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Dissertation Advisor: Professor Carter J. Eckert Motokazu Matsutani

Church over Nation:

Christian Missionaries and Korean Christians in Colonial Korea

Abstract

This dissertation examines the interrelationships between the foreign Missions and the Korean Church in colonial Korea. In contrast to previous scholarship that assumes a necessary link between the Korean Church and Korean nationalism, this study focuses on the foreign Mission's predominance over the Korean Church as a major obstacle in the Korean Church's adoption of nationalism as part of its Christian vision.

The foreign Missions established controlling power over the Korean Christians by relying on colonial privileges such as extraterritoriality and financial wealth, and perpetuated their power over local Christians through Church and mission schools. By insisting on the separation of Church from politics as an ecclesiastical principle, the Missions prevented

Korean Christians from engaging in nationalist politics. Therefore, Korean Christian nationalists who joined the Korean Church with the intent of making the Church a nationalist center were constantly checked by the mission-dominated Church authority and forced to leave the Church to pursue their nationalist aims, while the majority of Korean Christians stayed in the Church, remaining loyal to the ecclesiastical order. The increasing frustration of nationalist Christians eventually exploded in the 1919 March First Movement, the greatest nationalist uprising of Korea's colonial period. Many Christians participated in the political demonstrations of March First in protest not only to Japanese colonial rule but also against the ecclesiastical principle that prohibited Christian engagement in secular politics.

By highlighting the constant struggle that existed between the Protestant Church and Korean nationalism, this study argues that being a loyal Church member and being a Korean nationalist were incompatible roles in the mission-dominated Korean Church where the Church held primacy over the nation.

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The Great East Japan Earthquake on March 11, 2011, and the subsequent nuclear disaster at Fukushima Daiichi Powerplant was an unforgettable event in my last stage of writing. As a native of Fukushima city, where radioactive contamination has been severe, I found it impossible to concentrate on my writing without wondering why I should be allowed to continue my studies and pursue my own academic curiosity. While that question still remains with me, I hope that this dissertation may serve as a minor tribute to my old friends and close relatives there who have been patiently and courageously fighting the invisible fear of radiation.

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Introduction

Easter Sunday in 1885 is commonly regarded as the first page of Protestant Christian history in Korea. On that day, the first Protestant missionaries to Korea, the Americans Horace G. Underwood (1859-1916) and Henry G. Appenzeller (1858-1902), landed in Korea. To commemorate this historic event, the Korean Church held various events and ceremonies celebrating the year 1984 as the "100th Anniversary of Korean Christianity."[1] The climax of these ceremonial events was a huge mass service held in Yoŭido Park in Seoul where reportedly more than 200,000 people attended. Interestingly, this event was held on August 15, the Liberation Day celebrating Korean emancipation from Japanese colonial rule in 1945. The intention behind this scheduling decision was clear: to synchronize Korean Christian history with a national history that places the struggle against Japanese colonialism at its center. In fact, Christian struggles under Japanese rule were frequently mentioned in the sermons and prayers of this day and were praised as the most valuable service that the Korean Church has rendered to the Korean nation (*minjok*).

[1] For instance, On April 22, there was a symposium to discuss the Christian contribution to the national history; Han Kyŏng-jik was invited to visit President Chun Doohwan to brief on the ceremony. Hanʾguk kidokkyo 100-chunyŏn kinyŏm saŏp hyŏbŭihoe, *Hanʾguk kidokkyo 100-chunyŏn kinyŏm saŏp ch'ongnam* (Sŏul: Poisŭsa 1987), 39.

At the same time, the ceremony highlighted the contributions by foreign missionaries as they walked alongside Korean Christians in serving the Korean nationalist cause. Han Kyŏng-jik (1902-2000), representing the Korean Church, said in his opening remarks: "We thank God for loving this nation and sowing the gospel seed here a century ago. We also thank the American Presbyterian and Methodist missionaries, and other missionaries from different organizations for their service to us, the Korean Church and the Korean nation."[2]

As this ceremony clearly shows, there has long been a popular understanding in South Korea that the Korean Church was from its genesis to the present a leading nationalist institution which the foreign Missions served as its guardians. Loyalty to the nation has been widely accepted as a Christian virtue and thus it has been widely believed that Koreans and missionaries stood shoulder-to-shoulder against the enemy of the nation, Japanese colonialism, not only because of their common support for Korean nationalism but also because they were Christians. Simply put, historians of Korean Christianity have been loath to recognize any tension between Christianity and the tasks of modern nationalism.

[2] Ibid., 45.

The centrality of the nation is a common feature of any nationalist discourse, but the Korean case is unique in that a nationalist perspective prevails in the field of Christian history. This stands in contrast to the usual historical pattern which finds Christians faced with the dilemma of being a loyal servant of a transcendental God and a loyal national subject. In European history, roughly speaking, Protestants solved this dilemma by nationalizing the Church, while Catholics rejected nationalism and maintained their commitment to a Universal Church irrespective of national boundaries. In Asia, however, where Christianity was a foreign religion, the Protestant solution of Church nationalization was difficult to apply. In Korea, as in Japan and China, Christianity was introduced by the western Missions and often collided with local nationalism due to its foreign origin, transnational character or association with western imperialism. Christian converts were thus often identified as anti-nationalists and remained a social minority.

Previous studies have emphasized that Korea's atypical experience of being colonized by non-Christian Japan instead of the Christian West made Korea different from other Asian nations because it prevented Christianity and the Missions from being

identified with colonial aggression.[3] Instead, Christianity in Korea retained its positive image as a religion of the advanced, powerful, and friendly West and thus did not conflict with the rise of Korean nationalism, which was primarily directed against Japanese colonialism. Moreover, Japan's continuous suppression of Christianity further strengthened the bond between anti-Japanese nationalism and Christian faith, making the Korean Church a breeding ground for Korean nationalism. Simply put, a consensus exists in the current historiography that all potential causes of conflict between Christianity and the Korean nation were largely cancelled out by the presence of Japanese colonialism.

It is true that there was continuous conflict between the Japanese colonial regime and the Korean Church, and there were Christian nationalists who participated in anti-colonial activities such as the March First Movement in 1919. However, Christianity began to take root in Korea during the Chosŏn period (1492-1910) in the form of Catholicism in the late eighteenth century and Protestantism in the late nineteenth century, prior to the rise of Korean nationalism and long before the Japanese colonial period (1910-1945). Therefore, the Korean encounter with Christianity, especially in its early stages, was not necessarily influenced by Japanese colonialism and thus Korea did not

[3] Min Kyŏng-bae, *Han'guk kidok kyohoesa (sin kaejŏn p'an)* (Sŏul Yŏnse Taehakkyo Ch'ulp'anbu, 1993), 20-21.

enjoy any particular advantage with respect to other Asian countries in resolving the tension between Christianity and nationalism. Rather, Koreans shared the same difficulty as other Asian nations in adopting Christianity and the Missions as foreign intruders, while Korean Christians shared the experience of being torn apart between Christianity and nationalism, as these two forces continued to grow under Japanese colonial rule.

Seen in this way, what made the experience of Korean Christians unique was not that they were colonized by non-Christian Japan but that they had been placed under two foreign masters, Christian missionaries and Japanese colonizers, both of whom tried to inculcate new ideas and values in Korea. Though their ideologies and methods of propagation were different, both missionaries and Japanese tried to create new identities for Koreans, and Korean Christians had to configure their own identity, living among and having frequent intercourses with both foreign masters.

This dissertation aims to explicate how this unique experience of being placed under missionary and colonial rule affected the formation of ideological dynamics within the Korean Church with special attention given to its relation to Korean nationalism, and also how it affected the actual Christian involvement in the nationalist movement. While

previous studies have narrated Korean Christian history as a smooth linear development toward the formation of a nationalist Korean Church, this study focuses on the complex of microform dynamics and tensions that existed between Korean Christianity and nationalist ideology and that, when viewed through a nationalist framework, have either been not fully comprehended or completely overlooked. Specifically, it sheds light on the foreign Mission's influence in shaping the Korean Christian relationship to nationalism and shows that missionary dominance kept Korean Christians from being nationalized. Furthermore, it illustrates how some Korean Christians, who were gradually turned towards nationalism through their encounter with Japanese colonialism, had to struggle in keeping their balance between loyalty to the mission-dominated Church and loyalty to the nation. Ultimately, it shows that Christian nationalists could not sustain that balance. While some Korean Christians left the Church and often rebelled against the missionaries by participating in the nationalist movement, the majority of Korean Christians stayed in the Church as loyalists to the ecclesiastical order. In so doing, this study provides an alternative account of the genesis and evolution of Korean Christianity as a history of constant conflicts between Church and nation and argues that Christianity and nationalism were never identified with

one another within the mission-dominated Church but only by Korean Christians outside the Church.

In this dissertation, discussion of these issues proceeds in the following order. In the first chapter, I briefly summarize the history of the Catholic Church in Korea, which preceded the introduction of Protestantism in the late nineteenth century. The purpose of incorporating Catholic history into this study is that the social image and status of Catholicism that had already been established in Korea affected how Koreans later understood Protestantism. Of particular importance here is that the Catholic Mission had long propagated Christian faith in Korea against the legal proscription of the Chosŏn dynastic government, often taking advantage of French imperial power. For these reasons, the Chosŏn state labeled Catholicism a treacherous foreign cult and persecuted by, while Catholics subscribed to it as a transnational form of faith and as a religion of a foreign power whose authority superseded that of their own state.

The second chapter shows that the tactical strategies of the Catholic Mission discussed in Chapter 1 were largely inherited by the American Protestant Missions and thus Koreans adopted Protestantism as a transnational religion sponsored by the superior power

of the United States. It pays special attention to the extraterritorial rights of American missionaries and how such privileges helped them to establish their authority among Koreans, attracting many locals seeking an escape from the oppressive government of the Chosŏn dynasty. In so doing, it stresses the significance of the specific local context that led the early Protestant Church in Korea, like its Catholic counterpart, to draw the majority of its converts from the oppressed class and allowed the missionary to rule over them as their legal guardian.

The third chapter discusses how hierarchical power relations between missionaries and Korean converts were institutionalized in the Korean Church. It details the various missionary prerogatives in the Korean Church and reveals how they managed to keep Korean converts in subordinate positions, while maintaining their claim to control the Church. An in-depth examination of the internal structure of the Church will help us to understand that the Korean Church was only nominally independent of the Mission and that Korean Christian agency was largely suppressed in the ecclesiastical sphere.

The fourth chapter looks into the management of the mission school. As was true of the Korean Church, mission schools were also kept under missionary control for many years. Moreover, mission education was predominantly religious in character due to the

mission policy of making schools more evangelical than educational. Hence, Korean Christians were not given many opportunities to learn broader general subjects and advance in western scholarship. As a result, the educational standards of Korean Christians remained as low as that of average non-Christians and few modern intellectuals capable of leading the nation were born out of the mission schools. By detailing how the Missions controlled the intellectual standards and orientation of Korean Christians, this chapter prepares the context for later chapters that examine how Korean Christian students engaged in strikes to demonstrate their frustration against mission school policy.

The fifth chapter discusses the issue of national politics in the Korean Church. First, it portrays how the Mission defined and controlled the relationship of Korean Christians to politics and shows that it basically kept the Korean Church as aloof from secular politics by adopting the "separation of Church from politics" as its ecclesiastical principle. It also shows that this policy was sustained even as Korea came under Japanese rule, so that the Korean Church was not responsive to the call of nationalism promoted by patriotic Koreans outside the Church and was at times criticized as anti-national.

The sixth chapter treats several cases of Korean Christian challenges toward missionary authority. Frustrated by their secondary status in church and school, some

Korean Christian leaders began to oppose the foreign missions from the 1890s onward and, in some cases, split the church to build an independent church outside missionary jurisdiction. By analyzing the causes of conflict between the missionaries and the Korean Christians, this chapter argues that nationalistic sentiments among Korean Christians were fermented primarily through conflict with western missionaries rather than with the Japanese colonial regime. To prove this point, it shows that some anti-missionary Christians actually sought an alliance with the Japanese as a means of freeing themselves from missionary control. In so doing, it highlights the peculiar position of Korean Christian leaders who had to rely on Japanese colonial power to counter the religious colonialism that western missionaries imposed on Korean Christianity.

The seventh chapter deals with similar instances of resistance to missionary authority by Korean students and intellectuals in missionary schools and also in public media. These Koreans perceived the missionary's intellectual domination over Korean Christians as a major obstacle toward achieving enlightenment and civilization, which they perceived as a necessary step in Korean efforts toward self-strengthening and future national independence. A close look at the frustrations of Korean intellectuals about the missionary presence in Korea will also help us understand why they perceived Japanese

educational policy, especially its advanced school system, as more beneficial to Koreans than the mission schools.

The last chapter provides an alternative account of the 1919 March First Movement, often regarded as a manifestation of Korean Christian nationalism. Based on the findings of the previous chapters, it argues that Christian participation in the movement was limited not only in scale but also in terms of its regional base. This chapter shows that the Christian leaders who played a leading role in the movement were actually dissenters who had been dissatisfied with the Church's apolitical attitude and its subordinate status to the foreign Mission. It also shows that Christian leaders who were loyal to the ecclesiastical order were quite reluctant to participate in such political activism and that the majority of Korean Christians followed their church leadership, while a minority in the northern region played a disproportionately large role in the movement. This chapter argues that the conventional understanding of the Christian role in the Movement has been exaggerated and that the Korean Church played a much smaller part than has been believed.

In its concluding chapter, this dissertation provides a brief summary of post-March First developments in the Korean Church and shows that the schism between the Korean Church and the nationalist camp widened after the Movement as missionary control of the

Church was reasserted and the Church became a bulwark of religious conservatism entirely disengaged from the secular world. Based upon these observations, this chapter reasserts the thesis of this study that the Korean Church had to contradict with Korean nationalism because it was not able to subvert the ascendency of foreign missionary authority and any political commitment to the nationalist cause was constantly checked and suppressed by the mission-dominated Church authority. In conclusion, it argues that being a loyal Christian to the ecclesiastical order and being a loyal Korean nationalist were incompatible identities under the mission-dominated Church in colonial Korea and that this circumstance led many Korean Christians to seek national salvation outside the jurisdiction of ecclesiastical institutions.

Review of Historiography

The major thesis of this dissertation, that the relationship between the Korean Church and the nationalist movement in Korea was characterized by conflict, poses a bold challenge to the conventional scholarship on Korean Christianity. In particular, it takes issue with the works produced by a particular group of historians, who are commonly

referred to as the scholars of the "national Church (*minjok kyohoe)*." It is therefore important to briefly review here the existing historiography on Korean Christian history.

Korean-language studies

Writing Korean history within a nationalist framework has been the dominant practice among Korean historians in post-colonial South Korea until recently. This practice began to show a marked change with the publication of *Haeban chŏnhusa ŭi chae insik* [New understanding of pre- and post-Liberation Korean History (2006)], which revealed a more complex and often collaborative dynamics between colonial power and the development of Korean modernity/ modernization. Nevertheless, nation-centered perspectives still remain dominant in historical narratives of the Korean church.[4] In fact, none of the articles in *Haebang chŏnhusa ŭi chae insik* deals with the question of Christianity, and the Korean Church history, based on the conventional nationalist framework, has been left largely untouched by the recent historiographical trend.

Since Korean nationalism was suppressed under Japanese rule, writing Korean history from a nationalist perspective was an act of reviving a lost past and serving the

[4] Pak Chi-hyang et al., eds., *Haebang chŏnhusa ŭi chae insik* (Sŏul: Ch'ek sesang,2006).

interests of nation-building in a post-colonial context, and this attitude was fully adopted by Christian historians and writers as well. As a result, the presence of the nation or *minjok* was taken as a given premise in the post-colonial Korean Christian historiography and Christian nationalist struggles against Japanese colonial aggression were often placed at the center of its narrative.

However, this trend in the writing of Korean Christian history did not begin as soon as Korean became liberated from Japanese rule in 1945. While numerous writings on the Korean nationalist movement were published upon independence through the 1950s, there was actually a paucity of studies on Korean Christian history that stressed Christian contributions to national development during this same period. It is true that the Christian backgrounds of some prominent nationalist leaders such as An Ch'ang-ho and Yi Sŭng-hun were mentioned in their biographical sketches,[5] but no substantial study focusing on the nationalist aspect of the Korean Church was published through the 1950s.

There were several reasons for this lacuna, but the primary reason was likely the internal division of the Korean Church over the issue of pro-Japanese collaboration. It was

[5] Tosan Kinyŏm Saŏphoe, *Tosan An Ch'ang-ho* (Sŏul: T'aegŭk sŏgwan, 1947); Kim To-t'ae, *Namgang Yi Sŭng-hun chŏn* (Seoul: Munʾgyosa, 1950). In these biographies, their association with Christianity is mentioned but it is overshadowed by their nationalist zeal.

no secret that, during the last stage of the colonial period, many Korean Christian leaders collaborated with the Japanese war effort. As a result, some of the top church leaders were arrested and interrogated by the special investigation committee by the post-liberation government in South Korea.[6] Also, the majority of Korean Church leaders had surrendered to Japanese pressure to worship at Shinto shrines and their compromise came under harsh attack by the minority of non-conformist Church leaders who were released from Japanese imprisonment after national liberation. This serious internal strife over the collaboration issue continued to shake the Korean Church both from within and without, and eventually resulted in a series of church splits during the 1950s.[7] In short, the Korean Church was far from being sufficiently united to claim nationalist credentials for its colonial past and was barely qualified to present itself as a leading nationalist institution under the political climate of the time.

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[6] For instance, the Superintendent of the Korean Methodist Church, Chŏng Ch'un-su, and the Moderator of the Korean Presbyterian Church, Chŏn P'ilsun, were both arrested for the collaboration charge in 1946. Hanʾguk kidokkyo yŏksahakhoe, *Hanʾguk kidokkyo ŭi yŏksa 3* (Sŏul: Hanʾguk kidokkyo yŏksa yŏn'guso, 2009), 21. However, both were exempted from the prosecution for the insufficient evidence. Later, Chŏng was ousted from the Church, while Chŏn continued to preside over the Church as the Moderator. Consequently, today, only Chŏng is remembered as a notorious pro-Japanese. For the details of his pro-Japanese activities, see *Ch'inil Inmnyŏng sajŏn* (minjok munje yŏn'guso, 2009), s.v. "Chŏng Ch'unsu."

[7] Min Kyŏng-bae, *Han'guk kidok kyohoesa (sin kaejŏn p'an)*, 512-525.

The unfavorable political situation for the Church began to change in the 1960s after Park Chung-hee (1917-1979) established his new regime after the military coup in 1961. Park made rapid economic growth the primary goal of his administration and mobilized the entire nation toward that purpose. Under his dictatorial leadership, national unity was promoted to achieve economic development and the idea of service to the nation was propagated in every corner of life, while voices of dissent that were seen as undermining national integrity were harshly suppressed.

It was with this general rise of national consciousness in Korean society that Kim Yang-sŏn, a Presbyterian historian, published an article, *The March First Movement and Christianity* [*Samil undong kwa kidok kyohoe*], in 1969. He contributed this article to the collection of papers that was compiled by a popular newspaper, *Tonga Ilbo*, for the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the March First Movement, the first national uprising against Japanese rule in 1919. In this article, Kim not only emphasized the Christian contribution to the historic national movement but generalized it as a consistent characteristic of Korean Christianity, going as far to say that "Korean nationalism was

fostered by Christianity."[8] Considering that the Korean Church was divided over the issue of collaboration in the 1950s, Kim's confidence was a good indication that the historical memory of the Korean Christian past was being revised with the rise of Korean nationalism. The Korean Church was now going on the offensive to claim its nationalist credentials and asserted that Christianity and Korean nationalism went along with each other and the March First Movement was reinterpreted as the manifestation of Korean Christian nationalism.

Christian propaganda stressing its historical affinity with Korean nationalism gained significant momentum in the 1970s. In 1972, Min Kyŏng-bae, a church historian, published the first comprehensive *History of the Korean Christian Church* (*Han'guk kidok kyohoe sa*), in which he narrated Korean Church history as a story of consistent Christian service to the nation.[9] His nationalist perspective was clearly manifested in his use of a new term, *minjok kyohoe*, which he used to identify the fundamental character of the Korean Church that had been sustained throughout its history. Literally, *minjok kyohoe* is the combination of "nation" and "church" in the Korean language, but it means more than

[8] Kim Yang Sŏn, "Samil undong kwa kidokkyohoe," in *Samil undong 50-chunyŏn kinŏym nonjip*, ed. Ko Chae-uk (Seoul: Tonga Ilbosa 1969), 235-270.
[9] Min Kyong-bae, *Han'guk kidok kyohoesa* (Sŏul: Taehan Kidokkyoso hoe, 1972).

what "national church" usually means in English. Since *minjok* specifically refers to the Koreans as a race or an ethnic group,[10] *minjok kyohoe* presents a highly exclusive image of the Church that consisted of ethnic Koreans and was solely concerned with Korean nationals. Hence, when Min argued that the Korean Church developed as *minjok kyohoe*, his implication was that the Korean Church was always a nationalist institution. This grand thesis was reasserted in several revised versions of Min's work,[11] and the image of the Church as a nationalist institution was firmly established.

To be fair, Min does not simply glorify the Christian past. He admits that the Church made mistakes and had to face "disgraces" such as instances of wartime collaboration with the Japanese empire among its leadership. However, he does not dare to question the validity of his basic premise that the *minjok* was the fundamental and consistent concern of the Korean Church. Thus, his teleological understanding of Korean Christian history as a linear development toward the formation of the *minjok kyohoe* appears to be more a belief than an empirically tested argument.

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[10] For more detailed discussion about the ethno-based understanding of nation in Korea, see Gi-Wook Shin, *Ethnic nationalism in Korea : genealogy, politics, and legacy*, Studies of the Walter H. Shorenstein Asia-Pacific Research Center (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2006)

[11] Min Kyŏng-bae, *Han'guk kidok kyohoesa (sin kaejŏn p'an)*. For the English translation, see Min Kyoung Bae, *A History of Christian Churches in Korea* (Seoul: Yonsei University Press, 2005).

Min's *minjok kyohoe* concept left a profound impact on other historians, including but not limited to church historians, who were interested in the relationship of Korean Christianity to nationalism. While Min's work focused mainly on the Church as its major object of study, the historian Yi Man-yŏl and his study group, specializing in "Korean national history" (*kuksa*), ventured to expand their scope of study and made a series of surveys on the various social, cultural and intellectual movements led by Christians from the late nineteenth century to the early twentieth century.[12] Certainly, these scholars made a significant historiographical contribution by broadening the range of studies on Korean Christianity. Their interpretive framework, however, was no different from Min's. In fact, their method and goal was to search for nationalist traits in Christian-led movements and put them together to buttress the established narrative, stated implicitly or explicitly, that Korean Christians were nationalists.

English-language studies

While Korean scholars emphasized the historical affinity between the Church and nationalism, foreign missionaries and their descendants, who left behind many writings on

[12]Yi Man-yŏl ed. *Hangŭk kidokkyo wa minjok undong* (Sŏul: Posŏng 1986) ; Yi Man-yŏl ed. *Hangŭk kidokkyo wa minjok ŭisik* (Sŏul: Chisik Sanŏpsa 1991) .

Korea that range from personal recollections to more academic essays, showed virtually no interest in the relationship of Christianity to nationalism.[13] Their writings are mostly concerned with their personal experiences in Korea and are inclined to focus solely on ecclesiastical affairs. The political and social issues in Korea and their potential influence on Korean Christian development attracted little attention from missionary scholars and writers. Needless to say, they had no dialogue with Korean scholars in the field, who tended to approach Korean Christian history from a completely different perspective.

Here it is important to note that the lack of missionary interest in Korean nationalism and the paucity of their dialogue with Korean scholars in the same field is actually a legacy of the historical tension between the Mission and the Korean Church, which this study discusses. The missionary's indifference or hostility to Korean nationalism, contrasted with the embrace of nationalism by Korean intellectual elites, was no post-colonial phenomenon; it was inherited from the colonial period.

With the growing interest in the rapid Christianization of Korea from the 1970s onward, there emerged a number of studies in English-language scholarship to explain the factors behind phenomenal Church growth. As part of this endeavor, some studies sought

[13] For the missionary-authored publications on Korean Christianity, see the bibliography.

possible answers in the history of the Korean Church. However, these studies were mainly carried out by Korean or Korean-American scholars who had access to Korean-language scholarship and tended to translate the arguments of Korean scholarship into English, rather than using their command of Korean for the purposes of innovative research. The consequence was, needless to say, the continuation of the nationalist perspective that had already been established in Korea. [14]

This uncritical reception of Korean scholarship has also been common in several English-language monograph studies on Korean Christianity. Kenneth Wells, for instance, generally accepts the claim that "Protestants were involved in most phases and streams of the nationalistic movement in Korea" from the late nineteenth century through the Japanese colonial period." Nevertheless, Wells expresses reservations about the division of Korean Protestants in Korea across a wide range of political approaches, some of which were mutually antagonistic, and admits that it is actually "difficult to identify any specific

[14] There are numerous studies of this kind, but to name a few, Wi Jo Kang, *Religion and politics in Korea under the Japanese rule* (Lewiston, N.Y.: E. Mellen Press, 1987); Shin Ki-Young, "Christianity and nation-building in Korea, 1885-1945" (Arizona State University, Ph.D. Diss., 1993) ; Kim In Soo, "Protestants and the formation of modern Korean nationalism, 1885-1920: A study of the contributions of Horace Grant Underwood and Sun Chu Kil" (Union Theological Seminary in Virginia, Ph.D. Diss., 1993) ; Kim Shin, "Christianity and Korean nationalism, 1884-1945: A missiological perspective" (Fuller Theological Seminary, Ph.D. Diss., 2008).

Protestant contribution to Korean nationalism."[15] Therefore, to refine his argument, he selected a single group of Protestants who "did directly influence the formation of at least one stream of nationalism: self-construction or 'ethical' nationalism" [16] by which he meant those who sought to "build a modern nation-state whose identity centered on the attainment of a democratic, self-reliant, 'Christian society' through spiritual renewal, moral reformation, and purposeful action."[17]

Though the detailed account and analysis of this group of Protestants is interesting and insightful, Well's work is in agreement with the conventional Korean scholarship that identifies Christianity with Korean nationalism. He shares the same assumption that "Protestant" nationalist leaders could be "Church" leaders and is silent on the question of whether nationalism was institutionally supported by the Church or simply embraced by particular Christian individuals as a personal creed. Moreover, since his approach is grounded more in intellectual history than social history, important "on the ground" issues such as the social and cultural tension between the Mission and the Korean Church receive scant attention.

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[15] Kenneth M. Wells, *New god, new nation : Protestants and self-reconstruction nationalism in Korea 1896-1937* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1990), 9.
[16] Ibid., 9.
[17] Ibid., viii.

By contrast, Park Chung-shin pays more attention to the socio-political circumstances of the colonial period and traces how external conditions affected the course of Korean church development. Nonetheless, while Park's social historical approach is somewhat new, his understanding of the Korean Church's relations to nationalism remains entirely orthodox. He simply adopts the conventional claim that Protestant Christianity in Korea "established a strong ideological and organizational relationship with the Korean nationalist movement" and asserts that "the religious community served as a rally point for fervent nationalists striving for independence" and "Church leaders enthusiastically supported those nationalists who used the religious community as a base of operations; some even initiated anti-Japanese activities."[18] Again, Christian nationalists are identified with "Church leaders" and the "Church" is presumed to be a nationalist institution from top to bottom without any account for the foreign missionary presence in the Church and their power relations with the Protestant nationalists.

Timothy Lee's recent publication, *Born Again: Evangelicalism in Korea*, also follows the convention in finding that the major reason for Christian growth during the

[18] Chung-shin Park, *Protestantism and politics in Korea* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2003), 5.

colonial period was the close interaction between the Church and nationalism.[19] His main argument throughout the book is that "evangelical" character, by which he generally meant its fundamentalist orientation, was always distinct in the Korean Christian movement. However, Lee does not discuss whether such "evangelical" character could really fit the demands of Korean nationalism, nor does he pay much attention to how missionaries, the teachers of "evangelical" Christianity, responded this vision of unifying "evangelicalism" and "nationalism".

In sum, the major English-language studies on Korean Christianity so far has presented no distinctive interpretation of the Korean Christian relation to nationalism.

Japanese-language Studies

Due to a general lack of interest in Korean studies in postwar Japanese academia, Japanese scholars did not produce in-depth studies of Korean Christianity until the 1970s, when Japanese progressive intellectuals, including some leading Christians, began to take interest in the democratization movement in Korea. They began to provide support for the

[19] Timothy S. Lee, *Born again : evangelicalism in Korea* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2010), Ch.3.

Korean Christians who were the movement's leaders, while importing knowledge from them about Korean Christian history.

Sawa Masahiko's *History of Korean Christianity* (*Chōsen kirisutokyōshi ron*) is the first monograph on Korean Christian history written by a Japanese scholar writing after the colonial period. Having studied in Korea during the 1970s, Sawa partially subscribed to the nation-centered view of Christian history, but qualified his agreement by clearly differentiating between the contributions of the Korean Church as a national institution, and those of individual Korean Christians, to Korean nationalism.[20] Nonetheless, his early death did not allow him to develop his initial question about the relationship of Korean Christianity to nationalism and provide a clear alternative to the conventional Korean scholarship.[21] Kurata Masahiko also studied in Korea after Sawa and paid much attention

[20] Sawa Masahiko, *Nanpoku Chōsen Kirisutokyōshi ron* (Tokyo: Nihon Kiristuo Kyōdan Shuppankyoku, 1985), 106-116.

[21] After his death, Sawa's manuscript for *Korean Protestant History* [Chōsen Protesutanto shi] was published, but its introduction and a chapter on the early missionaries were left incomplete and we cannot tell clearly how his understanding of Korean Christian relation to nationalism and the missionary role in shaping it was developed after his first publication. However, a chapter on the March First Movement provides a detailed analysis on the court testimonies by the Christian leaders to show that there were divergent views among them, indicating that he had become more skeptical of the simplistic nationalist interpretation of Korean Christian history. Sawa Masahiko, *Mikan Chōsen Kirisutokyōshi* (Tōkyō Nihon Kirisutokyōdan Shuppankyoku, 1991), 113-154.

to the study of Korean Christian resistance to Japanese imperial ideology, which eventually led him to stand closer to the Korean nationalist historiography than Sawa.[22]

Besides these minister-historians, Iinuma Jirō and Han Sŏk-hŭi, writing as Protestant laymen, have produced a series of studies on the Japanese Christian missions to Korea during the colonial period.[23] These studies were meaningful as they addressed a topic that had been overlooked by scholars outside Korea, but the crucial limitation of their research is that they dealt with only Japanese sources and did not consult Korean sources to provide a more balanced description of these missions. This is not to say that their study was apologetic to Japanese colonialism or too favorable to the goodwill of Japanese Christians. To the contrary, Iinuma and Han were so critical of Japanese colonialism that they simply renounced the Japanese missionaries to Korea as imperial agents who served Japanese colonialism, while making no investigation of why some Korean Christians, presumably nationalists, were attracted to the Japanese Church. Their primary interest was to critique the Japanese Church, not the Korean Church, and therefore they did not venture to challenge the dominant framework of Korean Christian history.

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[22] Kurata Masahiko, *Tennōsei to Kankoku Kirisutokyō* (Tōkyō: Shinkyō Shuppansha, 1991)
[23] Iinuma Jirō and Han Sŏkki, *Nihon teikoku shugi ka no chōsen dendō*, Tokyo (Nihon kirisutokyōdan shuppankyoku, 1985)

A recent study by Yi Sŏng-jŏn details the development of mission education in colonial Korea, but focuses entirely upon mission schools and does not provide a general picture how Korean nationalism developed in the process of Korean Christian development.[24] Moreover, Yi adopts the conventional view that the mission school contributed to the rise of Korean nationalism by providing modern education and thus conflicted with Japanese colonial authority. Hence, like English-language scholarship, Japanese-language scholarship has not yet produced any alternative to the Korean-language historiographical view of the relationship between Christianity and nationalism in Korea.

[24] Yi Sŏng-jŏn, *Amerikajin senkyōshi to Chōsen no kindai : Misshonsukūru no seisei to shokuminchika no kattō* (Tōkyō: Shakai Hyōronsha, 2006)

Chapter 1 Catholic Tradition in Korea

Historians of Korean Protestantism commonly mention Catholic history in Korea as a prologue for Protestant history. In their narratives, Korean Catholics are depicted as the harbingers of a Protestant faith introduced to Korea a century after the arrival of Catholicism. While the synthesis of Korea's Catholic and Protestant history may appear to be the fruit of the ecumenical sprit of Christian historians, in many cases, it is rather the product of a nationalist inspiration that views Catholic history as a part of Korea's national history. In this view, it is presumed that both Catholics and Protestants shared the same Korean national identity regardless of the difference in their church traditions and thus had to be integrated into a single national history seen from the perspective of the Korean *minjok.*

However, Protestant historians stress their distinction from the Catholics on one point: their degree of loyalty to the nation. The Protestant understanding is that Korean Catholics failed to develop their Christian faith along lines parallel to that of Korean nationalism and that Protestants succeeded this incomplete project and brought it to fruition. Hence, the significance of Catholic history ceases with the development of the nationalist

Protestant Church and in fact, Korean Protestant history no longer mentions Catholic history after the arrival of Protestantism in Korea, as if Catholicism itself had entirely disappeared from the Korean peninsula.[25] Nonetheless, Catholicism continued to grow alongside Protestantism and the historical precedent in Korea left many legacies inherited by Korean Protestantism. In fact, as this chapter makes clear, it is impossible to understand the genesis and development of Protestant Christianity in Korea without first examining the Catholic missions that preceded them.

Origins of the Catholic Church in Korea

Catholicism was first introduced to the Korean peninsula from China where Jesuits priests had settled and propagated their teachings since the sixteenth century. Chinese translations of Catholic teaching and philosophy were constantly being imported into Korea by Korean governmental envoys making seasonal visits to present tribute to the suzerain state of China and bringing back various Chinese products and works of scholarship upon their return. In Korea, imported Catholic books were studied by Confucian scholars and

[25] This is a common feature in the following representative works on Korean Christianity. Min Kyŏng-bae, *Han'guk kidok kyohoesa (sin kaejŏn p'an)*; Hanʾguk kidokkyosa yŏn'guso, *Hanʾguk kidokkyo ŭi yŏksa 1* (Sŏul: Kidok kyomunsa, 1989). Especially, Min stresses the historical discontinuity. Min Kyŏng-bae, *Han'guk kidok kyohoesa (sin kaejŏn p'an)*, 111-112.

known as Western Learning (sŏhak).[26] In the beginning, Western Learning was received more as a new form of scholarship than as a religion. Highly educated scholar-officials studied Western Learning to expand their intellectual horizons and many found that it shared some common tenets with the state orthodoxy of Neo-Confucianism and thus could complement traditional Confucian philosophy rather than simply negate it.[27]

However, there soon emerged a group of scholars who took Western Learning as a new guiding principle in their social and religious life. They not only held group studies of Catholic books but began to transform their way of life according to Catholic doctrine. These scholars desired to learn more about Catholic teaching and sought the chance to establish contact with Catholic missionaries in China. Eventually they succeeded in enlisting one of their group members, Yi Sŭng-hun (1756-1801), in the seasonal tributary envoy to Beijing in 1783. Arriving in Beijing, Yi visited the Catholic missionary in residence and received baptism there, thus becoming the first Korean convert to Catholic Christianity.[28] After returning home, Yi took a more active part in disseminating Catholic

[26] Min Kyŏng-bae, *Han'guk kidok kyohoesa (sin kaejŏn p'an)*,47-52; Hanʾguk kidokkyosa yŏn'guso, *Hanʾguk kidokkyo ŭi yŏksa 1*, 65-71.
[27] Yu Hong-nyŏl, *Han'guk ŭi ch'ŏnjugyosa* (Sŏul: K'at'ollik ch'ulp'ansa 1990) vol.1,76-80 ; Hanʾguk kidokkyosa yŏn'guso, *Hanʾguk kidokkyo ŭi yŏksa 1*, 68-72.
[28] Yu Hong-nyŏl, *Han'guk ŭi ch'ŏnjugyosa*, 81-83

doctrine and even baptized his friends in the Catholic community in the absence of foreign missionaries in Korea.[29]

The fact that the first Catholic converts were born before the Catholic foreign mission was established in Korea is often interpreted as proof of Korean initiative in the church's formation and thus as a testament to the independent spirit of the nation.[30] However, it should not be overlooked that early Korean Catholics recognized the ecclesiastical authority of the Roman Catholic Church and thus desired to establish direct connection with the foreign Catholic priests in China. In other words, Korean converts not only embraced the new foreign religion voluntarily but also submitted to the institutional order of the Catholic Church without having to be persuaded to do so by missionaries.

In fact, Korean Catholic loyalty to Rome was consistent with the subsequent development of the Church in Korea. For instance, Yi soon stopped administering sacramental rites for fellow Koreans when he was told by the Catholic authorities in Beijing that he was not qualified to do so except for baptism.[31] Since there was no ordained priest in Korea, this meant that Koreans were deprived of the right to administer any sacramental

[29] Ibid., 86-89.
[30] Min Kyŏng-bae, Han'guk kidok kyohoesa (sin kaejŏn p'an), 56-57; ;
[31] Yu Hong-nyŏl, *Han'guk ŭi ch'ŏnjugyosa*, 93-95.

rites until foreign priests would later arrive in Korea. A more revealing example is the abolishment of ancestral worship under the ecclesiastical order from Beijing. As mentioned above, the first Catholic converts did not think that Catholicism was incompatible with Neo-Confucianism and did not regard ancestral worship as violating Catholic doctrine. However, when cautioned by the Church in Beijing that ancestor worship constituted a sin against God's commandment not to engage in idol worship, the Korean converts loyally followed these instructions and entirely discontinued practice of this social ritual. Their loyalty to the religious cause was most dramatically demonstrated by Yun Chi-ch'ung (1759-1791) and Kwŏn Sang-yŏn (1751-1791) in 1791, in the Chinsan Incident, when the two scholar-converts burnt the ancestral tablets of their parents in public.[32] In Neo-Confucian society, where filial piety was a cardinal virtue, the discontinuation of ancestral worship was a bold challenge to the public order. Because filial piety was also cherished as the foundation of the popular loyalty to the king, the father of all subjects, neglecting ancestor worship was taken as a treacherous act.

From this incident forward, the Chosŏn dynasty began to take oppressive measures against Catholicism. It regarded Catholicism as an anti-social and anti-governmental cult

[32] Ibid., 97-100.

manipulated by foreign priests and prohibited it under state law. Catholic leaders such as Yun and Kwŏn were soon arrested and executed for the violation of public law and order, while others were banished to rural provinces and remote islands. The state also stopped the circulation of Catholic books and enforced book burnings in public places.[33] Moreover, the state devised a new system of mutual censorship in each village and mandated that villagers to report to the authority.[34]

Under persecution, many converts became apostates, including the first convert, Yi Sŭng-hun, but the Catholic community as a whole never died out. Rather, it survived underground and risked death in remaining loyal to the faith. Contemporary police reports show that Catholic converts were convinced that the Christian God, whom they called *Ch'ŏnju* (Heavenly Lord) in Korean, had higher authority than the state or king. Kwŏn Sang-yŏn, for example, stated that "the teaching of *Ch'ŏnju* is highly majestic, so even if I violate the commandments of king and parents I cannot deny the teaching of *Ch'ŏnju*,"[35]

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[33] Ibid., 103-106.
[34] Cho Kwang, "Chosŏn Government's Measures against Catholicism," in *The founding of Catholic tradition in Korea*, ed. Yu Chai-Shin (Fremont, California: Asian Humanities Press, 2004), 104.
[35] *Chŏngjong sillok*, vol.33 (October, the 15th year of the King Chŏngjong), quoted in Kŭm Chang-t'ae, "The Doctrinial Disputes between Confucianism and Western Thought in the Late Chosŏn Period," in *The founding of Catholic tradition in Korea*, ed. Yu Chai-Shin (Fermont, California: Asian Humanities Press, 2004), 34.

clarifying his belief that loyalty to God held primacy over his attachment to state and family.

Korean Catholics at that time were taught that it is the duty of a believer to be loyal to the king and obey the orders of the state,[36] but Catholic loyalty to the state was premised on the condition that the state also fulfills its duty to provide good governance and protect the people's living as well as the Church. Therefore, when the state failed to fulfill this duty, Korean Catholics had a basis upon which they could justify their resistance to state authority and follow the Church. [37]

Korean Catholic loyalty to the Church over the state was most clearly demonstrated in a famous incident in 1801, generally known as Hwang Sa-yŏng's Silk Letter Incident. As the most prominent and respected scholar of the Catholic community, Hwang Sa-yŏng (1775-1801) was forced into hiding when the Chosŏn state began its persecution of Catholics. While hiding in a cave, he wrote a secret letter to the French Bishop in Beijing asking for help. In this letter, Hwang requested that the Bishop ask the Pope to influence the Qing emperor to order the Korean king to grant religious freedom for

[36] Cho Kwang, *Chosŏn hugi ch'ŏnjugyosa yŏn'gu ŭi kich'o* (Seoul: kyŏngin munhwa sa, 2010), 26-27.
[37] Ibid., 29.

the Catholics in Korea.[38] In addition, Hwang asked the Bishop to dispatch foreign gunboats to Korea and intimidate the Korean king into granting religious freedom to his subjects.[39] Moreover, he provided geographic and other strategic information on Korea to assist with this foreign intervention.[40]

This letter clearly shows that the Korean Catholics fully trusted the ultimate authority of the Catholic Church above that of their own state. They understood the world in terms of a hierarchical system in which the Holy See was positioned on the top and the Chinese emperor and the Korean king were below in descending order. Hence, they naturally expected that the Chinese emperor would obey papal instruction and exercise his power over the vassal state of Korea accordingly. Moreover, if the Korean king failed to obey the higher order, the Catholics thought he deserved punishment and that the foreign conquest of Korea would bring a better day for them.

From the viewpoint of the Chosŏn state, Hwang's letter provided indisputable proof of Catholic treason. The government was now fully convinced that Catholicism was a

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[38] Yu Hong-nyŏl, *Han'guk ŭi ch'ŏnjugyosa* vo.1, 168 ; Min Kyŏng-bae, *Han'guk kidok kyohoesa (sin kaejŏn p'an)*, 67-70.
[39] Yu Hong-nyŏl, *Han'guk ŭi ch'ŏnjugyosa* vol.1, 168-169 ; Min Kyŏng-bae, *Han'guk kidok kyohoesa (sin kaejŏn p'an)*, 67-70.
[40] Yu Hong-nyŏl, *Han'guk ŭi ch'ŏnjugyosa* vol.1, 169-170.

treacherous cult that had to be exterminated. Following this event, governmental persecution became more severe and merciless. The hard measures adopted by the government, however, ended up strengthening Catholic resolve to report their dire situation in Korea to the missionaries in China in order to petition for foreign intervention on their behalf. In one such attempt, a Korean Catholic leader, Chŏng Ha-sang (1795-1839), wrote a petition to the Pope in which he asked the Vatican to send missionaries directly to Korea and rescue the local Catholics suffering persecution. Eventually, the petition was heeded by the Holy See and the Pope ordered the establishment of the Vicariate Apostolic in Korea in 1831, while appointing the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris [La Societe de Mission Etrangeres de Paris] to take charge.[41] The Society soon dispatched several missionaries to Korea through China and one of them, Philbert Mauban, successfully smuggled himself into the country in 1836 against the seclusion policy of the Chosŏn government.[42] Other French missionaries soon followed him and began to organize the local Catholics underground, giving them religious instructions and administering baptisms.[43] In order to avoid arrest by the police, the missionaries always disguised themselves in the traditional

[41] Min Kyŏng-bae, *Han'guk kidok kyohoesa (sin kaejŏn p'an)*, 73-74.
[42] Ibid., 76-77.
[43] Missions étrangères de Paris., *The Catholic Church in Korea* (Hongkong: Impr. de la Société des missions-étrangères, 1924), 25.

garb of Korean mourners.[44] According to Confucian custom, mourners were neither to speak nor to be spoken to on the street and thus provided the best means for the French missionaries to engage in clandestine proselytization.

French and American Intervention

The domestic Catholic communities were greatly revived and empowered by the foreign missionary presence, but it naturally alarmed the Chosŏn state that Catholics were conspiring against the dynasty using foreign aid. The Chosŏn state thus repeatedly launched harsh anti-Catholic campaigns and executed many believers, including French missionaries, whenever their underground presence was discovered. From 1838 to 1841, more than two hundred Catholics were killed by decapitation, hanging, and torture.[45] All of the three French priests who had been underground were arrested and beheaded on the public execution ground in Seoul.[46]

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[44] Fred Harvey Harrington, *God, mammon, and the Japanese* (Madison, Wis.,: The University of Wisconsin press, 1944), 90. For the actual picture of a priest in mourner's garb, see Yu Hong-nyŏl, *Han'guk ŭi ch'ŏnjugyosa* vol.1, 105 (left-hand side).
[45] Kim Chang-mun and Chung Jae-sun, *Catholic Korea:* (Seoul: St. Joseph Publishing co., 1984), 190.
[46] Missions étrangères de Paris., *The Catholic Church in Korea*, 27-29.

The execution of the French missionaries was soon reported to the French embassy in China, as many Korean Catholics escaped the country and fled to find refuge there. Upon receiving the news, Admiral Cecille sent a letter to the Korean king to ask for an explanation and French man-of-war would be sent to hear his response next year. Accordingly, the French frigate was dispatched to Korea in 1846 with some Korean Catholics on board.[47] The return of Korean Catholics in the French gunboat convinced the state once again of Catholic collaboration with foreign aggressors and fueled its anti-Catholic hatred. Though the French naval demonstration did not lead to a direct military confrontation with Korea at this time, it led the Chosŏn state to intensify its persecution of Catholicism.

By the mid-nineteenth century, the Chosŏn state's suspicion that domestic Catholics would invite foreign invasion was becoming a reality in its neighboring state of China. During the Second Opium War in 1857, the French and British expedition forces not only invaded China and occupied Beijing but also imposed the Treaty of Tianjin, by which the Chinese government was mandated to recognize the Christian religion, both Catholic

[47]Ibid. 33; Yu Hong-nyŏl, *Han'guk ŭi ch'ŏnjugyosa* vol.1, 476-477.

and Protestant, and also to protect Chinese converts as well as foreign missionaries.[48] The detailed report of the war and its aftermath was soon sent to Korea by the annual Korean tributary envoy to Beijing. The news of China's defeat was a great shock to Korean elites, who long admired the Central Kingdom as its sovereign. According to the Catholic missionary report, some among Korea's wealthy and leisure class, upon hearing the news, fled to the mountains thinking that foreign troops would soon arrive in Seoul.[49]

It is in this socio-political context that the Taewŏn'gun (1820-1898), who assumed power in 1861 as the regent for a minor king, took a hard-line diplomatic position and strengthened the dynasty's traditional anti-foreign and anti-Catholic policy. Believing that expulsion of all foreign elements in Korea was the best means to secure his dynasty he

[48] The Treaty of Tianjin signed by between Great Britain and China in 1858 included the following article: "ARTICLE VIII. The Christian religion, as professed by Protestants or Roman Catholics inculcates the practice of virtue, and teaches man to do as he would be done by. Persons teaching or professing it, therefore, shall alike be entitled to the protection of the Chinese authorities, nor shall any such, peaceably pursuing their calling, and not offending against the law, shall be persecuted or interfered with." On the other hand, the treaty between United States and China, signed in the same year, stipulated the right of Chinese converts more clearly : "ARTICLE XXIX. The principles of the Christian religion, as professed by the Protestant and Roman Catholic churches, are recognized as teaching men to do good, and to do to others as they would have others do to them. Hereafter those who quietly profess and teach these doctrines shall not be harassed or persecuted on account of their faith. Any person, whether citizen of the United States or Chinese convert, who, according to these tenets, peaceably teach and practice the principles of Christianity, shall in no case be interfered with or molested." William Frederick Mayers, *Treaties between the Empire of China and foreign powers* (Shanghai: North-China Herald Office, 1902), 12-13, 92.

[49] Missions étrangères de Paris., *The Catholic Church in Korea*, 37.

ordered the mass arrest of Catholics in 1866. This persecution lasted for several years and resulted in the execution of more than 8,000 Catholics, including nine French missionaries.[50] The frightening news of the Catholic massacre was quickly relayed to Catholic authorities in China by Korean refugees and resulted in yet another French military intervention. This time the French government not only sent expeditionary forces but also demanded that the Korean government turn over the ministers who ordered the massacre and also enter treaty negotiations. When this demand was ignored by the Chosŏn government, the French forces invaded Kanghwa Island in the vicinity of the capital Seoul and looted the detached royal palace there.[51] However, due to the limited number of troops and the fierce resistance put up by Chosŏn soldiers, the French invasion did not advance on Seoul but instead withdrew to China.

Meanwhile, shortly before the French invasion, the American Commercial boat, *General Sherman*, had also entered Taedong River to approach Pyŏngyang in northern Korea and had a military skirmish with the Korean defense force. Korean soldiers attacked and set fire to the boat when the boat shipwrecked on the shallow floor of the river, killing

[50] Min Kyŏng-bae, *Han'guk kidok kyohoesa (sin kaejŏn p'an)*, 94-95.
[51] Missions étrangères de Paris., *The Catholic Church in Korea*, 50.

all the crew on board, including a Scottish Protestant missionary.[52] Like the French, the Americans also returned in four warships to protest the burning of the *General Sherman* in 1871 and exchanged fire with the Korean soldiers in Kanghwa Island. The Americans occupied a fortress on the island, killing around 200 Korean soldiers, but soon withdrew to Chefoo in China.[53]

Successful defense bolstered Taewŏn'gun's confidence in his seclusion policy. He commemorated the victory by building a stone stele on which he inscribed, "Expel the barbarians and protect Confucian orthodoxy. Those who seek peace with the barbarians must be killed," and ordered the same stele to be built all over the country.[54] In this way, Catholicism in Korea was considered the most dangerous subversive cult and identified with those who would collaborate with foreign (and especially French and American) invasions. Hence, there was no room for Catholicism to gain governmental recognition in the nineteenth century. Catholicism was branded from beginning to end as an anti-state and anti-social force and strongly disdained for its foreign affiliation.

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[52] Yu Hong-nyŏl, *Han'guk ŭi ch'ŏnjugyosa* vol.2, 113.
[53] Ibid., 181-184.
[54] Min Kyŏng-bae, *Han'guk kidok kyohoesa (sin kaejŏn p'an)*, 107.

Catholic Status in the Chosŏn Society

Despite a century of bloody persecution, the Catholic communities were not completely uprooted. Rather, they survived underground with the support of a continuous supply of missionaries dispatched s from abroad. However, continuous long-term persecution brought significant changes to the Korean Catholic community. First, the aristocratic yangban Catholics, who provided leadership in the early stages, were all killed and eliminated from the state bureaucracy during the persecutions. Even those who survived were deprived of their economic wealth during exile or imprisonment and lost their previous social status.[55] Consequently, the majority of the community members were gradually occupied by the lower social status groups such as the *chungin* (mostly practitioners of skilled professions such as medicine, paintings, mathematics and astronomy, etc.) and *yangmin* class (farmers, merchants and artisans).[56] This is also evidenced by the fact that the royal edict of 1839 to prohibit Catholicism was written in part using the Korean alphabet (*hangŭl*), which was used primarily by the less educated class.[57] Since the

[55] Cho kwang, "Chosŏn hugi ch'ŏnjugyodo ŭi ilsangsaenghwal," in *chosŏn hugi sahoe wa ch'ŏnjugyo* (kyŏngin munhwa sa, 2010), 275-280.
[56]Cho Kwang, "Chosŏn hugi ch'ŏnjugyo chidoch'ŭng ŭi t'ŭksŏng " *Yŏksa Hakpo* 105 (1985): 56-66.
[57] Min Kyŏng-bae, *Han'guk kidok kyohoesa (sin kaejŏn p'an)*, 79.

majority of Catholic believers were composed of those who could not comprehend classical Chinese, the official language and lingua franca of intellectuals at that time, the government had to write the edict in the vernacular, *hangŭl*. Second, leadership of the Catholic community was retained by the French missionaries as they arrived to organize the underground church. Since there were no Korean priests who possessed the ecclesiastical right to administer mass and other rituals, converts had no choice but to rely on foreign priests who were few in number and not always available. Lastly, we should note the repeated persecution of scattered Catholic communities all over the country. In order to escape from the constant state of surveillance, Catholics had to flee their villages and seek refuge in the mountains and other remote areas in the rural provinces where they lived a life of seclusion.[58] The first Catholic community was originally formed in Chŏlla, Ch'ungch'ong and Kyŏnggi Province in the south, but it was scattered to other provinces such Kangwŏn and Kyŏngsang by persecution and the number of Catholic converts totaled around 17,000 by the middle of the nineteenth century.[59]

Freedom of Religion under Unequal Treaty

[58] Cho Kwang, *Chosŏn hugi ch'ŏnjugyosa yŏn'gu ŭi kich'o*, 31.
[59] Yu Hong-nyŏl, *Han'guk ŭi ch'ŏnjugyosa* vol., 170, 559.

