heaven,
> Hallowed be thy name;
> Thy will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven.
> Amen (Moon Sun Myung 2000, 740).

While Bak Taeseon encouraged celibacy, Moon advocated marriage, holding mass wedding ceremonies with his blessings. This theology is based on a dualist view of

the world: God's world and Satan's world. Since human beings are fallen from God's world, they are continuously put in Satan's world. The birth of fallen children continues because they were born of fallen parents; thus, the human fall means "the spreading of the false love, false life, and false lineage of Satan" (Moon Sun Myung 2000, 24). As the ideal model of parents, Rev. Mun and his wife, Han Hakja, play leading roles in the restoration of human beings from the fall. After his divorce, he married Han Hakja, an eighteen year old girl in 1960, and they became a role model for parents and children (Moon Sun Myung 2000, 24). In this theology, Jesus' Messianic work is partially achieved. Jesus only guaranteed spiritual salvation because he died physically before his marriage. Therefore, for a perfect salvation, the Messiah must return in order to restore the positions of spiritual and physical parents: "True parents must be persons who receive God's blessing spiritually and physically" (Moon Sun Myung 2000, 28). Through the Holy Wedding Ceremony by the True Parents, the blessed families make a perfect unity and form new tribes. This unification process does not cease, but extends to individuals, families, tribes, nations, the world, and the cosmos. The Messiah has the responsibility to unify them (Moon Sun Myung 2000, 35).

4.4. The New Cultic Milieu and Cultic Religions

Korean Christianity not only revitalized the traditional religiosity of Korea, but also became the source of Christian-oriented new religions such as the Heavenly Father Religion and the Unification Church. Unlike other new religious groups, Christian-oriented new religious groups made use of more specific Christian resources. However,

not all Christian cults have prior ties with the established Christian traditions; many groups borrow their mythological ideas from other traditions. By contrast, Christian sects are schismatic groups within the Christian tradition. At an organizational level, cults are different from sects (Campbell 1972, 121):

> [W]hile sects are usually clearly circumscribed entities with specifically formulated belief systems and organizational structures which have a tendency to persist over time, cults by contrast tend to have undefined boundaries, fluctuating belief systems, rudimentary organizational structures and are frequently highly ephemeral.

While sects are the offspring of schism, cults come from all kinds of cultural elements due to their lack of organization (Campbell 1972, 122).

Given the varieties of religious change, sociologist William Sims Bainbridge explains this cultural milieu through his biological concept of a "cultural gene" that functions similarly to a biological one: "Any organized subset of cultural elements can function as a single gene, if the general explanation which binds them together is inherited unchanged through the processes of reproduction" (Bainbridge 1985, 169). He argues that this cultural gene can be "divided into two or more smaller genes" and "combine with other cultural elements to form a larger gene" (Bainbridge 1985, 169). We can also anticipate that "transduction" may occur. In a cultic milieu, an individual can switch from one group to another and transmit new cultural elements. Bainbridge classifies this defector as a virus that may cause transduction (Bainbridge 1985, 169). As Bainbridge conceives it, a cultural gene has, as it were, hereditary as well as particular features in a specific context. Cultural genes in Korea produce different religious features from those in North America. The Unification Church and the Heavenly Father Religion

in Korea, as Christian-oriented new religions, have a different cultural inheritance from Mormonism and Christian Science in the United States. While Western new religions tend to originate from Christian and Western esoteric and pagan traditions, Korean new religions in general trace their parent religions to Yogic traditions and primal religions, such as Buddhism, Confucianism, and indigenous religions. Considering these cultural characteristics, the concept of "family group" put forward by Melton and Lee can be linked to a cultural milieu. Furthermore, as Bainbridge's cultural gene demonstrates, seekers tend to pursue their religiosity within the domain of a specific family group or a particular cultural milieu.

Examples of this way of viewing new religions can be seen in the factional groups that developed from the Heavenly Father Religion and the Unification Church. These show a more drastic break with the Christian tradition. The messianic roles of group leaders are major factors for their new religious entities, which are substantiated by messianic literatures and traditions in Korea.

Taking one as an example, the Victory Altar (Seunri Jedan) was created by Jo Huiseong, who was once involved in the Olive Tree Movement (the Heavenly Father Religion). He respects Bak Taeseon (the leader of the Olive Tree Movement) as the Spiritual Mother,[5] and regards him as the one who prepared the way for the appearance of Jo himself. It was claimed that Jo, who inherited Bak's spiritual competence, completed the Messianic role. The core doctrine of the group is to overcome human death, for which Jo appeared as the Victor, rejecting the idea that every human being dies.

[5] This should be read metaphorically, since Bak is obviously male.

Shakyamuni died
Socrates died
Confucius died
Jesus died (individual facts) ——— logical jump (blind faith)

Therefore, everybody dies (general fact)

According to this group, such an inductive inference conceals a logical fallacy, because no one has confirmed the fact that "every human being dies". We can only say that "up to now all people have died." Therefore, the proposition that "every human being dies" is not an "empirical fact," but one based on "blind faith" (Seungrijedan Haksulbu 1990, 318). Alternatively, this religion suggests other syllogisms (Seungrijedan Haksulbu 1990, 325).

Jesus died
Shakyamuni died
Confucius died ——— (creative transformation, not a logical jump)

Therefore, everybody dies (general fact)

This inductive inference is related to a deductive one for an immortal theory.

Normal humans never die (major premise)
I am a normal human (minor premise)

Therefore, I never die (conclusion)

The immortal theory of the religion aims to destroy a distorted civilization and culture, and construct the perfect order of civilization and culture. The principle of blood is a

major factor in the explanation of the immortal theory (Seungrijedan Haksulbu 1990, 325-326). Since the principle is based on the premise that spirit and body are not separated, the two are viewed as identical (Kim Hyun-bae 1984, 6-7):

Blood = cells = body
=
Life= heart = spirit.

Thus, transpositions between them are possible

Blood = life = heart
=
Body = blood = spirit.

According to this logic, “When you die, you actually die”; “Your spirit or soul [also] dies like your body”; “Therefore only those who live eternally with their bodies (=hearts) deserve to inherit the kingdom of God” (Kim, Hyun-bae 1984, 8). Consequently, this claim is in relation to the next step.

God = Word = Life
=
Spirit = Body = Blood

Thus, transpositions between them are also possible

Word = Body = Spirit
=
God = Spirit = Life
=
God = Human (Kim, Hyun-bae 1984, 9-11).

This truth is fulfilled by the Victor who “has overcome death completely” and who kills Satan (Kim Hyun-bae 1984, 38**).** For this group, Jesus is regarded as the “Satan who has

destroyed the Garden of Eden and has raised the flood," and his role as the Christ is denounced: "If he had been the Christ, [Paradise] on the earth would have been set up already two thousand ago" (Kim Hyun-bae 1984, 120). Actually, Jesus did not die on the cross but fled with Mary Magdalene to France, where his descendants are still living (Kim Hyun-bae 1984, 128-129).

The Victor Messiah (referring to Jo Huiseong) "is performing his promise of salvation" (Kim Hyun-bae 1984, 39). In order to legitimize this proclamation and the claim that "God is human," this group makes use of the world's existing sacred sources. All religions and historical sequences are focused on the fulfillment of the coming of the Messiah in Korea:

> Through [studying] Buddhism, Confucianism, Islam, and many other religions, you [will find] that, though the expressions are different, they all have the same teachings and doctrines. In Buddhism, they call the Savior Maitreya (which means the Buddha who will appear in the future), Maitreya means Messiah. In a word, Messiah is Christ, Christ is Israel, Israel is Shiloh, Shiloh is Victor, Victor is God…. (Kwon Hee-Soon 1992, 107).

Jeongamrok and *Geokam Yorok* are the major texts used to confirm this theological claim.

It is an interest fact that these religious resources were appropriated by the Three-Thousand Year Castle (Samcheongneon Seong). This group was founded by Lee Hyeongseok, who left Jo's Victory Altar in 1982. For this group, the advent of the savior has three chronological stages: Bak Taeseon (1956), Jo Huiseong (1980-1981), and Lee Hyunseok (2000-2001). In this exclusive chronological inheritance, this group claims that Lee completes the providence of the triune God, becomes the savior God or

Jeongdoryeong, and what he teaches is the only true way, the true discipline, and the true religion (Sinsegye Changjohoe Samcheonyeonseong Seongyohoe 2001, 26, 43, 51, 71, 113). This is the third factional group of the Heavenly Father Religion. While the religious center of the Victory Altar is in Sosa, Gyeonggi Province, this new group regards Gwangju as its center. The leader is the third person who completed the advent of the three triune figures, after Bak Taeseon and Jo Huiseong, Lee Hyeonseok himself. Thus, the savior or Jeongdoryeong is the lord of the Three Year Castle, that is, Lee Hyunseok. In this religion, the Christian tradition almost disappeared and resulted in a new transduction of the cultural gene of Messiahship in which the mythic figures Maitreya, Dangun, and Jeondoryeong were identified as the same being. This represents a radical transformation of mythology from biblical referents to places and figures within Korea (Sinsegye Changjohoe Samcheonyeonseong Seongyohoe 2001, 145)

A schismatic tendency applies to cults as well as to sects. As Rodney Stark and William Sims Bainbridge explain:

> [W]ithin the context of cult movements, schismatic movements can form ... But a theory of sect formation simply will not serve as a theory of cult formation. The genesis of the two are very different (Stark and Bainbridge 1985, 26).

Under this heading, the Victory Altar and the Three Year Castle can be called factional groups which deviate from the parental group, the Heavenly Father Religion. In this cultic context, another factional group, the Dangun Association (Pan National Campaign Association for Perceiving Dangun in the Right Way), believes that Bak Taeseon is the true God incarnated in Korea as a Christian elder. As stated in the *Gyeokam Yurok*, the *Jeongamrok*, and other prophetic literatures, his real nature was

revealed on earth in 1980. Interestingly, the prince sitting on the white horse, or God on earth, leads this group's teachings about the heavenly father. The prince is the incarnation of Dangun, who is the son of God. Bak Taeson, as the God of heaven and earth, founded the Heavenly Father Religion to find the son of God able to establish paradise on earth and unite all religions (Confucianism, Buddhism, and Christianity). Of course, this theological narrative places Korea at the center of all nations and peoples (Bang Jinyong 2002, 34, 89-90, 96-97, 115, 120-122, 158).

This mythmaking process seems to be necessary for the creation of new religions. If such groups seek, at all costs, to maintain a coherent worldview to ensure the enthusiasm and commitment of their religious seekers, the Christian features in this religious movement are almost dissolved. Even though it is not possible to predict their future direction, it is likely that these religious groups will continue to use many cultural sources in order to establish and maintain legitimacy and authenticity in society.

5. Conclusion

Specific Korean cultural and social sources provided a cultic milieu where various new religious movements were created, articulated, and maintained. Like other revitalization movements in Korean history, Christian-oriented religious groups were influenced by the environment of Korean culture. Group differences arise from the use of different religious resources. Therefore, the sociological classification of groups as sects or cults depends on the degree of their "deviance" from societal norms.

In order to identify these key differences, one must understand the dialectical relationship between myth and doctrine. When humans encounter religious resources under specific geographical, ethnic, and cultural environments, their imaginations are crystallized in myth and doctrine. Accordingly, religious groups can move towards or away from the status of a sect or cult. They are not arbitrary innovations, but remain the historical products of the Korean people and their culture.

While many Pentecostal and charismatic Christian groups remain within the Christian tradition, the mythologies of the Unification Church, the Heavenly Father Religion, and other groups have tended to go beyond the boundaries of the established Christian tradition to create new religions. On the one hand, schismatic movements in Christian circles have tended to be incorporated into traditional religions. The sects led by Na Unmong, Jo Yonggi, and Kim Gidong demonstrate the movement towards denominationalism. On the other hand, according to Choe Jungghyeon, the defining characteristic of cult groups in Korea has been the messianic motif (Choe Junghyeon 1999). The basic logic of these movements asserts that the Messiah will appear in Korea as the bearer of salvation. In pursuing this new religiosity, Christian-oriented cults have gradually, and often drastically, lost their ties to Christianity.

The next chapter will examine the attempts of Christian fundamentalism to establish a secure world, one which could be called a monopolistic world of truth. Since anti-cult movements are within Christian orthodoxy, and fundamentalist in nature, they are not within Edward John Carnell's theological category of "orthodoxy gone cultic"

(Carnell 1959, 113). Rather, they are at the forefront of efforts to defend orthodox Christian beliefs.

Chapter Seven

Anti-Cult Movements: Protestant Responses to Sects and Cults

As two forms of fundamentalism, anti-liberal and anti-cult movements in Korea share a tendency to oppose any belief systems which differ from them. The former is distinguished in terms of the conflict between liberalism and fundamentalism; this was labeled "classical fundamentalism" in chapter five. The latter appears in the form of heresy hunting or anti-cult movements, which will be examined in this chapter. Conservative churches in Korea have been a reservoir of fundamentalism, holding sway over most Protestant churches[1] and relegating liberal or moderate Christians to marginal status. In these religious circumstances, sectarian and cultic groups have become targets of attack by conservative Christians.

It follows that the formation of anti-cultism in Korea reflects a mutually interactive process: anti-cult movements refine and defend their beliefs in the midst of engaging and attacking their enemies. This phenomenon engenders an anti-cult milieu, where a specific Christian worldview is constructed and maintained in relation to identifiable hostile "others". This relationship serves to distinguish "pure" Christian beliefs from the "polluted" or "deviant" beliefs of others. In consequence, anti-cult movements do not limit their concern to Christian-oriented sects and cults but also focus their attention on other religions. This chapter deals with the nature and social function of

[1] Consequently, extreme fundamentalists and moderate evangelicals cannot be strictly distinguished in this context.

Christian anti-cultism, especially how it contributes to the social construction of sects and cults.

