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THE COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE CHRISTOLOGY
IN

LATIN AMERICAN LIBERATION THEOLOGY
AND KOREAN MINJUNG THEOLOGY

BY

HONG JEI LEE

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SUMMARY

This dissertation is fundamentally concerned with the comparative study of Christology in Latin American liberation theology and Korean minjung theology. To meet this task the Christology of the former is examined in relation to that of the latter.

The study is divided into three parts. Part one contains chapter I through to III. Chapter I is a presentation of liberation theology's motive which takes the suffering people in the current socio-economic political situation as the starting point for a politics-orientated Christology. Chapter II shows the detailed analysis of liberation theology's methodology which is definitely grounded in the principles of the social sciences. Chapter III consists of seeking to interpret Jesus, his words and deeds in the light of the Latin American condition.

Part two, which constitutes chapter IV through to VI, will try to examine a way of thinking about minjung theology within the same categories which we concentrate on the development of liberation theology and its Christological implication in part one, because the clarification between them is necessary for the purpose of this thesis. It may help to solve some of the suspicion whether the label minjung theology is practically synonymous with the label liberation theology in creating a new and appropriate mode of an adequate Christology for answering to the vital needs of the poor and oppressed today. In this observation, have liberation theology and minjung theology anything to say to each other? It is natural for the Christian

church to look to them for light on the question.

In this desire, part three in chapter VII through to X begins a comparative and critical discussion of the motive, methodologies and Christological implications of the two theologies. That is, this final part is an attempt to offer comparative and critical conclusion on issues on such as whether or not the harmonisation of their theological motives, methodologies, and Christological implications is a likely prospect. Our critical assessment of the paradigmas of the two theologies will then be derived from the Christian witness in agreement with the combination of the biblical texts and traditional theology.

During the last two decades, however, the theological landscape has been changed. The breakthrough in Christian theology has been the explosive emergence of liberation theologians in Latin America, North America, Europe, Asia, and Africa. Especially in Latin America and Korea, revolutionary Christians have joined the popular movement of political theology and opted for its programme which is the praxis of service to the poor and oppressed. These radical men have tried to break with contemporary authoritarian forms of traditional and evangelical ecclesiastical speech and practice concerning the exposition of the historical foundation and the theological significance of the primary confession that Jesus is the Christ and Lord, focusing

Introduction

In reading and re-reading the sources for our knowledge of Christology, we have found the priorities of Christianity which are the history of the church's witness to Jesus Christ and the theological tradition of Christology. The Christ-event in summarising the theological significance of the historical life, death, and resurrection of Jesus is central to Christian experience and history. The confessional statement towards Jesus as the Christ became "the crystalization point of all New Testament Christological views."¹ and "the primary faith formula of the early Christian."² All Christian bodies have affirmed the essential truths of the early Christian confession that Jesus is Lord. Therefore, Christians and others can understand the intention of the early church in the context of the historical, mystical, philosophical, cultural, and personal milieux that gave them their form.

During the last two decades, however, the theological landscape has been changed. The breakthrough in Christian theology has been the explosive emergence of liberation theologians in Latin America, North America, Europe, Asia, and Africa. Especially in Latin America and Korea, revolutionary Christians have joined the popular movement of political theology and opted for its programme which is the praxis of service to the poor and oppressed. These radical men have tried to break with contemporary authoritarian forms of traditional and evangelical ecclesiastical speech and practice concerning the exposition of the historical foundation and the theological significance of the primary confession that Jesus is the Christ and Lord, focusing

upon a religion of redemption, whilst they have worked side by side in the life and death struggle for liberation with the victims of economic and political exploitation and oppression in their countries.

Thus, to those who look at Jesus Christ with new thinking and new attitudes of approach within their own history and their contemporary economic political realities, the Old and New Testaments are being used by the dominant biblical interpreters to keep them in a position of failing to respond justly to their existential situation.³ Alongside, the traditional approach to Christology is a religiously symbolic expression of the faith of the earliest Christian communities and reflects on Jesus as he had been during his own lifetime.⁴ As a result, in a different religious atmosphere the credibility of the Bible and traditional theologies is inevitably called into question. The question of credibility has been posed by Latin American liberation and Korean minjung theologians.

For liberation theology and minjung theology, the main question at issue is whether or not Christology was/is central to Jesus own life and preaching. They attempt to answer us by means of an historical analysis. This Christological question lies in the fact that Jesus of Nazareth is not seen as a person in the midst of the conflicts of human history but overshadowed by the permeating dogmatic emphasis on the orthodox doctrine of the exalted Christ. In this strict sense, a Christology has been formulated by Latin American liberation and Korean minjung theologians in the reinterpretation of Jesus Christ and his

meaning for today, as inspiring the rebellion of the dominated and legitimising their struggle for liberation.

This thesis is thus basically a Christological study. It concentrates heavily upon the Christological perspective of both liberation theology and minjung theology, because its aim is to attempt a complete analysis and evaluation of the Christology of the two, regarding its development since the 1970s in the primary writings of liberation and minjung theologians proposed, along with secondary sources on these theologies. At the same time, our intention is to describe the basic roots of the two theologies derived in the following two ways: motive and methodology. This presentation will be an original contribution to understand fully the Christology of both theologies, because the motive and the methodology force liberation and minjung theologians to view Jesus solely in the recognition of his historical identification with the poor.

In chapter I we will therefore evaluate the motives of liberation theology that stimulate Latin American theologians to engage in the struggle which has the poor on one side and the supporters of the status quo on the other. The various aspects of Latin American society, as a motivating force for liberation theologians, embody the political imperative of the Christian life to ^{reconstruct} a new theology in the light of liberation. This fact, which produces tension, conflicts, and even confrontations within the existing church, will be shown to flesh out the details of the requirement of doing theology.

In chapter II, we will be concerned to review the methodological issues of liberation theology seeking a useful

framework and tool for the question and answer of human existence in the light of contemporary experience. As adequate to the whole theological task for understanding the situations of humanity in Latin America now, the methodological principles of liberation theology provide stimulus to produce instantly relevant theological interpretations for historical curiosity. Without the assessment of this conviction, the important fundamental aspects of liberation theologians' thought on a praxis-orientated theology would be misinterpreted.

Chapter III begins with the primary themes of Christology in liberation theology. Many questions, which are found in various doctrines and theologies on the subject of Christology, are not at the very heart of liberation theology. In the proper sense for the current situation in Latin America, the Christologies of traditional and liberal theologies do not provide any answer to the question "Who is Christ for the people of Latin America today?" Liberation theology here shows certain characteristics that structure its understanding of Jesus Christ within the field of Christological division. In this, the several Christological issues will be examined in some depth to explore what they really are.

Since this dissertation basically belongs to the comparative study of the Christology in liberation and minjung theologies, the categories of chapters IV through to VI which we use to describe the main development of minjung theology and its Christological implications follow in the same line of all the above in chapters I through to III to explain the main

development of liberation theology and its Christological implication. This would make possible the task of a comparative study of this thesis. It may be helpful to conclude by comparing and criticizing the processes of the two theologies and the perspectives of their Christologies.

With the above factors in mind, the ultimate attention of chapters VII through to X is a comparative analysis between the two theologies paying critical attention to whether or not their theological basis and Christological consequences are closely related to those of the biblical message and traditional theology. In other words, the theological motives of liberation and minjung in chapter VII, their theological methodologies in chapter VIII, their Christological purposes and beginnings in chapter IX, and their Christological major figures in chapter X will be observed in comprehensive, comparative, and critical ways in order to understand whether or not they witness to the Christian gospel in the light of religious and theological vision. With the task of clear comparison of the two theologies, this thesis tries to provide both description and criticism of their theological development and Christological speculation.

As a result of what has been outlined above, this dissertation is divided into three parts. Part one is an account of the process of liberation theology and its Christological implication. Part two is an account of the process of minjung theology and its Christological implication. Part three consists of a comparative and critical view of them. Finally, a conclusion is drawn.

ENDNOTES

1. Oscar Cullmann, The Christology of the New Testament, (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1963), p. 111.
2. Bruce Vawter, This Man Jesus: An Essay Toward a New Testament Christology, (London: Geoffrey Chapman Publishers, 1975), p. 57.
3. Jose Miranda, Being and the Messiah, (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1977), p. 34. See also Byung Mu Ahn, "The Korean Church's Understanding of Jesus: an Historical View," International Review of Mission LXXIV(293), January 1985, p. 81.
4. Jon Sobrino, Christology at the Crossroads, Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1982), pp. 4ff.

CHAPTER ONE

THE MOTIVE OF LIBERATION THEOLOGY

The purpose of this chapter is to examine some aspects of the motives of rising liberation theology in Latin America. The topics dealt with in this survey are selected on the basis of utility and the desire to know the significant factors, of the present and past historical situations in Latin America, which have made Latin American theologians more responsive to development efforts for commencing a theology in political and ideological opinion. Thus, our concern in this chapter is not so much with broad substantive themes as with the exposition of a research style for the whole history and situation of Latin America.

A. Awareness

The Latin American Catholic church, as an institution and its relationship with the Universal Church and state, was inseparable from the message of Jesus Christ which sought to lead all men to salvation. This message was transcendental as it relates man to an ultimate end in God. In its mission it urged a commitment which leads the believer to move more in the direction of individual salvation, as defined by the traditional church. As a system of symbols, beliefs, and acts, the church showed tremendous continuity over the past four centuries.

From a historical perspective, however, political power and religious power went together for the Spaniards. They were closely interrelated components and mutually reinforcing over both spiritual and temporal affairs. The church did not

consider issues in social and political terms much in connection with the defence of the natives and new civilization in various problems created by the conquest, the distribution of the profits, the collection of taxes, slave traffic, political corruption, and so on. Without the social and cultural basis for the establishment of a true humanitarian development, the Latin American countries underwent a succession of enlightened dictatorships, oligarchies, minority governments, and the indifference of the church to the natives. The church enjoyed its links with political power and remained so tied until at least the middle of this century. One among many instances where the church entered into the preservation of the status quo, for example, was:

The Catholic Church in Mexico wielded vast economic and political power in the past. When independence from Spain was achieved in 1821, the church owned one-half of the productive land in the country. In 1855, the Liberals...initiated a series of reforms which eliminated ecclesiastical privileges, nationalized church lands, and secularized education....In the long dictatorship of Porfirio Diaz (1876-1910), the laws of the Reform were ignored, and the church gradually regained much of its power. The Mexican Revolution, which erupted in 1910, was strongly opposed by the clergy who feared the revolutionary program of agrarian reform.

Again, this does not mean that the church in Latin America was not rooted in the peasant communities and involved in other social problems. The church influenced social and political behaviours in many ways for Latin American inhabitants. But it was not enough to do something for them.

Since the 1960s, however, the attitude of most Catholic clergy has changed. The Latin American theologians have

acknowledged the presence of misery which was forgotten by the earlier ecclesiastical institutions. The number of poor persons in Latin America continued to increase. The income distribution and social and political advantages worsened. There liberation theologians met the people who lived in their poor dwellings without land, work and goods. Hence, liberation theology has come out as a reaction against the naked poverty that assails the lives of so many human beings in the southern continent. No one can distance himself from the Latin American economic, social and political realities. The poor of Latin American need more than our charity. The kingdom of God does not belong to only the rich who enjoy material abundance. In a response to the suffering of the poor and oppressed, liberation theology has arisen "as a theology of the poor, for the poor, on the side of the poor."² That is, liberation theology insists that all theologizing must start with a commitment to liberation of the poor in the present time.

For that reason, Latin American theology urges us to accept that:

If theology is to be vital, it must be response to the social, economic, and political factors which are "real" for that society. This implies that theology is, to some extent, determined or conditional by those factors.³

Here the liberation theologian is aware that any theology is not conditioned on philosophical assumptions about knowledge, revelation, the existence of God, or one's Christian experience, but on its social context.

As a result, the priority given to liberation theology is in

preaching of Jesus as "Good News to the poor". The solidarity to identify him with the poor and to fight for their property is the task of the church. In agreement with the view, Gustavo Gutierrez suggests as follows:

The proclamation of the Gospel from the standpoint of identification with the poor calls the Church to solidarity with the low classes of the continent; to solidarity with their aspirations and with their struggle to take a part in Latin history. The Church is called to make a contribution from its own task, the proclamation of the Gospel, to the abolition of a society built by and for the benefit of a few, and to the construction of a different social order, more just and more human, for all men and women.⁴

Jon Sobrino also adds that the poor are "the constitution of the Church" and "the authentic theological source for understanding Christian truth".⁵ With the definition of the term poor in order to explain a commitment of solidarity with them, Gutierrez notes that:

The "poor" person today is the oppressed one, the one margined from society, the member of the proletariat struggling for his most basic rights; he is the exploited and plundered social class, the country struggling for its liberation. In today's world the solidarity and protest of which we are speaking have an evident and inevitable "political" character insofar as they imply liberation. To be with the oppressed is to be against the oppressor. In our times and on our continent to be in solidarity with the "poor", understood in this way, means to run personal risks - even to put one's life in danger. Many Christians - and non-Christians - who are committed to the Latin American revolutionary process are running these risks.⁶

With all this background which contains a commitment to liberation from the standpoint of the poor and exploited classes, the major message of the church comes from Luke 4:16 which is elicited by Jesus Christ in Galilee from Isaiah 6:1-2.⁷

The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, Because He anointed Me to preach to the captives, And recovery of sight to the blind, To set free those who are downtrodden, To proclaim the favourable year of the Lord.

For the poor, the message is needed in the struggle to improve their present situation, and in seeking to put an end to it.

Another fact is that there is nothing unique about turning to foreigners (especially capitalists) for assistance with the development of Latin America. This means that the highly developed nations dominate and direct Latin American countries in the name of Alliance for Progress on international assistance. In the eyes of Latin American theologians, western countries continue to be colonist in the sense that they exploit Latin American nations politically, economically, and culturally. For their political and economical empire, the First World nations obtain cheap raw materials and labour and have markets where they are able to set the price of their products. In order to maintain their economic and political supremacy, western countries seek the full backing of the dominant classes in Latin America and even use military intervention.

Latin American liberation theologians have faced up to the new realities in their countries and tried to break their international ties of dependence to the United States and other developed nations. Liberation theology thus

rejects the "developmentalist attempt to solve the Latin American problems within the capitalist international system, depending on the relations to the Northern countries; instead it envisages a breaking away from the domination of the "empires".⁸

What we here understand is that the political and economic

development of Latin America must be

not based on the desire for gain or on the power of a handful of capitalists...but on the collective will of all the people, who become owners of the economy and organise their advance as a community without class differences.⁹

This idea is "an idea of human liberation" and puts "an end to the exploitation of some men by others", in the thought of liberation theology. Particularly, this social structure "creates the necessary bases for the elimination from the earth of every form of oppression, segregation, and servitude among men", and "fulfils the biblical teaching that the purpose of material goods is to serve all men."¹⁰

The new realities, which have been mentioned above, have a sound basis in fact. The role of the desire for independence is shown in liberation theology by the rejection of the developmentalism of both colonialist and capitalist nations as an answer to the economic social, and political problems of Latin America. Jose Bonino and Hugh Assmann, who have learned from the past experiences of Latin American history in the 1960s¹¹ understand the plan of development as no more than a guise for the new plots of dependence on and subordination to Western Europe and the United States.¹² In assisting Latin American nations in the resolution of their internal and external problems of ideology, social and political structures, and institutions, Bonino thus proposes that "a strong centralized state is a necessary step in the process"¹³ of nationalization that transfers control over important economic and political decisions from individuals to nation. This is a way to eliminate the political and economic effects of increasing the dependence of

Latin America on a few domestic elites and foreigners in the decade ahead. Especially, foreign political power and investments must encourage the national development of Latin America without threatening national sovereignty and destiny.

The final awareness to solve the problems of economic and political development and social justice, or to break the identifiable structure of class privilege and oppression which cause and maintain them in Latin America sees "the revolutionary process, as "an objective process". This objective revolutionary process involves Latin American societies "in a transition from capitalism to socialism" which is a system in which productive goods of a social character belong to the community,¹⁴ There is no way of bringing about social transformations in Latin America except a revolutionary programme which heavily stresses the need for creating organised solidarity. Through the revolutionary participation of the people in carrying out the tasks of changing the basic economic, political, social, and cultural structures, and conditions of life, the construction of social power must be established. In doing so, Bonino says that:

Such elimination of dependence is impossible without a parallel revolution in the social structure of Latin American societies, through which the oligarchic elites which cooperate with foreign interests are displaced from power; this is only possible through a mobilization of the people.¹⁵

Here the simple indication of the revolution is a movement designed to right the social, economic. and political wrongs in Latin America and to assure abundance and justice for all. In this sense, Bonino urges us to a significant study of the mutual

challenge to the revolution of Christians and Marxists. Latin Americans, regardless of whether they are Christians or non-Christians, flock in increasing numbers to the meccas of Moscow, Peking, and Havana. This thoughtful compromising note is impressive and a new direction that emphasizes the Communist ideology. But this does not mean that Bonino's Latin American revolutionary trend must be approached on the conventional level of the orthodox Marxism and Leninism. It is not a simple enquiry, holding together at a very general level into the forces that go to the making of the revolutionary climate. Nevertheless, Bonino's view on revolution can be understood in the broader context of the forces of attraction operating within it and around it in both ways - the Marxist doctrine and "a revolutionary theory in the service of action which seeks to change situations and systems of exploitation." 16

Furthermore, in some way the strategy of alliance in Latin America between Marxists and Christians is considered in the terms of believing that the former has the science of revolutionary change and the latter is committed to it by teaching of the Bible. 17 That is, dealing primarily in the context of Latin American realities, liberation theology has tried to make the mutual challenge by forcing together the lines between Marxist humanistic theory and Christian theology. Liberation theology "begins with using Marxism humanistic theory and Christian theology. Liberation theology "begins with using Marxism as an analytical tool" 18 of economic, social, and political realities in Latin America, and arrives at "the new way

of interpreting the source of our faith, the Scriptures, with the new elements at our disposal." ¹⁹ In this respect, Marxism provides liberation theology with the way to solve economic and political injustice and social imbalance which cause the problem of class struggle in Latin America. In a new hermeneutical approach, for liberation theology "the Bible establishes a close link between creation and salvation. But the link is based on the historical and liberating experience of the Exodus." ²⁰ As a result, at the same level the Bible and Marxism are used as a new and favourable orientation to liberation theology. Especially, "the Bible loses both its priority and its authority." ²¹

B. Motivation

The awareness of Latin American liberation theologians of the movement of the revolutionary ideas for transforming the Latin American situation has given a vision of the new society which Latin America needs. The awakening has fostered a responsibility for the people of Latin America through the revolution guided by Marxist ideological terms. The awakened conscience of Latin American theologians must not be allowed to settle down to a status quo which produces and maintains current injustice and the privileges. This phenomenon was a motivation to turn all their attentions to the service of endeavouring to change the situation and enlist participation.

Here our intention is to know what things made Latin American liberation theologians aware of themselves as the creators of their society in breaking away from the traditional

Catholic theologies. How could the awareness arise from the Catholic church which was so historically conservative? In our discussion of this question, we will illustrate several selected occasions which have animated liberation theologians leading the church to take a prominent role in pressing for human emancipation.

a. The Personal Account

Personally Bartulome de las Casas and Camilo Torres were as different as men can be. But they revealed certain basic similarities in their ministerial lives towards the exploited and oppressed and have been treated as the symbolic archetype in thinking of the prophetic role of the Catholic church in the history of Latin America. Needless to say, Latin American liberation theologians have found it difficult to avoid admitting that Casas and Torres' devotion to duty and their exemplary lives are profound and effective lessons in providing instruction to liberation theology in compulsory service on revolutionary and political operation. ²²

The first objective is hence to see who Casas was and how he played a significant part in the essentials of the Latin American church. As a descendent of the Cases family which originated in France, Casas was born in Seville, Spain in 1474. After having studied at the University of Salamanca, in 1502 he as an adventurer and soldier went to the New World where his father, who "brought back an Indian boy as a slave for his son", had preceded him. Casas became a Catholic priest in Latin America in 1510, 1512, or 1513. ²³

In the bloody conquest of Cuba, Casas participated in killing Indians and received a hundred Indians and land as a reward. As is revealed by the historical records for Casas:

He exploited the Indians as the rest of his countrymen did, forcing them to labor in the mines and to do goldwashing in the rivers for his own enrichment.²⁴

Henry Atkins on the other hand suggested that in 1511 Casas who "stated that at least fifteen million Indians had died needlessly at the hands of the Spaniards",

accepted the following solution to the Indian problem presented to the King of Spain: "as the labour of one Negro was more valuable than that of four Indians, every effort should be made to bring to Hispaniola many Negros from Guinea." Las Casas opted for Black slaves to replace Indian slaves.²⁵

However, the problem of the Indians had not been solved and the legal freeing of the Black slave had newly entered in the New World. One day, Casas realized the ill-treatment that he himself was affording the Indians. According to Lewis Hanke,

In 1514 he experienced a radical change of heart, came to feel that the Indians had been unjustly treated by his countrymen, and determined to dedicate the remainder of his days to their defense. He became the renowned champion of the Indians, and for half a century was one of the dominating figures of the most exciting and glorious age Spain has ever known.²⁶

Casas' awakening and decision to devote his life to struggling on behalf of the Indians grew directly from the deep stirrings of Friar Montesinos' courageous stand, "as that of the Moravians in Saint Thomas who were willing to become slaves in order to minister to the slave population",²⁷ which "was the first voice to be raised against the unjust treatment of the Indians in the New World."²⁸

After his conversion experience, as a colonist of a new

type, Casas "wanted the Indians to be converted by the force of the Gospel message, not by force of arms." ²⁹ In a utopian plan, his community scheme was "a perfect example of total regimentation, in a typically Spanish style of town planning" and "the greatest significance at the start of his career." ³⁰ Whilst Casas tried to get rid of the encomienda system for protecting the Indians, he wrote many books ³¹ and letters which were addressed to the Kings of Spain and the Council of the Indians.