The anti-Catholic atmosphere subsided after King Kojong (1852-1919) replaced the Taewŏn'gun in 1873. The new king soon abandoned the traditional seclusion policy due to increasing pressure from the surrounding powers and signed Korea's first open port treaty with Japan in 1876 and then with the United States in 1882. Nonetheless, the Chosŏn government was determined to maintain its anti-Catholic policy even after opening the country to foreign intercourse. It actually made efforts to exclude any provision from the US-Korean treaty that would guarantee freedom of religion. Later, it permitted foreigners to practice their own faith in the designated foreign concessions in the Anglo-Korean Treaty of 1883,[60] but it never recognized the right of foreigners to disseminate their religion to Koreans. In short, the new treaties opened up Korea to foreign trade, but not to Christianity, and the American Protestant missionaries, who began to arrive in Korea from 1885 onward, had to remain in the treaty port and wait until the Chosŏn government lifted the ban on Christianity. But the lack of a treaty between Korea and France meant that Catholic missionaries on the peninsula were technically still at risk of punishment for their illegal residence, while other foreign citizens were not. French missionaries in China had

[60] Article IV of the treaty stipulated that in the treaty ports, the British subjects "shall be allowed to the free exercise of their religion." Henry Chung, *Korean treaties* (New York: H.S. Nichols, 1919), 136.

requested the French government to sign a treaty agreement with the Chosŏn government in order to secure the legal status of missionaries in Korea, but actual negotiations did not begin until May 1886, when the French Minister in Beijing, Congordan, was dispatched to Korea and met with the Korean Foreign Minister, Kim Yun Sik.[61]

As the security of the catholic missionaries was at stake, the French government did not easily concede the right of its citizens to propagate religion in Korea. Instead, the French Minister made this issue the main agenda of negotiations and made several specific demands that would facilitate the French Catholic mission: To grant freedom for Koreans to practice Catholicism; allow the missionaries to travel freely in the country and purchase land; permit Catholics to build churches, schools, hospitals and cemeteries in sufficient number that corresponds to the Catholic population ratio; and pay financial compensation of one million franc for the damages incurred upon the Catholic Church in Korea during the past persecutions and build a memorial stone at the expense of the Chosŏn government as a means to express the official apology for the martyred French missionaries.[62] Such demands were too radical and humiliating for the Chosŏn government to accept. Adopting all of them would have required the complete revision of its century-long anti-Catholic

[61] Ch'oe Sŏk-u, "Hanbul choyak kwa singyo chayu," *Sahak Yŏn'gu*, no. 21 (1969):210-211.
[62] Ibid., 220-221.

policy and the virtual recognition of French jurisdiction over domestic Catholics in Korea. The Korean Minister rejected the French demand at once and negotiations were suspended for almost a month without any further development. In the event, when negotiations came close to breaking down, the French government made a concession and gave up the treaty's clause for religious freedom. Instead, it prioritized securing the legal right of residence of missionaries by inserting the following article.

> Subjects of either nationality who may proceed to the country of the other to study or *teach* [note -- *professer* in original] its language, literature, laws, arts or industries…shall be afforded to every reasonable facility for doing so.

This article was a copy of article nine of the Anglo-Korean Treaty, ratified the previous year, with an addition of "teach" after "study." The French intention behind this minor revision was to provide an official and legitimate reason for missionaries to enter Korea as teachers of the French language and allow them to disguise their religious proselytizing under the pretense of language teaching. While there was no consensus between the two governments over the meaning of this article, the French Minister was confident that the Korean government could no longer persecute the missionaries once they retained the legal status of language teachers, and encouraged Bishop Blanc, the head of the

French Catholic mission in Korea, to obtain an official passport from the Korean government and travel the country under the protection of the new treaty.[63]

Besides freedom of travel, the greatest benefit the French obtained by this treaty was the right of extraterritoriality, which was stipulated in previous treaties between the Chosŏn government and other powers and thus automatically extended to French citizens by virtue of the most-favored-nation clause. Consequently, French missionaries were exempted from Korean jurisdiction and no longer punishable by Korean authority, even if they were charged with disseminating the illegal religion of Christianity. Instead, they were to be judged in the French consular court where they could expect lenient treatment since their home government was fully supportive of their mission work. In sum, the Franco-Korean treaty did not win freedom of religion per se, but granted missionaries a legal safeguard, while allowing the Korean government not to permit Christian propagation.

Unaware of the French intention to use the "language teaching" clause to justify mission work, the Chosŏn government was upset when French missionaries came out of hiding with the ratification of the treaty in 1887. Accordingly, it attempted to prevent

[63] Ibid., 228-229.

missionaries from openly traveling around the country. For instance, the magistrate of Wŏnsan, one of the first three treaty ports, did not permit a French missionary, Father Deguette, to enter the city regardless of his having an official passport. Moreover, the magistrate ordered the arrest of a dozen local Catholics for their affiliation with Deguette and sent them to Seoul for trial.[64]

The expansion of the Catholic mission without the consent of the Korean government resulted in more violent conflict between the missionaries and local residents. In Chŏnju, Chŏlla Province, some local leaders agitated the anti-Catholic mob and beat a French missionary, Father Baudounet, who visited the town with two Korean Catholics.[65] Similarly, in the vicinity of Taegu, Kyŏngsang Province, a local mob stormed and destroyed an inn where Father Robert was staying. When the French missionary fled into Taegu city to ask for governmental protection, the magistrate rejected the request. Consequently, the missionary and his followers were chased by hundreds of rioters and narrowly escaped death.[66] With the report of this incident, the French Legation demanded

[64] Yi Wŏn-sun, "Chosŏn malgi sahoe ŭi tae sŏgyo munje yŏn'gu," *yŏksa kyoyuk* 2 (1973): 76.
[65] Ibid., 76.
[66] Ibid.,76-77.

the Korean government punish the responsible officials, compensate the missionary and force the local governments to respect the treaty rights.[67]

However, the Chosŏn government held that it had the right to punish those who violated Korean law and rejected the French demand for the abolishment of anti-Catholic law.[68] Moreover, the Korean government also sabotaged efforts to stop anti-Catholic violence and local authorities continued their anti-Catholic agitation. In 1891, the magistrate of Kijang, Kyŏngsang Province, posted an official notice on the public bulletin board that all foreign missionaries should be killed for disseminating their evil religion.[69] This incident again caused a strong protest from the French legation and the Korean Foreign Office promised to investigate the case. Nonetheless, a similar incident occurred the following year in Ichŏn, Kyŏnggi Province, where the magistrate officially denounced Catholicism as a subversive cult and warned the populace not to follow it.[70] Such explicit instigation at the government level appears to have encouraged anti-Catholic violence at the popular level. In fact, the following year, in Suwon, not far from Ichŏn, Father Wilhelm

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[67] Ibid.,77.
[68] Koryŏ Taehakkyo Asea Munje Yŏnʾguso, *Ku hanʾguk oegyo munsŏ : pŏp-an* (Seoul: Koryŏ Taehakkyo Chʻulpʻanbu 1965), Document number, 124, 138.
[69] Yi Wŏn-sun, "Chosŏn malgi sahoe ŭi tae sŏgyo munje yŏn'gu,"122
[70] Ibid., 122.

was beaten by a local thug without cause, while Father Lafoucade in Kangwŏn Province was attacked by members of the local merchant guild (*pobusang*), who were often hired to execute private revenge at that time.[71]

The growing visibility of French missionaries and their interaction with local Catholics reaffirmed the prevailing common perception that Catholics were subverting society using foreign aid. Therefore, Korean Catholics became easy prey for local violence, especially when they were seen with French missionaries. In 1891 alone, anti-Catholic violence was reported in Changsŏng (Chŏlla Province),Yŏmp'o (Kyŏngsang) and Yangyang (Kangwŏn).[72] Also, in Samga (Kyŏngsang) in 1892 and Puyŏ (Ch'ungch'chong) in 1893, Catholic families were robbed by villagers and even though they sued the violators, their appeal was dismissed.[73] When the Tonghak, the followers of an anti-foreign indigenous religion, rose up against the Chosŏn government in 1894, they targeted Catholics as well as corrupt officials. The major cause of the rebellion was heavy taxation and abuse of power by the local government, but the peasant rebels also maintained a strong anti-foreign posture and united under the slogan, "Expel Western and

[71] Ibid., 77-78.
[72] See the choronology of anti-Catholic incidents in ibid., 97.
[73] Ibid., 97.

Japanese barbarians." One of the appeals they posted on the street in Seoul clearly designated Catholics as "beasts" and demanded that they should abandon the heterodox teaching.[74] Actually, the rebels often attacked local Catholics during their campaigns against the local government. They burnt and sacked the missionary residence and many Catholic households in Yangchŏn, Nosŏng and other towns in Ch'ungch'ong Province.[75] Even after the rebellion was suppressed by government forces, some surviving Tonghaks continued to attack Catholics individually in places such as Suwŏn and Poŭn.[76]

In sum, the treaty did not change traditional anti-Catholic sentiments either at the government or popular levels, nor did it produce any right to freedom of religion. Rather, the growing visibility of missionaries acting without legal sanction exacerbated traditional fear and prejudice against Catholics and ignited anti-Catholic violence across the country.

The Church as Refuge

In spite of the persisting anti-Catholic climate, the French missionaries no longer accepted the limitations imposed on them as quietly as they did during the era of open

[74] Ibid., 108.
[75] Ibid., 109.
[76] Ibid., 97-98.

persecution. Even if they were still vulnerable to uncontrolled violence at the local level, they now possessed at least the legal right to stay in Korea and demand that the Korean government provide due protection through the French legation. They could even demand compensation for damages they suffered at the hands of local mobs. In fact, as they kept filing official protests against the Korean governmental negligence for protecting the missionaries, the Korean government gradually came to terms with their demand and instructed local governments in 1893 not to abuse local Catholics on the reasoning that they too were the "children of His Majesty."[77] Though such orders did not have an immediate effect in subduing anti-Catholic violence, it was gradually recognized by the local populace that the missionaries held power to negotiate with the government and could bring punishment against local persecutors of Catholics.

As the foreign privilege of extraterritoriality was recognized, native Catholics who had long been abused by the local anti-Catholic forces began to seek refuge in the Catholic missions. They flocked around the missionaries in the hope that they too could be exempted from Korean jurisdiction if they came under foreign authority. Thus, there were even some cases in which former members of the anti-foreign Tonghaks joined the Catholic Church to

[77] Ibid., 123.

disguise their identity and avoid government suppression or evade taxation.[78] In fact, the French missionaries embraced such Catholic refugees on principle and shielded them from Korean government persecution. Moreover, whenever local officials imprisoned Catholics, French missionaries would demand the release of the native Catholics to the government and often won them back with support from the French legation.[79]

On the other hand, as missionary power gained social recognition, some Catholics took advantage of the foreign presence to assert their interests against non-Catholics. For instance, Catholics brought in French missionaries in land disputes and threatened their non-Catholic counterparts in 1893.[80] Next year, in Sŏnchŏn, a Catholic lynched the non-Catholic neighbors in the village, claiming that he was granted the right to do so from a missionary.[81] These cases were recorded on local government reports to the central government. As such, there may be some exaggeration or bias in their description. Nonetheless, it is important to note that Catholics were no longer silent sufferers. In theory, foreign privileges were not to be extended to Koreans, but in reality there were many cases

[78] Moon Yumi, "The Populist Contest: The Ilchinhoe Movement and the Japanese Colonization of Korea,1896-1910" (Harvard University, Ph.D. Diss., 2005), 55-56.
[79] Yi Wŏn-sun, "Chosŏn malgi sahoe ŭi tae sŏgyo munje yŏn'gu," 84-96.
[80] Ibid. 97.
[81] Ibid., 97.

where Catholics attempted to use foreign protection to escape from or confront those in power at the local level. As a result, the chain of violence and animosity between Catholics and non-Catholics was constantly perpetuated. The resilience of grassroots anti-Catholic persecution continued to drive Catholics to seek foreign protection and alienate them from the rest of society.

In conclusion, the political tension between Catholics and non-Catholics remained and even intensified after the ratification of the Franco-Korean treaty. Continuous violent clashes between the two parties illustrate that the rise of Catholicism in Korea was a contributing fact,or to social disintegration rather than integration. Catholics in Korea had long valued the Church over the state and continued to hold that belief even after the treaty. To them, the forces of anti-Catholicism, whether private or governmental, were simply enemies of the Church to be resisted to the very end. To non-Catholics, the subversive nature of Catholicism was common sense reconfirmed by the fact that Catholics continued to affiliate with foreign missionaries and in doing so became more confrontational toward non-Catholics.

The profound schism between Catholicism and anti-Catholicism in late Chosŏn Korea also clearly shows that there was no sense of unity that derived from belonging to the

same race or nation. Even if there was "proto-nationalism," as some scholars have suggested,[82] it did not provide any means of practical arbitration between the two groups divided by different ideological beliefs. After all, Catholics in Korea gave their loyalty to a universal church that transcended both state and nation. Thus, it inevitably came into conflict with the Chosŏn dynasty, which demanded the highest loyalty to the state. Catholics did not hesitate to rely upon French power and authority in order to defend themselves, because they considered France to be the agent of the Catholic Church, rather than a foreign aggressor. It thus makes little sense to criticize Korean Catholics for their lack of nationalism as some Korean nationalist historians have done.[83] Rather, we should pay attention to the fact that Catholics in Korea consistently desired freedom from state persecution and wanted to establish an autonomous Catholic community, where believers would be free from local tradition and state jurisdiction. In ways that anticipate and perhaps influenced the story of Protestant Koreans that follows, what Catholics strived for was not

[82] John Duncan, "Proto-nationalism in Premodern Korea," in *Perspectives on Korea*, ed. Lee Sang Oak and Park Duk-Soo (Sydney :Honolulu, Hawaii: Wild Peony ;international distribution by University of Hawaii Press, 1998). 198-221.
[83] For instance, Min renounces Hwang Sayŏng's Silk Letter Incident as "anti-national" (*mol-minjok chŏk*) act. Min Kyŏng-bae, *Han'guk kidok kyohoesa (sin kaejŏn p'an)*, 111.

to identify themselves with state power and national tradition, but rather to detach themselves from both.

Chapter 2 Protestant Missions and Power

Conventional Protestant history centers on a narrative that stresses the "subjectivity" of Koreans in adopting the Protestant faith. Specifically, it highlights the uniqueness of a historical situation in which Protestant Christianity was introduced to Korea by Koreans before the Protestant foreign Missions entered Korea. This claim is based on the fact that the first Korean Protestants were converted in Manchuria beyond the Korean peninsula. They lived in the northern edge of the peninsula and engaged in cross-border trade between Korea and China. They met the Scottish Presbyterian missionaries, John Ross and John MacIntyre, on the Chinese side of the border and upon converting to Christianity helped them to translate a portion of the Bible into the Korean vernacular script of *hangŭl*. These missionaries then dispatched these Korean converts back to Korea with the translation and had them distribute it and proselytize the fellow Koreans in a clandestine manner.[84]

It is true that these early Korean Protestant agents contributed to some extent to the early evangelization of Korea. However, the subsequent development of Korean Protestant

[84] Hanʾguk kidokkyosa yŏn'guso, *Hanʾguk kidokkyo ŭi yŏksa 1*, 142-156.

Christianity was not led by these early converts on the periphery of the Korean peninsula, but by the foreign Missions who occupied the capital Seoul and reached out to other parts of Korea. As a matter of fact, the key members of the early Korean evangelists from Manchuria such as the Sŏ brothers, Sŏ Sang-ryun and Sŏ Kyŏng-jŏ, reported their presence to the American Presbyterian Mission when it arrived and worked for the Mission. Moreover, it took Sŏ Kyŏng-jo another twenty years of training under the American Mission before he received official ordination as the first Korean Presbyterian minister in 1904 (as discussed in Chapter 3).

This chapter reveals that the Korean reception of Protestant Christianity was much less "subjective" than has previously been claimed. It argues that the development of the foreign mission is the key to understanding the early development of Korean Protestant Christianity, which relied heavily upon the foreign privileges of the Mission as much as the Catholic predecessors.

Genesis of the Protestant Mission in Korea

In 1882, the United States became the first western power to sign an open port treaty with Korea. American Protestant missionaries arrived in Korea as soon as this treaty

was ratified in 1884. Prior to the treaty, the foreign mission boards of the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America (Northern Presbyterian Church, hereafter "NP") and the Methodist Episcopal Church, United States (Northern Methodist Church, "NM") had received substantial information about Korea through its missionary agents in China and Japan and had been seeking the chance to extend their mission to Korea.[85] However, they were more careful than the French Catholic mission and did not dare to send missionaries to Korea without treaty protection. Missionary security was a priority for them and hence they waited to see the American flag raised on Korean soil before opening the door to mission work.

However, the treaty was commercial in nature and made no mention of religion. American missionaries could therefore enter Korea and receive protection as United States citizens under the treaty, but had no legal right to preach Christianity to Koreans. The foreign mission boards of the U.S. Churches were fully aware of this treaty restriction but they thought it better to dispatch their missionaries to Korea in any way possible to prepare for the day when Christian religion would be tolerated. Hence, the Northern Presbyterian mission board reassigned one of its China missionaries, Horace N. Allen (1858–1932) to

[85] Paek Nak-chun, *The history of protestant missions in Korea 1832-1910*, Series of Reprints of Western books on Korea, 6 (Seoul,: Yonsei Univ. Press, 1970), 73-81.

Korea in the summer of 1884, while appointing Horace G. Underwood (1859-1916) and John Heron (1856-1890) as the first Korea missionaries, who landed in Korea in April 1885. Likewise, the Northern Methodist mission board selected and dispatched Henry G. Appenzeller (1858-1902) and William B. Scranton (1856-1922), who arrived in Korea with the Presbyterians in 1885. As their birth years show, these missionaries were all young and in their twenties when they arrived in Korea in the 1880s, coming straight from the seminaries or colleges and had little knowledge on Korea.

The foreign mission boards were optimistic about the future prospects of the mission in Korea. Their Japan missionaries had already established friendly relations with some influential Korean officials, such as Kim Ok-kyun (1851–1894) and Pak Yŏng-hyo (1861-1939), who had made repeated visits to Tokyo from 1881 to study western scholarship and technology, and had now returned to the Korean government to launch their pro-modernization and pro-Western policy against the conservative opposition. The reformist agenda of this group, which was known as the "Progressive Party" in Korea, had advantages for beginning mission activities in Korea. In fact, a veteran Japan missionary of the Methodist Mission, Robert MacLay (1824-1907, NM) had received a royal permit to start a hospital and school in Korea through the auspices of Kim Okkyun in 1884. This led

to the board decision to dispatch the first missionaries to Korea.[86] In other words, the plan of the foreign mission boards was to ally itself with progressive forces in Korea and gradually move Chosŏn policy in a pro-West and pro-Christian direction.

These optimistic hopes were dashed before Protestant missionaries even reached Korea. In December 1884, the Korean Progressive Party, with support from the Japanese government, staged a palace coup to take over power from the conservatives, but their efforts failed in only three days due to Chinese military intervention. As a result, progressive leaders such as Kim and Pak were ousted from the court and fled to Japan to seek exile, leaving no chance for the Korea missionaries to ally with the progressives in the court. The only good fortune to come out of the unfortunate event was that Horace N. Allen, who was the only missionary already present in Korea, was able to win court favor by saving the life of a conservative Korean official who had been attacked and seriously wounded during the coup. Allen was a physician-missionary and, because he could not practice mission work in Korea, he had been working as a doctor to the U.S. legation since his arrival. The U.S. Ambassador had introduced Allen to the Korean court as a physician,

[86] Robert S. MacLay, "Korea's Permit to Christianity," *The Missionary Review of the World* (April 1896): 287.

not a missionary.[87] The foreign court advisor, Paul von Molldendorf (1847 -1901), had met Allen in person and he called the American doctor to treat the badly wounded official on the night of the coup.

The official whom Allen saved was the leader of the conservative party, Min Yŏng-ik (1860 -1914), the cousin of Queen Min. Royal gratitude to Allen as well as Min's personal favor soon made him a court physician holding official rank. Taking advantage of this breakthrough, Allen soon petitioned the king to allow him to establish a hospital to care for the sick. His petition was accepted and resulted in the Royal Hospital where Allen was allowed to practice western medicine. The hospital also provided a temporary workplace for newly arrived missionaries in the absence of the right to engage in direct mission work.[88]

Superficially, Allen's success as a court physician may seem to suggest the Korean court's recognition of Protestant mission work and de facto toleration of Christianity. In fact, the reality was entirely different. Court patronage for Allen was for his medical practice only and neither King Kojong nor Min Yŏng-ik had any intention of tolerating Christianity. In the first place, Allen continued to suppress his missionary profile and tried his best to

[87] Harrington, *God, mammon, and the Japanese*, 12.
[88] Ibid., 49.

avoid conflict with the Korean court over the matter of his faith. Moreover, Allen's petition to build the Royal Hospital was permitted because he proposed that it be a royal institution, entirely funded by the Korean court, with its ultimate purpose being to provide free care for the sick and "endear the people to their monarch"[89] rather than to advance the Christian cause. Though Allen hired fellow missionaries as hospital workers, he explained to the court that they had been sent by "a benevolent society in America," and came as Korean court employees, thereby concealing the church and missionary support they received.[90] In short, Allen's success was the result of camouflaging his Christian identity rather than winning royal recognition of it.

Franco-Korean Treaty and Its Effect on the Protestant Mission

Allen justified his establishment of the Royal Hospital as a nominally non-missionary institution as an expedient adopted in light of anti-Christian policy in Korea. He imagined he could change this policy by cultivating the maximum extent of royal favor. Other missionaries, however, did not share this view and thought Allen was simply working

[89] *Horace N. Allen's Diary* (1/22/1885) reprinted in Sŏ Chŏng-min, *Chejungwŏn kwa ch'ogi han'guk kidokkyo* (Sŏul: Yŏnse Taehakkyo Ch'ulp'anbu, 2003),167. Hereafter, *Allen's Diary.*
[90] Ibid., 167 ; Harrington, *God, mammon, and the Japanese*, 47.

for his own interest and prestige, while neglecting his missionary duties. Such frustration was strong among evangelical missionaries such as Underwood and Appenzeller, who considered a hospital without Christian agency to be worthless.[91] Moreover, Underwood and Appenzeller were ordained ministers with no medical skills to establish their careers in the hospital. Finally, they grew personally weary of Allen's high-handed manner and leadership, taking advantage of his personal connection to the court. They saw Allen as being no different from themselves, a young man in his twenties with little professional experience as a missionary.[92] Thus, they had all the more reason to reject Allen's methods.

Unable to wait any longer, these frustrated young missionaries began to seek the chance to start their own mission work in violation of the treaty restrictions. Fortuitously, it was also precisely at this time that they heard the news that the Franco-Korean Treaty was about to be negotiated and that "the French… will insist upon the right of their priests to work here." As rivals of the Catholic faith, these American missionaries observed unhappily that the "Romanists have a large Korean following" and worried that "if the Protestants do

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[91] Lilias H. Underwood (Mrs. Underwood) to Dr. Ellinwood (11/22/1889) in Yi Man-yŏl and OakSung-Deuk, *Ŏndŏudŭ charyojip I* (Sŏul Yŏnse taehakkyo ch'ulp'anbu 2005), 566. Hereafter, *Underwood Letters vol.1* ; Harrington, *God, mammon, and the Japanese*, 78.

[92] For more detailed and vivid accounts of quarrels among the Presbyterian missionaries, see Harrington, *God, mammon, and the Japanese*, 72-84.

not do their duty, we will have a Romish instead of a heathen people to convert."[93] They were thus concerned that if the French won the right of religious freedom in Korea, the Catholic mission would prevail there. On the other hand, they also knew that any treaty privilege gained by the French would be extended to American citizens by virtue of the most-favored-nation clause. Hence, the American missionaries desired to see the French win the right of religious freedom, calculating that, "if they do this [win religious freedom], it will at once give us the right also."[94] Behind the scenes, however, they did not miss the chance to defame the Catholics in the eyes of the Korean court whenever the opportunity arose to do so. For instance, when Horace Allen was consulted by the Korean court during Franco-Korean negotiations and asked for his opinion about the teaching of Catholicism, he did his best to list the reasons that the Koreans should reject Catholicism. First, Allen warned that, in accepting Catholicism, Korea would be politically subservient to Papal authority, a point he contrasted with Protestant America.

[93] H. G. Underwood to Dr. Ellinwood (1/31/1886), *Underwood Letters vol.1,* 369.
[94] H. G. Underwood to Dr. Ellinwood (2 /17/ 1886), *Underwood Letters vol.1,* 386.

> Americans are an independent people and look with disfavor on anything that tends to curtail our power. Were we Catholics, our President would be under the power of the Pope.[95]

Allen also elaborated on what he saw as the social dangers of Catholicism by appealing to the Korean Confucian ethical views of gender.

> First, we are opposed to praying idols or anyone but the Creator of the Universe. The Catholics worship and pray to the Virgin Mary, Mother of Christ, a woman. Secondly, we think no one but God can forgive sin, they give this power to corrupt priests to whom all Catholics must confess their most private thoughts. Third the priests are men with the same organs and passions as other men, they are not eunuchs, and we claim that it is not safe for women to go and confess to these men their secret thoughts and faults.[96]

It is not clear how this vicious anti-Catholic propaganda by a Protestant missionary affected Franco-Korean treaty negotiations, but as seen in the previous chapter, even the French government failed to win the explicit religious freedom clause due to the staunch Korean opposition.

In the event, Protestant expectations that the French would win the right of freedom of religion were betrayed. Nevertheless, Protestant missionaries soon found that

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[95] *Horace N. Allen's Diary* (5/9/1886). His diary is reprinted and readable in typed format in Sŏ Chŏng-min, *Chejungwŏn kwa ch'ogi han'guk kidokkyo*, 219. Hereafter, the author quotes from this reprinted version.
[96] Ibid., 219.

French priests were traveling to the Korean interior and giving religious instructions to Korean Catholics under the pretense of "language teaching." As detailed in the previous chapter, this unilateral action on the part of the French missionaries angered the Korean government, who saw it as a treaty violation, and also triggered a series of violent anti-foreign and anti-Catholic incidents across the country. But the American missionaries, who had long been frustrated over the treaty restrictions placed on their missionary rights, took the French aggressive action as a good excuse to claim the same right for Americans as a most-favored-nation. Thus, Horace G. Underwood and Henry G. Appenzeller decided to do as the French were doing and ventured to make a joint trip outside the foreign settlement to the Korean interior in 1888 and, when occasion allowed, did preach to the locals and even baptized some.[97]

Needless to say, the Korean government was greatly offended by American missionary actions and sent an official objection to the US legation to the effect that "It is well known to the Korean Government that Americans residing in Korea are engaged in disseminating the doctrines of the Christian religion." The government also made clear that

[97] H. G. Underwood to Dr. Ellinwood, (1/22/1887, 1/27/1887), *Underwood Letters vol.1,* 405, 497; George William Gilmore, *Korea from its capital with a chapter on missions* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication and Sabbath-school Work, 1892), 307.

mission work was not permitted under the current treaty and that such actions "not authorized by the treaty… shall cease."[98] Upon receiving this notice, the United States Minister adopted the Korean objection and recalled Underwood and Appenzeller from the interior to Seoul and ordered them to "refrain from teaching the Christian religion and administering its rites and ordinances to the Korean people."[99]

While illicit evangelism by Protestant missionaries ceased temporarily, Underwood was unwilling to accept any legal restrictions. Despite the warning from the Korean government, he claimed that the missionaries "were under higher orders than that of a Korean king" and therefore "our duty was to preach and take the consequences, resting for authority on the word of God."[100] With such self-assigned divine prerogative, Underwood was not deterred by the Korean government order and continued to "teach and preach, in public and private, singing hymns."[101]

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[98] Board of the Foreign Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church, *The Annual Report of the Board of the Foreign Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church* (1888), 338. Hereafter, *Annual Report of BFMMEC* ; Min Kyŏng-bae, *Han'guk kidok kyohoesa (sin kaejŏn p'an)*, 126-127.
[99] *Annual Report of BFMMEC* (1888), 338.
[100] Lillias H. Underwood, *Fifteen years among the top-knots; or, Life in Korea* (Boston, New York: American tract society, 1904), 14.
[101] Ibid., 14.

There is no doubt that Underwood's religious convictions are what drove him to take such aggressive and bold action. However, he would not have dared to do so had it not been for the treaty right of extraterritoriality. All American missionaries knew that they were exempt from Korean jurisdiction despite whatever illegal act they might commit in Korea and were ultimately protected by the consular court under the American flag. In fact, the U.S. legation, despite its official stance against illegal evangelism in Korea, did not deport or punish missionaries for their transgressions. Rather, when any trouble took place between the missionaries and Korean authority, the U.S. government always did its best to protect the missionary interest as an American interest.[102]

On the other hand, the Korean King, Kojong, wanted to maintain friendly relations with the United States and desired its protection from the Chinese and Japanese power.[103] As a result, while the Korean government was never willing to permit Christianity officially, it tended to acquiescence to the missionary work. The missionaries could feel the effect of this change in the 1890s, observing that, "The Christian religion is nominally under the ban, but, practically missionaries may do religious work as long as the attention of the

[102] Horace Newton Allen, *Things Korean; a collection of sketches and anecdotes, missionary and diplomatic* (New York,Chicago: F. H. Revell Company, 1908), 182-183.
[103] Harrington, *God, mammon, and the Japanese*, 83, 211-213.

government is not directed to their operations or political complications do not arise to compel a protest."[104]

Popular Opposition against Christianity

Despite the real sense that the Chosŏn government was turning a blind eye toward missionary work suggested in the above observation, its optimism was nevertheless unfounded and did not reflect the reality of the foreign mission in Korea. The extension of Protestant mission work without official government sanctioning caused as many political complications with the Korean government and society as the Catholics. The Protestant followed the Catholic's lead to justify its illegal mission work under the unequal treaty and there was no difference between the two missions in terms of their neglect of Korean sovereignty and local jurisdiction.

In fact, anti-missionary opposition was conspicuous from the very beginning of the Protestant missions. When the Presbyterian mission began a hospital and an orphanage in Seoul, a vicious rumor soon spread among the local populace that the missionaries were

[104] Gilmore, *Korea from its capital with a chapter on missions*, 304

"sending them [Koreans to] America as slaves" and "fattening them up for the table."[105] This kind of rumor was observed in China as early as 1850s and it seems that the Koreans were influenced by anti-missionary sentiment in China. Such anti-foreign sentiment soon took the form of direct demonstration. In February 1887, street shops in Seoul closed in unison—a traditional means of expressing popular dissatisfaction—and Seoul merchants demanded the removal of all foreigners from the city center to suburban Yongsan, outside the city gate.[106]

The shop closure was followed by an anti-Christian decree in April 1888, in which the Korean government made clear its will to maintain its proscription of Christianity. Protestant missionaries at that time and Protestant historians later explained that the decree was directed against the Catholic missionaries who had embarrassed the king by building a Cathedral on a hill that looked down upon the palace.[107] However, the official note of objection that was sent to the U.S. legation specified the American Protestant missionaries

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[105] Horace G. Underwood to Dr. Ellinwood, (7/9/1886), *Underwood Letters vol.1*, 384.
[106] Horace Newton Allen, *A chronological index; some of the chief events in the foreign intercourse of Korea from the beginning of the Christian era to the twentieth century* (Seoul: Press of Methodist Pub. House, 1901), 21.
[107] Daniel M. Davies, *The life and thought of Henry Gerhard Appenzeller* (Lewiston, N.Y.: E. Mellen Press, 1988), 210.

as the violators of law[108] and there is no doubt that the Korean government made no distinction between Protestantism and Catholicism but wanted to keep both in check as subversive forms of heterodoxy. As mentioned above, royal patronage was given only for the medical and diplomatic services of the missionaries, whom the Chosŏn government considered as no more than court employees.

The anti-Christian decree appears to have incited the grassroots anti-Christian movement. Shortly thereafter, another grotesque rumor was disseminated claiming that missionaries had kidnapped Korean babies and killed them to use their eyes for medicine.[109] This rumor caused a mass hysteria that turned into a violent anti-missionary mob, later known as the "Baby Riot" in 1888. The frightened missionaries quickly fled into the U.S. legation and "lost sleep… took turn about one night watching for the outbreak" on that night, while the U.S. Navy squadron off the Inch'ŏn port was quickly mobilized to defend the legation building.[110] The riot was pacified in two weeks through Korean government intervention without any missionary casualties. Nevertheless, this incident furnished convincing proof that Korea was not yet open to Christianity.

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[108] See note 97 in this chapter.
[109] Underwood, *Fifteen years among the top-knots; or, Life in Korea*, 15.
[110] "Historical Sketch of the Korea Mission," *Korean Repository* (July 1898):261.

While the "Baby Riot" subsided in Seoul, the anti-foreign movement was spreading in the rural provinces beyond the city gates of Seoul. This was around the time that French Catholic missionaries began open proselytizing and emerging Protestant missionaries were naturally identified with the former. For instance, when William Baird (1862-1931), a Presbyterian missionary (NP), traveled to Kyŏngsang Province in 1893, he found that people feared him as a Catholic priest and he could not approach them closely, a circumstance he decried: "people in this country shun us."[111] The same year Daniel Gifford (n.a -1900, NP) and George Heber Jones (1867-1919, NM) found an anonymous anti-Christian edict posted on the wall of their residence, while James Scranton was robbed on the street one night.[112]

The more fearful experience missionaries suffered at this time was when the *Tonghak* staged a mass rebellion in 1894 under the slogan of anti-foreignism. Upon receiving news of the uprising, the Protestant missionaries in the region all retreated to Seoul and thus saved their lives, but many Catholic villages were burnt and destroyed in the

[111] Richard H. Baird, *William M. Baird of Korea; a profile* (Oakland, Cali: Richard H. Baird, 1968), 31.
[112] Koryŏ Taehakkyo Asea Munje Yŏnʾguso, *Ku hanʾguk oegyo munsŏ : mi-an* (Seoul: Koryŏ Taehakkyo Chʻulpʻanbu 1965), Document number, 718, 776.

southern provinces, while scathing anti-foreign edicts were posted on the streets in Seoul to scare all foreigners, whether Catholic or Protestant. [113]

Extraterritoriality and Converts

Given the strong anti-foreign and anti-Christian atmosphere, it was inevitable that Protestant missionaries would rely on their home government's power, whether political or military, in time of need. An instance of persecution in Pyŏngyang in 1894, shortly before the Tonghak Rebellion, provides a good case in point. At that time, Pyŏngyang was not a treaty city and foreign residence was not permitted there, much less the Christian religion. Yet, both the Presbyterian and Methodist missionaries had visited this city and made several converts there. Their justification for their activities was that the Japanese were already there and that Americans should deserve the same rights of residence as citizens of a most-favored-nation.[114] Moreover, they purchased property in the name of local converts and made it into a clandestine church. However, the illegal Christian intrusion was soon detected by local residents and reported to the local authorities. The governor of Pyŏngyang

[113] Allen, *A chronological index; some of the chief events in the foreign intercourse of Korea from the beginning of the Christian era to the twentieth century*, 29 ; Yi Wŏn-sun, "Chosŏn malgi sahoe ŭi tae sŏgyo munje yŏn'gu,"109.
[114] H. G. Underwood to Dr. Ellinwood (8/41890), *Underwood Letters vol.1*, 609.

quickly arrested and jailed the native Christians who had helped the foreigners, while the missionaries were saved from the same fate due to their extraterritorial status. Missionaries responded to local Christian requests "to secure protection for them,"[115] by sending an urgent telegraph to the American and British legations in Seoul to press the Korean Foreign Ministry to release the Christians in Pyŏngyang. The Korean government responded quickly, but the governor, who possessed considerable power as a close relative of the current Queen, resisted the release order from the central government and continued torturing the Christians in prison. To make matters worse, the missionary residence in the city was sieged by a local anti-Christian mob. The house was stoned and the wall was torn down, while native water carriers were blocked from supplying water to the foreigners.[116] In the event, the governor surrendered to the central government and the Korean Christians were released, but the "Pyŏngyang Persecution" in 1894 provides further proof that there was no official or legal sanction for Christian mission work in Korea.

Meanwhile, the "Pyŏngyang Persecution" left a significant impact upon the popular perception of the foreign missionaries and the subsequent development of the

[115] Rosetta Sherwood Hall, ed. *The Life of Rev. WIlliam James Hall, M.D.* (New York: Press of Eaton & Mains,1897), 271-72.
[116] Ibid., 274, 276.

Protestant Church. To draw upon a contemporary missionary's testimony, "this victory made the people generally realize that missionaries were their friends and that behind the missionaries was a Power which could overcome even magistrates and governors."[117] This impression is further endorsed by the Korean Christian historian, Paik Nak-chun (1895-1985), who was born and brought up in Chŏngju, P'yŏngan Province in the aftermath of this event.

> This single episode made a profound impression on the minds of the people. Even the governor had to yield when he came to deal with missionaries. The people who had been oppressed and subjected to extortion by the governor turned to the missionary and his religion as a measure of protection and personal safety.[118]

This description of the oppressed Koreans who turned to the missionaries for protection and safety was no different from that of the Korean Catholics under the French mission. In the Korean context, where there was no governmental recognition for Christianity, it was impossible to carry out the mission work without relying on the privileges of extraterritoriality.

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[117] Lillias H. Underwood, *Underwood of Korea* (New York, London: Fleming H. Revell company, 1918), 134.
[118] Paek Nak-chun, *The history of protestant missions in Korea 1832-1910*, 256-7.

Given that "extra-territoriality ensures the safety of the missionaries, but adds nothing to the security of its converts,"[119] it was inevitable that missionaries would attempt to extend their privileges to local converts. As a contemporary foreign observer put it, "while foreigners are not subject to the native laws, they yet have influence in securing mitigation of punishments or release of prisoners held under the operation of those laws" and therefore there were cases where "the missionaries secured the release of men who had been imprisoned on grounds which to the missionaries seemed unjust.[120]

Once the Korean populace recognized the superior power of missionaries to provide protection from the law, many soon came to flock around the missionaries either for conversion or for employment. According to Franklin Ohlinger (1845-1919), a Methodist missionary (NM), it was already a common idea in 1892 that, "A Korean who is in any way connected with foreigners, especially with missionaries, is perfectly free from the restraints of Koreans as well as all other law" and "That is their interpretation of ex-territoriality."[121] Horace N. Allen (NP) agreed, observing: "This [extraterritorial right] places great power in his [missionary] hands… is pretty sure to be led into a greater or less

[119] Gilmore, *Korea from its capital with a chapter on missions*, 309
[120] Ibid., 288-289.
[121] *Annual Report of BFMMEC* (1892), 286.

number of cases where in a native desires to profit by his Christian connection and obtain foreign protection…The hope of this sort of assistance some times induces people to flock to the Church."[122] In short, the missionaries were well aware that their privileged status was as much appealing to the Koreans as their religion. Whether the missionaries were comfortable with such Korean expectations or not, they were bound to be identified with foreign power as long as they possessed privileges of extraterritorial status that oppressed Koreans could never dream of. The Protestant Church appeared to Koreans as a political refuge as much as the Catholic Church.

Conflicts with Local Customs and Society

The Korean Christian sense of enjoying the extraterritorial privileges of the missionaries also enabled their bold challenge to local religious traditions, including ancestral worship and other practices. Like the early Catholic Mission, the Protestant Missions, both Presbyterian and Methodist, defined the Confucian-style ancestral worship as idol worship and required the converts to discontinue the practice as a requisite for church membership. Naturally, Korean Christians were persecuted and they were often

[122] Allen, *Things Korean; a collection of sketches and anecdotes, missionary and diplomatic*, 181.

ousted from their family and the local society they belonged to. Daniel Gifford (NP) testified to the hardships faced by Korean Christians:

> From the moment the man decides for Christ, a complete revolution in the tenor of this life begins. One of the great days for the worship of ancestors arrives, and on conscientious grounds he refuses to join in the worship. Immediately he finds himself in trouble, and this is especially true to the *Yangban*, or aristocratic claims to social superiority depend so largely upon the universally strict adherence to the system of Confucius…Hence our Christian finds himself opposed by the bitter anger of the men of his family, and all his near and distant relations, not to mention the dislike and ridicule of the rest of the community.[123]

It was not ancestral worship alone but all indigenous religious practices that had to be abandoned completely as "demon worship." The missionaries encouraged the Christians to show their determination in action and to perform the burning of traditional religious elements in their house, which was "assailed by the tears and imprecations of the female part of his household" as the cult of non-Confucian miscellaneous deities were more a religion of women in traditional Korea. Such provocative idol destruction was often carried out under missionary supervision. In her diary, Mattie Noble (NM) provides the following account of one such mission-sponsored ritual.

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[123] Daniel L. Gifford, *Everyday-life in Korea* (Chicago,New York,Toronto: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1898), 158-159.

> At one home where the mother had been a Christian a few days, we were invited in to help destroy the fetish… Seeing one fetish on the wall, I asked its meaning and was told that it was the fetish to the spirit protecting the house building… In one room on a shelf were three baskets full of clothes that had been made for offering to different evil spirits. In a crock was some old cooked rice. She desired to burn them all… we took them away to be used for the poorer children of the Church , as outside of the Church no one would use then for the fear of the wrath of the Evil One.[124]

Noble also intervened in non-Christian life and did her best to eliminate any "fetishes" that came within her sight. When she saw Koreans in her neighborhood called sorcerers to drive away the evil spirit of a sick child, she took her native Christian woman with her and "went to the open courtyard of the house to see if we might possibly talk to the mother about the Great Physician." Though she could not make herself heard, "amid the noise and confusion," she "sent two Christian women some other time to teach them."[125]

The Presbyterian, Samuel F. Moore (1860-1906, NP), was more confrontational. When he made a visit to a Buddhist monastery in 1900, he lost his patience and smashed some temple idols. Though he later explained that he had merely "lightly tapped one [idol]

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[124] *Mattie Noble's Diary* (1898/2/5) in Han'gukk kidokkyo yŏksayŏn'guso, ed. *The Jounrals of Mattie Wilcox Noble 1892-1934* (Sŏul: Han'gukk kidokkyo yŏksayŏn'guso,2003). Hereafter, *Mattie Noble's Diary.*
[125] *Mattie Noble's Diary* (1897/3/7).

as illustrating their inanity,"[126] his bold action came to be known by the British representative in Seoul who, fearing a Korean reprise of the previous year's anti-Christian Boxer Rebellion in China, demanded the American government take "drastic measures in punishment" of Moore.[127] Horace N. Allen, who had by that time left the Presbyterian Mission to serve as a U.S. Consular representative in Seoul, took up the matter with the State Department and could placate Moore only by threatening him with imprisonment.[128]

Allen himself defended other missionaries as men of "common sense with superior mental quality,"[129] but iconoclasm against local deities was copied and widely practiced by Korean Christians, for which Christians were targeted by anti-Christian mobs. A detailed account of the cases is omitted here, but let it suffice to quote a few pages from the first official annul of the Korean Presbyterian Church in the Korean language, published in 1928, in which many cases of anti-Christian persecution were reported as a result of iconoclastic

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[126] S. F. Moore to Horace Allen (1900/3/3) quoted in Martha Huntley, *To Start a Work: The Foundations of Protestant Mission in Korea (1884-1919)* (Seoul: Presbyterian Church of Korea, 1987), 47.
[127] Allen, *Things Korean; a collection of sketches and anecdotes, missionary and diplomatic*, 173-174; Harrington, *God, mammon, and the Japanese*, 105-106.
[128] Harrington, *God, mammon, and the Japanese*, 105-106.
[129] Allen, *Things Korean; a collection of sketches and anecdotes, missionary and diplomatic*, 173.

acts of destruction carried out against local traditions. For instance, in P'yŏngan Province alone, the following cases are reported for the year 1894.

> In Yŏngch'ŏn, a Christian believer, Paek In-gyŏl, demolished the head part of an idol in the local shrine [*sŏnghwangdang*]. Villagers were excited to rise up and lynched Paek harshly, prohibiting other Christians to reside in the village any more. This caused a huge uproar for a few months but eventually solved by the intervention by government officials. In Sŏnchŏn County, when Koŭp Church was just established, an evangelist, Chŏng Ing-no stepped in a local shrine building and pulled down the divine tablet. Thereupon, villagers were excited to beat our believers and banned our believers from farming in the village, causing another huge uproar for a few months. Government officials intervened and settled it down.[130]

The two cases quoted above are those that are clearly recoded as having been triggered by Christians' acts of icon destruction. If we include other cases of trouble that are recorded without a clear explanation of the cause, we can add a few more cases of severe anti-Christian violence such as beating, lynching in detention, and arson of church buildings by non-believers.[131] Even without Christian provocation, anti-Christian sentiment prevailed in the countryside and violent clashes were frequent in other regions.

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[130] Ch'a Chae-myong, ed. *Chosŏn yesugyo changnohoe sagi* (Kyŏngsŏng [Seoul]: Sinmunan kyhoedang,1928), 75-77.
[131] Ibid., 75-79.

The above-mentioned Presbyterian Annul describes the general state of anti-Christian trend in Hwanghae Province in 1896 as follows.

> Non-believers persecuted us on the ground that Christians are immoral meeting men and women together and that we discontinue ancestral worship and abandon lineage traditions. They caused many difficulties for our Church in various ways. For instance, in T'angp'o, Pongsan County, our meeting place was destroyed because we did not participate in the Confucian worship in the village; In Imdong, Pongsan County, our believers were beaten; In P'yŏnchŏn, P'yŏngsan County, they [non-Christians] banned us to sing hymnals and reported to the police to file a lawsuit against us because we did not give a heed. Besides, there were frequent incidents in which the stubborn and wandering delinquents formed a flock and demolished our church gates, beat our believers and humiliated us.[132]

Needless to say, this series of Christian conflicts with the local society completely concurs with the case of Korean Catholics in its early development as described in the previous chapter. Regardless of the institutional and doctrinal differences between the two Churches, both Catholics and Protestants were perceived as a dangerous social heterodoxy under foreign control and were thus attacked and ostracized by local society at large. There is no doubt that their belief in transcendental God and new Christian principles led converts to make a radical departure from Korean social conventions. We should not overlook,

[132] Ibid., 78.

however, the fact that their destructive actions were often taken under the encouragement and support of foreign Missions who enjoyed extraterritorial protection. In this regard, the Protestants shared a common culture with the Catholics and their radical departure from social convention must be explained not only by their religious belief in a transcendental God but also by their sense of socio-political empowerment under the foreign Mission.

Catholic-Protestant Conflicts

This common reliance on foreign power among early Korean Christian converts is also evidenced by the fact that there were many disputes between Korean Catholics and Protestants in which both sides claimed that they had a sovereign right in the local society and were not to be disturbed by any other party, whether government or private. The most famous case of Catholic-Protestant conflict is one that occurred in Hwanghae Province in 1898. The Korean Presbyterian Church records the following account of this incident.

> In Chaeryŏng in 1898, when our believers were building a church, more than one hundred Catholics came to us out of blue and announced that they will also use the church. When we rejected, Catholics were greatly angered and tried to stop our construction work. Since we were outnumbered, we had to stop it and sent a messenger to P'yŏngyang to let the [Presbyterian] missionaries heed our grief. However, there was no

> effect [of the missionary intervention] and Catholics threatened us so fearfully that our believers were depressed to the extreme. Then, Ch'oe Pyŏng-sa and Kim Chae-hwan could not endure the plight anymore and filed a suit in the court against Father Wilhelm [the head of the Catholic Church in that region]. On April 2 in the same year, the court trial began and two hundred and more Catholics appeared to demonstrate [their power] against our two Protestant believers. Given that scary condition, we never thought of winning the case, but with only our Lord's help, the Head of our Church, we were able to win and complete the construction of the church…[133]

What is important to note in this passage is that both Catholics and Protestants took enlisting missionary support for their case for granted. Unlike the Catholic Father, the Presbyterian missionaries did not represent Koreans directly in court this time, but they were still the first authority to receive the report from Korean Christians before the local police. In another Catholic-Protestant conflict in Charyŏng in 1900, in which Protestants were beaten by Catholics for not contributing money for a Catholic church building fund, the Protestant missionaries pressed the U.S. Minister in Seoul to intervene and let him negotiate with the French Minister to stop the French Fathers behind the scheme. When the issue was brought to the local Korean court, Presbyterian missionaries, Horace G.

[133] Ibid., 78-79.

Underwood and Samuel A. Moffett attended the trial as observers, which eventually judged in favor of the Protestant cause.[134]

By the end of the 1890s, it was common sense among Koreans that Protestant missionaries held the same power and privileges as Catholic priests. As a result, Protestant missionaries were embarrassed at times to find that their converts also came to the Church to receive protection. James E. Adams (1867-1929, NP) testifies to one such experience in his field in Kyŏngsang Province in 1901.

> The immediate and urgent motive for this [visiting of local Christian groups] was that one of them was reported to be going over, bag and baggage, to the Roman Catholics, who would give help in a civil suit in the native courts when we would not. This group was a sort of family group, almost all the members being in one relationship… They were quite frank to admit that they did not think much of the doctrines of that church, but it was essential that they should have protection in order to live, and that was the only place they could get it. We labored with them for several days but without great apparent effect…[135]

It was not only the common people who sought foreign protection. Even among Korean officials, who had witnessed the superior power of the missionary to their own government, there were a few who began to seek Church membership as a better means of security. Yun

[134] Harrington, *God, mammon, and the Japanese*,116-117.
[135] "Tempted to join the Catholics," *Korea Field* (November 1901):7.

Ch'i-ho, one of the first Korean Methodist converts, found one such person among his friends and wrote in his diary.

> Called on Rou Chai Hion [sic], the Vice Minister of Law. He desires to join either the Catholic or the Protestant Mission, as one of the means of protection in this land of oppression and disorder. He is, by the way, one of the smartest and straightest men in the Corean officialdom.[136]

As discussed below, the conversion to Christianity by high-ranking officials was rare, but this testimony shows how missionary power was generally perceived by the Koreans. It also shows that for seekers of political asylum the decision to go to the Protestant Church or Catholic Church was rather a random choice. The important thing was whether the foreigners could protect them in exchange for their association to the Church.

The Mission and Material Opulence

In addition to extraterritorial privilege, the Protestant missionaries also used their material wealth as another means to impress Korean converts. The American foreign compound became a major venue for the exhibition of this material wealth. During the high

[136] *Yun Ch'i-ho's Diary* (2/20/1897) in Kuksa p'yŏnch'an wiwŏnhoe, ed. *Yun Ch'i-ho Ilgi* (Sŏul Kuksa p'yŏnch'an wiwŏnhoe 1973).Hereafter, *Yun Ch'i-ho's Diary*. Note that the original is written in English. The author quotes this text from the Kuksa p'yŏnch'an wiwŏnhoe's online database at (http://db.history.go.kr).

tide of western imperialism in the late nineteenth century, it was a universal practice for colonialists to form a foreign compound in which they could maintain their home culture and lifestyle in the colony. The American missionaries in Korea, though they were not formal colonialists, were in no way different in following this social convention. For example, Henry G. Appenzeller, the first Methodist missionary to Korea, was gratified when he first saw a foreign compound in Yokohama en route to Korea.

> The first thing that impressed me on landing in Yokohama was the "foreign concession", a section of the city set aside exclusively for foreigners. Here I found myself practically in an American or English city. Good substantial buildings, wide streets and the quick, lively step of European. Then the "compound" system was novel to me.[137]

Appenzeller's view was not unique. As soon as they settled in Seoul, and regardless of denominational affiliation, American Protestant missionaries together began constructing a foreign compound in the proximity of the U.S. Legation. Mrs. Ella Appenzeller wrote happily her family: "We, with the Presbyterians and the Legations, are making this end of

[137] Henry Appenzeller to D.A. Sonders, (5/15/1885) quoted in Davies, *The life and thought of Henry Gerhard Appenzeller*, 118.

the city a miniature America. We can show thousands what a home is like, and have made ours as pleasant as possible."[138]

As the last part of Ella Appenzeller's statement reveals, the missionary house was not merely a place of residence, but an exhibition center where missionaries introduced Koreans to the merits of Christian civilization, which Koreans naively identified with the American way of life. With this purpose, the missionaries had little hesitation about making every aspect of their home life as American as possible. Typically, a missionary house was furnished with American desks, chairs and carpets they had sent from home. As for daily food, they relied heavily upon imports from home.[139] According a missionary wife, "Rice, chickens, and eggs could be bought at the Korean market, which was held every five days, but other supplies had to come from San Francisco."[140]

To maintain a comfortable living, it was a common missionary practice to hire many domestic servants. Back home, a private servant would have been a luxury to most missionaries, but in Korea they could use their decent salary to hire a number of them.

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[138] Ella Appenzeller to Mrs. J.S. Wadsworth, (5/14/1886), quoted in ibid., 185.
[139] Ryu Taeyŏng, *Ch'ogi miguk sŏngyosa yŏn'gu* (Sŏul: Han'guk kidokkyosa yŏn'guso, 2001), 59-60.
[140] Anabel Major Nisbet, *Day In and Day Out in Korea* (Richmond, VA: Presbyterian Committee of Publication, 1919), 26.

According to Horace Allen's testimony, the average market price for servants varied depending on their nationality: "A first-class Chinese boy (all Chinese male servants are called boys, irrespective of age) can be obtained for about twelve to fifteen dollars a month; a Japanese cook and his wife can be hired for about fifteen dollars a month; while Korean man or boy will serve for from four to six dollars."[141] Allen himself hired a Korean waiter, a gate boy, sedan chair carriers, and several other helpers, in addition to a Chinese nurse for his child and a Japanese cook.[142] As domestic servants were considered a commodity, it soon became common that the missionaries prearrange servants for the newcomer missionaries. Upon first arriving in Seoul in 1893, O.R. Avison (1860-1956), a Presbyterian doctor (NP), was surprised to find a Japanese amah, a Korean cook, and, an errand man, waiting to serve him in his residence.[143]

The justification for hiring so many servants varied among the missionaries. Miss Barlow, a Methodist missionary, said it was a substitute for modern infrastructure.