1. Anti-Cultism and its Cognitive Boundaries

When Korean anti-cultists use the words “heresy” and “cult,” they carry specific theological and cultural connotations. Such meanings function in tandem as weapons designed to attack any religion that threatens the plausibility structures of Christianity. As groups interact with one another, various kinds of knowledge and meaning are exchanged, leading to tensions in the area of religious boundary maintenance. Religion is, on one level, a cultural system in which power is practiced in relation to social, historical, and political factors. Since the degree of social acceptance is correlated with power, a movement or countermovement can be viewed as either persecutor or fugitive. Christian anti-cult movements are legitimated on the grounds that their social acceptance and power are greater than those of deviant sect and cult groups. Therefore, Christian orthodoxy can appear socially oppressive, often by viewing a sect or cult as fugitive. So labeled, the “deviant” group is forced to go underground in order to hide its belief system.

This represents an ongoing process in society. As long as anti-cult activities continue to thrive, this construction exists as a social reality and is inherited by the next generation, creating a tradition of anti-cultism. In doing so, Christian anti-cult literature forms part of a particular symbolic world in which the construction of an imagined or perceived enemy gains a permanent life cycle as part of the fundamentalist belief system. Regardless of the form of new religious groups, and any changes within them, anti-cult

activists tend to attack their target individuals and groups by means of “unchanging” doctrines and norms. In contemporary Korea, where Buddhist influences and Confucian social values remain significant parts of the social fabric, Korean Protestantism has established an orthodox stronghold that has been, and continues to be, a major force behind the construction of social norms. When this belief system combines with a high degree of social acceptance, its social construction of other religions becomes a reality within that belief system and even in society.

Thus the construction of other religions by anti-cultists encompasses the whole religious phenomenon in society. As Douglas Cowan points out, for fundamentalist Christian anti-cultists, “any religious movement, group, or tradition that differs from [their version of Christianity] is to be rejected and repudiated, and its adherents considered potential targets for missionizing and conversion” (Cowan 2003, 20). This is apparent from the writings of the Korean anti-cultist Shin Sahun’s claims about other religions: first, he says that, while Buddhism is a kind of syncretism, Christianity is “purely biblical”: Thus as Gnosticism is an attempt to unite all religions, so the Unification Church follows suit (Shin Sahun 1957, 92).

As a result, the targets of anti-cult movements constitute concentric circles, which range from non-Christian religions to Christian sects and cults. In the outer circle are non-Christian groups and at the core of anti-cult movements are deviant Christian groups. The reason the latter occupies the core is simple: sectarian and cultic groups have been rich recruiting grounds of numerous deviant and heretical movements. In other words, since Christian sects and cults are regarded as heretical by anti-cultists, the

justification for their attacks can be theologically legitimated and supported by fellow Christians.

On the one hand, since non-Christian groups are easily identified as different religious groups, they are not seriously regarded as encroaching on the plausibility structure of anti-cultists. Furthermore, except for deviant new religions with very unconventional norms, they have been tolerated in Korean society. Some new religions, which held strong nationalistic and ethnocentric tendencies during Japanese rule, are still revered by Koreans today. Thus, to attack them is to invite a negative response from the masses, who exhibit deeply-held nationalistic sentiments. On the other hand, Christian-oriented groups are major targets because their religious commonality is considered to be threatening: a camouflaged enemy challenges the plausibility structure of anti-cultist worldviews. In particular, since they often engage in high pressure proselytizing, they become competitors and archenemies of conventional religion, and thus are usually the primary targets of anti-cultism. Thus, it is not surprising that sectarian groups such as the Jehovah's Witnesses, Seventh Day Adventism, and Mormonism have been traditional targets in Christian circles—they seem to deconstruct conventional religions, and establish new forms of legitimacy.

Consequently, anti-cult movements represent the way that conservative Christian organizations respond to and label deviant groups. Anti-cult movements pursue a *via negativa* where "[t]he boundaries of what is true and acceptable are marked out through a systematic identification of what is false and unacceptable" (Kurtz 1983, 1085). Since beliefs and actions often go together, anti-cult movements not only produce a particular

social knowledge, but are also engaged in a process of social control. If any individual or group is located or classified under the categories of “heresy” and “cult,” the initial action is to create boundary lines. In the end, these processes serve as permanent boundary markers which essentialize a relationship of “us” versus “them” (Barker 1995, 298; Lincoln 2006, 34).

These are a process of the social construction of reality. As Eileen Barker suggests, the social construction of reality is divided into two types: primary and secondary. The primary construction is “the product of direct and indirect interactions between the members of the movement, and, to some extent, between members and the rest of society”; the secondary construction refers to “depictions about the movement that are offered in the public area by [scholars] and others, including the movement itself, *about* the movement” (Barker 1995, 288). Barker’s theory sees primary and secondary constructions as a process of cognitive praxis. These constructions are not clearly separated, but dialectical**,** representing a mutual interaction between social actors. Through the primary construction a group maintains its identity; through the secondary construction it defensively apologizes for itself or offensively attacks others. Thus, the two types of social construction of reality are not independent, but are intertwined in social discourses.

Just as new religious groups deconstruct conventional religions in society, anti-cult movements attempt to “deconstruct” their target religions by constructing the negative (or dark) images of a particular “cult.” Anti-cult literature and the atrocity narratives of ex-members, along with rumor and gossip, are the apparatus involved in the

negative construction of cults, which function as cognitive boundary markers for identifying deviancy in a target group. If this construction is legitimized in society, the construction of new religions by anti-cultism becomes self-generative and thus is maintained throughout time and place.

2. The Korean Anti-Cult Movement and Christian Fundamentalism

The agenda of anti-heresy or anti-cultism is not solely a dominant subject of Korean Protestantism, but has historical consequences. It is undeniable that since cultural contacts can generate mutual adaptations, adoptions, and conflicts, intolerant social environments have existed in the history of Korea. They have certainly shown intolerance towards religions.

During the Joseon Dynasty (1392-1910) heresy controversy in Confucian circles was ample, but its orientation was political rather than religious. The neo-Confucian system brought about factional conflicts in opposition to each other. With Confucianism adopted as the national ideology, Buddhism lost the prestigious social position that it had once enjoyed during the Goryeo Dynasty (935-1392). But the Catholic persecutions during the 18th and 19th centuries were the most tragic incidents in Korean religious history; it is proper to refer to martyrdom here in comparison to Buddhism, which did not suffer a single martyr at the time. The persecution was a cultural clash between two different cultures, that is, between the monotheistic culture of Christianity and the ancestral worship culture of Confucianism. The persecution that the Catholic Church faced was not simply because it was a foreign religion or cult, but because it challenged

the traditional society. The denial of ancestral veneration was considered a violation of the key pillar of the nation, one through which Koreans maintained their plausibility structure of loyalty to the nation and filial piety. In a sociological sense, Roman Catholicism was a cult-type religion which did not comply with Confucian norms, because it completely rejected ancestral worship, the most important ritual and social value in Confucian society. The Roman Catholic mission did not allow any ancestral worship and simultaneously the Confucian government was not tolerant toward this strange new religion.

It was, however, left to Korean Protestantism to seriously address the dichotomy of orthodoxy and heresy. Since cultural boundaries between the traditional religions of Korea were not rigidly regulated, and new religious groups were not seriously treated as matters of social deviance, it is with the reinvention of Korean Protestant churches that the word heresy becomes socially significant in contemporary Korean society. While in Western society, the word "cult" gained a wide range of uses, Korean Protestant churches inherited the word "heresy" from Christian theology. For example, the Korean anti-cultist Jeong Dongseop calls American anti-cultist Walter Martin "the authority on heresy" (Jeong Dongseop 1993, 9). Since the word "cult" is not yet widely circulated in Korean, except for the "cult" film, the Korean term *idan*, an equivalent word for "heresy," is used exclusively in anti-cult circles. The word "heresy" is usually translated as the Koreanized word "*idan*", which came from the Chinese character "*ituan*."

The word *idan*, however, is not a plain translation of *heresy* or *cult*, but has a historical denotation. Originally, the word *idan* was used to indicate different

philosophical points of view which deviated from the right path in Confucian society. Initially, the word was not meant to oppress dissident people, but to positively induce them to practice the path of righteousness (jeongdo) and to "avoid the wrong path" called "byeok idan" (Geum Jangtae 1984, 55-58). Therefore, the changing meanings of concepts tend to depend heavily on their currency.

In this context, the term "anti-heresy" seems to be more adequate than "anti-cult" in describing the countermovement in Korea, but as a technical term "anti-cult" is useful for understanding a religious counter-movement. Although the agendas of anti-heresy and anti-cult movements are almost identical from a theological perspective, their underlying issues are seriously different in contemporary society. The classical dichotomy of orthodoxy and heresy does not reflect modern plurality and global culture. Thus, although Christian anti-cult movements have much in common with traditional anti-heresy movements, especially their fundamental agenda for maintaining traditional beliefs, Christian anti-cult movements are not carbon copies of traditional anti-heresy movements, but are the new products of modernity. There are some instructive parallels. In Korea, alongside the word "*idan*" (heresy), the common words of these religious groups are "yusa jonggyo" (quasi-religion), "saibi jonggyo" (pseudo-religion), and "sagyo" (evil religion or cult), the meaning of which can be included and represented in the word "cult."

Thus from a sociological perspective, the word "cult" shows not only the general view of Korean conventional society but a Christian attitude towards new forms of religious organization. For heresy-hunters or anti-cultists, sects and cults are regarded as

doctrinally and ritually wrong as well as socially and morally deviant. The following argument symbolizes the belief system of anti-cultists: the Christian gospel has grown on the spiritual ground of superstitious Shamanism, idolatrous Buddhism, ritual-centered Confucianism, and nationalist Cheondogyo (The Heavenly Way Religion) (Bak 1999, 15-23). This statement demonstrates that its proponents believe Christianity to be the only true religion and other religions to be false or inferior and thus deviations from the right path. Thus, the word "heresy" serves as a tool to exercise power and impose negative images on dissident groups. When the word moved into a Christian setting, it occupied a vantage point equivalent to the word "cult" in western countries.

Because there are relatively few liberal or moderate Christians in Korea, Christian anti-cultism largely reflects the agenda of evangelical Christians and fundamentalists. If mainline churches are mostly conservative, the fundamentalist agenda for attacking new religions will likely be strongly supported by mainline churches. This is why the anti-cult movement in Korea seems to be perpetual. Thus, it is not unusual for newly constituted religious groups with different beliefs and practices to become fugitives, hunted by fundamentalist individuals and churches.

Thus, this anti-cult agenda goes beyond the nature of cultural bias: the propensity of every culture to look suspiciously at outside or unfamiliar groups. In its attempts to make a sharp distinction between the worldviews of cults and what is specifically Christian, anti-cultism reveals its proactive fundamentalist agenda. As George Marsden indicates: "Fundamentalists are not just religious conservatives, they are conservatives who are willing to take a stand and to fight" (Marsden 1991, 1).

3. Images of Religions in Anti-Cult Literature

Christian-oriented sects, cults, and anti-cults in Korea show the social construction of reality through their historical and cultural involvement in Korea. In others words, knowledge interests direct the cognitive praxis of specific groups; thus, it is apparent that religious cultures are shaped within the matrices of social relations.

3.1. The Image of World Religions in Anti-Cultism

Although heresy hunting was traditionally expressed as conflict within a group, its application can be extended to different religious groups in a pluralistic society. In his important study *No Other Name?*, Paul Knitter, a leading theologian of interreligious dialogue, concedes that "[t]o dismiss evangelical attitudes as outdated is simply to ignore the fact that these attitudes *do* represent a strong, and an increasingly louder, voice within the Christian population" (Knitter 1985, 75, emphasis in the original). This statement applies particularly to Korean Protestant churches. In fact, Professor Byeon Seonhwan, the Korean translator of this book, was forced to leave the Methodist Theological Seminary because of his involvement in interreligious dialogue.

In general, evangelical approaches to traditional Korean religions are based on the binary notions of purity and contamination. In his comparative study of religion, Bak Hyeongyong claims that "through the study of world religions, it is concluded that all religions are not true, but the religion of Jesus Christ is true" (Bak Hyeongyong 1981, 377). Although Bak presents a relatively balanced comparative view of religion, he

believes that only a minimum amount of truth can be found in non-Christian religions, because only Christianity has a divine origin (Bak Hyeongyong 1981, 377, 387).

Lee Hungu, an evangelical apologist, sees traditional Korean religions simply as enemies "infiltrating" Christian territory; he refuses to view them as useful catalysts for candid re-examinations of Christianity. He transfers all the bad aspects of Christianity onto other religions. Shamanism, he claims, has no ethics, pursues only this-worldly and materialistic blessings, and leads to excessive possession and ecstasy; Buddhism teaches excessive blessings and other worldly beliefs, and promotes syncretism; Confucianism leads to outward, formalistic, factional, and humanistic beliefs (Lee Hungu 1999, 112-150). From this point of view, Christian "renewal" is nothing but the eradication of the negative elements of other religions (Lee Hungu 1999, 202). Although this obsession with purification is less radical than that of millenarian and apocalyptic Christians, its "paranoid style" is not so far from them. By imputing the negative side of Christianity to other religions, it attempts to create a perceived "pure" Christianity. As Richard Hofstadter points out: "Since the enemy is thought of as being totally evil and totally unappeasable, he must be totally eliminated" (Hofstadter 1969, 111).

This "paranoid style" is apparent in most anti-cult literature, which seeks to attack world religions as well as Christian sects and cults. In the Korean monthly journal *Church and Heresy*, Rev. Yun Myeonggil argues that if proponents of inter-religious dialogue deny "the Scripture of the Old and New Testament as the only true Word of God and the Holy Trinity," they are "false brothers, nonbelievers, and heretics" (Yun Myeonggil 2002, 40, 48). He reiterates this theological position in the creed of the Sound

Doctrine, a fundamentalist movement that he leads. There he presents, in English, the typical attitude of anti-cultists towards the world:

> We are against the doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church, [the] Documentary Hypothesis, [the] Ecumenical Movement, and [the] Charismatic Movement. We are against anti-biblical doctrines such as high[er] criticism, liberation theology, and [the] social gospel [sic] of Roman Catholicism (Yun, Paul M. 2007).