The prophetic life and work of Casas thus provide a dynamic alternative to Latin American liberation theologians who identify themselves with the cause to which they are committed and who seek to remedy the gross injustice perpetrated against the poor and oppressed in Latin America. In Enrique Dussel's understanding, liberation theology has had its antecedents in Casas who was outstanding in his defence of the rights of the Indians in the sixteenth century. ³²

The impact of Camilo Torres is also visible in finding the theological orientation of Latin America to social forms and styles of action. Torres, who was born of an upper-class Bogota family in 1929, entered the Dominican seminary in Colombia and then became a priest. During 1950s, he studied sociology at Louvain University in Belgium. After his return to Colombia in 1958, he as the chaplain of the National University "built a chapel there and was one of the founders of the Department of Sociology." ³³

In our research for details on Torres' initiative for his decision to become a priest of the Catholic church, we have not

found a clear answer to the question. But what Daniel Levine asserts is that:

Torres entered the priesthood under the influence of French social Catholicism as espoused by Dominican priests...in Colombia. His vocation was this strongly influenced by a particular dedication to social reform through Christian action. This orientation was reinforced by his advanced clerical education, which took him to Louvain University in Belgium. 34

For Maurice Zeitlin, the First Latin American Episcopal Conference took place in Rio de Janeiro in 1955 and the Second Vatican Council could count on the backing of Torres' involvement in practical revolutionary and political activity. The two movements within the Catholic Church, which declared the constructive process of preparing a new tomorrow for the people of Latin America and then pointed the new direction of the church, influenced Torres profoundly. 35

As a consequence, Torres saw that the oligarchy could not bring his dream which "combined the prophetic vision and utopian striving of the Old Testament prophets with the messianism of early Christianity and the ideals of contemporary socialist and anti-imperialist movements." 36 Furthermore, Torres who regarded Christian faith as requiring action to transform an unjust world

did not oppose politics to religion, or somehow put politics before religion. Rather, he saw the two as intimately and necessarily joined, and looked for the way religious commitments require action to make them effective. In his view, a true Christian is obliged to be political, for only in this way can love of one's neighbour, the key Christian precept, be made effective. Individual acts of kindness and charity are negated by unjust structures of society. 37

On this concern, Torres showed the wide range on this side of

"the extraordinary development of Marxist-Christian dialogue and cooperation" and "alliance with any and all groups dedicated to the cause of revolution." 38 Therefore, in his public political life Torres did his best to speak to the working class or the proletariat, bringing them his reorientation of Christianity and revolutionary commitment. He also wrote pastoral letters and other books 39 which gave the call to the battle for freeing the people from the exploitation of the oligarchy and from imperialism.

In 1965 Torres finally founded a movement, "the United Front of the Colombian People,"

in an attempt to force an alliance of discontented liberals, young intellectual, militant Catholics, trade unionists, and Communists, he hoped to create a genuine revolutionary movement of workers and peasants that would bring to power the popular government he envisioned. 40

This tendency towards the political arena conflicted with the external exercise of Torres' priestly ministry and became a decisive reason to give up the religious privilege which came from leading the Mass and from wearing clerical garb. When Torres left the priesthood, he made a statement as follows:

I have left the privileges and duties of the clergy, but I have not left the priesthood. I believe to have devoted myself to the revolution out of love for my neighbor. I will not say the Mass, but I will realize the economic and social realms. When my neighbor has nothing against me, when I have realized the revolution, I will then say the Holy Mass again. 41

Having left the priesthood in June 1965, Torres entered a guerilla front in October, and was killed in early 1966 in a skirmish with an army patrol. 42

Indeed it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the

advanced social and political thinking of Camilo Torres is strongly represented within the implications of liberation theology. Some see little connection between Torres' theological application and that of liberation theologians. For instance, in Claus Bussmann's understanding, "no theological interpretation of the concepts of liberation and freedom occurs in Torres' writings". Yet "Walter Repges...considers Camilo Torres to be one of the forerunners of theology of liberation".⁴³ In contrast to Bussmann, there arises in the deed and theology of Torres the firm belief that the social and political perspectives of Latin American theologians have been developed most implicitly and explicitly in what has come to be known as liberation theology.

b. The Ecclesiastical Account

In the history of the Roman Catholic church, the Council of Trent (1543-63) as the Nineteenth Ecumenical Council responded to the sixteenth century Protestant movement, was intended to draw on the spiritual and theological revival that characterised the Counter-Reformation. Since the Trent, the First Vatican Council (1869-1870) which was convened by Pope Pius IX in Rome was the Twentieth Ecumenical Church Council. Vatican Council I sought to define the Catholic church's doctrine concerning the faith and the church, especially in response to the new challenges from secular philosophical and political movements and theological liberalism. Mainly, these two Councils were to regather the Catholic church for reaffirming its faith, its authority, and in particular its head, the papacy.⁴⁴ Vatican I, which went back to the thought of the Trent, especially

sees the modern errors of rationalism, nationalism, pantheism, materialism and atheism as consequences of the Protestant principle that every Christian may exercise private judgment in matters of Christian doctrine. It regards atheism as a contradiction of reason and as destructive of the foundations of human society. 45

The Second Vatican Council. In Latin America, the social-Christian movement which emerged in Europe in the middle of the nineteenth century did not become a major force until the 1950s. It did not seek to reform society on more communitarian lines by carrying out ideas through direct personal action. However, the reality of the situation in Latin America has been changed by Vatican II which was held in several sessions from 1962 to 1965 and which marked the opening of a period of deep change for the Catholic Church. Its impact on Latin America was profound.

Vatican Council II, which is regarded by Roman Catholics as the Twenty first Ecumenical Church Council, was concerned in Rome in the October of 1962 by Pope John XIII and reconvened in the September of 1963 by his successor, Pope Paul VI. In initiating an extraordinary transformation of the Roman Catholic Church before the eyes of the world, the Council was a deliberate attempt to renew and bring up to date all facets of church faith and life. In its implications for the Universal Church,

Vatican II marked a major attempt to rethink the nature of the Church, the world, and the proper relation between the two. Alongside the traditional model of the Church as an institution, which had stressed eternal unchanging aspects of belief, structure, and hierarchy, the council elaborated a vision of the Church as a "Pilgrim People of God" - a living changing community of the faithful making its way through history. Viewing the Church as a Pilgrim People of God means, in a very basic sense, accepting the

importance of temporal, historical change, both as a fact in itself and as a powerful source of changing values. 46

In Latin American liberation theologians' thinking, Vatican II has taught the new concept and action possible within the church for the poor and oppressed, in the realm of the church's relation to society. In the relation of the church to the world Vatican Council II stated that the Catholic church is at the service of the world. For Jon Sobrino,

The Second Vatican Council teaches that the Church does not exist for itself but to serve the world; that the Church is to bear witness not to itself but to something distinct from and greater than itself. This teaching has been applied in Latin America. 47

In the elaboration of the church in Latin America, thus, Sobrino has articulated the concept of the "Church of the Poor" 48 at the service of the poor. This new approach could enable the church to cope with the problem of the day. It has drawn up a general outline for church renewal and made a call for a church of service instead of a church of power.

At the same time, Vatican II put particular emphasis on the dialogue between the church and the world. For this view, what Phillip Berryman interprets is that:

Vatican II encouraged church people to enter dialogue with "the world". Viewed optimistically from Europe, that world seemed to be one of rapid technological and social change. A Third World angle of vision, however, revealed a world of vast poverty and oppression that seemed to call for revolution. 49

In the matter of dialogue, the Catholic church which had rejected atheism in principle in its past Councils manifested "a new attitude of dialogue" in Kasper's writings. The reference here

is clearly shown in the following way.

The Second Vatican Council opens a new chapter in the church's relation to atheism. It counts atheism as "one of the most serious problems of our times", but adds immediately that it "deserve more thorough treatment". This change, especially in relation to Marxist atheism, has been summed up in the formula: "From anathema to dialogue". The formula correctly captures the pastoral emphasis of the Council. 50

On analysis, this new approach has been drawn from the following statement:

Vatican II began this incorporation of secular social thinking in a mild way, with general sociological analysis and a broad concern for "development". But as we shall see, this small opening quickly expanded, above all in Latin America, to encompass new ideas about violence, "structure change", and essentially Marxist notions of economic dependency, praxis, and revolution. 51

The coming of Vatican II, hence, marked profound shifts in the prevailing ethos concerning liberation theology which has taken up a positive attitude towards human destiny and any appropriate planning of an earthly future. For some people, Pope John XXIII who convened Vatican II has to be treated as follows:

When historians evaluate this period a century from now, it may well turn out that Pope John XXIII will be judged to have had more influence on the Latin American continent than any other man in the twentieth century. 52

? The Medellin Conference. After the First General Conference of Latin American Episcopate in 1955, the Second Conference was held in Medellin, Colombia, in August and September in 1968. Latin American priests and lay people who "felt the need for a special conference to deal with the implications" 53 of Vatican II, came to the Medellin Conference seeking "to integrate the perspectives of social sciences, theology, ethics, and pastoral reflection". 54 The attention of the liberationist group was

concerned with an analysis of the human and religious situation in Latin America and a theological reinterpretation in the light of Vatican II, whereas the traditionalist group and the developmentalist group tried to seek gradual change without the disruption of present institutions within the apologetical discussions. But the liberationists of the Medellin Conference condemned the two groups by indicating that:

"Traditionalists...show little or no social consciousness, have a bourgeois mentality, and hence do not question social structures." Developmentalists, with their technological mentality, are concerned about the means of production, put more emphasis on economic than on social progress, and see the solution of marginality as the "integration" of people into society as producers and consumers. 55

In their positive message on a revolutionary posture, therefore, the liberationist leaders of the Medellin Conference

intended to apply the implications of Vatican II to the Latin American scene and in so doing went significantly beyond the previous papal encyclical and the documents of Vatican II in their understanding of the function and mission of the church in the world. 56

Gutierrez, who participated actively in the consultations and one of the principal writers of "ponencias" for the Conference, also goes on to say that:

Vatican II talks about a Church in the world and describes the relationships in a way which tends to neutralise the conflicts; Medellin demonstrates that the world in which the Latin American Church ought to be present is in full revolution. Vatican II sketches a general outline for Church renewal; Medellin provides guidelines for a transformation of the Church in terms of its present on a continent of misery and injustice. 57

As the theme of the Medellin Conference: "The Church in the Present-Day Transformation of Latin America in the Light of the

(Second Vatican) Council" 58 showed the Latin American liberationists went to what Vatican II implicitly and explicitly contained in theological and practical thinking. In that way, the Episcopal Conference at Medellin which had realized the unequal, unjust, and oppressive social structures of society turned to a reconsideration of all aspects of religious life in the context of contemporary social transformation in Latin America. This reminds us to say here that Medellin's attention was focused on the poor and oppressive. Oppressive social, economic, and political structures which had given special privilege to the rich became aware of the true significance of a social change to the liberationists

The consequence led them to think of violence (revolutionary movement) as the legitimate tool of social transformation. Revolution, which obliterates the existing social structure to construct an entirely new one, became a burden to the liberationist priests and theologians. In connection with this critical discovery of the historical responsibility of the church, the liberationists clearly tried to distance themselves from what has been done by the traditional Latin American Catholic church. Regarding the Medellin Conference, Robert Brown comments: It "has been a major catalyst in social engagement by Latin American clergy and laity." 59 "Much of the subsequent dedication of Latin Americans to liberation theology can be traced to this document." 60 What we here assume is that the Latin American liberationists committed themselves to work for the radical structural change which can bring social justice to their continent, and that they opened the

way for Latin American theological liberationism as their own theology, although the prologue to the Medellin Conference evidenced a sharp conflict between opposing camps within the Latin American Catholic church.

The Puebla Conference. Since the Medellin^{Conference,} there already had been an awakening of the revolutionary consciousness within the life of the Latin American church and within a different theological focus. It seemed impossible that the spirit of the Medellin Conference could in any way reverse its own history. The traditional theological approach was challenged by the introduction of a new method of doing theology. This movement directly and indirectly stimulated many priests, theologians, and lay-men towards participation in the solution of social problems through the way of a political radicalization. 61

In the midst of all this, the Third Conference of Latin American Bishops was held in Puebla, Mexico, in early 1979. The theme of the Puebla Conference was "Evangelisation in the Present and Future in Latin America" 62 which was intended to evaluate the decade since the Medellin Conference and to "provide considerable insight into the kind of synthesis of religion and politics now emerging in the central institutions of the Church." 63 However, "confrontation was...inevitable in Puebla. The bishops were divided in class loyalties, different ideologies, and even national blocs." 64 This is, the liberationists, who tried to play the most active part for effecting a recovery in the Puebla Conference, acknowledged the limitations of their forces to articulate the affirmation of the

implications of Medellin, because those who sought to preserve the traditional pastoral ideologies spoke out clearly against the reduction of the biblical truth to mere socio-political involvement.

The conflict and division, which continued until the meeting of the Puebla Conference, are plainly explained by Berryman's analysis. The representatives of the Puebla Conference were divided into three groups in general. The first group was the "conservatives who stressed hierarchical authority and doctrinal orthodoxy and were consciously combating liberation theology for what they saw as its Marxism". The second group was the liberationists "who insisted that the church must take on a style of life in keeping with its role of service" for a process of emancipation from every form of servitude. The final group as centrist was interested in church unity. Thus,

with the conservatives this group shared a concern for church authority, and with the liberationists a conviction about the need to defend human rights, at least in extreme circumstances. These centrist figures played a leading role in leading the Conference itself while conservatives and liberationists lobbied, changing wording, adding to some passages, objecting to others. 65

Under both the impact of the central role of the third group and the impact of Pope John Paul II who gave his speech in Puebla in the hope of rejecting the implications of liberation theology and condemning political activism by radical priests 66 the Puebla Conference articulated its final documents. Yet the documents were "occasionally ambiguous and contradictory". 67 In other words, the documents did not express a great thrust to the liberationists, neither did they condemn it. The final

documents approved neither the conservatives who asserted the risk of ideologization run by Marxist analysis nor the liberationists who denied that the system of Capitalism is to serve the needy. For instance, the documents used occasional strong language to encourage action "to be contained within the institutional structures of the Church as guided by its authoritative leaders", 68 and on the other hand to offer a broad opening for participation in favour of the poor.

As a result, for some people "each of the three tendencies could find positive elements". 69 In the conservative group's point of view, the Puebla Conference was a call to separate the Latin American Catholic church from Marxist ideology and to reject many elements in the liberation theology. In contrast with the opposite group, Joseph Comblin sees that:

Puebla differs from Medellin only in having to announce that in ten years the situation has worsened, and distance between rich and poor increased oppressive systems become stronger and more complicated.

He goes on to define that:

The church of Puebla speaks to the poor not in language of resignation and alms, but in the language of liberation. The church wants to put itself at the service of those movements whereby the poor themselves fight for their liberation, not to replace them, but to enable the poor to be the makers of their own liberation. 70

In Jon Sobrino's words, also,

Puebla does...pick up Medellin's basics: "Medellin was a leap ahead, Puebla is a step ahead." True, Puebla is not Medellin's "quantum leap", but such advance does not come every ten years. 71

In addition to this, Enrique Duessel takes the view that the Puebla conference spoke out very strongly in defence of human rights, and for the Latin American church's commitment to the

liberation of the poor and oppressed by its social, economic, and political action. 72 For these theologians, the meeting of Puebla, which was held in the midst of a confrontation between the liberationist side which tried to concentrate on its theological and pastoral implications in the light of the spirit and letter of Medellin and the conservative side which sought to discredit its opposite implications in the light of the traditional theological and pastoral directions, was eventually able to produce just what the former had planned.

The response to this part is that the final Puebla documents more fully achieved in considerable detail the thought of the liberationists on the human and religious situation of Latin America. Thus, events at Puebla indicate that liberation theology has been shaped under the liberationists to incorporate the vision of man and his dignity, a sense of justice and of solidarity in Latin America. "No condemnation issued from Puebla, neither liberation theology, nor "the church of the poor", not even Marxist analysis...is condemned." 73 This testifies to liberation theology which would rather build up than tear down. For the liberationist side, "Puebla was an advance on Medellin", and it was "a more mature document and the sign of a more mature church". 74

c. The Theological Account

The history of theology teaches us that a new openness and flexibility in theological thought are evident everywhere. All theological possibilities are not only liable to be explored in the most radical, critical, and destructive ways by human

intelligence, but are also liable to positively lead the rehabilitation of Christianity. With these possibilities, liberation theology today has become a very professional and high pressure subject. The seedbed of that theology is Latin America with its burden of suffering and the need to overcome the oppressive status quo.

In this sense, we find a liberation theology which directs its application to contemporary society and which glances at the theological difficulties of traditionalism and liberalism with the eyes of social science. Especially, European theology with the advent of liberalism which was built on the foundation of a human that depends not on God but rather on man in the way of anti-biblical concept set by the challenge of the Enlightenment in seventeenth and eighteenth centuries ⁷⁵ is the counterpart to liberation theology. This does not mean that liberation theology is more close to traditional theology in comparing different theological understandings between traditional theology and European theology. On the contrary, traditional theological principles have been already ruled out in liberation theologians' minds.

What we see exactly is that Latin American theology has taken a gloomy view of the future in European theology. Through its response to the thought-categories of the Enlightenment, European theology

has understood the liberating functioning of theological understanding to consist primarily in liberation from all dogmatic arbitrariness, all authoritarianism ⁷⁶

and then in the various and radical hermeneutics of theology it has been

an effort to liberate theology from authoritarianism historical error, myth, and from obscuring of the meaning of the faith. 77

For European theologians, whether they are Catholic or Protestant, "these movements see themselves as movements of liberation", but their theological function is "first to explain the truth of the faith" 78 in philosophical systems, not to do something for the situation of the real world. In Sobrino's understanding, European theology

would be an attempt to hide the real wretchedness of the world behind a partial liberation, thus shifting the solution of the real problem (liberation from the wretched conditions of the real world) to the level of ideas (liberation of the meaning of the faith). 79

Sobrino thus denotes what the basic difference between the two theologies are. Latin American liberation theology

is trying to respond to a new kind of problem - not the problem of the meaning of faith, but the problem of the meaning of the real situation in Latin America....This theology understands itself as a theology, first and foremost, of liberation, not a theology of the word or the person or history. The focus of theological interest is precisely the desire for liberation. 80

This movement as confronted with the first movement of the Enlightenment towards liberation, "takes up the challenge represented by the second phase of the Enlightenment towards liberation." 81

In the following examples, Sobrino gives us basic differences between the two theologies.

European theological thinking has advanced through intra-theological confrontations (Barth in reaction to liberal theological thought), Bultmann in reaction to Barth, Rahner in reaction to decadent Scholasticism, or through critical dialogue with one or another type of

philosophical thinking (Bultmann and Rahner with existentialism, Rahner with transcendental philosophy, Teilhard de Chardin with evolutionism, Pannenberg with Hegelianism, Moltmann with Bloch and more recently with Marxism of the Frankfurt School), or with a particular cultural movement (Robinson with secularism, Moltmann with consumer culture),⁸²

He goes on to affirm that:

By contrast, Latin American theology tries to approach reality as it is, even when it cannot draw any clear distinction between the reality as it is and the reality as interpreted theologically, philosophically, or culturally. If, for example, a particular reality is said to be sinful, the reality has already been interpreted with the aid of a thought model that determines why and in what sense it is so. The perspective here is different from that of European theology....In Latin American theology, the object is first to see that the sin is there and then to ask how to get rid of it.⁸³

Here liberation theologians understand that through the theological, philosophical, and cultural movements, European theology has seen a real situation of the world. But its problem is to approach the real situation through thought about it in the concept of reconciliation between good and evil. On the other hand, liberation theology is not to explain what a sinful world is and means, but to become committed to serving society as a step in the direction of a new stage. In this sense, for Sobrino "European theology tends to confront with reality primarily as an object of thought, whereas Latin American theology tends to confront it as it is."⁸⁴

Hugh Assmann apparently affirms the political theology of Jurgen Moltmann "as one of the best movements in contemporary theology, particularly for its criticism of the "epiphanic" thought based on institutions". But at the same time he insists that "proclaiming a hope that does not articulate and motivate

the actual stages in the struggle...runs the risk of leaving man an inactive spectator".⁸⁵ In Reuben Alves' view, Moltmann's political theology towards the future does not spring from the present reality, but from a promise that is transcendent and that comes from outside.⁸⁶ Although Moltmann tried to provide a response to social and temporal dimensions through a concentration on the crucifixion of Jesus, his theology failed to "grasp the basic challenge of Latin American theological thought and to remain...within the circle of European political theology".⁸⁷ In the analysis made by Rosino Gilellini, liberation theology and political theology present themselves "as a theology of praxis", but the former differs from the latter "in that it is shaped as a specific and radical form of the theology of praxis". That is, liberation theology sees "praxis as a proof of faith", whilst political theology sees "praxis as an imperative of faith".⁸⁸

For Gutierrez, Johannes Metz's political theology tended to underline the public and political dimensions of the Christian faith, "in reaction to the privatization of the faith to which the churches have fled before the critical assaults of the Enlightenment."⁸⁹ Political theology which is understood as "its point of departure from an analysis of the societal situation as secularized"⁹⁰ sought to "overcome the relegation of faith to the private individualistic sphere by elaborating a new hermeneutic of the relationship between theory and praxis", whereas liberation theology arose "as a response to the oppression and injustices within the Latin American scene".⁹¹ Moreover, Gutierrez points out that as "a new version of

liberation theology" Metz's political theology is "marked by an uncritical conformism with today's world" where the present cultural, economic, political situations must be eliminated, because it "interprets Christianity as a provocative critico-liberative memory in the process of the emancipation, secularization, and enlightenment of the modern era".⁹² In the use of the term "narrative" on "the history of death and resurrection", Metz's theology merely "leads us to the memory of persons in their sufferings, a memory of persons in their sufferings, a memory of the sufferings of the poor of this world",⁹³ but not to the service of their fellows who are suffering from poverty and oppression.

However, in general we assume that political theology and liberation theology come together in a common commitment to a new hermeneutics for doing theology and the relevance for the social and political aspects of liberation. Although liberation theology is harshly against European political theology as not taking the discussion of the real historical situation in the world, the implications of Moltmann and Metz are implicitly contained in one way or another in liberation theology.