> Servants in the Orient are not a luxury but a necessity. In the West you also had servants, in the form of running water, electricity, gas, and such fixtures as washers, sweepers, and flush toilets… In Korea there are not

[141] Gilmore, *Korea from its capital with a chapter on missions*, 270.
[142] Ibid., 271; Harrington, *God, mammon, and the Japanese*, 58; Paek Nak-chun, *The history of protestant missions in Korea 1832-1910,* 98.
[143] Oliver R. Avison, *Memories of Life in Korea* (N.p.: n.p., ca.1941), 110.

> such conveniences to save both labor and precious time. Yes, here, in order to accomplish anything worthwhile, one has to have servants. It is a clear "must."[144]

Others said that studying the native language and teaching their children at home left them too busy to do household work,[145] while some others retrospectively excused themselves by saying that "untrained servants of that day were unable to handle more than one kind of a job…an oriental servant is apt to have a very definite idea as to what he will do and what he will not do."[146] Considering the gap in living standard between Korea and America at that time, these statements may have an element of truth. But there was another reason for having so many domestic servants, which few missionaries were willing to mention--- their desire for material wealth and power. Annie Baird (1864-1916, NP), a wife of the pioneer Presbyterian missionary, William Baird (NP), was exceptionally honest on that point. She admitted that the missionaries in Korea were constantly exposed to a strong temptation to employ more servants than actually necessary because "it comes so easily and cheaply."[147] She also observed that a young missionary couple to Korea who "came out keyed up to

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[144] Sherwood Hall, *With stethoscope in Asia : Korea*, 1st ed. (McLean, Va.: MCL Associates, 1978), 234.
[145] Avison, *Memories of Life in Korea*, 113.
[146] Annie Laurie Adams Baird, *Inside views of mission life* (Philadelphia,: Westminster Press, 1913), 67.
[147] Ibid., 22.

endure physical hardship of any and every description" usually felt that their "occidental conscience" was not satisfied when they saw "missionaries living for the most part in comfortable houses, surrounded by bevies of yellow, black or brown servants... and presenting an appearance of astonishing ease," and they even thought of dispensing with servants altogether.[148] Yet, as time went on and their "mental vision clears," they also ended up in conceding their lofty ideals and adopting conventional missionary practice, acquiescing in the observation that "the cheapest and most plentiful thing under heathen skies is human manual labor, and the scarcest and most precious is missionary time and strength."[149]

It is in such homes of "astonishing ease" surrounded by "bevies of servants" that many Koreans were invited to learn the essence of Christian civilization in its American expression. The missionaries were generally confident and positive about the evangelizing effect of such visual opulence upon the Korean mind.

> Koreans are fond of visiting the homes of foreigners. They admire the comfort…of the home life of the strangers. They go home to ponder on the religion which takes hold of the present life of man… They mark our cheerful faces and our enjoyment of life, and wonder at the cause. They

[148] Ibid., 22.
[149] Ibid., 23.

> listen to the tales of achievements of Western science. The huge cities, the wonderful railroad, the marvelous steamboat, impress them with a sense of the lifting power of our civilization. When they realize that all this is the outcome and development of our religion, the practical value of Christianity makes a powerful appeal to them. [150]

In fact, material superiority was the common answer to the most frequently asked questions by the Koreans--- "What good it is going to do [to become a Christian] or "in what respect Christianity is superior to Confucianism and Buddhism?" To these questions, the typical missionary answer was to "point to the superior comforts which Christians enjoy, to detail the advantages of a distinctively Christian civilization."[151]

The affluent and conspicuous foreign lifestyle of the missionaries stood in stark contrast to the poor living standard of the Korean Christians who came under missionary care. On the one hand, the gap in material living standards convinced the poor Koreans of the power of the foreign missionaries and the superiority of the Christian religion. On the other hand, such material wealth also carried a danger of alienating Koreans from the missionaries physically, culturally, and, psychosocially. Nonetheless, the general view among the missionaries is that placing an affluent lifestyle on display had a more positive impact on winning more converts. The effects of this practice had been tested and verified

[150] Gilmore, *Korea from its capital with a chapter on missions*, 315-316.
[151] Ibid., 315-316.

in neighboring mission fields such as China. On this reasoning, the Korea missionaries insisted that "the case is the same in Korea" and the Presbyterian mission board raised their salaries "taking into account of the great advantage of this argument."[152] In sum, Protestant missionaries from the beginning put great emphasis on the promise of material wealth, which they considered a good expedient means for Christian propaganda in Korea.

Missionary Adaptation to Social Hierarchy

Using extraterritoriality and material affluence, missionaries constructed their image as a new ruling class in Korean society. In their home residences, missionaries were surrounded by a number of servants who were dependent upon their foreign masters for pay and protection. American missionaries, many of whom came to Korea in their twenties straight from college or seminary, did not enjoy commanding positions in their own society.[153] Once they crossed the Pacific and reached Korea, however, they were treated as masters without any qualification. Being an American missionary secured them considerable social privilege and the young missionaries soon learned the joy "to be lord

[152] Ibid., 315-316.
[153] Many of the Korean missionaries were involved in the so-called Student Volunteer Movement (SVM) and applied for the mission upon graduating college. For SVM's influence over the Korea missionaries, see Ryu Taeyŏng, *Ch'ogi miguk sŏngyosa yŏn'gu*, 137- 154.

over a little crowd of underlings" and embraced "a pleasant feeling of power and position."[154]

It is important to note here that the occupation of domestic servant was held in the lowest esteem in Chosŏn society, where the institution of slavery still existed and little distinction was made between servant and slave.[155] Thus, servants in the missionary house followed the social convention of making themselves absolutely subservient to their master's will and served their foreign masters loyally as they would do to the Korean aristocratic class called *yangban*. Servants, for examples, addressed the missionaries as "*yŏnggamnim*"(master) or "*taein*" (great man),[156] which were the honorific titles for social superiors in the Korean language. Likewise, missionary wives were called "*taepuin*"(great lady) as the spouses of honorable men. This social convention gladdened many American missionaries of common origin, who could never expect such a high title at home, and they

[154] Baird, *Inside views of mission life*, 24.
[155] It is estimated that the slave population reached around one-third of the total population in the seventeenth century and yangbans still held household slaves in the late nineteenth century.James B. Palais, "A Search for Korean Uniqueness," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 55, no. 2 (1995): 414-418.
[156] Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Korea Mission, *The Fiftieth Anniversary of the Korea Mission of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., 1884-1934* (Seoul Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A, 1934), 37.

often reported this home proudly: “The foreigners here are highly respected… We are here called “the great man” or “the great lady.” [157]

The missionary desire to hold and perpetuate their superior position to the Koreans was also manifest in the Korean language they learned to use. The Korean language is sensitive to distinctions of social status, and the mode of speech depends on the relation of power between the speakers. The missionaries often complained that the Korean language was so foreign and difficult to learn, but they scarcely made a mistake when it came to whom they should use *panmal*, the language seniors use to address juniors, which the missionaries called “low talk.” The first missionaries perhaps learned this linguistic practice naturally through the real-life experience of being a master, but using “low talk” to Koreans soon became such a common habit that it was actually taught in the Korean language manual compiled by veteran missionaries. The manual instructed the missionary learner to use “low talk” to “children, boys, and, in general, to servants,” adding a special note, “do not be afraid of often using something a little higher” to servants.[158] It also taught

[157] *Mattie Noble’s Diary* (11/14/1892).
[158] Annie Laurie Adams Baird, *Fifty helps for the beginner in the use of the Korean language*, 2nd ed. (N.P.: n.p., 1898), 56.

missionaries proper manners expected of a Korean nobleman: "Do not, as a rule, salute to children or servants first, but expect and return their salutations."[159]

Having received such training, the missionaries did not hesitate to demonstrate their superior position to Koreans in public just as *yangban* aristocrats did. For instance, when the missionaries walked on a crowded street with servants, they let the servants "tell them [people] avoid pressing near us and to make way for us."[160] The missionary ladies avoided traveling horseback, because in Chosŏn society "only the low dancing girls travel in this way."[161] So, they used sedan chairs as this was the primary means of transportation for high-class women. And, when they went on sedan chair for evangelical purposes, they made their servants follow on foot after the chair carriers.[162] Later, some male missionaries gave their servants a more difficult time by traveling fast on a bicycle. In this case, the missionary did not travel with the servants but went ahead to the villages and the towns of his destination to attract a crowd with this strange locomotive and waited for his servants to

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[159] Ibid., 59.
[160] *Mattie Noble's Dia*ry (6/14/1893).
[161] H.G. Underwood to Dr. Ellinwood (3/11/1889), *Underwood Letters vol.1*, 516.
[162] Helen F. MacRae Parker Lee and Ross Penner, *A tiger on dragon mountain : the life of Rev. Duncan M. MacRae, D.D., Ma Moksa, "Duncan Korea"* (Charlottetown, P.E.I.: A.J. Haslam, 1993), 92.

catch up with him and follow up his gospel teaching.[163] In the 1920s, missionaries began to drive T-Fords,[164] a mode of transportation too luxurious to afford not only for Koreans, but also for most Japanese colonialists.

The social conduct of the missionaries was so perfectly in accordance with that of the traditional yangban aristocrats that local Koreans soon coined the new idiom, *yang taein,* meaning "western yangban."[165] Contemporary missionary reports and writings are inclined to depict their self-image as benevolent and egalitarian servants to the heathens, but their image in the Korean eye was quite different. No matter how benevolent they were when compared with the local yangban, they were nonetheless masters and identified as such in the local context.

Servants-turned-Christian Leaders

The master-servant relation was originally shaped in the domestic sphere of the missionary residence but was soon carried over into the ecclesiastical sphere. This is

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[163] This practice became common around 1900. Clara Hedberg Bruen, *40 years in Korea* (N.p.: n.p., ca. 1980), 103.
[164] Ibid., 367.
[165] Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Korea Mission, *The Fiftieth Anniversary of the Korea Mission of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., 1884-1934*, 37.

because many of the early Korean converts, including Korean pastors, were actually produced from among missionary servants. The missionaries, especially in the early stage of the mission, regarded these servants as the primary target of conversion since they were within reach and more receptive to missionary influence, being protected in their foreign residence and free from governmental and popular harassment. In fact, in 1893, the Methodist Mission reported that out of sixty-two Korean members of their Church, one-third of them were under missionary employment.[166] In this context, it was a natural consequence that the servant-turned-convert did not enjoy an equal status with the missionaries. Even after conversion, they remained as servants under missionary pay. Some, however, were assigned as "helpers" to provide assistance to missionary work. To take a few examples, Kim Chang-sik (1857-1929), who later became the first Korean deacon in the Methodist Church in Korea, was originally a gatekeeper, hired by Franklin Ohlinger (NM).[167] Chŏn Tŏkki (1875-1914), who was later known as a representative anti-Japanese Christian nationalist, was a cook for William Scranton (NM), the first Methodist medical

[166] *Annual Report of BFMMEC* (1893), 253.
[167] James Dale Van Buskirk, *Korea, land of the dawn* (New York,: Missionary Education Movement of the United States and Canada, 1931), 38 ; Yu Tong-sik, *Han'guk kamni kyohoe ŭi yŏksa : 1884-1992 I* (Sŏul: Kidokkyo Taehan Kamnihoe, 1994), 472.

missionary.[168] Yi Ki-p'ung (1865-1942), one of the first seven Korean Presbyterian ministers, ordained in 1907, and the first Korean missionary to the Quelpart Island (Cheju Island) was also a cook for William Swallen (1865-1954, NP).[169] In the case of Walter Erdman (1877-1948, NP), his female servant was such an excellent cook that he hesitated to use her as an evangelist.

> My cook has been a great help. She is unusually bright and quick to understand my meaning, so I often ask her to "translate" my words to others. She is a very good cook, too, but the fear is growing upon me that she is too bright to be a cook all her life and some day [*sic*] I will have to make her into a Bible woman, or my conscience won't be easy! Good servants are very important in a missionary home, but in the ultimate, good Bible women are probably more so.[170]

The "amahs", nannies, in the missionary home, were also mobilized for evangelical purposes. One such amah at the Swallens (NP) residence was recruited as an evangelist and later sent to Cheju Island as the first woman missionary. The Swallens were particularly fond of recruiting Korean evangelists among their servants and thus Mrs. Swallen

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[168] Charles August Sauer, ed. *Within the gate : comprising the addresses delivered at the fiftieth anniversary of Korean Methodism, First Church, Seoul, Korea, June 19th-20th, 1934* (Seoul: Korea Methodist News Service,1934), 29.
[169] Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Korea Mission, *The Fiftieth Anniversary of the Korea Mission of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., 1884-1934*, 50,53 ; Baird, *Inside views of mission life*, 132-133.
[170] Bruen, *40 years in Korea*, 172.

continued to practice the same method and still advocated it in the 1930s, recommending it to young missionaries: "Let the new missionaries try it out. Train your servants to be helpers and workers."[171]

How this subservient status of the early Korean Christian leaders affected the formative process of the Korean Church will be discussed later; let it suffice here to note that the missionaries in Korea did not attempt to change traditional status society by applying the Christian egalitarianism they advocated to the reality they encountered in Korea. Rather, they established themselves as "high" status teachers with respect to the "low" status converts and thus generally adopted and smoothly fit the traditional social hierarchy based upon the Confucian notion of an absolute status distinction between the gentleman and the ignorant.

Missionaries and the Korean Aristocracy

The Korean ruling elites who suppressed the Catholics for so many years in order to protect the Confucian orthodoxy could not favor Protestantism. Not only were the major teachings the same in both religions but the Korean Protestant converts were no different

[171] Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Korea Mission, *The Fiftieth Anniversary of the Korea Mission of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., 1884-1934*, 53.

from the Catholics in terms of their class background and their relation to the foreign missionary. In their eyes, Christians were all an impoverished, ignorant mass who blindly followed foreign authority for money and protection. This image was not entirely unfounded. High-class yangbans naturally scorned the subservient status of Korean converts to the Protestant missionary and despised them for it. Even though they soon learned that the treaty condition of extraterritoriality meant they could not quell Korean Protestants by force, yangban nevertheless maintained an antagonistic attitude toward the missionaries and Christians, harassing them when occasion allowed, and few of them dared to join the Church.

The absence of upper-class Koreans in the Christian constituency was conspicuous from the beginning. After the first decade of missionary work, the Methodist mission admitted that "most of our work has been among the poorer class, and I believe that our work among this class has proved far more successful and its results far more lasting than among the class of nobles."[172] The Presbyterians had the same impression. According to Lillias H. Underwood, the wife of Horace G. Underwood, the early members of the Saemunan church, the first Presbyterian Church in Seoul in 1890s, "were all poor" and their

[172] *Annual Report of BFMMEC* (1894), 248.

occupations were “carpenters, merchants, farmers, policemen, interpreters”, whose technical labor was considered “low” in the Korean status society, and “none of them earned much over five dollars a month.”[173]

Consequently, the yangbans disdained the Church as the gathering place of the low. Even in the 1920s, the descendants of the yangbans “largely considered Christianity as the religion for coolies and beggars.”[174] The lack of social dignity and respect for the Korean Christian image, which was established at the beginning of the mission, left a profound impact on subsequent Korean Christian development. It completely alienated the status conscious Korean elites from the Church and thus Christianity spread mainly among the socially weak. Protestant Christianity, then, did not break traditional social status distinctions in Korean society. Rather, it underscored existing status distinctions by infiltrating into the lower classes only, while alienating the upper class.

Finally, the missionaries’ failure to attract yangbans to the Church soon led them to consider the yangban persona non grata. They often took the yangban’s resilient opposition to Christianity as a challenge to missionary authority and identified them more or less as enemies. Their anti-yangban sentiment was no secret and publicly disclosed, especially to

[173] Underwood, *Underwood of Korea*, 141-142.
[174] Bruen, *40 years in Korea*, 274.

American Christian audiences at home. According to Daniel Gifford (NP), a typical yangban had the following traits.

> He has, in a measure, the intellectual power of a man, with the actual knowledge of a child… [He] has become so self-conceited that Socrates himself could not convince him of his ignorance. He is color-blind to everything modern… He is slave to the traditions and customs transmitted from antiquity. His thinking has no breadth nor originality… [He] displays a ceremonious politeness that is certainly charming. But do not for a moment be deceived. There is very little heart in it.[175]

The missionary-yangban relation thus was mutually antagonistic from the early days of the mission and stood in stark contrast to the subservient but intimate master-servant relationship shared between the missionaries and lower-class Korean Christians. This class-biased structure of the Korean Church continued for many years to come and kept Koreans from being united under the cross.

Protestant Social Elites: Two Notable Exceptions

The absence of yangban Christian in the early Korean Christian development was a general rule but there were always some exceptions. In Korea in the 1890s, there were

[175] Gifford, *Everyday-life in Korea*, 127.

only a few such exceptional individuals who were elite yangban and Christian at the same time. Here it is worth noting about the two names, who played an inproportionately large role, Yun Ch'i-ho (1864-1945) and Sŏ Chae-p'il (1864-1951).[176]

Yun was born in Asan, Ch'ungch'ong Province, in 1864 as son of wealthy yangban, Yun Ung-nyŏl, who then served as a high-ranking military official in the Chosŏn court. Yun was known for his intellectual excellence from an early age and selected by the court as a member of a special envoy to Japan in 1881, when he was only seventeen. His mission was to accompany Kim Okkyun, the head of the Progressive Party in the Korean Court, and master the Japanese language as well as modern scholarship and technology. While in Japan, he not only mastered Japanese but also learned some English and thus employed by General Lucius Foote (1826–1913), the first American Minister to Korea, as his translator and returned to Korea with him to work in the U.S. Legation.

Sŏ Chae-p'il came from a very similar background to that of Yun. He was from a yangban family and was also dispatched to study in Japan at a young age. He was enrolled

[176] For the summary of Yun's life, "A Short Sketch of Dr. T. H. Yun's Life," *The Korean Mission Field* (March, 1935): 45-52. For So's life, Philip Jaisohn and Sŏn-p'yo Hong, *My days in Korea and other essays* (Sŏul: Institute for Modern Korean Studies, Yonsei University, 1999), xiii-xvii, 3-39. The following summation of their life paths in this section relies on these sources and *Yun Ch'i-ho's Diary* unless noted otherwise.

in Japanese Military Academy and studied modern military technology there. Also, like Yun, Sŏ was a protégée of Kim Okkyun and closely associated with him as a member of the Progressive Party. Therefore, it was natural that, when Kim Okkyun staged a place coup in 1882 in order to oust the conservatives from the Chosŏn court, Sŏ would take an active part in it as a military specialist and command the armed units to occupy and defend the royal palace. Yun Ch'i-ho himself, though a progressive, did not play an active part in the coup, although his father Ung-nyŏl was involved in the coup on the side of the Progressives. Thus, when the coup failed due to Chinese intervention, Sŏ and Yun, were forced into exile.

Sŏ fled to Japan and then to the United States in exile, while his family including his wife and children were all executed by the Chosŏn court. Subsequently, Sŏ migrated to the United States. While in the States, Sŏ studied medicine and obtained a medical degree to be a professional physician. He then married with an American woman and naturalized to obtain U.S. citizenship with a new Anglicized name, Phillip Jaisohn. It was through his direct American experience that he came to adopt the Christian way of life and he was baptized as a Methodist.

By contrast, Yun fled to Shanghai through the good offices of Lucius Foote and enrolled in Anglo-Chinese College, a Southern Methodist mission school. During his

studies, Yun was inspired by intellectual and kind missionary teachers and after a long period of contemplation, he agreed to receive baptism as a Southern Methodist. Because of this denominational connection, he proceeded to pursue advanced studies in Methodist college in the American South. He first studied religion and theology at Vanderbilt College in Tennessee and then proceeded to study the same at Emory College, Georgia. Upon graduation in 1893, he still could not return to Korea as the conservative was still in power. Instead, he returned to Shanghai to teach at his alma mater, Anglo-Chinese school and married with a Chinese Christian woman there.

The Japanese victory over China in 1894 led to the collapse of the conservative cabinet in the Korean court and a new government was formed under Japanese tutelage by the surviving members of the former Progressive Party. With this dramatic change of Korean politics, Yun and Sŏ were finally able to come back to Korea after a long period of exile, where their former colleagues were now in power.

As will be discussed in Chapter 5, Yun and Sŏ soon established the Independence Club to promote Korean nationalism, while publishing the first Korean newspapers in vernacular, *Tongnip sinmun* [The Independence]. They taught at mission schools and made various efforts for the dissemination of modern education. Yun and Sŏ happened to be

Christians, but the current literature on Korean history often identifies them as representative Korean Christian leaders. However, as this chapter demonstrates, the life and career of Yun and Sŏ were so different from those of ordinary Korean Christians at that time that it is completely misleading to view them as the product of a Korean Christian movement pioneered by the American Protestant Missions. They were not led to the Christian faith by the young conservative American missionaries in Korea, who used their imperial privilege to win the souls of the oppressed. They were not intellectually inspired by most American missionaries in Korea, who came straight out of college or the academy to Korea, but by well-trained college professors in Shanghai or in the United States. While most Korean Christians had no direct access to western scholarship, Yun and Sŏ had easy access to it, being well versed in Japanese and English as well as Classical Chinese. In the case of Yun, his command of English was so sophisticated that he won a prize in an oratorical contest in his college days in the U.S. and kept his diary in English, from which more will be quoted in later chapters.

In sum, there were no other Korean Christians besides Yun and Sŏ who had a comparable social status and breadth of knowledge in western civilization in Korea at the end of the nineteenth century time. Unlike Christian leaders in Meiji Japan, most of whom

studied abroad and competed with missionaries in the intellectual arena, Korean Christians had no equal opportunity because Korea had long been a secluded country and was just beginning to open outside world. In this sense, Yun and Sŏ were not merely exceptional Christians. They were exceptional Koreans who had no parallel in Korean society at that time.

Chapter 3 Church Formation under Missionary Control

The previous chapter examined the formation of power relations between foreign missionaries and Korean converts and found that a highly asymmetrical relationship existed between the two parties. The missionary always held controlling power over the Korean convert, who was dependent upon economic, social, and political support from the missionaries. Moreover, the missionaries effectively fit themselves into the traditional social hierarchy and presented themselves as aristocratic rulers to instruct lower-class Koreans, who made up the majority of converts.

Despite these observations, previous studies have commonly emphasized that the Korean Church had been formed under the Korean Christian leadership because the Missions, the Presbyterian one in particular, adopted a distinctive mission policy, called the "Nevius Method," that granted more freedom to local initiative and prioritized self-government (in church management), self-support (in finance), and self-propagation

(in evangelism) in the Church.[177] The exponential growth of the Korean Presbyterian Church has been largely attributed to success of the Nevius Method.

This chapter analyzes how the asymmetrical relationship of power between missionaries and local converts was reflected at the level of church organization and argues that Korean initiative along the lines of the Nevius Method was actually impracticable since the missionaries carried their power over Koreans into the realms of everyday life and the Church. By institutionalizing their superior status in the Korean Church, the missionaries perpetuated their rule over Korean Christians without granting Korean autonomy.

Christian Growth without Church Organization

As freedom of missionary work was gradually secured under the protection of extraterritorial rights, the Protestant missions expanded their evangelistic campaigns from Seoul to the countryside. Officially, missionaries could not travel freely in the interior and were supposed to live on designated foreign settlements, but missionaries were not constrained to obey this rule as long as the Korean government acquiesced. And despite the

[177] Charles Allen Clark, *The Nevius plan for mission work, illustrated in Korea* (Seoul, Korea: Christian Literature Society, 1937), 23-43 ; Min Kyŏng-bae, *Han'guk kidok kyohoesa (sin kaejŏn p'an)*,195-200; Hanʾguk kidokkyosa yŏn'guso, *Hanʾguk kidokkyo ŭi yŏksa 1*, 223.

general anti-foreign and anti-missionary sentiment that was widespread among the Korean populace, once the power and authority of the missionaries became generally recognized they were able to attract many Koreans from the lower classes who needed protection. As a result, all Protestant missions could increase their church memberships relatively easily, especially after the Sino-Japanese War in 1894. But the Presbyterian Mission won the largest number of converts. The statistical record shows that the Mission had 3 organized churches, 300 unorganized churches with 4,793 communicants and 12,694 adherents under its jurisdiction in 1900.[178]

Numerical growth, however, was not accompanied by the formation of an independent Korean Church governed by local Christian leaders. This is because Protestant missions did not pay due attention to the training of Korean Christian leaders and pass ecclesiastical authority into Korean hands. In fact, the Mission did not ordain even a single Korean pastor for more than two decades after the beginning of missionary activities. As a result, in 1900, there were 23 Korean evangelists but all were unordained helpers to the missionaries and had no ecclesiastical power to examine baptismal candidates, administer

[178] See Table I and II in Harry A. Rhodes and Arch Campbell, *History of the Korea mission, Presbyterian Church U. S. A.* (Seoul,: Chosen Mission Presbyterian Church U.S. A., 1934), 544-547.

sacraments or discipline Korean congregations. All of these important powers were monopolized by the ordained missionaries, whose number counted only 29 in 1900. As a matter of fact, Sŏ Kyŏng-jŏ, one of the first Korean Protestant Christians, who received baptism from a Scottish missionary in Manchuria in 1882 and had worked as an active evangelist in Korea ever since, was still an unordained assistant to the missionary and paid by the Mission in 1902.[179] He had to wait another five years before he was finally ordained as a minister of the Korean Church in 1907, a point which will be discussed later. In short, even after two decades of missionary work, there was still neither a Korean minister nor Korean Church with a capital "C", i.e. as an institutionalized and unified religious body represented by Koreans. Instead, what existed were dozens of local evangelists and hundreds of churches, both in the city and countryside, all of which were under missionary jurisdiction. According to missionary statistics taken in 1900, the majority of local churches, 300 out of 303 churches, were "unorganized,[180] meaning they possessed no resident leader and steady organization, and were often called "outstations" of the Mission, rather than

[179] *Minutes and Reports of the Nineteenth Annual Meeting of the Korea Mission of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.*(1902), 50-52 . Hereafter, *Minutes and Reports of KMPCU*.
[180] Rhodes and Campbell, *History of the Korea mission, Presbyterian Church U. S. A.*, 546.

"churches," where the missionaries were supposed to reach out on regular basis from their "station" in the city.

In reality, however, such a small number of missionaries could not provide adequate pastoral care to the increasing number of congregations scattered across the country. Since missionaries mainly lived in the foreign compound of Korean cities and visited churches in the countryside only at times of occasional itinerating, it was impossible to visit and provide sufficient instructions for rural congregations. Samuel A. Moffett (1864-1939, NP) reported this difficulty in 1901.

> In the ten trips of 86 days, all the time which I was able to spare from the city work, so much of the time was necessarily taken up with the urgent and important work of examination of candidates for baptism that too little time was left for instruction and for more thorough organization… I have been able to provide for the administration of Lord's Supper in but six of the churches this year, a fact I very deeply regret...[181]

The missionaries were aware that they lacked the power necessary to supervise the numerous Korean churches. They therefore made some Korean Christians their personal "helpers" (*chosa*) and dispatched them to take care of local churches on their behalf.

[181] S. A. Moffett, "Clippings from October Reports," *Korea Field* (November 1901):14.

However, these helpers were not granted the power to manage the local churches, and their main duty was to relay missionary instructions to local congregations. As Samuel Moffett admitted, "Efficient as the helpers are in their sphere of service… they have not the missionary's power of organization of new work,"[182] and thus could not serve as ministers. In addition, even the combined force of the missionaries and helpers was still too small to cover all the work in the assigned missionary territory, called "the circuit," and even Korean helpers, being committed to other duties, were not always available. In a report from 1903, William Baird (NP) described the difficulty of managing the circuit with limited manpower.

> [My] circuit has received less attention from me than I should have desired. The two helpers, Pang Ki Chang and Kim Hyo Syun, have continued to travel on regular circuits, visiting each group about once a month, when not prevented by class work... Pang has given a part of the time to studies in preparation for the ministry. The circuit has therefore not received as much of his attention as formerly.[183]

Samuel Moffett had the same problem. He had 33 outstations under his charge and assigned his helpers to take care of "from four to twelve outstations with their tributary groups of

[182] S. A. Moffett, "Northern Circuit, South Pyeng An Province," *Korea Field* (February 1903): 90.
[183] W. M. Baird, "On the Western Circuit," *Korea Field* (February 1903): 94.

believers in many villages." Still, his burden was too heavy to carry out and he had to state in his annual report that he had "not been able to visit all the outstations, seven of them not having received even one visit during the year" and "there are a number of places in which interested inquirers are only waiting for a visit from the missionary."[184]

Closely observing the mission field, the missionaries understood well that, "In all the region there is a pressing need for [Korean] leaders or pastors" with the growing number of Christians in Korea, but they were reluctant to produce Korean ministers and delegate their ecclesiastical power to them because "administrative problems and the duties of real spiritual leadership fall heavily upon those who were capable of the simpler labors of gathering the first converts about them."[185] In other words, the missionaries did not believe that Korean leaders could do more than the "simple labor of gathering" people to the church and had no intention of delegating their ecclesiastical power to the local leadership. At best, then, Korean Christian leaders were supposed to remain "helpers" to the missionaries.

Leaving aside the question of whether missionaries made a fair judgment of Korean leadership, let us note here that the division of labor and the hierarchical

[184] "Northern Circuit, South Pyeng An Province," *Korea Field* (February 1903): 90.
[185] "On the Western Circuit," *Korea Field* (February 1903): 95.

relationship between the missionary and the Korean helpers resembled that of an absentee landlord and his peasant. Developing this analogy, we might say that the missionaries possessed the Korean "outstations" as property and cultivated them from afar by means of "helpers," but they never missed the chance to harvest the "converts" of these areas by dictating baptismal rights and report to the mission board the number of Koreans souls they had won on Korean soil. It may be said that the missionaries were the commanders in the mission field and enlisted Korean evangelists as their subordinates, without paying due respect to them as the same workers of God.

Salary Gap between Missionary and Korean Evangelist

The missionary's lack of respect for the Korean mission workers is also evidenced by their pay rate, especially when compared with the missionary's salary. During the period from 1900-1905, Presbyterian missionaries received their annual salary from the mission board according to the following formula: Married male missionary, $1,250 (= 2,500 yen); single male missionary, $833.33 (1,666 yen); single woman, $650 (1,300 yen) ; Per child,

$100 (200 yen).[186] Thus, the average missionary family with two children, for instance, received 2,900 yen a year. In contrast, the Korean helpers received only 130-180 yen per annum from the mission, while male colporteurs and Bible women, who travelled widely to sell Bibles and distribute religious tracts, received even less, 50-70 yen and 40 yen respectively.[187] On average, the basic income of the missionary was twenty times higher than that of the Korean helper.

To some extent, the salary gap between the missionary and the Korean worker was inevitable and corresponded to the general economic gap between the United States and Korea. It is important to note, however, that the Korean church worker's pay was kept as low as that of an average servant or manual laborer of the day. According to the Japanese governmental survey in 1906, the average daily wage for a Korean carpenter (*daiku/moksu*), construction worker (*dokata/nogada*), and domestic servant (*genan/hanam*) was estimated around 1 yen, 0.6 yen and 0.5 yen.[188] Assuming that each laborer works at least twenty days a month, this would make their annual salaries 240 yen, 144 yen, and 120 yen

[186] *Minutes and Reports of KMPCU* (1902), 50-52. The exchange rate, 0.5 yen = 1 dollar, was fixed in the 1890s and 1900s. This is confirmed by the following references. Gifford, *Everyday-life in Korea*,203; *Minutes and Reports KMPCU* (1904), 38-39.
[187] *Minutes and Reports KMPCU* (1905), 75.
[188] Tōkanfu, "Tōkanfu tōkei nenpō," (N.P.: Tōkanfu 1906), 151-152.

respectively. According to missionary testimony from 1910, a peasant's daily wage was 20 cents (=0.4 yen), making an annual salary of 96 yen a year, based upon the same assumption.[189] This salary range was exactly the same as that of Korean evangelists under missionary pay. The Korean evangelists were rated the same as the manual worker in the Korean labor market.

The breakdown of annual expenditures for an average single male missionary proves this point. As seen below in the "servant" column of Table 1, the missionary calculates the average pay for a house servant at 75 yen per person. This sum almost equals that of the Korean colporteur and is even higher than that of the Bible woman. Also, because servants were usually boarded in the missionary's house and there were no independent costs for food and lodging, their 75 yen salary can be taken as their net income. It is thus likely that missionary servants were much better off, and perhaps, closer to the income level of the Korean helper, who received 130-180 yen, from which they had to pay for the daily necessities. While this point cannot be proven conclusively, it would be no mere coincidence if the net income of a domestic servant and a Korean evangelist was the

[189] "Mission Education in Korea," *Korea Mission Field,* (May 1910) : 90.

Table 1 Breakdown of a Single Male Missionary's Annual Expenditure [190]

Items of Expenditure	Total (Yen)
Board @1.75 yen per day	638
Laundry	20
Lights	13
Fuel, Wood and Coal	75
Clothing	185
Servant 1&1/2@ 75yen per year	112
Books, periodicals, Stationary, postage	100
Furniture, matting and Repairs	25
Dentistry	40
Public subscription(tract society, YMCA)	35
Charity, one tenth	125
Sewing and mending	6
Linen, bedding, towels etc.	15
Insurance	50
Itinerating outfit and repair	10
Supplies, toilet, blacking, watch repairs 20	20
Total	**1469**
OTHER LEGITIMATE EXPENSES	
Annual Meeting expense	50
Tracts and deficits in evangelistic work	50 to 150
Summer vacations, health trips	25 to 150
Bicycle and repairs, horse and feed,	30
Total	155
Grand Total	**1624 yen**

[190] *Minutes and Reports KMPCU* (1904), 38-39.

same because they came from identical backgrounds and the former could become the latter upon the missionary's personal nomination.

The above chart also illuminates how different the quality of life was between the missionary and the Korean workers. To take a few examples, the single male missionary expended 638 yen for "Board", but this item alone is four to five times as large as the Korean helper's total salary per year. Even if the missionary heavily depended upon the expensive imported food from abroad,[191] the gap in food expenses is significant. Similarly, "fuel, coal and wood" were necessities for both the missionary and the Korean alike, but the missionary's annual expenditure of 75 yen exceeds the annual salary of a Korean colporteur. Lastly, the vacation fee from 25 to 150 yen is considered "legitimate" and no equivalent reward was offered the Koreans. Of course, the Korean Christians were the natives and used to the local environment, but if refreshment was the reward for labor, the Koreans might have shared in it as they did almost the same labor.

[191] A missionary lady testifies that "Rice, chickens, and eggs could be bought at the Korean market, which was held every five days, but other supplies had to come from San Francisco."Nisbet, *Day In and Day Out in Korea*, 26.

Whatever justification there may be for such differential treatment, the obvious consequence was that many poor Koreans flocked around the missionary for material gain. Edwin Kagin (NP) testifies,

> Many Koreans have the idea that the "Moksa"[minister] is a sort of inexhaustible supply of ready cash. Says your [Korean language] teacher, "Please loan me $200.00 to put out on interest so I can pay my daughter's expenses at the school in Seoul…" [A Korean Christian] Choe sends a friend and she stands up before the missionaries and with a flowing introduction… eloquently pictures her friend's need and asks for a loan of $5.00 for him in order that he may buy materials to put up a new house"… Helper Kim's wife has just had an operation performed… He has no money, no house of his own, and has been asked to move out of the house he is in. There is no way out of it says he, than that the "Moksa" lend him $40.00 to buy a house. And so it continues---requests for money come from all sources and for all manner of things. The problem is to give wisely and to those who are worthy.[192]

Hence, the Korean evangelists who received regular pay from the mission were considered "worthy" from the missionary viewpoint, working for the Christian cause rather than mere material gain. However, the fact that they received as little as the average wage for a house servant or day laborer of that day made it a disrespectable occupation and degraded the popular image of Christians. Even if Korean church workers were satisfied with their work

[192] Edwin Kagin, "In Difficulties," *Korea Mission Field*, (August 1909):145-146.

and pay, they were seen, in the eyes of other Koreans, as simply in need of money and dependent on the foreigners. Eva Field (NP) testified to this effect about her servant-evangelist.

> Sometimes the impudent question "how much money do you get for preaching this doctrine?" is asked [for my preaching servant], and then she replies "I am not paid for preaching. I 'm only the lady's servant, and I'm telling you of Jesus because He has taken away my sins…As yet she has not been employed as a Bible Woman, and does not wish to be, her reason being that she wishes to be in a position where she cannot be accused of preaching for money.[193]

This anecdote was, of course, intended to highlight the genuine faithfulness of the Korean servant. At the same time, however, it also reveals that the Bible woman under foreign pay was a socially despised occupation. The position of missionary servant was little better. The popular Korean perception was that Christians were affiliated with the missionary primarily for money, a view based on the known fact that they were hired by the missionaries.

Exclusion of Korean Leadership in the Formation of the Presbyterian Church

[193] Eva H. Field, "Changsie Omni," *Korea Field* (May 1904):173.

While the Presbyterian Mission controlled all phases of mission work and kept Korean workers under their command for the first two decades of the mission, it was not without a formal vision to establish a Korean Presbyterian Church as an independent body run by ordained Korean ministers. Nevertheless, they were very slow to move in that direction. In 1893, the four Presbyterian Missions—U.S. North and South, Australian and Canadian—jointly established the Council of the Presbyterian Mission, which aimed at coordinating efforts to prepare for establishing an independent native Church in future. It was stipulated, however, that the Mission hold the "controlling ecclesiastical powers in relation to the native Church until the organization of latter in accordance with Presbyterian usage" was created and that no ecclesiastical authority would be granted to Korean congregations.[194] Moreover, the Council was composed entirely of male missionaries and no Korean leaders were allowed to sit in at the sessions of the Council. In other words, the Council continued to discuss the issues of the Korean congregation and prepare for the future independence of the Korean Church without having any Korean representative hear their voice. In 1901, the Council for the first time allowed several Korean leaders to sit in on part of the session, which was conducted in Korean, but the Korean-language session

[194] Charles Allen Clark, *Digest of the Presbyterian Church of Korea (Chosen)* (Seoul, Korea, Japan: Korean Religious Book & Tract Society, 1918), 7.

had no legislative power and all such power was exercised by the English language sessions of the missionaries.[195] In sum, Koreans were completely excluded from the decision-making process of the Council, where the future independence of the Korean Church was discussed over many years.

The Presbyterian Mission's unwillingness to include Korean leaders in the church administration was based on their low view of Korean qualifications. Thus, the Mission held that "ecclesiastical and administrative responsibility should not be laid upon the people until men truly qualified to discharge such responsibility have been raised up, and the spiritual state of the Christians warrants and invites it."[196] In this age of imperialism, such a low view of the native converts was nothing new in other mission fields and contained some truth, especially in the case of Korea, where the majority of the converts came from the poorest and least educated class. However, the Korean Mission's fault lay in the fact that they took no action to improve the situation, knowingly neglecting the education and training of the future leaders of the Korean Church.

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[195] Ibid., 8.
[196] Robert Speer, *Report on the mission in Korea* (The Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., 1897), 11.

The absence of a qualified native leadership in the Korean Church was well known to the Board and was the cause of some concern. Robert Speer (1855–1918), the Secretary of the Presbyterian Foreign Mission Board, who visited Korea for field inspection in 1897, generally agreed that the Mission should hold ecclesiastical authority over the immature Korean church and admitted that "this caution in ordaining men and in establishing a native ecclesiastical body, like a Presbytery, lessens and postpones certain dangers." Nevertheless, he did not forget to point out the danger of maintaining such practices since "the times of delicacy will arise when natives are ordained and ecclesiastical authority passes into their hands."[197]

Five years later in 1902, the new Board Secretary, Arthur Brown, also visited Korea and found the Mission was still wanting in a unified church organization. He also observed that this absence of church organization was due to "the lack of duly qualified men for church officers."[198] Unlike Speer, however, Brown was not entirely persuaded by the Mission's everlasting excuse that there was no suitable men in Korea. Rather he

[197] Ibid., 12.
[198] Arthur Judson Brown and Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Board of Foreign Missions., *Report of a visitation of the Korea mission of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions* (New York, N.Y.: The Board, 1902), 15.

suspected the real reason might be the too rigid qualifications the missionaries imposed upon Koreans. In his official report, Brown questioned:

> What is meant by "suitability"? I cordially agree with the Korean missionaries that an office-bearer in the Church of God should be a man of more than ordinary wisdom and spiritual character. Undoubtedly, the missionaries are right in saying that comparatively few such men have yet been developed in Korea… [but] in my brief contact with the Korean Christians, I got the impression that, from the viewpoint of spiritual life, they averaged as high as an equal number of American Christians…Is there not risk of going to an extreme in deferring organization of the already numerous and rapidly increasing Christians of Korea until ideal church officers can be found?[199]

Nonetheless, Brown's high estimate of the Korean potentials conflicted with the majority view of the Mission. The missionaries in the field knew how hard the Korean Christians were struggling in dire poverty and few of them were trained to take any leadership role. William B. Harrison (Southern Presbyterian Mission, hereafter "SP" [200]) in Chŏlla Province saw that most of his Christian constituency was "poverty stricken" and observed that "they cannot buy books, they cannot give much time to study." Understandably, he felt

[199] Ibid., 15.
[200] Southern Presbyterian Mission (The Foreign Mission of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, South) began its mission work in1892 and occupied the two southern provinces of North and South Chŏlla Province as its exclusive mission territory. See the following discussion about the territorial division in this chapter.

despondent, observing that "the amount of patient laborious teaching that it takes to make of these men strong intelligent workers who can be trusted to build alone is appalling."[201]

It is beyond doubt that the paucity of "intelligent workers" was a structural problem rooted in the fact that the Christian constituencies were predominantly undereducated and even illiterate. Such paucity, however, was also in part the result of the Presbyterian policy of keeping their intellectual standards for the Korean Christian leadership only slightly above that of the lay believers. The background and problems inherent in mission education policy will be discussed in the next chapter. Suffice it to note here that the Mission was in no position to bemoan the paucity of qualified leaders among Korean Christians when the missionaries themselves made no systematic effort to train Korean ministers.

Nonetheless, pushed by Brown's report, the Presbyterian Mission at last began to move toward organizing an independent Korean Church. In 1902, the Council finally voted for a resolution stating that, "Where there shall be at least twelve churches with one or more ordained Elders each, and at least three Koreans whom the Council deem ready for ordination to the ministry, a Presbytery shall be organized as the Supreme Ecclesiastical

[201] W. B. Harrison, "Native Workers in Korea," *Korea Mission Field,* (February 1906): 67.

Court of the Presbyterian Church of Korea."[202] This resolution was significant in that the missionaries clarified specific conditions that would allow Korean congregations to organize an independent Church. Their conditions, however, were still too demanding given that there was not a single ordination yet.

Moreover, along with the above resolution, the Council passed another important resolution, this time determining the future missionary relationship to the Korean Church when it became an independent body. The resolution read:

> The ministers who are members of Presbytery shall be members of the same only as far as concerns the rights and privileges of voting and participating in all of its proceedings, but ecclesiastically they shall be subject to the authority and discipline of their home churches, retaining their full ecclesiastical connection with those Churches.[203]

The significance of this article was two-fold. First, the missionaries were already determined to stay in the Korean Presbytery and exercise their power as voting members even after the native Church was formally organized. Second, while they retained ecclesiastical power over the Korean Church, they did not transfer their membership from

[202] Clark, *Digest of the Presbyterian Church of Korea (Chosen)*, 15. "Presbytery" has a jurisdiction over churches in certain area. "General Assembly" is formed with several Presbyteries and has the highest ecclesiastical authority. Since the Korean Church was still in its nascent stages, only a single Presbytery was formed, but it meant that the local Korean church no longer belonged to the Mission and became independent.
[203] Ibid.,15.

their home church to the Korean Church. In so doing, they could be subject to the ecclesiastical authority of their home church in North America, but exempt from the local ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Korean Presbytery. In other words, the missionaries could enjoy a sort of "ecclesiastical extraterritoriality" that would allow them to govern the Korean Church but never be governed by it. Just as the missionaries possessed extraterritorial privileges in Korean society, they also wanted to enjoy a similar status in the independent Korean Church that they were making.

Abrupt Preparation for Independence

In 1903, the Presbyterian Mission officially asked for the Board's approval to organize an "independent Korean Presbyterian Church" according to the plan adopted by the Council in the previous year.[204] The Executive Council of the Board approved the plan of organizing a united native Presbyterian Church with other corporation Missions but raised strong doubts about the absence of ordained native leaders and the continuing dominance of the proposed native Church by the missionaries.

[204] From Arthur Brown to the Committee on Korea and the Executive Council (11/20/1903) in Record Group 140, Box 11, File 1, Presbyterian Historical Society Archive, Philadelphia, PA, U.S.A. Hereafter, this record group is shown as RG140-11-1.

> We question whether the time has yet come for the proposed organization in Korea. In all the Mission, we have not a single ordained native minister and only three regularly organized churches; all the rest of our large number of Christians being in groups with leaders appointed by the Mission--- but without an ecclesiastical organization or ordained officers.[205]

The Board was clearly aware that the proposed independent Korean Church would place no Koreans in administrative positions. To this criticism, Samuel Moffett, representing the Korean Mission, urged that "another three years will probably see from twenty to thirty churches with elders and five or six men ready for ordination." The Board, however, rejected this argument on the grounds that

> Even then it is manifest that a Korean Church organization in the near future would be so largely composed of missionaries that it would be a distinctly foreign church rather than a native Korean Church. The Korean ministers coming into it slowly and one by one are to be completely overshadowed by the foreign membership, and we might thus at the outset hamper even if we did not indefinitely postpone the very purpose we have in mind; namely, the founding of a self-governing as well as a self-supporting and self-propagating native church.[206]

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[205] "Report of the Korea Committee and Executive Council on the Proposed Independent Korean Church" (12/7/1903), 2, RG140-11-1.
[206] Ibid., 3.

Moreover, the Board criticized the idea that missionaries could become voting members of the native Church, while retaining membership in their home church.

> Would not the missionaries… be in an anomalous position in that they would really control the native Korean Church and at the same time be themselves primarily responsible to the separate jurisdictions. It would apparently place the Korean Churches under the complete domination of the foreigners, who would control alike the mission and the church and thus leave the Korean ministers and elders no sphere whatever for the development of individual responsibility and life. [207]

In conclusion, the Board suggested that "it would be wiser to defer the organization of the proposed Korean Church until there shall be a sufficient number of Korean elders and members to form at least a considerable majority of the church and that it would be well for the Mission to carefully consider whether the relations of the foreign missionaries to the church when formed might not wisely be those of corresponding members rather than those of voting members."[208]

Facing opposition from the Board, the Mission suddenly sped up its training of native leaders and administered a series of ordinations of local leaders, which they had long either neglected or paid minor attention to. The Council Report in 1904 announced its plan

[207] Ibid., 3.
[208] Ibid., 4.

to start belated theological training for native leaders, with the expectation to accept 26 students.[209] Also, it gave statistical evidence that the number of ordained Korean elders had more than doubled from 5 to 11 and that the native "helpers", who could become candidates for eldership in the future, had increased from 66 to 86 in the past year.[210] In this way, the Mission attempted to convince the Board that the native church was quickly moving towards self-government.

While the Mission complied with the Board's suggestion to increase native ordinations, it did not change its position that the missionaries should preside over the native Church even after independence. In fact, the Mission was quite bold in defending their privileged position.

> We believe it is necessary for the proper development of the native church that we who have fathered the flock be privileged to help direct its affairs for a time when it starts off independently. From complete dependence in ecclesiastical affairs to complete independence is too great a step for the Korean church to take in a day. It is better for the youth to enjoy authority, real authority, soon, but autonomy needs a little postponement.[211]

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[209] "Extract from Report of the Council of Presbyterian Missions in Korea, 1904," 3-4, in RG140-11-1.
[210] Ibid., 4.
[211] Ibid., 5-6.

By the time of this statement, not "a day" but two full decades had passed since the beginning of the Korean Mission and the Korea missionaries at times propagated to the home audience through missionary media that Korean Christians were becoming increasingly self-governing, self-supporting and self-propagating. However, their candid views were different. They were still wary of Korean Christian qualifications for independence and thus believed that Koreans should "enjoy authority" of the foreign fathers of the church. Simply put, the missionaries knew that the independence of the Korean Church was only nominal and they were determined to maintain controlling power over the Korean Church.

Because church independence was only nominal, it is hardly surprising that other ecclesiastical procedures for organizing the Church were also handled without Korean involvement. For instance, the Confession of Faith, which in theory had to be made by Korean Christians as their subjective and voluntary confession of faith, was actually prepared by the Council of the Missions, without any Korean involvement. The Confession used in Korea was actually a pure recycle of the Confession of Faith of the Presbyterian Church in India without preamble, the only difference being that "India" in the text was

replaced with "Korea."[212] The Form of Government, which defines the polity of the Church, was also drafted by the missionaries. They first thought of modeling this document after the Westminster Form of Government, but soon dropped the idea because "it was better not to put upon the infant Church such a wrought out Form of Government."[213]

On September 17, 1907, the Korean Presbyterian Church finally came into being as an independent native Church. The membership of the new Presbytery was composed of twenty-eight missionaries and forty Korean elders with the Korean majority. Not surprisingly, however, missionaries occupied the key administrative positions. Samuel Moffett, who had advocated for the need of prolonged missionary guidance, assumed the chair of Moderator, to preside over the general management of the Church, while Graham Lee was elected as Treasurer to control its finances.[214] Under foreign leadership, three Koreans, Pang Ki-ch'ang, Han Sŏk-chin, and Song In-sŏ were installed in the offices of vice-moderator, clerk and assistant clerk.[215]

This prolonged missionary dominance over Korean Church offices did not reflect a gradualist approach to the transfer of power to a native leadership. The offices of

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[212] Paek Nak-chun, *The history of protestant missions in Korea 1832-1910*, 376.
[213] Clark, *Digest of the Presbyterian Church of Korea (Chosen)*, 27.
[214] Rhodes and Campbell, *History of the Korea mission, Presbyterian Church U. S. A.*, 386.
[215] Ibid., 386.

Moderator and Treasurer of the Presbytery continued to be occupied by missionaries, and even when the organization of the Korean Church was expanded to include plural Presbyteries under the General Assembly in 1912, the Assembly itself was still presided over by Horace G. Underwood as the Moderator, and William Blair, the treasurer.[216] The missionaries saw no problem in monopolizing the highest church offices because "none of the Koreans has as yet had sufficient practice in leading such large bodies in parliamentary practice work, such that they felt willing to accept the office of Moderator."[217] It goes without saying that the missionary's privilege of "ecclesiastical extraterritoriality" went unchallenged and that they governed the Korean Church without being governed by Korean Christians.

It is true that the number of Korean delegates to the Assembly continued to grow and outnumber the missionaries. However, the missionaries soon introduced a new rule to reduce the number of Korean delegates to the Assembly at one in every five "Sessions".[218] The "Session" was a congregational meeting at the local level and one delegate from five sessions meant that only one Korean pastor from five local churches could attend the

[216] Ibid., 387.
[217] Clark, *The Nevius plan for mission work, illustrated in Korea*, 176.
[218] Ibid., 172.

Assembly as a voting member, while each individual ordained missionary could attend and vote in the Assembly.[219] In short, one missionary vote weighed five times more than the Korean votes.

Korean Acceptance of Missionary Authority

As we will discuss later, there were sporadic bursts of Korean frustration against missionary rule over the Korean Church, but the majority of the Church leadership remained loyal to missionary authority. Far from rebelling, they took missionary authority for granted and made little effort to reduce missionary influence even when given the opportunity to do so. For instance, in 1913 and 1914 the missionaries asked the General Assembly if the Korean members desired the missionaries to attend the Assembly only as a delegate body, one or two in every five missionaries according to the same formula used for selecting Korean delegates. After much deliberation, however, the final decision was postponed for a year, and the issue was eventually voted down the following year.[220] Missionaries repeatedly suggested reducing the number of missionary delegates in the

[219] Ibid., 176.
[220] Clark, *Digest of the Presbyterian Church of Korea (Chosen)*, 80-81.