Theologically, Christian anti-cultism is an attribute of Christian fundamentalism, given that Christian liberalism, ecumenism, non-Christian religions, Christian sects and cults are all rejected.

In an evangelical approach to new religions, Bak Gimin argues that "the common characteristic of new religions is the form and content of syncretism," while Christianity has the true God, and is the religion of revelation (Bak Gimin 1985, 4-5). This evangelical attitude towards other religions is not only based on a theological or dogmatic perspective, but also appears as a response to competing religious markets. For Christian anti-cultists, the presence of world religions in the religious marketplace is regarded as a competitive threat to Christianity (Cowan 2000, 38). A Christian anti-cultist, Bak Yeonggwan, categorizes world religions and new religions as paganism, claiming that paganism originated from the fallen angel Satan, the founder of all pagan religions (Bak Yeonggwan 1999, 28**)**. He considers the Christian Bible to be the "revelation of God" but condemns pagan scriptures as "artificial products" (Bak Yeonggwan 1999, 33).

From Bak's fundamentalist viewpoint, the Roman Catholic Church is "not the historical church, but … an aberrant group from Christianity" (Bak Yeonggwan 1999,

389). He also refers to the Roman Catholic Church as “the great dragon,” set to appear during the end-times (Revelation 12:9) (Bak Yeonggwan 1999, 383). Thus, there is nothing new about the Roman Catholic Church being listed among the heresies of anti-cult literature. It has always been the object of antagonism for anti-cultists (Yu Seonho 1991). Roman Catholic doctrines, such as the forgiveness of sin through priests, papal infallibility, and the perpetual virginity of Mary are deemed heretical (Jang Uncheol 2000, 134-136). Essentially, Roman Catholicism is not Christian. This attitude exhibits a logical coherence. Christian fundamentalists do not accept the ecumenical movements led by the World Council of Churches (WCC), which promote interreligious dialogue with other religions, including the Roman Catholic Church. Jo Yeongyeop, a professor at a conservative theological school in Korea, labels two Presbyterian denominations (Gijang and Tonghap), which are members of the WCC, as “liberal Presbyterian Churches” (Jo Yeongyeop 2004, 46-47).

Thus, the nature of Christian anti-cultism is based on a perceived “pure” world in which a specific identity must be maintained. Thus, anti-cultism is not an isolated entity of Christian fundamentalism, but extends to Korean culture generally. The major clash between Korean culture and Protestantism is concerned with building statues of Dangun, the alleged founder of the Korean nation, in the public sphere. Since Christians generally see Dangun as only a mythic figure, whose real existence has no historic proof, they regard any project to place his statues in public places as idolatry. In 1966, the Korean government attempted to set up Dangun’s statues for the purposes of national integration but had to stop because of Christian opposition. Intending to dignify Sajik Park in Seoul

in 1985, the City of Seoul tried to set up his statues; this also resulted in failure for the same reason.

The largest Presbyterian denomination**,** Tonghap**,** made a statement opposing the plan to erect the statue, asserting that Dangun is merely a symbolic and mythic figure representing the foundation of Korea. Considering the separation between religion and state in modern society, it is generally accepted that Christian claims can be legitimized. However, these claims are revealing, given that the only organizations to oppose the projects are Christian. It is apparent that there is a cultural dissonance between Christian and Korean traditions.

Thus, it is not surprising that the Counseling Office for the Problem of Pseudo-Religion and Heresy at the General Council of the Presbyterian Church (Tonghap) issued a report on Dangun's myth, including literature against Dangun's statues (Daehan Yesugyo Jangroghe Chonghoe Idan Saibi Munje Sangdamso 1993). In 2000, the weekly magazine *Church and Heresy* claimed that Danhak Seowon, a new religious group, had worked behind the scenes to manipulate the building of Dangun's statues (Gyohoewa Idan Pyeonjipbu 2000, 30-32). Protesting against this project, more than fifty Christian denominations participated in an anti-Dangun statue movement. The Hongikmunhwa Movement Federation of Korea, a nationalist organization for building Dangun statues, stated that seventy statues, including those in sixty-one secondary schools, were damaged. On December 23, 1999, seven church ministers were arrested on the charge of destroying a statue of Dangun at the Yeongju Namsan Elementary School (Hongik Ingan Undong Yeonhap 2007). On May 1, 2001, the Christian Council of Korea urged the government

to release them from jail. On January 24, 2000, Rev. Heo Taeseon was arrested while attempting to destroy a Dangun statue and sentenced to prison for eight months.

Christian involvement in destroying traditional artifacts and buildings include Buddha statues and Buddhist buildings. Such Christian attitudes give rise to anti-Christian sentiments. The major agenda of anti-Christian movements arises from the exclusive attitudes of Christians towards other religions, which go together with the destruction of Dangun's statues, and the Christian burning and damaging of Buddhist temples (Ban Gidokgyo Undong Yeonghap 2007). The resulting anti-Christian sentiment in Korea reflects a symbiotic relationship: Christian attitudes are formed in reaction to traditional culture and religion. Anti-cultism is part of the general conflict between Christian and traditional cultures. When these conflicts intensify, culture wars tend to become extreme.

3.2. Images of Christian Sects and Cults in Anti-cultism

If mainstream religions are socially intolerant and religiously dogmatic, they tend to impose their particular norms as orthodox in order to control any deviant beliefs and behaviors. Christian anti-cultism represents a means of separating sects and cults from dominant religious groups, whereby the doctrinal and ritual differences of sects and cults are often magnified and blacklisted. Once labeled as a heresy or a cult, a group finds it very hard to get off such a list. Thus, it is not surprising that well-known heresies from a conservative Christian perspective, such as Mormonism, the Seventh Day Adventist Church, and the Jehovah's Witnesses, were never removed from the blacklists of cults, to

say nothing of the Unification Church, although the Yeoido Full Gospel Church was removed from the list.

3.2.1. Images of Christian Sects in Anti-Cultism

Anti-cult accusations help to mark the boundaries between conventional churches and heretical groups. The three Pentecostal or charismatic figures discussed in chapter six were all accused of being heretical by conventional churches.

Na Unmong was first reported to the General Council of the Presbyterian Church of Korea (Tonghap) in 1955 on the charge that his religious movement deviated from the Presbyterian Creed of Korea. Then in 1956, the council advised Presbyterians not to attend Na's evangelistic conventions, and it prohibited him from occupying any Presbyterian pulpit (Jeong Haengeop 1999, 197-200). In 1997, he was condemned on the basis that his concept of God resembled Korean ancestral veneration. Moreover, his interpretation of Korean history as part of his theological scheme was denounced as syncretistic (Jeong Haengeop 1997, 395-401).

In 1993, a motion concerning Rev. Jo Yonggi, the leader of the Yeoido Full Gospel Church, was referred to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (Tonghap), on the grounds that his dispensational eschatology, accounts of revelation, theological anthropology, faith healing, and demonology held heretical implications (Jeong Hangeop 1999, 350-355). In 1994, he was referred once again to the assembly. Interestingly, their standard for measuring Rev. Jo's heretical features came from the early Christian creeds, and the documents on faith and order issued by the World Council

of Churches (WCC). The report about Rev. Jo can be summarized as follows (Jeng Hangeop 1999, 355-368):

First, Rev. Jo's biblical view of plenary inspiration (or biblical literalism), and, as a result, his teaching on regeneration, healing, and the second coming of Christ led to theological disorder. Second, in light of the doctrine of the Trinity in the Niceno-Constantinopolitan creed, Rev. Jo's emphasis on the Holy Spirit possibly distorted its relationship with the triune God and christology. Third, Rev. Jo's view of the person and work of Jesus Christ was judged "orthodox" in light of the Niceno-Constantinopolitan and Chalcedonian creeds, but his Pentecostal Church had caused problems by claiming that its understanding of justification and sanctification through the Holy Spirit in the redemptive work of Jesus Christ included his excessive physical healing. Thus, the Tonghap church demanded that he clarify the explicit role of justification and sanctification. Fourth, Rev. Jo's Pentecostal movement tended to fall into mysticism or fanaticism; his supernatural view of the Holy Spirit raised the problem of immediate revelation; his views on the gifts of the Holy Spirit were considered so selective that his emphasis on personal blessings through the work of the Holy Spirit was seen to cause an excessive interest in worldly goods. Lastly, Rev. Jo's dispensational premillennialism was deemed to be similar to that of heretical end-time believers, who pervaded Korean churches during the 1980s and 1990s. In responding to this accusation on August 29, 1994, Rev. Jo Yonggi sent a written apology to the Presbyterian Assembly, saying that he would sincerely mitigate and correct the mistakes highlighted by the church (Jeong Hangeop 1999, 368-369).

Since the Tonghap Church is the largest Protestant denomination in Korea, and Presbyterian denominations are predominant in Korean Christianity, it is no wonder that Rev. Jo complied with this request. A rejection of Pentecostal churches underlies the Tonghap Church's accusation of heresy. It reflects the tendency of mainline churches to maintain a position of superiority in relation to smaller religious groups (World Council of Churches 1979). Given that the Tonghap Church is a member of the WCC, which pursues ecumenical unity in diversity, its charge of heresy against a relatively small denomination goes against the "Guideline on Dialogue with People of Living Faiths and Ideologies," issued by the WCC in 1979. This guideline encourages dialogue with other religions, including new religions (World Council of Churches 1979): "Listening carefully to the neighbour's self-understanding enables Christians better to obey the commandment not to bear false witness against their neighbours, whether those neighbours be of long established religious, cultural or ideological traditions, or members of new religious groups" (World Council of Churches 1979). Although the Tonghap church is a member of the WCC, it best reflects the strong voice of a Calvinistic reformed tradition, which tends to be dogmatic in theology and aggressive in its attitude towards other religious groups. This Calvinistic tradition was used to measure the orthodoxy of Rev. Jo and his church.

Similarly, Rev. Kim Gidong faced heresy charges in 1988 when his demonology was criticized as unbiblical, and because it was said to conflict with the tenets of the Tonghap Presbyterian Church. Then again in 1992, accusations were made that his thought was based on demons and that his understanding of the Trinity was modalist, a

position which claims that the distinctions of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are only transitory features of the one true God (Jeong Haengeop 1999, 267-269, 305-309).

The Berea International Institute, an umbrella organization of Kim Gidong's Seongrak Church, has compiled four source books about these heresy charges, bringing together the material of its proponents and opponents. These texts seek to defend the Seongrak Church from such charges. One of the translated English titles is *Research Papers of the Korean Presbyterian Church (Tonghap) on Heresies* (the Korean title, translated literally, is *The Ecclesiastical Authority of the Korean Presbyterian Church (Tonghap) and Rev. Choe Samgyeong's Study on Cult and Heresy*). Rev. Choe's name appears in the title because he was a leading member of the cult and heresy study commissioned by the General Council of the Tonghap Church. According to the Berea International Institute, investigations into heresy take the form of a pyramid: first, the base is laid when the cult expert selects an individual or group; second, building on this foundation he reports the individual or group to a presbytery or General Council; third, the council sets more blocks in place by requesting a study on the individual or group; fourth, the cult expert is involved as the investigation heightens; and lastly, the structure reaches its pinnacle once the results of the study are published in an anti-cult magazine (Berea Gukje Jinheungwon 1996, 12). Rev. Choe was not only on the Tonghap committee against heresy and cults, but was also the chief editor of *Church and Faith* (Gyohoewa Sinang), a monthly anti-cult magazine. Moreover, his book *A Criticism on the Demonology of Berea* (1990) was recommended by the moderator of the Tonghap Church. In this volume he argued that Kim Gidong's demonology was "satanic" and

"anti-Christian" (Choe Samgyeong 1990, 36). Incidentally, this heresy charge had already been made by Rev. Kim's denomination, the Korean Baptist Convention. Rev. Kim had left the denomination in 1987 and organized his own church. Not long after this he was charged with heresy by the Korean Baptist Convention.

The theological ground for the charge was provided by Rev. Won Seho, who worked with Rev. Choe as the publisher of *Church and Faith*. He argued that heresies tend to grow rapidly through means of counterfeit miracles, signs, and wonders. In particular, he claimed that Rev. Kim's demon-ousting was a fraudulent performance by demons (Berea Gukje Jinheunwon 1995, 83-84). In an English letter to American Christians in 1987, his theological position was clearly apparent:

> Recently, one group mixed Korean animism with teachings from the Bible and thus, concealed many promises made to the believer. This has misled over ten thousand souls. Over three thousand pastors [are also] involved in this heresy which has caused great confusion among Korean evangelical Christians (Berea Gukje Jinheunwon 1995, 345).

This obsession with Christian purity can be seen in his distinction between pagan (or non-Christian) cults and Christian cults. He thinks that since pagan religions can be cults, but are not heresies, the major purpose of his anti-cult crusade is to identify Christian heresies (Won Seho 1990, 8-9). For him, Christian heretics are those who mix the true faith with aberrant teachings and heretical doctrines, form factional groups, create conflicts in the church, and "steal" church members (Won Seho 1990, 13-14).

3.2.2. Images of Christian Cults in Anti-Cultism

The Unification Church has been regarded as the archenemy of conventional churches in Korea. Except for the book *Protestantism and the Unification Church*, compiled and published by the Unification Church (Lee Jaeseok 1981), there is no extensive work about the group within Protestant circles equivalent to the book *New Religions & the Theological Imagination in America*, which articulates new religions from Christian perspectives (Bednarowski 1989). Lee's book includes research articles by leading conservative and liberal theologians, public lectures, anti-Unification Church statements, and the apologetic papers of the Unification Church.