In thinking the European roots of liberation theology, according to Gutierrez, "the theological undertaking centred on the liberation process comes from a different purview" between the two theologies. Nonetheless, "today political theology has entered into fruitful dialogue with the theology of liberation, and interesting points of convergence are emerging".⁹⁴ Accordingly, Moltmann's theological thought, which "is one

transcendental hope (because unrelated to any specific situation) that makes man aware of the pain of his present, contains that "God would resemble the Aristotelian primum movens, pulling history to its future, but without being involved in history" ⁹⁵ In this concept, Gutierrez is fundamentally different from Moltmann, because he feels that "Moltmann is aware of the danger of ignoring the present life". Moltmann's recent writings, however, have been developed in "an interesting evolution and a fruitful opening to the historical struggle of man today", ⁹⁶ which liberation theology has tried to do.

For Bonino, Moltmann's theological perspective as leading us to "easy acceptance of the status quo" is clearly a "constant disturbance of reality as it is and a call to move ahead to the future". Yet, "Moltmann is the theologian to whom the theology of liberation is most indebted and with whom it shows the clearest affinity", ⁹⁷ Dietrich Bonhoeffer's influence on liberation theology is also as a Christian committed to political involvement in the availability of his theological terms. According to Julio de Santa Ana, the influence of Bonhoeffer is considerable on the thinking of the theologians of liberation theology on this particular subject. Ana stresses that:

They knew how he had died, his part in German resistance to Nazi, his complicity in the plot against Hitler in July 1944 when Bonhoeffer was already in prison. Some people saw all this as an indication that the use of violence and participation in subversive activities against oppressive regimes were possible for Christians. ⁹⁸

In Gutierrez's eyes, also,

Bonhoeffer's own direct and cruel experience of suffering, as victim of the Nazi repression, and martyr-witness-of God's helpless love in the political conditions of his time, was a factor of vital importance in molding this perception.⁹⁹

In weighing up the contribution of European political theologians to Latin American liberation theologians, we wonder whether or not the praxis of liberation theology in Latin America is the fulfilment of the work of political theologians in Europe. Berryman says that:

Liberation theology accepts in principle the orientation of Metz and others, but it seeks to be more rooted in analysis of concrete situations and has become politicized in practice.¹⁰⁰

Above all, what we have seen is that liberation theology has arisen from Latin American liberation theologians who gained their education in European universities where they were exposed to various ways of Marxism, hermeneutics, critical theory, and so on. Dussel reminds us that Latin American liberation theology began to develop as a result of "study in Europe by many Latin American seminary professors and theological teachers".¹⁰¹ The following selected biographical sketch confirms what Dussel has mentioned.

Hugo Assmann studied philosophy and sociology in Brazil and theology in Rome. He served as a visiting professor on the theology faculty of the University of Munster in West Germany. Leonardo Boff, after having pursued his philosophical and theological studies in Brazil, studied at Ludwig-Maximilian Universitat in Munich where he gained his doctorate in theology

and at Wurzburg, Louvain and Oxford. Joseph Comblin studied at Louvain and Malines. He has been on the theology faculty of the Louvain. Enrique Dussel, after having gained his licentiate in philosophy from the University of Mendoza in Argentina, gained a doctorate philosophy from Madrid University, a doctorate in history from the Sorbonne, and a licentiate in theology from the Catholic Institute of Paris. 102

These selected Latin American theologians are the most important figures in the current liberation movement and some of them, who have not been introduced in this paper, were educated at American seminaries and universities. Doubtless, these European theological, philosophical and sociological exposures for Latin American theologians have resulted in a new insight for liberation theology and based on creative imagination in collaboration.

Finally, the conclusive critical and reflective thinking on the relationship between European political theology and liberation theology is introduced to us. In his, "An Open Letter to Jose Miguez Bonino", Moltmann admits that

The most decisive difference between the Latin American theology of liberation and political theology in Western Europe lies in the assessment of the various historical situations....But the various countries, societies and cultures do not live synchronously at the same point in history. Therefore, according to each concrete situation, there are diverse ways to realize what is generally good for all. 103

Then he answers Gutierrez who made comment on European political theology by saying that:

Gutierrez presents the process of liberation in Latin America as the continuation and culmination of the European history of freedom. One gets a glimpse into this history of freedom by being enlightened about Kant and Hegel, Rousseau and Feuerbach, Marx and Freud. The "secularization process" is portrayed in detail through the work of Gogarten, Bonhoeffer, Cox and Metz. This is all worked through independently and offers many new insights, but precisely only in the framework of Europe's history, scarcely in the history of Latin America. Gutierrez has written an invaluable contribution to European theology. But where is Latin America in it all? 104

Conclusion

Under the title of the motives of liberation theology, we have briefly outlined the major awareness of liberation theology and the major animation to stimulate this movement. Of course, there are many other perspectives on the development of their theological orientation. Each of them, however, is a fertile source for this chapter and serves us positively in allowing a specific focus on a re-analysis of the motives of liberation theology, which is our main concern in the comparative study of Christology between liberation theology and minjung theology.

The reflective attitude provided by this chapter can produce tolerance if we are willing to be open about the real situation of Latin America. Being open to someone's misery is good and definitely something valuable in realizing problems associated with him and solving them for him. Also, it is understandable that Latin American theologians criticized other theological movements in Europe from the stand point of a variety of their contemporary situation and then that they have set out doing theology from this vantage point. For the poor and oppressive to gain better economic and social structures, the devotional

lives and literatures of Latin American liberation theologians would become the proving ground for the movement. But we have to wait for the major theological implications involved in liberation theology in the following chapters.

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3. T. Newland Sands, "Liberation Theology and the Social Gospel: Variations on a Theme", *Theological Studies* 41(4), 1980, p. 608.

4. Gustavo Gutierrez, "Introduction", *Practical Theology of Liberation*, Hugo Assmann (London: Search Press Limited, 1975), p. 93.

5. Jon Sobrino, *The True Church and the Poor*, (London: SCM Press, 1985), p. 93.

6. Gustavo Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1983), p. 301.

7. Gustavo Gutierrez, *We Drink from Our Own Wells*, (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1984), pp. 42ff.

8. Jose M. Bonino, *Revolutionary Theology Comes of Age*, (London: SPCK, 1975), p. 39; Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, pp. 21ff.

9. Julio Silva Solar and Jacques Chonchol, "Development without Capitalism: Towards a Communitarian World", *Models of Political Change in Latin America*, ed. Paul E. Sigmond (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1990), p. 310.

10. *Ibid.*, pp. 310-311.

11. Ted Scalet, *The Winds of Revolution*. (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1963), pp. 233ff. - The Alliance for Progress, as a new form between the United States and Latin America was born as a policy idea and a broad cooperative concept in March 1961, was an effort to aim at raising the living standard and strengthening democracy in Latin America. But the programme could not succeed as a major historical movement between both the United States and Latin America, because of numerous things which happened in both the material and the political spheres. Particularly, the Alliance was wholly intertwined with the political problems in Latin America.

12. J. Bonino, *Revolutionary Theology Comes of Age*, p. 24; H. Assmann, *Practical Theology of Liberation*, p. 55.

13. J. Bonino, *Revolutionary Theology Comes of Age*, p. 39.

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4. Gustavo Gutierrez, "Introduction", Practical Theology of Liberation, Hugo Assmann (London: Search Press Limited, 1975), p. 93.
5. Jon Sobrino, The True Church and the Poor, (London: SCM Press, 1985), p. 93.
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11. Tad Szulc, The Winds of Revolution. (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1963), pp. 233ff. - The Alliance for Progress, as a new form between the United States and Latin America was born as a policy idea and a broad cooperative concept in March 1961, was an effort to aim at raising the living standard and strengthening democracy in Latin America. But the programme could not succeed as a major historical movement between both the United States and Latin America, because of numerous things which happened in both the material and the political spheres. Particularly, the Alliance was wholly intertwined with the political problems in Latin America.
12. J. Bonino, Revolutionary Theology Comes of Age, p. 24; H. Assmann, Practical Theology of Liberation, p. 55.
13. J. Bonino, Revolutionary Theology Comes of Age, p. 39.

14. J. Solar and H. Chonchol, "Development Without Capitalism: Towards a Communitarian World", p. 311.

15. J. Bonino, Revolutionary Theology Comes of Age, p. 39.

16. J. Andrew Kirk, Theology Encounters Revolution (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1980), p. 117. Also see Gerard Berhoef and Lester Dekoster, Liberation Theology, Grand Rapids: Christian's Library Press, 1984), pp. 65ff.

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CHAPTER TWO

THE METHODOLOGY OF LIBERATION THEOLOGY

It is generally recognised that liberation theology is not directed primarily at academics, but at the poor and oppressed of Latin America. Philosophy is the handmaiden of traditional theology and scholastic theology. But social science is the handmaiden of liberation theology, arising out of reflection on the experience of the poor's effort for liberation and on the pastoral action of the church. For Latin American theologians who wish to deal with the real questions of their present society and to attempt to respond to them, theology must come from a different orientation and different perspective, because its audience is different from that of traditional theology and scholastic theology. Thus, the analytical methods borrowed from other disciplines must be carried out in a special way by theologians in Latin America. That is why it is not uncommon for social science to be predominant among the things which liberation theologians have borrowed from Marxist principles.

For this reason, this chapter begins with an overview of the methodological foundations, analysing Latin American theologians' approach to liberation theology. Building on this foundation, the first section moves to the issue of history as they delineate it. In section two, we consider the method of the sociological analysis from the liberation theologians' point of view of giving new meaning and purpose to the poor who seek the kingdom of God. The third section discusses the political implication of the theology which denies "some sort of orientation of traditional

dogma toward political ethics" and a linguistic expression in theology.¹ The final section of this chapter describes the praxis of liberation theology which is expressed as "a liberating function" and a prophetic function"² for man who is dominated and oppressed by other people and nations.

A. The Historical Aspect

For liberation theology, the traditional Christian understanding of history differs from other views. Relatively little attention has been given to the pagan view of historical thinking. In contrast with "the traditional pagan notion of fate or fortune"³ and "with the ancient Persian dualism" which "means that the good God is not sovereign in history",⁴ the theological view of history in the light of the Bible has presupposed God's providence which means the rule of God "in the world as a whole over the entire course of time". Through the concept of providence which is based on its ontological basis, therefore,

Traditional theology has expressed the mode of the divine sovereignty over temporal process, i.e., over natural occurrence, over historical events, and so over the course of events everywhere and at every time which constitute history.⁵

In addition to this, Augustine noted that:

Everything in nature and in history, including the sack of Rome, falls within the plan of divine providence and under divine governance; nothing escapes divine foreknowledge or the divine will.⁶

In the thought of the Greeks, history is a cycle which means seeing the endless cycle of time as being incompatible with the creation of the world. In speaking about a cycle of time,

Heraclitus saw that "history is a wedding of Up and Down, and despite all dynamics is, at bottom, a static unity of contradictions". For Plato, history is "no more than imitation and remembrance of the Idea", and "his interest in history was directed to the past".⁷ According to Augustine, in God's divine promises and his divine plans, "the unrepeatability of sacrifice for our salvation" happened and "the certainty of the salvation based on that sacrifice" has been offered to all men. "Because of these two absolute certainties", "no moments are caught on a meaningless and futile cycle". Thus, "all historical moments are unrepeatable and so can mediate ultimate salvation",⁸ In this way, there is no cycle.

Turning to the entire biblical revelation for history, what we assume is that:

The Bible proclaims God's saving action directed towards men; it recites God's actions in human history, actions that have their motive in love and their purpose in man's salvation. It is for this reason that we properly speak of the biblical revelation as salvation history. The term bears reference both to the idea of the history of man's salvation and to the idea of the sacred history that saves. For the Christian both ideas are to be identified.⁹

Here we have the two valuable insights into the theological concern of history. The first fact is that:

Salvation history serves to follow closely the biblical pattern, to utilize the dynamics of biblical language and thought, and to emphasize the historical nature and reality of God's actions.¹⁰

Other facts remind us to think of Jesus Christ who proclaimed the kingdom of God as the goal of history. For Hendrikus Berkhof,

This idea becomes central in the New Testament. There the cry sounds, "The Kingdom of God is at hand!" The

promise of that kingdom as the goal of history is now realized, i.e., firmly established. This realization began with Jesus. The end time has now arrived. His life and sacrificial death, his words and miracles, all united in his resurrection and glorification, rang in the last phase of history. The boundaries of Israel are now torn open, and the Gentiles take part in the salvation of Abraham. History has now not only a goal (the return of Christ), but also a centre (his first coming). The believer looks forward and backward, and knows himself to be involved in the unrestrainable movement towards the completion of God's Kingdom.¹¹

However, many different opinions of history have begun to interest the leading intellectual minds in the directions of the naturalistic view of history,¹² the idealistic view of history,¹³ and the positivistic view of history.¹⁴ Correspondingly the Christian view of history has been challenged by liberal theology which has discussed "the providential interpretation of a progressive history and the providential interpretation of an evolutionary development of nature". That is, the "continuous and progressive development in history was...the apparently all-encompassing model for secular scientific and historical understanding" and "providence was the reigning theological symbol". Furthermore, we find the development of any of the notion in the following way.

The process of nature and history are radically sundered from God's redeeming presence and the eschatological goal of God is thereby separated as the from the future of human society....Providence as the symbol explicative of the divine presence and activity in natural and historical change itself virtually disappears, and other theological symbols take the central places.¹⁵

This attitude rejects the Christian root of history that the kingdom of God is "not to appear developmentally out of the past and present, but through God's action from the future".¹⁶

Liberalism is also afraid of the meaning of Augustine thinking about history which

Is found in the struggle between the earthly and the eternal kingdoms. The worldly states, personifications of the earthly kingdom, will be destroyed in a vain cycle; the Kingdom of God will go through strife to meet her glory. The millennial kingdom was initiated by the coming of Christ; in this kingdom the Church reigns and exercises her right of binding and loosing. 17

The liberal thought of history, nevertheless, lost its conviction in developments in history. This means that the process of social history had neither the intrinsic nor an extrinsic achievement of human existence which was one of the major intellectual voices of our world in the twentieth century. Whilst neo-orthodoxy in opposing the liberal theology insisted on the history of the gospel as "a history in crisis, in conflict and in revolution that is to be redeemed", an eschatological political theology which was provided by Johannes Weiss, Albrecht Ritschl, Albert Schweitzer, and the social gospel, was "the one basis for the important liberationist and revolutionary theologies of the Third World, especially in South America". 18 As a consequence, in the light of this awareness new theologians - Wolfhart Pannenberg, Jurgen Moltmann, Johannes Metz, Robem Alves, Gustavo Guterriez, Carl Braaten, and so on, 19 - have established the new interpretation of history for man in the world. From among these theologians, our concern in this section is with Latin American liberation theologians.

Liberation theologians as well as European political theologians have presented a reaction against previous theologies - the liberalism, the existentialism, and Barthianism - as being

unconcerned with contemporary social change for the oppressed classes in history. 20 Among themselves, the differences on the issue of the direction and concept of history seem to lie in the different ways they understand theology and its relation to history. But the major voice is "the history of salvation" means "human history". 21 In order to set forth the different assessments of history as relative answers to human historical problems, the distinction of natural and supernatural worlds and of divine and secular activities should be reconsidered from the standpoint of theology. For this reason,

Instead of thinking of religious history and world history as separate, instead of believing that outside the church there is no salvation, instead of talking about religious or secular activity, liberation theologians routinely and strongly emphasize the unity of history. 22

Related to this pragmatic posture, the attack against the "theoretical and epistemological" problems "in the areas of philosophical and theological speculation" is expressed in Leonardo Boff's opposition to traditional theologians and liberal theologians. Boff's most fundamental reason against previous theologians is that:

An epiphanic conception of God no longer holds sway. Human beings have a history. There is a world of technological artifacts created by us. There is a world which is no longer the natural world that speaks of God but rather a second-hand world that speaks of human beings. Viewed historically, almost everything is not the work of God but the result of human effort. Humanity has altered and adapted nature to suit the historical project. Thus we can no longer take God as a universally accepted starting point in the tract on grace. 23

This explicitly and implicitly contains the conspiracy against the

traditional Christian view of history in rejecting the sovereignty and activity of God as a timeless, wholly other being. Boff asserts history in the "secular character of the world" that results "from human intervention" ²⁴ rather than the divine operation. In addition, the meaning of history is "really created for us by ourselves, by human beings". ²⁵ Man is thus responsible for his own history.

The consequent theological insight concerning the unity of history (the one history) is centred in the pursuit of denying an other-worldly kingdom, but ^{affirming} a this-worldly kingdom. In this historical consciousness, there are not two worlds: "the human world below and the divine world above". ²⁶ As Hegel pointed out, God is not

The God over and above history, the divine stranger in the heavens, who ruled the earth and its people from above and only intervened in their history at certain moments. ²⁷

"In relation to the one history of this world", God's epiphany through the event of Jesus in reconstructing "a mythicization of reality" is an effort to show the kingdom of God as an eschatological reality to establish the link of God's presence in history and to politicize this-worldly "in a manner consistent with the theme of liberation". ²⁸ For Juan Segundo, "eternal life and the new earth are truly synonymous". The former is "fashioned with the materials". The latter is "the new reality" which is elevated by God's Grace and which is "renewed and transformed". ²⁹ In point of fact, as we have seen, liberation theology is simply in a position to hold a predominantly this-worldly eschatology: its vision belonged to this.

world of space and time. The vision of apocalyptic eschatology flourished in the Bible is a dead issue for liberation theology. There is no specific hope for an apocalyptic transformation of the present age into a spiritual realm beyond space and time. The history of liberation theology moves away from heavenly to earthly expectations, from seeking a totally other destiny of humanity in the world above and beyond history to a better society in history for the poor and oppressed in Latin America.

Hence, the new earth concentrates its attention on history and existence in time. Further, this option teaches the present reality of the kingdom which takes place in history. The kingdom, which Jesus proclaimed, is of grace by the initial intervention of God "but not yet fully completed".³⁰ The kingdom "signifies a revolution in our way of thinking and acting and the total transformation of the world,"³¹ and "means the breakthrough of the new heaven and the new earth (Rev. 21.:14)".³² In connection with this perspective, the kingdom of liberation theology rejects the two kingdom interpretations: Augustine's city of man in history and city of God beyond history,³³ and Luther's "geistliches Regiment" and "weltliches Regiment".³⁴ The kingdom of God in the thinking of liberation theology is hence neither a kingdom as a transcendental realm beyond the world, nor a kingdom as a pure spiritual realm, but a state as an existence in this present age. This attitude towards the kingdom of God is the "shift in perspective from an other-worldly to a this-worldly ideology".³⁵

In all of this, liberation theology pays attention to the

historical consciousness which is defined in the fact that people:

Experience themselves as having been produced by an historical process and being responsible for creating their future by a similar process passing through their collective decisions.³⁶

The "historical consciousness as the ability" to discover both the past events of history and the present human situation thus provides "what happened in the past and has become history".³⁷

In this sense, though surveying their church history and cultural history, Latin American theologians find the explanation of events involving human participants in the process of the past history.

The notable example of this is that:

Latin America was not discovered in 1492; that year marks rather the beginning of its integration into a European, and more recently North American, economy and culture. In this historical process the church has been, at one and the same time, both the vehicle of this integration and the prophetic voice speaking out against it.³⁸

This is the most common basic source providing an overall context for liberation theology.

A further step of the theology, which has found "the problem of history that is manifest in the social injustice and oppressive poverty that makes Latin America",³⁹ is therefore to "use this knowledge as an element in shaping the thoughts and actions that will determine the future".⁴⁰ That is, Latin American theologians use history "as a primary source"⁴¹ for their theology which is a response to the massive human poverty and oppression in Latin America today. For Raul Vidales, this path towards the goal of liberation theology presents "a reinterpretation of the past relative to the present concrete

situation".⁴² From the purely historical viewpoint, facts help us to become aware of a painful situation and to respond to every level of human existence which is relative to our social and historical existence. With the investigation into the history of humanity, liberation theologians thus begin their articulation of the ideal for involving existential dimensions, instead of relying on philosophical thought and linguistic usage as their theological "paramount auxiliary".⁴³

In Roger Haight's assumption, the use of human history is expressed as "the method of correlation" which brings together "contemporary experience" - "the general human experience" X (the first element of liberation theology) and "the Christian sources" - "the New Testament" (the second element of the theology) of "the past and the present in a mutual dialogue and a constant tension".⁴⁴ Liberation theology in this respect "begins with an analysis of human experience", In so doing,

Anthropology becomes the hermeneutical condition for understanding the meaning of Christian revelation....The Christian message should be seen in relation to a more adequate and systematically coherent and comprehensive view of human existence.⁴⁵

This method calls "for a critical correlation of the results of one's investigations" of the Christian message and the human situation. The motive of the two sources of theology contains "the need to formulate a method capable of correlating the principal questions and answers of each source".⁴⁶ All this indicates that the theological notion of Latin American theologians tries to respond adequately to common human experience as it is experienced today in anthropological terms beyond

classical supernaturalism, neo-orthodoxy, and liberalism.