General Assembly, but this suggestion was repeatedly rejected by the Church's Korean membership.[221]

The currently available sources do not reveal what kind of discussions was held over the issue of missionary presence in the Assembly. According to missionary testimony, however, the main source of Korean objections was that they were concerned that "it might look to outsiders as though there were friction between the missionaries and the Korean Christian, which was not a fact."[222] If this statement is true, it indicates that Korean Christians wanted to present themselves as close affiliates or even subordinates to the foreign missionaries rather than independent-spirited church leaders who sought to promote more Korean autonomy in the Church. To them, the missionaries were still the guarantors of their status in society. Thus, the more missionaries there were occupying governing positions in the Church the better. It seems that their subservient attitude had much to do with their low social-status and their former careers as missionary servants and other employees. Missionaries took such attitudes for genuine Korean appreciation of their presence. This missionary belief in Korean gratitude for their presence in the Church

[221] Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Korea Mission, *The Fiftieth Anniversary of the Korea Mission of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., 1884-1934*, 65.
[222] Clark, *The Nevius plan for mission work, illustrated in Korea*, 97.

continued for some time. Thus, when Charles A. Clark (NP) recalled his missionary years in 1930s, he proudly stated that "there has never been a movement among the Koreans with a view to demanding from the mission more control" and "it has always been offered them before they sought it."[223]

In fact, Clark's statement was quite self-deceptive, as missionaries at that time were facing powerful demand for more control over the Church by some Korean Christians, especially after March First Movement (see Chapter 8 and Epilogue). For instance, the manuscript of the *Annul of the Korean Presbyterian Church*, prepared in the 1920s by Ham T'ae-yŏng (1873-1964), one of the Christian leaders who played central role in the March First Movement in 1919 (Chapter 8), contained the following passage:

> After the formation of the General Assembly of the Korean Presbyterian Church [in 1912]… it is clear that the Church does not belong to any of the Missions and it must be clear to the missionaries. [But] They have not transferred [their church membership] from either the Mission or from their home Presbytery [in North America] for some reason, yet they have apparently become a member of the Korean Presbytery and its Assembly. Moreover, if they became a member of the [Korean] Presbytery, there is no doubt that they [now] belong to it, but for some reason, the Korean Presbytery and its Assembly had no jurisdictional power [*ch'irikwŏn*] over the missionaries. How great this contradiction is! It is nothing but

[223] Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Korea Mission, *The Fiftieth Anniversary of the Korea Mission of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., 1884-1934*, 65.

> that the missionaries do not see the Korean Church as equal and do not treat us as brothers. Instead, they see us as barbaric and slave-like.[224]

For some reason, this manuscript was not printed at that time, perhaps due to missionary censorship, yet it would indicate that there was a growing criticism against the privileged missionary status within the Korean Church prior to the 1920s. At least, the missionary's predominance in the Korean Church was obvious to the contemporary foreign observers in the 1910s. William Adams Brown, theological professor at the Union Theological Seminary in New York, who visited Korea in 1916, had a strong impression that the missionaries still holding the controlling power of the Korean Church and did not cover up the fact in his report that "in Korea we have self-support and self-propagation, but self-government only in name."[225]

Discriminatory Practices against Koreans

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[224] Han'guk kyohoesa hakhoe, ed. *Choson Yesugyo Changnohoe Sagi (ha-kwon)* (Sŏul: Yonse taehakkyo ch'ulp'anbu,1968), 154. It is said that Ham kept this original manuscript in private through the colonial period and handed it over to his Christian colleague in the post-colonial era. It was finally published in 1968. Ibid., 1-2. Interestingly, the official *Annul of the Presbyterian Church* [Ch'a Chae-myong, ed. *Chosŏn yesugyo changnohoe sagi*] published in 1928, had no critical reference to the missionaries.

[225] William Adams Brown, *Modern missions in the Far East*, Union seminary lectures on religion in the Far East. (New York: Union theological seminary, 1917), 41.

The unequal status of the Korean Church and the Mission was also manifested in qualifications for the Holy Communion. The Mission made a unique rule in Korea to distinguish the baptism of a convert and his admission to the Lord's Supper. According to this rule, Korean converts could receive baptism "on simple profession of faith," but could not partake in the Lord's Supper until they fulfilled "more rigorous requirements" and received the ministerial approval.[226]

It is important to note here that the separation of baptism and the admission to the Lord 's Supper would have been an abnormal practice in the missionaries' home church as it was believed that all baptized Christians were equal before God and thus sit together at the Lord's table. In fact, the missionaries knew the universal rule that "if he is truly enough Christ's disciple to be baptized into His body, he is entitled also to partake of that body provided for him" and that there is no "scriptural or reasonable right to deny one of these ordinances to a man to whom we allow the other."[227] Yet, they did not apply the rule to Koreans. Arthur Brown, another Secretary of the Presbyterian Board, who toured to Korea in 1902, observed the practice and admitted that "from the view point of ecclesiastical

[226] Robert Speer, *Missions visitation .1896-97.* (Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Board of Foreign Missions, 1897), 13.
[227] Ibid., 12.

organization, the Korean Church is an anomaly." [228] Nevertheless, he still found it justifiable because "some stability in character should be attained before [Korean] believers are formally constituted a church."[229]

Some missionaries did not share the Lord's Supper even with qualified Koreans. Horace Underwood, the first missionary to Korea, was shocked to see that his fellow missionaries declined to sit with Koreans "for fear of contracting disease" in 1894.[230] The missionaries may have had some reason to be worried, given the very low standard of public hygiene and prevalence of cholera in Korean society at that time. However, it is likely that their prejudice against Koreans accentuated these fears. In fact, Underwood was more sympathetic to the Koreans, and was critical of the missionaries' overreaction the missionaries questioning, "of what service can we be if we cannot sit down at the Lord's table with these Koreans?"[231]

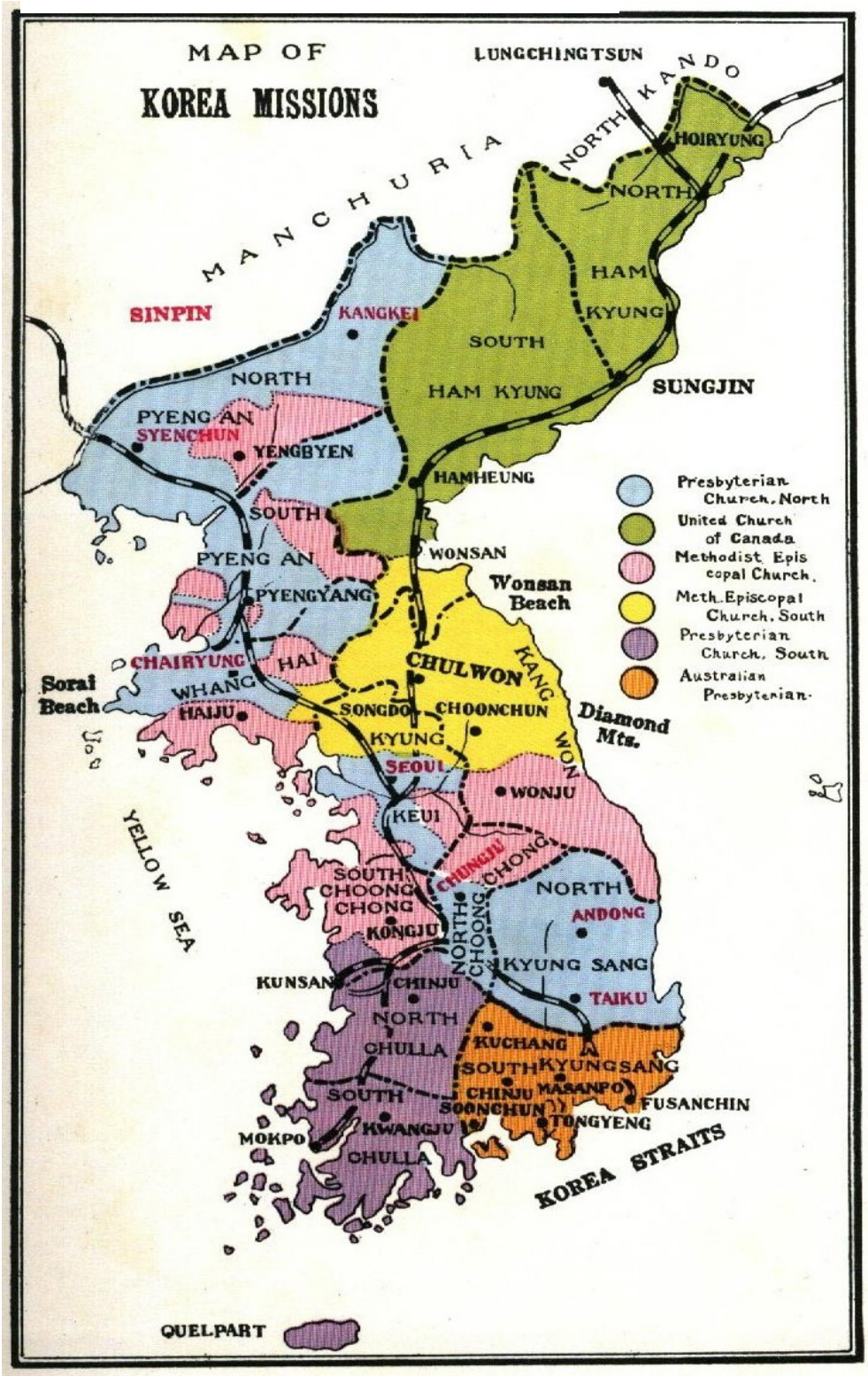
Denominational Rivalry and Territorial Division

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[228] Brown and Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Board of Foreign Missions., *Report of a visitation of the Korea mission of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions*, 13.
[229] Ibid., 14.
[230] H.G. Underwood to Dr. Ellinwood, (2/2/1894), *Underwood Letters vol.II*, 354.
[231] Ibid., 354.

The fact that the missionaries in general neglected the individual rights of Korean Christians is also evidenced by the "territorial division" of the missionary field. This division was made in order to avoid denominational rivalry and overlapping of evangelical efforts between the Missions. Such territorial arrangements, called "comity," were made constantly from the 1890s through the 1910s and each mission enjoyed the exclusive right of occupancy in their assigned territory, shutting out the entry of other missions. (Figure 1)

Figure 1 Map of Territorial Division



Source: Harry A. Rhodes and Arch Campbell, *History of the Korea mission, Presbyterian Church U. S. A.* (Seoul,: Chosen Mission Presbyterian Church U.S. A., 1934), Appendix in front .

To Korean Christians, however, this arrangement was quite unfair and discriminatory because missionaries made decisions without consulting with Koreans, even when they knew it would impact the Korean Christian's life in significant ways. The most significant impact of this arrangement was that some Korean Christians were forcibly transferred from one denomination to another. This was the consequence of transferring all local Korean churches in a given region to the jurisdiction of a different mission after the renegotiation of missionary territories. Hence, Korean Presbyterians in one region were made Methodists overnight, and vice versa, when the two Missions traded a portion of their original constituencies to redefine their exclusive territories according to the comity agreement.

The missionaries were aware that this practice was unfair and antagonized the Koreans, yet they believed that the ends would justify the means. For example, when the Methodist and the Presbyterian mission exchanged forty converts in a part of Anju area in the northern province in 1904, Arthur Becker (1879-1978, NM), reported to the Board that "not all exchanged persons are satisfied with their transport, yet I am sure the cause of

Christ has been strengthened and glorified by the arrangement."[232] The next year, when the entire Anju area was retransferred to the Presbyterians, William Blair (NP), also noted that "At first, the Methodist Christian in Anju objected, being prejudiced against us just as our people had been prejudiced against them." However, the Korean opposition was suppressed as "Mr. Morris, the Methodist missionary in charge, showed them that it was necessary for the good of the whole church."[233]

The missionaries were pleased that the Koreans surrendered to their authority despite initial opposition. At the same time, however, they also knew that they could not have acted in the same way in their homeland, where the denomination was cherished as the most fundamental identity of Protestant Christians. Thus, Miss Helen Taylor (NP) could not help thinking what if the same had happened to an American church, when she visited an ex-Presbyterian church in Hwanghae Province that had been recently turned over to the Methodist Mission.

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[232] Official Minutes of the *First Annual Session, Korea Mission Conference, MEC, Seoul ,Korea* (1905), 44, quoted in Byun Chang Uk, "Comity Agreement between Missions in Korea from 1884 to 1910: The Ambiguities of Ecumenicity and Denominationalism" (Ph.D diss., Princeton Theological Seminary, 2003), 211-212.

[233] William Newton Blair, *Gold in Korea* (Topeka, Kansas: H.M. Ives & Sons, Inc., 1957), 41.

> Imagine the furor in America if all the Presbyterian churches in one county were by act of General Assembly, turned over to another denomination, no matter how good, without consulting them or giving them any vote in the matter. Fancy the reception the new Bishop would get as he made a tour of his new charges! It would be anything but a triumphal procession.[234]

This statement clearly shows that the missionaries were clearly aware of practicing a double standard. As long as the Koreans showed themselves adaptive to this practice, missionaries did not see this as a problem. In fact, Miss. Taylor herself was happy to see that the Presbyterian-turned-Methodists still "welcomed [her] most heartily."[235] The missions had made constant efforts to implant American denominational culture in Korea and told the Koreans to maintain loyalty to their denominational Church, but when it caused the slightest inconvenience to the missions, they did not hesitate to order Koreans to sacrifice their denominational loyalty. The missionaries explained that Korean obedience to their order was an expression of Christian tolerance, but the major reason was simply Korean subservience to missionary authority. To draw an analogy, Korean Christians were pawns on the mission field. They were often used, traded, or even abandoned at the will of the master players: the missionaries.

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[234] Miss Taylor "The Spirit of Unity Shown by Korean Christians," *Korea Mission Field*, (April 1910): 85.
[235] Ibid., 85.

The division of missionary territory also meant that the Korean Christians had no opportunity to promote a common identity for themselves under a single national organization. As Korean Christians were separated from each other by regional-denominational divisions under different missionary jurisdictions, they were not given a chance to establish a unified Korean Church that would place the entire Korean peninsula under its jurisdiction. In other words, none of the denominational Korean Churches possessed a geographical basis on which they could claim to be the national Church. If Korean Christians had wanted to pursue national integrity under the name of a Korean Church, they needed to first break the denominational borders delineated by the Missions. This never happened and most Korean Christians remained loyal constituents of their mission-granted denomination.

Overall, the Korean Church was established in such a way as the Mission could maintain controlling power over it. Korean Christians certainly played a large role in evangelizing Korea, but their efforts did not make themselves the managers of the Church. They remained subordinates to the mission-dominated Church and were not allowed to stand on par with the missionaries that ranked above them within their own Church.

Chapter 4 Mission School Management

In mission fields where Christianity was prohibited, it was common for educational and medical work, often called "indirect evangelism," to precede direct evangelism. Thus, the Missions often built schools and hospitals before church and tried to disseminate Christian message in a form of western scholarship and medicine. This was the case in Korea where anti-Christian law was still in effect in the early stage of the mission.

Of these "indirect" mission institutions, schools had a larger impact on the formative process of Korean Church because they produced a new generation of Korean Christians who were supposed to lead the subsequent development of the Korean Church. In the existing literature, mission education has generally been positively evaluated not only because it produced Christians but also because it provided modern education through which Korean Christian youth acquired new knowledge about the world and consolidated their intellectual base for Korean nationalism.

The mission schools, however, were just as much under the Mission as the Church. Because the Mission had controlling power over school management and its curriculum, Korean Christians could not always learn what they wanted to learn. This chapter examines

the formative process of the mission schools in Korea analyzes how missionary power affected Christian education in Korea and the course of Christian development in Korea at large.

Presbyterian School

The Presbyterian Mission conducted its educational work on two principles. These principles are well summarized by Richard Baird (1898-?, NP), who was born and brought up in Korea as the son of a long-time educational missionary, William Baird (NP), as "the gospel for the heathen and education for Christians" and "no institution before church."[236] The former principle meant that the Mission should prioritize converting Koreans through direct preaching and then provide education in order to guide their incipient faith. The latter principle meant that church formation must precede the establishment of other mission institutions such as school and hospitals. The underlying assumption of this peculiar policy is that education in itself was not the purpose of the Mission and should be provided only for Christians. In short, a mission school should not be used as an expedient mechanism to

[236] Baird, *William M. Baird of Korea; a profile*, 114 ; Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Korea Mission, *The Fiftieth Anniversary of the Korea Mission of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., 1884-1934*, 42.

draw in non-Christians and broaden their intellectual horizons by exposing them to western education. Rather, the mission school had to be a thoroughly religious institution where the children of Christian converts were gathered to study the Bible and receive regular religious instruction so that they could succeed the faith of their parents.

Presbyterian policy, however, was infeasible in Korea, especially during the first few years of the mission, when there were no Christians educated in mission schools yet. To implement Presbyterian policy, missionaries had to preach and win converts first before providing them education, but they could not do so in Korea because freedom of religion was not tolerated even after the treaty. Compelled by the realities of this situation, Presbyterian missionaries had to concede principle and start a school before any church was officially established.

Nonetheless, due to the deeply embedded anti-Christian and anti-foreign prejudice among the Koreans, the missionaries were not able to recruit any children to their schools. In 1886, Horace G. Underwood first thought of enticing poor Koreans by making school tuition free, but soon gave up the idea on the grounds that "there is a danger of giving the Koreans the idea that we are backed by a rich board at home, and that it would be a pretty

good idea to become Christian."[237] Underwood instead decided to gather street children in Seoul, who were "homeless and destitute… of illegitimate birth," so that "they would be taken and clothed and fed and trained up in a right way to love the Savior."[238] In other words, orphans were selected to be the first pupils of the Presbyterian school not because they were recognized as having positive potential, but simply because they were the only ones whom missionaries could place under their full-time control without encountering parental opposition.

The orphan-school, which started with 36 pupils in 1886, soon proved to be a dismal failure. The orphans had neither any previous education nor the will to study. As they had simply been brought to the school by the missionaries, it was natural that they had no clear purpose of being in school except for promise of food and clothing. To make matters worse, the xenophobic feelings of the orphans did not disappear so easily. In fact, at the time of the Baby Riot in 1887, the orphans took the prevalent rumor of baby-eating at face value. Underwood sadly reported to the Board.

> The poor little fellows, frightened… wanted to run away and many of them did. One poor little fellow, only eight years old, ran away one night

[237] H.G. Underwood to Dr. Ellinwood (January 20, 1886), *Underwood Letters vol.1*, 366.
[238] Ibid., 366.

> and all alone managed to find his way home a distance of some 90 or 100 miles and reached there foot sore and almost famished with hunger.[239]

By this time, the orphans had spent almost two years at the school. If two years of teaching failed to convince them that foreigners were not cannibalists, we can reasonably estimate how poorly the missionary teachers taught, how little the pupils actually learned, and, more than anything, how superficially the missionaries cultivated the hearts and minds of Korean children. In any case, there is no question that the Presbyterian school did not start as a modern educational institution and it was quite dubious if it deserved to be called school at all.

In 1891, the newly arrived missionary, Samuel A. Moffett, succeeded the school management from Underwood. To make it a proper Christian mission school, Moffett first renamed it Jesus Doctrine School (*yesugyo haktang*) and required students to pay for a part of their school expenses.[240] His reform measures, however, had adverse consequences. First, the new school name marked it as so distinctively sectarian that it even further alienated Koreans, especially those among the educated classes, who were strongly

[239] H.G. Underwood to Dr. Ellinwood (June 17, 1887)*, Underwood Letters vol.1*, 424.
[240] Paek Nak-chun, *The history of protestant missions in Korea 1832-1910*, 233.

anti-Christian.[241] In the first place, Christianity was not officially legalized but only tacitly tolerated because of its presence under the foreign extraterritoriality. Hence, few Koreans dared to send their children to such a "strange" and illegal school. Second, the required tuition placed a heavy burden on enrolled students, the majority of whom were orphans or the children of impoverished families. It seems that Moffett soon realized that his school would not survive under the new policy and resumed granting material and financial support to the students in order to keep them enrolled. According to school records in 1891, the Jesus Doctrine School had only 24 students, of which 19 were still fed and clothed,[242] as had been the practice at the orphan-school. Even after two years, the students remained "a selected band of boys of the lower class," though it is doubtful if they were "selected" in any significant sense.[243]

Another reason that missionaries failed to attract students of a higher caliber is that they did not teach English. By that time, the Chosŏn dynasty had installed its first Government English School (*kwallip yŏngŏ hakkyo*) in 1886 and began to provide English-language training for a group of selected officials. However, the Presbyterian

[241] Ibid., 236.
[242] Ibid., 233.
[243] Ibid., 233.

Mission stopped providing English-language teaching for a brief trial period and concluded that teaching English to Korean Christians was an "error" to be "rectified."[244] The reason given for this decision was that "when they [Korean students] learned a little English they would go off to the Ports or the Mines and there become interpreter[s] and those were bad places for young folks."[245] In other words, the missionaries saw English education as a distraction from their purposes of keeping the students under their Christian influence and making them into devout churchgoers. They wanted to bar students from seeking secular jobs and taking advantage of the opportunities that fluency in English could offer. They saw the students as investment assets and expected them to be faithful, if undereducated, Christian assistants to the missionaries. Thus, missionaries took their prerogative to control the career paths of Korean students for granted and did away with the teaching of English entirely in 1890 so that they would lose the chance to get a secular job. To make this policy a rule, the missionaries passed an official resolution in 1895 that "the Mission does not believe in Schools for the teaching of English---at least for themselves."[246]

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[244] C. C. Vinton, "Presbyterian Mission," *Korean Repository,* (January 1895): 21.
[245] Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Korea Mission, *The Fiftieth Anniversary of the Korea Mission of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., 1884-1934*, 50.
[246] "Annual Meeting of The Presbyterian Mission, North," *Korean Repository,* (November 1895):444.

But job opportunity was not all that Korean students of the Presbyterian mission school lost. Without knowledge of English, the students lost direct access to western scholarship. In Korea in the 1890s, the modernization movement was just beginning after the Sino-Japanese War in 1894 and few western books had been translated into Korean, much less school textbooks. English was thus a necessary means for any Korean to acquire new knowledge of the modern world. If the Presbyterian Missions wanted to uplift the intellectual standards of Korean Christians, English language education should have been considered indispensable. However, the Mission had the opposite objective in mind and wanted to keep the convert's knowledge at the same level as that of the average Korean. William D. Reynolds (1867-1951, SP), known as the most scholarly Presbyterian missionary for his strong background in Greek and Latin and Classics and his pivotal role in Korean Bible translation,[247]was one of the strong advocates of this Presbyterian policy. In 1896, he publicized his view on the proper education for future Korean Christian leaders, in which he articulated the following points.

> Don't send him [a prospective Korean Christian leader] to America to be educated, at any rate in the early stages of Mission Work. Don't train him

[247] For his missionary career, see Ryu Taeyŏng, "Wŏlliŏm Reinoljŭ ŭi namchangnogyo paegyŏng kwa sŏngyŏng pŏnyŏk saop " *Han'guk kidokkyo yŏksa*, no. 33 (2010) : 5-31.

> 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.[248]

Instead, Reynolds insisted that the missionaries should instruct Koreans so as to "seek to lift [them] to high plane of spiritual experience", and "ground [them] thoroughly… in the cardinal facts and truths of Christianity", and "endure hardness as…good soldier[s] of Jesus Christ." Moreover, educational standards should be raised "as Korean Christians advance in culture and modern civilization" and even when the missionaries made " his education sufficiently in advance of [the] average education of his people to secure respect and prestige" education was still to be restricted so as not to go "enough ahead to excite envy or a feeling of separation.[249] In sum, the Presbyterian Mission had no intention of making the mission school into a threshold to the new modern world for Korean Christians. Rather, they wanted to contain Korean Christians in the school to indoctrinate them with Christian theology, while keeping them insensitive to the changing intellectual trends of the time.

Combined with this education policy, the lack of qualified teaching staff also curbed the steady intellectual development of the school. In the first place, most

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[248] W.D. Reynolds, "The Native Ministry," *Korean Repository*, (May 1896) : 107.
[249] Ibid., 107.

missionaries came to Korea without any teaching experience. Moreover, they were far more interested in winning converts than in teaching children and believed that preaching was their sole duty as missionaries. Especially the ordained ministers, whose profession was to preach from the pulpit, held the belief that "ordained men [are] not to be asked to teach boys" in school.[250] Thus, school work was quite unpopular among the Presbyterian missionaries. Richard Baird (NP) attests to this point.

> The school became a sort of football that was kicked around at every annual meeting [of the Mission]. Its existence was contrary to the Mission's philosophy [of prioritizing evangelism to education]. Its oversight was a burden no one wanted. Messrs. Gale, Moffett, and F.S. Miller, with varying degrees of unwillingness, each carried the load till it could be shoved off onto some missionary newer than themselves.[251]

Yet, the new missionaries were, of course, even worse than their predecessors as they had no knowledge of Korean language and culture. No doubt this vicious cycle completely demoralized the teachers as well as the students and worsened the school's condition.

As of 1897, the Presbyterian mission had two boarding schools in Seoul, a Boys' school with 35 pupils, and a Girls' school with 38 pupils, and ten day schools with 166

[250] H.G. Underwood to Dr. Ellinwood, (1/7/1889), *Underwood Letters vol.1,* 496.
[251] Baird, *William M. Baird of Korea; a profile*, 114.

pupils.[252] Among these schools, the two boarding schools were under direct missionary management and provided a little better education than day schools, where no missionary teachers were regularly attached. Nonetheless, none of these schools in Korea, including the boarding schools, were above the elementary level and its educational impact on Korean society at large was trivial, having only less than 250 pupils in all of Korea. The fruitless educational endeavor soon made the missionaries weary of carrying it on and many of them began thinking of withdrawing from the school's management entirely. The Annual Meeting of the mission in 1897 officially voted for closing the Boys' school on the grounds that "only a few boys…capable of receiving advanced instruction [were enrolled in the school]" and "there is little demand from the native Christians as yet for higher education."[253] Subsequently, the missionaries decided to hand over the school work to "one of the Seoul Churches as a day school, to be supported by it."[254] Over a decade of trial, the Presbyterian Mission concluded that school work was not worthy of investment and stopped educating the Korean Christian youth altogether.

[252] Speer, *Report on the mission in Korea*, 22.
[253] Ibid., 22.
[254] Ibid., 22.

Evangelism before Education

The Presbyterian Mission stressed that the school closure was inevitable because there was little "demand among the Korean Christians for a higher grade of education."[255] The Mission was also responsible, however, for the situation because it made no effort to convince Korean Christians of the need for a higher grade of education. It was the missionaries themselves who discouraged Koreans from engaging in intellectual pursuits beyond what they considered appropriate and suppressed the development of intellectual excellence among the general populace. In short, the Presbyterian missionaries' decision to close the mission school perpetuated a vicious circle: they closed the school while they suppressed the Korean demand for higher education and then used this lack of demand to justify their decision. In the end, educational work was no more than a spare job for the early Presbyterian missionaries during a period when their real profession of public preaching was prohibited.

Thus, it was natural that missionaries shifted their focus of investment from education to evangelism once the governmental ban on Christian propagation was loosened. "At present the field seems white," the Presbyterian missionaries judged the situation in the

[255] Paek Nak-chun, *The history of protestant missions in Korea 1832-1910*, 235.

immediate aftermath of the Sino-Japanese War in 1894. Based on this perception, they drew up an important resolution that "all available men, with the language and experience, should go out among the people."[256] With this decision and the school closure that followed, the reluctant missionary teachers were happily decommissioned from school work in Seoul and transferred to the evangelical frontline in the countryside. For instance, William Baird was transferred to Pyŏngan Province, F.S. Miller (1866-1937, NP) to Hwanghae, and S. L. Swallen to Hamgyŏng.[257] This restructuring of personnel prepared the Mission to implement its ideal policy, where direct evangelism would always be held primary in the mission field and conversions would come before education. Such restructuring did not entirely exclude the possibility of starting "a new and real high school" in the future, on the condition that this would be undertaken only "when the Mission is ready for it."[258] As a matter of fact, it took five years before the Mission resumed school work in Seoul in 1901 under James Gale, as subject that will be discussed in greater detail later.

[256] Speer, *Report on the mission in Korea*, 22.
[257] "The Presbyterian Annual Meeting," *Korean Repository* (September 1895) : 342,
[258] Speer, *Report on the mission in Korea*, 22.

Management of Day Schools

With the school closure in 1897, the Presbyterian Mission had no school above the primary level, and elementary education for Korean Christian children was taken charge of by local churches under their church schools, which were referred to as "day schools." While on the surface this might have appeared to offer Korean churches the opportunity to run their own schools independently and without missionary interference, in fact, the Mission drafted a set of new rules for church schools and kept them under missionary control. The Mission's resolution in 1897 read:

> That in place where there is sufficient Christian constituency, private schools should be organized and supported by the native Church, and should be under the supervision of the missionary in charge of the district. That in exceptional cases assistance may be given by the Mission, but not to exceed more than one-half the expense of the school.[259]

The Mission established the Educational Committee as a supervising agency "which shall act as an advisory board, with whom the various superintendents of individual schools shall consult, and whose special duty it shall be to see that the general policy of the Mission with

[259] Ibid., 25.

reference to school work is upheld; who shall… report to the annual meeting of the Mission immediately after the reports of the superintendents of various schools have been heard."[260]

What these rules suggested is that the missionaries should place the financial and administrative responsibilities of running the day schools on the local Korean churches but hold controlling power over school policy through the Educational Committee. Therefore, even though Korean teachers or superintendents could in theory "have the entire charge of such [a] school," they would "of course [have to follow] the general policy laid down by the Mission." Moreover, "unexpected visits" by the missionaries were recommended as they would "serve to keep the Korean teacher up to his work."[261]

The essential reason that the Mission desired such strict supervision was their distrust of the Korean teacher's qualifications. Considering "that the religious and spiritual influence brought to bear on the pupils is the most important thing in the school," the missionaries thought the Koreans were not deserving of the task as they were "comparatively ineffectual in moral influence and in power to affect the character of the pupils."[262] The Mission's conviction was that "sufficient missionary supervision cannot be

[260] Ibid., 26.
[261] Ibid., 26.
[262] Ibid., 26.

made too strict… If a school cannot be made what it should be, it may not be best always at once to discontinue it, but the presumption is adverse to its continuance."[263]

It is easy to see the bias inherent in the Mission's judgment of Korean ability. It should be remembered, however, that the Korean churches were composed of the poorest class that had received no modern education and that adequate teachers were hard to find among the Korean Christians. In fact, prior to the closing of the mission school, the missionaries had drawn up a plan to "qualify young men in our boys' school and to send them out as teachers" to local elementary schools in country towns.[264] The fact that the graduates from the mission school recently closed down for poor performance were designated as teachers to the local church schools reveals much about the general standard of education in the local Christian constituency. As William Baird (NP) admitted frankly,

> These schools were for the most part very elementary and scarcely worthy of the name. They consisted usually of a few little boys pursuing elementary studies with a Korean teacher of the old type, who, except in the subject of the Chinese character, knew very little more than the pupils.[265]

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[263] Ibid., 27.
[264] C. C. Vinton, "Presbyterian Mission Work in Korea," *Missionary Review of the World*, (September 1893): 671.
[265] Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Korea Mission, *Quarto centennial papers read before the Korea Mission of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. at the annual meeting in Pyeng Yang, August 27, 1909* (Pyeng Yang: Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Korea Mission, 1909), 61.

Little wonder, then, that the Mission had to adopt the following set of regulations on admissions in order to save the schools from a hopeless situation.

> Art. IX Save in exceptional cases, children whose parents are beggars, or such as send their children to school solely to escape their maintenance, shall not be received as pupils.
> Art. X Dull and stupid boys should not knowingly be received into a school, nor retained there as a matter of charity to them or their parents.
> Art XII No more shall be done in the way of board, clothing, etc., than is absolutely necessary to secure the end purposed by the school.[266]

These regulations indicate that the missionaries were still greatly troubled by the poor educational qualifications of children of Korean Christians even after a decade of educational enterprise. This was the reason why the mission stopped any further investment in schools and transferred educational responsibility to local churches, which were actually even less capable of conducting educational work for children.

Resumed Mission School in Seoul

The Presbyterian Mission resumed school work above the elementary level in Seoul in 1901 under James Gale's supervision, who showed keen interest in studying

[266] Speer, *Report on the mission in Korea*, 27.

Korean language and history and was well-known for his scholarly researches on Korea even outside the missionary society.[267] Certainly, he was a good scholar, but it seems he was not as good a teacher for school children.[268] In any case, the school faced the same difficulty in recruiting good students as the previous Presbyterian school. According to Gale's report in 1902, the school had only "six boys" due to various oppositions from within the Christian population. Some Koreans, Gale noted, still believed Confucianism to be superior [to Christianity], demanding "You ought to teach the Confucian classics", while others objected, declaring "We want the Bible; nothing more" and "I will not send my boy unless you teach the Bible and the Bible only." These religious devotees did not understand the merits of modern education and held that "there is no sense in all this figuring and geography and history" and asked Gale "What's the use of studying about flower[s]." There were also those who frankly asked for something in return for their child's attendance: "If

[267] For his biography and scholarly achievements, see Richard Rutt, ed. *James Scarth Gale and his History of the Korean people* (Seoul: Royal Asiatic Society Korea Branch,1972), 1-88.

[268] Richard Baird (NP) includes Gale among the missionaries who showed little willingness for school work for Korean Christian children. Baird, *William M. Baird of Korea; a profile*, 114. However, Gale later helped Korean yangbans to found Educational Association and took active part in Y.M.C.A. movement. Rutt, ed. *James Scarth Gale and his History of the Korean people* ,34. It seems that he was more interested in higher education than primary education.

they'll feed my boy, I'll let him go."[269] Gale tried to persuade such Christians to cooperate, stressing that "This is not our school: this is yours: lend a hand" but such pleas fell on deaf ears as "they had taken Christianity for what they could get out of it."[270]

Despite such obvious failure, the Presbyterian Mission did not take any radical measures to fix its failing educational project. They continued to neglect the importance of general education and paid scant attention to it. Even after Korea became a Japanese protectorate and the Korean desire for education was rising as a means to national empowerment, the Presbyterian attitude toward education remained unchanged. In 1910, the mission had 542 church schools under its jurisdiction, and ran them "primarily for evangelization... secondarily, the establishment of an indigenous church" rather than for the general uplift of the Korean Christian intellect because "the educational responsibility finds its place in this second aspect of the mission work."[271] Thus, the Presbyterians continued to reject the idea that "the Mission has any responsibility for the education of non-Christians" and "the Mission's educational responsibility is in the children of the

[269] "The Intermediate School," *Korea Field* (November 1902) : 68.
[270] Ibid., 68.
[271] J. E. Adams, "Christian Education for Christians," *Korea Mission Field* (September 1910): 225.

Church alone."[272] This meant that the educational responsibility for non-Christians, who constituted the vast majority of the Korean population at that time, largely fell in the hand of the Japanese government and the Mission expected the Japanese to do so.

In sum, the conventional image of the mission school as a harbinger of modern scientific education in Korea does not always apply to the Presbyterian schools of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. They provided mainly religious education for a limited number of Korean Christians, while putting little emphasis on general subjects. As the Presbyterian Mission board summarized, the Presbyterian Mission in Korea was "not willing to adopt a program of secular education divorced from the life of the Church" and even if Koreans wanted to receive a general Western education of the West, it was not "willing to yield to the popular demand for new fads."[273] The Presbyterian schools were for Christians only and their major aim was "not to develop a great system of general education"[274] but to "send them back into their home churches as strong evangelical Christians."[275] After all, the sole purpose of Presbyterian education was to make Christians,

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[272] Ibid., 225.
[273] Rhodes and Campbell, *History of the Korea mission, Presbyterian Church U. S. A.*, 533.
[274] Brown, *Modern missions in the Far East*, 553.
[275] *The Christian Movement in Japan, Korea, Formosa 1925,* 484, quoted in James Earnes Fisher, *Democracy and mission education in Korea* (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1928), 41.

not nationalist leaders who would use his advanced knowledge as a major means of national self-strengthening and independence.

Some Representative Presbyterian Graduates

In Korean history, the period from 1894-1910 is known as the moment when popular interest in modern education first began to surge. The Presbyterian Mission, however, went against the trend of the time and withdrew itself from the educational enterprise. Little wonder, then, that the Presbyterian school did not produce Korean Christian leaders who could stand on par with non-Christian leaders in disseminating modern education in the national arena. Instead, it mainly raised a group of Korean Christians who would devote themselves to religious service within the Church and continued to live under missionary guidance.

A typical example is the case of Song Sun-myŏng, who became the first ordained Korean church Elder. Song was an orphan who was taken to the orphan-school by Horace G. Underwood around 1887. Presumably, he received education at the elementary level, as this was the standard of the school, and hired as a colporteur and then as a helper. His faithful service was soon recognized by the missionary he served and Song was

recommended for ordination. In 1904, he became the first Korean Elder. Thereafter, he served in the Saemunan Church for over fifty years until his death in 1954.[276]

Despite his historical significance as the first Korean Elder and his leading status among Korean Christians, however, Song is hardly remembered in Korean Christian historiography today. This is because he did not participate in any significant event or make any noteworthy contributions either within or without the Church. [277] A representative Korean church leader who was hand-picked by a missionary and raised in the Presbyterian school was not the type of person to leave a profound impact upon the subsequent development of the Korean nation. And this was an intended result of early Presbyterian education policy, which aimed at producing a religious devotee who would disengage himself from secular society and devote himself to church service under missionary tutelage.

On the other hand, one of Song's classmates, An Ch'ang-ho, pursued a totally different path, and is today remembered as an iconic figure in the Korean nationalist movement. However, An's life and nationalist career cannot be taken as a result of his

[276] Yun Kyŏng-no, *Saemunan Kyohoe 100-yŏnsa : 1887-1987* (Seoul: Saemunan Kyohoe Ch'angnip 100-chunyŏn Kinyŏm Saŏphoe Yŏksa P'yŏnch'an Wiwŏnhoe, 1995) , 134-136.
[277] Ibid., 137, n.18.

Christian background for the following reasons. First, An did not have a regular affiliation with the Korean Church.[278] He was a wandering youth from a farming family from Pyŏngan Province and enticed to join the Presbyterian school "for the rumor of free lodging and food" when he came down to Seoul.[279] Then, he became a Christian but he soon migrated to Los Angeles to work among the Korean immigrants, where he was deeply involved in the Korean nationalist movement, and lost contact with the Korean Church. He did not reconnect with the Korean Church after his return to Korea in 1906 because he held a pantheistic idea and did not want to commit himself to the Christian faith.[280] Second, since the Presbyterian school provided only primary level education, it is unlikely that An's one year of study there transformed him into an intellectually strong national leader. It is more likely that his experience in the United States had more influence over his intellectual development. In any case, as we will discuss in greater detail in Chapter 7, the fact that he was involved in politics against the missionary expectation that Christian pupils in the school should work for the church after graduation was a good indication that An was not a typical alumnus of the Presbyterian school. He was not at all a representative Korean

[278] Chu Yo-han, *An Tosan chŏnsŏ* (Sŏul: Samjungdang, 1990), 25.
[279] Ibid., 23; Tosan Kinyŏm Saŏphoe, *Tosan An Ch'ang-ho*, 10.
[280] Chu Yo-han, *An Tosan chŏnsŏ*, 25.

church leader and his political commitment was not the intended result of mission education, but of his resistance against it.

Methodist Mission School: Paejae School

The Methodist Mission opened its first school in 1886, around the same time that the Presbyterian Mission started its orphan-school. Unlike the Presbyterians, who began the school without any educational objective other than to Christianize orphans, the Methodist Mission had a clear purpose of "placing within easy reach of Korean youth the essentials of American educational institutions and methods" and "to give to Korean students thoro[ugh] training in the curriculum of western science and literature, uniting with it the essential features of the native school system."[281]

As this statement of purpose reveals, the Methodist Mission did not plan to make its school an evangelizing agency to provide religious education for Christian converts, though some evangelical missionaries did teach Christianity in a clandestine manner when occasions allowed. Rather, the mission recognized the usefulness of general education based on modern science, as was common in America, and was also willing to coordinate

[281] "Historical Sketch of the Korea Mission," *Korean Repository*, (July 1898):259.

its program to fit the government educational system. Hence, its admission policy was not limited to Christian converts but open to anyone eager to study. According to this policy, the Methodist Mission selected pupils only from among those who had previous education and showed a willingness to learn, an approach which stood in stark contrast to the Presbyterian method of randomly recruiting street children. The Methodist mission also differed from the Presbyterian in its policy toward teaching English. It considered English as a requisite in acquiring western knowledge and thus taught it to the Korean students. Given that there was no Korean textbook on western science and literature at that time, the Methodist decision to educate its students in the English language was quite reasonable.

It should also be mentioned that the Methodist emphasis on general education in Korea was not an original innovation. Rather, this policy was in accord with the general education policy of the Methodist Church in the United States in the late nineteenth century. A resolution adopted by the Methodist General Assembly in 1890 stated that "The first duty of the Church is to convert the world; the second duty is to educate the world" and "Education often needs to precede conversion." This idea was exactly the opposite of the Presbyterian philosophy --- "gospel to heathen, education for Christians" and "No

institution before Church." To the Presbyterians, education was a privilege to be granted for the already saved. To the Methodists, it was the pathway to salvation.

Since Methodist school policy was not focused on Christian indoctrination, but on the acquisition of western knowledge, the school was welcomed by the Korean government. In fact, in 1887, when Henry G. Appenzeller asked for governmental recognition of the school, the Korean king not only approved but also bestowed the school name, *Pai Chai Haktang* or "the Hall for the Training of Useful Men" (hereafter, spelled as "Paejae" according to the contemporary standard spelling), as a visible sign of royal recognition.[282] As the school name suggests it was authorized by the Korean government not for Christian education, but for general education that would raise pupils useful to the Korean government, not to the mission. In other words, the Methodist mission did not hesitate to compromise Christian education for royal recognition and adopted a positive approach to providing general education to the broader Korean public.

Modern Educational Institution

[282] Davies, *The life and thought of Henry Gerhard Appenzeller*, 198 ; *Annual Report of BFMMEC* (1887), 313.

Gaining royal recognition had a significant impact on the development of the Paejae Haktang. Recognition granted security for students who were eager to learn from western scholarship but often worried about the possibility of governmental punishment for being enrolled at a foreign school where some missionaries did on occasion clandestinely teach Christian doctrine. Paejae students were more encouraged when one of their classmates was hired to be an interpreter at the royal palace soon after the school obtained royal recognition in 1887.[283] Six other students also received similar appointments later that year.[284] Although these appointments were to minor positions in the government, they marked a great step forward that showed that even a foreign school could now function as a gateway to officialdom. In Chosŏn society, where appointment to government positions had been so highly valued, any educational institution that would open the door to officialdom could gain social prestige. Methodist missionaries were a little concerned that their pupils left school for governmental appointments without enough training in English, but that did not discourage them from encouraging their students to seek governmental employment, nor did they stop teaching English as the Presbyterians did. To the contrary, the Methodist

[283] *Annual Report of BFMMEC* (1887), 313.
[284] Ibid., 313.

missionaries were "glad to see the work appreciated by the Government"[285] and gained confidence in their school policy.

Encouraged by initial success, the Methodist Mission also invested in school facilities. As soon as it won royal recognition, the mission built an impressive western-style school building, the first of its kind in Korea, on one of the most commanding sites in Seoul. According to the official description, "the hall is a substantial brick building 76 x 52 feet, one story high, built in renaissance style of architecture" and "contains a chapel, four lecture-rooms, a library, the principal's office, and a basement under half the building, to be devoted to the industrial department."[286] This was quite a contrast to the poorly equipped Presbyterian orphan school. Certainly, such an impressively western appearance would have appealed to the Korean who took a growing interest in western civilization, if not Christianity.

The steady advancement of Paejae Haktang was duly recognized by the government. This is indicated by the fact that within a decade of the school's opening "thirty three men [had] gone forth to take positions in one and another department of

[285] Ibid., 313.
[286] Ibid., 313.

government."[287] Moreover, in 1895, the Korean government entered contract with the Mission to dispatch 200 students to the school to train future officials in western- style education,[288] and continued to send students there every year. Considering that this decision was made by the new Korean cabinet, backed up by the Japanese in the wake of the Sino-Japanese War, it seems that the Japanese victory had some influence on this contract. In any case, the school's social prestige was greatly elevated and its financial position stabilized as tuition was paid in full by the government. This practice of receiving governmental trainees was continued until 1902.[289]

By 1896, the Paejae Haktang had two departments, Chinese and English, and 60 and 106 students in each and they received no financial assistance from the Mission.[290] Instead, those in financial need were given a chance to earn money on campus, mainly in the printing workshop.[291] The Methodist mission introduced the first modern press machine in Paejae and it printed religious tracts, missionary newspapers and reports. The workshop established in 1890 evolved into the Trilingual Press, where Korean, Chinese and

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[287] "Historical Sketch of the Korea Mission," *Korean Repository* (July 1898):268.
[288] "Education in the capital of Korea," *Korean Repository* (June 1896):216.
[289] *Annual Report of BFMMEC* (1902), 323.
[290] "Education in the capital of Korea," *Korean Repository* (June 1896):216.
[291] "Historical Sketch of the Korea Mission," *Korean Repository* (July 1898):267.

English types were prepared and dominated the early stages of the printing industry in Korea.[292] The New Testament was also incorporated into the curriculum and worship service in school chapel was no longer concealed and made mandatory.[293]

During this time, the missionaries invited Sŏ Chae-p'il (1864-1951) and Yun Ch'i-ho (1864-1945), two of the few Korean intellectuals at that time who had studied in the United States, as lecturers. Sŏ and Yun had lived a life of exile in the United States after the failed coup in 1882 where they obtained degrees in medicine and in theology respectively (see Chapter 2). Upon returning to Korea in 1895, they devoted themselves to educational work and established the Independence Club, through which he aimed at disseminating modern education and reforming the dynastic government. With their knowledge of modern scholarship, they taught various subjects, including geography and world affairs.[294] As both Sŏ and Yun belonged to the aristocratic yangban, their presence attracted many students of their class. In fact, it is around this time Syngman Rhee [Yi Sŭng-man] (1875-1965) and Cynn Hung-wu (Sin Hŭng-u] (1883-1959), two eager yangban

[292] Davies, *The life and thought of Henry Gerhard Appenzeller*, 218-219.
[293] "Education in the capital of Korea," *Korean Repository* (June 1896):217.
[294] Yun, for instance, taught physical geography, while sometimes lectured on a more specific topic such as "educational system of America and the defects in the Croean [sic](Korean) method of education." *Yun Ch'i-ho's Diary* (1895/3/20, 1898/2/28).

children, both of whom later became national leaders of post-liberation Korea, studied in this school and learned English as well as other forms of western scholarship, which later led them to pursue higher education in the United States.[295]

Reviewing the development of the Methodist mission school, we may note that, along with other government schools, it consistently maintained the same purpose of raising the intellectual standards of the Korean people and thus provided them with general education. The Methodist mission did not hide its Christian purpose and actually proposed that its students adopt it. At the same time, however, it neither imposed Christianity nor rejected admission for lack of faith. This was consistent with its philosophy that education sometimes needed to precede conversion and that general education of good quality would serve Koreans even if they did not adopt the Christian faith. If some did adopt faith along with knowledge, that would be ideal from the missionary point of view. Hence, a Methodist missionary fervently enthused in 1895 that, "The school has grand opportunities… of preparing Christian secular teachers for Korea. The country will soon demand them. It has a grander work in training Christian workers for our lay and full ministry."[296] Though it may sound somewhat contradictory, the title of "Christian secular teacher" was a keyword for

[295] Chŏn T'aek-pu, *Ingan Sin Hŭng-u* (Sŏul: Kidokkyo Sŏhoe, 1971), 27-30.
[296] "Historical Sketch of the Korea Mission," *Korean Repository* (July 1898):268.

understanding Methodist education policy. Methodist missioanries wanted to educate Koreans who would lead others in secular knowledge, but also maintain their commitment to the Christian cause.

Methodist Church Schools

The Methodist mission was successful in establishing a prestigious school in Seoul, but it failed to achieve the same success elsewhere. Like the Presbyterian mission, the Methodist mission concentrated its forces in Seoul and few resided outside the capital, where foreign residence was legally prohibited. Even if given the possibility of neglecting the law and attempting to reside in the countryside, missionaries still preferred to stay in the capital, which they considered a vital home base. Thus, when the Methodist mission began to expand its education work to the countryside, it let the local church run the school as day schools under its management. Though the doors of these schools were widely open to non-Christians, unlike the Presbyterian Day schools, they "were seriously handicapped because of lack of teachers, textbooks and facilities"[297] and also of "prejudice against the

[297] Charles August Sauer, *Methodists in Korea 1930-1960* (Seoul, Korea: The Christian Literature Society, 1973), 160.

Christian religion taught there."[298] Thus, attendance at these schools was constantly low and "unsatisfactory."[299]

In comparison, the Methodists were certainly more successful than the Presbyterians but their success was limited to the case of Paejae Haktang. It is true that the Methodist Mission later built more schools of a similar standard in other regions as the mission territory expanded, but the basic Methodist policy was to "concentrate resources on a few schools of outstanding quality"[300] in urban centers such as Inchŏn and Pyŏngyang and did not penetrate into the rural areas beyond the city gate. In fact, the general state of Methodist day schools was so miserably low that one Methodist missionary had to lament that many schools were allowed to exist simply because they were "better than none."[301]

Such dysfunctional schools were not limited to the Methodist mission, but also included Presbyterian ones. Yet, as the missionary stated, they were certainly better than none because there was no universal education system yet in Korea and there were many rural areas where there were no schools at all. The church school thus represented the only means of getting an education for the general Korean populace. Expectedly, as the general

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[298] "Historical Sketch of the Korea Mission," *Korean Repository*, (July 1898): 262-263.
[299] Sauer, *Methodists in Korea 1930-1960*, 160.
[300] Ibid., 332.
[301] Ibid., 160.

Korean interest in education began to rise under the Japanese protectorate, many Koreans turned to the church schools, not necessarily for religion but for education. The atmosphere of the time was well captured in the following missionary article.

> The whole nation is awake hungry for *kaiwha* [enlightenment], determined to getting an education, that open sesame as they think, to greatness, power, wealth, independence, all sorts of material blessings. They are considering favorably the *Yesu Kyowhay* [Protestant Church] too, as a possible means for the attainment of these same desired material blessings thro[ugh] the favor of placated Heavenly Powers. An education they will have, Christian or otherwise, whatever can be got, if not one another, religion they are ready to consider.[302]

This education fever was a great incentive for conversion as Christians were given priority for the limited enrollment in church schools. Especially in the case of Presbyterian schools, enrollment was limited to the children of Christian families on principle and thus conversion appeared a ticket to admission, which often perplexed missionaries like W. L. Swallen (NP).

> The school problem is great, at almost every point…The churches will get mixed up with the heathen on the school question, because the heathen want what the Christians have without giving up the devil. The heathen are offering the Christians their money and their old defunct Confucian school properties, and promise obedience to all the rules of the

[302] "The State of the Case," *Korea Mission Field,* (June 1910):121.

> Christian school, even to the sending of their children to the service on Sabbath, if only the church will provide the Christian teacher.[303]

Hence, church schools continued to grow in number and its total enrollment being a greater gap between demand and supply for school due to the absence of universal education system in Korea.

Nonetheless, the poorly equipped church schools could not respond to the sudden increase in enrollment. As a Methodist missionary reported, "the growth of educational work and the amount of money that the Koreans are giving for schools is very gratifying and yet perplexing, because of the scarcity of good teachers and the inadequacy of text-books."[304]

It is reasonable, then, to conclude that, for at least the first two decades of the Mission, the majority of Koreans Christians, regardless of denominational affiliation, received at best only a minimum standard of education. Most schools were crippled by a lack of facilities, teachers and textbooks. Consequently, Korean Christians were left undereducated about modern science and technology or western civilization as the average Korean of that time. With the exception of the Methodist Paejae School, then, mission

[303] "Narrative Report," *Korea Mission Field* ,(August 1908): 44.
[304] *Annual Report of BFMMEC* (1909), 177.

education made a limited contribution to the molding of intellectually advanced national leaders.

Chapter 5 Church and Korean Politics

From the beginning of the mission, the Protestant missionaries saw the world in terms of a binary system of sacred and secular and rejected political and social issues as belonging to the latter. This view was representative of conservative Protestantism in America and explains why missionaries in Korea were "comparatively indifferent to the educational and social application of the gospel in Korea."[305] Given that many Korean missionaries came from such a conservative Christian background in America,[306] it was natural that they taught Korean Christians to keep their distance from politics and devote themselves to religious salvation alone. While it is true that missionaries occasionally intervened in Korean political matters through the US legation when they deemed it necessary to protect Korean Christians from persecution, this was primarily a defense measure compelled by the on-the-ground circumstances (Chapter 2). As the Korean

[305] Horace Horton Underwood, *Modern education in Korea* (New York: International press, 1926), 288.

[306] Arthur Brown, the former secretary of the Presbyterian Mission Board, testifies the highly conservative nature of the Presbyterian Mission in Korea. "In most of the evangelical churches of America and Great Britain, conservatives and liberals have learned to live and work together in peace; but in Korea the few men who hold "the modern view" have a rough road to travel, particularly in the Presbyterian group of missions." Arthur Judson Brown, *The Mastery of the Far East* (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1919), 540.

government gradually acquiesced in the missionaries' freedom of religion, especially after the Sino-Japanese War in 1894, the missionaries tried to maintain their neutrality or aloofness from politics. Under missionary supervision, disengagement from politics soon became a common practice in the Korean churches.