However, such dialogue or mutual interaction does not exist in Korea. Due to the extreme tensions between the Unification Church and conventional Christian churches, any objective research is labeled the work of a sympathizer. In 1970, for example, Professor Seo Namdong, a pioneer behind *minjung* theology and the frontrunner of liberal theology, offered a critical appraisal of the Unification Church's theology. Drawing attention to the church's teaching on the relatively autonomous role of humanity in God's plan of salvation, he argued that it was based upon a distorted interpretation of the scriptures. For Seo, the dualistic view of the Unification Church was not too far from Gnosticism, and its dispensational scheme very similar to the apocalyptic vision of Joachim of Fiore (1132-1202), who promoted the "salvation of history," rather than that of Augustine of Hippo (354-30), who saw "salvation from history" in his historical theology. Yet, Seo also expressed some theological sympathy for the church, stating: "That the Divine Principle is an excellent production of Korean theology is not only

because of its emphasis on the Korean sense of calling (the Korean extension of the view of redemptive history), but also because of the splendor of its theological creativity and the strength of its theological system" (Lee Seokjae 1981, 81-86). Such praise, however qualified, quickly led conventional churches to condemn Seo, who was forced to resign as the dean of the College of Theology at Yonsei [Yeonse] University.

Unsurprisingly, academics who try to evaluate new religions or cults in a scholarly manner are dismissed as cult sympathizers, while anti-cultists are routinely praised by Christians for producing works of "sound" scholarship. Oftentimes, mainstream Korean society regards anti-cult activists as "experts" on new religions. One distinctive example is *The Year 2000 Research Report on Korean New Religions: Self-Styled Second Coming Messiahs*, published by the anti-cult magazine *Modern Religion Monthly* (Hyeondae Jonggyo 2002). According to the preface, this report was issued at the request of the Korean Ministry of Culture and Tourism, and later published in a popular format. This ministerial endorsement of *Modern Religion Monthly*, and its parent organization, the Institute of the Problem of Modern Religion, reveals the enormous influence of the anti-cult movement within Korean society. Although *The Year 2000 Research Report* is a recent publication, it was actually a modification of the well known anti-cult expert Tak Myeonghwan's four volume work on Christian cults. In spite of the almost verbatim reproduction of Tak's work, it has become a benchmark for identifying cults in Korea. Therefore, anti-cult literature not only gains "authority" as officially sanctioned "scholarship," but plays a critical role in the anti-cult crusade.

In Tak's four volume work, thirty-five groups are listed as Christian cults, among which the Unification Church is listed first and the Heavenly Father Religion second (Tak Myeong Hwan 1997; 1992a; 1992b; 1987). Tak deplores the fact that conventional churches maintain a defensive or passive attitude towards the Unification Church. He urges direct confrontation, claiming that the Unification Church has already infiltrated Christian and social organizations (Tak Myeonghwan 1997, 50). Such an accusation is based on an elaborate conspiracy theory. Tak assumes that the Unification Church continually seeks real power through a complex social network of organizations. He claims that it intends to use these organizations to impose its will on Christian churches (Tak Myeonghwan 1997, 75).

Tak even believes that the Unification Church has formed organizations of professors and students to infiltrate schools, colleges, and universities. The Center for the Christian Interdenominational Movement, he warns**,** is a Unification Church umbrella organization plotting to win over Christian ministers. He also says that the Professors' World Peace Association and International Christian Professors Association have around one thousand and five hundred members respectively. According to his analysis, the Collegiate Association for Research into the Divine Principle is a nation-wide network that has infiltrated sixty-two universities, with around one thousand student members (as of 1986). Tak goes on to argue that the International Christian Students Association, founded in 1986, is a camouflage group among Christians seeking to promote the Unification Church and its leader, Sun Myung Moon [Mun Seonmyeong**].** He alleges the existence of numerous other umbrella groups and organizations as well. The purpose of

all these activities, he claims, is the political, economic, social, cultural, and religious hegemony of the Unification Church and its teachings (Tak Myeonghwan 1997, 88-96).

Thus, it goes without saying that the Unification Church has never been dropped from the cult blacklists produced by Christians. The Unification Church "scare" is well addressed in a document issued by the Christian Council of Korea (CCK), the largest evangelical association in the country. It claims that without rooting out cults and heresies, Korean churches will not survive. The association not only urges the government to promote "sound" religious activities, but encourages it to punish "evil" religions that shake the foundations of the family and social order (Hanguk Gidokgyo Chongyeonhaphoe 2002, 249-250). The many statements made by conventional churches and organizations make it clear that the Unification Church is regarded as less than Christian, a syncretistic religion of Christianity and the Oriental Yin-Yang philosophy, with Mun Seonmyeong as the pseudo Messiah of the second coming (Tak Myeonghwan 1979, 248-322).

Another example of this type of thinking can be seen in the images of the Heavenly Father Religion, which are associated with its founder Bak Taeseon. His cultic career exhibits the pattern of the so-called "notorious" religious leader. He began as a Christian evangelist and ended up creating a new religion. While a successful evangelist in the 1950s and 1960s, he began to denounce Christianity during the 1980s and had established a new religion before his death in 1990.

Thus, anti-cult literature focused on the rise and fall of Bak's life and religion. His healing practices were regarded as fraudulent by anti-cultists (Kim Gyeongrae 1957,

160, 178). His messianic role—expressed in such phrases as “the one righteous man from the east, “the two olive trees,” and “one who sits upon a white horse”—was labeled as a perversion of Messiahship and as a sign of the anti-Christ (Shin Sahun 1957, 29, 31). As early as 1957, the conservative theologian Shin Sahun claimed that Bak Taeseon was a “true heretic,” the polar opposite of the American Evangelist Billy Graham, a leading world evangelist conforming to orthodox beliefs (Shin Sahun 1957, 30-31, 36). In Shin’s theological frame, Bak is the fraudulent leader of a Christian-oriented new religion claiming him to be the Messiah (Shin Sahun 1957, 34-36). Shin labels Bak’s teachings Communist propaganda and indoctrination, reflecting the painful period after the Korean War (Shin Sahun 1957, 79, 83). Consequently, he was continuously described as sexually abusive, politically corrupt, religiously fraudulent, and so on. Although the social power of this religion shrank drastically after his death, his group has continued to provide inspiration for other factional groups. Thus, his image in anti-cult literature is significant to the construction of anti-cultism in the long term.

The Victory Altar inherited all the negativity of the Heavenly Father Religion. The leader Jo Huiseong rejected Jesus as the Messiah and dubbed himself God. According to Tak Myeonghwan in 1989, the religion created a seven unit team for the punishment of its apostates. In 1994, Jo was sentenced to prison for thirty months on charges of fraud and usurpation, which was extended into the year 2000 with new disclosures about the murder and secret burial of his followers (Hyundae Jonggyo 2002, 315-316). Thus, their public exposure and their radical belief systems help to create the image of “dangerous” cults.

Although sects and cults can be classified as different religious groups, however, the measurement for "sects and cults" is insignificant. In his bilingual Korean-English book about the Unification Church, Park Young-Kwan [Bak Yeonggwan] defines a "cult" as follows:

> The word cult…, when applied to a religious group, has a more restricted meaning: a religion regarded as unorthodox or spurious, or a minority religious group holding beliefs regarded as unorthodox or spurious. The term cult can be applied to these with greater accuracy than the term sect (Park Young-Kwan 1999, 7).

However, upon closer examination his "restricted" application of the word cult to specified groups is in fact not restricted at all because sects and cults in his works are treated as similar religious groups.

Although specified groups may differ according to the various examples given in anti-cult literature, most groups on cult lists are excluded from the category of Christian orthodoxy. For anti-cultists, particular definitions of the words sect, cult, and heresy are insignificant because the real concern of anti-cultism is to make explicit the boundaries between orthodoxy and heresy; that is, between conventional churches and deviant groups. For anti-cultists, these two divided worlds are a constructed reality by which a pure Christian world is secured. Although there may be some differences in their measurements for cult awareness, the division does not critically deter the dichotomous categorization of orthodoxy and heresy (or cult).

4. Boundary Makers for Orthodoxy: Churches and Anti-Cultists

In a situation where intolerant religions are predominant, sectarian and cultic groups tend "to become even more firm in their deviant stands" (Moberg 1962, 274). Christian orthodoxy is an attempt to establish and maintain a religious authority by making cognitive boundaries through denouncing heretics. This interaction reinforces the differences and conflicts between two camps. Conventional churches support anti-cultism and confirm the deviancy of sects and cults, and anti-cultists play a role in amplifying the deviancy of sects and cults

4.1. Korean Protestant Churches as Supporters of Anti-Cultism

In his magnum opus *The History of the Christian Church of Korea*, Min Gyeongbae, a prominent Korean church historian, used the word "sect" instead of "heresy." Given the fact that his book covers the entire history of the Protestant Church in Korea, it is remarkable that he uses the word "heresy" so rarely compared with other church historians. For him, sects are Christian movements which have nationalist tendencies, and which fill a niche where the established churches do not meet people's religious needs, or which present aberrant forms of piety (Min Gyeongbae 1998, 402-433, 537-542). It is also exceptional that the anti-cult crusade of the most influential Christian anti-cultist, Tak Myeongwhan, is mentioned in the book as part of the church history of Korea, informing that during 1972 he went on lecturing tours to individual churches thirty-four times, to gatherings of churches twenty times, and gave special lectures (and seminars) thirty-seven times (Min Gyeongbae 1998, 562-563). Min's work addresses the fact that

Christian culture interacts with traditional Korean culture and gives rise to new types of religion.

In fact, conservative Protestantism was essentially associated with Christian sects and cults, which all foster a literal reading of the Bible, millennial dispensationalism, and schism. First, the literal reading of the Bible can easily lead to allegorical, figurative, and typological interpretations. Most of the sectarian and cultic groups discussed in chapter six are prone to such an understanding. Although the approach to the Bible by the Unification Church seems to be radical, its basic understanding is not so far from traditional Christian fundamentalism. This religion regards the Scriptures as "not the truth itself, but "textbooks teaching the truth" (H.S.A-U.W.C 2002, 7). However, its typological and figurative interpretation and dispensational theology are similar to Christian fundamentalism. Second, the combination of premillennialism and dispensationalism has generated a number of sectarian groups with members who typically appear as end-time believers. This tendency has not only produced exclusive and dogmatic beliefs, but has also focused on religious experience, pietistic attitudes, and otherworldly beliefs (Noh Gilmyeong 1996, 253).

Despite the fact that sectarian groups played a role in shaping Korean Protestantism, the history of sects and cults demonstrates that they were continuously rejected and attacked by mainstream churches. More important, intolerant conventional churches in Korea kept new religious groups at bay. In other words, the differing boundaries between mainstream churches and "deviant" groups were intensified, which in turn made new religious groups radical departures from the parent groups. As an

extreme response, expelled groups reinforced their inner solidarity in order to protect themselves from outside attacks, keeping their core beliefs secret. It follows that confronted by these mutual challenges, making boundaries is a natural process to protect specific groups and their beliefs.

This activity has a parallel with the classification system proposed by Emile Durkheim and Marcel Mauss: "[t]o classify things, to arrange them in groups which are distinct from each other, and are separated by clearly determined lines of demarcation" (Durkheim and Mauss1967, 4)[2]. The task of classification is a continuous process of making distinctions between "our" forces and the "enemy" in the battlefield (between religious groups), involving witch-hunting and blacklisting for identifying cults. Religious conflicts and culture wars of this kind leave no grey areas, but make a sharp

[2] The nature of this classification is also expressed in Van Baalen's *The Chaos of Cults*, the title of which is reminiscent of Mircea Eliade's metaphorical dichotomy between "cosmos" and "chaos." Orthodoxy as cosmos is familiar and ordered space (inhabited and organized) and heresy as chaos is an unknown and dangerous area populated by the dead, demons, ghosts, and foreigners (Cf. Eliade 1969, 37-38). While van Baalen's study of cults is relatively balanced compared to those of other anti-cultists (Hexham and Poewe 1997, 2), he defends traditional beliefs by criticizing cults and world religions. He believes that "[t]he true Biblical doctrine would envisage not only doctrine but also ethics, economics and sociology as much as a personal code of conduct, art in music, sobriety in public prayer, and beauty in church architecture" (van Baalen 1956, 10). He goes on to say that "cults are the unpaid bills of the church" (van Baalen 1956, 14). Anthony Hoekema also claims that "people often find in the cults emphases and practices which they miss in the established churches" (Hoekema 1978, 1). These statements are warnings for preventing the possible rise of dissident groups and imply that in a religiously pluralistic society, religions tend to compete with and control each other in order to promote feelings of authenticity. Likewise, Walter Martin's *Kingdom of the Cults* postulates that cults have a special domain, what he calls a "kingdom". This labeling activity makes theological and social the boundaries between orthodox and deviant Christian groups. The language of the kingdom, defined either by Christianity or the cults, serves as an exemplary metaphor of the territorial boundaries that exist between two different religious worlds. Thus, religious knowledge is not confined solely to theological and religious arenas, but has a sociological dimension as well. The tensions between cult and anti-cult movements are not simply the result of doctrinal conflict, but reflect a cosmological war between different groups, one that involves the maintenance and very survival of religious plausibility structures.

distinction between two different fields. These polarized belief systems result from the process of boundary-making, often through stigmatizing words such as heresy, cult, pseudo-religion, and evil teaching. The construction of heresy or cult not only shows conflict within religious groups, but also reflects the power relations among social organizations. Through such labeling, mainstream organizations tend to secure their own boundaries and their target religions also become conscious of such labeling and foster an "in-group" mentality. Through these mutual interactions, religious groups define each other, creating different social loci.

Thus, for anti-cultists, the "very presence of nontraditional religious groups threatens the worldview inhabited by conservative Christians and challenges that worldview's various claims to an ultimate authority and a unique veracity" (Cowan 2003, 16). One method of defense within anti-cultism is the heresy list, which reflects the ongoing process of heresy construction. Warning against indiscriminative heresy charges, Bae Boncheol, a professor at Seoul Theological University (Holiness), classifies a number of "heretical sects": neo-Gnosticism, neo-Montanism, and neo-Donatism. He suggests an objective historical survey of "heresy," instead of subjective dogmatic approaches, in order to avoid the abuse of unsound heretical charges. According to his analysis, this method discriminates "sound" sects from "deviant" cults. However, his understanding of new religions is theologically oriented, and his classification of heresies functions in the same way as that of anti-cultists (Table 6.1).