B. The Sociological Aspect

As another methodological theme for stimulating the necessity of practical theology, it is not surprising that Latin American theologians use sociological theory. Daniel Levine comments that:

Vatican II began this incorporation of secular social thinking in a mild way, with general sociological analysis and a broad concern for "development". But as we shall see, this small opening quickly expanded, above all in Latin America, to encompass new ideas about violence, "structural change", and essentially Marxist notions of economic dependency, praxis and revolution.⁴⁷

Vatican II's attempt to seek the social science of theology, according to Levine, was "to transform the world in accordance with the principle of a known body of Christian doctrine". But Vatican II's new perspective led to "a different direction". For liberation theology, therefore, "the starting point here is now social, not religious".⁴⁸ Related to this view, Roger Haight adds that:

Typical of liberation theology is its use of social analysis and the bringing of this to bear in mediating theological understanding. This is both a strong point and a weakness in this theology.⁴⁹

This new trend recognises that theology and sociology can fulfil some sort of social role in the emancipation of the people of Latin America from existing economic and political

structures.⁵⁰ In the liberation theologians' point of view, sociology is able to provide "the raw material for theologising in being aware of the structure of oppression that pushed vast numbers of people into misery and dehumanisation".⁵¹ Traditional Christian theology tends towards talk about God as the Ultimate and Absolute Being who revealed in Jesus Christ. Theology cannot skip over this dimension of the origin of Christian faith. In attempting to find a solution, nothing is gained by appealing to a theology which lies in a search for the causes of the existing social situations in the empirical world. In responding to the Latin American situation with a new way of practical theology, theology must take the analysis of reality by means of sociology. From this point,

The theology of liberation takes a decisive step in the direction of the secular sciences, by admitting that the fact of human experience on which the secular sciences have the first word to say, is its basic point of reference, its contextual starting-point.⁵²

In seeking to analyse the relations between variables in social systems, sociology explains "the social nature of human existence" to Latin American theologians. From this social scientific view, liberation theology learns that man, who in biological terms is not basically different from all other animals, must determine his "most basic ideas, values and behaviors", in the given social context, because "no person is simply a private individual existence but also lives in relation to others". "The human person is dependent on others and influences others simply by being and acting".⁵³ In liberation theologians' understanding, the social character of human

existence thus provides the dynamic perspectives that draw attention to the important "inter-relation of peoples and societies" on the normative dimension of social life and raise the responsibility of human will and freedom for the conditions of poverty and exploitation in society. Here, the most important consequence for liberation theology is to find the term solidarity which is a social fact by the intermediary of social effects. The emphasis of liberation theology in focusing on solidarity is that:

"The people" are a solidium, a community, a whole, and individuals are urged to join and be united with and committed to the others. The impetus of this ideal is a desire that more and more people take on and share the common experience, values, interests and problems of the greater proportion of the community. This extremely vital value in liberation theology points to a deeper ontological truth that should be characterised as a theological supposition, namely, the unity of the human race. 54

This notion cannot overcome the dichotomy that exists between the private and public aspects of human action, but provides some philosophical foundations for developing a theology of social solidarity.

At this juncture, liberation theology must deal with the biblical message of Christianity to provide meaning and motivation for its basis as a whole. The Latin American theologian must take a value-committed stance which attempts to supply a vision of the methodological shape of liberation theology. Faced with his attitude and approach to the sociologist investigating religion who finds himself defending the nature of his subject, the liberation theologian sees that it is no longer possible to hold the Scriptures over society as a whole. He must express his concern about the sociological role which contributes to the

disorientation of traditional theology. The work between sociology and theology is "important and need not in any way be destructive either to Christian faith or to sociological understanding". 55

Liberation theology, nonetheless, lies simply in relation to the reinterpretation of the Scriptures which is defined by the relevance of the economic, social and political problems of today. For example, the expansion of primitive Christianity, Jesus Christ, salvation, and the kingdom of God in the biblical and theological tradition must be "reinterpreted for our day under the influence of the problematic of historical human existence. This means that the direction of the theological reinterpretation of liberation theology is preserved in relating to "all levels and dimension of human existence" 56 in social terms. As Gerd Theissen has suggested, the tools of investigation and interpretation by the method of sociology, which were ignored by former generations, are used to understand primitive Christianity. In using the sociological method for a study of the early church, the inquiry has been prompted to follow the analysis that original Christianity

began as a renewal movement within Judaism and became an independent religion. It took root in rural areas but spread primarily through the cities of the Hellenistic Mediterranean. It was at first a movement of those who were socially unintegrated; but it soon developed a new pattern of integration which later could be taken over by the larger society. 57

Undeniably, this inquiry is a useful perspective for any sociological approach to the history of the beginning of Christianity. If the gospel of Mark is approached with a similar

method to that used in the above, it would be recognised as an editorial product using material from oral tradition and other sources that were circulating in the early Christian communities. In the case of the writer of the gospel, it would be also possible to see Mark as an editor instead of an author. The radical recognition of this point is thus crucial to the church which strikingly emphasises the authorship of Mark as it is. 58

Applied to the editorial product of the gospel of Mark, the meaning of Jesus' words and deeds in the gospel for liberation theologians should be explicated by the method of social sciences to specify their theological intention or purpose for the poor. Hence the traditional interpretation of Jesus' words and deeds should be modified from the perspective of liberation theology.

According to R. Haight:

The first concerns the nature of revelation as a form of religious experience. The second relates to the need for critical historical work in theology over against the error of fundamentalism. Third, the limitations of historical theology have to be insisted upon in the light of the constant need for new interpretation, in the proper task of theology. Finally, I would insist on the ongoing revelatory power of Christian symbols and the fact that they continually pose challenges for our new and further self-understanding. 59-

Here, the essentials of the biblical views would not be understood as speaking of the dramatic news that God has acted in saving history, climaxed by the incarnate person and work of Christ. God's revelation would be separated from understanding the history of traditional fundamental theology and placed in the form of human experience here and now. The human reality of

history would be the context for God's disclosure. 60 In other words, God's revelation is "not propositional, but consists of...God's act in history". 61 An active participant within the concrete situation in which we live, the epiphany of God shows the distinction from biblical and theological supernatural history to the link between God's presence in history and humanity's imperative of practice for bringing an earthly eschatological reality.

The next reason for doubting that fundamentalism cannot succeed in making a contribution to liberation theology is that it:

Stands for the direct application or use of past religious statement as normative or authoritative for the present without the mediation of interpretation on the basis of current experience. 62

This means that fundamentalism has not tried to make its Christian message credible to social, political, and economic issues which happened to the present world. Fundamentalist theologians are not interested in translating the biblical message into social scientific terms, but in bringing the world more into conformity with the old-fashioned Christian message. Like fundamentalism, historical theology has not made much headway in answering this question at the theological level, because its criterion is "fidelity to Christian revelation as that is manifested primarily in Scripture and secondarily in ongoing Christian tradition". 63

The final attempt to reinterpret the Christian symbols which are revealed to us in events of salvation leads to the intention of liberation theology which wants "the disclosive power of symbols...to transform our common experience into possibilities

that remain deeply human". 64 In forcing the abandoning of the traditional Christian hermeneutics of symbols, liberation theology has tried to bring its reinterpretation of them close to the social and human sciences. This hermeneutical procedure, which relates the biblical symbols to "the historical, political, and social entities", creates the kingdom of God, not the apocalyptic kingdom of the biblical vision. The Christian symbols must be read "as clues for one to discover where the new social reality is taking shape". 65

C. The Political Aspect

In 1920s, Latin American liberation theologians began to search for an adequate form of the Catholic church which could do justice to the brutal reality of everyday life for the Latin American peoples. This practical concern demanded that the church rescue itself from falling into a level of mere thought and "other-worldly" religious ethos. The challenge of this prophetic movement led to a fundamental break with traditional theology, and then sought to adapt a political method "with historical tasks through the mediation of the social sciences (in socia-analytical mediation)". 66 The baseline of liberation theology was thus human experience in society and concern with creative and responsible action. In the light of this, we concentrate here on the word "politics" and the direction in which liberation theologians use it for their theological structure formula.

The term "politics", which "stems from polis, the Greek word for city-state", is:

The process of making government policies, the making of decisions by public means, the authoritative allocation of values, the quest for power, and so forth. 67

Another definition is summed up by the following quote:

Politics can be defined as a struggle between actors pursuing conflicting desires on issues that may result in an authoritative allocation of values. Political science involves the systematic analysis and study of politics in the public realm. 68

Each of these viewpoints points towards a general understanding of the nature of politics and can be applied to domestic as well as international politics.

At the other point in politics, "there are two basic approaches to politics, one emphasises philosophy, the other science", "As a normative exercise", the former begins with "identifying a political value" which means "equality, freedom, or order" as "the ultimate goal of all political understanding". 69 On the other hand, the latter "as basically explanatory" deals "not with what ought to be, but with what is, or was, or will be", Its methodological approach is

To identify a certain fact about the way people behave politically and then relate that fact to a theory of how politics operates in different types of political systems. 70

In this sense, we see that Karl Marx, Max Weber, and Karl Mannheim, who were "all aware of values", made a basis for "social theories from....their values". 71 Marx particularly felt that:

The primary value of a political system is humanity. A system is not healthy when its subjects are inhuman to one another or to themselves....This inhumanity was caused by a peculiar configuration of the economic aspects of society....By changing these economic aspects. the primary value of humanity could be preserved. But before this could happen, the most inhumanely treated segment of society would have to become aware of its treatment and overthrow the

economic system that produced the inhumanity. 72

Recent studies by political scientists indicate that political development has captured the attention of the leading specialists in comparative politics. . Today the approaches to a political development are seen in the following three stages: the political modernisation model, the institution-building model, and the prescriptive policy process model: 73 The first stage comes from "the process of social mobilisation" which is advanced through "formal popular participation in the decision-making apparatus", whereas the traditional monarch concentrates "most major decision-making in his own person". 74 The second stage is viewed as "autonomous organisms which may achieve a relatively higher or lower level of evolution and growth in each historical epoch". The developed political institutions of today are shown in Japan and the Soviet Union. For instance, Japan's Liberal Democratic Party, which encompasses "a large number of members of the society", refers to "the capacity of the political institutions to allow for the peaceful succession of one set of leaders by another". 75 The final stage is "the capacity of the political system to achieve the non-political goals set by its leaders". This model does not relate to systematic political development of "any specific or concrete political form", as "a prescriptive policy process for achieving whatever may be the dominant goals of society". In addition to this, the typical prescriptive model is manifested in the fact that:

Marxism views political development as a function of changes in the ownership and means of production, and also a function of class struggle....The political

forms at each stage or level of development correspond to particular stages in economic development.⁷⁶

Moving to the political integration relating to Latin America since 1960s, what we see is that "both as a political means of change and as the content of a deep and large social transformation of society" revolution was "a widespread aim in Latin America".⁷⁷ The revolutionary movement had to do with political modernisation and economic development. For this, the Latin American instance of revolution was provided by the Cuban revolution which was "the most effort ever made to transform the social structure of a Latin American country",⁷⁸ although the Cuban revolution did not achieve the forming of its social, political, and economic goals "ideals and values entirely different from these prevalent in old Cuba and the rest of Latin America".⁷⁹ With respect to revolution in Latin America, some scholars say that the Cuba model revolution did not "fit the present internal and external conditions in Latin America".⁸⁰ That is, revolution in Latin America was not successful in its attempt to meet the profound needs of Latin America. Nonetheless, the paper of the Jesuit society published in 1963 stresses that:

But now we ourselves speak of revolution. Desired or feared, propitiated or combated, revolution is present in the mind of all. And when we speak of revolution we are not thinking of the barrack revolts and mutinies of former years but of something new and different. Almost without wanting to do so we think of Russia, China, and Cuba.⁸¹

Apparently, in Latin America "revolutionary winds" were "blowing". The population of Latin America, where were "inspired by the only revolutionary ideology which it finds within reach: the Marxist ideology",⁸² increased by millions year by year.

This was a radical situation for both the Catholic church and society of Latin America. Modern Catholic theologian works figured prominently in building up the church's new social ideology. In this matter, they are said to turn directly to secular forms of participation without the support of the traditional Catholic based social ideology that condones the political modernisation of Latin America. Evidence for this assumption by Ivan Vallier is that: Latin American political development:

Increasingly centers round the secular reformers' willingness to tie their forms of production, their political objectives, and their concepts about social revolution to Catholicism's "new face". Unless this connection is made, Latin America will continue to show regressive swings, egregious political setbacks, and familiar patterns of disturbance and resistance.⁸³

All this gives the impression that the Latin American Catholic church, when associated with the secular political pattern of Marxism, was a strategic political player in Latin American social dynamics.

In setting out on the march mentioned above, Latin American theologians have tried to accomplish their praxis-orientated theology in observing not the thought of the traditional Catholic theology and liberal Protestant theology, but "the thoughts produced by faith on the humus of Marxism".⁸⁴ Liberation theology thus appears to be a fertile field for research on the direction of the Marxism theology. For example, the words⁸⁵ "exploitation", "class struggle", "capitalism", "poverty", "land owner", and so forth, which are the objectives of Marxist politics

to eliminate them in society, are used as primitive weapons which enable liberation theology to deal with the liberation movement of the poor and oppressed. Particularly, the analysis of exploitation as unequal distribution takes up the main part of liberation theology. Through the analytical evaluation of the Marxist theory in exploitation, liberation theology sees some as exploiters and others as exploited who provide to find the reality of Latin America and to act collectively against the reality. The fact that Juan Segundo has accepted Marxism premises without trying to deny it is that:

Whether everything Marx said is accepted or not, and in whatever way one may conceive his "essential" thinking, there can be no doubt that present-day social thought will be "Marxist" to some extent: that is, profoundly indebted to Marx. In that sense, Latin American theology is certainly Marxist.⁸⁶

The important thing is now to move on to discover the re-interpretation of the Scriptures considered by liberation theology which is embedded in the deepest influence on Marxian political dimensions that transform the existing social structure into a new society. Segundo says that "as to the concrete political forms which Marxism has taken up to now", a Christian must not be "content to tolerate the form in which he is obliged to live out his conviction and his community".⁸⁷ Hence, in the gospel and Jesus' life, liberation theology has to discover "the pervasive influence of politics". The political interpretation of the gospel must be "closely linked to the scandal of an oppressive, iniquitous society in which the privileges enjoyed by a few are paid for by the misery of the many".⁸⁸ This interpretation is made in the light of the problem of human existence through the

use of Marxist categories which "leads to an acceptance....of Marxist world-view that is contradictory to and negates Christian faith".⁸⁹

For the hermeneutic regrounding on an objective theology of human existence and the dynamics of history and society, liberation theology "must consider the body of theological representations (i.e., ideas, images, and symbols) that are used to approach and interpret"⁹⁰ political realities in theological terms. This view tries to interpret traditional Christian representations in the political intent of liberation theology vis-a-vis the social context. That is, the practical and transformative intent of liberation theology in the case of Marx's political theory denies the static formalism of Christian traditional hermeneutics that seeks a retrospective explanation of the past. Nonetheless, Alfredo Fierro does not hesitate to assert that:

Messianism, Christianity, the Exodus story, and prophetism provide political theology with representational approaches or a body of useful representations. In themselves, all the ideas, notions, images of theology can be recast to perform a role in political theology, in the same way as they were recast in an earlier decade to perform a role in existential theology.⁹¹

For liberation theology, thus there is no alternative to this interpretation to endorse "the values of commitment to the poor and reaction against the unjust social structures that exist in Latin America".⁹²

D. Praxis

The final methodological principle of liberation theology, which directs its attention to fundamental historical practical experience, is praxis⁹³ rejecting any dualistic position of supernatural, metaphysics, and two-world theology.⁹⁴ The biblical text must be understood from the perspective of praxis. The direction from praxis to theology is the basic approach of liberation theologians so that we must know why they have given a key place to praxis.

Translated into English as practice, the much-used term "praxis" is of Greek origin, deriving from "I perform some activity".⁹⁵ In modern uses of praxis, no one loses "the history of this complex concept from Aristotle through Marx to the twentieth-century critical theorists".⁹⁶ In addition, praxis is very much tied in Marxist thought to the development of liberation theology. For Aristotle "there are three kinds of knowledge" which are known "by the terms theoria, praxis and poiesis". Theoria is "the life of contemplation" which seeks the religious truth. Praxis is directed to "the personal participation of the individual in the life of the polis". Poiesis is "the productive life" for "a process of human making".⁹⁷ In this concept.

Rather than oppose praxis and theoria, Aristotle wanted to keep politics and philosophy, the practical life and the contemplative life, together.⁹⁸

"Geist" for Hegel is translated as spirit. Spirit is

basically derived:

From the Judaeo-Christian tradition, when God is conceived of as an omniscient, omnipotent, active Being who makes Himself manifest in history and guides history in the form of Divine Providence.⁹⁹

The complex perspective of Hegel's spirit is, however, difficult to clearly discern in several passages. Nevertheless, we discover that:

Spirit, for Hegel, is the guiding principle of history and everything in the world is related to Spirit. Spirit is that dynamic, dialectical and absolute process of becoming which develops the universe by actualising itself in history. This all-pervasive and all-determining Spirit in history is guided ultimately by Divine Providence. It is the individual who reflects the development of Spirit. The individual is the agent through which the Spirit expresses itself in history.¹⁰⁰

This suggests to us that as "access to the absolute principle of Spirit",¹⁰¹ each individual is expressed in Hegel's thinking as follows:

Man is his own action, the sequence of his action, that into which he has been making himself.¹⁰²

Further, Hegel's spirit is "in a continuous state of conflict" and then tries to overcome it "through dialectical activity: affirmation, critical negation and forward movement". This unfolding is "mediated through consciousness" which is understood as "the activity of Spirit" and which "comes into being through contact with other selves". In this sense, praxis is "the praxis of Spirit realising itself in history". Thus,

The rational element in this praxis of Spirit is that which constitutes consciousness. Our consciousness of this rational moment...is what makes up theory. Hegel once said "theory rises only at sundown": it comes after the praxis of Spirit in history; it is the expression of the rational element in the praxis of Spirit. Praxis, then, is the unfolding activity of

the Spirit in the world and theory is the rational articulation of that praxis. There is a unity between praxis and theory for Hegel....This unity...is a unity between the praxis of Spirit and the theory proposed by

the individual. Theory, human knowledge, is always about the praxis of the Spirit and not the praxis of the individual person in the world.¹⁰³

In general, Hegel's synthesis on praxis has been said to provide insight into Marx's own description of the theory-praxis relationship. However, Marx clearly expressed that Hegel's framework of praxis as the praxis of Spirit is "too idealistic and ultimately ideological" and did nothing to change the course of history, or to bring about freedom in the world". Hegel failed to provide the needed substantial specification for constructive transformation. In opposition to Hegel's philosophy,

Marx sets out...to replace the praxis of Spirit by a praxis of human beings. The subject of world history is not Spirit guided by Providence but the praxis of individual human beings.¹⁰⁴

At this point, Marx stepped in and repeatedly raised the issue of praxis which we consider further.

The major thrust of Marx's lifework was not an effort to explain what human being is and what ~~his~~ society is. Rather, Marx's concern

does not only predict the rise of a revolutionary proletariat that will overturn capitalism, but also actively mobilises persons to do this. It intervenes to change the world.¹⁰⁵

Marx here urges persons to undertake action-praxis and then develops his philosophy of praxis. For Marx, there are two different conception of praxis. The first fact is "the source of alienation within society".¹⁰⁶ This means that "workers

are constrained to contribute to the very system that alienates them".¹⁰⁷

This view is seen as scientific Marxism which "deals with the given structures of capitalist society".¹⁰⁸

On the other hand, the other facet is "the creative praxis that is directed towards changing the social conditions of the working masses"¹⁰⁹ for being free from the social conditions.

For their emancipation from capitalist domination, workers must freely choose their action especially on political struggle. This notion comes from critical Marxism.

On the basis of the two theories, the problem with human society for Marx is that capitalism, which is made through blind praxis, is the source of human alienation. Capitalism domination takes the form of control by one class over the working class by means of its control over the objective condition of labouring activity. In order to eliminate the cause of alienation, thus, "Marx's critique of capitalism alienation....is the basic idea of the Marxism system".¹¹⁰ Consequently, Marx's work of alienation is shown:

Not in understanding alienation considered as a fundamental dimension of history, or as a...tension necessarily inherent in the very nature of human self-consciousness, but in...contributing to the realization of that process whereby the distortions and dehumanizations produced by an historically specific mode of production (namely capitalism) might be transcended, overcome, or dialectically resolved, in concrete social and political act.¹¹¹

No doubt, Marx in the theory of alienation displays the devastating effect of capitalist theory on human beings as showing the injustice in the presence of capitalist production and exchange. Capital directs the productive activity of the

workers, whereas the worker has equivalent power to direct the process of capital. In this concept, the worker is not paid properly, as the value of what he produces is appropriated by the capitalist. The labourer loses the right to an equivalent exchange of the value he produces into capital. In the transition from the exchange to production, therefore, for Marx there is a fundamental violation of the right of property upon which exchange itself is based. It is evident that in the process of alienation and exploitation violation is inevitable in production. On this point of view, Marx was concerned with praxis, not merely theory. This praxis is engaged in a powerful struggle to overcome the form of alienation, especially "in the political form of emancipation of the work". 112

Turning now to the theological consideration on praxis, it is possible to say that the term is the most important element of liberation theology as well as of the political theology of Europe. In Marx's work, the traditional approach of theology, as confronting social and political questions by "means of the science of social" today, was "incapable of perceiving the positive data of social phenomena and situation". 113 The ethics, dogmatics, and hermeneutics of traditional theology were unable to engage in contemporary social and political practices for solving concrete human problems. In this form of argument, liberation theology has tried to be a practical theology of praxis exercising a direct influence on social life and developing the future in the realm of concrete activity in Latin America. Thus, the theology has been engaged "in real praxis, under pressure of historical urgency" which demands social and

political life "in revolutionary activity" for establishing the kingdom of God by the means of the social science.¹¹⁴

We here assume that the terms praxis and theory used by liberation theology can serve as the link to those who follow Marx's thought. For this reason, the terms are not part of the Christian tradition to express its theological significance. Traditional Christians have been concerned with changing the world in different ways to those of Karl Marx and Latin American theologians. Like Marxism, liberation theology has called for "new humanistic thought"¹¹⁵ as the radical imperative of a conscious ideological stance. As we have seen, Marx believed in the confrontation of the two classes - those who have and those who have not - the worker for Marx and the poor for liberation theology. Marx rose to replace the property-holders and to socialise the means of production. In the same manner, liberation theology has tried to provide the poor's position as human beings by their own revolutionary and political action. The theology like Marxism has confronted both its national oppressors and the international capitalist forces that account for its plight. This must be reorganised as the final practical implication for the liberation of the poor and oppressed of Latin America, in the name of an inevitable class struggle to bring out economic, social, and political justice. The method of Marx's praxis has been apparently extended to liberation theology in helping the present vigorous approach to social transformation.