Attitude toward the Independence Club

The separation of the church from politics became a keen issue for the Mission for the first time in the late 1890s, when the Independence Club began to demand political reforms to the government. This Club was founded in 1896 by two leading Korean intellectuals, Sŏ Chae-p'il and Yun Ch'i-ho, to promote the Korean independence cause among the general populace. They took the advantage of China's defeat in the Sino-Japanese War and sought to disseminate the nationalist ideal of standing independent without relying on foreign power. As a symbolic action, the Club members disestablished the traditional "Welcome Gate" in Seoul, the site where Chinese imperial delegates were hosted, and replaced it with a new western-style stone arch, the "Independence Gate." They envisioned constitutional monarchy as the future form of the Korean government and tried

to move the Korean Court toward that direction.[307] To win the royal confidence, the Club leader, Sŏ Chae-p'il organized a public celebration for the King's Birthday and some missionaries such as Horace G. Underwood (NP) mobilized Christians in Seoul to attend the ceremony and pray for him.[308] For this kind of activities, some scholars interpret the Club's movement and the Christian involvement as a proof of the Christian "loyalty to the king and the nation" (ch'unggun aeguk).[309]

Nonetheless, the Club's relation to the King and the Korean Court was not without tension. In the beginning, the Club was supportive of the Korean Court policy of moving away from Chinese tutelage after the Sino-Japanese war, but it became critical of the Court, when it showed a growing reliance on the Russian Empire in 1896 in order to hold the victorious Japanese in check. To sustain Korean independence, the Club proposed that the Korean government implement various reform measures such as prohibiting the sale of national resources for foreign concessions and punishing corrupt officials who placed their personal gain over the national interest.

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[307] For the detailed account of the Club, see Vipan Chandra, *Imperialism, resistance, and reform in late nineteenth-century Korea : enlightenment and the Independence Club* (Berkeley: Center for Korean Studies Institute of East Asian Studies University of California Berkeley, 1988)

[308] "His Majesty's Birthday,"*Korean Repository* (September 1896): 277.

[309] Min Kyŏng-bae, *Han'guk kidok kyohoesa (sin kaejŏn p'an)*, 222-223.

Yet, King Kojong was by no means determined to adopt the progressive agenda proposed by the Club, though he was leaning more toward western ideas and technology after the Sino-Japanese War. Hence, when the conservative anti-Club officials conspired to disseminate a false rumor that the Club was plotting a revolution to make Korea into a Republic, the indecisive king was panic-stricken and ordered the arrest of the Club leaders, while announcing royal edict that the Club be disestablished at once.[310] As a result, Sŏ Chae-p'il and Yun Ch'i-ho were hunted by the government and had to take refuge using their foreign contacts. It was the second time for them to be wanted by their own government since the failed coup in 1882. Because Sŏ had acquired United States citizenship, he could ask the U.S. Consul-General for diplomatic protection and flee to the United States. Yun went into hiding at the house of his missionary friend Henry G. Appenzeller.[311] While Sŏ and Yun were exceptional Christian intellectual elites and did not represent the majority of Korean Christians, it is nevertheless interesting to note that their political behavior was in complete accord with the Korean Christian tradition of seeking refuge under foreign protection in time of need.

[310] *Yun Ch'i-ho's Diary*, (11/5/1898).
[311] *Yun Ch'i-ho's Diary*, (11/5/1898).

With the suppression of the Independence Club, Yun lost confidence in the Korean monarch as a potential reformer. In his diary, Yun cursed King Kojong as "the deteriorated edition of King Charles I" and when he heard the news of the forced dissolution of the Club, he burst into anger: "This is a King! A smooth-lying treacherous coward could not have done anything meaner than this… Great Emperor of Korea!!!"[312] But what disheartened Yun more than the king was the "abominable indifference of the general public" to the Club's struggle.

> They [Korean people] look on the struggle as a personal quarrel of some Independents with the government. These children of oppression and slaves of centuries fail to see that the six Articles [of the Club's reform proposal] touch the national and personal interest of every one of them! To have based any hope on a people of this sort—we have been greater fools. As the king, so is the people! They deserve to be nothing but slaves![313]

This statement clearly shows the sense of isolation that Christian intellectuals like Yun felt. Behind them was no mass support from Korean Christians at all. The nationalist aspiration that drove the Club had no appeal to the "children of oppression and slaves" to which the majority of the Christian population belonged. They were struggling to make a living and

[312] *Yun Ch'i-ho's Diary*, (11/5/1898).
[313] *Yun Ch'i-ho's Diary*, (11/6/1898).

had neither extra time nor resources to make engage positively in political affairs and received little education. Moreover, the missionaries instructed Korean Christians to stay aloof from politics, while encouraging them to divert their interests and resources to the religious cause of the Church.

In fact, the missionaries were generally inimical to the Club's political activism. The Presbyterian missionaries in particular dismissed the Independence Club's cause as having nothing to do with the religious salvation of Korean souls. To the contrary, they frowned upon the Korean Christians' association with the Club and tried to keep them away from the Club. For instance, Samuel F. Moore (NP), ministering at Yon Mot Kol Church in Seoul, was annoyed when he found that some of his congregation were "engrossed with the 'Independence Club'" and renounced them as having "little thought or purpose in the work of the Church."[314] In other words, the missionaries were largely responsible for producing such politically passive Korean Christians, whom Christian intellectuals like Yun Ch'i-ho disdained as "slaves."

Nonetheless, the government crackdown of the Independence Movement brought about an unexpected positive impact on the subsequent Korean Christian development.

[314] Korea Mission of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., A*nnual report of Seoul Station, Korea Mission for the year 1898-1899*, 3.

Among some reform-minded and elite yangban members of the Club who were deprived of their government positions and jailed in Seoul prison were born a group of Christian converts. Their conversion was led mainly by Dalziel A. Bunker (1853-1932, NM) , James S. Gale (NP) and Horace G. Underwood (NP), who made a regular visit to these noted elite yangban officials in prison for consolation and provided religious tracts and Bible in classical Chinese. Also, Syngman Rhee (1875-1965), a Paejae graduate and the young activist in the Independence Club, who was imprisoned himself, was instrumental in proselytizing his senior prisonmates.[315] Gradually, many of them believed the new teaching and converted, which include prominent senior officials. They included the following figures: Yu Sŏng-jun (1860-1934), a high-ranking official and a younger brother of Yu Kil-chun, a well-known scholar who had studied in the United States and authored *Sŏyu kyŏngmun*, the first book on the West published in Korea in 1895; Yi Sang-jae (1850-1927), former secretary cabinet and later became an executive leader of Seoul

[315] *Yun Ch'i-ho's Diary* (3/9/1904).

Y.M.C.A.; Yi Wŏn-gŭng (1849-?), one of the most noted Confucian scholar at that time; Kim Chŏng-sik (1862-1937), former chief of police of Seoul.[316]

In career, status and age, this group of converts had a totally different caliber from the majority of the Korean Christians at that time. By the time of conversion, they had been ruling the country as high officials and concerned about the future of the Korean state and nation as their own concerns. Their participation in the governmental and social reform through Independence Club shows they were the leaders of incipient Korean nationalism. There is little document to show their internal motive for conversion, but, considering their socio-political background, it was likely that they received it not only as a means for personal salvation but also national. In any case, this yangbans's conversion in prison, though a few in number, was a historic moment in Korean Christian history, where ruling elites within Korea turned to Christian faith for the first time.[317] How their peculiar presence in the low-class dominated Korean Church, after their release from prison, affected the subsequent development of the Church will be discussed in the next chapters.

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[316] Yu Sŏng-jun, "midŭm ŭi tonggi wa yurae," *Kidok sinbo* (6/27/1928, 7/4/1928); James Scarth Gale, *Korea in transition* (New York :Cincinnati: Eaton & Mains ;Jennings & Graham, 1909), 183-184.

[317] Yi Nŭng-hwa, *Chosŏn Kidokkyo kŭp oegyo sa* (Kyŏngsŏng Chosŏn Kidokkyo Ch'angmunsa 1928), 203-204.

The Separation of Church from Politics

The Presbyterian principle of absolute separation of church and politics soon became a formal policy of the mission. In the Mission Council in 1901, the Presbyterian missionaries adopted the following resolution and delivered the Korean translation to the local Korean churches under its jurisdiction.

> 1. We resolved that our ministers shall never interfere with affairs of state (*nara il*), government (*chŏngbu il*) and officials (*kwanwŏn il*) of Korea (*Taehan*)
> 2. There are treaties between the Korea and our [missionaries' home] countries and we have to handle political affairs according to the treaties… What we teach our [Korean] congregations is that Church is not the organization that should take responsibility of state affairs or interfere with it.
> 3. Korean people remain as Korean people even after becoming a member of the Church. What we teach you is to serve the emperor with loyalty, to obey officials, and to observe the government laws according to the word of Gods.
> 4. Our Church neither forces nor prohibits its members to take part in state affairs or join any political party. [But] we would not take any responsibility nor make defense for the mistakes and crimes that might be committed by the church members while involved in state affairs.
> 5. Our Church is the Church where Holy Spirit resides, not the Church to take care of state affairs. Thus, the church buildings, minister's guestrooms and church schools should be used for church activities (*kyohoe il*) only, and never for the discussion about state and political

> affairs… Also, whoever becomes a church member, he shall not bring in his minister's guestroom such topics as cannot be discussed publicly in other places.[318]

This policy is quite distinctive in that it demanded more than a separation of church and state as was commonly practiced in the United States. It mandated that Korean Christians refrain entirely from engaging in politics regardless of purpose. The fact that even discussion of political affairs was banned in church buildings shows how strongly the missionaries wanted to insulate Korean Christians from political entanglement. At that time, the Korean Church was relatively free from Korean government censorship through the extraterritorial rights enjoyed by the missionaries. Within the Church, however, the missionary practiced another kind of censorship and political discussions were strictly suppressed. The missionaries adopted Koreans who needed political refuge in the church, but once Koreans entered church doors, they were expected to forget about politics and remain silent about it. Korean Christians might have learned some elementary ideas about democracy in sermons or classes at the mission schools, but were expected not to practice it in public. Therefore, there was no place in the church for politically-minded Korean Christians who wanted to reform the corrupt Korean government and share political ideas

[318] *Kŭrisŭdo sinmun* (10/3/ 1901), 318.

with their fellow Christians. In other words, for the Korean Christians, simultaneously being a church leader and also a political leader was impossible as long as missionary censorship prevailed in the Church.

The Japanese Protectorate

The missionaries continued to discourage Korean Christian involvement in politics even when Korean sovereignty was endangered by the Japanese empire. When Japan imposed the Protectorate Treaty on the Korean government in 1905 and made it into a semi-colonized state, the missionaries did their best to keep Korean Christians calm and refrain from raising voices of opposition against the new Japanese regime.

The endorsement of Japanese rule in Korea was in accordance with the United States diplomatic policy under Theodore Roosevelt, who wanted Japan to check the Russian expansion.[319] Also, the missionaries wanted a more functional local government so that their mission work would not be disturbed. This view was represented by Arthur Brown, the Secretary of the Presbyterian Foreign Mission Board, who made an inspection

[319] Horace N. Allen, the missionary-turned American representative in Seoul, wanted to persuade the State Department not to take Japanese side, but failed before the first Presidential position to support Japan. the Harrington, *God, mammon, and the Japanese*, 302-318.

trip to Korea in 1902 and predicted that internal corruption in Korea would soon lead it to be taken over by foreign powers.

> It is totally destitute of the moral fiber needed in Korea at this time, and the prevailing corruption is as among the officials in the Imperial Palace as anywhere in the Empire. The people are taxed beyond all reason… Offices are sold to the highest bidder, or given to dissipated favorites…So rotten is the entire system that one marvels that the nation has not fallen to pieces before this. Only the stolid apathy of the Asiatic and the rival claims of foreign Powers have held it together at all.[320]

Based on this cool and pessimistic observation, Brown concluded, "It is evident that Korea is too weak to maintain her independence much longer. She is sure to fall at no distant day."[321] For the American Protestant missionaries, then, the Japanese takeover of Korea was an expected scenario.

Some missionaries optimistically believed that the loss of national independence would turn Korean minds more toward religion than politics and thus make for more devoted evangelists. Interpreting this political event in religious terms, one Methodist missionary thought that "God is forming out of Korea an instrument for the evangelizing of the yellow races" and prophesized that, "The day will come when we shall see the Korean

[320] Brown and Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Board of Foreign Missions., *Report of a visitation of the Korea mission of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions*, 1.
[321] Ibid., 3.

evangelists working with as much power and force among China's millions as among his own people."[322] Hence, from the missionary point of view, Korea's loss of independence was a positive development that would lead it to become "the Palestine of the Far East" where Christian converts were commissioned to disseminate the gospel to neighboring great nations just as the Jewish Christian converts evangelized the Romans.

Such a missionary view was also endorsed by a Korean Christian, Syngman Rhee, a Paejae graduate, who had been an active member of the Independence Club and known as a young nationalist leader. In 1908, he had a chance to attend the American Methodist Convention at Pittsburg and delivered the address to the missionary audience in which he mentioned the present state of Korea.

> So you see, the Koreans to-day have not country to live or die for, and no longer homes in which to enjoy peaceful life… Parden[sic] me, friends, I mention it not with unpleasant feeling at all. On the contrary, I am glad of it. I thank God for that, because this is Korea's opportunity… In the lowest pitch of their national humility, the Koreans at once realize the need of some great power to life them up. They know well enough that no earthly power could do that… If Korea can be saved at all, it is by Jesus Christ…You [missionaries] have given them the very thing they needed… [God] gave us this great opportunity so that the Koreans might give up their national pride, ancestral beliefs, and hereditary superstitions… Today more than one hundred thousand native Christians

[322] "Korea, The Palestine of the Far East," *The Korea Methodist*, (May 1905):152.

> are praying earnestly and constantly that their beautiful little country may become a perfect Christian nation within the next twenty years. I am one of these native converts who firmly believe that God will answer our prayers.[323]

Rhee might have prepared this address with a diplomatic intention to attract American attention to Korea as a deterrence against the increasing Japanese power in Korea. Considering that Rhee actually became a Korean nationalist leader in exile in the States and continued to lobby with Washington for support for Korea's independence, it is likely that he had such diplomatic consideration in mind when he made the address. Nonetheless, it still shows us that a nationalist like Rhee knew well enough what kind of message the American missionary audience wanted to hear most from a native Korean Christian and had to present the Koreans as a naïve nation who would not pursue earthly political aims, abandon national pride, and wait for God's salvation on the verge of national demise. Simply put, Rhee could not say in front of the missionary audience, even if he wanted, that he pray God for Korean national independence and His protection in his struggle against the Japanese because the missionaries did not want to hear. He had to conform to the

[323] "Appeals of Native Christians", *Korea Mission Field*, (June 1908) : 96.

missionary view in any way as long as he tried to keep American attention through the Mission, the gateway to the American power.

There were, of course, some missionaries who showed more personal sympathy for the passing of Korea than others, but their sympathy did not drive to them to oppose mission policy or confront the Japanese regime. James Scranton, for instance, was worried that Bishop Harris, who presided over both Japanese and Korean Methodist Church, had a strong pro-Japanese gesture might dishearten the Koreans, but even he had no intention of rejecting the Japanese. He expected Japan's rule, if inevitable, would benefit Korea and wrote to the Board. "As foreigners living in Korea… we are nearly all pro-Japanese to the extent of wishing well for Japan in Korea, if she will do well by Korea," even though "We are Korean sympathizers first, and look at Korea from the local standpoint."[324]

Missionary support for the Japanese regime was expressed not only in word but also in deed. Especially when church members were involved in any form of anti-Japanese movement, the Missions punished them as violating the principle of separation of church and politics. For instance, the Methodist mission disbanded the Epworth League, a youth group in the Chŏngdong Church, the oldest and the largest Methodist Church in Seoul at

[324] James Scranton to Dr. Leonard, (5/15/1905) quoted in Charles Davis Stokes, "History of Methodist Missions in Korea" (Ph.D. diss, Yale University, 1947), 175.

that time, where Chŏn Tŏkki, a missionary servant-turned-pastor, schemed to mobilize some members of the church for the anti-Japanese movement. Though the detailed activities of the League were not disclosed in the official record of the Mission, it accused the League's members for "leading a double life before the church and within itself" and "falling under the control of outsiders…who were carrying away the League from the purposes of the church to that of the world."[325]

While missionaries prohibited Korean Christians from expressing their dissatisfaction with Japanese rule, they allowed themselves to express sympathy and affinity with the Japanese empire. A good example is the Methodist relationship with the Itō Hirobumi, the first Resident-General in Korea. When Itō arrived in Seoul, a representative of the Methodist Mission escorted him to the palace where he was to receive the royal audience.[326] The scene of the missionaries, following Itō's procession in horse cart through the main street of Seoul was a clear message to Koreans that Christians should remain loyal to state authority, whether the state was handled by the Korean King or the Japanese Resident-General.

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[325] *Annual Report of BFMMEC* (1906), 322.
[326] *Keijō Nippō*, (6/23/1907), 2.

The Anti-Ŭibyŏng Attitude of the Church

With such high expectations placed on the religious role of Korean Christians, it was natural that the missionaries were rather unsympathetic to the ŭibyŏng, the righteous army who took arms against the Japanese at the time of the Protectorate Treaty in 1905. This armed rebellion quickly spread, especially after the disbanding of the Korean Army in 1907, when many of the dismissed Korean military officials and soldiers joined other anti-Japanese forces organized by Confucian scholars and other local leaders.[327] To counter this popular resistance, the Japanese deployed a large number of fully armed police and conducted aggressive campaigns to suppress it. Thus, there were continuous skirmishes between the Japanese and Korean guerrilla forces between 1905 and 1910, resulting in significant socio-economic turmoil in rural area.

The conventional historiography generally interprets ŭibyŏng as a manifestation of anti-Japanese Korean nationalism. However, since many ŭibyŏng leaders were Confucianists and maintained conservative values, they were not simply anti-Japanese but anti-foreign. In fact, one of the common purposes of the ŭibyŏng uprisings was to restore the traditional socio-political order under the current dynasty by expelling all foreigners,

[327] For the first-hand account of ŭibyŏng by a western journalist at that time, see Fred A. McKenzie, *The tragedy of Korea* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1908), 197-208.

western and Japanese alike. Therefore, Korean Christians and missionaries in general had a quite low view of the "Righteous Army" as reactionary and anachronistic. In addition, their armed resistance caused many local disturbances and worsened the living conditions of local Christians who had been struggling in daily poverty. Often, local Christians were caught in the fighting between the ŭibyŏng and the Japanese and suffered serious damage to their home and religious life. As a result, the missionaries had to conclude that the ŭibyŏng was the enemy of the Church, and often worse than the Japanese police force. For example, Charles A. Clark (1878-1961, NP) was totally disgusted with the ŭibyŏng when he inspected the real aftermath of the ŭibyŏng's righteous fighting in Kyŏnggi and Kangwŏn province in 1906.

> I saw the ruins of hundreds of houses burned either by the Japanese or the "euipyungs [sic]," for both are in the business. At Yanggeun, 300 houses, at Tukusoo, 80, Yongmoon, 80, and so on. There were the largest towns but every day we passed isolated house and small villages burned in whole or in part. Hundreds are living in caves… The Japanese have been very cruel, in some places, but on the whole not worse than the other side. The "euipyungs" are the real oppressors of the poor. Some months ago, there was a faint spark of patriotism in this movement and it no doubt lingers in some individuals, but my conclusion, from what I saw, is that 90% of them are in it for Number One and not for the sake of the country. They have never, so far as I could find, sought the Japanese to fight them. From the beginning, they have gone around in bands of 30 to 1500 men, going from

> village to village, summoning the leaders of the town and demanding great sums of money. Wherever they were refused, they murdered or tortured without limit…The "euipyungs" have taken food and clothes and money from the Christians and they burned one Christian village near Whang-sang-kol, but they have not as yet harmed any of our people physically…[328]

As ŭibyŏng guerrilla warfare dragged on, the state of the local churches deteriorated further. Clark's report for the year 1907-08 depicted a grimmer picture of the war.

> The whole area has been passing through a reign of terror. All the opponents of the Japanese from the 13 provinces have assembled here because the mountains make it hard for the Japanese to catch them. The guerrilla fighters have roamed around in band living off the land. The Japanese have followed them wherever they could get any knowledge of them. Night and day, for months, continuous skirmishes have gone on. NO mercy was shown on either side. Anyone suspected of helping either side was at once shot by the other, if caught. Every house or village that entertained either side was at once burned by the other… It has put the church through a test of fire.[329]

The situation was no better in the Northern provinces. Mattie and Arthur Noble (1866-1945, NM) in Pyŏngyang, observed that "The We-pyung [sic] have for a long time not only been plundering and killing Japanese but their own country men and women in the interior, who

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[328] Charles Allen Clark, "Personal Report to the Korean Mission for 1906-1907," cited in Donald N. Clark, *Living dangerously in Korea : the western experience, 1900-1950* (Norwalk, CT: EastBridge, 2003), 35-36.
[329] Charles Allen Clark, "Personal Report to the Korean Mission for 1907-1908," cited in ibid., 35.

they thought could give them money and help or who they suspected of being Japanese sympathizers."[330]

Totally repulsed by the undisciplined ŭibyŏng soldiers, James S. Gale (NP) introduced them in a negative light to Christian audiences overseas.

> A mad sort of spurious patriotism started into being, with suicide, chopping off of fingers, sworn oaths, guerrilla warfare flint-lock resistance. It still goes on to a considerable degree, while the poor people in valleys, caught between the two contending forces, have to pay the price of Korea's past failures.[331]

While missionaries campaigned against the ŭibyŏng, there were instances where local Christian leaders were arrested and executed by Japanese on charges of being "participators in the insurrection."[332] Though such radical elements were a small minority in the church, the missionaries were afraid that the Japanese would see the Korean Church as ŭibyŏng sympathizers. Therefore, the missionaries had all the more reason to keep the Korean Christians from taking any part in the resistance and avoid any engagement in political complications.

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[330] *Mattie Noble's Diary*, (2/12/1908).
[331] Gale, *Korea in transition*, 38.
[332] *Annual Report of BFMMEC* (1908), 379.

Most Korean Church leaders followed this mission policy loyally. Kil Sŏn-ju (1869-1935, NP), one of the first ordained Korean Elders, preached to the congregation in his church in Pyŏngyang not to join the ŭibyŏng and told the Christian that "the powers that be are ordained of God" and thus avoid confronting Japanese.[333] Some leaders took more positive action. Ch'oe Pyŏng-hŏn (1858-1927, NM), one of the first Korean Methodist pastors, accepted the Korean governmental appointment to become a "peace commissioner" (*sŏnyusa*) who would be sent to ŭibyŏng leaders in rural provinces and persuade them to lay down arms under royal authority. It was likely that this royal appointment was manipulated by the Japanese protectorate acting behind the crown, but Ch'oe accepted it positively, thinking, "it was not meddling with politics but simply an humanitarian measure."[334] George Heber Jones (1867-1919, NM), who supervised Ch'oe, opposed his decision at first and refused to give his consent. But, upon Ch'oe's plea, he gave him permission to become "commissioner" on condition that he should take a leave of absence from his church work.[335] It was the Korean Christian's determination to negotiate with ŭibyŏng to lay their arms. Soon the Methodist Mission publicly expressed its support for

[333] Paek Nak-chun, *The history of protestant missions in Korea 1832-1910*, 416.
[334] *Mattie Noble's Diary*, (2/12/1908).
[335] *Mattie Noble's Diary*, (2/12/1908).

Ch'oe's mission and wished his success.[336] Endorsed by the missionary, Ch'oe visited rural villages in his home province of Ch'ungch'ong, escorted by the Japanese police, and preached to the local residents as well as the ŭibyŏng leaders, persuading them that the current and immediate need of Korea was to promote education among the common people and losing lives to armed resistance was to waste a valuable asset. Ch'oe's campaigning had some effect and several ŭibyŏng leaders surrendered to the Japanese authority.[337]

Likewise, Sŏ Sang-ryun (1848-1925, NP), one of the first Korean Protestant converts in Manchuria, who by then had become the senior leader of the Church, also received an appointment as "peace commissioner" and was dispatched to his home province of Hwanghae. However, Sŏ was less successful in his persuasion campaigns as he rejected the ŭibyŏng's cause outright and branded them traitors against the royal order. During the tour, he was captured by the ŭibyŏng on one occasion and reportedly flogged a few dozen times, on suspicion of being a false "royal commissioner" and a "Japanese spy."[338]

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[336] "News Notes," *Korea Mission Field*, (January 1908): 5.
[337] For further details on Ch'oe's campaign, see Yi Tŏk-chu, *Hanguk t'och'ak kyohoe hyŏngsŏngsa yŏn'gu* (Hanguk kidokyyo yŏksa yŏn'guso, 2001), 184-190. The author is greatly indebted to Yi's work which enabled him to locate the primary sources on Ch'oe's activities.
[338] *Hwansŏng sinmun*, (3/13/ 1908), 2.

For their part, the ŭibyŏng leaders thought that Korean Christians were simply manipulated by the missionaries. They thus planned an anti-missionary assault. In fact, an anonymous leader of the ŭibyŏng sent a death threat to George H. Jones, which aimed at "his life in ten days, and from him down to the Christians the burning of missionary homes" unless he recalled Ch'oe before then.[339] The same letter was sent to James S. Gale, though he was not a Methodist missionary and had no control over Ch'oe. The scared missionaries decided to recall Ch'oe after consulting with the U.S. and British Consuls.[340] They also reported to the Japanese police of the harassment and the Japanese sent the police guards to Jones' residence to prepare for the ŭibyŏng's attack, for which Jones was very thankful.[341]

These Korean Christian and missionary reactions to the ŭibyŏng show that anti-Japanese nationalism did not bond the Christians the ŭibyŏng together, but divided them farther apart. For the ŭibyŏng, the Christians were identified as followers of the heterodox religious rule of the foreign missionaries and were thus traitors. Their anti-Christian sentiment was so strong that they had little sympathy for Korean Christians

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[339] *Mattie Noble's Diary* (2/12/1908, 2/15/1908).
[340] Gale was a Canadian citizen and the British Embassy was in charge of the Canadians in Seoul.
[341] Kikuchi Takeichi to Sone Arasuke, titled "Beikoku senkyōshi ni kansuru hōkoku" (2/15/1908) in Kuksa p'yŏnch'an wiwŏnhoe, ed. *T'onggambu munsŏ vol.1* (Kwach'ŏn-si: Kuksa p'yŏnch'an wiwŏnhoe 1998).

and robbed property and money for their righteous war against the Japanese. As seen in Chapter 2, such anti-Christian violence had been prevalent in Korea prior to the Japanese Protectorate and this was not the first time that Christians were physically threatened by non-Christians. By contrast, the Korean Christians and missionaries viewed the ŭibyŏng as bandits or anti-Christian thugs. As they possessed no military power to challenge the ŭibyŏng, however, they had to rely on the suppression campaigns of the Japanese protectorate. Hence, it was not a critical issue for them whether the government force was Japanese or Korean. They simply needed any power that could pacify the uncontrolled violence of the ŭibyŏng and restore an order in which they could enjoy the freedom of religion. Their primary objective lay in preserving the security of their religious as well as material life with the Church at its center, even if this was accomplished under foreign rule.

It is also worth noting that there was an important historical precedent for Korean Christian reliance on foreign protection. Catholic Christians under the Chosŏn dynasty had also been dependent upon foreign power and prerogatives for protection of their existence. The missionary's extraterritorial rights had been the primary defense against government persecution, but they had been ineffective against the uncontrolled violence of anti-Christian mobs and riots. Thus, physical force was at times needed and, following this

logic, the missionaries welcomed Japanese intervention to suppress the anti-foreign and anti-Christian Tonghaks in 1894 and appreciated peace under Japanese domination in the postwar era where they gained greater freedom of religion and Christian growth took off. Taking into account such historical context, the Christian reliance on the Japanese against the anti-Christian ŭibyŏng was in accord with their past behavioral patterns. As long as Korean society at large maintained an intolerant and violent attitude toward Christianity, Korean Christians always needed an external guarantor of their security, whether in the form of the western missionaries or the Japanese colonial power.

In short, the missionaries and Korean Christians wanted the restoration of peace and order above all and worked diligently to achieve this goal. The Methodist Mission commended such Christian efforts, and gladly reported to the Board that:

> Both at Seoul and Pyengyang [sic], and throughout the disturbed sections, the Christians exerted their influence on the side of law and order and contributed very largely to keeping the spirit of disorder under control. In the north, no uprising against the government occurred, and this was all the more remarkable, as the people in Pyengyang and the northern provinces are the most excitable and turbulent in the empire.[342]

The Mission thus concluded the report proudly:

[342] George Heber Jones and Arthur W. Noble, *The Korean Revival* (New York: Board of Foreign Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church, ca.1910), 41.

> Any just review of the causes which contributed to tranquility must give a large share of credit to the restraining influence of the churches. Throughout this entire region, both in the north and at Seoul, misguided patriots threatened the lives of missionaries and native preachers because their influence was against disorder, but as the result of the counsels and restraining influence of the Christian workers, bloodshed was prevented and order maintained.[343]

In other words, the major contribution of the Korean Church in this period was not to promote anti-Japanese nationalist struggles, but to suppress it.

Mass Revivals in 1907

While missionaries and Korean Christians stayed out of politics, they made a concerted effort to propagate the gospel and disseminate the message of religious salvation among the general populace. Korean Christians, who were mostly poor and socially underprivileged, had neither the political will nor the material means to rise up in arms against the Korean government, ŭibyŏng or the Japanese protectorate. The desperate hopelessness and helplessness prevailed among the impoverished Koreans and the missionaries often heard their crying, "*Wei-chi hal kot tomochi oupso* [ŭiji hal kot tomuji

[343] Ibid., 41-42.

ŏpsŏ]," meaning "there is altogether no place to trust."[344] In a time when hope for socio-political salvation was fading away, many Koreans were tempted to seek religious salvation as an alternative. This desire led to a series of Christian revivals, beginning in the northern regions of Korea in the wake of the Japanese Protectorate, but quickly spreading all over the country and reaching its peak in 1907 at the "Great Revival" in Pyŏngyang.

The "Great Revival" has been explained as the expression of Korean Christian nationalism, in which Korean Christians cried and prayed for national rejuvenation and salvation. However, the missionaries at least did not note such a nationalist agenda in the revival, but rather intended to make it an opportunity to promote religious piety and keep Koreans away from national politics. William Blair (n.a.- 1970, NP), one of the initiators of the Revival, articulated his purpose as follows.

> We felt that the Korean church needed not only to repent of hating the Japanese, but a clear vision of all sin against God, that many had come into the church sincerely believing in Jesus as their Savior and anxious to do God's will without great sorrow for sin because of its familiarity… We felt…that embittered souls needed to have their thoughts taken away from the national situation to their own personal relation with the Master.[345]

[344] J.R. Moose, "A Great Awakening," *Korea Mission Field*, (January 1906): 51.
[345] William Newton Blair, *The Korea Pentecost* (New York: The Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., n.d.), 42.

There is no way of knowing if Korean Christians repented the sin of hating Japanese as the missionaries instructed, but there is evidence that missionaries and Korean Christians invited Japanese residents in Pyŏngyang to the Revival and proselytized them at that time. George H. Jones, for example, was greatly impressed by Japanese participation in the Korean Revival.

> A number of Japanese were converted in the meetings held in Pyengyang, although they were ignorant of the Korean language and the contact was altogether in spirit. The Christians who witnessed the effects of the revival on the Koreans were profoundly moved and carried back the news to Japan, where in several instances it resulted in quickening the Japanese Church... One night there came into the meeting in Pyengyang a Japanese army officer who appeared to be deeply interested in what was taking place. When the Christians knelt in prayer, he knelt with them, but when they arose he continued prostrate before God. No one present could speak the Japanese language, so it was not possible to communicate with him…The next day he came with the pastor of the Japanese church in Pyengyang to see the missionary. He told of how in the past he had no belief in existence of God, but in the meeting had been so impressed with what had taken place that he could doubt no longer his being and presence, and there had given his heart to Christ. As he was soon to return to Japan he requested baptism, and the following night a little group of Japanese took their place in the midst of the vast audience of Koreans. At the close of the service this soldier-Christian was baptized into the Christian faith amid the common rejoicing of Japanese and Koreans. The officer returned to Japan with his heart filled with the divine passion for souls. He preached the gospel in the garrison city to

> which he was appointed with such earnestness that the entire community was deeply stirred and many persons brought to Christ. This is but typical of the possible influence that Korea may exert upon her neighbors.[346]

The joy of transnational alliance in faith was also experienced by Presbyterian missionaries, who visited Pyŏngyang to attend the Great Revival, and met Japanese Christians there.

> Sometimes Mr. Murata, the Japanese evangelist, and other Japanese Christians attend and take part, either in broken English or in pure Japanese, which none of us can understand. And yet, strange to say, interpreted by common sympathy and faith, we all feel the spirit of what they are saying, and are enabled to join in heartily with them in prayer.[347]

The Japanese involvement in the Great Revival in Korea was more than nominal. It inspired Japanese Christians both in Korea and at home, and some Japanese Christians in the mainland, who were inspired by the news of the revival in Korea, even made an inspection tour of Pyŏngyang in 1907,[348] and reported favorably of the spiritual development in the neighboring country upon their return to Japan.[349]

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[346] George Heber Jones and Arthur W. Noble, *The Korean Revival* (New York: Board of Foreign Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1910 ca.), 43-44.
[347] Mrs. W. M. Baird, "The Spirit Among Pyeng Yang Students," *Korea Mission Field* (May 1907): 67.
[348] M.C. Harris, "Christianity in Japan and Korea," *Missionary Review of the World* (March 1911), 190.
[349] "Chōsen no kirisuto kyō,"*Fukuin Shinpō* (9/8/1910); Murata Jūji, "Kakoku jijō", *Gokyō* (3/20/1909).

As mentioned above, some missionaries entertained visions of making Koreans future missionaries among other Asian peoples. From the missionary point of view, then, the evangelizing efforts of Korean Christians toward the Japanese were quite desirable and satisfactory. The missionaries were thus proud of Korean Christians being neighbor-loving evangelists rather than anti-Japanese fighters. For the missionaries, the Korean loss of national independence was sufficiently compensated by the growing evangelization of Korea and its transnational impact upon its colonizing neighbors. And, whether willing or unwilling, the Korean Christians conformed to the missionary's expectations. At a minimum, they never chose to confront the powers that be.

Silence about Annexation

Having given up hope for Korea's independence after the Protectorate Treaty, the missionaries had no reason to oppose the formal Japanese annexation of Korea. They calmly accepted annexation and taught the Korean Christians "submission to the inevitable, rather than a reckless waste of life and treasure."[350] In fact, some missionaries expected that the annexation would bring merit to Korean Christians. For instance, Henry Bruen

[350]Jennie Fowler-Willing and Mrs. George Heber Jones, *The lure of Korea* (Boston: Woman's Foreign Missionary Society, Methodist Episcopal Church, ca.1910), 17.

(1874-1957), a Presbyterian minister (NP), gladly observed the change of the atmosphere in the Korean Church after the annexation.

> The supremacy of the Japanese in Korea having become a definite reality even the vague and shadowy hope of political succor in time of stress, which was something of a motive in the minds of some in coming in the church and from among whom the church eventually secured some earnest spiritual minded members, is no longer operative.[351]

In other words, the Japanese colonization of Korea was helpful in purifying the Church as politically-minded Christians would leave the church, having lost their last hope for Korean independence. To the missionaries, the less political hope for Koreans, the better for Korean Christians.

In sum, the Korean Church under missionary control did not make any contribution to the Korean nationalist cause. The Church remained as a community of the religiously devout but apolitical Koreans who prioritized individual salvation from sin over national salvation from the Japanese empire. Such a disinterested attitude on the part of Korean Christians at a time of national crisis was shockingly disappointing to secular Korean nationalists who resisted Japanese rule either through armed resistance or printed

[351] "Personal Report of H.M. Bruen 1911-1912" quoted in Bruen, *40 years in Korea*, 205.

dissent. Thus, *Taehan Maeil Sinbo*, a popular Korean newspaper that represented the nationalist camp at the time, publicly condemned the Korean Church and renounced its religious pietism as treason to the nation.

> We don't say that no Christians have any national spirit (*kukka chŏngsin*), but there are many who do not have it… Among the Christians, there are those who know only the salvation of the spirit but do not know the salvation of the flesh; know the way to heaven, but do not know the business of this world; know the blessing in heaven or the suffering in hell, but do not know the preservation of a state or the demise of a nation. How can we not be appalled by their attitude![352]

The editorial continued to argue that the teaching of "turn the other cheek" in the Bible "should not be applied to Koreans today whose country has been destroyed and whose people are suffering" and urged that "Koreans today must be sympathetic to the suffering of fellow Koreans and resist the violent Satan."[353] Nonetheless, the majority of Korean Christians did not heed this call to join the anti-Japanese uprising. Following orthodox Christian doctrine and missionary instructions, they remained loyal to secular authority kept their distance from the nationalist camp. After all, nationalism was not a primary value for Korean Christians, and identification of the Church and nationalism was totally unthinkable

[352] *Taehan Maeil Sinbo,* (4/15/1910), 1.
[353] *Taehan Maeil Sinbo,* (4/15/1910), 1.

in the historical context of the time, where the Mission stood in between and blocked such union.

Chapter 6 Korean Christian Revolts against Ecclesiastical Authority

From the beginning of the mission through the 1910s, missionaries retained controlling power over the Korean Church. Not only did they dictate the internal management of the Korean Church, but they also suppressed the relationship of Korean Christians to political matters outside the Church. During this period, the controlling power of missionaries was generally secure and did not face a serious challenge from Koreans. There were, however, sporadic murmurings of dissent among Koreans against the missionaries. In the beginning, missionaries could relatively easily suppress such dissent behind the scenes, but gradually oppositional voices against the missionaries grew stronger and took on a visible form so that missionaries had to deal with Korean dissatisfaction more seriously. This chapter focuses on the Korean Christian challenge to missionary authority and analyzes how it affected the development of the Korean Church.

Dispute in Kon Dang Kol Church

In the early stage of the mission, Protestant missionaries could not infiltrate the Korean aristocracy, and thus targeted lower-class Koreans as the primary object of their

evangelizing campaigns. As a part of its effort to evangelize the poor, the Presbyterian mission selected a slum district of Seoul called Kon Dang Kol and built a church there in 1893, assigning Samuel F. Moore (NP) as its minister.

During the Chosŏn dynasty, when rigid social status distinctions were maintained, the residential areas of Seoul were divided along status lines and Kon Dang Kol was an area inhabited by the lowest social castes, including *paekchŏng*, who were severely discriminated against for their animal-related occupations such as butchery and leather work. Adjacent to Kon Dang Kol to the north was another residential area called *Pukch'on*, where yangban aristocrats and high-ranking government officials resided. And, this setting of Kon Dang Kol between lower and upper social castes important provided a cause of dispute in the church later.

The church was started with 16 members, but membership quickly grew to 43 within a year and became the largest of the five Presbyterian churches in Seoul by 1896.[354] Needless to say, the majority of this church's members were the lower class Koreans in the area. Perhaps because of the church's proximity to the yangban's residence, however, there

[354] Harry A. Rhodes and Arch Campbell, *History of the Korea mission, Presbyterian Church U. S. A. 1884-1934* (Seoul,: Chosen Mission Presbyterian Church U.S. A., 1934), 101; "Notes and Comments," *Korean Repository,* (November 1895), 443.

were also a few aristocratic members such as Yi Sŭng-du and Ma Yŏng-jun. Though it is not clear how prestigious their family status was within yangban society, it was rare to see Korean church members of the upper classes among the predominantly lower class congregation.

The mixed class composition of the Kon Dang Kol church may tempt one to see it as an example of Christian egalitarianism put into practice. Such, however, was not the case. When Samuel Moore met a man by the name of Pak, a *paekchŏng,* and brought him to the church, it upset the congregation, especially, those belonging to the upper classes, who saw it as disgraceful to have a paekchŏng in their church. Moreover, when Moore baptized Pak and gave him full church membership, many found this intolerable and left the church to avoid being treated by missionaries on equal terms with paekchŏng.

Moore sadly reported to the Board that "Yesterday at church half a dozen regular attendants were absent… they felt they could not belong to the same church as a butcher" since "one might take a beggar up and make a man of him but the butcher can never rise."[355] What embarrassed Moore even more, however, was that these anti-*paekchŏng*

[355] Samuel Moore to Ellinwood (4/21/1897) quoted in Martha Huntley, *Caring, growing, changing : a history of the Protestant mission in Korea* (New York Friendship Press, 1984), 69.

Christians did want to maintain their affiliation with the church. The dissident leader, Yi Sŭng-du, said that they should build a chapel somewhere else or meet for worship at home. Moore tried to persuade them against this plan, but they did not listen to him. Moore reported the Board of the consequence of trouble as follows.

> I said that I thought it strange that children of one Father could not sit down together in one room. The butcher could keep still no longer but came and sat before them [yanbans] and asked what sin he had committed against their highness... When he [butcher] came here he thought our religion was one that took up the lost and dying sinners and lifted them to heaven… The yangban's religion would permit only the highest classes to go to heaven… [Yangban] Yi lost his temper and began to speak very loudly and abusively. When I told him to hush up the yangban all went out together."[356]

About a month later some of the yangban returned. According to Moore, "they acknowledged themselves in the wrong and promised to do better," but some yangbans insisted that "they can only return to the church on one condition, that a custom be established giving the yangban seats of honor and the butchers the back seat of the room as per Korean Custom." [357] But, when Moore rejected the suggestion, they said that he would not return to the church but remain a Christian and observe the Sabbath at home.[358]

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[356] Samuel Moore to Dr. Ellinwood (4/21/1897), quoted in ibid.,71.
[357] Samuel Moore to Dr. Ellinwood (6/7/1897), quoted in ibid., 71.
[358] Ibid., 71.

The dissident yangbans then started a separate meeting and soon established their own church, Hong Mun Suk Kol church in Pukch'on, the yangban district north of Kon Dang Kol. There they observed Sabbath service, held prayer meetings and also engaged in evangelism in the area.[359] This yangban-centered church soon attracted Christians from other churches in Seoul, presumably yangbans, who formally transferred their memberships to join the church. [360]

No doubt was it the yangbans' motive for splitting the church was their desire to preserve the distinction of their social status. While this motive would not be considered morally respectable today, their decision was nonetheless a historic event because it was the first case in Korean Church history of a Korean congregation opposing missionary authority and establishing a separate church of their own. The dissident yangbans demonstrated that Koreans could run a church independently without missionary endorsement. It is important to note, however, that achieving full ecclesiastical independence from the Mission was not their ultimate goal but only a means of establishing social segregation in the Church. In fact, when the Mission recognized the yangban-only

[359] Kim Kwŏn-jŏng, "Ch'ogi kidokkyo suyong kwa sahoe pyŏndong," in *Han'guk sahak nonch'ŏng: Hong Kyŏng-man kyosu chŏngnyŏn kinyŏm nonch'ong* (Hong Kyŏng-man kyosu chŏngnyŏn kinyŏm nonch'ong kanhaeng wiwŏnhoe, 2002), 508.
[360] Ibid., 508.

Hong Mun Sok Kol Church, the congregation was reconnected with the missionaries and invited them to visit their pulpit and give sermons every week.[361] To the yangbans, the missionaries were objectionable only when they threatened the social hierarchy; they were otherwise considered to be acceptable as teachers of a new religion.

There are several possible reasons why missionaries endorsed social segregation in the Church, but the mostly likely reason was that segregation was still practiced even in the United States. In fact, Samuel Moore recalled the segregation at home when he saw off the yangbans from his church.

> The yangbans went off without saying good bye to me and told my teacher that they were never coming back. At first I was disposed to think them sinners above most all others, but when another missionary reminded me that at home also there were Christian people who would not allow low people or colored brethren to meet with them for worship, and I remembered that these [Koreans] have only just come out of the darkest heathenism, I felt more lenient.[362]

This testimony shows that the missionary understood the issue of social status in Korea as being similar to the issues of race and class in the United States. It was thus understandable

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[361] The Presbyterian missionaries who preached in the church were O. R. Avison, H. G. Underwood and C. C. Vinton. *Kŭrisŭdo Sinmun* (2/3/1898), 83; (2/24/1898), 57; (3/17/1898), 110.

[362] Samuel Moore to Ellinwood (6/7/1896), quoted in Huntley, *Caring, growing, changing : a history of the Protestant mission in Korea*, 71.

that they took a pragmatic or gradualist approach to the toleration of segregation within the Korean Church. Hence, segregation was not considered a sin in the Korean Church and missionaries later ordained Yi Sŭng-du and Mok Wŏn-gŭn as the first deacons of the church regardless of their roles as leading segregationists.[363]

This ordination had a symbolic meaning insofar as it meant that the missionaries had sustained their ecclesiastical authority over the yangban Christians. By endorsing segregation in the church, the missionaries alleviated the yangbans' frustration and kept them under their control, without losing the yangban class from their church causing them to apostate. Segregation was a means to sustain the integrity of Korean Christians under missionary control.

Nevertheless, a few years later the yangbans would have to pay the price for their recognition for the missionary authority. In 1901, the Hong Mun Sok Kol Church was shut down by the Presbyterian Mission and the congregation was dissolved for good. Available sources tell us that there were two reasons in the main for the closure: First, the church

[363] *Kŭrisŭdo sinmun* (3/17/1898), 95. These yangban members had joined the Independence Club and engaged in the political reform movement at the time. Interestingly, Pak, the paekchŏng, had once been invited to present his speech on freedom at a public meeting hosted by the Club. *The Independence,*(10/29/1898). This means that Pak was discriminated against by the yangban members in the Presbyterian Church, but was more equally treated in the Club. It seems to suggest that the Club was more loyal to the egalitarian ideal than the Church.

building and land was purchased using a corrupt source of funding; Second, some members brought unbelievers to the church and used the church building for inappropriate purposes without approval of the church session, though further details were not accounted.[364] For this scandal, the missionaries excommunicated the church's seventeen members and transferred the rest of the congregation to other churches in Seoul. With such a high-handed manner, the Hong Mun Suk Kol Church, the first church established by Korean initiative, was closed overnight and disappeared from history. There were many mysteries about this church closure, but what this incident clearly showed is that who had the power in administering the Korean Church.

Dispute in Yŏndong Church

The Kon Dang Kol church was not the only institution that was split over the problem of social status and caused yangban's opposition to the missionary. The same problem occurred in Yŏndong Church, one of the oldest Presbyterian churches in Seoul in 1909. Interestingly, the dissidents were influential members of the church such as Yi Wŏn-gŭng, Yu Sŏng-jun, and Ham U-t'aek and, all of whom were aristocratic yangbans,

[364] *Kŭrisŭdo sinmun*, (2/27/1902), 68.

and two of them, Yi and Yun, were the famous "converts in prison" mentioned in the previous chapter. These yangbans were helped by James S. Gale, while in prison, and after their release, they had come to attend Yŏndong Church where Gale was ministering.

Gale was a great benefactor to the yangbans in the sense he first provided them with the chance to encounter with Christianity, but the yangbans soon discovered that Gale was self-righteous, giving preferential treatment to lower-class Koreans and neglecting the yangbans on purpose. They felt especially insulted in 1909 when Gale ordained Ko Ch'an-ik (1861-1908), and Yi Myŏng-hyŏk (1863-1930), both of whom came from lower class society, but rejected Yi Wŏn-gŭng's candidacy for eldership without much explanation.[365]

Perhaps Gale meant to teach the yangbans social equality and demonstrate Christian egalitarianism in his church by such appointments, but it seems he did so with little respect for the yangbans and the traditional education they received. His basic view on Korean education was that "in Korea [education] is like a foot bandage…for the

[365] Yŏndong kyohoe, ed. *Yŏndong Kyohoe 100-Yŏnsa 1894-1994* (Seoul: Yŏndong kyohoe,1995), 192-193.

mind---once fairly put on and all growth and development is at an end," [366] and thus he said of the Korean upper class equipped with such education: "An idle existence brings with it no stings of conscience; in fact, the native who can scheme to do nothing, proves by all the logic of antiquity his right to be classed among the gentry." [367]

Given such a low view of Korean intellectuals, surely Gale eventually would have collided with the yangbans who had kept their pride in their Confucian education, even if the incident involving the ordination of lower class Koreans described above had not occurred. In any case, when the yangbans' frustration reached its peak, they left the church in several groups and formed the splinter church, Myodong church in 1910,[368] and continued to hold Sunday service without the presence of missionaries. The yangban Christians were driven by their class interest in founding the new church, but they nonetheless accomplished their independence from the foreign mission, something unprecedented in Korean church history. [369]

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[366] James S. Gale, "The Korean Mind," The Church at Home and Abroad, (August 1896):117.
[367] Ibid., 117.
[368] Myodong kyohoesa 80-chunyŏn p'yŏnch'an wiwŏnhoe, *Myodong kyohoe 80-nyŏnsa* (Sŏul: Myodong kyohoe, 1990), 159-160; Yŏndong kyohoe, ed. *Yŏndong Kyohoe 100-Yŏnsa 1894-1994* , 191-193.
[369] There is another indication that these yangbans intended to achieve the ecclesiastical independence from the missionaries. Yi Wŏn-gŭng published his own Bible exegesis in 1910,

Disputes in Pyŏngyang

The above two cases of Korean challenges to missionary authority were led by the yangbans in Seoul and their major causes were rooted in issues of class, but there were other cases in which anti-missionary sentiment of Korean Christians was expressed in a more direct manner.

In 1907, when the Northern Methodist Mission held its conference in Pyŏngyang, a number of Korean Christians came up to break the service and demanded that the missionaries should publicly proclaim that Dr. Douglas Follwell (NM), a medical missionary in Pyŏngyang, was a "wicked man."[370] The cause of trouble was Follwell's dispute with a Korean church member over land property, for which the missionary took his case to the local magistrate for judgment. His action could have been justified legally, but the Methodist Church had a rule that "a brother having a matter against a brother should have it come before the Church committee and not take it to law."[371] Of course, it was the Mission that made this rule and taught its Korean church members to follow. Thus, Korean

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the first Korean publication of this kind. Myodong kyohoesa 80-chunyŏn p'yŏnch'an wiwŏnhoe, *Myodong kyohoe 80-nyŏnsa* , 160.

[370] *Mattie Noble's Diary* (7/8/1907).

[371] *Mattie Noble's Diary* (7/8/1907).

Christians were angered by this contradiction and expressed their frustration in the Mission Conference, where many missionaries from other Missions and Churches were also present beside the Methodist missionaries.

The Methodist missionaries could not control the Korean protesters who kept shouting and clamored for everyone to stop worshipping during the service. Observing the disorder, Yun Ch'i-ho, who happened to be there as an honorable guest from the Southern Methodist Church in Korea, intervened to help the troubled missionary. As Yun was one of few prominent yangban Christians and well respected by Koreans, he was able to quiet down the Korean protesters quickly and resume the service. After the conference, however, the frustrated Koreans continued to demand that the Mission take disciplinary action against Follwell and intimidated that they would form a separate Church of their own. In fact, they soon began holding separate services at the private residence of one of their members. Finally, Follwell was forced to admit his wrongdoing and went to the Koreans to ask for forgiveness. But it was too late; these Korean Christians rejected his apology and did not return to the Church.

The Methodist missionaries were deeply embarrassed to show such a trouble happening to the missionary guests from other countries while they were in Korea.

However, W. R. Lambuth, a long-time Japan missionary and the head of Kansei Gakuin College in Kōbe, was very understanding and told them his view, which impressed Mattie Noble (NM).

> Dr. Lambuth says he thinks it remarkable so many years have elapsed without a demonstration of this kind [in Korea]. He says he has seen churches split in two [sic] many times in China and Japan, and our growth has been phenomenal.[372]

What struck Lambuth was not the rising Korean voice against the missionary in front of his eyes, but the fact that there had not been such challenge to the missionary before in Korea. To him, Korea missionaries were remarkable in that they had kept local Christians under control and achieved the church growth without being challenged by them.

Christians caught-in between Missionaries and Nationalists

Meanwhile, the pastor of the Church, Yi Ŭn-sŭng, a missionary's protégée, was caught between the missionaries and the Korean congregation and had to make the difficult decision of which of the two sides to take. As a Korean, he could perhaps understand well

[372] *Mattie Noble's Diary*, (7/9/1907).

the anti-missionary sentiment among his congregation, but he could not betray the missionaries who raised him as a pastor.

> For many years they [Koreans] wouldn't have translators of Scripture, great scholars... and there was no ground for their leaving their beloved missionaries… I have been with and learned of Mr. Noble for nearly ten years and I will stay by them [missionaries].[373]

The missionaries "all rejoiced" to hear Yi's confession of faith. Especially, Mrs. Noble, whose husband's long tutelage of Yi was rewarded, was happy to write in her diary, that "He [Yi] was faithful and loyal, as I had believed he would be."[374] What made her even happier was that her Bible women and helpers as well as "a number of the faithful" stayed in the Church.

However, the "faithful" followers of the missionaries were seen as betrayers by the Korean protesters. In fact, the dissenting Koreans were angry at the Bible woman and helpers who supported the missionaries and abused them verbally, "You who receive pay from the foreigners won't stand by your people for their independence. Only paid hirelings stand by them. We wouldn't ask you to come with us."[375] For independent-minded Korean

[373] *Mattie Noble's Diary*, (7/8/1907).
[374] *Mattie Noble's Diary*, (7/8/1907).
[375] *Mattie Noble's Diary*, (7/8/1907).

Christians, association with the missionaries was no longer a merit but a disgrace for the Korean Church, and the symbol of Korean subjugation to foreign rule. Hence, they began to call for national independence from the missionaries within the Church.

Nonetheless, Arthur Noble, the Superintendent of the Northern Methodist Mission, who closely observed the situation, did not think that the missionaries were responsible for the Korean uprising. In his report to Bishop Harris, Noble mentioned Follwell's misbehavior as one of the causes, but he placed greater fault on the lack of discipline among Korean Christians and regretted that "we have been receiving a great mass of people who have not been thoroughly indoctrinated in our Church law and regulations." On the other hand, he also blamed the Japanese for agitating and assisting anti-missionary movement from outside. According to his report, the Japanese governor of the Province was seeking to "destroy the American influence in Northern Korea by influencing the Christians to separate into independent churches" and "the Japanese have visited the disaffected people and encouraged them in the movement, while the local Japanese papers took it up with vigor and by garbled of affairs [*sic*] tried to enflame the people."[376]

[376] Yi's statement is quoted in *Mattie Noble's Diary* (7/16/1907).