Table 6.1. Types of Radical Christian Sects

Neo-Gnosticism	Segye Ilgagong Gyeophoe (Association of One World Religion) Yeohowa Saeil Gyodan (Church of Jehovah's New Work) Tongil Gyo (Unification Church) Jeondogwan [Cheonbygyo] (Heavenly Father Religion)
Neo-Montanism	Cham Yesu Gyohoe (True Jesus Church) Seventh Day Adventist Church Dami Seongyohoe (Mission for the Near Future)
Neo-Donatism	Jehovah's Witnesses Local Church Guwonpa (Salvationist Party)

Source: (Bae Boncheol 2002, 257-287)

In *Heresies of Christianity*, published by the General Council of the Presbyterian Church of Korea (Hapdong), the second largest Presbyterian Church, heresies are classified under three categories: heresies in the history of the Western Church, pseudo-religions from the East, and heresies originating in Korea. As shown in Table 6.2, the classification of heresies not only involves traditional heresies, but also includes any cult group regardless of its background. In particular, modern heresies are called "cultic-[heresies]" in English because cults are doctrinally "heretical" as well as "cultic." Here the word "cultic" is understood as "pseudo-religious" (Sim Changseop et al. 1998, 16).

Table 6.2. Types of Heresies

Heresies in the History of the Western Church	Early Church	1) General Heresies Ebionites, Gnosticism, Marcionism,

		Montanism, 2) Christological heresies Arius Apollinaris Nestorius Eutyches
	[Modern] Church	Jehovah's Witnesses Mormonism The Seventh-day Adventist Church Christian Science
Pseudo-Religions from the East	China	Local Church International Moral Association
	Japan	Tenrikyo Sekai Kyuseikyo Zenrinkai (Zenrinkyo)
	India	T.M. (Transcendental Meditation)
Heresies in Korea	Major Heresies	Unification Church Kim Gidong's Demonology Dongbanggyo (Eastern Religion) Yeohowa Saeil [Gyodan] (Church of Jehovah's New Work) Aecheon Gyohoe [Christian Gospel Mission] Gidokgyo Bokeum Chimryehoe (Christian Gospel Baptist Church) Cheonbugyo (Heavenly Father Religion) Yeongsaenggyo Seongnijedan (the Victory Altar)
	Sectarian Heresies	Banbiliya Chusugun Eliya Bokeum Seongyohoe (Elijah Mission Association for the Gospel) Hanguk Yerusalem Seongyohoe (Association of the Korea Jerusalem Mission) Rema Bokeum Seongyohoe (Association of the Rema Gospel Mission) End-time Believers

Source: (Sim Changseop et al. 1998)

This classification continues in *A History of the Korean Church* by Kim Insu, who places the groups of Na Unmong, Bak Taeseon, and Mun Seonmyeong under the new heresy movements of the 1950s. Instead of seeing them as a stimulus for Christianity," he thinks that Bak's and Mun's movements have had "extremely bad effects on the Korean churches and society" (Kim Insu 195, 340-347).

Lee Hyeonggi, a church historian of the Tonghap Church, divides religious groups into traditional denominations (orthodoxy) and heresies. For him, the former consists of seven major denominations—the Presbyterian, Methodist, Holiness, Baptist, Lutheran, Anglican, and Roman Catholic churches—while the latter includes the Unification Church, the Jehovah's Witnesses, the Mormon Church, the Local Church, other Christian-oriented sects and cults (Lee Hyeonggi 1993, 17-138). It seems that he simply follows the reports of heresy by the General Assembly of his Tonghap Church. From this it is apparent that a simple and fundamentalist boundary line between orthodoxy and heresy is promoted by Lee's theological scheme, in spite of his support for the WCC's faith and order policy (Lee Hyeonggi 1993, 143).

Furthermore, the classification of heretical groups is not confined to religious groups. In the General Assembly reports, "anti-Christian publications" are enumerated, claiming that their scholarship is "superficial," "humanistic, and lacking "original research." The list also includes the early church historian Ellain Pagels' *The Gnostic Gospels* and the religious studies scholar and Anglican cleric Trevor Ling's *Buddha, Marx and God* (Lee Hyeonggi 1993, 112).

These classifications aim at magnifying the religious differences between churches and so-called heresies or cults, drawing clear boundaries between them. As a matter of fact, the "cult awareness" policies of conventional churches only serve to divide Christians into the categories of pure and impure. In the source book published by the Christian Council of Korea in 2004, twenty-seven religious groups in Korea are listed as heretical and cultic and all are excluded from membership. In the appendix of the book,

thirty-eight groups are listed with the enumerations of charges of heresy and cultic status by the Presbyterian, Holiness, and Methodist denominations (Hanguk Gidoxgyo Chongyeonhaphoe Idan Saibi Munje Sangdamso 2004, 150-153). According to the eighth report of cult and heresy by the Presbyterian Church of Korea (Tonghap), ninety-eight kinds of heresy and cult-related agendas between the 1st and 83rd general meetings of the church were presented (Daehan Yesugyo Jangrohoe Chonghoe Saibi Idan Munje Sangdamso 1999, 123-150). [3]

Given the fact that the Christian Council of Korea is the largest interdenominational evangelical association in Korea, including the Tonghap and other major Presbyterian, Methodist, Holiness, and Baptist churches, its anti-cult activism magnifies religious conflicts in the Korean context. In particular, since the theologically moderate Tonghap Church is the largest denomination in Korea and a member of the World Council of Churches, its exclusive attitude towards Christian sects and cults signifies its symbolic and practical role in leading charges of heresy.

Therefore, one may predict that other ultra-conservative churches are more likely to reject new religious groups, creating tensions and conflicts between them. When a dogmatically-oriented conservative religion becomes intolerant toward other religions, it becomes militant, although the degree of militancy may differ according to its historical situation, social location, and worldview. In the Korean context, the anti-cult agenda in Protestant churches appears as religious rather than ethnically oriented, because Korea is an ethnically homogenous society. Korean Protestant churches are so dogmatically

[3] Although Rev. Jo Yonggi of the Yeoido Full Gospel Church was eventually removed from the list of heresy and cults, this was a rare case.

oriented, and their cultural and social systems so militant, that their relationships with other religions are socially exclusive and culturally narrow. With respect to deviant groups, their theological studies only aim at spotting heresies (cults) for heresy charges, and charges which allow no room for theological dialogue or discussion. As Gordon Melton points out, "[t]heological systems are immensely important in spotting [outsider-religions], as even the most secularized and established religions are still concerned with the promotion of a particular worldview and jealously guard it against competitors" (Melton 2004b, 82). Therefore, it is no surprise that established churches (or denominations), which share orthodox beliefs, are "in the long-term mobilization of support for [the] anti-cult [movement]" (Melton 2004b, 81).

4.2. Anti-Cultists as Knowledge Brokers

Religious elites are the most influential in the shaping of religion; they produce ideological weapons to defend their beliefs, or generate mythologies for creating new religions. These knowledge or cultural elites can be divided into two types. The first are traditional elites who "present themselves as heirs to the truths of the past"; the second are organic elites who "present themselves as the new and dynamic sources" (Hunter 1991, 61). With respect to traditional religions and new religions, the former tend to maintain their orthodox position, while the latter tend to pursue new and innovative religious beliefs and practices. They each play a constructive role in their symbolic world, deconstructing others. As James Davidson Hunter points out, "cultural conflict is ultimately about the struggle for domination…to achieve or maintain the power to

define" (Hunter 1991, 52). The binary division of a culture war can be due to the actors' strategy which wants to sustain each of their own plausibility structures.

Anti-cultists as knowledge producers play a leading role in creating religious boundaries. Since anti-cultism cannot wage battles against all sectarian and cultic groups, it must be selective in choosing and uncovering the deviancy of its targets. This has given rise to a lucrative religious industry where anti-cultist agendas are manufactured and funded. Established churches function as factories and branch plants, offering anti-cultists ideological and financial support. In this dynamic milieu, anti-cult movements thrive, competing or cooperating with each other for their share of the religious market.

Although the phrase "anti-cult industry" seems to be a value-laden one, it addresses the nature of anti-cultism, which relies on the reality of new religions. As suggested by the names of Korean anti-cult magazines, such as *Modern Religion Monthly*, *Church and Heresy*, and *The Cults of Christianity Quarterly*, aggressive anti-cult networks are generated by these publications. The sources they use are largely the accounts of ex-cult members and infiltrators who sneak into cult groups and collect material. Therefore, since their measuring criteria of cults have not changed over the years, new cults are manufactured all the time in these anti-cult magazines. Since many cult groups with beliefs vulnerable to criticism tend to have two stages of teaching processes (initiatory and mature stages), public accessibility to their core beliefs remains so limited that most information about them tends to come from anti-cult literature. Like cult leaders, "cult experts" play a major role in cult awareness.

Tak Myeonghwan (1937-1994), the Walter Martin of Korea, was one of the most important figures in the Korean anti-cult movement. He not only informed people about many unknown new religious groups, but his works became a standard for judging heresies (or cults). Unlike other theologically-motivated anti-cultists, he contributed significantly to research on new religious groups. Many groups would have been forgotten by the public without his investigations.

He began his anti-cult career as a journalist who exposed religious groups and provoked controversial sentiments among the public, before becoming a Christian apologist bent on rooting out heresies (or cults). His efforts ultimately proved to be fatal. As his eldest son, Tark Ji-il [Tak Jiil], noted in a book on new religions: "[Tak Myeonghwan] dedicated his life to the study of new religious movements in Korea, focusing on the so-called Christian heresies and was killed by a member of one of those movements in 1994" (Tark Ji-il 2003, 1). Tak Myeonghwan finished his BA in philosophy in 1960, and studied theology in several theological schools. In 1975, he received his master's degree from United Graduate School of Theology at Yonsei University.

In 1966, after being exposed to the Center for the Christian Interdenominational Movement, allegedly run by the Unification Church, Tak Myeonghwan entered a new phase of his anti-cult crusade, namely, cult expertise. His knowledge of "cults" continued to grow after his investigations of the Temple of the Tabernacle, an end-time group emerging in 1967, and the Olive Tree Movement, which had helped to break up his friend's family (Tak Myeong Hwan 1996, 49-51). In 1971, he joined the Christian

magazine *Seolbyeol* (Sacred Separation), which he later took over and renamed *Hyeondae Jonggyo* (Modern Religion Monthly). This journal quickly became the primary literary forum for his research into anti-cultism (Hyeondae Jonggyo 1994, 43).

For twenty years, he experienced over seventy terror and death threats, as well as a number of lawsuits (Hyeondae Jonggyo 1994, 39). The most humiliating event in his anti-cult career took place in 1978, when he was forced to apologize to the Unification Church in public newspapers. He conceded that his assessment of the church as an immoral, political, and neo-Communist evil had been incorrect and had damaged the church's reputation. He later withdrew his apology, claiming that he had been threatened by the Unification Church and was forced to issue it because of their political connections. Furthermore, he contended that his letter of apology, along with several ads meant for the public, had been prepared by the Unification Church (Tak Myeonghwan 1979, 137-144; 1996, 385-396). The Unification Church countered these accusations by arguing that he had requested financial support as a reward for eliminating it from his anti-cult list (Sege Gidokgyo Tongilhyeophoe Yeoksapyeonchan 1983, 258-263).

He continued this work until his death in 1994, at which time the crusade was taken up by his two sons, Jiwon and Jiil. His twenty-six books, especially his four-volume work on Christian sects and cults, became the most important sources for those engaged in the field of anti-cultism. His life's work was divided into three phases. First, as a journalist he began to uncover the defects of cults, such as fraud and sexual scandal. Second, he identified non-Christian cults. Finally, in his later years, he focused mainly on

Christian sects and cults and thus provided an influential standard for measuring "Christian heresies".

Although he claimed to study new religions objectively, there is no evidence that he kept a neutral position. The explicit goal of his magazine *Modern Religion Monthly* was to campaign against the enemies of Christianity, to eradicate heresies and cults. Tak distinguished between new and false religions, and called the latter forms of heretical religion. In many ways, however, his approach to new religions differed from that of other Christian cult experts, who often focused only on the testimonies of ex-members. As a result, his in-depth investigations had a powerful influence on the anti-cult crusade. His works uncovered the previously hidden accounts of cults and the stories behind them, and provided information on their organizational structures.

He was, nevertheless, not the first person to dedicate himself to research on new religions. One of his undergraduate professors, Lee Gango, of Chonbuk [Jeonbuk] National University, published a 1,609 page coffee table book about new religious groups, but remained a new religions scholar, not a anti-cult activist (Lee Gango 1992). Yet, it was left to Tak who worked extensively on Christian sects and cults, who intended to "expose" them to the Christians as part of anti-cult awareness. The fact was evident that when murdered by a cult member, he was called a "martyr" for fighting against numerous heresies and cults, giving his life to protect Christian "flocks of sheep" from being plundered by them (Mun Sanghui 1994, 27).

While Tak Myeonghwan's original surveys were negative exposés of new religious groups, Rev. Choe Samgyeong was more theologically oriented and played an

important role in heresy charges at denominational and inter-denominational levels. He not only worked for the anti-cult monthly *Church and Faith*, but played a critical role in heresy charges on behalf of his Presbyterian Church (Tonghap) and the Christian Council of Korea. He belonged to the Presbyterian Church (Hapdong) and then moved to the Tonghap Church, where he became a staunch critic of Rev. Kim Gidong's Berea Movement. He gained his reputation as a "heresy discriminator," feared by new religious groups because of his association with the largest Korean Protestant denomination (the Tonghap Church) and the Christian Council of Korea (the largest evangelical association in the country).