Liberation theology, reflecting "on and from within the complex...relationship between theory and practice"¹¹⁶

therefore offers the clear summary that as a dialectical moment within praxis theory illuminates the exact nature of social situation. In other words, theory becomes a necessary instrument to the better understanding of the situation in which unjust social and political structures that oppress and exploit people are immersed. Theory provides the impulse, together with the awareness of injustice for the commitment to the first step towards transforming the situation. Ultimately, as being defined in "a revolutionary or transforming praxis" to aim at breaking down the oppressive structures, praxis for liberation theology is observed in the following paragraphs that:

It has a theoretical and a practical moment, both of which are considered essential to the theological process. In the theoretical moment an analysis of the social structure is undertaken, revealing the relationships of power, oppression, and freedom. The theoretical moment includes reflection on how God is active in human history, bringing judgement and a transformative moment to history. Such analysis and correlation with the perceived activity of God lead to transformative action on the part of the community of believers. 117

With regard to the methodological point of departure, the Latin American theologian consequently seeks to employ the new hermeneutic method of the Scriptures which differs from the traditional hermeneutics of the biblical scholars. In addition to this, G. Gutierrez affirms that:

The real exegesis of God's word. to which theology seeks to make a contribution, takes place in deeds. It is in deeds, not simply in affirmation, that we salvage our understanding of the faith from all forms of idealism. 118

Juan Segundo also adds that:

It cannot simply drag out metaphysical or universal questions that have been handed down from generation to generation by long tradition....Attention to the signs

of the time is the theological criterion which sets off a theology of liberation from a conservative, academic theology. 119

Here, the view is that the approach to the Bible must begin with the discussion of contemporary historical experience (i.e., the social and political context of Latin America). The focus of hermeneutics must be related to factual life and to transforming the conditions of existence. In other words, today's hermeneutics must begin with a personal commitment to eliminate the present reality of economic and political alienation and exploitation in Latin America and to advance liberation.

Hence, the hermeneutics of traditional theology, which tried to separate the church and theology from politics by the means of today's social science, was not that of liberation theology which forces a radical change in biblical and theological interpretations. The relating of hermeneutics to praxis in the light of present reality seeks to apply biblical and theological elements that correspond to creative action for future. As a result, the appreciation of the gospel as a functional tool of praxis is expressed by a political hermeneutics which performs a critique of Marxist ideology that is concerned "with the change in the constitutive mechanisms of the existing society in all its dimensions". 120 On the contrary, the hermeneutics beginning from biblical and theological principles is treated as against the stage of human evolutionary movement.

Conclusion

This chapter has considered the method of liberation theology which is essential to evaluate the Christological

perspective of the theology in the next chapter. For liberation theologians, theology is not simply talk about God and Christ in philosophical terms. Nor is theology simply reflection on the faith of Christian tradition, neither subject faith understood the traditional Christian doctrines that make up the kernel of Christianity. Theology is expressed as reflection on the acceptance of concrete social analysis of the historical situation in the light of liberation theology's faith which respects rationality of social science. 121

Latin American theologians have thus attempted the methodological innovation of their theology as a change from the criteria of orthodoxy to that of orthopraxis. There is every reason to assume that today's social science has measured up to the standard of the method of liberation theology. In attempting to associate their theology with secular social theories, liberation theologians have adopted Marxist social science and terminology. Needless to say, the methodological formulation of the theology in the recognition of the challenge of Marxist social science has reached its culmination in the work of most Latin American liberation theologians.

Consequently, Marx's contribution that responds to social science has given the challenge of the new hermeneutics of the Bible to liberation theology. This means that Marx's thought on social science has been the turning point in resolving the task of the practical hermeneutics of liberation theology which has approached the biblical texts not as being inspired or inerrant in the faith of Christian tradition but as containing emancipatory potential.

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CHAPTER THREE

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CHAPTER THREE

THE CHRISTOLOGY OF LIBERATION THEOLOGY

Having spoken against the limited conception of the Catholic church's role in the society of Latin America, liberation theology has been one of the most significant theological developments in the last twenty years. Latin American theologians have written an abundance of articles and books that have led to the view that their writers are at the forefront of developing liberation theology. The theological formulation of these theologians is the development of critical correlations between the reinterpretation of the Christian theological tradition and the interpretation of the contemporary economic, social, and political situations of Latin America. As a result,

These new interpretations of both the tradition and the contemporary situation have forced these theologians into developing a Christian theological form of ideology-critique of all cognitive claims.¹

In considering this challenge to theology, liberation theologians have acknowledged that the Scriptures play an important role in the formation of their theology. There is general acceptance that the Bible must be used, but there is no evidence that most liberation theologians have used it as an authority which is a necessary precondition of right interpretation. Here our concern on this assumption is not to clarify whether or not the biblical interpretation of liberation theology is authoritative without losing the framework of the canon; rather, it is to understand how liberation theologians have developed the themes of their theology by the means of their

hermeneutical retrieval of the Scriptures. Among the theological themes of liberation theology, the Christological aspect of the theology will be definitely expounded in this chapter, since it is our major goal for this work as we noted above.

Thus chapter three will present the Christological aspect of liberation theology. In relation to this subject, the purpose and beginning of liberation Christology are shown as justifying substantive principles to step up the discussion on the detailed Christological structures of liberation theology. The formative factors of the Christology are then described in the following terms: the person of Jesus Christ, the death of Jesus Christ, the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, and the political Jesus.

A. The Purpose of Liberation Christology

As we have mentioned in the preceding chapter, in liberation theology the Kingdom of God as presented in the New Testament is not reserved for spiritual and futuristic matters beyond and after this earthly life, but for an actual matter which involves an effort to transform the present world. The principle of God's kingdom does not link the religious expectation of the future for another world, but the vision of "this world completely new and renewed".² Jesus' dealing with his contemporary people is not seen in the apocalyptic eschatology as referred to an existence beyond this earth and beyond history. On the contrary, "the kingdom is the transformation of a bad situation, of an oppressive situation"³ in rejecting the sense

of expectation for the parousia, but in recognising the political and social character of all Christian self-understanding in real history. Within this context, Leonard Boff argues that:

The kingdom of God is a total, global and structural transfiguration and revolution of the reality of human beings; it is the cosmos purified of all evils and full of the reality of God. The kingdom of God is not to be in another world but in the old world transformed into a new one.⁴

On this reading, liberation theologians' speculation towards the kingdom of God leads us to the notion of utopia which is associated with the traditional utopian form. In particular, Gustavo Gutierrez's utopia, "which is characterised by its relationship to present historical reality", is "something to be achieved, not a return to a lost paradise".⁵ The principle of Boff and Jon Sobrino's utopia is also contained in the present context of the kingdom on the socio-political level.⁶ Although "utopia is a complex entity"⁷ in history, the utopia of liberation theology appears as transforming humanistic social, political and economic visions of tomorrow, into the reality of today. Alfredo Fierro likewise agrees that "the gospel message does include a social and earthly utopia" in relation to "an illustration of the absolute utopia" in relation to "an illustration of the absolute utopia of God's kingdom".⁸ Gutierrez's utopia especially comes closer to that of Thomas More who was interested in "renewal of the social order and its political structures" while criticising "society and its existing structures by depicting a kind of ideal State: Utopia."⁹ Moreover, it is a sound instinct that leads us to assume that the utopia of liberation theology¹⁰ would be rooted in the giant

symbols in the history of utopianism: Thomas Muntzer looked at "the revolutionary transformation of Christian expectation",¹¹ Ernest Bloch saw the kingdom of God as the concept of "the social utopia"¹² which "reflects the aspirations of a new class for a future dwelling place that transcends the alienation of the present world order";¹³ and Karl Marx fashioned "a utopian dream of a future world community of social freedom and free, creative human activity".¹⁴

The utopian hope of liberation theology is another major shift relative to the traditional Christian pattern of life in a historical cosmos. Borrowing from Gutierrez, "the repudiation of a dehumanising situation is an unavoidable aspect of utopia" as "a denunciation of the existing order".¹⁵ Utopia hence makes people sensitive to:

Its orientation towards radical social change that is complete contrast with all the existing order of society....Utopia is inevitably a critique of reality, and so all criticism if society contains some utopian strain within it...Utopia "establishes a space for desire"...It projects a social space or locale in which human desire can take organised shape in forms that are not repressive.¹⁶

The utopia of liberation theology consequently provides an image that influences people to thought and action for bringing actual social change.

Here, the ultimate goal of liberation theology is seen in the utopian kingdom of man to be realised in the community, place, and time of this world, not of another world. The kingdom is the only hope for the future and the world and the very ultimate goal of salvation (or liberation) which is applied to the realm of earthly history and the socio-political situation.

Therefore:

Liberation theology is a theology of salvation in the concrete historical and political conditions of the present day. ¹⁷

Further:

The Christian symbol of salvation is conflated with the symbol of liberation. The history of Christian salvation is a history of liberation. And this liberation should be understood in such a way that it includes being freed from progressive historical, cultural, social, economic and political structures. ¹⁸

But salvation is not something that is achieved once for all in history, but "ongoing historical process...which Jesus initiated and his followers continue". ¹⁹

In seeking an answer to this, liberation theology has reflected back on Jesus Christ as a being who saw the kingdom of God as his ultimate goal in relation to an historical situation. ²⁰ The work and life of Jesus are of the highest importance for the Christological perspective of the theology in connection with the real condition of the Latin American people. Thus, the important thing is to consider the portrait of a critical Jesus whom traditional theologians ignored, to take other possible aspects of the social, political, and historical import of Jesus' life. Liberation theology in this sense has tried to reinterpret the whole patrimony of Jesus Christ to be found in the Bible. The only goal in re-examining Jesus who was/is in the dominated periphery is to actualize his life in the service of the economic, social, and political liberation of the poor people in Latin America. For liberation theology,

This new direction is the most clearly seen in the priority given to the praxis of following Jesus in announcing the kingdom, denouncing injustice, and seeking to embody or realise the kingdom, at least partially, in real life. 21

B. The Beginning of Liberation Christology

In finding the existing Christology in traditional notions inadequate for meeting the contemporary reality of Latin America, liberation theologians have come face to face with the question of the Christ of faith: who is Jesus for today? The advance of this question over the preceding dogmatic one is not simple. Yet it has led us to the wholesale condemnation of the dogmatic formula of Christology in a way which is calculated to arise from an abstract intimacy with the current history. In making the historical Jesus who is discovered in the biblical text the limits of understanding, the Chalcedonian formula thus:

Expresses the universality of Christ in abstract terms, and such abstraction leaves room for the possibility of manipulating the future of Christ 22

For his own Christological speculation in opposition to the Chalcedonian formula, Jon Sobrino has used the following verse: "But if I cast out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you"(Luke 11:20). In the light of the verse, what Sobrino understands is that

Jesus did demonstrate an awareness of his special relationship with God....He personally felt a special union with his Father, as we know from the celebrated terminological difference between Jesus' reference to "my" Father and "your" Father. 23

This new understanding of Christology from the gospel through the post-apostolic church to the Chalcedonian formula indicates an increasing concern to clarify Jesus' origin "in the

biblical terms of being at work in the world", ²⁴ not in the hypostatic terms of metaphysical theory and religious myth. The Christological enterprise of traditional theology which "rests on Christian faith and its commitment to Jesus as God's Christ" ²⁵ concentrating on the saviour of the world, dehistoricises the Nazarite man in employing metaphysical categories. But Latin American theologians feel that they no longer live in a world which is dominated by the principles of ancient philosophers so that they no longer need to subscribe to the Christological implications of traditional theology which is basically supernatural and inhuman. Perhaps it would be better to see a new way of thinking and acting in the Christological perception, because each culture should make its own adaptation. In the new world of emerging theological diversity, thus, it is inevitable for Latin American theologians to bear little resemblance to their traditional counterpart.

Likewise liberation theology has seen the Christological position of Rudolf Bultmann as "the Christ of faith". ²⁶ In the way of the kerygma-theology, Bultmann's intention was the kerygmatic Christ as the crucified and risen Lord who was proclaimed by his disciples on the conviction of Jesus' resurrection after his death. This means that Jesus Christ, who cannot be objectively established as accessible to historical research. is present and known only "in the Word of preaching at any given time". ²⁷ The proclaimed Christ is the present Jesus whom we meet in the word of preaching which brings illumination. Bultmann "did not deny the historical Jesus". Yet in his

Christological formula, "the historical Jesus was not as important as the Christ of faith, the mythological Christ". To accept "the mythological model for a personal Christology" 28 is to gain some advantages in dealing with the meaning of Jesus without it being difficult to prevent the development of existential Christology. For Bultmann, the advantages in accepting Jesus as a mythical figure are: we find "some elements in Christology that cannot and shall not be taken as absolutes" which indicate dogmatic formulations. We are able "to seek new expressions and possibilities for the contemporary mind" at the various levels of the value of Christianity. Finally, "if we have Christianity based upon a mythical Christ of faith, then there are no particular bounties that can be ascribed to Christianity". 29

However, Bultmann's mythical perception "leaves the faith open to serious problems". 30 For liberation theology, Bultmann's work:

Takes away from us the criterion by which we can judge Mark, Luke, Matthew, John, Paul and other scriptural authors and see to what extent they interpreted and developed the original message of Jesus when confronted with the new necessities of their respective communities. 31

Latin American theologians who have shown an interest in the historical Jesus are here ready to avoid the Christology of Bultmann, since they have not believed the kerygmatic Christ without a historical Jesus. It is unthinkable to say that they historical Jesus of flesh, of the Galilean road, and of living with the poor has become an unknown in the context of mythologised gospel interpretations. Jesus Christ who is at

present in the kerygma cannot be shown in a worldly, historicized and eschatologized meaning as capable of actualization to the historical event of the Nazarite man Jesus in the way of the method of liberation theology.

Throughout history Jesus Christ should be interpreted by each age as the perfect man and exemplar through which all men strive to achieve their liberation from inhuman reality. With the advent of this view, there are serious attempts to understand what kind of God was and what Jesus did in Palestine in his time. This means that most of the Christological outlooks of liberation theology should be governed by factors which are surveyed in the historical investigation of early Christology. The meaning of traditional Christological titles in reference to Jesus Christ lacks in content, if Jesus is understood without the recourse of factual knowledge about Jesus himself. Jesus' words and deeds should be developed on the basis of the historical Jesus. This might seem to indicate that the Christological implication of traditional theology has not developed from the real story of the first Jesus. Having observed this, Sobrino has noted that various Christologies dealing with basis dogmatic terms "ignore or partialize the history of Jesus". 32

In pursuing the dynamic application of Christology for Latin America, therefore, liberation theology must not begin "with kerygmatic presentation of Jesus Christ" 33 and with the mythical and metaphysical presentation of traditional Christology, but with the historical Jesus who:

Refers to the actual concrete, this worldly person Jesus of Nazareth as he can be retrieved, reconstructed and known through critical historical research. 34

Despite the historical distance that separates us from Jesus' contemporary time, Jesus' public preaching and activity can arrive at the same essential labels which are available to be used in developing the Christological assumption of liberation theology as for here and now. That is, the historical approach to Jesus Christ is able to give Latin American theologians an answer that directs them to the possibility of the Latin American peoples deciding for themselves their economic, social and political destiny.

Liberation theology hence suggests a new hermeneutical direction which can demonstrate the historical meaning of the Scriptures in order to speak definitely of its message for the contemporary historical events of Latin America.³⁵ This new hermeneutical interest tries to escape from the hermeneutics of the Christ of faith which absolutized the representative materials of the Bible in an attempt to make them atemporal and other-worldly. When dealing with the instances of the historical Jesus words and practice, the Christological hermeneutics of liberation theology does not intend to understand the import and meaning of the Scriptures in religious concepts, but seeks to place the biblical record at the service of the historical renewal of Latin American realities.³⁶ It is a radical reaction against the traditional Christology of the Catholic church. This hermeneutical reflection especially rejects any normative Christian notion of the Bible and doctrinal theology. But liberation theologians have used the new hermeneutical procedure in relation to other disciplines, such as economics, sociology, politics, history and ideology. To make sure of this,, they look

at the synoptic gospels as it seems to be the most conscious of showing the actual historical Jesus. They are specially faithful to variations in Mark as the earlier good news containing original historical message of Jesus towards humanity for the weak. In the following sections therefore we will consider the representative example in which liberation theologians have developed their Christological speculation concerning Jesus' meaning for today.

C. The Person of Jesus

The first Christians did not write the biography of Jesus Christ which modern theologians seek. Rather, they were concerned with writing what they believed, experienced and confessed about the person of Jesus of Nazareth who lived in Palestine. The beliefs and life of the early church concerning the person of Jesus were expressed in their religious practice and devotion with regard to the living Christ and his present relationship to mankind. Christian life and Christian thought thus centred around the person Jesus. In the apostolic witness to the Jesus Christ event, the names Jesus (of Nazareth) and Christ (Messiah) were combined in the one title transforming the confession "Jesus (who is) the Christ" to the confessional name Jesus Christ. This title for the person Jesus of Nazareth is found in Jewish Christian writings (Matt. 1:1; Rom. 1:7, Heb. 13:18; James 1:1; and Pet. 1:1). With regard to belief in the title, Jesus Christ was the goal of the primitive Nazarene church for the needs of preaching and mission propaganda. 37

In relation to the historical study of early century Christian thought regarding the person of Jesus of Nazareth, the writings of the Apostolic Fathers and early Apologists tended to develop an orthodoxy which contains "the relation of Jesus to God and....the relation of divinity and humanity in Jesus". 38 In other words, Jesus Christ was spoken of as God and as pre-existent, and his Incarnation was described in the following terms, "the Lord who saved us became flesh". When dealing with Christological titles, some of the early theologians overstressed Jesus Christ's humanity (i.e., the Ebionites-adoptionism 39 , and some of them emphasised his divinity (i.e. the Gnostics-Docetism 40). For the orthodox theologians, no other consideration loomed in their Christological concepts. Their Jesus Christ must be "truly God and truly man, a hypostatic union of two natures in one person, the second person of the Trinity" 41

Latin American theologians' work on the meaning of Christology has focused on the humanity of Jesus Christ in the historical point of view. The uniqueness of Jesus is not his divinity but his humanity in the context of anthropology. Unlike the theologians of the past, Latin American theologians have not tried to expose Jesus' dual nature as God and Man which was the sole basis of traditional Christology. With the conviction that the Christological affirmation of traditional theology was mistaken, liberation theology has offered Jesus as a true human being who related his experience to all human

experience and who had:

A profound religious experience that was the psychological ground or experiential source for his message and manner of life. 42

Jesus did not involve himself in religion for liberation theology. Yet there seems to have been the element of religious experience with the One Jesus calling his God "Abba". Jesus' addressing God as Abba in his prayer suggests "a vivid awareness of a new relationship with God" as his religious experience "both of the presence of God to him and of his own active conformity to God's will". 43 In this respect, as "the son of a poor family" 44 Jesus discovered the basis of his life in his own practice and then he could live "with a definite sense of purpose for his life" in the light of "his proclamation of the kingdom of God". 45

In saying that God as Abba was operative in Jesus' public life, another clue is that:

The fidelity and obedience that characterised his life manifests a deep union of wills with God or dedication to God. 46

This means that Jesus was submissive to God in order to bring the kingdom which is the most basic human aspiration.

Jesus' fidelity was seen as his highest witness to the certainty that God the Father offers salvation (liberation) to humankind. Jesus engaged not in the fundamental matter of religious dogma, but in the submission to his mission as the living condition of fidelity. Therefore, Jose Comblin has sensed that during his life in a definitive way Jesus "identified himself with the sentiments of the Old Testament" 47 and:

Was obedient to the Father according to the style and the form of the Jews. He read the Scriptures and discovered in them God's orders and instructions. As a servant to God, he submitted his mission and entire activity to the word of the sacred book 48

This relation of the creative fidelity and obedience of Jesus leads us to see that Jesus was not to offer his whole life in the religious cult in the Temple of Jerusalem, but as a ransom for many in the material world. For liberation theology, Jesus must not be presented as affirming his kingship in a religious and cosmic manner as the characteristic Christological motif in the early church. Jesus as a human being did not seek advice from those who were in power: the Pharisees, the priests, the scribes, the Roman soldiers, and the Roman philosophers of his contemporary time. Instead, Jesus' whole life had been marked by a self-abnegation or self-negation in relation to God" 49 to liberate the poor from the fear of suffering and from the false religious attitude of the Pharisees. From this point of view, Jesus who took a determinate position on the side of the abandoned people is shown as providing a creative or imitative stimulus to liberation theologians who fight against the economic, social and political realities of Latin America.

The faith of liberation Christology, which denotes that God as Abba was present in and at work in the man Jesus of Nazareth, consequently seems to go against the unity between humanity and divinity in Jesus which had been the principle of traditional Christology 50 . For seeking a contribution to a new Christology with something meaningful to say about Jesus at a time when the poor and oppressed are deeply stirred by the desire of liberation, the best approach is to liberate Jesus from the

type of definition concerning his status with regard to God as is laid down in the dogmatic statement of the hypostatic union. On this matter, the speculation of the Christological mystery in orthodoxy only leads liberation theologians to the crucial Christological question: how does God actualise himself to be a human being in a oneness of person with the man Jesus of Nazareth? The human nature of Jesus Christ cannot be understood "in a personal manner on a divine ontological level". 51

Thus the Latin American Christological concept of the divinity of Jesus is expressed in the timely act of the well-motivated economic, social and political movement. In other words, the historical activity of Jesus for others leads us to affirm "the divinity of Jesus in relationship to the Father" in the concept of the term modality. The personal unity of humanity and divinity in Jesus is hence defined by Jon Sobrino in the following way that:

Jesus is a person who becomes the person he is precisely through his surrender to the Other who is the Father. The divinity in Jesus is the modality of this personal relationship with the Father, which takes place in history and amid the conflict-ridden reality of history. 52

In addition to this view,

The divinity of Jesus consists of his concrete relationship to the Father. This unique, peculiar, and unrepeatable way of being in relationship with the Father is what constitutes his concrete way of participating in divinity. 53

Here, Jesus' divinity is formed in the solidarity that is essential to the struggle for liberating marginalized people. In this sense, the divine wholeness of Jesus requires solidarity. This is a praxic focus of Jesus' divinity. In order to assert

the divinity of the historical Jesus, Sobrino argued that the divinity of Jesus consisted:

Merely in his psychological, historically experienced relationship with God in trust and obedience. 54

Latin American Christology, not surprisingly, rejects the affirmation of dogmatic Christological mystery. Jesus' divinity is described in his historical filiation with God, "in carrying out his mission to proclaim and realize the kingdom of God". 55

In this form of argument, the traditional perception of Jesus' sonship should be reclarified in the Christological style of liberation theology. As we have seen above, the historical Jesus did not bind his use of God as Abba to himself. He was not concerned with teaching his disciples to use Abba as he did. Rather, the carpenter's son Jesus of Nazareth stimulated his disciples directly and indirectly to use his own distinctive address to God as Abba adapted in his prayer. From this tension, Latin American theologians suppose that Jesus "experienced his sonship as a unique relationship with God" 56 in his eschatological mission. When we look at our oldest written statement on the standard orthodoxy of Christology, God became human in Jesus and then the incarnate Jesus as perfect God and perfect man penetrated the divine reality of the eternal Son in the concept of the Trinity. For liberation Christology, however, this Christology is beyond comprehension and becomes unrecognisable or meaningless. Jesus could not become isolated from the rest of human beings with whom he fully identified, although it is possible to assert that he was different in kind in his relationship with God.