Noble's claim was not groundless as the Japanese authority was becoming increasingly suspicious and inimical to missionaries who still enjoyed extraterritorial immunity from the Japanese protectorate government. However, he did not reflect upon the question of why Korean Christians were susceptible to Japanese propaganda despite the fact that Koreans in general felt an "irritation of foreign domination in political and social life" under Japanese rule. Perhaps he knew that missionaries were becoming increasingly unpopular, but did not want to admit it publicly. In fact, Noble's Annual Report of that year kept silent about the serious church split in Pyongyang, but mentioned only positive developments.

> Pyengyang: Never in the history of our work has the City church shown so much of the real spiritual life as it does at the present. Our total following is 2,123. There have been added to the church rolls over 300 during the year… This church is by far the strongest church in the North.[377]

The report of the numerical growth of the Church was probably true, but it was deceptive insofar as it revealed only one side of the dynamic development of the Korean Church in that region. Behind the increasing number of Christians, there was growing Korean

[377] *Annual Report of BFMMEC* (1908), 388.

dissatisfaction about the missionary's presence in the Korean Church and some began to challenge missionary authority under the direct or indirect influence of the Japanese protectorate.

Alliance with the Japanese Church

Given that previous studies have stressed anti-Japanese nationalism as a core value of the Korean Church, Noble's observation that some Koreans Christians were pushed by the Japanese propaganda in an anti-missionary direction may strike us as peculiar today. However, there were other cases where Korean Christians' conflict with missionaries led their churches to seek assistance from the Japanese.

Ch'oe Chung-jin was a minister at a Presbyterian church in Chŏlla Province, where the Southern Presbyterian Mission had exclusive jurisdiction. In 1910, Ch'oe submitted a petition to the local Presbytery in which he made five specific demands to the missionaries. The summary of his demands was : 1) Do not be too strict about the Korean baptismal candidates and give them more freedom in practicing their faith, 2) To assign him a broader mission territory, 3) Establish a middle school in his region, 4) Establish a "relief committee" with the mission fund and help affected members of the church in time of

natural disasters, 5) The Mission should provide free housing for Korean pastors as it did for the missionaries.[378]

These five demands correspond quite closely to the problems plaguing the Korea mission discussed in previous chapters. First, the baptismal rights of Korean converts were monopolized by the missionary since there were few Korean ordinations. Second, Korean pastors were treated more as "helpers" than as ministers and assigned to work in areas according to the territorial division of the Missions. Third, the general education of Koreans was neglected and there was no mission school above the elementary grade. Fourth, the majority of Korean Christians lived in poverty and needed constant material support from the Mission, especially in times of famine. Fifth, missionaries were provided good housing and extremely high salaries from the mission, while the Korean pastors were compensated less for the same work. In short, Ch'oe's petition was based upon astute observations made in the field and accurately diagnosed what was wrong with missionary policy.

However, Ch'oe's petition to improve the rights and welfare of Korean ministers rights and well-being was rejected by the Presbytery. Ch'oe resisted sending a letter of objection to the Presbytery, criticizing the missionary.

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[378] Yi Tŏk-chu, *Hanguk t'och'ak kyohoe hyŏngsŏngsa yŏn'gu*, 38, n.16

> Listen, You missionaries from the West! How much [salary] do you receive every month? Read the Gospel of Matthew 7: 12,[379] and repent! You should provide a part of what you receive for poor Korean pastors and helpers and then let them work. They [first] have to be clothed and fed.[380]

As we have seen in Chapter 3, Korean helpers were paid less than one tenth of an average missionary salary, and the pay rate was as low as that of coolie or peasants at that time, In this light, Ch'oe's plea represented a real grievous cry of Korean Christian leaders who were struggling in dire poverty and nothing too demanding at all.

Nonetheless, the mission-dominated Presbytery not only rejected his letter but condemned him for "[being an] ingrate," "law-breaking," and "disobedience," and ousted from the Church, with his name removed from the membership list.[381] This was a clear message from the missionaries that any attempt by the Korean Christians to stand on par with the missionary was tantamount to treason. The duty of Korean Christians was to accept their secondary status and remain loyal to the higher authority of the Presbytery.

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[379] Matthew 7: 12 says "So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets."

[380] *Chŏnbuk Taerihoe hoeŭirok* (1910) [North Chŏlla Presbytery Record] quoted in Kang Sil-lyong, "Han'gugin kidokkyoindŭl ŭi kumiai kyohoe hyŏmnyŏk kwa kaip ŭi kwanhan Ilkoch'al," *Han'guk kidokkyo yŏksa yŏng'guso sosik* 22 (1995), 52.

[381] *Chŏnbuk Taerihoe hoeŭirok* (1910) quoted in ibid., 52.

Though ousted from the Presbyterian Church, Ch'oe did not become an apostate. Rather, he established his own church independent of missionary control and named it the "Free Christian Church of Korea" (*Taehan yesugyo chayu kyohoe*). In western Christian history, the term "free church" usually refers to a Church pursuing independence from the state church or government intervention, but for Ch'oe "freedom" meant ecclesiastical independence from the missionaries. According to the conventional interpretation, Ch'oe's action was the manifestation of Christian nationalism. For instance, Yi Tŏk-chu stresses that Ch'oe was the first Korean pastor who demonstrated the "subjectivity of the Korean Church" by criticizing the dictatorial rule of the missionaries.[382] Indeed, Ch'oe was a man of great subjective agency but we should not overlook that he was excommunicated by the Korean Church for the very "subjectivity" that he demonstrated. His independence movement was the antithesis of the Korean Church in which Korean Christians were subjugated to the missionary control. He was a Christian nationalist, but he had to leave the Church in order to demonstrate it.

Moreover, Yi's argument completely overlooks the fact that Ch'oe's "Free Church" soon joined the Japanese Congregationalist Church that had started sending Japanese

[382] Yi Tŏkju, *Hanguk T'och'ak kyohoe hyŏngsŏngsa yŏn'gu* (hanguk kidokyyo yŏksa yŏn'guso, 2001),38.

Christian missionaries to Korea after annexation in 1910.[383] The independent-minded Ch'oe did not stop at breaking ties with the mission-dominated Korean Church, but went further to ally himself with the Japanese Church. Given that previous studies have stressed that anti-Japanese sentiment was a core value of the Korean Church, the decision of a Korean Christian to transfer his allegiance to the Japanese Church may strike us as peculiar today. As I shall discuss below, however, Ch'oe was not alone in seeking association with the Japanese Church

For instance, Ch'a Hag-yŏn, a church leader in Kanggye, Pyŏngan Province, was dissatisfied with missionary rule and split from the church along with his followers. Moreover, he "seized the old church property on the theory that they were entitled to it."[384] It was at this time that Ch'a decided to visit Ch'oe Chung-jin in Chŏlla Province after hearing that he too was also making a stand against the missionaries. On his way to the southern Province, Ch'a met Watase Tsuneyoshi (1867-1894), a Japanese Congregationalist missionary, in Seoul and discussed his possible transfer to the Japanese Congregationalist

[383]Kang Sil-lyong, "Han'gugin kidokkyoindŭl ŭi kumiai kyohoe hyŏmnyŏk kwa kaip ŭi kwanhan Ilkoch'al," 51-52.
[384] Rhodes and Campbell, *History of the Korea mission, Presbyterian Church U. S. A.*, 331-332.

Church.[385] Finally, both Ch'a and Ch'oe joined the Japanese Congregationalist Church along with their followers. Like-minded independents and close associates of Ch'oe Chung-jin all over Chŏlla Province decided to join the Congregational Church.[386] On January 7, 1912, Watase and his Korean fifty Korean attendants including Ch'a and others, conducted a ceremony to celebrate the union of these 14 Korean churches of total 600 members with the Japanese Congregational Church, and Watase ordained Kim Ki-ch'an and also appointed Yi Kŭn-hong during the ceremony.[387]

Shortly afterward, another Korean Methodist minister, Kim Sang-bae, from Ch'ungch'ong province also joined the Congregational Church with his 200 followers. Kim had been excommunicated from the Methodist Mission after having trouble with missionaries. However, the Korean congregation supported Kim and objected to the missionary decision. Consequently, the missionary withdrew from the area, abandoning the pastoral care for the church and Kim had no other choice but to preach in the region independently, maintaining several churches under his care.[388] It was after this period of

[385] Watase Tsuneyoshi, *Hizume no ato* (Tokyo: Keiseisha Shoten, 1914), 2-3.
[386] Ibid., 4-7.
[387] Ibid., 18-21.
[388] Ibid., 28,37-38.

isolation from the Mission that Kim and his followers in Ch'ungch'ong Province sought the membership of the Congregational Church.

In the case of Kim Chang-ho in Hwanghae Province, he blamed the missionaries for imposing anti-intellectual fundamentalist theology on the Korean Church. He was tried in the court of the church and chastised for teaching a liberal interpretation of the Bible.[389] He then left the church to establish an independent church of his own, the Korean Christian Church (*chosŏn kidokkyohoe*), which did not become a member of the Congregationalist Church but retained a close affiliation. [390]

These leaders all resided in the region, but the Congregationalist boom was seen also in Seoul. The key Korean Congregationalist leader in Seoul was Kim Chŏng-sik, one of the prominent yangban converts in prison. After his conversion, Kim became a pastor and he was dispatched to Japan to minister Korean students group at the Korean Y.M.C.A. in Tokyo. In 1916, he returned to Korea and joined the Congregationalist Church and became its active member.[391] By that time, he was well-known among Korean Christian leaders for his staunch anti-missionary posture, which Yun-Ch'iho, Kim's close friend,

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[389] Kim Chang-ho, *Chosŏn kidokyohoe sosa* (Keijō: Chosŏn kidokyohoe, 1941), 46-49.
[390] For example, the Japanese Congregational Church visited his church for support and held a public screening of a religious film. *Chosŏn Kidokkyohoi sosa,* 49.
[391] *Yun Ch'i-ho's Diary*, (8/26/1916, 8/29/1918).

testifies in the following episode, when they made a joint trip to Chŏnju, Chŏlla Province, to attend the Y.M.C.A convention in April 1917.

> Our Chŏnju experience has been on the whole very pleasant. No friction. But the attitude of indifference of the missionaries resident in Chŏnju. They showed no sign of welcome on arrival, no sign of courtesy on parting, no sign of hospitality during the convention. Such a perfect indifference and inhospitality to the delegates was deeply felt by all the Koreans. Then Kim Jung Sik [sic] who is strongly anti-f[oreign] some hand throw concerning missionaries.[392]

Moreover, Kim was so strongly anti-foreign that he tried to persuade Yun to "raise fund among the Japanese so as to free the Y.M.C.A. from the grip of Americans."[393] From these testimonies, we can reasonably assume that Kim's participation in the Japanese Church had much to do with his anti-missionary sentiments.

As previous studies have revealed, the Japanese Congregationalist mission was manifestly an imperial agent in the sense it was partly funded by the Japanese colonial government, albeit in a clandestine manner.[394] However, it is important to note that despite adversarial conditions such as the prevailing anti-Japanese sentiment and the omnipresence of Western missionaries, a mass conversion of some Koreans to the Japanese Church

[392] *Yun Ch'i-ho's Diary* (4/9/1917).
[393] *Yun Ch'i-ho's Diary* (1/7/1918).
[394] Iinuma Jirō and Han Sŏkki, *Nihon teikoku shugi ka no chōsen dendō*, 87.

nevertheless did take place. The *Missionary Handbook,* edited in 1920 by the Western missionaries, recorded that the Japanese Congregationalist Church had 200 churches with 20,000 members in 1920 and "except for two, all the thirteen provinces are occupied."[395]

There is not enough primary evidence to judge whether the leaders of the Korean churches that joined the Japanese Congregationalism Church were willing to endorse Japanese colonialism. However, Kim Chŏng-sik, at least, was clearly aware of and against Japanese aggression in Korea. Yun Ch'i-ho's diary records a following episode to show Kim's stand against Japanese. One day Kim saw a Japanese policeman kicked down an old Korean woman on the street, whom nobody seemed to take any notice of. So, Kim intervened and suggested the police to send her to the nearest hospital.[396] So, as a close friend and observer of Kim, Yun Ch'i-ho's conclusive view of Kim was that "Mr. Kim Chŏng-sik, while pro-Japanese is true to Korea."[397]

Being pro-Japanese but true to Korea sounds like a contradiction, but reveals precisely what drove Korean Christians leaders to join the Congregationalist Church. They were not happy about Japanese colonialism but they were equally unhappy about the

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[395] M. L. Swinehart, *Korea, handbook of missions* (The Federal Council of Korea and the Interchurch World Movement of North America, 1920), 23.
[396] *Yun Ch'i-ho's Diary* (8/28/1918).
[397] *Yun Ch'i-ho's Diary* (3/11/1919).

western missionary dominance over the Korean Church. As a Christian leader, their priority was to emancipate Korean Christians from the missionary's yoke and they chose to ally with the Japanese Christians to achieve that purpose. They were true to the Korean nationalist cause in that their ultimate aim was to bring more Korean autonomy within the Church. Despite his personal animosity against the Japanese, Kim's Christian nationalism seems to have led him to seek Korea's ecclesiastical independence from the missionaries before national independence from Japanese.

In any case, there is no doubt that Korean Christian leaders could find practical merits in joining the Congregational Church according to their need and situation. First, having severed their relations with the Western missions, the Korean leaders needed to secure an alternative source of political and financial support and they likely saw the Japanese mission as the better alternative. In fact, the Congregationalist Mission dispensed abundant funds to aid the financially weak Korean churches. Since the pastor like Ch'oe Chung-jin had long been troubled by the low salary and had actually asked the foreign missionary for the material aid and got rejected, he had little reason to reject the Japanese funds as alternative if it were provided for the improvement for Korean welfare. According to the internal records of 1915, the Congregational Mission paid on average fifteen to

twenty yen a month for the salary of Korean ministers in urban churches, while paying five to ten yen for evangelists in rural provinces.[398] Considering that ministers in the Korean Methodist Church received twenty to thirty yen a month around that time,[399] this pay rate was slightly below average. However, there were some additional budgets of 300 yen for "special service bonus" (irōhi), 770 yen for "travel" (ryokōhi), and 294 yen for "house rent"(yachin). It is not clear how these additional funds were allocated among 35 Korean Congregationalist pastors at that time.[400] If we assume that the "bonus" fund was equally allocated among them, it gave them additional 9 yen a year, making it closer to the average pay. In any case, whether the new pay rate was a little higher or lower than their previous pay, it must have been a substantial and meaningful compensation for Korean ministers who had been financially struggling for long time and lost even their meager income sources when they left the mission-dominated Korean Church.

Assuming that the Korean ministers received more or less the same amount of salary in the Congregationalist Church, we can also say that Korean ministers were not

[398] "Taishŏ yonen do chōsen dendōhi tokubetsu kaikei" in Ebina Danjō shiryŏ (Collected papers of Ebina Danjō) Document Number 5, Dōshisha University Library.
[399] *Yun Ch'iho's Diary* (5/29/1918). Also, see the discussion about the Korean minister's salary in Chapter 8.
[400] "Taishŏ yonen do chosen dendōhi tokubetsu kaikei" in Ebina Danjō shiryō.

enticed by the better salary offered by the Japanese Congregationalist Church alone; they also seem to have found other merits in the Japanese Congregationalism besides the decent salary. For Korean ministers, one probable merit of joining the Congregationalist Church may have been that a major characteristic of the Congregationalist tradition is the rejection of central control by a denominational headquarters and respect for the autonomy of each local church. This stood in contrast to the Presbyterian and Methodist traditions that placed much greater value on a more centralized form of government. In fact, the Congregational Church propagated in Korea that, "The fundamental principle of the [Congregational] Church is to include breadth of faith, self-government and self-support; this applies to Korea equally with other parts of the world." This tradition can be seen in Watase's handling of Korean transfers to the Congregational Church. As mentioned above, when Watase conducted a ceremony to receive Korean churches, he does not appear to have had Koreans adopt any particular doctrinal standard. Also, it seems that he ordained Korean pastors without mandating them to study again in the Congregational seminary in Japan or elsewhere. This kind of administrative looseness would likely have been frowned upon by Presbyterian or Methodist missionaries as neglecting the ecclesiastical traditions of the West, yet it could have been seen as a form of religious tolerance or freedom by the Korean

Christians who had been subjected by western missionaries to many unfamiliar denominational traditions. Such case may apply the case of Kim Chang-ho who objected the conservative theology of the Presbyterian Church and sought association with Japanese.

Another merit of joining the Congregationalist Church could be the fact that the Congregational Mission ignored the territorial divisions established by the western missionaries and invited like-minded Korean Christians to come together under the same Church organization irrespective of their place of residence. This was a new experience for Korean Christians who had been divided and assigned to different denominations under the comity agreement of the Missions. In fact, the major Korean figures in the Congregational Church such as Ch'a Hag-yŏn, Ch'oe Chung-jin and Kim Sang-bae lived in different parts of Korea occupied by different missions and could not have become members of the same Church if they had stayed in the western missionary jurisdiction. Thus, joining the Congregational Church meant gaining access to an alternative ecclesiastical network capable of overcoming the geographical and regional boundaries created by the western missions.

Lastly, the number of Japanese missionaries in Korea was much smaller and far less conspicuous than the western missionaries. There were only four Japanese missionaries

to 120 Korean staff and preachers in the Congregational Mission and the "workers in Korea form their own executive body and advance the work according to their own judgment."[401] As a result, regardless of whether or not the Japanese were truly willing to give Koreans as much freedom as they promised, the tiny Japanese missionary force had no choice but to let Koreans run their churches on their own.

Whatever their primary motivations may have been, the mass conversion of Korean Christians to the Japanese Congregational Church suggests that missionary-Korean power relations began to change with the growing presence of the Japanese empire. Tensions between the Korean leaders and the missionaries had long existed, but some Korean Christians after colonization could now use the Japanese Christian presence to counter the western missionaries. The frustration of these Korean Christians about missionary control was so great that it made sense to them to seek an alliance with the Japanese Church as long as it would bring them greater ecclesiastical autonomy and financial aid. This does not mean that the Korean leaders accepted or approved of Japanese colonialism, but rather that they strategically relied upon and took advantage of Japanese power to counter the western missionaries whom they perceived more as oppressors of the

[401] Swinehart, *Korea, handbook of missions*, 25.

Korean Church. Even if they were critical of Japanese colonialism itself, their struggle for ecclesiastical independence from the western Missions held primacy over their desire for national independence from the Japanese empire. Simply put, the Korean Congregationalists thought that ecclesiastical independence had to precede national independence.

Chapter 7 Korean Intellectual Revolts against Ecclesiastical Authority

Once Korean Christians began to question the legitimacy of missionary rule in the Church, it was a natural consequence that they would also turn a critical eye to the same oligarchical rule that missionaries exercised over the Christian schools. As discussed in Chapter 4, the missionaries had maintained the mission schools and church schools mainly as subsidiary institutions of the Church to evangelize Koreans and produce Christians rather than as independent institutions to provide general education to the broader Korean public. This general policy was increasingly unpopular among Korean Christians, and their frustration gradually took the form of open revolt.

Student Strike

In 1903, twenty students at Paejae School, the leading Methodist mission school, sent a letter of protest to their missionary teachers. The letter stated that they found "the religious teaching in the school distasteful and they would leave if it were not discontinued."[402] Paejae School had accepted both Christian and non-Christian students,

[402] *Annual Report of BFMMEC* (1903), 371.

but Bible teaching was mandatory as mission policy. It is not clear if the protesters were all non-Christians, but in any case the students were dissatisfied with the heavy emphasis on religious indoctrination at the school. The missionary teachers informed the students that "they need not bother to withdraw from the school, as their names were already stricken from the roll" and dismissed the students without any attempt at conciliation.[403] These Korean students then surrendered one by one and "made an apology before other students in chapel" and "promised to obey implicitly thereafter the rules of the school."[404]

The first "student strike" at a Korean mission school indicates that many Korean students had received religious teaching only reluctantly. Had there been any other schools that provided general education without religious teaching, they could have transferred to them. In Korea, however, there was no universal education system yet, and given that the paucity of schools , the eager Korean youth had no other choice but to choose the mission school. Religious teaching was a kind of tax they had to pay in order to acquire new knowledge.

Although this initial strike was suppressed, Korean frustration over the mission school curriculum was omnipresent and continued to grow. In 1907, 400 students at Sungsil

[403] Ibid., 371.
[404] Ibid., 371.

High School (Union College) in P'yŏngyang,[405] run jointly by the Northern Presbyterian and Northern Methodist Missions, submitted a list of grievances to their missionary teachers and the head of the Methodist Mission, Bishop M. C. Harris (1846-1921) and boycotted classes.[406] Though available sources do not tell exactly what grievances they had, the contextual evidence indicates that they were mostly likely to relate to the general quality of school teachers and the missionary prohibition of student engagements in politics. Regarding teachers, William Baird (NP), the principle of the school, had noted his fear that "our Christian schools cannot continue to exist in the face of Japanese schools which may be established here…I believe this fear is well founded if we continue to transfer capable men [teachers] to other positions" and "our schools are poorly manned with teachers who are ill-trained,"[407] indicating dearth of qualified teachers demoralized schools. On politics,

[405] During the Japanese Protectorate period, the Missions were exempted from the governmental educational order and thus had a liberty in granting any categorical title to their mission schools such as "Academy" or "College" without any substance. For instance, Union Academy consists of a three years course, preceded by one year of preparatory course, but students came from primary schools after six years study there. *Annual Report of BFMMEC* (1907), 419. This means Academy was an equivalent of junior high school in Japanese educational system at that time, while four years of study at the "College" was an equivalent of high school education. In fact, Koreans at that time called the school, "*Sungsil chung-kodŭng hakkyo,*" which means "middle and high school" not "taehak" or college. So, it is important to note that the title of the mission schools often does not reflect the substance of its education.

[406] Evelyn Becker McCune and Heather McCune Thompson, *Michigan to Korea : Arthur Lynn Becker, 1899-1926* (N.P.: Lulu, 2009) , 276.

[407] Ibid., 277 ; "Teaching Teachers," *Korea Mission Field* ,(August 1906): 206.

the summer in 1907 was the time when the Korean Emperor, Kojong, was forced to abdicate by the Japanese government and political air was tense. However, Baird's firm policy was to "keep the students away from political issues" and he "monitored" the student orations in school events so that the topics would be religious.[408] Given that Barid's annual report for that year mentions his added "anxiety" that "political and social motives are cooperating with educational and religious" outcome in the school, it is likely that students made some kind of requests on the current political issues.

Whatever the real reason might be, missionary teachers paid no serious heed to this protest and ordered the students to immediately return to school. Missionary power prevailed, and many students gave up their demands. Having pacified these Korean students, Arthur Becker (NM) reported to the Methodist Board that "they had learned that they were not running the school and we had peace for the rest of the year."[409]

In 1909, Paejae experienced another student strike in which 140 students participated and "paralyzed" the school for a few days. Though the missionary record does not detail what the student demands were, it was likely that the students were still dissatisfied over religious indoctrination. This time students "marched out in a body" and

[408] Ibid., 264.
[409] Ibid., 276.

some students transferred to other schools when their demand was not met. According to D.A. Bunker (NM), the missionary teacher at Paejae, such "outbursts of passion on the part of the students" had been common among other mission schools by that time and it came "periodically to all schools in this land."[410] In spite of such circumstances, the Missions made little effort to seek conciliation with Korean students and fiercely maintained their commitment to religious education.

An Ch'ang-ho and Taesŏng School

For some Korean Christian leaders, the mission school problem was not limited to religious education alone. They were fully aware that the mission schools were no different from the churches where missionaries presided over important business and suppressed Korean voices that conflicted with missionary decisions. Such subordinate Korean status in mission schools was growingly unbearable for independent-minded Christian educators and they thus began to seek opportunities to establish their own schools outside missionary jurisdiction. Just as some Korean ministers broke their ties with the Missions to gain more freedom, some Korean Christian educators also followed the same path.

[410] *Annual Report of BFMMEC* (1909), 178.

One such Korean educator was An Ch'ang-ho, who studied in the Presbyterian school in Seoul in the 1890s and became a Christian (Chapter 4). By the 1900s, however, An was known to be one of the leading Korean nationalists rather than a church leader. He had taken an active part in the so-called Patriotic Enlightenment Movement (*aeguk kyemong undong*), which aimed at Korean self-strengthening through modern education and organized a Korean youth group, called *Sinminhoe,* (New People's Association) through which he promoted nationalist thought among the Korean youth. He vigorously toured around Korea and inspired many students with his eloquent speech and charismatic leadership.

As a part of his nationalist project, he founded Taesŏng School in his hometown, P'yŏngyang, in 1908, with Yun Ch'i-ho at its official head.[411] His vision was to make the school the center of nationalist education in Korea. However, despite the fact that both An and Yun were Christians, An did not make Taesŏng a Christian school and kept its doors open to anyone who wanted to study. According to his wife, An was dissatisfied with missionaries who "taught only about the otherworld" and wanted to disseminate education

[411] *Taehan Maeil Sinbo* (9/23/1908), 1.

that placed science at its center.[412] Clearly, his intention was to provide an alternative form of education for the Korean youth and foster nationalism among them, something not possible in the mission school. Had he been a "devout" Christian loyal to Church authority, he could have collaborated with the Sungsil School in P'yŏngyang, where many Christian students gathered, but he dared to maintain a school independent of the Church and the Mission in the same city.

Knowing An's intention, the missionaries in Pyŏngyang all turned against him and saw him more as a threat to the Church engrossed in national politics against the church rule. In fact, when Japanese police interviewed Samuel Moffett (NP), the leader of the Presbyterians in Pyŏngyang, about An and his relation to the Church, Moffett made no defense for him.

> An Ch'ang-ho used to be a Christian adherent in our Presbyterian Church and had taken a part in evangelism. But, he is now engaged in his educational work and provides no sincere support for the Church. He always seeks to use education as a means of politics. [413]

[412] Tosan Kinyŏm Saŏphoe, *Tosan An Ch'ang-ho*, 26.
[413] "Itō kō ansatsu narabini An Ch'angho no taiho ni tsuki gaikoku senkyōshi no kanjō" (11/10/1909), Kuksa p'yŏnch'an wiwŏnhoe, ed. *T'onggambu munsŏ vol.7* (Kwach'ŏn-si: Kuksa p'yŏnch'an wiwŏnhoe,1998).

Arthur Becker (NM), the head of the Methodist teachers at Sungsil, endorsed Moffett's view to the Japanese and did not hide his animosity against An: "An Ch'angho was not only anti-Japanese but anti-foreign. I guess he intends to expel all foreigners."[414] The missionaries were well aware that An's nationalist activities would bring negative consequences to the Church and the Mission. On the one hand, his former affiliation with the Church could mislead the Japanese into identifying the Korean Church with anti-Japanese institutions and invite unnecessary persecution. On the other, An's nationalist propaganda could lead Koreans to seek control of the Church and the schools, where foreign domination by the Missions was conspicuous. Therefore, as a Christian nationalist, if An could be labeled as such, he was a most unwelcome presence for the missionaries and there was no room for him in the Korean Church and the schools under missionary jurisdiction.

Yi Sŭng-hun and Yi Kwang-su in Osan School

The missionary's control over Christian education also became an issue at Osan, a private school in Chŏngju, north of P'yŏngyang. In conventional Korean historiography,

[414] Ibid.

Osan is today known as a "nationalist school founded upon Christian ideals" along with Taesŏng School.[415] However, the founder of the school, Yi Sŭng-hun (1864-1930) was not a Christian at the time of its foundation. Yi was originally a peddler of brassware, whose business network covered the entire P'yŏngan Province. As the Japanese colonial presence increasingly encroached upon Korean sovereignty, Yi joined the Patriotic Enlightenment Movement and met An Ch'angho, who urged him of the need of modern education for Korea's national empowerment.[416] Greatly inspired, Yi decided to invest his business fortune to build Osan School in his hometown of Chŏngju in 1907.[417]

Yi subsequently converted to Christianity in 1910 immediately following Korea's colonization, when he happened to hear an impressive sermon by Han Sŏk-chin.[418] It is said that he found in Christianity a new hope for national rejuvenation and salvation, though there is no documentary evidence of this.[419] However, what is known is that Han

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[415] Hanʾguk kidokkyosa yŏn'guso, *Hanʾguk kidokkyo ŭi yŏksa 1*, 290.
[416] Osan chunghak-kodŭng hakkyo, *Osan 80-nyŏnsa* (Sŏul: Osan chunghak-kodŭng hakkyo, 1987), 56-57; Tosan Kinyŏm Saŏphoe, *Tosan An Ch'ang-ho*, 47; Kim To-t'ae, *Namgang Yi Sŭng-hun chŏn*, 188-192.
[417] The school name was *Kangmyŏn Ŭisuk* and later changed to *Osan hakkkyo*. Namgang munhwa chaedan, *Namgang Yi Sŭng-hun kwa minjok undong* (Sŏul: Namgang Munhwa Chaedan Ch'ulpʻanbu 1988),121-123.
[418] Ibid., 303. Han was the one of the first seven Korean ministers who received the Presbyterian ordination in 1907.Rhodes and Campbell, *History of the Korea mission, Presbyterian Church U. S. A.*,77.
[419] Namgang munhwa chaedan, *Namgang Yi Sŭng-hun kwa minjok undong*,303-304.

was one of few ordained Korean pastors who was critical of missionary rule over the Korean church and thus invited by Myodŏng Church in 1909, the church that was founded by the anti-missionary yangban dissenters (Chapter 6).[420] Thus, if Yi's conversion was truly brought about by Han Sŏk-chin, it was likely that his anti-missionary attitude impressed Yi.

Upon conversion, Yi established a chapel in his Osan School, but invited S. L. Roberts (1881-1946, NP) to administer the church and the school.[421] This decision meant that these institutions came under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Northern Presbyterian Mission that controlled Chŏngju and its vicinity as its exclusive mission territory. Considering Yi's nationalist orientation, it is not clear why he placed a missionary as Osan's school principal, if only nominally, but his disciples explain that the missionary presence was necessary as a buffer against Japanese intervention.[422] If so, Yi was a nationalist, but also a realist, and did not hesitate to take advantage of western power to check Japanese colonialism.

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[420] Myodong kyohoesa 80-chunyŏn p'yŏnch'an wiwŏnhoe, *Myodong kyohoe 80-nyŏnsa* (Sŏul Myodong kyohoe, 1990), 153, 156.
[421] Namgang munhwa chaedan, *Namgang Yi Sŭng-hun kwa minjok undong*, 307, 313.
[422] Kim To-t'ae, *Namgang Yi Sŭng-hun chŏn*, 259.

In any case, Yi's involvement in nationalist education campaign invited Japanese attention and he was soon imprisoned by the Japanese police for conspiring to assassinate the Japanese Governor-General, the so-called "Conspiracy Case" or "105-in Sakŏn" in Korean, and vacated the school office until 1915 (discussed in detail in Chapter 8).[423] Hence, despite his vision to make Osan school in a center of nationalist education, the school was quickly Christianized rather than nationalized under missionary supervision in his absence.[424]

This drastic change in school management from being run by a Korean nationalist to the Presbyterian Mission meant that the school now had to conform to Presbyterian school policy, which prioritized evangelization over intellectual enlightenment. This change clearly narrowed the educational spectrum and placed Korean nationalist teachers who would not agree with the policy in a difficult situation. A typical example was Yi Kwang-su, who taught at the school from 1911 to 1914, and later became a prominent writer, often referred to as the founding father of modern Korean literature.

Yi Kwang-su was a native from Chŏngju and had experience studying at Meiji Gakuin High School, a Presbyterian mission school in Tokyo, from 1905-1909, which was

[423] See Chapter 8 for further discussion about the "Conspiracy Case".
[424] Osan chunghak-kodŭng hakkyo, *Osan 80-nyŏnsa*, 98.

quite a rare and prestigious accomplishment among the Korean youth at that time. When Korean sovereignty was lost, his patriotism brought him back to Korea to promote the educational cause for the future of Korea. His student career and nationalism as well as his regional background as a Chŏngju native were greatly appreciated by Yi Sŭng-hun, who invited him to teach at Osan School despite his young age of nineteen years.

As a young, intelligent, and critical thinker, Yi Kwang-su did not embrace the Presbyterian dogmatism imposed upon the church and the school. He was a faithful to the Christian cause and a catechumenate (baptismal candidate) who would even make occasional preaching in the church when asked, but he disagreed with conservative Presbyterian theology and could not compromise his intellectual honesty to embrace a literal understanding of the Bible or accept at face value traditional creeds such as the Virgin Birth and Resurrection. Thus, every time the missionary, S. L. Roberts, visited Chŏngju Church in itineration and examined his faith as a baptismal candidate, Yi declined to comply with the catechumenal standard and confessed his honest doubt about the

traditional doctrines. Consequently, he had been left unbaptized and his admission to church membership was rejected.[425]

Yi's intellectual honesty soon faced a series of personal attacks from the church Elders, who mobilized the religiously genuine Christian students and their parents to press him to leave the school. They labeled him a "Tolstoyan" for his critical attitude toward the Church and condemned his beliefs as "heresy."[426] The Tolstoyans rejected the divinity of Christ, setting aside the miraculous in the Gospels as well as the doctrines of an orthodox Church such as the Atonement, the Resurrection, the Trinity, but believed Jesus as a man's greatest good who fulfilled God's will, and tried to pursue a life in simplicity and love.[427].

It is not clear whether Yi self-identified as a Tolstoyan, but his rejection of orthodox doctrine became associated with Tolstoyanism and appeared as a threat to Presbyterian missionaries who wanted to make the Korean Church into a bulwark of orthodox Presbyterianism. Yi Kwang-su was gradually cornered by orthodox Christians and

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[425] Yi Kwang-su, "Na ŭi kyowŏn saenghwal," in *Namgang Yi Sŭnghun kwa minjok undong*, ed. Namgang munhwa chaedan (Namgang munhwa chaedan ch'ulp'anbu, 1988),552. This article was first published as a serial novel on *Chosŏn Ilbo* from 1936 to 1937. Though the names of the protagonists, schools, and places were all written in pseudonym, showing only the initial letter of the real names, the scholars have identified most names and they generally agree that the story could represents Yi's real experience at Osan School.

[426] Ibid., 550.

[427] For a good summary of Tolstoyanism, see The *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (Oxford University Press, 2005), s.v. "Tolstoy, Leo."

the missionaries and decided to leave the school, which remained in his heart as an inerasable trauma. His departure from Osan marked the end of his institutional connection with the Korean Church.

Yi Kwan-su's Response to the Church

Deeply hurt, Yi moved to Seoul and started a new career as a writer for an intellectual journal, *Ch'ŏngch'un* (Youth), the only one of its kind published in Korea. *Ch'ŏngch'un* was edited by Ch'oe Nam-sŏn (1890-1957), a young nationalist scholar and educator, who had invited Yi to work with him. Now having a public medium in which to express his thoughts, Yi vigorously wrote critiques on various contemporary social issues in Korea, including the problems of the Korean Church, and publicized his frank views of the Korean Church to inform Koreans of what was wrong with it. In his article, "Defects of the Korean Church Today," he diagnosed the various ills of the Korean Church.[428]

First, Yi criticized the hierarchical relationship between the church leaders and lay believers, pointing out that "the Korean Church of today is organized on the caste

[428] *Ch'ŏngch'un* (November, 1917): 76-83. For the English translation, "Defects of the Korean Church Today", *Korea Mission Field* (December, 1918):253-257.

system."[429] He observed that "the relation between pastors or elders and the lay believers is something like that between rulers and subjects, seniors and juniors, teachers and disciples" and that "Pastors and elders may almost be called *Yangbans* while the lay members are *Sangnoms* (men of low-class)."[430] Therefore, he lamented that, "To be a church officer in the Korean Church is regarded as possessing the honor and power which the holders of secular offices used to have," concluding that, "Christianity, the religion of equality itself, seems powerless to unsettle this idea of caste."[431]

Second, Yi denounced the Korean Church's disrespect for the secular world, a vanity that was underpinned by excessive religious pietism. He observed that the Korean Church still held to the "doctrine of ecclesiastical supremacy," which he explained as the conviction that "the Church… must rule mankind in everything" and that "faith in religion is the whole duty of man."[432] As a consequence, Korean Christians came to look down on "non-Christian [as] belonging to an entirely different species… and not to be trusted," to forbid "intermarriage with non-Christians," and even discouraged even social intercourse

[429] Ibid., 253.
[430] Ibid., 253
[431] Ibid., 253.
[432] Ibid., 253-254.

with them.[433] Moreover, their disregard for secular society that led them to "treat learning with the greatest contempt, calling it "worldly knowledge," and took it "as a temptation of the devil and an enemy of the soul." Therefore, in Korea, he concluded, "those who desire to acquire an education higher than that of a special school, or to go abroad for study, are considered to have already stepped inside the gates of hell."[434]

Third, Yi pointed out that this general disregard for secular knowledge naturally resulted in the "ignorance of the church workers."[435] He urged that "A preacher be furnished, at the least, with a knowledge of Christian theology, of philosophy ancient and modern, and religious literature" and "something of the great principles of modern philosophy and of the spirit of science so that he may understand the spirit of modern civilization, the source of modern thoughts, the relation between modern civilization and religion," but such preachers had been scarcely produced in the Korean Church because the Examination Committee of the Presbyterian Church "consists mostly of uneducated old men who are incapable of judging the character and ability of a man," and "the most

[433] Ibid., 254
[434] Ibid., 254.
[435] Ibid., 255.

successful candidates are those who assent to everything the Committee says--- who are, in short, as superstitious, as ignorant and as unthinking, as the Committee."[436]

Lastly, Yi denounced the western missionary's use of conversion tactics that took advantage of the ignorance of the Korean people. He observed that "old superstitions, such as the doctrines of heaven and hell, of resurrection, of the omnipotence of prayer, etc., have been utilized to save the ignorant multitude from sin" in Korea and "rather than reason and contemplation, superstitious belief has been recommended, encouraging them to trust blindly in the mystical merits of ritualism --- like baptism, worship, and prayer." As a result, "In Korean churches, as well as in Christian homes, prayers are offered for personal benefits such as "recovery from sickness" and "the birth of sons."[437]

Needless to say, all of Yi's points touched precisely upon the major problems of the Korean Church, which we have dealt with so far, and they were drawn from his personal experiences and observations in the Church, especially, from his days at Osan School, where he was attacked and ousted by the Church authorities. The problems of the Korean Church as he diagnosed them were not unknown among Korean intellectuals at that time, but few had dared to publicize such critical views and provoke Korean Christian

[436] Ibid., 255.
[437] Ibid., 256.

leaders and the missionaries who stood behind them. Thus, Yi's final remark in the article that "the educated classes of today are not satisfied with the kind of Christianity we have now"[438] carries a profound historical significance as the first powerful intellectual challenge against the Korean Church and the Missions.

Yun Ch'i-ho was one of the Korean Christian intellectuals who understood the historical significance of Yi's article. Though he did not agree with everything what Yi said, Yun nevertheless felt the need of informing the missionaries of this article so that they would be aware of the intellectual trend among the educated Korean youth. Thus, Yun translated Yi's article and had it appear in the *Korean Mission Field,* a monthly missionary journal, under the joint editorship of the Korea missionaries. In his introductory remarks, Yun made clear that as a practicing Christian, he would not take Yi Kwang-su's side, commenting that "as is common to many young men of talent in certain periods of their lives, he is inclined to be destructive in his criticisms." However, Yun continued, "however incorrect some of the opinions seem to be, they are worthy of serious consideration as they, in a way, represent the mental attitude of a large class of young men toward Christianity in

[438] Ibid., 256.

Korea today."[439] In Yun's eyes, it was clear that young Korean intellectuals of a nationalist mindset were already withdrawing from the mission-dominated and anti-intellectual Korean Church. Yun thus took Yi's critique as a serious warning and challenge to the Korean Church and urged the missionaries to be prepared for the intellectual sophistication of the Korean youth who he thought would soon subvert the missionary's sway over the Korean Christian.

Japanese Educational Ordinance

The Korean Church and mission schools in the 1910s faced another important challenge; the 1911 Educational Ordinance issued by the Korean Government-General. The Ordinance declared that the purpose of public education was to make "good and loyal Japanese subjects" of Koreans and thus ordered all schools whether government or private to conform to the rules and regulations stipulated by the Ordinance. One of the new rules was to prohibit teaching religion as a required subject in middle schools and above. This meant that missionaries could no longer mandate Koreans to study the Bible in their schools, though they were free to study it outside the schools under private teachers, or at

[439] "An Explanation," *Korea Mission Field* (December 1918): 257.

special institutes such as Sunday school, seminaries and churches.[440] Another possibility was for the missionaries to continue their religious teaching in schools without receiving governmental recognition as "middle-schools," but graduates of a non-recognized school had no qualifications with which to proceed to higher schools such as professional schools and colleges. The Japanese authority gave a ten-year grace period to the mission schools to decide whether they would conform to Japanese standards and receive recognition as "middle-schools" or remain non-recognized and shut down at the end of the tenth year.[441]

The missionaries were generally opposed to the Japanese ordinance. They saw it as a violation of freedom of religion and asked the government to modify the rule. They thought that the Japanese demand to separate religion from schools was too extreme and ruinous to the very purpose of Christian education. They were also upset by other regulations in the Ordinance, which prescribed details such as "certain building requirements, grounds of a certain size, athletic and scientific and other school furnishings, and equipment of specified design and quantity."[442] The opposition was particularly strong among older missionaries in Korea who had faced "very little interference from the Korean

[440] Underwood, *Modern education in Korea*, 200-201.
[441] For the English translation of the Ordinance, see ibid., 196-197.
[442] Fisher, *Democracy and mission education in Korea*, 69.

Government" due to their extraterritorial status and "developed schools and were conducting them in accordance with their own educational ideals."[443] Thus, it was natural, as one young missionary observed, that "many of them looked upon the Japanese as interlopers, who were coming in to destroy or seriously hamper the work to which they had given years of labor… and which they regarded as vital to the well-being and progress of the Korean Christian Movement."[444] In short, the Japanese authority appeared to these missionaries as a formidable rival in the educational sphere where they competed over the souls and minds of young Koreans.

Nonetheless, the extraterritorial status of the missionaries ceased with the colonization of Korea by Japan and the U.S. government had fully acknowledged that United States citizens were subject to the Japanese jurisdiction in Korea.[445] Thus, the Japanese colonial government did not concede its controlling power over Korean education and turned down repeated petitions by the Missions to modify the Ordinance. Having exhausted all their resources and realizing their powerlessness to counter Japanese colonial authority, divisions of opinion surfaced among the missionaries. The division occurred

[443] Ibid., 65.
[444] Ibid., 65.
[445] Komatsu Midori, *Chōsen heigō no rimen* (Tokyo: Chūgaishinronsha, 1920), 211-220.

along denominational lines, though there were divergent views among individuals. The Methodist Mission decided to conform to the Japanese Ordinance and sought governmental recognition, while the Presbyterians declined to do so. The Methodist missionaries made additional investment in the Paejae School in Seoul to improve both faculty and facilities, and revised the curriculum to make religion optional. Soon, the Japanese granted the due recognition to Paejae as a "higher common school" (*kodŭng pot'ong hakkyo*), the first Korean mission school that could stand on par with Japanese middle-schools.[446] Other Methodist mission schools followed suit at varying intervals from the 1910s through 1920s and 30s. This does not mean, however, that they ceased to exist as Christian schools. Even though they did not mandate Bible study in school, they would hold chapel exercises outside the school building or at a nearby church, or they would hold voluntary Bible classes arranged for afternoons and evenings, so that they could keep their religious identities.[447]

On the other hand, the Presbyterian Mission took a completely opposite path. Presbyterian missionaries, who consisted mainly of theological conservatives, held that the missionary school was a place for religious indoctrination. As we saw in Chapter 4, the

[446] *Annual Report of BFMMEC* (1918), 298.
[447] Fisher, *Democracy and mission education in Korea*, 203.

Presbyterian Mission did not place priority upon education and believed that the primary aim of school was to adopt children from Christian families and nurture them to serve the Church. Thus, they did not hesitate to shut down schools once it became clear that they could no longer use schools for religious aims. Accordingly, the Presbyterians chose to remain as non-recognized schools and to withdraw from the educational field after ten years, when their schools were no longer allowed to operate by the government. Some schools, such as one Presbyterian school (SP) in Sunch'ŏn, South Chŏlla Province and a Girls' Academy (NP) in Sinch'ŏn, P'yŏngan Province were closed immediately or reduced in size and grade, without waiting for the end of the ten-year grace period. Other local schools under the Korean Church followed suit as they were also under direct or indirect missionary control, and some schools were shut down "either on the account of the religious exclusion article or on account of some of the other provisions by which the standards were raised to a level which they could not reach."[448]

The majority of Presbyterian schools that remained as non-recognized schools were able to protect their rights to provide religious education. However, they made no systematic improvement in terms of faculty, facility, and curriculum as they did not seek

[448] Ibid., 204.

governmental recognition under the Ordinance. Consequently, these non-recognized schools could not match the recognized schools in terms of their educational appeal to the Korean youth who wanted a better learning environment and the qualification to proceed to higher schools. The widening gap between these two kinds of school posed a serious dilemma to intellectual Korean Christians, who had to choose either the religious but lower-grade school or secular but higher-grade school for their children. Yun Ch'i-ho was one such Korean Christian.

Yun Ch'i-ho's Concern

As a Christian intellectual and a nationalist, Yun's life work was to raise the educational standard of the Korean youth. He had thus been involved in both Christian and secular educational projects. Not only had he helped An Ch'ang-ho build Taesŏng school, but he also donated his private fund to found the first Southern Methodist School in Kaesŏng (*Han-Yŏng Hag-wŏn* or Anglo-Korean School), where he served in the school board along with the missionaries.[449] He also played an active part in the Y. M. C. A. where he led various educational projects for the Korean youth.

[449] "The Anglo-Korean School, Song Do," *Korea Mission Field*, (September 1907):142-144.

In this way, he did not limit his field only within his denominational Church circle, but he remained personally loyal to his denominational identity, sending his daughter to a Southern Methodist school, Paehwa Girls' School, in Seoul. Nonetheless, watching his daughter's progress, Yun soon noticed that the educational quality at the mission school was far from satisfactory and began to wonder if he should withdraw her from a school he had come to consider as defective.

> I am thinking seriously about taking Munhŭi [Yun's daughter] out of the Pai Hwa (sic) school and sending her to the governmental Higher School [kwallip pot'ong hakkyo]. She has been going to the former school for the last three years and hasn't learned hardly anything in Chinese or Japanese. Can I afford, is it right for me, to sacrifice the education of my precious children to the mere sentiment—of keeping or sending my children to the Church schools when the Church schools, thanks to the obstinacy of missionaries, are the poorest of their kind?[450]

Within a few days, Yun reached the conclusion that the Japanese Higher School was the best choice for his precious daughter. Though he "regret[ed] very much the necessity for withdrawing Munhŭi from my [his] own church school," he believed that he had no choice in the situation where "the missionaries, with the very best intentions in the world ruin the schools." He pointed the specific missionary offenses as follows: 1) "employing only the

[450] *Yun Ch'i-ho's Diary* (1/7/1919).

cheapest grade of teachers ￥11 to 12 for girl-teachers", 2) not discussing with "the Koreans who have great interest in the school and who ought to know what is good for the Korean, better than a missionary; 3) "by not adopting method and curricula to the needs and conditions of the Korean children." Yet, the fundamental problem for Yun was that "The missionaries despise Koreans too much if not in so many words, nonetheless, in so many acts.[451] Here, Yun's observation concurs what we have seen thus far. The missionaries had an absolute power over school management and imposed what they wanted to teach on the Koreans, without consulting and adapting to Korean needs and circumstances.

Such neglect of Korean agency was nothing new in the mission school, but the new development after the Japanese Annexation is that that disillusioned Korean Christians, especially of intellectual class, began to turn to Japanese educational institutions. As the overbearing missionaries in the Korean Church lost many independent-minded Korean church leaders to the Japanese Congregationalist Church, they also started losing the best Korean Christian intellectuals and their children from their mission schools.

In fact, such a trend was prevailing on a nationwide scale. Wherever there was an opportunity, the majority of Korean students preferred to go to government schools and did

[451] *Yun Ch'i-ho's Diary* (1/10/1919).

not seek education at Christian schools, which often required them to maintain Church affiliations. As the Methodist Mission reported in 1914, "the Korean students in the higher common schools in Seoul … all speak Japanese and are not being touched in any large way by the Korean churches" and "the Korean children in the public schools throughout the country are mostly from the so-called heathen homes and are not in the present Sunday schools."[452] In other words, Christian schools at large were the second choice for many Koreans, and as long as they could afford public education, there was no need for them to maintain affiliations with schools under ecclesiastical jurisdiction. The public education system, even if it was under Japanese control, began overwhelming the Christian schools in quality and popularity already in the 1910s.

Nonetheless, it is important to note that there was always a constant lack of public schools for the increasing number of Korean children of school age, and a universal education system was not fully established until the end of the Japanese colonial rule. Therefore, Christian school could hold strong merit as a substitute for public schools and continued to appeal to those who had no access to public education. The problem is that the Christian schools were mostly elementary grade and there were only a few schools that

[452] *Annual Report of BFMMEC* (1914), 166-167.

provided middle school education or above. Therefore, the numerical growth of enrollment at Christian schools did not contribute to a remarkable rise of educational standards among the Korean Christians. This is evidenced by the fact that the popular image of the Korean Christian was still the man of little means and the Korean Church was often ridiculed by non-Christians as "the Society of the Impoverished" or "the Society of the Ignorant" even in the mid-1910s.[453] In short, the Korean Christian schools as well as the Church were not venues where young and intellectual Koreans were willing to come and work together for national salvation through education.

Y. M. C.A. as a Nationalist Center

An alternative venue for educated Koreans to work for the national cause was the Young Men's Christian Association (Y.M.C.A.). The Korean branch of this international organization was established in Seoul in 1903 and quickly developed as the most popular youth organization.[454] Under Japanese colonial administration, where Korean civil liberties were limited, the Y.M.C.A. was one of few civil organizations where Koreans

[453] *Sinhak Segye,* vol.1(1916): 5-6.
[454] Min Kyŏng-bae, *Sŏul YMCA undong 100-yŏnsa : 1903-2003* (Sŏul: Sŏul YMCA, 2004), 78.

could gather and operate various social programs such as speech contests, chorus, and athletic games.[455] Yet, the Y.M.C.A. was not a Korean institution. Like the Korean Church and mission schools, the Korean Y.M.C.A. was funded in large part by foreign sources. It was headed by a foreign director, P. L. Gillett, dispatched by the Y.M.C.A. in the United States and its Board members included many foreign missionaries and even Japanese.[456] In fact, it had received regular support from Japanese affiliates, one of whom was none other than Itō Hirobumi, the Japanese Resident-General. Itō made a generous donation of 10,000 yen a year for several years during his office.[457]

The Y.M.C.A. was a so-called "para-church" organization, where Christians were supposed to cooperate ecumenically in the interests of social advancement. It could thereby avoid ecclesiastical control by a particular Church or Mission. Therefore, there was no religious requirement for its members, let alone the catechumenal test to check their reception of the traditional Christian dogmas. This was a great attraction to many Koreans who simply wanted an institution where they could carry out their social and political programs without the ecclesiastical supervision.

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[455] Ibid., 174-190.
[456] Ibid.,79.
[457] Kiyoshi Nakarai, *Relations Between the Government and Christianity in Chosen* (Keijo: Government-General of Chosen, 1921), 6.

In fact, many Korean Christian intellectuals who collided with the Church and the Mission flocked to the Korean Y.M.C.A. and made it the center of their socio-political agenda. The best example was Yi Sang-jae, one of the prominent "converts in prison." Yi was a high-class yangban who became a Christian in 1903, while he was imprisoned as a former member of the defunct Independence Club.[458] He began attending the Presbyterian Yŏndong Church but soon found that the apolitical attitude of the church and the missionary did not suit him.[459] Hence, even though he was elected as Elder, he declined church office, choosing to devote more energy to the Y.M.C.A. as the better place for educating Korean youth.[460] Likewise, Yun Ch'i-ho also declined to assume any church office, though he regularly attended Sunday service at the Chonggyo Church in Seoul. Instead, he was more active in the Y.M.C.A. and served as a Y.M.C.A. Secretary for many years. Sin Hŭng-u (1883-1959), who succeeded Yun's secretaryship of the Y.M.C.A. was a Northern Methodist, with a degree from Southern California University, which was rare among Korean Christians in those days. Yet, this intellectual figure also did not become a minister but made Paejae School and Y.M.C.A. as his major field, though he often attended

[458] Kim Myŏng-gu, *Wŏlnam Yi Sang-je ŭi kidokkyo sahoe undong kwa sasang* (Sŏul: Simin munhwa, 2003), 96-104.
[459] Ibid.,67.
[460] Ibid.,164, 172-173.

the Methodist and other Christian conferences in Korea and abroad as a Korean representative.[461] Beside, another yangban convert in prison, Kim Chŏng-sik, who joined the Japanese Congregationalist Church was also active Y.M.C.A. member as shown in Chapter 6. Among the younger leaders, Pak Hŭi-do (1889-1951) deserves note.[462] Pak graduated Sŭngsil High school and received his professional training in the Methodist seminary in Seoul and became an ordained minister, but he was also active in the Y.M.C.A. and served as its officer.[463]

On the other hand, the Y.M.C.A. was also seen with much caution by the conservative missionaries because they knew that many Korean Christians wanted to join it in order to escape from their control. Anna Nisbet (1867-1920, SP) testifies her sense of disgust when she saw the Y.M.C.A. drawing many unchristian-like Koreans.