Rev. Choe's public discussions with the Seventh Day Adventist Church and the Local Church about heresy revealed a new aspect of his anti-cult activism. First, a ten round open discussion between his camp and the Seventh Day Adventist Church appeared in *Church and Faith* and was later published as a book (Cheo Samgyeong, Jin Yongsik, and Kim Daeseong 1997). Choe's final conclusion was that the Seventh Day Adventist Church was unorthodox. Although the church had been given a chance to defend the orthodoxy of its beliefs, it had failed to do so. Each camp had a different purpose: attack or defend. Choe also had open discussions with the Local Church. He was involved in the Tonghap Church's charge of heresy against the Local Church, arguing that such an indictment was legitimate because it had been leveled by an entire denomination ([Choe Samgyeong and the Local Church] 1999, 76, 94-95). The main heresy accusation against the Local Church was that its understanding of the triune God was based on "modalism" ([Choe Samgyeong and the Local Church] 1999, 99-107). In

its main response, the Local Church countered that Rev. Choe's own trinitarian formula reflected three polytheistic gods rather than the monotheistic trinity ([Choe Samgyeong and the Local Church] 1999, 109-128). Since a theory of the trinity is not empirically verifiable, any attempt to explain the doctrine has the difficulty of overcoming linguistic limitations. Not surprisingly, this discussion did not resolve the charges and counter charges of heresy. Choe's own theology was even suspected of having a heretical element, a suspicion that was simply reinforced by the Association of the Presbyterian Church**,** which issued a report calling his theology "problematic" (Daehan Yesugyo Jangrohoe Yonhaphoe Idan Saibi Daechaek Wiwonghoe 2004, 433-435). Rev. Choe's case demonstrates that theological accusations are far more difficult than exposing the negative images of target religions.

In a third case of anti-cult activism, Rev. Lee Daebok had a different background from the two figures discussed above. He was a leading member and teacher of the Unification Church for eighteen years, but left it and became a staunch anti-cult activist. In his anti-cult monthly *Church and Heresy*, he has dealt with all kinds of religions believed to be heresies. For him, heresies are the archenemy of God; thus there should be zero tolerance of heresy. Since there has always been heresy, he claims that an antagonistic relationship between church and heresy is "inevitable" (Lee Daebok 2001, 198). He argues that since he was a member of the Unification Church, he is in a position to distinguish between true and false estimates of it, and at the same time he refutes its teachings by appealing to orthodox Christian doctrines (Lee Daebok 1999, 4). Due to this activism, he claims that many attempts were made to stop his lectures, and once he was

kidnapped (1988) and suffered death threats (Lee Daebok 1999, 409-417). His anti-cult rhetoric has also been applied to Pentecostal churches. He has called Rev. Jo Yonggi a heretic who “paints Korean churches with satanic colors” (Lee Daebok 2004, 39).

As the rise and fall of new religious groups continues, anti-cultists themselves have been accused of heresy and replaced by new ones. The importance of anti-cultism is, however, a culture which appears as a response to a steady stream of new religious groups. Anti-cultists are agents who produce religious conflicts. Perhaps the most important result is social support. If anti-cult crusades gain strong social support, a society’s religious culture tends to become intolerant of new religious groups. Their aim becomes that of zero tolerance. Thus, the anti-cult industry both feeds and relies on social demand. So long as accusations and attacks are regarded as legitimate, there will be a culture of anti-cultism.

4.3. Anti-Cultism and the Amplification of Deviancy

The separation of conventional churches from “deviant” new religious groups is reinforced by anti-cultists, whose exclusive information and knowledge about sects and cults serve to amplify the deviancy of cults. As the deviancy of a sect or cult is exposed, the group is isolated and alienated from society. Thus, the amplification of its deviancy increases (Young 1973, 34). In the process, anti-cultism gains public support, is legitimized, and captures ground for its repeated updates about cults.

The case of a charismatic church shows that the amplification of deviancy is intensified with mass media exposure. On May 12, 1999, a nationally known incident

took place in Seoul. A program of the Munhwa Broadcasting Corporation (MBC), “The PD-Note,” was going to release a show exposing the deviant teachings and behavior of Rev. Lee Jaerok of the Manmin Jungang Church (MJC). In order to interrupt the program’s broadcast, around 1,500 supporters surrounded the MBC building and staged a sit-down protest in the late evening, from which about fifty protesters broke into the studio room. As a result, the release of the documentary was blocked, and it was replaced by an animal documentary. The protesters claimed that the TV station had distorted the facts and defamed the church's image. The intrusion delayed the broadcasting, but not for more than one day. The main focus of the MBC program “PD-Note” concerned Rev. Lee’s gambling in Las Vegas, as well as his “fraudulent” miracles. Given this incident, the main thrust of the news-gathering basically followed the anti-cultists’ agenda on new religious groups. The broadcast began with the PD-Note commentator stating that Rev. Lee Jaerok recently had been charged as heretical by the Christian Council of Korea, the largest evangelical association in the country. While the PD-Note interviewed three cult experts (or heresy hunters) and ex-members, no new religion scholars participated in this program.

This incident and its setting demonstrate the way in which a conventional society responds to deviant groups. In terms of religion, a conventional society tends to follow the attitudes of mainstream religion towards new religions. In the MJC case, the first people to label this church as deviant were anti-cult activists. Prior to being charged as heretical, the MJC was just one of a number of charismatic churches. With the incident, the heretical church was painted with more colorful and negative images. Thus, the

amplification of a cult by anti-cult activism is initiated and maximized by the mass media. This incident was not an isolated event or an exceptional piece of sensationalism, but the consequence of intertwined social entities.

This incident involved the broadcasting industry, heresy hunters, a sectarian group, and the masses. On an analytical level, each actor performs a different role in social relations and conflicts. The formation of a group, by virtue of its relationship to the surrounding environment, is in the process of social construction, which leads to the formation of clear boundaries and a collective identity. Consequently, conflicts over truth claims within Christian circles can become cultural clashes within the social sphere.

According to Cho Yong Sun, who conducted a survey of Christian responses to the MJC through a random sampling method, the accusations of heresy against the MJC came mainly from the secular broadcasting industry (See Table 6.1).

Table 6.1. The Scale of Cult Awareness (The title is: By what means do you know that Lee Jaerok's group is heretical?)

	Percentage
School	1.8
Book	2.9
Neighbourhood	5.5
Pastor in Charge	10.2
Broadcasting	79.6

Source: (Cho Yong Sun 2000)

Given that the survey was conducted one year after the incident, the amplification by the mass media may be misleading due to the time lag. The most pertinent action was performed by anti-cultists. The doctrines or beliefs of the group are not far from those of

the Yeoido Full Gospel Church in its early stage. It was one of the charismatic churches that laid great stress on healing, the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and the spiritual authority of church leaders. The MJC had been a member of a Protestant denomination which belongs to the family of "Holiness Churches," but was excluded by the General Assembly of the Holiness Church of Korea in 1990. The assembly claimed that the church's leader, Rev. Lee Jaerok, was heretical in his charismatic leadership and mystical teachings. After that verdict, Rev. Lee organized his own denomination called "The Association of the Holiness Church." Another heresy charge was leveled against him in 1999. The MJC was thrown out of the Christian Council of Korea in April 1999. According to the report of the Committee of Heresy and Pseudo-Religion Counter Plan, an umbrella organization of the council, its heresy charge was focused around Lee Jaerok's doctrine of revelation and his deification. They claimed that although Rev. Lee believed the Bible to be the Word of God, his assertion merely hid and camouflaged his heretical features.

In reality, however, the group's degree of religious secrecy was relatively low compared to that of other new religious groups. What made the group different from conventional churches was its magical style of healing and miracles, and Rev. Lee's charismatic leadership. Once a group is listed as heretical, it is hardly ever removed from the anti-cult literature. With the study of deviancy, Jock Young notes that "[m]ost of the hostility that I have met with comes from people who have never examined the facts at all" (Young 1973, 55).

5. The Role of Anti-Cultism

Anti-cult writers occupy a specific space for building boundaries in order to keep "cult" groups from invading their theological universe. Their own function is that of sustaining the plausibility structures of anti-cultist worldviews. Regardless of the accuracy of their constructions of new religions, the authors of anti-cult literature form a self-generative and independent knowledge about new religious groups. If their constructions appeal to the public and are accepted as "real," they can have immense social impact.

5.1. The Cognitive Territory of Cults

Atrocity tales, rumors, and negative descriptions about "cults" in anti-cult literature comprise the major components for the secondary construction of new religions. The world constructed by anti-cult literature utilizes dark images in order to describe new religious groups. By adopting this negative approach, anti-cult movements seek to protect supposed core beliefs and traditional values from threatening worldviews and ideologies. Within the bounds of their symbolic world or cosmos, their belief system is taken for granted; in a changing world, however, traditional views, defined territory, and shared beliefs are challenged. Consequently, their negative construction functions as a convenient device for maintaining their plausibility structures, providing ways to sustain a monopoly on truth and defend against groups with differing beliefs.

Groups that compete with conventional religions, especially in markets where proselytizing is regarded as "sheep stealing," become the easy targets of anti-cult organizations (Melton 2004b, 82). However, building cognitive boundaries between

orthodoxy and heresy is in practice related to other attributes, as Gordon Melton notes succinctly:

> [Attributes] leading to the "new religion" category include the adoption of a different sexual ethic (which might include arranged marriages, polygamy, pedophilia, free love, or other minority sexual behavior); violent (homicide, suicide, brutality) or otherwise illegal (fraud, drug use) behavior; separatism; a communal life (which often includes separatism); a distinctive diet (veganism, macrobiotics) or medical restrictions (no doctors, no blood transfusions); and /or the espousing of apocalyptic beliefs about the end of the world. Complaints against new religions may also relate to conservative approaches to the role of women, a perceived foreignness, racial exclusiveness, or authoritarian leadership (Melton 2004b, 83).

Following Melton's brief account of the negative construction of cults, new religious groups cannot avoid this imputation of cultic attributes. Thus, according to this category almost any group at any time can be deemed a cult. Although Christian anti-cult movements attempt to establish religious orthodoxy through a monopoly on truth, their assessments of cults not only use doctrinal differences, but also the moral and social aspects of religion. According to this definition of religion, a heresy or cult, along with its corresponding concepts, may issue in a different kind of classification (or category) of religious groups.

This category has also been constructed historically in Korea. As Protestant churches were relatively firmly established in Korea, anti-cult awareness began to grow. One of two historical books of the Korean Presbyterian church compiled in 1928 mentions that a heresy called the Freedom Church (Jayu Gyohoe) appeared in 1910 or 1911 (Hanguk Gidokgyo Yeoksa Yeonguso 2000 [1968]a, 228, 280). According to the second volume of this work, Kim Yeongyu, the assistant minister of the Taetan Church,

in the Hwanghae Province, had led about forty members of the church to a Saturday church service (presumably at a Seventh Day Adventist Church). In 1917, Pastor Kim Jangho of the Sinwon Church, in the Bongsan County of Hwanghae Province, was removed from his position for teaching "heretical doctrines" and disobeying the Presbyterian constitution (Hanguk Gidokgyo Yeoksa Yeonguso 2002 [1968]b, 162). Then in 1918, and again in 1923, it was reported that heretical churches had been created and were damaging Presbyterian congregations. This report also singled out the Seventh Day Adventist Church, which had caused a deacon to apostatize and destroy one local church (Hanguk Gidokgyo Yeoksa Yeonguso 2002 [1968]b, 326-327).

This awareness of cults or fringe groups was also coincident with other sources. When the word "cult" appeared in an issue of *The Korea Mission Field* in 1913, it referred only to indigenous new religions: "There is a revival of Oriental cults, and of thought towards the old oriental ideals, that make it necessary that books of Christian teaching and atmosphere also be prepared and circulated" (Miller 1913, 158). In an article published in 1913, the book *Millennial Dawn*, written by the Jehovah Witness C. T. Russell, was considered to be proof that heresy "is now being promulgated throughout Korea" (Bonwick 1913, 117). By the following year, the Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormons were labeled clear "heresies." Ignoring any differences between Catholics, Calvinists, and Arminians, Charles F. Bernheisel defined heretics simply as "those whose teachings come in conflict with the accepted teachings of the Protestant Churches" (Bernheisel 1914, 113). They were to be treated like other religions, such as the Korean-born Heavenly Way Religion, described as a "Mormon-like" group, and considered

symptoms of a “spiritual disease” requiring regular doses of an “anti-toxin” (Bernheisel 1914, 114). In another article, three “anti-septic” solutions for overcoming heresy were suggested, such as (1) having a clear knowledge of heresies and heretics, (2) praying for them, and (3) seeking light from faith, church history, and love (Johns 1915, 260-261).

Another systematic criticism of Christian sects---from the Seventh Day Adventist Church and Christian Science to the Jehovah Witnesses and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—was undertaken by Kim Gyudang, who relied heavily on the works of Jan Karel Van Baalen and William E. Biederwolf (Kim Gyudang 1955). The extensive treatment by anti-cult literature of Christian-oriented new religions as “social evils” and “immense heresies” began with the Unification Church and the Olive Tree Movement [The Heavenly Way Religion] (Shin Sahun 1957, 16). Once the Olive Tree movement became widespread, it acquired the label “Bak Taeseon’s disease,” and its members were referred to as “Bak Taeseon’s patients” (Kim Kyeongrae 1957, 146-147). Kim Gyeongrae and Shin Sahun labeled the Seventh Day Adventist Church, Christian Science, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and the Jehovah Witnesses “pseudo” Christian (Kim Kyeongrae 1957, 104; Shin Sahun 1957, 59). Korean-born Christian cults, in particular, became the common enemy of mainstream churches, regardless of their conservative or liberal persuasions.

The Unification Church in Korea was the prototypical target of anti-cultism. There was a rumor that students from Ehwa Women’s College and Yeonhui College were involved in this church. In late 1954, Kim Hwallan, the president of Ehwa Women’s College, founded by Methodist missionaries, decided to launch an

investigation into the new church. The President asked Professor Kim Young Oon [Kim Yeongun], who headed the department of Christian Religion at Ehwa Women's College, to carry out this task. Yet, in the process of investigating the group, she became fascinated by its theology and joined it. Due to this church, five professors were forced to leave the school, including Kim, who became a leading theorist of Unification theology and a pioneer of the mission in the United States.[4] On May 11, 1955, fourteen students at Ehwa Women's College were expelled on the ground that they believed in a heretical religion. On July 7, two students at Yeonhui College, a Presbyterian Mission School, also were expelled. Considering the fact that these mission schools accepted non-Christian students, these expulsions were severe and gained national attention. Between the 4th and 13th of July, 1955, five leaders of the Unification Church, including Rev. Mun, were jailed for three months on suspicion of the illegal custody of a group member, violation of the military service law, and adultery. On October 4, Rev. Mun was released after being cleared of the charge of sexual abuse, but the others were fined or sentenced to prison (Segye Gidokgyo Tongil Sileonghyeophoi Yeoksa Pyeonchan Wiwonhoe 1983, 56-144; Sherwood 1991, 485-487). These incidents so horrified conventional churches that a Christian anti-cult crusade was initiated. This crusade against the Unification Church began around fifteen years before the emergence of anything similar in North America.