As the direct opposite of the traditional formulation of Christology that God became man in the man Jesus of Nazareth, Juan Segundo has offered "an antichristology" ⁵⁷ which seems to connect Jesus with the criteria that guides the Latin American people in trying to get the ultimate answer of solving the misery reality in Latin America. In other words, as "an ordinary human being" ⁵⁸ Jesus became the Son of God on the basis of his real-life history "as a witness to a more human and liberated human life". ⁵⁹ That is, Jesus' whole life as God's Son was one of bottomless suffering on the cross. For this, the Christological model of liberation theology proposed by Sobrino is that:

The human being, Jesus of Nazareth, becomes the Son of God in and through his concrete history. The advantage of this model is that it does justice to the history of Jesus as it is presented in the New Testament. Jesus is someone who learns obedience and arrives at perfection. ⁶⁰

Consequently, what we can conclude from the notion of liberation Christology is no doubt that Latin American theologians refer:

Not to the divine character of Jesus as Son of God, but to the filiation with respect to God that characterises the human being. ⁶¹

The final category of the person of liberation Christology is the lordship of Jesus Christ. The phrase "Jesus is Lord" was the earliest of the Christian confessions and produced various acts of Christian worship. Jesus' Lordship over his church, over the whole world, and over all the visible and invisible creation was carried out through the church and its proclamation. The significance of the title in the mission of the church was particularly linked to Jesus' exaltation "by virtue of his resurrection", ⁶² of claiming that "the crucified Christ is the

one who fulfils God's plan of salvation", and of asserting that "the same divine power is active both in creation and salvation" in splitting of the creative power of God between God the Father and Christ the Lord". 63

In the light of this lordship, the first Christians constantly and strongly confessed that Jesus is "now equal with God 64 that in worship they experienced Christ's presence", and that "the lordship of Christ began with his ascension and will end with his return". 65 Particularly, "the realm of Christ's lordship is much longer than that of the Church", since the period of the church must come to an end with Christ's second coming. This means that the realm of Christ's lordship is not limited to heaven and earth, but that of the church is limited to earth.

For liberation Christology, however, there can be no discussion of this issue of what the first Christians believed and proclaimed. It is against the background that "the new Testament proclaims Jesus as the eschatological Lord". 66 The presentation of Jesus as Lord must take place in discontinuity with the early church tradition whilst at the same time reinterpreting its content. In order to understand the eschatological lordship of the biblical text, firstly, everything about Jesus must be discovered in the historical Jesus. Liberation Christology cannot speak the truth about the traditional interpretation of lordship on which the primitive Christian community was based without asserting the authentic historical basis. In this way, Latin American theologians have articulated their understanding of lordship in the historical

Jesus. The articulation is that the historical Jesus as a man stood on the sideline of his contemporary social misery which led him "to the human helplessness and death". 67 The life of Jesus was not religiously motivated to be used as the Christological dogma "but socio-political in effect", 68 through the event of Calvary. Thus the lordship of Latin American Christology can be seen from the service of Jesus.

The next tone of this uneasiness with the early Christian faith is therefore that the pattern of Jesus' lordship presupposes the conviction of the religious eschatological fulfilment through the parousia of Jesus Christ. But liberation theology has tried to explain the relocation of the lordship of Jesus in a different way from that of the early church. As quite contrary to the original intention of the first Christians, in Latin American theologians' view Jesus exercised his lordship "as a force for the transformation of reality". 69 What we here feel is: when Jesus is identified with others' needing help and solidarity, or when his conduct is marked by concern for the poor and deprived, his lordship appears in what he does. This lordship is seen as a force to eliminate the historical reality of injustice. Latin American theologians see Jesus as the Lord for others, because they regard him as a fellow man who struggled against the powerful.

Liberation theologians have seen that the fundamental attitude of Jesus' life was not religious trust but participation in actual life. Like Edward Schillebeeckx, these theologians have expressed that through his radical "conduct of life and his

innocent suffering and dying on the cross" Jesus stirred us to reread the history of his time that "is a source of a renewal". 70 Jesus, who identified himself with his contemporaries in his poverty and his commitment, is the hope that contributes to the overall effort to liberate humanity in Latin America. In the historical life of Jesus, thus, liberation theologians have found the call for a revolutionary break with the economic, social, political realities of Latin America and the construction of a radically new one. Jesus, who was committed to the liberation of the most oppressed, continues to accompany the Latin American community that struggles for the coming of the kingdom. By way of conclusion on this issue, Sobrino has described that in the liberation Christology the lordship of Jesus:

Is nothing more than the renewal of reality, both in the believer's personal freedom and in the progressive becoming of the kingdom of God both continues to be the historical Jesus and the poor whom he served and sought to liberate. 71

D. The Death of Jesus

The primitive Christian community believed Jesus' death on the cross was the fulfilment of the apocalyptic implication which provides "the understanding of the expiation accomplished by Jesus' death with its universal significance for many". This expiatory character of Jesus' death was consequently understood "as ultimate and final, requiring no further supplementation" 72 for "a saving and expiatory death for us and for many". 73 In this sense, the first Christians came to believe that Jesus died for our sins according to the Scriptures. The death of Jesus

was the essential proclamation of the primitive Christian community and became "so tremendously influential for the history of Christian piety" and Christian extension. This death also placed Jesus:

In a great divine salvation history and had him appear as its crown and completion; only thus did the community make this picture of Jesus of Nazareth influential. 74

All of this, though showing clear signs of reflection on Jesus' death, is indeed problematical for liberation theologians to say with confidence anything to the point about how the first Christians understood Jesus' death in the view of the religious eschatological perspective. For liberation Christology, Jesus' death should be rooted in the historical Jesus whose life is always understood by the synoptic which come "closest to historical documents in our sense" 75 rather than the rest of the New Testament. For example, "the interpretation of Jesus' death presented in the Letter to the Hebrews" speaks of the sacerdotal activity in Atonement ritual as the type of what Jesus himself fulfilled. This prior act goes in not only with the blood of expiation but also with the blood of the covenant in the concept of the Old Testament. However, their observation does not contribute to "the comprehensive liberation of the human being". This approach to death:

Grows out of concrete historical premises, which have themselves occurred in a concrete historical context. Jesus was sentenced to death because he opposed a sinful situation, and because he did not hesitate to name those who had caused this situation. 76

Similarly, Leonardo Boff has accepted that the death of Jesus

happened from rejecting the oppressive practice of authority and the mechanism of privilege which produce alienation, domination, and exploitation. Jesus was not afraid to counteract the economic, social, political forces in both the civil and religious society of his time. He refused to allow the Jewish interpretation of religion to be maintained as an absolute. On the contrary, Jesus tried to create a new attitude towards God, human life, and the future in a way which involves the new order for which the poor hope. 77 This was to deny the existing society of his time.

Boff adds that:

Jesus' death is intimately bound up with his proclamation, and his practical activities. His call for conversion, his new image of God, his freedom towards sacred tradition, and his prophetic criticism of those holding political, economic, and religious power combined to provoke the conflict that resulted in his violent death. 78

For Boff, Jesus was hence a sign of contradiction, pointing to a crisis in the Roman authorities and Judaism. This was a reason to let him die on the cross.

In Claus Bussmann's writings, Ruben R. Dri insists that "Jesus' death was the consequence of his subversive activity, which endangered the power of the might". The whole life of the man Jesus of Nazareth was to proclaim the love of liberation which "threatens the privileges of the oppressors". 79 The essential content of Jesus' preaching attacked the authorities who dominated the social system of Israel and was bound up with the ignorant, the poor, and the marginalized in connection with justifying their sorry situation in society. Thus:

Jesus and the institution have aversion. They exclude each other. The dominating classes - religious, economic, and political - defend the social system that

Jesus turns away from, condemns, and revolutionizes. Jesus is very far from attempting to limit himself and his activity to what that system allows. 80

Raul Vinales went on to confirm that Jesus' death is explained as "the death of a prophet or a "just" one " who as the Messiah is a different person who "encourages human beings to take control of their destiny and history". To be sure:

Jesus is sentenced to death simply because he, like so many other just human beings before and after him, was not afraid to take a position outside the status quo, in words and deeds alike. 81

As Edward Schillebeeckx puts it, 82 here Latin American theologians have observed that Jesus' death was in continuity with the reaction to his words and deeds against the Roman authorities and the Jewish religious authorities who are described as oppressors in the sense of modern man. The death of Jesus must be "the consequence of his life and work" regarded "as an attack on the foundations of the religious and political orders of the Jewish state" 83 under the rule of the Roman Empire. In the judgment of liberation theologians, therefore, Jesus' death as articulated in the salvific implication of the New Testament and in the tradition of Christian faith must be free from the belief that it was an atoning death for humankind in the concept of a propitiary sacrifice, but must stand as a new way of corresponding to the historical outcome of Jesus' public life in the reality of the Roman occupation.

In this primary vision of Jesus' death, Latin American theologians have attached great importance to the cross of Jesus, since it is part of the experience of the historical and essential of liberation Christology. Jesus' cross "as the

historical consequence of his life" 84 was God's plan which involved his live to transform present inhuman reality. God's plan did not come down;

To manipulating history in order to get to the one and only thing that interests him: Jesus' crucifixion as a work of redemption....However, God's plan can and should be understood in terms of the real, authentic incarnation of God. 85

The cross is not seen as a symbol of suffering in relation to the vision of Chalcedonian tradition, but gives rise to positive moment in the effort to achieve liberation. Jesus' cross is unacceptable for a mere cultic experience but acceptable for a liberative hermeneutics which is grounded in the present reality of misery and oppression.

The cross of Jesus in this type of thinking brings us to see Sobrino's incarnational concept taking place between Jesus as Son and God as Father. In the light of Sobrino's theological view, the cross became a foundational systematic tool that permits a form of the incarnational theology through the event of the cross. That is, the cross was employed as maintaining the transcendence of God. God as Father was experienced by Jesus personally present on the cross. As a true human being, Jesus experienced himself as the Son of God in the liberative relationship with the Father as a result of his divinity. God chose to reveal himself as the Son Jesus through suffering love on the cross whilst Jesus became the Son of God through giving himself in service to others. In this new awareness of Jesus' cross, Sobrino senses that:

On the cross of Jesus God himself is crucified. The Father suffers the death of the Son and takes . Upon himself all the pain and suffering of history. In this

ultimate solidarity with humanity he reveals himself as the God of love, who opens up a hope and a future through the most negative side of history. Christian existence is nothing else but a process of participating in this same process whereby God loves the world and hence in the very life of God. 86

Through the cross, God the Father surrendered Jesus the Son and demonstrated his love for humanity in his ultimate solidarity with man in his inhuman reality. With this consideration, liberation theologians come to see that "on the cross of Jesus God was present...and at the same time absent" in expressing the concept of this dialectics. 87

Furthermore, the cross revealed God's presence "in conjecture with historical path that leads Jesus to the cross." 88 On Jesus' cross, God became powerless in love and suffering in order to transform present injustice reality. God is not "the one who holds, and wields power" expressed by traditional theology and other philosophical implications, but "submerged within the negative". 89 For liberation theology, God's transcendental presence in the hypostasis of Chalcedon cannot become the subject of discussion. Through the event of the cross, the transcendence of God is known in "quite the opposite of divine: i.e. suffering". 90 As a consequence of incarnational theology, therefore, Jesus' cross:

Is not the result of some divine decision independent of history; it is the outcome of the basic option for incarnation in a given situation. That entails conflict because sin holds power in history and takes the triumphant form of religious and political oppression. Jesus had to choose between evading all that or facing up to it squarely. He chose the latter course, challenging the idolatrous use of power to oppress people and the idolatrous conception of God that justified such use. 91

E. The Resurrection of Jesus

The New Testament and the later Christian tradition introduced their testimony to the resurrection of Jesus with the truth of Easter. Our earliest Christian confession was: "If Christ had not been raised, then our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain"(I. Cor. 15:14); and "God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by his power"(I Cor. 6:14). Apparently the first Christians described God as the One who raised Jesus from the dead and worshipped their God as the God of resurrection. They believed that Jesus who was actually raised from the dead was taken into heaven, and that he is now reigning there.

But this formula, which is among the earliest confessional statements of Christian faith, is far from that which most liberation theologians have spoken of Jesus' resurrection. It is difficult to accept the following conclusion: Christian faith in Jesus as the Son of God which stands with the truth of Easter provides historical evidence for the decisive divine intervention in the history of salvation in expiatory value. 92 Thus, liberation theologians have initiated a new movement in Jesus' resurrection by breaking the traditional view of the resurrection for the individual here and now. The resurrection of the crucified must be reinterpreted in the sense of a this-worldly existence not of an other-worldly existence.

Boff has argued that there are problems in his own approach in the resurrection from a dogmatic point of view. For him, "the account concerning the resurrection of Jesus, the empty sepulchre

and the apparitions to the disciples" 93 become somewhat problematic in trying to reconstruct the original nature of the raised Jesus. As we know it, the story of the empty tomb occurs in all four gospels, although each case is marked by divergences in matters of detail. However, without any detailed discussion Boff has held that as being firstly discovered by Mary Magdalane the empty tomb is not reliable enough for him. In other words, Boff is unable to use the story of the empty sepulchre to ground his Christological implication that Jesus was really raised by God inside the sepulchre and that he is now at the right hand of God as an exalted life. Thus, the empty tomb is "an ambiguous sign, subject to various interpretations". In fact, the story of the empty tomb is "an invitation to faith" which "makes people think and bring them to reflect on the possibility of the resurrection". 94

For Boff, the details of the appearance tradition of the raised Jesus were not quite factual. Rather, the appearance stories of Jesus were relatively problematic from the eyes of historians. The perfect appearance of Jesus as the datable historical events of the past seem difficult to harmonize completely with the general picture of what happened at Easter. In Boff's view, the appearance tradition of the raised Jesus is seen "as a latter addition" or "as a later elaboration" 95 on the passages of the appearance narratives. This means that the appearance of Jesus must begin as credible statements which later developed into full-length stories.

Like Jon Sobrino, Boff has preferred to use his own phrase "the apparitions of Christ", instead of using the phrase "the

appearances of the raised Jesus". In Boff's thought, the apparitions of Christ to the disciples and others:

Were not subjective visions, products of the faith of the community, but really trans-subjective apparitions, a witness to an impact that imposed itself from outside. 96

With this picture, Boff has been convinced that faith in Jesus' resurrection was "the fruit of the impact on the apostles of the apparitions of the living Lord". "Without this, they would never have preached the crucified Jesus as Lord." 97

At the same time, the traditional insight of the first Christians held the resurrection to be the supernatural event as the result of the direct intervention of God in the historical process. Both the emphasis of "the corporal reality of Jesus and the identity of the resurrected Jesus with Jesus of Nazareth" 98 were the inevitable consequence of approaching the religious institution. The resurrection of Jesus marked an entry into the eternal life of God. This is, the resurrection is conceived in such a way as to imply that he had gone to heaven from, whence he will return in understanding "the apocalyptic vein". 99

For Boff, the resurrection cannot be placed in the context of eschatological faith in the specific form of apocalyptic expectation. The Resurrection must contain contemporary significance in relation to the basic anthropological relevance. 100 Hence, Boff has considered the resurrection in terms of a new possibility of existence which includes the possibility of liberation from the inhuman reality of history. The resurrection ought to express not simply a hope for the future in religious experience but a hope for the present in political

terms. Here Boff has tried to clarify the resurrection of Jesus in terms of liberation. For what Boff affirms is that:

The meaning of the resurrection as total liberation only becomes clear when it is set in a context of Jesus' struggle for the establishment of the kingdom in this world. Otherwise it degenerates into pious cynicism about the injustice of the world, combined with an idealism that has no connection with history. Through his resurrection, Jesus continues his activity among men and women and arouses them to the struggle for liberation. All genuinely human growth, anything that can really be called justice in social relationship, and whatever is conducive to the multiplication of life, represent a form of the actualization of the resurrection, the anticipation and preparation of its future plenitude 101

We turn next to Jon Sobrino who has developed his view of the resurrection of Jesus. Like Boff, Sobrino has not accepted the resurrection tradition of the raised Jesus which has been drawn from faith. Faith cannot make certain what the historical evidence is itself unable to establish. Thus, Sobrino has presented the presupposition of resurrection belief in three aspects: the historical aspect ("what really happened"); the theological aspect ("what exactly is the significance of the resurrection event"); and a hermeneutical aspect ("how is it possible to comprehend the events and its meaning"). 102

The historical aspect of the resurrection. For Sobrino, "there is no historical tradition in the New Testament that deals with the resurrection event itself". 103 The important point here is that the formula of the resurrection narratives on the New Testament data is not available today because it speaks of the resurrection not as an historical event but as a meta-historical event. In this view, "faith in the risen Jesus does not depend

on the existence (or non-existence) of the empty tomb" and leads us "incorrectly to envision" the experience of Jesus' apparitions "as the revival of a corpse". The empty tomb and the appearance are discrepancies which:

Can be explained in terms of the theological apologetic, or kerygmatic motives of the final redactors and the situation in their perspective communities. 104

The experience of both the empty tomb and the appearances must not be literally interpreted in terms of the concept of an apocalyptic belief in the resurrection of the dead at the end of the world.

Therefore, Sobrino has posed a challenge to the resurrection tradition of the church in ignoring "a new science of history". 105 In his defence of his position, Sobrino has said that according to the disciples Jesus was not raised from the dead in historical evidence but:

(1) God raised the crucified Jesus from the dead; (2) on him is grounded the whole future of justice for sinners and those subjected to injustice, oppression, and death; (3) the disciples are not merely spectators to this event. They are witness which implies that they are summoned to a faith and a love that is meant to overcome the world. 106

Here, Sobrino is not dealing with the resurrection event of Jesus in terms of human being-towards-death (i.e., a restoration to a normal state of human physical life) but in terms of the whole history of suffering. So with respect to the possible symbolic character of the cause and event of Jesus' resurrection, Sobrino has tried to generalise the resurrection in terms of "the questioning search for justice, by asking about the final future of witness and their murderers". 107 Jesus' resurrection is not experienced in some transcendent dimension of salvation in heaven

but in here and now on earth where human beings live. Thus, Sobrino's resurrection ought to deal "with the triumph of justice" and with the following question: who will be victorious, the oppressor, or the oppressed?" 108

The theological aspect of the resurrection. The mystery of God and Jesus was formulated in Greek thought from the beginning of the church. Greek philosophy tried to recognise God on some cognitive mysteries, not on the cross, In Sobrino's thinking, the resurrection of Jesus speaks of three theological aspects, God, humanity and history, and Jesus himself. As "something very similar to the Old Testament's efforts to define God in historical terms, directly, Sobrino's God is the one who held the Hebrew people free in the midst of historical bondage. This God again demonstrated his liberating action in the case of Jesus who died on the cross at the hands of the religious authorities and the Roman authorities. Sobrino's God is clearly:

defined as a liberative power that has also become a historized love affair after the cross of Jesus. God not only raised Jesus from the dead but also handed him over out of love for human beings. 109

That is to say that God discloses himself as the same God who showed his decisive self-manifestation in the cross-resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The resurrection of Jesus secondly talks of humanity and history. For Sobrino, "God's action in Jesus has been a salvific action of pardon and revival rather than of retribution". 110 Through Jesus's resurrection in God's action which calls forward into new possibilities of being, Sobrino has experienced the transformation of the personal and social dimension of existence.

The resurrection of Jesus from the dead is the energizing force which acknowledges the kingdom of freedom in history. The raised Jesus, who suffered with mankind in history, is the first person who called his brothers and sisters to enter into the kingdom of God.

Jesus' resurrection finally speaks of Jesus himself. For this, Sobrino's concern has been to distinguish the relationship that must exist between God and the raised Jesus after the resurrection event. "In trying to understand Jesus' relationship to God", ¹¹¹ Sobrino has used the term Son of Man in identifying the "man other than Jesus himself" ¹¹² who was a Galilean in Palestine, "When Jesus used the self-designation Son of Man he and his hearers understood it to imply his pre-existence." ¹¹³ In the gospel traditions, doubtless Jesus was identified with a pre-existent figure who had descended from heaven and became incarnate as the man Jesus of Nazareth. Various honorific titles (i.e., Son of God, Messiah, Lord, and so on) are shown in terms of developing various theological interpretations of the event in Jesus' life to explain his special relationship of oneness with God.

For Sobrino, however, Jesus is only recognised as Son of Man in that "God has manifested himself in a definitive way in Jesus". ¹¹⁴ Jesus' oneness with God is not seen in terms of both the absolute divine nature of a third person and the apocalyptic perspective of a dual history (earthly and heavenly), but of the category of relationship by virtue of the resurrection. This relative category is seen as symbolic in the vision for a mediating Son of Man who is of earthly origin. For Sobrino, the absolute divinity of Jesus is only known in terms of

Jesus' relation to the Father, not of his own absolute nature. In this hypothesis, Jesus' divinity is known in the following various relative terms:

In personal terms Jesus is the Son. In functional terms Jesus is the One who holds lordship. In temporal terms Jesus will hand the kingdom over to the Father at the end of time 115

Since Sobrino has taken the most radical consideration of Jesus' resurrection for the present here and now, his final exposition is the hermeneutical aspect. It is necessary to have an adequate hermeneutic for developing his own speculation of the resurrection concerning both "justice" and "today". 116 The question, "Is Jesus' resurrection understandable in terms of its character as a religious eschatological event?" opens a way for reinterpreting the resurrection in Sobrino's hermeneutics in the three points: hope, promise and mission.