> The great objection to the church has always been the unpleasant insistence upon repentance and putting away certain sinful habits; but a new condition arose. The Y.M.C.A. had been founded in Seoul, and soon after, the Epworth League, in the Methodist Church, both of which had the customary provision for associate membership. The report now spread rapidly that one could belong to the church without the objectionable features, such as believing on Jesus and forsaking sin. As

[461] Chŏn T'aek-pu, *Ingan Sin Hŭng-u*, Ch. 3-4, 6-7.
[462] Min Kyŏng-bae, *Sŏul YMCA undong 100-yŏnsa : 1903-2003*, 196.
[463] For Pak's biographic information, see *Kidokkyo taebaekkwa sajŏn vol.7*, (Sŏul: Kidok kyomunsa, 1980), s.v. "Pak Hŭi-do."

> a result, the YMCA and Epworth League spread like wild fire among non-Christian villages, using their names, constitution, and by-laws until prohibited by the respective organizations.[464]

As seen in Chapter 5, Epworth League actually became an organizing site for anti-Japanese movement and was thus dissolved by the Methodist Mission.

There were some liberal missionaries such as Horace. H. Underwood (NP), the son of H. G. Underwood,[465]who showed a more understanding attitude toward Korean Christians and recognized the social significance of the Y.M.C.A. in the specific Korean colonial context.

> In some quarters the whole movement is regarded as purely political, and still others regard the associations as mere social clubs lacking the restraints of Christianity or any religion, and more evil than good… In our much-organized society, with its countless lodges, and clubs and associations of every conceivable sort this simple association seems of little import. But in Korea their very organization and development on native initiative is a sign of the times, and once organized and functioning they have untold potentialities in the direct and indirect education of the people.[466]

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[464] Nisbet, *Day In and Day Out in Korea*, 93.
[465] In fact, Horace G. Underwood was the one who promoted setting up Y.M.C.A. in Seoul. Min Kyŏng-bae, *Sŏul YMCA undong 100-yŏnsa : 1903-2003*, 67-68.
[466] Underwood, *Modern education in Korea*, 188.

Here we can see more clearly why the Y.M.C.A. continued to be the center of various socio-political movements during the colonial period, including that of the nationalist movement. Unlike the Epworth League, which was suppressed by the Methodist Mission, the Y.M.C.A. was international organization independent of any denominational Missions or Churches and could not be dissolved singlehandedly by such ecclesiastical authorities. Thus, it continued to attract many political activists who had loose or no affiliations with the Church. In other words, from its inception, the Y.M.C.A. had an institutional character that would entice socio-politically ambitious Koreans who were inclined to neglect the authority of the Church and the Mission and preferred to act as independent individuals. It was the only social venue where Korean intellectuals could balance between Christian faith or ideals with their nationalist aspiration and turn them into more visible actions. And, thus it could become one of the centers of the March First Movement, which we will discuss in the next chapter.

Chapter 8 Korean Church and Independence Movement

In the previous chapters, we have observed that the Korean Christians were divided into two groups over their different attitude toward the mission-dominated Korean church and Christian schools. On one hand there was a majority consisting of those who accepted the existing framework of a missionary dominated Church and derived various advantages from it such as foreign protection, access to education as well as religious consolation. On the other hand, there was a minority group that consisted of high-class yangbans and intellectuals, who subscribed to the Christian faith and its ideals, but tended to distance themselves from the Church in order to avoid missionary control.

This division within Korean Christianity has been largely suppressed by the nationalist framework in the conventional historiography. As a result, any incident of national significance that involved Christians has been largely reduced to the achievement of the Korean Church. This chapter looks into two of such cases, namely, the "Conspiracy Case" [*105-in sakŏn*] in 1911 and the "March First Movement" in 1919, and analyzes how

much Christian involvement was actually there and, if any, how much we can attribute it to the merit of the Korean Church.

Conspiracy Case Trial

In 1911, the Japanese police made a series of arrests of over hundreds of Koreans for the charge of conspiring to assassinate the Japanese Governor-General Terauchi Masatake. Of these, 123 men were formally prosecuted and 105 men were convicted in the Seoul court.[467] The Japanese prosecutors claimed that these Koreans had formed a secret society, "New People's Association" (s*inminhoe*), and plotted to kill the Governor with the assistance of the foreign missionaries when he toured the north the previous year.[468] Among the 123 prosecuted, 94 were Protestant Christians, including noted figures such as Yun Ch'i-ho and Yi Sŭng-hun, while only two were Catholics.[469]

If these Christians involved in the "Conspiracy Case" had truly conspired to launch such a violent attack on their Japanese ruler, their actions would prove the prevalence of anti-Japanese nationalism among Korean Christians at that time. However,

[467] For the names of the arrested 123 Koreans, see Yun Kyŏng-no, *105-in sakŏn kwa sinminhoe yŏn'gu* (Sŏul: Ilchisa, 1990), 26-27.
[468] Ibid., 20-21.
[469] Ibid., 88-89.

the series of court trials revealed that that these Christians were tortured by the Japanese to make a false confession. The missionaries were also convinced of the innocence of the Korean Christians and furious with the Japanese for torturing Koreans to make false confessions that some missionaries masterminded the conspiracy behind Koreans.[470] Therefore, as Arthur Brown, the secretary of the Presbyterian mission, stated, "many Japanese, as well as practically all foreign observers, realized that the "conspiracy" had been manufactured out of the imaginations of hostile and overzealous police" and the missionaries pressed the Japanese government to give them a fair trial.[471] Eventually, this court case ended up acquitting most of the Korean defendants except for six individuals considered to be the masterminds of the alleged plot, who were also released by a Japanese amnesty after a couple of years in prison.[472] The "Conspiracy Case" actually proved the absence of the alleged conspiracy, even if the Japanese authority did not admit it officially.

Among the six people who received guilty sentences were Yun Ch'i-ho and Yi Sŭng-hun. While Yun and Yi repeatedly testified that they had made false confessions under Japanese duress, they were not released, while others who provided the same defense were.

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[470] The missionary names indicated by the Japanese police were George S. McCune and Samuel A. Moffett, both Presbyterians residing in the northern provinces. Rhodes,499.
[471] Brown, *The Mastery of the Far East*, 572.
[472] Yun Kyŏng-no, *105-in sakŏn kwa sinminhoe yŏn'gu*,130-166.

Simply put, the Japanese needed to give them a guilty sentence as a general warning to the Korean Christians, who they thought were involved in nationalist politics, if not alleged conspiracy. Here, it is worth recalling that Yun and Yi were active in nationalist education at that time. Yun worked with another nationalist leader, An Ch'ang-ho, and headed a new nationalist school, Taesŏng School, in Pyŏngyang, while Yi was inspired by An and founded Osan School in his hometown, Chŏngju, to promote the Korean nationalist cause among the youth (Chapter 6). So, the Japanese accusation of their ringleaders of the conspiracy was completely groundless and a Japanese fabrication, their nationalist reputation was real.

Nonetheless, it would be a mistake to make their activities, which were all undertaken outside ecclesiastical institutions, into nationalist credentials for the Korean Church. Their schools aimed at nationalist education rather than religious education and such school was not tolerated in the mission-dominated Korean Church where religious devotion was prioritized over national education. Moreover, Yi Sŭng-hun converted to Christianity only after a year before the Conspiracy case, and it was only after his imprisonment that he became more religious, having read the Bible many times in

prison.[473] In any case, what is clear is that he had no influential position in the Korean Church at the time of the Conspiracy Case. Similarly, Yun was a prominent Christian intellectual, but he also had no church office at that time and desired to be free from missionary control. In fact, he had long believed that working as a pastor under an overbearing missionary was the most humiliating thing he could think of and intentionally declined to take church office despite his commitment to the Christian faith.

> To me the prejudices of heathen unbelievers seem less unbearable than the unintentional but the matter-of-fact "bossism" of missionary superiors. Once become a "native preacher," I would have to surrender to a missionary not only my time and service but my freedom of opinion and of conscience as well, compelled to preach the doctrines and dogmas of the Mission whether I believed in them or not. I can hardly imagine a situation more degrading or more painful than that in which one has to preach the sacred doctrines of religion not necessarily through conviction but under a sort of pious compulsion.[474]

In short, Yun and Yi were Christians but they were in no position to represent the Korean Church, from which their nationalist activities received no institutional support.

In this sense, Japanese were completely mistaken when they identified these men as Korean Church leaders. They failed to note the widening schism between the minority of

[473] Kim To-t'ae, *Namgang Yi Sŭng-hun chŏn*, 4, 335.
[474] *Yun Ch'i-ho's Diary* (6/1/1897).

nationalist Christians with the majority of apolitical Christians who were loyal to Church authority. The Japanese colonial government's false identification of the Korean Church with the anti-Japanese movement also led them to pay special attention to the northern region of Korea where the Christian population was heavily concentrated. In fact, An Ch'ang-ho and Yi Sŭng-hun were northerners from P'yŏngan Province and the Japanese police arrested many of their friends and associates in the north, thus making northerners the majority of the prosecuted in the Conspiracy trial, 118 out of 123,[475] though none of them had anything to do with the fabricated conspiracy.

The Japanese false arrest of a number of northern Christians left one unexpected result: a strong regional memory of oppression. Those northerners were not only arrested without evidence but also imprisoned and tortured to make false confession before they were released. Thus, this collective experience was enough to convince the northern Christians of the injustice of Japanese rule and left a long-lasting feeling of resentment that would resurface later at the time of the March First Movement.

The March First Movement

[475] For the names of the northerners, see the list in Yun Kyŏng-no, *105-in sakŏn kwa sinminhoe yŏn'gu*, 72.

Like the "Conspiracy Case," the "Christian" element in the March First Movement in 1919 has been stressed in the previous studies. It has been claimed that the Korean Church produced 16 out of 33 signatories of the famous "Declaration of Independence," who were Christians, and also mobilized many Christians who actively participated in street demonstrations, shouting "manse" (Long Live Korea) for Korean Independence.[476] Thus, the Movement has been regarded as the single most important manifestation of Korean Christian nationalism.[477] However, in order to verify the conventional interpretation, we need to qualify who among the Christians took actual leadership in the Movement and how much they represented the Korean Church, keeping in mind the internal division within Korean Christianity described in earlier chapters. In so doing, we will be able to render a fairer judgment on the relationship between the Korean Church and the nationalist movement.

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Yi Kwang-su and the Korean Student Movement in Tokyo

[476] Min argues that the Korean Church was the channel (*kyŏngno*) through which the movement was spread nationally. Min Kyŏng-bae, *Han'guk kidok kyohoesa (sin kaejŏn p'an)*, 330-341.
[477] Ibid.,357-358.

The scholarship on the March First Movement commonly refers to a so-called "Wilsonian Boom" in which Korean intellectuals were inspired by the idea of the "national self-determination" and took it as their opportunity to raise their voice to the world, as the major backdrop of the movement.[478] To this end, some Korean nationalists both within and without Korea planned to send delegations to the Versailles Peace Conference, while others resorted to the more direct method of declaring independence without securing recognition from the powers. One such early attempt that had an immediate impact on the March First Movement was the Korean students' movement in Tokyo on February 8, 1919. On that day, Korean students gathered at the Korean Y.M.C.A. building in Kanda, Tokyo, and read loud their Declaration of Independence. Unsurprisingly, the Japanese police swiftly cracked down on the gathering and arrested many of the Korean students. However, the news of the Students' Declaration soon reached Korea and stirred the Korean nationalist leaders and led them to organize a similar movement, which materialized in the March First Movement.[479]

[478] Ibid., 332.
[479] Hanʾguk kidokkyosa yŏn'guso, *Hanʾguk kidokkyo ŭi yŏksa 2* (Sŏul: Kidok kyomunsa, 1990), 31-32.

The student movement in Tokyo had a small Christian element that stands in contrast to the subsequent March First Movement, which conventional historiography credits the Korean Church with having led. In fact, the student leader who drafted the February Declaration was none other than Yi Kwang-su, the sharpest and boldest critic of the Korean Church and its missionaries. Yi came to Japan to pursue advanced scholarship at Waseda University after he was ousted from Osan School by the leaders of the Presbyterian Church, and had established himself as an active leader of the Korean student community in Tokyo.

In that connection, it is also important to note that the Y.M.C.A. provided the venue for the student movement. As discussed in the previous chapter, the Y.M.C.A. attracted Korean students because, as an international civic organization, it was one of few places where Koreans could enjoy relative freedom of speech without intervention from the Church and its missionaries or agents of the Japanese empire. The same was true of the Korean Y.M.C.A. branch in Tokyo and it provided space where many political-minded Korean students could gather together. For example, Sŏ Ch'un, one of the central figures in the student movement at the Tokyo Y and also an alumnus from Osan School,[480] was a

[480] Osan chunghak-kodŭng hakkyo, *Osan 80-nyŏnsa*,118, 132.

leftist who shared with Yi Kwang-su a critical view of the Korean Church public criticizing the Church for its dependency on western missionaries and its anti-national tendencies.[481] The nationalist movement by Korean students in Tokyo, which galvanized the subsequent March First Movement, was led by young Korean intellectuals who had a low view of the Korean Church and kept their distance from it.

Ch'ŏndogyo's Initiative in the March First Movement

The absence of the Christian element was also conspicuous in the preparatory process of the March First Movement. The planning of the Movement was mainly led by Ch'oe Rin (1878-1958), Kwŏn Tong-jin (1861-1947), and O Se-ch'ang (1864-1953), all of whom were leaders of Ch'ŏndogyo, the succeeding organization of the former Tonghak, the indigenous religion that intimidated Christians in Korea in the famous anti-foreign uprising of 1894. By 1919, the Ch'ŏndogyo had modified their political and ideological orientation and enlisted some intellectual leaders such as above-mentioned Ch'oe, Kwŏn, and O under the new leadership of Son Pyŏng-hŭi (1861-1922), but still had no friendly relations with

[481] *Gendai Shiryō vol. 26* (misuzu shobō, 1980), 8. Hereafter, *GS*.

the Christian Church, much less with the missionaries, whom they used to attack as foreign intruders.

The Ch'ŏndogyo leaders began to prepare their own independence movement in January 1919, upon hearing of the Wilson's Fourteen Point Statement. These leaders thought that if Koreans successfully demonstrated their collective will for national independence, this aspiration would be recognized by the Allied Powers, and thus planned to draft and distribute a Declaration of Independence throughout the world, including Japan.[482] For this purpose, they tried to recruit several important leaders from outside Ch'ŏndogyo institutions. At this time, Ch'oe Rin approached Ch'oe Nam-sŏn a prominent scholar who was well versed in both Chinese classics and contemporary western scholarship, but not a Christian, and asked him to draft the Declaration. Ch'oe consented, while refusing to sign the declaration itself to avoid arrest by the Japanese.[483]

It is worth recalling here that Ch'oe Nam-sŏn and Yi Kwang-su had worked together to publish *Ch'ŏngch'un* and introduced Yi's harsh criticism on the Korean Church to the public through his magazine. Ch'oe Nam-sŏn had respect for his Christian friends

[482] Kwŏng Tong-jin's testimony at Keijō Local Court (4/8/1919) in Ichikawa Masaaki, *San'ichi dokuritsu undō* (Tōkyō: Hara shobō, 1983) *vol.1,* 228. Hereafter, *SDS.*
[483] Ch'oe Namsŏn's testimony at Keijō Local Court, (5/19/ 1919), *SDS vol.3,* 86-87.

and mentors, but had no religious commitment to the Church and the Christian cause.[484] Therefore, it was natural that the Declaration he drafted included no specific references to Christian tenets or thought. In fact, the absence of Christian language in the Declaration is so obvious that even the leading Korean Church historian of the nationalist school, Min Kyŏng-bae admits that there is no Christian confession in the statement of the Declaration.[485]

The Ch'ŏndogyo leaders also took full responsibility for printing the Declaration. They printed three thousand copies of it in their own printing factory that usually published their organizational papers. The company was located on the campus of Posŏng School, which was owned and run by the Ch'ŏndogyo.[486] It goes without saying that printing and distributing uncensored documents was illegal and a difficult business, given the watchful eyes of the omnipresent Japanese police. That the Ch'ŏndogyo managed to print their Declaration was due to the fact that, unlike the Korean Church, it possessed all the

[484] Chŏn T'aek-pu, "3.1 undong ŭi chongsin kwa kŭpaegyŏng," *Kidokkyo Sasang* 22, no. 3 (1978): 43.
[485] Min Kyŏng bae, *Kankoku kirisuto kyōkai shi* (Tokyo: Shinkyō Shuppansha, 1981), 292-293.
[486] Ch'oe Rin's testimony at Keijō Local Court, (4/7/1919), *SDS vol.1*,219.

necessary material and human infrastructure under its own jurisdiction without relying on any external form of support.

By contrast, the sixteen Christian leaders who signed the Declaration played no part in drafting and printing this document. They nevertheless became its signatories over the course of the following events. The first Christian involvement in the movement began when Ch'oe Rin asked Ch'oe Nam-sŏn to invite Yi Sŭng-hun from P'yŏngan Province to join their movement in mid-February, 1919.[487] Ch'oe knew Yi personally as he had provided personal support for Yi's Osan School in Chŏngju.[488] Meeting with the Ch'ŏndogyo leaders in Seoul, Yi agreed to participate in the movement and promised to cultivate more Christian supporters in his home province in the north, where he soon recruited several prominent Christian ministers such as Kil Sŏn-ju and Yang Chŏn-baek.[489] After securing their support, he came to Seoul again and met Ham T'ae-yŏng, a young Presbyterian layman, and Pak Hŭi-do, a Methodist minister and also Y.M.C.A. officer, both of whom joined the movement.[490] Pak subsequently brought his Methodist colleagues to Ham and Yi, and the Christian leaders all agreed to ally with the Ch'ŏndogyo for the sake

[487] Ch'oe Rin's testimony at Keijō Local Court, (4/7/1919), *SDS vol.1*, 216.
[488] Ch'oe Nam-sŏn's testimony at Keijō Local Court (5/19/1919), *SDS vol.3,* 89.
[489] Yi Sŭng-hun's testimony at Keijō Local Court, (4/7/1919), *SDS vol.1*, 290-291.
[490] Yi Sŭng-hun's testimony at Keijō Local Court, (4/7/1919), *SDS vol.1*, 291-292.

of national union.[491] Henceforth, the Christian leaders signed onto the Declaration and helped distribute it to regions throughout the Christian network.

There is no doubt that Yi Sŭng-hun was the single most important figure among the Christian signers, and there would have been no Ch'ŏndogyo-Christian alliance and no Christian signers, had he not taken an active part in the movement. However, as already discussed in previous chapters, Yi was already a black sheep in the Korean Church for his political involvement and did not represent the Korean Church at that time. It is true that he became ordained a Presbyterian Elder after he was pardoned from prison in 1915 and entered Presbyterian Theological seminary in 1916 at the age of 52, but he was soon asked to withdraw by S.L. Roberts, the missionary in charge of his home church in Chŏngju, who was aware of his political ambition.[492] Thus, had Yi been a loyal member of the Korean Church, he could not have acted in the way that he did. In the first place, his participation in the movement boldly transgressed the principle of the separation of politics and religion. Also, his collaboration with the Ch'ŏndogyo was controversial since the Korean Church had long despised the indigenous religion as a heathen, idol-worshipping cult that was

[491] Pak Hŭi-do's testimony at Keijō Local Court, (4/23/1918), *SDS vol.1*, 301.
[492] Namgang munhwa chaedan, *Namgang Yi Sŭng-hun kwa minjok undong*, 324-315.

incompatible with Christian faith.[493] His involvement in the March First Movement was possible because he had been disloyal to ecclesiastical rule and the tradition of the Korean Church despite being an ordained elder. In substance, he was no different from An Ch'ang-ho or Yi Kwang-su who were loosely affiliated with the Church but left it when ecclesiastical censorship over their political and intellectual freedom became too cumbersome.

Signatures against their Will : Kil Sŏn-ju, Yang Chŏnbaek and Chŏng Ch'un-su

Unlike Yi Sŭng-hun, Kil Sŏn-ju and Yang Chŏn-baek were two of the first seven Korean ministers ordained in 1907 and established themselves as leading ministers in the Korean Presbyterian Church. On this basis, previous studies have concluded that their signatures on the Declaration of Independence represent irrefutable evidence that the Korean Church, especially its Presbyterian branch, made a great contribution to the independence movement.

[493] Recall many cases of Christian conflict with local religions, including Tonghaks, in Chapter 2. Also, Sin Hong-sik, one of the signatories, later testified that he had been hesitant to work with Ch'ŏngdogyo because of the "difference in doctrinal belief." *Sintonga* (March 1969) :207.

This conventional understanding of the role played by Kil and Yang has been drawn without giving serious consideration on their own testimony, which they made during the court trials following the March First Movement. During the court hearings, Kil himself insisted that he never agreed with Yi Sŭng-hun's intrigue. According to Kil, when he met with Yi in P'yŏngyang in mid-February, Yi told him that he was working with the Ch'ŏndogyo leaders to prepare a "petition", not a provocative "declaration," to the Japanese government to permit Korean independence. Yi asked Kil to come to Seoul and join the movement but Kil refused as he was blind and physically weak. Then, Yi then pled with Kil to give his personal seal so that he could add his name on the petition in his behalf. Kil consented to do this, assuming that petitioning for independence would be acceptable to the Japanese as it was something like "a child asking his father to pass on a land title to him."[494] From that point, Kil did not hear anything from Yi about the movement until the day before March First, when Yi's messenger abruptly came and asked him to come down to Seoul. Kil was then in Hwanghae Province for a Bible study meeting and hurried to Seoul by night train. Upon arriving in Seoul, he learned that Yi and other Christians distributed the Declaration of Independence, which he had never seen or read, and his name

[494] Kil Sŏn-ju's testimony at Keijō Local Court (4/26/1919) in *SDS vol.1*. 331.

was also publicized as one of the signatories. Greatly shocked, the honest Kil felt responsible for the fact that his name had been used and swiftly surrendered to the Japanese authorities in order to explain his innocence.[495]

Therefore, Kil continued to show the Japanese that he was only guilty for his ignorance of the subsequent development of the event after he gave Yi his seal. When he was told by the Japanese prosecutor that Yi had claimed that Kil had agreed to sign the Declaration, he rejected this and made clear that "Yi was wrong on that point."[496] He then described his state of mind when he agreed to the idea of submitting a petition.

> Let me tell you my true heart. I have been devoted only in religion and paid little attention to politics. However… when I heard that national self-determination was proposed, because of my folly, I consented to give my name to the petition. Looking at the consequence as it is, I will never take part in such an attempt again, even if independence or even the entire world should be offered.[497]

As this statement was made in court, one may be tempted to think of it as a court tactic to escape Japanese punishment. However, it is important to note that such denials were made only Kil and Yang Chŏn-baek (discussed below), the two senior ministers of the Korean

[495] Kil Sŏn-ju's testimony at Keijō Local Court (4/26/1919) in *SDS vol.1,* 330.
[496] Kil Sŏn-ju's testimony at Higher Court (11/14/1919) in *SDS vol.2,* 180.
[497] Kil Sŏn-ju's testimony at Keijō Local Court (4/26/1919) in *SDS vol.1,* 331.

Presbyterian Church, while other Christian leaders squarely confessed their conviction that they were frustrated by the Japanese and thus participated in the movement to demonstrate their will to national independence. To take a few examples, Yi Sŭng-hun detailed how he was ill-treated by arrogant Japanese officials and accused the Japanese of treating Koreans as "barbarian" during the trials.[498] Pak Hŭi-do proclaimed that he would never quit the independence movement, when the Japanese judge asked about his plans for the future.[499] Ch'oe Sŏng-mo testified that he gave his seal to Ham because he had consented to the purpose of the movement.[500] Even the relatively moderate Sin Hong-sik stated that he had been discontent about Japanese discriminatory practices in Korea, though he accepted the annexation as God's will.[501] In short, there were few among the prosecuted Christians who made such a strong claim for innocence. It therefore seems less likely that Kil, who was known to be the most respected minister of the Korean Church, told a lie in front of his fellow Christians to save himself alone.

For these reasons, it is reasonable to conclude that Kil actually played no part in the March First Movement besides that of being misled by Yi Sŭng-hun to lend his name.

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[498] Yi Sŭng-hun's testimony at Keijō Local Court (4/7/1919), *SDS vol.1*, 297.
[499] Prosecutor's investigation report for Pak Hŭi-do (3/9/1919), *SDS vol.1,* 158.
[500] Ch'oe Sŏng-mo's testimony at Keijō Review Court (9/22/1920), *SDS vol.1*, 556.
[501] Sin Hong-sik's tesitomny at Keijō Local Court (4/25/1919), 317.

Kil was simply kept in dark (and he was actually blind) and not informed of the clandestine intrigue by the movement leaders. His appeal for innocence was recognized by the Japanese prosecutors as it coincided with testimonies by others as well as other situational evidence, and Kil alone was pronounced not guilty for insufficient evidence among the thirty-three signers of the Declaration and released from prison as soon as the case was concluded.[502] In the end, the court proved that the mainstream Presbyterian minister and leader of the Korean Church was a genuine religionist rather than an active nationalist.

Yang Chŏn-baek

Like Kil Sŏn-ju, Yang Chŏn-baek also fell victim to Yi Sŭng-hun's strategy of gathering seals for his Declaration under the pretense of merely petitioning the Japanese empire to recognize Korean independence. According to Yang's testimony, Yi came to Sŏnch'ŏn in mid-February, during a Bible study conference that many Church leaders gathered to attend from all over P'yŏngan Province. Yi took advantage of the gathering to explain the movement plan, asking these church leaders to give him their seals for the

[502] *GS 26,* 504-511.

movement's "petition."[503] Yu Yŏdae and Yi [Kim] P'yŏngjŏ concurred and gave their seals on the spot, but Yang promised to give his later. After Yi returned to Seoul, Ham T'ae-yŏng visited Yang to receive his seal around February 24 and Yang gave it at this time. Yang later received a letter from Yi in Seoul, explaining that the petition would be submitted soon. Yang arrived in Seoul on February 28, where he was shown the Declaration of the Independence for the first time by Ham T'ae-yŏng and found his name printed on it.[504] Still, Yang went to the Myŏngwŏlgwan Restaurant on the next day, where the Ch'ŏndogyo and Christian leaders gathered to read the Declaration, and was arrested by the Japanese police.

In court, the Japanese judge was not convinced of Yang's innocence and pressed him to admit that he agreed to sign the Declaration, to which Yang answered:

> I have not heard anything about the Declaration of Independence. If I had known it before, I would not have given my seal... I never agreed [with the Declaration] but I went to the Myŏngwŏlgwan Restaurant because I had agreed to the more important business of sending a petition to the government … To this day, I have been opposed to the Declaration of Independence.[505]

[503] Yang Chŏn-baek's testimony at Keijō Local Court (4/25/1918) *SDS vol.1*, 319-220.
[504] Yang Chŏn-baek's testimony at Keijō Local Court (4/25/1918) *SDS vol.1*, 321.
[505] Yang Chŏn-baek's testimony at Keijō Local Court (4/25/1918) *SDS vol.1*, 321.

Nevertheless, it was difficult for Yang to convince the Japanese authorities of his innocence because, unlike Kil, Yang did attend the gathering at the Myŏngwŏlgwan, knowing that the Declaration would be read with his name on it. In fact, Yang had almost given up on persuading the court on this point.

> I admit my error in passing over my seal to other person without hearing his explanation carefully. Nonetheless, as long as my name is already on the Declaration, I know that I would be presumed to have had known it in advance, even if I insisted of my ignorance. There is no other way.[506]

As Yang expected, his appeal was not taken seriously and rejected by the Japanese court and he was sentenced to two years in prison. However, it is important here to note again that the two senior and mainstream Presbyterian ministers, Yang and Kim, were the only ones who claimed for innocence for the same reason that Yi Sŭng-hun kept them dark what he really intended to do.

Chŏng Ch'un-su

[506] Yang Chŏn-baek's testimony at Keijō Local Court, (4/25/1918), *SDS vol.1*, 321.

Ch'ŏng Ch'un-su was another case of a Korean church leader whose name was printed on the Declaration without his prior consent. Ch'ŏng was a Southern Methodist minister at a church in Wŏnsan, Hamgyŏng Province, and thus did not have any institutional or regional relationship to Yi Sŭng-hun. However, when he came to Seoul on church business, he was asked to join the independence movement by Pak Hŭi-do. He consented to the idea of submitting a petition, but disagreed with the idea of an alliance with Ch'ŏndogyo because he felt unsure of whether the Ch'ŏndogyo leaders had the same sense of peace and justice as him and his fellow Christian ministers.[507] In a meeting with Yi and other Christian leaders, Chŏng insisted that Christians should adopt a moderate approach and petition for Korean "autonomy" rather than "independence." Yi, however, insisted on the need of an alliance with the Ch'ŏndogyo and worried that if the Christians were hesitant, Ch'ŏndogyo would act independently.[508] The other leaders, especially Methodist leaders such as Pak Hŭi-do and O Hwa-yŏng (1879-1959?), all took Chŏng's side and the Christian leaders agreed to collect signatures for the petition from each of their constituencies.[509] Hence, Chŏng returned to his home in Wŏnsan, while the leaders in

[507] Chŏng Ch'un-su's testimony at Keijō Local Court, (5/3/1919), *SDS vol.1*, 374-375.
[508] Chŏng Ch'un-su's testimony at Keijō Local Court, (5/3/1919), *SDS vol.1*, 375.
[509] O Hwa-yŏng's testimony at Keijō Higher Court, (11/15/1919) *SDS vol.2,* 206-7.

Seoul were to prepare the petition. It was around February 20 right after Yi Sŭng-hun had returned from the north with agreements to petition for independence by the Presbyterian leaders such as Kil and Yang.

Upon returning home, Chŏng recruited several ministers including Kwak Myŏng-ni in Wŏnsan and waited for instruction from Seoul. Then, he received a letter from O Hwa-yŏng in Seoul and learned that the Christians in Seoul had decided to work with Ch'ŏndogyo. Chŏng was confused and sent Kwak to Seoul by train to get more precise information on February 27. The next day, Kwak returned from Seoul with copies of the Declaration of Independence and Chŏng was greatly shocked to find his name used among the signatories.[510] However, like Kil Sŏn-ju, he felt responsible for the consequences of the Declaration and went to Seoul on March 1, where he found all the signatories already arrested. After some hesitation, Ch'ŏng eventually surrendered on March 6.[511]

Chŏng's assertion that he was not informed of the new developments in Seoul after he left for Wŏnsan was unanimously corroborated by other Christian leaders who stayed in Seoul. For instance, Pak Hŭi-do testified that Chŏng left for Wŏnsan after the meeting on February 20 and was not informed of what happened afterward. Thus, Pak

[510] Chŏng Ch'un-su's testimony at Keijō Local Court, (5/3/1919), *SDS vol.1*, 375.
[511] Chŏng Ch'un-su's testimony at Keijō Local Court, (5/3/1919), *SDS vol.1*, 375.

himself wondered how Chŏng's name ended up appearing on the Declaration.[512] Ham T'ae-yŏng who actually signed on the Declaration on behalf of those who were not present in Seoul on February 27 clarified that point in his testimony. Ham clearly stated that, while he received the seals from others as proxy and signed for them, he did not receive Chŏng's seal, but thought Chŏng had given it to O Hwa-yŏng and thus added Chŏng's name to the list. In retrospect, however, Ham admitted, "it was likely that Chŏng was not well informed."[513] To corroborate that point, O Hwa-yŏng testified that Chŏng's name was absent when the Christian leaders finalized the list of signers on February 22.[514] Chŏng was absolutely sure of his innocence and repeatedly appealed to the court that "I only agreed to give my name to the petition for autonomy and it was against my will to demand independence."[515]

Yi Sŭng-hun's Impetus for the Chŏndogyo-Christian Alliance: Financial Need

The testimonies of the three ministers above strongly suggest that Yi Sŭng-hun acted on his own authority in changing the independence movement's core statement from

[512] Pak Hŭi-do's testimony at Keijō Higher Court (11/28/1919),*SDS vol.2*, 157.
[513] Ham T'ae-yŏng's testimony at Keijō Higher Court (8/28/1919), *SDS vol.3*, 146.
[514] O Hwa-yŏng's testimony at Keijō Local Court (5/1/1919), *SDS vol.1*, 362.
[515] Chŏng Ch'ŭn-su's testimony at Keijō Local Court (5/3/1919), *SDS vol.1*, 378.

a "petition" to a "Declaration" and used the names of other Christian leaders at his discretion, while giving them little information on these important changes. In other words, while Yi first agreed to the idea of submitting a moderate petition to the government within a legal framework,[516] at some point he changed his mind and turned to a more confrontational method of distributing the Declaration of Independence without government permission.

The explanation for this important change was pressure coming from Ch'ŏndogyo leaders who preferred a more confrontational approach to the achievement of independence. In fact, in a discussion of the proper methods of the independence movement, Ch'oe Rin told Yi Sŭng-hun directly that he disagreed with the Christian idea of petitioning the Japanese empire.[517] Yi knew well that some of his Christian comrades were biased against Ch'ŏndogyo leaders and that it would be even more difficult to ally with them if they imposed their radical methods on the Christians. Nevertheless, he decided to accept Ch'ŏndogyo's demands because Ch'oe Rin had promised financial aid in return. Yi who first asked Ch'oe to provide 5,000 yen for him as the "movement fund" (undongbi) and, when Ch'oe concurred, Yi promised that the Christian leaders would collaborate with

[516] Yi Sŭng-hun's testimony at Keijō Higher Court (10/28/1919), *SDS vol.2*, 136.
[517] Ch'oe Rin's testimony at Review Court (9/20/1920) *GS 26*. 512.

Ch'ŏndogyo.[518] Ch'oe delivered the requested sum in cash to Yi the next day upon the approval of Sŏn Pyŏng-hŭi, the head of Ch'ŏndogyo.[519] Soon, Yi and Ham T'ae-yŏng came to see Ch'oe and confirmed that the Christians would work with Ch'ŏndogyo.[520]

In court, Yi claimed that the money was not a gift but a "loan" from Ch'ŏndogyo. He explained that he needed funds to borrow because there was little time to collect money from Christian comrades for the movement.[521] It is impossible to tell whether this was true or not. What is important, however, is that financial aid was the crucial factor that led Yi to adopt Ch'ŏndogyo's more radical preference for declaring independence. Moreover, these important decisions were made at Yi's discretion without informing Kil, Yang and Chŏng until later.

In Yi's defense, it must be pointed out that, without funding from Ch'ŏndogyo, Christian leaders had no financial means with which to execute the movement. Korean Christian poverty had been a serious problem since the foundation of the Korean Church and the meager salary of the Korean ministers was a constant cause of frustration. Moreover, the foreign missions that presided over the Korean Church were against any

[518] Ch'oe Rin's testimony at Keijō Local Court (4/7/1919), *SDS vol.1*, 217.
[519] Yi Sŭng-hun's testimony at Keijō Local Court (4/7/1919), *SDS vol.1*, 293.
[520] Ch'oe Rin's testimony at Keijō Higher Court (9/2/1919), *SDS vol.2*, 62.
[521] Ch'oe Rin's testimony at Higher Court (9/20/1920), *GS vol.26*, 513.

engagement in politics and there was no hope at all that the Church would grant institutional support for the nationalist movement, much less a financial gift.

The comparative poverty of the Christian leaders is clear when we compare the average salaries of the Christian and Ch'ŏndogyo leaders who were involved in the independence movement. Among the Ch'ŏngdogyo signers of the Declaration, Hong Ki-ch'o (1865-1938), Yang Han-muk (1862-1919), and Pak Chun-sŭng (1866-1927), each of whom held the status of priest (*tosa*), received 40 yen a month with additional monthly allowances from 4 to 5 yen depending on the change in crop price,[522] while the Elder (*changno*) such as Hong Pyŏng-gi (1869-1949) and Yi Chong-hun (1858-1932) received 60 yen and 70 yen respectively. O Se-ch'ang, the Ch'ŏndogyo's executive officer and one of the masterminds of the Declaration movement, received 100 yen a month, while Son Pyŏng-hŭi, the founder of the religion, enjoyed the extravagant salary of 500 yen a month.[523]

By contrast, Kil Sŏn-ju, the most prominent Presbyterian Church leader, who ministered the largest Korean Church in P'yŏngyang with more than 2,000 members,

[522] Their testimonies at Keijō Local Court, *SDS vol.1*, 266, 285, 405.
[523] Yi Chong-hun's testimony at Keijō Local Court (4/281919), *SDS vol. 1*, 277; Hong Pyŏng-gi's testimony at Keijō Local Court, (4/19/1919), *SDS vol. 1*, 281; Son Pyŏng-hŭi's testimony at Keijō Local Court (4/10/1919), *SDS vol.1*, 198-199.

received only 40 yen a month, which is slightly less than the average Ch'ŏndogyo priest's salary that included additional allowances. Nevertheless, Kil was still better off than most other Christian ministers. Chŏng Ch'un-su, a Southern Methodist minister, received 30 yen a month, while his colleague and a non-ordained evangelist (*chŏndosa*), Kwak Myŏng-ni, who ministered a church with 120 members, received only 20 yen a month.[524] By contrast, Korean employees of Mission-owned institutions seem to have generally enjoyed a better salary than the Korean ministers. One of the Christian signatories, Pak Tong-wan (1885-1941), who worked for *Kidok sinbo* (The Christian News), the Christian newspaper funded by the foreign missions, received 35 yen a month.[525]

With such limited income, Korean ministers had to struggle to support their families. Considering that even the average college student, who was arrested for participating in street demonstrations during the March First Movement, received 15 yen to 20 yen a month from their parents,[526] the financial strain upon the Korean ministers are plain. In fact, Chŏng Ch'un-su, who had a wife and four children to support, was already on

[524] The Pprosecutor's investigation report for Kwak Myŏng-ni (3/2/1919), *SDS vol. 4* 149.
[525] Chŏng Ch'ŭn-su's testimony at Keijō Local Court (5/3/1919), *SDS vol.1*, 374; Pak Tong-wan' s testimony at Keijō Local Court (5/2/1919), *SDS vol.1*, 368.
[526] Chu Chong-ŭi's testimony at Keijō Local Court (4/10/1919), *SDS vol.4,* 149; Kim T'ae-ha's testimony at Keijō Local Court, (6/3/1919), *SDS vol. 4* 235.

the brink of financial collapse and had begged for financial assistance from his mentor and wealthy layman of his Southern Methodist denomination, Yun Ch'i-ho. Yun responded favorably to his plea and rendered the needed assistance, which gravely concerned Yun about the future of the Korean Church, especially young able ministers.

> [Chŏng Ch'un-su] unbosomed to me the financial difficulties he is in. 30 yen a month with a debt of ￥100 still weighing on him — with a little girl to support in Miss Wagner's School [Southern Methodist mission school in Kaesŏng-- author] — all this reducing his sal. to ￥15 — a hard struggle — I promised him to relieve him of his debt—installments over 4 or 5 months. The financial struggles of preachers are such that it paralyzes their spiritual life. The gulf between Korean church workers and missionaries is constantly widening. The missionaries ought to be more thoughtful and less arrogant in their dealings with and attitude to Koreans.[527]

Because such poverty was the general condition of the Korean ministers' family life, it is understandable that Christian leaders would divert a portion of the enormous fund they received from Ch'ŏndogyo to support their families during the movement. When Yi Sŭng-hun received the 5,000 yen in cash, he first deposited 3,000 yen in his friend's bank account and gave the rest to Pak Hŭi-do, who distributed about 1500 yen for those traveling to the countryside and overseas to recruit supporters for the movement or deliver the copies

[527] *Yun Ch'i-ho's Diary,* (5/29/1918).

of the Declaration. The remaining 500 yen was allocated to those who agreed to put their names on the Declaration on the ground that their family members would need financial compensation during their expected imprisonment. The Christian leaders decided upon a formula to grant 20 yen a month per dependent in their family and, accordingly, the voluntary signers received from 70 to 100 yen prior to March 1: Yi P'il-chu (1869-1942), 70 yen; Pak Tong-wan, 100 yen, Yi Kap-sŏng (1889-1981), 80 yen; O Hwa-yŏn,g 80 yen, Pak Hŭi-do, 100 yen, Kim Ch'ang-jun (1888-?), 100 yen.[528] But the most needy Chŏng Ch'un-su did not receive any as he was not in Seoul at the time, regardless of the fact that his name was being used for the Declaration

That Christian leaders used the Ch'ŏndogyo's monetary gift as a kind of family stipend provides further evidence of how distanced they had become from the Church. Had these leaders been confident that their Church members were supportive of the nationalist movement they were planning, they could expect that Christian supporters would provide sufficient means to take care of their families who sacrificed their breadwinners for the admirable cause of national independence. They knew too well, however, that such support would never occur, given the Church's apolitical attitude and the general poverty of the

[528] Pak Hŭi-do's testimony at Keijō Local Court (4/23/1918), *SDS vol.1*, 302.

Christians. So they had to rely on the timely and generous support from Ch'ŏndogyo rather than from the Korean Church. While the missionaries boasted that the Korean Church was becoming a self-supporting, self-governing, and self-propagating Church, the Christians who were willing to work for the nationalist cause had no resource with which they could stand up for Korean independence and had no choice but to rely on external support.

Korean-Missionary Conflicts behind the Movement

The Christian leaders who signed the Declaration placed little hope in the missionaries. They knew that the missionaries would oppose their movement as a violation of the separation of the Church from politics. However, some of the Christian leaders who had long been associated with the missionaries felt that they could not simply neglect them and wanted at least to be honest about their intentions. Thus, these Christians dared to report their political determination to the missionaries and asked for their understanding, if not support.

Yi Kap-sŏng, one of the Presbyterian signatories, was baptized by Henry Bruen (NP) in 1908 and regarded the Bruens as being "the same as my parents" ever since.[529] Thus, when Yi went down to Taegu on a secret mission to collect signatures for the petition (this was before the "petition" became the "declaration") he stopped by Bruen's residence and told him about his involvement in the movement.[530] Bruen did not become angry but showed "a chilly smile" and asked, "Do you think Koreans are qualified for independence?" to which Yi responded, "that's something you will see later."[531]

Pak Hŭi-do, the leader of the Methodist group, received a similar warning from Arthur Becker, an educational missionary of the Northern Methodist Mission, when visiting him on the eve of the March First Movement. To Pak, Becker was a great benefactor who had sent him to high school and seminary, paying all his tuitions, and raising him as an intellectual minister. Also, Becker was the principal of the church school where Pak was teaching. When Pak disclosed his will to take part in the independence movement, Becker was worried that distributing the Declaration to the Korean masses might cause a riot as

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[529] Bruen baptized Yi in 1903 and mentioned him in his report to the board as "one of our brightest Christians."Bruen, *40 years in Korea*,84; Yi Kap-sŏn's testimony at Keijō Local Court, (4/28/1919), *SDS vol.1*, 335.
[530] Yi Kapsŏng's testimony at Keijō Local Court (4/28/1919), *SDS vol.1*, 335.
[531] Police investigation report for Yi Kap-sŏng (5/8/1919), *SDS vol.1*, 171.

"there are few among the Koreans who were sufficiently learned and intelligent." Hence, Becker complained to Pak: "You should have consulted me before putting your name on it [the Declaration]." [532]

These missionaries' comments to the Christian patriots were intended as sympathetic advice to save them from dangerous consequences, but they clearly evinced that typical missionary trait --- paternalism based upon a low view of Korean potentials. To them, Koreans were as a whole forever immature and thus in need of their kind guidance for anything. It was thus more a disappointing than pleasing incident for the missionaries to see their Korean protégées acting independently of their control and no longer seeking their paternal guidance.

In fact, Pak Hŭi-do encountered an even more unfriendly attitude when he met B.W. Billings (1881-1969, NM) after Becker. Billings was the head minister at the Central Church where Pak was also ministering. Pak thus felt it necessary to confess to the senior minister about his political involvement and ask him to prepare himself for Pak's probable arrest and taking leave from the pulpit. When Pak met with Billings however, he found that, Billings already knew of Pak's movement because Kim Ch'ang-jun, his fellow minister at

[532] Police investigation report for Pak Hŭi-do (3/9/1919), *SDS vol.1*, 156.

the Central Church, had already come to tell him that both Kim and Pak had signed the Declaration and would devote themselves to the cause of independence. Billings was embarrassed to know that two Korean ministers under his authority were rebelling against ecclesiastical rule and had committed themselves to such a dangerous political plot. He said to Pak rather angrily,

> You must not engage in such a thing [as the independence movement]… A religion[ist] should not take part in it. Moreover, don't you think it is meaningless to seek my consultation now, as you will be carrying out the movement tomorrow?[533]

Billings then began to offer a prayer in front of Pak so that God would protect, not his Korean disciples, but his Church from the "harm" that the two Korean ministers were about to cause.[534] According to Kim Ch'ang-jun, Billings "had a bad reputation" among Koreans because "he had no idea about the state (*kukka*) and [was] unsympathetic to the Korean cause" and therefore "had no reason to support our movement."[535] If this is true, it was likely that both Kim and Pak went to meet the missionary not to ask for his understanding, but to declare their independence from him. They had long endured this disrespectful

[533] Police investigation report for Pak Hŭi-do (3/9/1919), *SDS vol.1*, 156.
[534] Police investigation report for Pak Hŭi-do (3/9/1919), *SDS vol.1*, 156.
[535] Kim Ch'ang-jun's testimony at Keijō Local Court (4/20/1919), *SDS vol.1*, 350.

missionary as a boss but finally decided to stand for independence, not by ousting the missionary, but leaving the church and participating in the nationalist politics that the missionary had long forbade. In other words, Kim and Pak's participation in the movement had a double purpose: independence from the missionaries on one hand, and independence from the Japanese on the other.

Chŏng Ch'un-su was more self-conscious about the relationship between asserting independence from the Mission as well as from Japan. In court, Ch'ŏng explained to the Japanese how the two forms of independences came to occupy his mind.

> As a Christian minister, I have come into conflict with the missionaries over church administration and had grievances against them. In addition to this religious problem, I have a problem with national [state] affairs, which is that the complete assimilation of Japan and Korea could not be materialized [even if the Japanese wanted it][536]

To Chŏng, the fundamental cause of his religious problem--- subservience to the missionaries in the Korean Church ---was simple: the lack of Korea's independent status among the nations in the world. Thus, he believed that Korean national independence had to be won first from the Japanese in order to accomplish ecclesiastical independence from

[536] Chŏng Ch'un-su's testimony at Keijō Local Court (5/3/1919), *SDS vol.1*, 374.

the missionaries. It was thus his logical conclusion that "all Korean Christian pastors should sign the petition" for independence if they desired ecclesiastical independence and he hoped that "if we were successful in this attempt [at independence] …we can avoid conflicts with westerners in the area of religion."[537] In short, Chŏng thought that national and ecclesiastical independence were inseparable and that the former was necessary to achieve the latter. On this point, Chŏng differed from the Korean church leaders who joined the Japanese Congregationalist Church and prioritized ecclesiastical independence as prior to national independence, and did not hesitate to borrow the Japanese hand in achieving independence from the western missionaries. Nonetheless, the difference between the two was merely strategic; both were struggling with a common problem that Korean Christians in colonial Korea had to face. They were caught in between two colonial overlords--- the missionaries who ruled the Church from within and the Japanese empire who oppressed the Church from without.

Missionary Attitudes toward the March First Movement

[537] Chŏng Ch'un-su's testimony at Keijō Local Court (5/3/1919), *SDS vol.1*, 374.

As many studies have shown, there is no doubt that many missionaries took the Korean side once the independence demonstrations broke out, especially after the Japanese military police used cruel measures to crush the demonstrators.[538] They were not supportive of Korean independence in itself, much less Christian involvement in nationalist politics, but they were moralists and could not overlook the fact of Japanese brutality and thus raised voice under the common slogan, "No neutrality for brutality."[539] Some missionaries such as Frank W. Schofield (1889-1970) publicized the Japanese colonial police's cruel suppression of the Korean independence movement to the world through the Christian and secular media and pressed the Japanese government to restrain their use of violence.[540] Moreover, some individual missionaries supported by the Mission boards at home met with high-ranking Japanese officials and influential Diet members both in Korea

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[538] Samuel H. Moffett, "The Independence Movement and Missionaries," *Transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society, Korean Branch* 54 (1979); Donald N. Clark, ""Surely God Will Work Out Their Salvation": Protestant Missionaries in the March First Movement," *Korean Studies* 13 (1989)

[539] For the missionaries' reaction to the March First Movement, see Frank P. Baldwin, "Missionaries and the March First Movement: Can Moral Men Be Neutral?," in *Korea under Japanese colonial rule : studies of the policy and techniques of Japanese colonialism* ed. Andrew C. Nahm (Kalamazoo: Center for Korean Studies, Institute of International and Area Studies, Western Michigan University, 1973).

[540] Doretha Ellen Mortimore, "Dr. Frank W. Schofield and the Korean National Consciousness," in *Korea's response to Japan : the colonial period 1910-1945*, ed. C. I. Eugene Kim and Doretha Ellen Mortimore (Kalamazoo, Mich.: Center for Korean Studies, Western Michigan University, 1975), 245-261; Clark, *Living dangerously in Korea : the western experience, 1900-1950*, 53-55.

and in Japan, as well as the Japanese ambassador in Washington and asked for reforms of the colonial administration.[541]

Nevertheless, despite the good that these missionary actions brought to Koreans, they were meant to save the Korean Church and its innocent Christians from brutal suppression by the overly suspicious and anti-Christian Japanese police, who wrongly believed that all Christians were nationalist activists. The missionaries had little sympathy for the Christian signers of the Declaration or the participants in the "mansei" demonstration and thought that their movement would bring only harm to the Church. Moreover, the Korean Christian leaders of the independence movement themselves knew best that the missionaries were neither supporters of Korean independence nor their equal partners in the Church. For them, the missionaries were foreign overlords whose duty was to carefully watch over and guide the Korean Church so that Korean Christians would seek spiritual salvation rather than national salvation.

For their part, the Japanese authorities were biased against the Koreans and believed them to be incapable of standing up for themselves without foreign support. Hence, seeing the missionary efforts to protect Koreans from Japanese suppression, the Korean

[541] Min Kyŏng-bae, *Han'guk kidok kyohoesa (sin kaejŏn p'an)*, 350-356.

Government-General concluded that the Christian participants in the movement were being manipulated and supported by the foreign missionaries. Such Japanese judgments of Korean ability were seen as humiliating to the Korean Christian leaders whose aspiration for national independence was directed both against the Japanese empire and the missionaries. Hence when ordered in court to explain their relationship to the missionaries, the Korean leaders stressed their alienation from the missionary presence in Korea. For instance, Yi Sŭng-hun insisted that

> This independence movement was organized only by our comrades and there was no involvement of foreigners or overseas Koreans… We did not need any foreign assistance to begin with for such an [easy] thing as submitting our declaration to the Japanese government.[542]

Pak Hŭi-do, a missionary protégée, echoed this sentiment: "I had no intention of borrowing help from the missionaries."[543] Pak made this statement in spite of the fact that he personally felt indebted to his missionary mentors for the help they had extended to him in the past. While the representative of Japanese colonial authority may have taken these Korean voices as an effort to cover up missionary involvement, but Yun Ch'i-ho, who kept in touch with a broad range of Korean Christians for many years and observed the rising

[542] Yi Sŭng-hun's statement to the Prosecutor (3/6/1919), *SDS vol.1*, 148.
[543] Pak Hŭi-do's statement to the Prosecutors, (3/9/1919), *SDS vol.1*,156.

tension between Korean Christian leaders and missionaries within the Church, had known that the Korean Christian leaders' agony was real and becoming radicalized on the eve of the March First Movement.

Yun Ch'i-ho's Pessimistic Prospects for Missionary-Korean Relations

As mentioned above, Yun was close to Chŏng Ch'un-su and took kind and personal care of him as he was a young and promising minister of Yun's denomination, Southern Methodist Church. Yun was well aware of the financial plight of the young Korean minister and cleared his debt for him in May, 1918, while criticizing the missionaries for their disinterest in the Korean ministers' material welfare. By that time, Yun had known that Chŏng was frustrated not only by the lack of missionary sympathy for his financial plight, but also by their autocratic management of the Church and the mission schools. As early as September 1917, Chŏng had told Yun that he is "decidedly dissatisfied with the exclusive methods and manners of missionaries" and prophesized a more violent confrontation between missionaries and Korean Christians, which Yun worriedly recorded in his diary.

> He [Chŏng] said to … me, "If the missionaries persist on their policy of exclusiveness—not consulting Koreans on church policy and education, etc.—there will be a church revolution soon." [544]

According to Yun, Chŏng had already "showed signs of resistance [to missionaries] whenever he had chance" in church conferences and knew enough that the young minister was already pursuing ecclesiastical independence from the missionaries.

In July 1918, Yun witnessed another case in which his trusted young Korean Christian leader in Y.M.C.A. conflicted with a missionary and left his service. As mentioned above, Y.M.C.A. provided a comparatively free space for Korean nationalist leaders, who disliked the ecclesiastical control over them, yet even Y.M.C.A. was not free from missionary supervision.