[4] Professor Kim and her young followers were the very first American members of the Unification Church called "moonies". John Lofland and Rodney Stark were the first scholars to conduct field research on this group, and in the course of this research developed their conversion theory (Stark and Finke 2000, 116-118).

These negative incidents, which beset most new religious groups, are constructed as sequences of "social drama." As the anthropologist Victor Turner demonstrates, social drama consists of "public episodes of tensional irruptions," representing a "sequence of social events" (Turner 1974, 33, 35). In this sequence, the negative side of religion is attributed solely to new religions. Since new religious groups are institutionally unstable, continuously creating new myths and symbols, they are prone to become the targets of anti-cult literature. Thus, the social circumstances of new religions form a dramatic sequence, one in which their images are constructed. The more such social incidents gain public attention, the more likely they are to be attributed to the general category of "cult" or "heresy," which assumes that all new religions are interconnected with each other, even though they often share no social, historical, and cultural ties. As a result, all newly constructed religious groups tend to be treated as one undifferentiated religious phenomenon.

Korea has witnessed numerous instances of "new religion" drama, such as the infamous Five Oceans' incident. On August 25, 1987, under the roof of a factory's cafeteria, the bodies of thirty-two people associated with a sectarian Baptist church were discovered dead. A year later, a newspaper story described a female member of Aga Dongsan, a Christian sect, who had been killed and buried. Her body was never found. Between the years 1990 and 1992, six Victory Altar defectors were also murdered. Since 1984, Jeong Myeongseok, the leader of the Christian Gospel Mission, known as JMS (following his name's initials or his nickname Jesus Morning Star), has been wanted by the police and accused of sexual immorality with his female followers. In 1992, end-time

believers drew national attention with the claim that on October 22, 1992 the “rapture” and second coming of Christ would occur and save them, an event for which they had long awaited. But their conviction turned out to be wrong. The leading figure behind this belief was Rev. Lee Jangrim, who was accused of being a heretic. He later conceded that his timing of the end of the world had been faulty. Other cases, reported frequently to the public, involved charges of “sheep stealing”. The new sect New Heaven and Earth (Sincheonji) was accused of apparently establishing a number of tuition-free Bible schools in order to “steal” conventional church members. Because this sect has two-stage programs, comprised of initiatory and mature teachings, with public access to the latter strictly controlled, concerns over secrecy have been raised repeatedly by the media and anti-cultists.

These kinds of events are emphasized in the secondary constructions of anti-cult literature, and thus represent the negative side of new religions. Such negativity is likely to become magnified when new religious groups keep their teachings secret; as a result, new religious group construction tends to present a more dramatic sequence. In a context where many religious groups have two stages of teachings**,** anti-cult literature tends to be accepted uncritically by the general public; and thus the negative side of cults becomes factual reality. As a result, the anti-cult literature gains authenticity and legitimacy. The secondary construction of sect and cult groups by anti-cult movements has a dual purpose: first, aiming at eliminating deviant groups, and second, protecting conventional churches or maintaining their taken-for-granted world. Without any verification or falsification, these constructed worlds can survive, so far as they are accepted as true by

the pubic and conventional religions, thereby creating the belief that new religions are "deviant".

The components of the primary or secondary construction of a new religion may differ according to the degree of their acceptance. Ninian Smart distinguishes "between objects which are *real* and objects which *exist*" (Smart 1973, 54). Whether an object is experienced as real depends on those who accept or reject it. As Smart explains in one example, "God is real for Christians whether or not he exists" (Smart 1973, 54). Similarly, the secondary construction of new religions by anti-cultists can be accepted as real by outsiders. In turn, a religious reality may exist in a religion, but if it is denied by anti-cultists, the real thing is likely to be non-existent for the general public. While dealing with magical practices, believers in a specific group never have the freedom to doubt them. Yet, from the perspective of the anti-cultist, rumors and atrocity tales can apparently disprove their authenticity. These mutual constructions form a large part of the relationship between religion and any given society.

5.2. Atrocity Tales as Cognitive Praxis

Because new religious movements are in the process of creating their own symbolic worlds, anti-cult movements are a response to these new religious groups through disparagement. Like the world-building process of new religious groups, anti-cult literature engages in its own process of building by generating images of the other. When a new religion has a strong propensity to conceal its teachings, often as a form of aggressive self-defense, its image in anti-cult literature becomes all the more dramatized

and authentic for the public. This tension involves the making of two divided worlds, however much their audiences may differ from each other. While the audience of a new religious group is confined to its followers and potential converts, the audience of the anti-cult movement is conventional society, both generally and religiously speaking.

The purpose of anti-cult literature is to “expose” the negative or dark side of deviant religious groups in order to prevent their rise and spread. It fosters the common hypothesis that heresies or cults share similarities, having their roots ultimately in Satan. Thus they bear a family resemblance (Shin Sahun 1997, 90). Consequently, when anti-cult writers are accepted as authentic, their consequent constructions tend to be self-generating, whether their target religions exist or not. Their writings become sources of data, forms of historical evidence. As long as other target groups exist, the ensuing construction lasts and has a symbiotic relationship with ‘cults”. For instance, Bak Yeonggwan, an anti-cult theologian, seeks to trace “Scripture twisting cults” to Shamanism, Buddhism, Confucianism, and the Heavenly Way Religion (a new religion). He ascribed the same role in the 1930s to Lee Yongdo, in the 1950s to Kim Baekmun, in the 1970s to Bak Taeseon and Mun Seonmyeong (Moon Sun Myung), and in the 1990s to around forty types of heresies (Bak Yeonggwan 1991, 33).

For Christian anti-cult activism in Korea, the most popular targets have been the texts and messianic figures of new religions. In making such accusations, accounts of *pigareum* (literally sharing blood), which implies a sexual relationship between people, are persistent in anti-cult literature. This kind of accusation was popularized with the report of Kim Gyeongrae, then a reporter for the *Segye Daily* newspaper. Kim published

a book entitled *Social Evils and Evil Religious Movements* in 1957. His famous report about the practice of *pigareum* appeared in the *Segye Daily* on March 18, 1957. Kim reportedly claimed that Bak Taeseon, the leader of the Olive Tree movement, had a sexual relationship for a religious purpose with his mother-in law, sister-in law (his brother's wife) and a female follower. From the start, according to Kim, Bak Taeseon's evangelism was not Christian and his activism heretical (Kim Gyeongrae 1957, 54).

This practice has not only been attributed to the Olive Tree movement, but to Unification Church members. It is reportedly said that this ritual for a spirit-body relationship was created by Jeong Deukeun, a female spiritual guru (gyomo), and was inherited by other religious seekers (Kim Gyeongrae 1957, 15, 25-26, 30-31). Kim Gyeongrae has claimed that this practice is associated with Bak Taeseon, Mun Seonmyeong, Jeong Deukeun, Kim Baekmun, and Na Unmong. The origin of their movements can be traced back to Lee Yongdo and Hwang Gukju, although Na Unmong later returned to a conventional church (Kim Gyeongrae 1957, 35-36, 79). [5]

Kim Gyeongrae contends that Jeong Deukun's ritual performance was combined with Kim Baekmun's theoretical articulation, as seen in Kim's *The Theology of the Holy Ghost*, which offers an essential principle for these practitioners (Kim Kyeongrae 1957, 36-37, 46). In fact, Kim Baekmun shows his meticulous and systematic endeavor in his Christian beliefs. He carefully distinguished the works of the trinity: God the Father, Christ the Son, and the Holy Ghost. The work of the Holy Ghost completes

[5] However, Byeon Jongho, once a professor in several theological schools, and an editor of a ten volume book about Rev. Lee Yongdo, including Lee's journals and letters, argues against the allegation (Byeon Jongho 1993c, 299-301).

the redemptive work of the Holy Son; this scheme is similar to that of Joachim of Fiore (1132-1202). For Kim, the era of the Holy Ghost is that of restoration, which returns creation to its original status.

Kim's theoretical ground for this came from the story of Adam and Eve. According to him, the fall was an immoral event that originated in Eve's adultery with the serpent, the fundamental cause of human depravity. Humans should be sanctified by the Holy Ghost in order to be restored to the status of God's creation. He indicates that since the primary cause of the human fall was sexual desire, it remains the chief obstacle to be overcome in the process of sanctification (Kim Baekmun 1954, 127-131). The love of the cross of Christ did not fully accomplish God's redemptive love, and thus in the era of the Holy Ghost, humans must restore the status of love in the Garden of Eden through regeneration by the Holy Ghost. Kim argues that circumcision in the era of the Holy Father, baptism in the era of the Holy Son, and experience in the era of the Holy Ghost consummate the restoration (Kim Baekmun 1954, 133-134).

As a procedure, Kim Baekmun suggests that searching for the primary cause of human depravity, in conjunction with its remedy, is significant. The depravity of the blood and flesh of the forefather Adam was inherited from generation to generation. When Eve ate the fruit in the Garden of Eden, she lost her virginity to the serpent and the resultant child was Cain. Since the fundamental nature of human sin consists in the blood lineage of the serpent, and its transmission, human atonement from original sin is deeply associated with the sacred blood of Christ (Kim Baekmun 1954, 361-365). Kim

Gyeongrae claims that the above theory of vicarious atonement, suggested by Kim Baekmun, issued in sexual practices for the purification of tainted blood.

According to Kim Gyeongrae, this ritual had genealogical connections. First, during Japanese rule the matrix of the ritual initially came from Lee Yongdo and Hwang Gukju, and from their influence Mun Seonmyeong's Unification Church formed a major group. Second, Bak Taeseon was involved in a prayer group run by Jeong Deukeun, one of Mun's female disciples. The last one was Kim Bakmun's Israel Monastery (Kim Gyeongrae 1957, 77, 173). Although these people had their own independent groups, these individuals had a mutual relationship with each other: Jeong Deukeun and Mun Seonmyeong, Jeong Deukeun, and Bak Taeseon (Kim Kyeongrae 1957, 116). Kim Gyeongrae argues that Mun Seonmyeong, the leader of the Unification Church, occupies a top position in this genealogical scheme. What put Mun in jail**,** Kim continues, was that he actually practiced the *pigareum* ritual with his followers, through which they symbolically shared or exchanged their blood with each other (Kim Gyeongrae 1957, 39, 69-70). By having sexual relationships with these figures, who received the power of the Holy Ghost of Christ, their followers were purified from the tainted blood of Satan (Kim Gyeongrae 1957, 77). The most stringent criticism of this deviant ritual came from Shin Sahun, whose theological position is ultra-conservative. In response to his previous interviews with Bak Taeseon's weekly newspaper, which, he claims, distorted his intentions, Shin argues that this ritual is adultery and wholly heretical, and that Mun Seonmyeong's use of Genesis chapter three and other biblical stories are grounded on

"pan-sexualism." Since Eve lost her chastity because of a sexual relationship, *honeum* (or pigareum) is adultery (Shin Sahun 1957, 72-75).

Therefore, the secondary construction of new religious groups in anti-cult literature functions as a cognitive praxis through which mainstream religions draw lines between them and other sects and cults in order to control religious spheres. By denouncing other religious groups, they maintain their own mainstream plausibility structures.

6. Conclusion

Christian fundamentalism is a type of Protestantism that defends a particular tradition while attempting to negate, indeed trash, any and all other religious traditions. Here it has an affinity with Christian anti-liberal and anti-cult movements, which promote orthodox beliefs and activities. By examining the fundamentalist response to deviant groups this chapter has shown how the process works.

In Korea fundamentalism was seen as a doctrinal and social movement, paving the way for the establishment of a "pure religious world" through the elimination of its opponents. It means that religious conflicts should be expected in a Christian culture, where the self-proclaimed "orthodox" see to it that many heresies or cults are manufactured and many anti-cult movements generated. They are, in short, the mirror image of each other. This represents the social dimension of religion, one in which religions compete with one another and exhibit their specific plausibility structures in the process of constructing reality. Therefore, Christian-oriented sects and cults, side by side

with anti-cultism, are phenomena that need to be seen within the framework of Christian culture.

Chapter Eight

Conclusion

The general purpose of this dissertation was to demonstrate how belief systems have shaped the Korean religious landscape. It set out to address this issue by describing and analyzing the Christian-oriented sects, cults, and anti-cult movements that have emerged in this Asian country. This research was guided by the premise that belief systems are invariably manifested in human actions, social movements, and organizations (Stark 2003, 2). In particular, it suggested that myth and doctrine are two important factors that help us to explain the appearance of various religions. By interacting with each other, they create a symbolic world where specific belief systems or ideologies are secured and maintained. If the history of religions tells us anything, it shows that these core factors are responsible for generating two different patterns of religiosity: myth-oriented and doctrine-oriented religions. While an orientation towards myth often leads to the deconstruction of conventional religions, an orientation towards doctrine tends to protect the beliefs and practices defined by orthodoxy and social convention.

Given the nature of religion, it can be expected that issues like orthodoxy and heresy, the clash of civilizations, and culture wars are historically inevitable. The sociologist Mark Juergensmeyer is correct when he points out that what appears as a conflict between faith and the lack of faith on the personal level becomes a battle between truth and falsehood on the social level (Juergensmeyer 2003, 151). As long as dissident groups have opportunity to flourish in society, concerns over orthodoxy and heterodoxy will remain paramount. In fact, the dyadic division between orthodoxy and

heresy (or heterodoxy) is an expression of different worldviews, whether defined by religion or ideology. From a sociological perspective, this dynamic relationship between religions (or worldviews) can be classified in terms of church, sect, and cult. These three organizational categories are suggestive of various tensions, either with each other or with their complex social environments. The typology of church, sect, and cult therefore provides a very useful way to understand a religious group's worldview, relationship to power, and status in society.