In order to reunderstand the resurrection, the first hermeneutics must be a hope that transforms "the negative elements of the world". 117 As allowing a man to pierce through to a real future (to something new,, this hope is for himself and for his society in history. In this sense, the hope of liberation theology is derived from the experience of God in the Old Testament. God was the God of the deliverance from Egypt, who was on the side of the subjugated in history and who led his people into a new country. God raised up his people to leave the existing order in order to shape the future in response to his promise. In Jesus' day, the Jewish people also y earned for the deliverance of God's people, such as their fathers had experienced. This hope was the conviction that the

freedom of Israel cannot come until the people of Israel themselves work actively for this goal. This means that the establishment of God's kingdom on earth can come from the result of the participation of people to eliminate the existing oppression and injustice of society.

These ideas, as expounded in the Old Testament and in the Jewish tradition, play an important role in conditioning a hope in the hermeneutics of the resurrection. Liberation Christology has regarded this historical experience of operation and liberation as the root of its hermeneutical work. The biblical expression of the resurrection does not imply the Christian hope in eternal life by means of the Greek thought of immortality, but "the total transformation of the person and history". In this view, the resurrection of the dead ought to be expressed in "a utopian formulation that derives from the Old Testament and latter Judaism rather than the Hellenic world". 118. According to Andre-Marie Dubarle, in the Old Testament and Judaism a belief in immortality has "its roots in the oldest strata of the religious thought of Israel". 119 Frany Mussner also mentions that in late Judaism "there would be a resurrection of the dead at the end of time". 120 However, liberation theology asserts that the resurrection of the dead is only the object of our hope against death by the hands of the oppressor unjustly. The resurrection consequently is the symbols of hope to the extent that every human gives his life to the historical present and future. 121

Secondly, the resurrection must be expressed as a promise that "opens up a future" in history. As a historical event,

the resurrection "opens up an eschatological future" ¹²² as an event pointing towards this-worldly future. This future can only reach its fulfilment by human beings who "are the carriers of history". ¹²³ This eschatological view is not primarily the future of history expressed in mythical form. It means that human beings participate in the revolution with their own distinctive attitude confronting the present situation with Christian belief in the resurrection which has been based on the physical resurrection of Jesus from the dead. With a clear awareness of this fact, Sobrino has noted that for the future the disciples of Jesus:

were aware that they were not simply spectators of an event, that they were witnesses, who necessarily had to give testimony on behalf of what happened. Thus the resurrection is comprehensible only insofar as one is conscious of building building up history and trusts in the promise. ¹²⁴

The resurrection of the raised Jesus is finally "tied to a call to mission". ¹²⁵ In liberation theology, the disciples of Jesus did not understand the resurrection in the primitive Christian experience of the forgiveness of sins and of reconciliation with God as a promise of the ultimate salvation of mankind. But the disciples experienced that "something new has entered the world with Jesus resurrection ". ¹²⁶ The resurrection is not described as the fulfilment of historical reality, but as a "a still unfinished reality". ¹²⁷ Hence, the resurrection event happens again and again until the kingdom of God comes on earth. In this faith, the disciples found a powerful incentive to transform history and then dedicated their lives to proclaim the raised Jesus from a death at the hands of

the oppressor. This mission of the disciples, which was derived from the initiative of the resurrection of Jesus, was thus to give historical shape to "the church's consequent task of proclaiming utopian principles". 128

Given this utopian hopes, the hermeneutics designed to understand the resurrection means that:

It is possible to verify the truth of what happened in the resurrection only through a transforming praxis based on the ideals of the resurrection....The resurrection can be understood only through a praxis that seeks to transform the world. 129

The meaning of the resurrection which offers the role of doing the truth consequently:

Cannot be grasped unless one engages in active service for the transformation of an unredeemed world. 130

This hermeneutical approach of the resurrection has been developed by liberation theology to reevaluate the story of Jesus in the political terms which we will described in the final section of this chapter.

F. The Holy Spirit

For pneumatology, the person of Jesus Christ with its aspects (divine and human) is the problem for liberation theology. Jesus Christ in Chalcedonian Christology is seen as the divine Person - the second Person of the Trinity, who is the same essence (homoousios) as the Father. For the purpose of the main discussion on pneumatology in liberation theology, this sort of the hypostatic Logos should be detached from Latin American Christology. For modern men, it is no longer concerned with our existence, and it represents Jesus Christ to us merely as an

object of knowledge, On the relationship of the figure of Jesus, Sobrino has thus mentioned that:

Jesus' distinctiveness and uniqueness shows up first and foremost in his distinct and unique relationship with the one he calls his father. 131

This means that the eternal God and a historical man are the two beings of quite different status. As a logical impossibility, Chalcedonian Christology is not acceptable. Sobrino has thus and tried to see pneumatology with the historical Jesus who was Galilean.

Juan Segundo has also offered Jesus' divinity in Chalcedonian conception as a symbolic expression. 132 This is, Jesus' divinity as no longer meaningful to people of our day must not be read as literal or representative knowledge. Jesus' humanity cannot be absorbed into the divine to constitute an implicit monophysitism. The notion of God becoming man is an incredible one, belonging to the mythology and mystery of a bygone age. The ontological explanation of Jesus' divine quality tentatively suggests how Jesus could be sinless, and how God was present to this man in a unique way.

In the contemporary way of thinking, the possibility of the incarnation of God in Jesus fails to meet the problem of the person of Jesus Christ. Liberation theology has hence stressed Jesus Christ as the symbol of the Spirit of God which means an expression of God's eternal activity in man and history, In his article, Roger Haight has begun with that:

This tension will probably be best preserved today by some form of a Spirit as opposed to a Logos Christology. The symbol of the Spirit of God is in

itself a more dynamic concept than the other, one that can be adjusted to preserve the integrity of Jesus' being a human being. Moreover, the Spirit of God is also a symbol that corresponds to the experience that human beings have of God operative in their own lives. 133

Liberation theology here looks at the Spirit of God based on the vital power which belongs to the Divine Being. It seems to be operative in the world and in men. Hence Latin American theologians should attempt to explain the Holy Spirit in terms of the influence of the Spirit of God, because they see this influence in Jesus' birth, in his baptism, and as explicatory of all that he did, was and said. In and through Jesus, the Spirit (The Holy Spirit) of God acted in a new way of speaking about God's reality in relation to all that existed and happened. Jesus was possessed by the Holy spirit. In other words, the Holy Spirit dwelled in Jesus. So Jesus' "actions exert a fascination over people". 134

The Holy Spirit too is "the same presence and power of God". 135 As in the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit is "the biblical symbol for God's power immanent in the universe". 136 It is then divine energy which is the origin of all created life, especially of human existence. For instance, the prophet in the Old Testament is a man of the Spirit; the Spirit of God falls upon him, fills his mind, and speaks by his mouth; he finds himself at times dominated by a spiritual force which comes from somewhere. At the same time, the Holy Spirit in the same way is present in the creative power of human beings in their capabilities and their intelligence, straining themselves in the service of others. This forceful presence is grounded on the

Jesus Christ event.

In the case of the resurrection, it was God who raised Jesus from the dead. That is, the spirit of God raised Jesus from the dead. But on the basis of the Logos Christology it is difficult to say that the God-man could be holden of death, seeing that God cannot die. Therefore, Leonardo Boff has insisted that:

The resurrection revealed the full dimensions of the Spirit's presence in Jesus. Before the resurrection Jesus had possessed a carnal, fragile, mortal body. After the resurrection he came to possess a spiritual, incorruptible body full of divine energy (1 Cor. 15:44). The risen Christ was "transformed" into pure Spirit, as it were. Indeed Paul goes so far as to identify the risen Lord with the Spirit: "The Lord is the Spirit" (2 Cor. 3:17). This statement should not be understood in the trinitarian terms. It should be taken in the Old Testament sense as a way of describing how the risen Jesus now exists and acts. He lives and acts in the manner of the Spirit: free from the fetters of the flesh, pervading the whole cosmos, and in the plenitude of power and communion. 137

The Holy Spirit has not replaced Jesus Christ in thinking of the personality of the Holy Spirit in one form or another. Through the action of the Spirit of God Jesus himself is raised from the dead. That is, the Spirit acted in Jesus as the power of resurrection.

On the other hand, for Jose Miranda it is not acceptable that: "the Paraclete is the Spirit understood as the presence of the absent Jesus", and John presents the Paraclete as the Holy Spirit in a social role....as the personal presence of Jesus in the Christian while Jesus is with the Father. 138 Although John has Jesus speak of himself in his presence, as his actual bodily presence (Jn. 20:29; 26:17), for Miranda Jesus' presence as the Holy Spirit is seen in "the symbolic scene to tell us that the Pentecost considers with the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, having

previously told us that while Jesus was alive on earth there was not yet any Spirit because Jesus had not yet been glorified. 139 (Jn. 7:39). In the light of this assertion, the presence of Jesus after return to the Father is accomplished in and through the Paraclete as the Spirit of God in the concept of impersonality.

The Spirit, being sent by Jesus to the world, means "the Spirit of truth". That is, Jesus' "place has taken by another: the Spirit of truth". 140 This Spirit is called "the resistance Spirit" or "the power of the new community working for the liberation of mankind far beyond the limits in which Jesus had to work". 141 The Spirit is "the resistance counsellor who helps people to stop inhumanity in the world". 142 Thus, the Spirit is the Spirit of resistance meaning now to have "the power to stop inhumanity and to affirm our own humanity". 143 In the Spirit, Jesus comes again, not in full manifestation, for only the believer to salvation, but in increasing freedom on earth. In his presence, the Holy Spirit offers men battling for survival their true destiny.

G. The Political Jesus

In the concern to show the relationship between the historical Jesus and the contemporary Latin American situation, the final purpose of liberation theology regarding the man Jesus of Nazareth is to depict him as a political man. With Latin American theologians, therefore the historical Jesus is of the utmost importance, far exceeding a liberation praxis upon the

political dimension of his mission. The work of Jesus must always be something more than a mere doctrine for the traditional Christians. It is something which liberation theologians carry about with them, as part of their lives. At this very point, we will see how liberation theologians have portrayed the Nazarene in the light of the synthesis of the new quest for the historical Jesus.

A Jew. Jesus was a true Jesus of Jewish family, who lived in Nazareth which was a peaceful Galilean town. As a son of a carpenter, Jesus was like any other Jewish child in Nazareth. He immersed himself in the common life of a family in the small town of Nazareth. The youth of the upper class families had been able to go to the rabbinical schools, preparing themselves for the career of religious leaders and other dominant roles in their society. Jesus, who came from the rank of the simple class, was unable to prepare his individual career for the public office like the young boys of the upper class. Rather, the son of a poor family had to learn his father's work and to labour with the sweat of his brow. He experienced his trouble, his poverty, and his labours. 144

However, Jesus knew his religious tradition. He was aware that his country had been humiliated for centuries by foreign invaders. In the Old Testament, Jesus presumably discovered a vision of the world and of history, a wisdom, and rich vocabularies to explain the meaning of human life and the destiny of people. As a result, he knew that his people were not experiencing the promise of justice and peace delivered by the

prophets. For Jesus, the people of Israel must be brothers and sisters and were equal. It was impossible for there to exist the rich and the poor, and the oppressor and the oppressed, and the exploiter and the exploited. Thus, Jesus could not seek the privilege and intrude in his own family business, He could not even be close to be a leader of his traditional religion.¹⁴⁵ As a Jew, Jesus must live "among the conflicts and aspirations of Palestine at that particular historical movement".¹⁴⁶

The poor. Jesus thus began his work by concerning himself with the poor who were defined as the exploited and oppressed in reference to the economic condition of people. He not only took sides with the poor but also battled with the rich, He became the brother of all in identifying himself with everyone who hungered or thirsted and who was naked or imprisoned, no matter how miserable and abandoned that person might be. "Jesus' voluntary solidarity with the poor and outcast"¹⁴⁷ came from the tendency of Hebrew literature to emphasize it. In addition to this, Ronald Sider says that:

Jesus was a Hebrew prophet in the tradition of Amos and Isaiah. Like them, he announced God's outrage against those who try to mix pious practices and mistreatment of the poor.¹⁴⁸

Jesus' commitment to the poor consequently brought a call to God's kingdom of equality and justice in the midst of history. In the dialectical tension between passion and anticipation of the kingdom on earth, Jesus obliged the poor to make a choice. For this, Segundo Galilea has reminded us that:

Jesus calls the poor to make up his kingdom. In fact he announces that one must become poor in order to enter it (Matt. 5:3; Luke 6:20; 16:19-26)... He gives them priority, he gives them the ultimate sense

of their dignity. He calls them, he mobilizes them,
to form his church. 149

This is to "introduce a violent breach with the ritualistic" 150
of Jesus' time and to contend that the kingdom does not come from
the order of piety and religion, but the participation of people.

The religious group. Jesus opposed the religious groups of
his time. In Latin American theologians' view, Jesus was against
the scribes, priests, and Pharisees as hypocrites. The Pharisees
were those who tried to be themselves as the separate ones who
sought holiness through observing their religious rule for
cleansing. They had a sincere desire for fidelity and commitment
to the requirement of the law (the word of God). Their religious
practice was meant to embody devotion to the law. For this, they
regarded themselves as the true Israel. They considered their
fidelity as a point that set them apart from other Jews.
Nonetheless, their hearts were "filled with greed and wickedness".
In "the internal/external contradiction" 151 the Pharisees were
incapable of truly good actions and rather committed injustice
against peasant merchants, and artisans who were not in
privileged positions. Thus Jesus attacked the Pharisees on their
hypocritical behaviour.

At the same time, the priests were also portrayed as the
direct oppressors of the people by Jesus. The priests had an
important religious function in Israelite society. Their main
function was to perform the service of the Temple. Most of the
priests were themselves Pharisees, or supporters of the Pharisees.
Yet they loved the place of honour and were insensitive to the
evident needs of their people. However, in the eyes of Jesus the

priests were presented as misguiding others in the various spheres of their existence.

The priests have converted the temple into a den of thieves, a den from which evildoers continually emerge to commit their evil deeds. The Priests misuse their vocation, which is to conduct worship for the glory of God. Instead, they engage in business, and accrue profits.¹⁵²

The message of Jesus. We find that "Jesus was a religious leader" who proclaimed the kingdom of God. For Galilea, "Jesus neither claimed to be nor behaved as a revolutionary or as a political leader".¹⁵³ At the same time, Galilea has discovered that:

Jesus' proclamation of the kingdom of God had consequences for political and for social change, even revolutionary change, in his time, as well as wherever the Christian message can become a leaven in society in the future.¹⁵⁴

In this same sense, Eduardo Pironio has illustrated Luke 4:16-39 (the gospel to the poor in the inaugural sermon of his first ministry in Nazareth) as "an obligation to the political consciousness of the oppressed". This message was "in the line of the prophets as conscious of their political mission".¹⁵⁵ For Leonardo Boff, Luke 4:18-19 is seen as explaining "the Jesusological utopia...in which all alienation is overcome and all evil destroyed".¹⁵⁶

One more example among many messages of Jesus is the Beatitudes (Matt. 5:3-12; Luke 6:20-23). In examining the political implication of the Beatitudes, liberation theologians have drawn the conclusion that the Beatitudes provide us a challenge to get involved in politics for social change. The Beatitudes express God not as a revelation, but as the defender

and liberator of the dispossessed and oppressed. They then urge the crucial role of the poor who are left on the margins of society. In this regard, liberation theology has recalled that:

The Beatitudes....are understood as the basic law of a just social order, and precisely because they go back to Jesus Christ. In other words, what is basic is the Christological thesis, but this is also precisely what furnishes a level for responsible Christian behaviour in today's politics. ¹⁵⁷

In Latin American theologians' presumption, the Beatitudes are doubtless seen as a political feature to encourage those who are being oppressed and marginalized in their society.

The Zealots. In various important ways in depicting Jesus in political dimension, the movement of the Zealots which started 4 B.C. cannot be eliminated from the writings of Latin American theologians. The Zealots were rooted "in a profoundly spiritual religious tradition, which maintained that God is master of Israel but also master of history in its entirety". ¹⁵⁸ In the time of Jesus, the Zealot movement spread and tried to free Israel from the Roman Empire domination and to put an end to the rule of Rome's representatives in the highest level of Israelite society. The Zealot movement was, therefore, a burning issue in Palestine. Against this background, our concern in this section is to see whether or not liberation theology holds certain interests in common with the Zealots.

According to most liberation authors, the message of the Zealots was proclamation of the kingdom of God as extreme religious nationalism and tribalism. ¹⁵⁹ In doing away with every form of earthly dominion, the kingdom of God in this world was closely related to a political theocratic kingdom. The

Zealots thought God as the one and only Lord was superior to the sovereignty that any human power could claim. They believed that God would come to their aid if they launched themselves against the Roman Empire, and preferred to give their lives for the liberation of Israel which was the great hope of the Israelite people in Jesus' contemporary time. The movement used warfare against the Roman occupation and against the Jews who submitted to the Roman authorities. The Zealots were the victims of struggle for the freedom of Israel.

But for liberation theology, Jesus' mission was not Jewish nationalism and immediatist religiosity. In his teaching and action, Jesus reached down in to the hearts of the Jewish people in a different sense. Jesus clearly:

Favoured the concept of the poor and poverty over the concept of the Jew and Jewishness. In other words he gave preference to a humanistic, social concept over a politico-religious. He ultimately took a stance in line with the universalism of the prophets and pushed that line of thinking further ahead. ¹⁶⁰

Jesus' God was universal and will bring total unity and liberation to all human beings. The kingdom of God in Jesus' thinking was not the immediatist religiosity of the Zealots that:

In the theological realm....leads to an all too ready identification of the kingdom of God with a worldly political kingdom.

and that:

In the socio-political realm....leads to a religious fanaticism which has a very adverse effect on social and political coexistence as well as the secular life of God. ¹⁶¹

Here, Jesus is seen as the one who tried to "transform a politicized religion into a political faith" ¹⁶² and to help the liberation of all human beings over that of the Jews.

All these figures show that Jesus' main message was different from the theocratic message of the Zealots. Juan Segundo has also suggested that the Romans never saw in Jesus' words and deeds "a political ally of the Zealots", although "Jesus was presented to the Romans as a political agitator".¹⁶³ Nonetheless, Jesus' relation to the Zealots is persuasive in some way. Like other Latin American theologians, Jon Sobrino has written that "Jesus was not a Zealot", and that he did not espouse the kingdom of God in the concept of "religious nationalism or political theocratism", but in that of "the use of political power". At the same time Sobrino has stressed that:

Jesus does not disagree basically with the Zealots on the idea that there must be some historical and socio-political mediation of the kingdom of God. That is why he could be, and in fact was, identified as a Zealot.¹⁶⁴

Likewise, Leonardo Boff did not view Jesus as a pioneer Jewish nationalist against the Roman empire. Yet one important thing in common between Jesus and the Zealots was to seek the coming of God's kingdom. Like that of the Zealots, Jesus' ministry to God's reign was the "radical perfectibility to be realized by God and only by God". Jesus' kingdom "cannot be particularized and reduced to a part of a reality, such as politics".¹⁶⁵ Further, the link between Jesus and the Zealots can be seen in considering the following perspective of Hugo Echegaray:

In the life and teaching of Jesus there were characteristics which closely connect Jews with the Zealots. I have already pointed out one such common trait that....Jesus repeats the Zealot proclamation of God's reign as imminent. The exegetes are in agreement that this proclamation is the most decisive

characteristic of Jesus' preaching. The Zealots preached the same message, although they drew conclusions regarding immediate action that Jesus did not draw. ¹⁶⁶

Like his colleagues above, Hugo Echeagaray in his conclusion has mentioned to some extent the implication that Jesus' mission was linked with "a process of far broader scope" than that of the Zealots. Jesus is explained as the one who embraced all human beings and all nations without boundaries. ¹⁶⁷ As a result, most liberation theologians look for a positive reason for the rejection of the Zealots and are satisfied that Jesus had a different image of what they must need to develop their theological and political categories in a new Christology. On the other hand, it is possible that an intimate connection between Jesus and the Zealots is seen in the argument of liberation theologians above, even though the relative view is not presented profoundly.

The trial of Jesus. After the beginning of his public ministry, the Jewish religious power groups - high priests, elders, scribes, and Pharisees - were against Jesus according to the gospels. The ongoing hostility of Jewish religiousness about Jesus' teaching and conduct continued throughout his activity. In Liberation theologians' understanding, the serious charge of Jewish religiousness against Jesus came from the debate about political involvement regarded as deeply offensive to the Jewish authorities and the Roman authorities. The Pharisees, Herodians, and the rich joined together to catch Jesus in what he asserted and to hand him over to the Roman procurator, because they:

Feared for their power positions and privileged status,

especially those who exploited the business of the temple by selling sacrificial animals like the family and house of Annas. ¹⁶⁸

Consequently, Jesus was handed over to the Jewish authorities. After his arrest, Jesus was taken to Caiaphas' house. The assembly of elders, chief priests, and scribes met Jesus and led him to the Sanhedrin. There Jesus was whether whether he is the Son of God. Jesus replied that "You say that I am" (Matt. 26:64). This is enough to convince that "under cover of the religious" the Sanhedrin condemned Jesus "as a religious subversive, on the grounds of having threatened to destroy and rebuild the temple" and claiming to be the Christ, the Son of God". ¹⁶⁹ If Jesus was the Messiah, he must be the saviour of the Jews. But the Jewish leaders did not agree with the perspective, and instead assumed that Jesus was a political man who tried to put an end to their mandate and their power privilege". ¹⁷⁰

Arising out of this, the Jewish authorities accused Jesus of two offences.

In the religious sphere, he could be judged to be a blasphemer for having called himself the Christ, the Son of God. In the political sphere, to claim to be the Messiah involved a pretension to usurp the power reserved to the Romans. ¹⁷¹

In this context, the Jewish leaders took to Pilate. The reason was that these leaders were unable to liquidate Jesus without the help of Pilate. Pilate, who paid attention to the political import of the accusation against Jesus, asked him "Are you the king of the Jews?" Jesus answered regarding the meaning of his kingdom: "My kingdom does not belong to this world." In this judicial process, Pilate found no fault in Jesus. Jesus'

struggle was not directly with Roman interests. Pilate offered his release. But the response was a request for the release of Barabbas and for the crucifixion of Jesus. The fact that the Jewish authorities and the common people sided with Barabbas and the Zealots showed that in the "sociological interpretation" of Ignacio Ellacuria:

The ambiguity of Jesus' political mission was more of a threat to the dominant social figures in society than was the struggle of the Zealots against Roman political power.¹⁷²

As mentioned earlier, in constructing the idea of a political Christology, Latin American theologians have investigated the whole political implication of the background, teaching, link to the Zealots, and trial of Jesus. For these theologians, the conclusive argument is the fact that Jesus of Nazareth was not a nationalistic theocratic agitator like the Zealots. Jesus, who was "not a religious person" dedicated himself to liberate those who hungered for freedom, justice, and humanity in regarding both the universalism which embraces all human beings and the radicalism which is against "the religion of legalism and mediocrity".¹⁷³ In this sense, liberation theology has asserted the movement of Jesus as being extended to others and no longer limited to the Jewish people and the Jewish nation. Breaking out of the national framework, Jesus' political movement came to understand the full scope of this universal outlook with history.