> Yun Ki-wŏng, one of the best workers in the Industrial Dept. sent in his resignation. Yi In Yung tells me one of the reasons for this decision on the part of Yun is that Mr. Gregg [board member of Y] has been promising him now a raise in sal[ary] then a share in the profit, yet putting it off from week to week—Another reason is that he (Yun) is not given free hand in his department—too much interference and rude treatment.[545]

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[544] *Yun Ch'i-ho's Diary* (9/24/1917).
[545] *Yun Ch'i-ho's Diary* (7/3/1918).

After observing the situation, Yun actually had come to the same conclusion with Chŏng that the Korean Christian revolt against the missionaries would have to happen. Yun prophesized:

> The arrogance and thoughtlessness of missionaries are alienating the Koreans in schools and churches where foreigners rule —There will be a great revolt some day in near future on the part of the Koreans unless the missionaries change their attitude. What a pity![546]

With this sense of urgency, Yun tried his best to alleviate to the tension between the missionaries and Korean Christian leaders. He actually told Samuel A. Moffett, the senior leader of the Presbyterian Mission that "there is gradual alienation between the Korean Church workers and the missionaries" and suggested "a Committee be appointed to investigate into the causes of this alienation." Moffett agreed to Yun's suggestion perfectly, and later a committee was appointed by the Council of Missions to investigate the cause of "gradual estrangement that exists in the relation between the missionaries and the Korean Christian leaders."[547] Yet, Yun could not trust the missionary's good will, confessing privately:

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[546] *Yun Ch'i-ho's Diary* (9/9/1918).
[547] *Yun Ch'i-ho's Diary* (9/11/1918).

> But I fear nothing will come of it. The foreigners' contempt for Koreans is too profound to advise any advice. Final break or rebellion only will open the eyes of the missionaries—then may be too late.[548]

So, when the March First Movement took place, Yun knew well enough why some Korean Christian leaders were actively involved in it. Though it took the form of independence movement against Japanese, it had another aspect as a Christian "rebellion" against the missionaries who long suppressed Korean autonomy in the Church and schools. Yun did not endorse the independence movement itself since he was convinced direct confrontation with the Japanese would bring more harm to the Koreans than good and criticized the popular naïveté that western powers would intervene and help Korea win independence from Japanese.[549] Yet, Yun had been most sympathetic to the Korean Christian leaders' agony under the missionary rule and predicted, though unhappily, that the Korean Christian frustration against missionaries would turn into action. While non-Christians might have

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[548] *Yun Ch'i-ho's Diary* (9/9/1918).

[549] Yun's reasons for non-participation in the movement were : "1. The question of Korean independence will have no occasion to appear in the Peace Conference. 2. There is no power in Europe or America which will be so foolish as to offend Japan by espousing the cause of Korea. 3. If independence were given us, we are not ready to be profited thereby. Japan gave us independence in 1894. What did we do with it. 4. When a weak race has to live with a strong one the former must win the good will of the latter as a matter of self-preservation. 5. This foolish agitation of the students are only prolonging the military administration of Korea. If shouting Manseis[sic] through the streets will win a national independence there can be no subject nation or race in the world! 6. Don't be deceived by schemers like the Ch'ŏndogyo people." *Yun Ch'i-ho's Diary* (3/2/1919).

not noticed, the Korean Christian leaders, though not representing the Church, were fighting for the two-front war in the March First Movement; they wanted to demonstrate their desire for liberation from both Japanese and the missionaries.

Regional Deviation among the Participants

The fact that the Christian participants in the March First Movement were not sufficiently qualified to represent the Korean Church or the nation can be also seen from their strong regional character. The majority of Christian participants in the March First Movement, whether as leaders or as rank-and-file church members, were heavily concentrated in two particular regions, P'yŏngan Province and Seoul.

Table 2 shows the place of residence and origins of the Christian leaders who were prosecuted by the Japanese authorities for playing key roles in preparing the Declaration, regardless of whether they actually signed it or not. Out of these 23 Christian leaders, 11 belonged to the Presbyterian Church of Korea 7 to the Northern Methodist, and 4 to the Southern Methodist Church. The denominational balance was more or less in accordance with the actual population of their respective churches at that time: Presbyterian, 70,000, Northern Methodist, 20,000, and Southern Methodist, 6,000. But their regional background

was conspicuously unbalanced. 11 out of 8 Presbyterians had a long record of residence in P'yŏngan Province and half of these were concentrated in the small county of Chŏngju. As mentioned above, this small town was home to Yi Sŭng-hun and his Osan School and his discretion in collecting signatures for the Declaration does explain this extreme regional deviation.

All the leaders from P'yŏngan Province leaders unanimously testified that they decided to join the movement upon Yi Sŭng-hun's persuasion. Yi met with Yi Myŏng-nyong, Yang Chŏn-baek, Kim Pyŏng-jŏ and Yu Yŏ-dae on the occasion of the Presbyterian Annual Meeting in Sŏnch'ŏn, where they gathered secretly in Yang's private residence after the official event and agreed to join the independence movement, giving Yi their seals to be used for the petition to be prepared.[550]

That Yi's recruitment policy was not denominational but solely regional is also evidenced by the fact that he also approached Sin Hong-sik, a Methodist minister in P'yŏngyang and succeeded enlisting Sin among the signers. Sin then introduced Yi to Pak Hŭi-do, a Methodist minister in Seoul,[551] who became Yi's contact to the Methodist

[550] Yang Chŏnbaek's testimony at Keijō Higher Court, (8/25/1919), *SDS vol.2*, 173; Yi Sŭnghun's testimony in the Keijō Higher Court, (8/23/1919), *SDS vol.2*, 132-133.
[551] Sin Hŏnsik's testimony at Keijō Local Court, (4/25/1919), *SDS vol.1*, 312-313.

leaders. Yi also recruited another young Methodist Minister, Kim Chi-hwan, a native from Chŏnju, who was fostered under Yi's tutelage, though he resided in Kaesŏng at the time of the movement.[552] In sum, almost all the leaders from P'yŏngan Province were connected to Yi Sŭng-hun through his personal network and their selection as movement leaders had nothing to do with the institutional decisions of the Korean Church.

[552] Yi Sŭnghun's testimony at Keijō Higher Court, (8/23/1919), *SDS vol.2*, 126-127.

Table 2 Korean Christians who prepared Declaration of Independence [553]

	Name	Age	Occupation	Denomination	Residence	Birth Place	Sentence
1	**Pak Hŭi-do**	31	YMCA officer	Northern Methodist	Seoul	Haeju, Hwanghae	2
2	**Yi P'il-ju**	52	Minister	Northern Methodist	Seoul	Hongsŏng, S.Ch'unch'ong	2
3	**Pak Tong-wan**	35	Writer, Christian News	Northern Methodist	Seoul	Yangp'yŏng, Kyŏnggi	2
4	**Kim Ch'ang-jun**	31	Minister	Northern Methodist	Seoul	*Kangsŏ, N.P'yŏngan*	2.6
5	**Ch'oe Sŏng-mo**	47	Minister	Northern Methodist	Haeju, Hwagnhae	Seoul	2
6	**Sin Hong-sik**	49	Minister	Northern Methodist	*P'yŏngyang*	Seoul	2
7	Kim Sae-hwang	32	School teacher	Northern Methodist	Suwon, Kyŏnggi	Suwŏn, Kyŏnggi	0
8	**Chŏng Ch'un-su**	45	Miniser	Southern Methodist	Wŏnsan, S. Hamgyŏng	Ch'ŏngju, N. Ch'unch'ŏng	1.6
9	**O Hwa-yŏng**	41	Minister	Southern Methodist	Seoul	P'yŏngsan, Hwanghae	2.6
10	**Sin Sŏk-ku**	46	Minister	Southern Methodist	Seoul	Ch'ŏngju, N. Ch'unch'ŏng	2
11	Kim Chi-hwan	29	Minister	Southern Methodist	Kaesŏng, Kyŏnggi	***Chŏngju, N.P'yŏngan***	0
12	**Yi Sŭng-hun**	56	Elder	Presbyterian	***Chŏngju, N.P'yongan***	***Chŏngju, N.P'yŏngan***	3
13	**Yi Myŏng-nyong**	48	Farmer, Elder	Presbyterian	***Chŏngju, N.P'yŏngan***	***Ch'ŏlsan, N.P'yŏngan***	2

[553] *GS 26*, 504-511; *Kidokkyo taepaekkwa sajŏn* vol.3 (kidokkyomunsa, 1981), s.v. "Kim Pyŏng-jŏ." Names in **bold** are the signers of the Declaration. Place names in North P'yongan Province are ***italicized***.

Table 2 Korean Christians who prepared Declaration of Independence (Continued)

14	**Kil Sŏn-ju**	52	Minister	Presbyterian	***P'yŏngyang***	***Anju, N.P'yŏngan***	0
15	**Yu Yŏ-dae**	42	Minister	Presbyterian	***Ŭiju, N.P'yŏngan***	***Ŭiju, N.P'yŏngan***	2
16	**Yang Chŏn-baek**	51	Minister	Presbyterian	***Sŏnch'ŏn, N.P'yongan***	***Ŭiju, N.P'yŏngan***	2
17	**Kim Pyŏng-jŏ**	42	Minister	Presbyterian	***Chŏngju, N.P'yŏngan***	***Chŏngju, N.P'yŏngan***	Exile to
18	Kim To-t'ae	29	Unemployed (ex-school teacher)	Presbyterian	***Chŏngju, N.P'yŏngan***	***Chŏngju, N.P'yŏngan***	0
19	An Sae-hwan	33	Secretary,Chrisian Literature Society	Presbyterian	***P'yŏngyang***	***P'yŏngwon, S.P'yŏngan***	0
20	**Yi Kap-sŏng**	32	Officer, Severance	Presbyterian	Seoul	Taegu, N. Kyŏngsan	2.6
21	Ham T'ae-yŏng	48	Elder, (ex-judge)	Presbyterian	Seoul	Mosan, N.Hamgyŏng	2.6
22	Chŏng No-sik	30	Unemployed	Presbyterian	Seoul	T'aein, N. Chŏlla	0
23	Kim Wŏn-byŏk	27	Student, Yŏnhŭi College	N/A	Seoul	Ŭnyul, Hwanghae	1.6

Similarly, most of the Methodist participants were recruited through Pak Hŭi-do's personal network, who had good connections with Christian intellectuals and students in Seoul as he was an active and popular officer of the Seoul Y.M.C.A.. Because the Y.M.C.A. was an ecumenical institution, Pak's network reached out both to Presbyterians and Methodists regardless of their denomination. Among the signers, Chŏng Ch'un-su, Ch'oe Sŏng-mo, O

Hwa-yŏng, Pak Tong-wan, Yi P'il-ju, Yang Chŏn-baek, Yi Kap-sŏng and Yi Sŭng-hun were affiliates of Y.M.C.A.[554] Even if these men did not necessarily know each other well, the fact that they were acquainted with one another across denominational lines confirms the Y.M.C.A.'s character as a center for politically-minded Christians. Pak Hŭi-do met with Yi Sŭng-hun through Sin Hong-sik's mediation and invited his Methodist and Y.M.C.A. colleagues to form an inter-denominational alliance. Consequently, the core of the Methodist group in the independence movement was constituted by those living in Seoul and its surrounding vicinity: 8 out of 11 Methodists came from Seoul and neighboring Kyŏnggi Province.

Regional Composition of Rank-and-File Participants

The regional unbalance of participation in the March First Movement was not limited to its leadership. The same was true of the rank-and file Christians who participated in street demonstrations and other anti-Japanese uprisings all over the country. Table 3 shows the religious affiliation of the Koreans who were arrested and formally prosecuted by Japanese authorities between March 1 and May 24. As the "prosecuted" can be

[554] Chŏn T'aek-pu, "3.1 undong ŭi chongsin kwa kŭpaegyŏng,"119.

identified with those who participated in the movement most aggressively and were thus arrested by the Japanese as local movement leaders, we can reasonably estimate the general influence of Christians over the movement by analyzing their number among the "prosecuted."

Table 3　Prosecuted Koreans for the March First demonstrations

Province	Branch Office	Buddhism	Confucianism	Ch'ondogyo	Sach'onggyo	Protestantism					Catholicism	No religion	Unknown	Total
						Methodist	Presbyterian	Congregationalist	Unknown	Total				
Kyŏnggi /Kangwon	Seoul	12	5	154		72	40	1	74	187	7	707	417	1,489
	Kaesŏng	1				8				8		45	1	55
	Suwŏn									0			1	1
	Ch'unch'ŏn			1						0		25		26
	Wŏnju									0		2	3	5
	TOTAL	13	5	155	0	80	40	1	74	195	7	779	422	1,576
Ch'unch'ong	Kongju			17		30	11		2	43		51	185	296
	Taejŏn			1						0		36		37
	Hongsŏng									0		24	3	27
	Ch'ŏngju	1		2		3	2		1	6		103	29	141
	TOTAL	1	0	20	0	33	13	0	3	49	0	214	217	501
Hamgyŏng	Hamhung			184			95		3	98		82	278	642
	Pukch'ŏng			3						0			9	12
	Wŏnsan			1		7	11			18	1	22		42
	Yŏnghŭng			1						0		5		6
	Kangnŭng			3		6				6		80	1	90
	Ch'ŏngjin			42			4			4		31		77
	Sŏngjin									0		18	7	25
	Hoeryŏng						7			7		6		13
	TOTAL	0	0	234	0	13	117	0	3	133	1	244	295	907
P'yŏngan	P'yŏngyang			400		115	193	1	4	313	1	168	5	887
	Tŏkch'ŏn			1			1			1		2		4
	Chinnamp'o					3	16			19		20		39
	Sinŭiju	1	2	124		13	206	1		220		81	79	507
	Chŏngju			38			7		4	11		62	4	115
	TOTAL	1	2	563	0	131	423	2	8	564	1	333	88	1,552
Hwanghae	Haeju			137		60	95		9	164	4	405		710
	Sŏhŭng			27		30	48		1	79	1	100	6	213
	Caeryŏng						6			6		15	2	23
	TOTAL	0	0	164	0	90	149	0	10	249	5	520	8	946
North Kyŏngsan	Taegu	11			1		212	1	1	214	5	216	72	519
	Kumch'ŏn						8			8		6	24	38
	Sangju	4								0		17		21
	Andong						16			16		139	73	228
	Ŭisŏng						7			7		14	27	48
	Kyŏngju								1	1		1	17	19
	Yŏngdŏk						32		2	34		2	3	39
	Ulchin						2			2		22		24
	TOTAL	15	0	0	1	0	277	1	4	282	5	417	216	936
South Kyŏngsan	Pusan	38					31			31		95	37	201
	Ulsan			1					1	1		52	5	59
	Masan	5	3	2			29			29		181	5	225
	Miryang									0			30	30
	T'ongyŏng	3					1			1		8		12
	Chinju		4	3	1		6		3	9		174		191
	Kŏch'ang						3			3		11		14
	TOTAL	46	7	6	1	0	70	0	4	74	0	521	77	732
Chŏlla	Kwangju			1			81			81		57		139
	Sunch'ŏn			15						0		28		43
	Mokp'o		3				16		1	17		49		69
	Changhŭng			2			7		1	8		75	4	89
	Cheju						1			1		28		29
	Chŏnju	2		19			34		4	38		98	21	178
	Kumsan	1					1			1		7	4	13
	Namwon			11						0				11
	Chŏngŭp					1				1		34		35
	Kunsan			19			21		5	26		4	30	79
	TOTAL	3	3	67	0	1	161	0	11	173	0	380	59	685
	GRAND TOTAL	79	17	1,209	2	348	1,250	4	117	1,719	19	3,408	1,382	7,835
	Percentage	1%	0	15%	0	4%	16%	0	2%	22%	0	43%	18%	100

Source: Chŏsen Sŏtokufu,"Sŏjŏjiken kiso hikokunin no shinkyŏ betsu"(May 9, 1919) Japan Center for Asian Historical Records（http://www.jacar.go.jp）Ref. Code, C06031115800. Translation mine.

According to these statistics, Christians made up 1,719 out of the 7,835 prosecuted, which roughly equals 22%. This statistic is often quoted as strong evidence that the Korean Church and their Christians led the March First Movement.[555] Indeed, the Christian percentage is disproportionally high when compared to the actual Christian population at that time, around 2% of the national population. Nonetheless, we should note that the regional distribution of Christian participants was so uneven that there is reason to question whether Christian participation was a prevailing feature of the movement when observed at the national level. 34% of the Presbyterian participants (423 / 1,250) were concentrated in P'yŏngan Province, 22% (277 / 1,250) were in Northern Kyŏngsang Province, and 16% (161 / 1,250) in Chŏlla Province. Thus, the top three provinces produced more than 60% of the Presbyterian participants. Likewise, 38% of the Methodists (131/ 348) were also concentrated in P'yŏngan Province, 25% (90/ 348) in Hwanghae, and 23% (72 / 348) in Kyŏnggi, together constituting more than 80% of the total number of Methodist participants.

A closer look at the place of residence of these participants reveals that they were even more narrowly concentrated within each province in a few particular cities or counties.

[555] For instance, Han'guk Kidokkyosa Yŏngŭhoe, *Han'guk Kidokkyo ŭi yŏksa* (Sŏul: Kidok Kyomunsa, 1989), 38-39.

In P'yŏngan Province, more than 94% of the Presbyterian participants were arrested in P'yŏngyang (193) and Sinŭiju (206) alone. In North Kyŏngsang, Taegu alone produced over 75% of the participants, while Hamhŭng produced 81% of all Hamgyŏng participants. The same trend applies to Methodist participants: P'yŏngyang constituted 86% (115 / 131) of the total in P'yŏngan Province, Haeju held 66% (60 / 90) in Hwanghae and Seoul occupied 90% (72/ 80) of participants in Kyŏnggi. In short, far from being a "national" phenomenon, Christian participation in the movement was narrowly limited to a few specific sites within large provinces.

On the other hand, the narrow geographical concentration of the Christians marks quite a contrast to the universal distribution of non-Christian participants. For instance, the number of those "without religious affiliation," namely the masses at large, also tended to concentrate in Seoul and Haeju, but their numbers were far more evenly distributed within each province, when compared to those of the Christians. Also, these "unaffiliated" participants were active in many regions where little or no Christian participation was observed. From these observations, it is estimated that, excepting a few locations where the concentration of Christian participation was conspicuous, Christian influence over other participants was not as significant as has been previously thought. As evidence for this

argument, we may cite the fact that the ratio of Christian participants to total participants in Kyŏnggi and North Kyŏngsang Province was only 12 % and 10 % respectively in spite of the fact that both provinces produced the largest number of Christian participants. Hence, the Christians were a minority in the March First Movement and outnumbered by non-Christian participants, even if they were more active than other religions. Like their leaders who prepared the Declaration of Independence, the rank-and-file Christian participants in the March First Movement were also regionally biased and unable to mobilize Christians in other regions. If the Korean Church was a national institution exercising control over all Christian constituencies and had injected its institutional resources, both material and human, in support of the March First Movement, Christian participants may have appeared more broadly across Korea. That this did not happen is due to the fact that Christian participants, whether leaders or rank-and-file, had only limited institutional power to move the Korean Church, an institution that had long been trained and controlled by foreign missionaries to remain aloof of nationalist politics.

Epilogue

The March First Movement exposed a schism between Christian nationalists and the Korean Church under Mission rule. This schism took the form of a protest against the Japanese colonial regime, but it also had the additional dimension of a nationalist rebellion against the Korean Church that had long suppressed the activities of nationalists within the Korean Church and censored believers to prevent their infection by nationalist thought from without. Christian participation in the nationalist movement thus meant subverting ecclesiastical conventions and declaring their independence from missionary authority.

There were, of course, some Christian leaders who participated in the independence movement without a clear understanding of what the cost of such participation would be and how it would affect their relation to the Korean Church. In the aftermath of the March First Movement, however, even they had to realize the need to take a clear position between the nationalist camp and church authority. The relationship between the two forces was growing too contentious to allow for a neutral position.

Christian Nationalists after the March First Movement

The Christian nationalists who had been already critical of the apolitical stance of the Korean Church chose to remain outside the Church and continued to take part as Christian individuals in various nationalist programs even after the March First Movement failed to bring about immediate national independence. Rather than fade away, their nationalist movement gained stronger momentum in the 1920s due to the new Japanese colonial administration under Governor-General Saitō Makoto, who took a more conciliatory approach, the so-called policy of "Cultural Rule," to managing rising Korean nationalism and providing greater public space in which Koreans could discuss and pursue their nationalist ideals within a colonial framework. During this period, greater freedom of assembly was secured, the notorious Commercial Law that restricted Korean commercial enterprise was abolished, and many publications in Korean language, including daily newspapers, were permitted.

All of this was particularly good news for Korean Christians, whose freedom of speech and social activities had been suppressed within the Church organization. They no longer needed to rely on the Korean Church and other religious institutions as an expedient means to pursue their own socio-political activities. They could now organize civil societies on their own, establish commercial corporations and publish newspapers and journals for

their nationalist cause. It is not the case that "Cultural Rule" granted full civil liberties to Koreans; it did, however, create an alternative space for Korean Christians to pursue their socio-political objectives outside the Korean Church.

In fact, the major Christian nationalists who participated in the March First Movement unanimously competed over this newly created public space and launched new movements within it. Yi Sŭng-hun, who was released from prison in 1922, returned to his hometown and resumed educational work at Osan School. He also joined the movement by leading intellectuals and educationalists such as Yun Ch'i-ho to establish the first university in Korea.[556] The university was planned as a secular institution open to all Korean students without any relationship to the Church. By that time, there was already Sungsil College in P'yŏngyang and the Chōsen Christian College (*Yŏnhŭi chŏnmun hakkyo*) in Seoul, but Yi Sŭng-hun and Yun Ch'i-ho wanted to establish a separate secular university that would be Korean-financed and –managed rather than attempt to improve the existing mission institutions. For Korean nationalists, the nationality of the school was more important than its religious identity.

[556] Namgang munhwa chaedan, *Namgang Yi Sŭng-hun kwa minjok undong*, 270-271.

The "national university" (*millip taehakkyo*) plan ultimately proved abortive due to the refusal of the colonial government to permit it amid plans to establish the first imperial university in Korea. Nevertheless, Yi Sŭng-hun quickly found another forum in which to pursue his nationalist ideals. He was invited by the *Tonga Ilbo* newspaper company to assume its chief executive office.[557] The *Tonga Ilbo* was a daily newspaper, established by a group of secular entrepreneurs. It was headed by Kim Sŏng-su (1891-1955), a leading Korean capitalist and the president of the Kyŏngsŏng Spinning Company[558] and, along with its rival newspaper, *Chosŏn Ilbo*, was a product of the "Cultural Rule" policy of permitting more Korean language publications. Thus, it had every reason to hire Yi Sŭng-hun not as a Christian leader, but as a renowned nationalist.

In fact, the newly established nationalist media generally promoted a critical view of the Korean Church, especially its denationalizing tendencies, and Christian nationalists, who had become alienated from the Church, joined in this nationalist critique of Korean Christianity. A symbolic example of this trend may be cited in Yi Sang-jae's public

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[557] Ibid.,273-274.

[558] For the development of capitalism in colonial Korea during the life-time of Kim Sŏng-su, see Carter J. Eckert, *Offspring of empire : the Koch'ang Kims and the colonial origins of Korean capitalism, 1876-1945*, Korean studies of the Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1991).

denunciation of Korean Christians for discontinuing the practice of traditional ancestral worship, an incident that was publicized in the *Chosŏn Ilbo* in September 1920. Yi blamed the missionaries for defining the traditional Korean practice of venerating parents as idol worship and urged that Koreans "should not forget Korean spirit [*chosŏn hon*] even in the realm of religion."[559]

This kind of nationalist critique of Korean Christian practice and subservience to the missionaries had already circulated among Korean intellectuals prior to March First. That it was now disseminated through the popular media by one of the most prominent Christians in Korea such as Yi Sang-jae, however, was a phenomenal change. Given that there were several Christian papers such as *Christian News* (kidok sinbo), Yi could have raised his criticisms through the Christian media as an attempt at reformation within the Church establishment. However, these media outlets were all owned by the Missions and Yi must have known that they would never provide such space for him, who had long distanced himself from the Church and devoted himself to educational causes through the Y.M.C.A. In any case, Yi Sang-jae chose to challenge ecclesiastical authority not from within, but from without, with the backing of secular nationalists.

[559] *Chosŏn Ilbo* (9/1/1920), 3.

The Korean Christian Approach to Communism

Some Christian intellectuals turned to socialism as a new vision for the nation in the post-March First era. Communist thought had already been introduced into Korea from Japan prior to March First, but it gained a broader currency among Korean intellectuals in the 1920s as Japanese censorship loosened and the intellectual importing from Japan increased. Among such left-leaning intellectuals was one veteran of March First, Pak Hŭi-do, a signatory of the Declaration of Independence, who ignored the missionary persuasion to participate in the movement.

When Pak was released from prison, he did not return to the pulpit, but instead launched a magazine, *Sinsaenghwal* (New Life) which he served as chief editor, to promote social reform ideals with a leftist bent. For this endeavor, he was quickly targeted by the Japanese thought police and sent to jail again when he publicized an article in 1922 to commemorate the fifth anniversary of the Russian Revolution.[560] After his second release from prison, he increasingly collaborated with Japanese colonial authority and established a Japanese-language journal in the 1930s to promote the Japanese imperialist cause. The

[560] *Ch'inil Inmyŏng Sajŏn* (minjok munje yŏn'guso, 2009) s.v. "Pak Hŭi-do."

motive behind his conversion to communism and then to Japanese imperialism deserves its own study. Suffice it to note here that both ideologies advocated anti-western imperialism and could have appealed to Pak, who had observed a form of western imperialism in the Church.

By contrast, Pak's comrade-in-arms, Kim Ch'ang-jun, the other Methodist minister who signed the Declaration of Independence, returned to the pulpit after his release from prison. He seems to have repented and pledged allegiance to the Mission again. This change of heart is suggested by the fact that he was sent to study theology in the United States with missionary support, which was quite a privilege at that time. Yet, when he returned home again to assume a professorship at the Methodist seminary in the 1930s, he began to show interest in balancing Christianity with communism. He then publicized his view as "Jesus Socialism" (yesu sahoechuŭi), the Korean version of Christian Socialism.[561] He subsequently left Korea for Manchuria in the late 1930s to put his ideals into practice and when he returned home after Korean Liberation in 1945, he was more deeply committed to communism and eventually migrated to North Korea.[562]

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[561] Yu Tong-sik, *Han'guk kamni kyohoe ŭi yŏksa : 1884-1992 I*, 552.
[562] *Kidokkyo tae paekkwa sajōn vol.3*, s.v. "Kim Ch'ang-jun."

The Christian inclination toward communism was not limited to elite intellectuals, but is also observable among the rank-and-file Christian youth. Kim San, a pseudonym of Chang Chi-rak, was a student at a mission school in northern Korea, who participated in street demonstrations on March First. He believed that Christian pacifism and non-violent demonstration would bring immediate independence to Korea. However, he was completely disillusioned to see his Christian ideals trampled by brute Japanese force. He later recalled how this experienced had changed his life and thought.

> Before March First I had attended church regularly. I had never questioned the fact that the Christian church was the best institution in Korea, though I thought praying futile. After this debacle my faith was broken. I thought there was certainly no God and that the teachings of Christ had little application for the world of struggle into which I had been born.[563]

Moreover, the American missionaries' reaction to the March First Movement and their religious bias against Korean involvement in politics completely disillusioned him of the Christian West.

> One thing in particular made me angry… was hearing an American missionary tell the people, "God is punishing Korea for the mistakes she

[563] Kim San and Nym Wales, *Song of Ariran : a Korean Communist in the Chinese revolution* (San Francisco: Ramparts Press, 1972), 83.

> has made. Now Korea is suffering to pay for these. Later God will let her recover after penance is done. When God wills, Korea will get her independence, not before." Why should Korea be the only nation to practice Christian ethics, I asked myself. In Europe the Christian nations did not turn the other cheek… To fight was to gain victory. Only to pray was to ensure failure… March First was the beginning of my political career. A torment entered my soul and mind. All over Korea, young men felt the same.[564]

This experience led Kim San to conclude that something was missing from Christianity and this conclusion turned him toward communism, which promised a revolution by means of physical force. Eventually, Kim moved to China and joined the Red Army to achieve his goal.

Perseverance for Vengeance

Ham T'ae-yŏng, the Presbyterian ringleader of the March First movement, entered the Presbyterian seminary and started a new career as an ordained minister after graduation. Thereafter, he continued to rise in the church hierarchy and established himself as an influential leader of the Presbyterian Church. However, as he gained power, he also began

[564] Ibid., 83.

to challenge ecclesiastical authority of the conservative missionaries and their loyal followers.

He later allied with the Methodist dissenter, Sin Hŭng-u, and established an interdenominational parachurch organization, the Positive Faith Association (*chŏkkŭk sinangdan*), the purpose of which was to abolish traditional Church doctrines and by-laws imposed by the Missions and to promote a more liberal faith among Korean Christians.[565]Interestingly, his comrade from March First, Pak Hŭi-do, joined the Association and helped his challenge to ecclesiastical authority. Needless to say, the Association caused a strong reaction from the conservative Church and the Missions and Ham was pressed to dissolve the Association or leave the Church. He resisted, but eventually surrendered to pressure and chose to acquiesce in the inevitable. Nevertheless, he rebelled again in 1939 by establishing a new Presbyterian seminary, *Chosŏn Sinhag-wŏn* (Korean Theological Seminary) in Seoul with a formal permit from the Japanese authorities.[566] This seminary was the first seminary that was owned and run by Koreans

[565] *Kidokkyo taebaekkwa sajŏn vol.16,* s.v. "Ham T'ae-yŏng."
[566]Yŏndong kyohoe, ed. *Yŏndong Kyohoe 100-Yŏnsa 1894-1994* , 267.

and intended to challenge the mainstream Presbyterian seminary in Pyŏngyang that had been dominated by the Mission and used to propagate conservative theological ideas.[567]

Similarly, Chŏng Ch'un-su, the most articulate critic of missionary rule over the Korean Church, chose to persevere in the Church for a while after March First, but gradually moved to challenge missionary authority. He resumed his ministry upon release from prison and devoted himself to the administration of the Church, which promoted him to high office by the 1930s.[568] At this time, he was once again arrested and imprisoned by the Japanese on charges of conspiring to form an underground anti-Japanese movement and communicating with Syngman Rhee in the United States. There is no way to know whether Chŏng actually did conspire against the Japanese empire. At a minimum, however, it is significant that the Japanese watched Chŏng for his advocacy of Korean national independence. Yet, after his second release, he began to urge reformation of the Korean Church, by which he meant adopting a more liberal faith and greater independence from missionary supervision. His anti-missionary stance won him the trust of Japanese colonial authority and, just as Pak Hŭi-do did, he collaborated increasingly with the Japanese. As the tension between Japan and the United States heightened in the late 1930s, Chŏng was

[567] *Kidokkyo taebaekkwa sajŏn vol.16,* s.v. "Ham T'ae-yŏng."
[568] *Kidokkyo taebaekkwa sajŏn vol.13,* s.v. "Chŏng Ch'un-su."

elected Superintendent of the Korean Methodist Church and led the Christians to work for the Japanese imperial cause to fight against western imperialism.[569]

Reviewing the life path of these veterans of March First, one notes that their dual desire for national independence from Japan and ecclesiastical independence from the Mission continued to confront them with a difficult question. There is no doubt that increasing Japanese pressure and violence had much to do with their pro-Japanese collaboration, but their challenge to missionary authority with Japanese support was not a new phenomenon in colonial Korea. It was already visible in the 1910s, when independent-spirited Church leaders began to transfer their allegiances to the Japanese Congregationalist Church en masse. In the 1930s, these veterans of the March First movement came to reach the same conclusion as the Korean Congregationalists had in the 1910s. When the increasing Korean Christian desire for the ecclesiastical independence was matched with their decreasing hopes for immediate national independence, they seem to have placed priority on former independence and taken advantage of Japanese support to achieve it.

[569] Ibid.

Return to Church Loyalty

While many Christian veterans of March First experienced many ups and downs over their continuous efforts for national independence both within and without the Church, the two reluctant participants in the movement, Kil Sŏn-ju and Yang Chŏn-baek, whose names were misused for the Declaration of Independence, returned to a simple and pietistic life as mainstream Presbyterian ministers. Kil was released ahead of other ministers as he was not sentenced to a prison term due to insufficient evidence, the only defendant to receive a de facto non-guilty sentence among the 33 signers of the Declaration of Independence. While he waited for the final verdict in his detention cell, he is said to have devoted himself to the reading of St. John's Revelation and religious meditation.[570] Spiritually renewed, Kil returned to the pulpit in his Church in Pyŏngyang and continued to preach salvation from sin and hope for new life in the other world. His fame as a powerful evangelist never faded and he was invited to numerous revival meetings all over the country. Never again was Kil misled into joining any political intrigues and he ended his career as an orthodox Presbyterian minister within the established framework of the Church.

[570] Kil Chin-gyŏng, *Yŏnggye Kil Sŏn-ju* (Sŏul Chongno Sŏjŏk 1980), 278-279.

Yang Chŏn-baek returned to his hometown in Sŏnch'ŏn and continued his ministry. His loyalty to the Presbyterian Church was not shaken in the post-March First period and he was appointed by the Church to an internal committee to compile the history of the Korean Presbyterian Church.[571] This appointment was doubtlessly a great honor for the senior minister and recognition of his long service for the Church by the foreign missionaries. Of course, he stayed out of politics and quietly ended his life in 1933, two years before Kil Sŏn-ju's death.

The continuity of the conservative and pietistic tradition of the Korean Presbyterian Church was clearly manifest in the makeup of its executive church officers. In the fall of 1919, the General Assembly of the Korean Presbyterian Church elected Samuel A. Moffett as its Moderator.[572] This paramount office had been occupied by missionaries for the first few years since the foundation of the Korean Presbyterian Church in 1907, but was passed over to Koreans from 1915 through 1918.[573] As if to turn the back the clock by ten years, however, the Korean delegates to the assembly returned the office to missionary control

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[571] *Kidokkyo taebaekkwa sajŏn vol.12,* s.v. Yang Chŏng-baek."
[572] F.S. Miller, "The Korean General Assembly,"*Korea Mission Field* (November 1919): 240.
[573] Chŏng In-gwa, ed. *Yasogyo changnohoe yŏngam* (Keijō: Chosŏn yasogyo changnohoe ch'onghoe,1940), 7.

after the March First Movement. This decision may have been an emergency measure adopted in response the absence of qualified leaders in the wake of Japanese arrests. Even allowing for this possibility, however, there were still "sixty-nine [Korean] pastors, seventy elders" along with "fifty-six missionaries" who responded to the roll call in the Assembly.[574] Moreover, according to F. S. Miller (NP), Moffett was elected in spite of the fact that his fellow missionaries "voted for a Korean candidate [out of] habit" to let a Korean pastor take office. Hence, the election of a missionary Moderator in spite of a Korean majority in the assembly and missionary support for a Korean candidate furnishes indisputable proof of how much the Korean Church remained dependent upon missionary power in time of need. As a matter of fact, the election convinced the missionaries of how much "the Koreans are determined to have Dr. Moffett preside and probably they are wise under the present political conditions."[575]

Such a strategic decision has to remind us of the early Christian converts who often sought missionary protection. By 1920, the missionaries had lost their extraterritorial privileges, but they were not colonial subjects and stood on par with the Japanese. Thus, the

[574] Ibid., 40.
[575] Ibid., 40.

Korean church leaders had a reason to seat the missionary at the head of the Church, whom they expected to be a buffer, if not an aegis, to the persecuting Japanese in time of need.

In the following year, the General Assembly elected Kim Ik-tu (1874-1950) as the new Moderator to replace Moffett. The return of a Korean Moderator was s small step toward the normalization of church management, but Kim was not the type of leader who would do anything for the advancement of national independence. Kim was a typical Korean minister at the time. He came from humble origins and received little modern education, but was handpicked by a missionary to become a minister. By then, he was a popular revivalist and known for his extraordinary spiritual power such as faith-healing. Hence, with the assumption of the office of Moderator, he had his supporters compile the stories of his miracle and published it as "The Evidence of Miracles" in which tales of his fascinating healing of the sick, the blind and the lame filled over the pages.[576] Moreover, as he believed his miraculous powers were sufficiently proven, he let his follower ministers raise a motion in the General Assembly to revise the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church that denied the possibility of miracles.[577]

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[576] *Ijŏk ch'ŭngmyŏng*, (chosŏn yaso kyoso hoe, 1921)
[577] *Kidokkyo taebaekkwa sajŏn vol.3*, s.v. Kim Ik-tu."

Kim's faith-healing gained great popularity and the revival meeting he organized in Seoul in 1920 gathered more than 10,000 believers. While the sober, intellectual, and passionate nationalist Christian leaders were jailed for organizing the national independence movement, the majority of Korean church leaders and believers, in contrast, flocked around the revivalist-Moderator instead of nationalist fighters and indulged in a religious enthusiasm for his miracle. In the end, the March First Movement did not bring about any change in the fundamental character of the Korean Church. It was, as it had been, a society of the oppressed masses, who had little interest in nationalist politics, but gathered at the Church in search for various merits ranging from physical safety to religious salvation and healing.

The Christian indulgence in religious enthusiasm at a time of national crisis was enough to make Korean nationalists abandon the Church. Looking at the Korean Christians' continuous negligence of national affairs, the new nationalist media could not but renounce the Church as a whole. A popular journal *Kaebyŏk*, edited by leftist intellectuals, called Kim Ik-tu a "crazy pastor" and blamed the Church for letting him disseminate superstitious beliefs among the Christians of the "ignorant class."[578] The *Tonga Ilbo* also ran a critical

[578] "Nonsŏl," *Kaebyŏk,* (August, 1921) :19.

article on the false faith-healing and other supposed miracles by Kim, while also mentioning that sober Christians were now opposed to Kim's leadership. The Church, however, did not listen to such criticism but instead sent a letter of objection to the *Tonga Ilbo*, demanding that the article be rescinded.[579]

Missionary Responses to "Cultural Rule"

When the excitement of March First and the brutal Japanese suppression subsided, the majority of the missionaries also returned back to the everyday job of cultivating Korean faith. Their anger against the Japanese empire's cruel treatment of innocent Koreans certainly led them to stand with Koreans and win the trust of some nationalists. Such solidarity, however, did not last long. They were soon captivated by the new Governor-General, attracted not only by his liberal policies but also by his personal character and sympathy for the Christian cause, and became more conforming toward the Japanese colonial administration. Indeed, the new Governor and his administration brought many changes to colonial administration, especially in its relation to the missionary and the Church.

[579] *Tonga Ilbo* (5/15/1926, 5/25/1926).

First, Saitō Makoto and his wife sought to develop personal relations with the missionaries. Saitō had spent four years in Washington D.C. as a young Naval Attaché to the Japanese Legation from 1884 to 1888 and had a good command of English as well as a good sense of western culture and taste. He could speak with the missionaries directly and cultivate their personal trust. Mrs. Saitō Makoto was equally adept at improving relations with the missionaries as she was a graduate from a Methodist mission school (*Tōyō eiwa jogakuin*) in Japan and had a good understanding of the missionary cause. [580] They often invited the missionaries to various formal and informal gatherings at the Government-General and entertained them well with honored guests, while listening sympathetically to missionary ideas and works.

The Saitō administration also opened a new office, the Religious Affairs Section (*shūkyōka)*, through which missionaries could file complaints and requests pertaining to religious matters. Saitō also brought with him a high-ranking officer and translator, Oda Yasuma, who was a graduate of Ohio Wesleyan College and a practicing Christian. Oda became an important intermediary in all the important matters between Mission and

[580] "Baron Saito, the New Governor-General of Chosen," *Korea Mission Field* (October 1919): 199-200.

Government and his sincere work to improve relations between the two parties was "regarded most highly by the entire missionary community."[581]

There were of course more visible improvements too. The notorious government ordinance of 1915 was revised in 1920 and mission schools were given the right to teach religion. Also, in 1923, the Government issued a proclamation to the effect that private schools which meet the governmental standard may be "designated" as the equivalent of Government schools.[582] This policy change saved many mission schools, especially Presbyterian ones, from scheduled shut-down, which was supposed to happen in 1925 according to the previous ordinance that had prohibited religious teaching in private schools after the ten-year grace period. The effect of this proclamation was immediate and "created an attitude of friendliness and co-operation between the Government officials and church leaders."[583] The Government also allowed the Missions and Churches to establish their properties as "foundational juridical persons" (*zaidan hōjin*). This was also a legal revision missionaries had desired for some time to allow for convenient management of their Mission properties.

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[581] Rhodes and Campbell, *History of the Korea mission, Presbyterian Church U. S. A. 1884-1934*.504.
[582] Ibid..503.
[583] Ibid..503.

Of course, the missionaries were not entirely happy with the new administration. They suffered continuous annoyances from suspicious police, censorship of their publications, and interference with public ceremonies on the Sabbath day, etc.[584] Nonetheless, Herbert E. Blair (1879-1945, NP) after observing the administrative transition from the Chosŏn dynasty to the Japanese colonial government saw that "the benefits of Japanese occupation upon the Church have been many."

> Sunday has been made an official holiday. Peace and security of life and property has been given. Government regulations have taught efficiency. The Church of Korea has been given legal recognition and the incorporation of church bodies guarantees church and denominational property rights.[585]

When Saitō resigned his office in 1928 to serve as Ambassador Plenipotentiary to the Washington Conference, the Presbyterian Mission sent a congratulatory letter and expressed their sincere expression of friendship, to which Saito responded with equal friendliness: "As I look back on the past eight years and more during which I held office as Governor-General of Chosen, I recall with much pleasure the cordial relation that existed

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584 Ibid..503-4.

585 ,Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Korea Mission, *The Fiftieth Anniversary of the Korea Mission of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., 1884-1934*, 118.

between all of you and myself."[586] The friendly relationship was sustained even after Saitō left Korea in the 1930s when the fourth degree of the Order of the Sacred Treasure was conferred upon O. R. Avison (NP) in recognition of his forty-years of medical service and Samuel A. Moffett (NP) was presented with a gold medal in recognition of his distinguished service in the field of education.[587] So, it is not at all surprising that many missionaries later recalled the Saitō administration with much admiration and nostalgia. Even a known anti-Japanese missionary, Duncan MacRae (1868-1949, Canadian Presbyterian, "CP"), mourned Saitō's death at the hands of rebel soldier in the famous February 26 Incident of 1936, writing to his family on that day : "Something has happened in Japan today. All kinds of rumours, Stock exchange closed, the Palace occupied, and a number crossed the Jordan to the land from which they do not return. The dearly loved Saito among them."[588]

Missionary Relations with the Korean Church

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[586] Rhodes and Campbell, *History of the Korea mission, Presbyterian Church U. S. A. 1884-1934*, 505.
[587] Ibid.504-505.
[588] Lee and Penner, *A tiger on dragon mountain : the life of Rev. Duncan M. MacRae, D.D., Ma Moksa, "Duncan Korea"*, 195.

As missionary relations with the Government improved, its relations with the Korean Church and its loyal Christians remained unchanged. The missionaries were disturbed by the participation of some Christian nationalists in the March First Movement, but they knew that many of these were urban intellectuals only loosely affiliated with the Church, and did not represent the majority of Korean Christians. On the basis of their experience as long-serving field managers, the missionaries felt confident that the majority of Koreans, who mostly resided in the countryside, remained loyal to their ecclesiastical authority, detached from turbulent politics, and devoted to the religious cause.

In fact, the General Assembly of 1919 was the best occasion for missionaries to confirm their confidence in Korean Christians. The missionaries were gladdened not so much by the election of a missionary-Moderator by the Korean delegates but by the fact that "one characteristic of the meeting… in this time of trial" was "the evident determination of the delegates that world politics shall not be allowed to enter their spiritual assembly."[589]

For the missionaries, then, the primary task in the post-March First era was not to lead the Korean Church to adapt to the rise of nationalist sentiment in secular society, but to

[589] "The Korean General Assembly," *Korea Mission Field* (November 1919):240.

protect the Church from any dangerous influence. In particular, they were wary of nationalists who maintained nominal affiliations with the Church but engaged in politics in the name of Christianity. Hence, they tightened their grip over Korean Christian participation in politics and continued to purify the Church of political activism. This policy was loyally pursued and continued through the 1920s and 1930s.

There were a few exceptional missionaries who astutely observed that the time had come to change conventional mission policy to adapt to socio-political changes that happened under the Japanese colonial regime, especially, in urban centers. For instance, James S. Gale, who interacted closely with Korean intellectuals in Seoul, understood that the Mission's negligence of modern education for Korean Christians completely isolated them from the rest of society, where people could access modern scientific knowledge and learn critical views of religion through secular education at public schools and media without intermediation of the Church or the Mission. Though his message came rather belatedly, Gale felt compelled to urge his fellow missionaries that

> Modern education, be it ever so superficial, so defective, so much mixed and compounded of East and West, is a mighty factor in the city of Seoul. Therefore, the pastor must himself have explored, seen, and known its world if he would appeal to the educated classes about him. The day of

> the old pastor who hardly knows that the world is round, is gone never to return.

Moreover, he stressed that English and Japanese had become necessary means of leading the growing number of educated Koreans.

> As a sine qua non of special knowledge he should read and speak freely both Japanese and English. He needs Japanese to live comfortably and carry on his work as pastor under the present administration; he needs it to be at home with the student class who use Japanese freely; he needs it to know what present day thoughts rule the minds of his people. He needs English, on the other hand, as the great reservoir of Christian thought. English literature is permeated with the teachings of the Bible and no man in Asia can be a leader in the Church without being able to read English books… English is an absolute necessity.[590]

Nonetheless, Gale's suggestions were too demanding and came too late, given that his Mission had neglected the education of Korean pastors over three decades. In fact, among the two hundred Korean graduates of the Presbyterian seminary from 1907 to 1919, who constituted the core leadership of the Korean Church, only three were college graduates, nine Academy graduates, and around thirty with some academic training, and "the rest had only the old Chinese style education and a very small number could not even read

[590] James S. Gale, "The Ideal Korean Pastor for Seoul,"*Korea Mission Field* (April 1919) : 73-74.

Chinese."[591] As for English and Japanese literacy, "of the last five classes graduated, practically all of the men have some knowledge and perhaps twenty men have some knowledge of English." In other words, the vast majority of the Korean pastors could read neither Japanese nor English. Considering that there was a serious lack of Korean textbooks even for elementary education, Korean students must have learned not by reading but by listening to their missionary teachers, inheriting their conservative religious thought, without being challenged by secular thoughts and ideas which were inaccessible to them due to limited literacy in foreign languages.

In any case, liberal critics urging the need of Korean education were a minority voice easily overshadowed by the conservative majority. Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, their recommendations were never put into practice. It was thus not surprising that Gordon Holdcroft (NP), one of the leading conservatives, still held strongly in the 1930s that the current dangers for the Korean Church and the Mission were "secular education", "an attempt to promote state [shinto] religion", "material allurement" and "communists and other thoughts from [the] North," and lamented the rise of "modernism... a weakness, a

[591]Charles A. Clark, "Are We Training Too Many theological Students?," *Korea Mission Field* (April 1919) :79.

treachery, a betrayal in the ranks of our own 'Christian' constituency."[592] Simply put, except for the Japanese imposition of Shinto, anything that was attractive to Koreans in the post- March First period was what the missionaries wanted to deprive of the Korean Christians. Therefore, when Robert Greison (1868-1965, CP) casually mentioned that "our tenure of leadership is temporary" in Korea right after the March First, this was no more than lip service paid to Koreans. The true intentions of the missionary were better reflected in the passage below.

> In all our policies we should estimate in the back of our imaginations what the conditions will be like when we surrender the staff of office to our successors. We should not do thing that they [Koreans] will have to undo. We should build our foundations broad enough for Korean Christianity to build upon. [593]

We can see clearly here how the missionary perception of Koreans remained surprisingly intact over a dozen of years, even after their witnessing the eruption of Korean nationalism in the March First Movement. While they might have sympathized with the innocent Koreans who suffered from indiscriminate Japanese suppression, they had far less

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[592] Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Korea Mission, *The Fiftieth Anniversary of the Korea Mission of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., 1884-1934*, 209.
[593] Robert Grieson,"The Mission's Responsibility for Developing Men," *Korea Mission Field* (April 1919): 69.

sympathy for the Korean desire for national independence both within and without the Church. Rather, seeing some Korean Christians "betray" the Church and participate in politics, they were all the more convinced of their divine role as guardian angels of the Korean Church protecting weak Korean Christians from a dangerous secular world.

In 1934, the Presbyterian Mission celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the Mission and held a series of ceremonial events in Seoul that lasted several days. As mentioned in the beginning of this study, the 100th anniversary of Korean Christianity in 1984 was hosted by the Korean Church and the missionaries were praised as benefactors of the Korean nation. However, the 50th anniversary was neither organized by nor celebrated for the Korean Church. The official title of the anniversary was the "50th Anniversary of the Korea Mission of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.," and not that of the Korean Church. The centrality of the mission was clearly seen in the fact that no Korean guest was invited to make a speech or present a paper at the opening ceremony. The only foreign guest of honor was a high-ranking Japanese government officer who read a congratulatory remark on behalf of the Governor-General Ugaki Kazushige. In order to commemorate their accomplishments, the Mission also published on that year, *The History of the Presbyterian Mission in Korea,* in which the history of the Korean Presbyterian Church was subsumed

and narrated as a product of missionary efforts over a half century.[594] The narrative style itself was certainly an expression of missionary rule over the Korean Church, but the missionaries did not actually need such a subtle way of expressing their position vis-à-vis the Korean Church. In the last section of the *History*, the missionary-editor, Henry Rhodes (NP), asked himself how many more years the Mission should stay in Korea, given the remarkable growth of the Korean Church after fifty years of the Mission. His answer was simple and bold:

> The Mission believes that missionaries will be needed for some time, perhaps for another fifty years, depending upon future development.[595]

Reviewing the history of the Protestant Churches from the late nineteenth century through the March First Movement in 1919, it is concluded here that the Korean Church had limited autonomy from the foreign missionary presence. While it is true that Korean Christian converts and churches grew in number and spread over the country during this period, this does not mean that they were organized under an independent Korean Church free to exercise socio-political influence over society. This study has revealed that, despite its

[594] Rhodes and Campbell, *History of the Korea mission, Presbyterian Church U. S. A.*.
[595] Ibid., 533.

steady numerical growth, the Korean Church was subjugated to missionary power and restricted their participation in popular impetuses toward modern education and anti-colonial activism, both of which were considered unimportant and harmful by the Missions.

It goes without saying that those opposed to such missionary surveillance had no choice but to leave the Church. Those who wanted to sustain their Christian identity did not become apostates, but were alienated from the Church and their affiliation with the Church was either lost or remained nominal at best. And when such dissenters attempted to infiltrate the Church and mobilize people for their social or political aims, they were checked and ousted by Church authority, and lost their influence in the Church. As a result, Korean Christians were largely divided into two camps, the apolitical majority of loyal followers of the Mission on the one hand and the politicized minority of rebellious dissenters on the other. This division was also exacerbated by the lingering influence of traditional status distinctions in Korean society. The oppressed and undereducated classes desired the protection of the Church from the persecuting government and thus acquiesced in the foreign rule over the Church, while the traditional yangban elites tended to challenge foreign authority and replace foreign leadership with that of their own.

Moreover, the division of the Korean Church was widened further by Japanese colonial policy and especially through the gradual dissemination of public education. Although the purpose of Japanese colonial education was to make loyal Japanese subjects out of Koreans, it provided a new channel through which Korean Christians gained access to modern knowledge with which they could challenge the intellectual authority of the Mission and subvert its rule over the Korean Church. The Japanese education system, despite its existence as a vehicle of colonial domination, did provide an alternative source to knowledge that the Missions had refused to provide for Koreans in their attempts to keep them subservient to their intellectual and ecclesiastical authority. In other words, Japanese colonialism brought with it an opportunity for Korean Christian independence from the Mission, even as it deprived them of the opportunity for Korean national independence.

Up to the present time, scholars have consistently emphasized that anti-Japanese nationalism was a core value of the Korean Christian movement from its inception. However, our examination shows that there was a strong anti-missionary current within the Korean Church throughout its history that significantly affected its course of development. The tension between Korean leaders and missionaries existed prior to Japanese colonial rule and continued to grow even after colonization. Their disdain for missionary control

was so great that they constantly looked for liberation from it and at times took advantage of Japanese colonialism to bring greater ecclesiastical autonomy to Koreans.

As shown in this study, the dynamic and complicated process of Christian development in Korea suggests that we need to revise the conventional perspective that views Korean Christian history within a nationalist framework. This perspective sees the Korean Church and Japanese colonialism as constantly pitted against each other, while the presence of the Mission remained completely overshadowed behind the struggle of Korean Christian nationalists and Japanese colonialists. If we take a closer look at the nature of the Mission and its domination over Korean autonomy, it is more reasonable to view it as a form of colonialism, what we may refer to as "religious colonialism." With this notion, we can better understand the complicated and diverse historical paths that Korean Christians chose to follow. The history of Christianity in Korea was not a single national history but a history of multiple groups of Christians, who shared the unique experience of being placed under and torn apart by two kinds of different colonialisms: the religious colonialism of the western missionaries and the socio-political colonialism of the Japanese empire.

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