This typology represents an abstract ideal, providing an interpretive lens through which to group and appreciate common organizational variables, but it is also conditioned by the differing historical and cultural circumstances of religious groups. Therefore, the relationships between religions and between religions and social environments require careful analysis. This is necessary if we wish to know how religious belief systems are defined and maintained in a specific society, Western or Eastern. As the preceding chapters have demonstrated, the development of a conservative Protestant culture in Korea can only be understood in relation to the context of this Asian nation.

In the process of religious contact, acculturation, and establishment, religions in Korea exhibited both compromising and uncompromising attitudes towards their social environments. As a representative case, during the Joseon Dynasty, neo-Confucian orthodoxy was exclusive towards Buddhism, Shamanism, and the newly arrived Roman Catholic Church. Such exclusion was a cognitive praxis meant to confirm group identity. This landscape was further enriched and complicated by the arrival of Protestantism, a relative new comer to Korea. While not experiencing the severe persecution endured by

Roman Catholicism, Korean Protestantism was quickly able to establish a stronghold for conservative Christianity. Moreover, the subsequent social changes—Japanese rule, the Korean War, and modernization by authoritarian governments—played critical roles in the expansion of Korean Protestantism. Meanwhile, other religions fell behind in terms of their social mobilization.

As for Korean Protestantism, an interesting historical question is raised: how did it develop and maintain its belief system? The outlines of an answer have been presented in this dissertation. Korean Protestantism established itself in a competitive non-Christian world and created the conditions necessary for both conservatism and new religions. Since it promoted strong commitment and group identity, it encouraged ongoing clashes between competing worldviews. As argued here, these differences can best be understood through the typology of church, sect, and cult. These sociological divisions not only demonstrate the historical and cultural landscape of Korean Protestantism, but also display the differences between religious groups and belief systems.

First of all, the development of Protestantism reflected the process of a church-type organization. Korean Protestantism established a strong monotheistic system that left no room for religious compromise. Its monotheism would not have taken root without the transmission of religious resources, from the translation of the Bible to the diffusion of other important religious texts and related materials. Once its Christian system was established, Protestantism attempted to monopolize the sacred world through its dogmatic assertions and by its rejection of competing religious claims. Protestantism in Korea was distinctive for its anti-syncretism. Upon entering the country it rejected all foreign religious elements, considering them “impure”. Shaped by conservative or

fundamentalist religious assumptions, Korean Protestantism maintained a clearly defined belief system. Furthermore, in the process of guarding its own belief system it also sought to prevent any dissident groups from competing in this sacred space. Ultimately, the establishment of conservative Korean Protestantism exhibited the traits of a doctrine-oriented religion, one which attempts to maintain its orthodox beliefs at all costs.

Yet, the rise of sectarian and cultic groups also demonstrates that Korean Protestant culture has been productive of diversity. In other words, religious orthodoxy makes possible the existence of "deviant" cults and sects. While sects tend to remain within the Christian tradition, cults appear as more radical departures from so-called orthodox beliefs. Here a mythological turn or departure from conventionality plays a critical role in the formation of new religious groups in any given society. As the term "cultic milieu" indicates, this transformation does not simply refer to mythic or narrative changes; rather it accompanies the vested interests of specific individuals and groups and their attachments to or detachment from various religious discourses. In making use of these materials, a sect often remains within the ambit of the Christian tradition, while a cult is usually more detached from orthodoxy. Thus, depending on the degree of its "deviance," a cult's belief system and relation to society will vary.

All these differences are represented by the anti-cult agenda of conservative Korean Protestantism, which encompasses cultural narrowness, religious exclusiveness, and social intolerance. Anti-cult movements have various means of rejecting and ultimately eradicating the religious rivals of Protestantism. Conservative churches use clear boundaries to distinguish themselves from cults and sects, which are classified according to the perceived extent of their "orthodoxy". Often with the blessing and

support of churches, anti-cult activists consistently produce negative images of sects and cults. The anti-cult industry, which includes publications and the mass media, is utilized to achieve this agenda. Although anti-cult literature serves the secondary construction of sects and cults, its constructions are regarded as real and authentic once accepted and legitimated by society.

Monotheism's roles in setting boundaries and shaping religious identities are suggestive of some concluding questions and observations. Why has Protestantism been the most exclusive religion in Korea? Why has it culminated in the form of numerous anti-cult movements? As several social scientists contend (Wilson 1982; Stark 2001), Korean Protestantism proved to be a very effective carrier of Christian monotheism; it conveyed the single-mindedness of monotheism in its refusal to entertain any religious opinions beyond the parameters of Christian belief. Protestantism's exclusive and non-compromising propensity has proven very successful throughout religious history, especially in a Korean setting.

Due to the high degree of tension that exists among Christian groups, each continuously seeks to deconstruct the other. Through this process a group's plausibility structures are maintained and even renovated. Tension helps to reinvigorate group identity and solidarity, and nowhere is this more apparent than in Korea. Although the religious landscape in Korea is sizeable, and includes the broad spectrum of church, sect, and cult, it is Protestantism that has shown the highest degree of tension with its social environment. Other religious traditions in Korea demand far less in the areas of group identity and commitment. Given the fact that discriminating other groups from one's own remains an important way of maintaining belief, it can be anticipated that Korean

Protestantism will only continue to create far more conflicts and tensions than other religious traditions.

The diversity of religious expression in Korea also raises issues of a cross-cultural nature. In the American context, fundamentalism was born out of the Christian response to modernity in general and evolutionary theory in particular. Similarly, Islamic fundamentalism has been characterized as a reaction to Western culture and religion. Both grew from dominant indigenous cultures—Christian and Islamic—but Christian fundamentalism in Korea arose as a fringe group which quickly became a major religion in a non-Western culture. In this case, Christian fundamentalism was nurtured in relation to Korean tradition, Christian liberalism, and other alternative sources, including deviant Christian-oriented new religions. This dynamic environment, often defined by mutually hostile interactions with cults and sects, has shaped the contours of Korean Christian conservatism. To be understood adequately, Korean religious culture needs to be seen in relation to these multiple religious realities. The sociology of knowledge, which points to the constructive and deconstructive nature of societal and religious intercourse, provides one very helpful way of appreciating this complexity in Korea and elsewhere.

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n.n.= no legible number
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Interviews and Participant Observation

During three research trips to Korea I interviewed over fifty people, including church members, selected church leaders, and anti-cult activists. Because of the sensitivity of the issues discussed, I have avoided identifying my informants and have used the interviews simply as background material for my findings. Perhaps it is worth pointing out that in Korea some people have actually been murdered for probing these kinds of issues. Therefore, as far as possible, I use publically available published sources in this thesis. These are identified in the text as “Interview 2002” and “Interview 2004”.

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Appendix A: Explanatory Notes on Romanization

Although the McCune-Reischauer System of Romanization for Korean (MRS) has been used extensively worldwide, the Romanization System of Korean (RSK) established by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism in the Korean Government has begun to gain wide currency. Both systems, however, fail to perfectly represent the original sounds of Korean words; thus, the adoption of either system can lead to some confusion in the Romanization of Korean words (Song Ki-joong 2001).

In this dissertation, the new RSK system will be adopted with some exceptions. First, the Korean surname "Kim" will be used continuously instead of "Gim," as the former is used almost exclusively and is close to the original sound. The surnames Kang and Shin are substituted for Gang and Sin respectively, given their pejorative connotations. With respect to articles and journals published in English, the names of authors in square brackets will signify the RSK system (See Table 1).

Second, for Korean figures who are well-known to Western society, the spelling will be similar to what is used for the authors of both English and Korean publications. This will prevent any confusion deriving from the different Romanized spellings of the same figures. The names of places will also follow this pattern (See Table 2).

Third, since many English speakers are unfamiliar with the order of Korean, Chinese, and Japanese names, there is a tendency to confuse the order. Since many

Korean names translated into English place the surname before the given name, this dissertation will follow the same practice.

Table 1

Korean Surnames	Gang → Kang
	Gim→Kim
	No→Noh
	Sin → Shin
	O → Oh
Korean authors of Korean publications only	Follow the RSK
Korean authors of English publications only	Follow the Romanization of Korean names in publications
Authors of both English and Korean publications	Korean publications → follow the RSK (Jeong Jinhong)
	English publications Chin Hong Chung → Chung Chin Hong [Jeong Jinhong]

Table 2

Park Chung Hee [Bak Jeonghui]
Moon Sun Myung [Mun Seonmyeong]
Pusan [Busan]

Lastly, most Korean surnames have only one syllable while given names have two syllables. When these names are enumerated, they can create confusion. Since the Korean surname Kim is claimed by more than twenty percent of the Korean population, and often followed by Lee, Bak, and Kang, the "author-date text citations" of this

dissertation will adopt full Korean names. For example, “Kim Cheolsu” will be used instead of “Kim”.

Appendix B: Glossary of Korean Terms with Chinese Characters and English Translations

* Asterisk: Chinese Romanization (Wade-Giles System)

Korean Romanization	Korean	Chinese Characters	Translations
Anchal	안찰		Touch of peace
Baekseo	백서	帛書	Appeal for Aid or A silk letter
Baksu	박수		Korean male shaman
Boeun	보은	報恩	Offering gratitude
Boguk Anmin	보국안민	輔國安民	Helping the nation and providing the blessings of peace with the people
Buheunghoe	부흥회	復興會	Christian revival meeting
Bulgyo Seongjeon	불교성전		Buddhist Holy Scripture
Bulssi Japbyeon	불씨잡변	佛氏雜辨	Arguments against the Buddha
Byeokidan	벽이단	闢異端	Avoid the wrong path
Cheokwae Yangchangui	척왜양창의	斥倭洋倡義	Expulsion of the Japanese and the Westerners
Cheonju	천주	天主 * T'ienchu	Heavenly Lord
Cheonju Silui	천주실의	天主實義 * T'ienchu shihi	The True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven
Chudo Yebae	추도예배		Memorial service for the deceased
* Chu Hsi		朱熹	The founder of Neo-Confucianism
Daeghan Gyeongsin Yeonhaphoe	대한경신연합회	大韓 敬神聯合會	A Korean shaman association
Dangglre	당골네		A Korean shaman community or a female shaman
Dangol	단골		A regular client of a Korean shaman

Dohak	도학	道學	Discipline of way
Donghak	동학	東學	Eastern Learning
Dotongron	도통론	道統論	Interconnecting thread of way
Eumsa	음사	淫祀	Impure ritual
Gamram Namu	감람나무		Olive tree
Gibok Sinang	기복신앙	祈福信仰	A belief in prayers for blessing
Gidowon	기도원	祈禱 院	Korean prayer retreat center
Gyeokam Yurok	격암유록	格菴遺錄	The Writings of Gyeokam
Gyomo	교모	教母	Spiritual Mother
* Han Yü		韓愈	Chinese Confucian scholar
Haewon	해원	解 寃	Resolution of grudges and bitterness
Hananim	하나님		A dialect name of the Korean traditional God, but used exclusively by Korean Protestants
Haneunim	하느님		A name of the Korean traditional God, and appropriated by Christians, especially Catholics
Hucheon	후천	後天	Post-heaven
Hucheon Gaebyeok	후천개벽	後天開闢	Great cosmic creation
Idan	이단	異端 * Ituan	Heterodoxy or heresy
Ilwonsang	일원상	一圓相	Unitary circular form
Innaecheon	인내천	人乃天	Man is God
Insicheon	인시천	人是天	Man is God
Iseul Seongsin	이슬성신		Holy dew spirit
Jeongamrok	정감록	鄭鑑錄	Jeong's Prophesies
Jeongdo	정도	正道	The path of righteousness
Jesa	제사	祭祀	Memorial rite for deceased ancestors
Jinin	진인	眞人	True Man or Perfect

			Human being
Jiok	지옥	地獄	Hell
Joe	죄	罪	Sin
Jonhwa Yangi	존화양이	尊華攘夷	Revere China, expel barbarians
Jong	종	宗 * Tzung	Buddhist sect or denomination
Joseon Bulgyo Yusinron	조선불교유신론	朝鮮佛教維新論	Treatise on the Reformation of Korean Buddhism
Mansin	만신	萬神	An alternative name of mudang
Mu	무	巫	Korean Shamanism or shamans
Mudang	무당		A Korean female shaman
Mugeuk Daedo	무극대도	無極大道	Great Cosmic Way
Saemaeul Undong	새마을 운동		New Village Movement
Sagyo	사교	邪教	Evil religion
Saibi Jonggyo	사이비 종교	似而非 宗教	Pseudo-religion
Sain Yeocheon	사인여천	事人如天	Treat man as God
Samguk Yusa	삼국유사	三國遺事	The History of the Three Kingdoms
Sangje	상제	上 帝 * Shangdi	Supreme Emperor
Sangmin	상민	常民	Ordinary people
Sarimpa	사림파	士林派	A new Confucian faction during the Joseon Dynasty
Seokjeon	석전	釋奠	The worship ceremony performed at the National Confucian College, Seonggungwan.
Seoncheon	선천	先天	Pre-heaven
Seongrihak	성리학	性理學	The School of Nature and Order
Seon Gyo	선교	禪教	Zen and doctrinal Buddhism
Sicheongju	시천주	侍天主	Serve God within me

Silhakpa	실학파	實學派	School of Practical Learning
Sinangchon	신앙촌	信仰村	Faith Village
Sipseung Jiji	십승지지	十 勝之地	Ten places of refuge
* Tiendi		天帝	The emperor of Heaven
Uiri	의리	義理 * *Ili*	Righteousness and reason
* Wang Yangming		王陽明	A Chinese Confucian scholar
Wijeong Cheoksa	위정척사	衛正斥邪	Defending orthodoxy and rejecting heterodoxy
Yangban	양반	兩班	Two noble classes
Yebae	예배	禮拜	Worship
Yusa Jonggyo	유사종교	類似 宗教	Quasi-religion