In the light of these factors, liberation theologians have believed that the stress on the apolitical Jesus by traditional theology can be erased by the "hermeneutics that respects the original historicity of the text" - that incorporates "careful

exegesis and historico-social analysis as well".¹⁷⁴ When we forget Jesus as the king in the Christ of faith which obscures history, we rediscover "the possible aspect of the political import of Jesus' life: his criticism of, and opposition to, power".¹⁷⁵ In order to situate the action of Jesus in relation to the political situation of his day, liberation theology must try to avoid seeing Jesus as a religious leader or a religious founder who announced the kingdom of God that has nothing to do with this world. On the contrary, the historical Jesus must be an inspirational model for the task of socio-political liberation. The image of the historical man Jesus is the model of the struggle for the temporal liberation of the poor and oppressed. The distinct image of the Nazarene is enough to serve as the paradigm for a political Jesus.

Conclusion

As shown by this chapter, Latin American theologians have clearly expressed the purpose and beginning of their own Christology. The former is to bring the kingdom of God on earth as an ultimate salvation. For achieving this, the latter begins with the historical situation in which Jesus lived and died. In these theologians' faith, particularly, the implication of the historical Jesus is able to provide a right Christology as an adequate response to the hope of the Latin American people. This assumption puts in doubt the authenticity of traditional Christology as something unworthy of Jesus and prefers to interpret biblical Christology, in terms of theological

articulation. In this view, the Bible is not shown as proving or establishing the Christological conclusion of the Christian faith.

In contrast to the Christology of traditional theology, therefore, liberation theology has treated Jesus as a man figuring in the concrete Nazarite man. Jesus becomes a sign of contradiction for those who are in deep poverty, when he is presented as the divine human being seen by the theological formula of Christian tradition. Jesus should be known in being based not on the theological consideration of a unique ontological relationship between him and God, but on historical research of the sources. In this way, Jesus appears as someone who was a son of the carpenter and who was deeply involved in the human affairs in his day.

The Nazarite man Jesus, who connected his vision of the future, differed from all comparable radical theocratic movements by virtue of his time. He was involved in the socio-political tension in Palestine. His teaching and action for human liberation and the eradication of injustice entailed dying for the sake of others. Jesus was killed by those who supported the existing structures of oppression. He did not die on the cross because of his own egoism but for those who suffered from injustice and fought to overcome it. He did not make himself known in a purely religious and intellectual manner. He concretized himself the justice and love that can be experienced in the course of history.

Hence, the historical investigation of Jesus signifies two things in liberation Christology. Firstly, it alludes to the

empirical, sociohistorical fact of the liberation of the poor and oppressed. Secondly, it helps to constitute a political Christological category that has to do with the person and work of Jesus. The attitude of Jesus towards the public powers of his time can bring us to assume the possibility of fashioning a new approach towards adapting a political stance. This is the core point on which Latin American theologians appeal to the whole historical life of Jesus whom they call the liberator of the poor and oppressed. In order to keep fighting for the establishment of God's utopian kingdom here and now, these theologians have tried to follow the footsteps of Jesus. These footsteps lead us to a political Christology that extends participation to the public and practical realm of present social life.

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CHAPTER FOUR

THE MOTIVES OF MINJUNG THEOLOGY

The drama of social change on the soil of South Korea since the 1970s is indebted to the theological movement which entails the destruction of systems which maintain traditional theology, liberal theology, and the economic, military and political oppression of millions of people throughout the world. This focus on social and systematic change is at the heart of the Korean "minjung" ¹ theologians who have believed the task of doing theology to be transforming, rather than thinking and explaining the reality of the world. Minjung theologians, who have considered their own theological task to be directly transferable to the Korean setting in secular and biblical thoughts, have developed a proposition which implies a re-orientation of theological reflection in the Korean context. They then have tried to focus on a systematic treatment of the gospels in the light of the experience of the minjung in Korea.

Hence, our concern in this chapter is to establish the factors which drew minjung theologians to take up a practical and political challenge in interrelating with a theology of the human subject. Therefore, the motives which launched minjung theology will be described in chapter four.

A. Awareness

The mainstream Protestant church of Korea, which celebrated the centennial year of Protestant Mission in 1984, has been known as being amongst the strongest conservative evangelical churches in

the world today. The Church, which has been strongly conservative in biblical criticism and theology, has never tolerated higher criticism and liberal theology. Its uncompromising insistence has been in the fact that the Bible must be regarded in its totality as the Word of God, and that for theology it is perfectly authoritative. The presupposition that the positive attitude of the factual inerrancy of the Bible is the true and faithful witness of the truth of God has played an important role in the Korean church. As determinative for the whole position of the church, thus, its attitude to the Scriptures has been in conscious commitment to the basic principle of supernaturalism.² This means that the classical understanding of God, of creation, of the fall, of the incarnation, of redemption, and of the final triumph of Jesus Christ has been exceedingly significant to most Korean theologians and pastors who have paid relatively little attention to the presupposition of the liberal tradition.

As a result, the Korean church has been evangelistic and disciplined in the conviction that the duty of Christianity is to preach God's salvation through Jesus Christ. The imperative in the New Testament is evangelism in the understanding of the Korean church. The term "now" is an emphatic word in the Bible. The Bible teaches that it is the now of world evangelisation, the now of salvation, and the now of the anticipation of Jesus Christ's second coming. These theological tensions encourage the Korean church to live a most dynamic evangelistic life. Apart from this, the Christian church is nothing in the now of evangelization and expectation.³ As an essential part of the

church's mission, evangelism is more basic for the traditional Christian than concern for sociopolitical liberation. In keeping with the declared purpose of the Lord, the Korean church has enthusiastically tried to take the following evangelistic mandates: individual evangelism, mass evangelism, home meeting evangelism, campus evangelism, military evangelism, and so on.

Since the 1970s, however, Korean minjung theologians have held their unfavourable attitude towards the conservative evangelical church of Korea which has concentrated one-sidedly on heaven and fostered apoliticism that neglect this earth. These theologians have been aware of this as a danger which maintains an oppressive world. They have discovered that the tendency of the Korean church is to an authoritarian religion which lays down certain traditional dogmas as essential and which demands uncritical acceptance of them as the prerequisite of salvation. This absolute character of theological doctrine is incompatible with the character of the minjung theological view which concentrates on the duty of joining in social and political action for the sake of bringing about true liberation in today's Korean society.⁴ For minjung theology, the Christian church must call citizens to participate in justice and liberation for the oppressed, looking forward to the culmination of salvation in the world here and now.

In minjung theologians' view, on the contrary, the ^{main} Korean church has been in favour of exploiters and oppressors and ignored many important aspects in the proclamation and social demonstration of the gospel. The church has never ceased to

cherish the Bible in its worship and private devotion without being relevant to the living context of common people. In tending towards the individualistic interpretation of the Bible, the centrality of the preaching of the Word of God is to renew the church in the individual lives of believers. The spiritual discipline of the Christian daily life is seen in prayer, meditation, silence, fasting and Bible study. Through these pietistic practices, the Korean church extends its mission for salvation in an individual, spiritual, and other-worldly message of God's saving activity through Jesus Christ. 5

Within this context, minjung theologians have viewed the Korean church as an unworthy body which maintains the dehumanising process in Korean society. If the Christianity of the church does not belong to the economic, social and political order but the religious, it is unable to deliver the world from its idols. The Christian church cannot become the religious alibi for the rich and oppressor. In contrast to this, the church sees its essential function of saving alienated and frustrated people as man historical concrete reality. Nonetheless, in the Korean church there is no indication of support for radical change, neither is there any apparent awareness of the present reality of Korea. For minjung theologians, it is no less true that the Korean church has lost sight of its essential mission of giving its people certain guidelines which is believed important to establish justice. 6. The church just exists to solidify its ties with established authority, thus enjoying the latter's support as a way to maintain social service and charitable works for the poor. But minjung theology has sought to introduce

radical social change through political movement in its new ecclesiastical awareness of the Korean situation.

The period since the middle of the 1960s has been one of unprecedented economic growth for South Korea. From the beginning, the economic development of Korea has mainly been concentrated in the urban areas rather than in the rural areas. It is obvious that this rapid economic growth has brought about a tremendous increase in economic life for the past twenty years (1965-1985).

For minjung theologians, however, the problem of South Korea is that various social ills in society have created a serious gap between the rich and the poor, the subjugation of the First World of capitalism, and the legality of discriminative wages in spite of economic improvement over the past years. Especially, based on the capitalist ideological value of dominant class of progress, the development theory has never taken the economic and political aspiration of the majority poor of people but of the minority rich of people. The poverty of Korea is not the result of inherent natural defect and the delay of development but of the dependency theory of the capitalist nations. In the name of propaganda of developmentalism to help poor nations, the dependency created by capitalist nations twisted the moral consciousness of the rich, whilst inflicting on the poor.⁷ In the name of progress, the ruling elite forced the common people to work hard without giving them right wages. Hard work, patriotic fervour, and patience were only the order of the ruling class to the poor.

Within Korean society, thus the gap between the haves and the

have-nots has become much greater. The achievement of a more egalitarian or more just society cannot be expected from a capitalist system. This dependence is the key to produce poverty. Here minjung theologians could not close their eyes to the situation that the great majority of their fellow people continue to live in the phenomenon of the growth of poverty despite increasing wealth. It is undeniable that the majority lack the most elementary material goods and continue to live a dehumanized existence and to be exploited by the privileged minority. This current awareness has become an accusation against the wealthy individuals who have unjustly treated the defenceless poor.

The Korean governments tightly controlled policy of economic development has also created problems of political apathy among the Korean people including minjung theologians. Every national economic policy has been determined by those in power rather than in accordance with public opinion, as the rule of democracy dictates. Accordingly, the first economic policy of the Korean government "did not permit any free discussion on issues related to national goals, concept of state and even national ideology".⁸ The economic policy of the authoritarian Korean government, which operated various mechanisms to maintain its dominion over the internal and external economic affairs of Korea at any cost, doubtless has led to the creation of greater growth for the few and greater poverty for the many. As a result, these factors - the injustice, exploitation, alienation and poverty of the many Koreans by the other few Koreans - have combined to form a situation that minjung theologians have not hesitated to condemn

strongly and publicly. Many smaller enterprises have collapsed by massive mismanagement, corruption, and resultant debts. The works, the students, and the opposition parties took part in demonstrations. Thus, Nam Dong Suh said that:

Some of the typical characteristics of modern Korean export business are special provisions for bank loans, tax exemptions, rapid expansion, low wages paid to workers, and the smuggling of capital out of the country.⁹

However, the fact that the privileged minority by holding economic power in their hands has succeeded in climbing up the political and social scale paradoxically has offered minjung theologians a vivid picture of the majority of Korea, accompanied by a demanding theological and pastoral outlook. In this sense, minjung theologians have felt a responsibility to the poor of the majority of Korea, who are aware of having growing aspirations for justice.

Analyzing this situation more deeply, minjung theologians have realized that as Jesus was the defender of those who could not defend themselves the Christian must follow in his paths to be the protectors of the poor today. Jesus explained that his mission is addressed to the poor. In this, Jesus' message was the good news which was announced especially to the poor. Both for guaranteeing the rights of the poor in the face of the rich and for repressing the rich who threatened the rights of the poor, Jesus experienced the pain of death. This perspective is enough to oblige minjung theologians no longer to live in the sphere of the traditional pietism. Here these theologians cannot accept the oppressor and rich in quite the same way as they have accepted

them in the past year. The message of Jesus in the gospel is no longer a manifestation of paternalism from the Korean church as it did it, but rather a proclamation which helps the poor to direct engagement in the struggle for liberation. For minjung theologians, this contact with the poor leads to the understanding of radical mission as commitment to liberation.¹⁰ The Korean church must keep hope alive for the poor who are bypassed by economic growth as their church, not that of the powerful.

Another aspect that minjung theologians have seen is the political scene of South Korea. Despite economic improvements, there have been and continue to be many social and political problems in Korea. General Chung Hee Park, who overthrew the civil government by his military coup of May 1961, became the President of South Korea through the restoration of the 1963 limited democratic constitution. President Park ruled the country by continuing to be progressively authoritarian, depending upon the brutal methods of a highly developed central intelligence agency, and imposing a fiercely expulsive pattern of economic development. Day by day, the nature of the Park regime grew increasingly dictatorial invoking the Garrison Decree in October 1971, declaring a state of emergency in December, 1972, and adopting the new "Yushin" Constitution in October 1972 which gave President Park massive dictatorial power. This new constitution placed no limit on successive presidential terms for President Park. During the Park regime, Korean economic growth was not bad. However, the policies of the Park government were of no advantage to the working class and

used cheap labour in a strategy which advocated development priorities for export-orientated industries. In the name of national economic growth strategies, the Park regime did not hesitate to invoke its broad emergency power ¹¹.

President Park, who concentrated all political power around himself in seeking to grasp permanent political power, was however assassinated by one of his main pillars of power who was the director of the presidential security and the director of the other major political instrument, the Korean Central Intelligence Agency. Because of this event in late 1979, the political circumstances of Korea deteriorated into the confusion of intense and open competition for power between the military group and the citizens.

General Du Hwan Chun, who was a loyal supporter of the assassinated President Park, took the powerful political position as the head of the Defence Security Command through his successful coup with the army in December 1979. General Chun fully controlled the national instrument of violence and was not willing to accede to the opposition parties and students demand for the restoration of democracy. Rather, he tried to crack down on the demonstrations of the students and to destroy the power base of all existing political groups. He made a clean sweep of the entire political arena for his plan to build a new political structure for his permanent political stability. ¹²

Undoubtedly, General Chun's hard line direction led to a confrontation in Kwangju, a city of 600,000 people and the scene of an uprising and bloodbath in the end of May 1980. The

students and soldiers confronted each other and the citizens joined in. The uprising which started with student demonstrations resulted in 170 persons being killed, including 22 soldiers and 4 policeman. But this popular uprising was unable to overthrow General Chun's military power.¹³ In spite of this movement, General Chun proceeded to take over constitutional authority with lightning speed. With his promise on inaugural day that contained the creation of a new society where all corrupt practice of the past would be replaced by mutual trust and justice, General Chun became the President of South Korea in June 1980.

However, the policies of General Chun did not satisfy the students, the elite, and the opposition politicians who sought the restoration of democracy and the indiscriminate distribution of economics to the low working class. In a growing sense of uncertainty, the domestic political situations had not been able to pave the way off for the genuine, mutual, humanitarian perspective which the Korean church and the elite wanted, even though General Chun had been confident of his country's economic and technological improvement. The antigovernment student demonstrations continued with the following manifestos which demanded:

The downfall of President Chun's government,enuine participatory democracy, economic and social justice, guarantees of civil liberties, independence from foreign influence, university autonomy, and student self-government,¹⁴

In response to all these conditions, minjung theologians have played a leading role in the movement against the two military regimes. For these theologians, social and political problems

have been the target of mission and political work and their preaching has continued notwithstanding social unrest. These theologians have seen the military men as the oppressors, the dominators, and the exploiters and then intended to eliminate them and to destroy all the unjust structures which are used against the fundamental rights of the Korean minjung. The alternative model which minjung theologians have proposed is the model to overthrow the existing social, economic and political structures, probably by violence. This is a call to make the church more political as attempting to do something that will make a new reality for those who live in Korea.

Finally, the awareness of minjung theology is not enough to exalt the poverty of the minjung but to find ways to do battle with it so that it may be overcome. In the past two decades of struggle and hope, therefore, the issue of participation has assumed a new urgency in minjung theologians' thought. But the Korean church has taught that Jesus Christ changes a man's heart, a man's mind, or a man's spirit, and that his mission is not to transform human society. What comes out of the heart is what defiles a man. Thus each man must be converted in order that he may become a fount of justice. At the same time, the Korean church has introduced its people to the things that the Bible dictates for everyday living. In scrutinizing the Bible, each individual finds guidelines for a lifestyle that is called pietism in Christian tradition. Drunkenness and debauchery, which were/are behaviours common to Korean people, were/are pushed aside by the spiritual renewal that accompanied the ethics of the Korean

church. Kindness, sobriety and sexual purity also have been characterized by the emerging of the Korean church.

In the concern of this ethical behaviour of the Korean church on the essential basis of Christian religion, however, minjung theology has complained that the Korean church has failed to generate the personal responsibility that becomes the hallmark of human history. For the theology, the urgent demand of today's man is on quite a different level from those who become Christians in the traditional theology which cannot give any answer to the question concerning the meaning of human existence and world history. Man is in no way capable of resolving the problem of reality by laying the foundation of fixed mythical metaphysical and religious world-views. Man cannot come to self-authenticity apart from the political battle for justice and freedom. There is no conversion (revolution) of a man's heart without a conversion of his behaviour to change the collective conscience and to transform inhuman social structures.¹⁵

Man must come to a view of world-history that has to do with earthly and temporal affairs and which aims at constructing the earthly city of man¹⁶ When we are aware of the importance of earthly affairs in the creation of any human relation, we realize that the Christian message gives us a human hope here and now and invites us to build a world where the many are not exploited by the few. Thus, the ongoing challenge of minjung theology to the self-evident injustice society of Korea should be extensive and deeply transformative. This is, revolutionary violence is employed in the first place as long as the end of the existing society brings a new kind of society. Here the revolutionary

movement of minjung theology can be understood as the active involvement of the minjung in society achieving a wholly different view of virtue.¹⁷ This creates a great deal of very interesting reflection on the past and present revolutionary movements of Korea and directs minjung to establish a new order and a new humanising way against the eschatological perspective of traditional theology.

B. Motivation

Minjung theologians have realized that they cannot and should not exist apart from the individual dimension of Christian faith and the unjust economic, social, and political realities of Korea. For these theologians, it is essential to become involved in the political process, seeing that this is where authentic human beings as Christians must live. These theologians have come down hard on the structures of Korean society that cause political, social, and economic oppression. In doing so, the three historical aspects of Korea have had a profound impact on minjung theology. These historical sources doubtless have encouraged minjung theologians to develop their political theology. Therefore, this section will uncover the vital resources that have stimulated these theologians to survey the social reality of Korea and to be grounded in a present-day suffering of the poor and oppressed.

a. The Personal Account

During the middle of the nineteenth century the Korean government was in great tribulation in domestic and foreign affairs. For example, the frequent appearance of the European ships, the spread of Roman Catholicism, the mounting inflow of western goods, plainly showed that Korea would share the fate of other East Asian Nations sooner or later. Catholicism particularly began to expand vigorously, whilst the Korean authorities remained extremely hostile. With these external pressures building up around Korea, it experienced internal troubles as well. For instance, the practice of exemption of certain lands from taxation meant that the royal clan proliferated and that officials found ways to divert government income. Private individuals were continually getting their land withdrawn from the tax registers by bribing officials. However, Confucianism, which assumed a static, hierarchical society, became irrelevant to a society in a process of irrevocable change. Also Buddhism offered no alternative to the reality of its contemporary society.

In reaction to the failure of the previous society and religious and particularly in reaction against Roman Catholicism as a foreign ideology which is dangerous to the nation of Korea and its tradition, the Che U Choe founded Tonghak, which means a new religion - "Religion of Heavenly way" - in 1860. Choe, who as a patriotic man was well educated in Confucian classics and in the literature of Buddhism and Taoism, saw the economic distress and moral decay of his society and realized that a new set of values relevant to his people could eliminate the evil of the time.¹⁸ Lamenting over the social and moral decadence of his

day, Choe:

wanted to establish a pure, indigenous philosophy and religion of Korea to develop the spiritual culture of the nation as well as preserving the national tradition and protecting the well-being of the people. ¹⁹

He went on to say that:

Westerners entered Japan, built churches, and would come to our Eastern land (Korea) to do the same thing. We should destroy them. ²⁰

After a period of wandering during which Choe tried to build his basic principles in this context, he returned to his home-town in Kyongju and there announced the foundation of a new religion - Tonghak, or Eastern Learning as opposed to Western Learning (i.e. Catholicism).

Choe viewed that "Confucianism and Buddhism were behind the time" and Christianity "cannot compete with Tonghak either". ²¹ The religious characteristics of the Tonghak came from Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism, and Catholicism. For this reason, Benjamin Weems says:

From Confucianism, he took the concept of the five relationships (father-son, King-subject, husband-wife, elder-younger, and friend-friend);, Buddhism, the concept of heart cleansing; and from Taoism the law of cleansing the body from natural and moral filth. Choe also took certain organizational and ritualistic elements from Roman Catholicism, and his writings and writings about him reflect a style and tone strangely analogous to those of the Biblical accounts of the life and teaching of Jesus Christ. ²²

On these religious foundations, Choe developed his Tonghak theories through his own mediation and discussion with intellectuals.

Among many creeds of the Tonghak, in brief the phrase "In Nae Chon" will be introduced in this section. In Nae Chon, which

means "man is God", or "man is one with God" ²³ , or "a creative force", at the same time "the one supreme being", ²⁴ is the fundamental doctrine and political philosophy of the Tonghak. The principle of In Nae Chon is: potentially man is God. But this oneness is actually realized, when a man exercises the right moral character that is essential for him in order to attain the union between his will and the will of God. A man contradicts the interest of God, when he acts in his selfish interest without seeking the union with the will of God. That is, the moral act of a person is tied up with the interest of God with which his own interest is merged. This perspective signifies the identification of the individual with the interest of God as the goal of life.

As applied to the aspect of ethics, the concept of In Nae Chon is seen in the theory of "Sa In Yo Chon", which means "treat man as Heaven", or "treat man as God". The implication of the term contains "the virtue of sincerity, respect, and faith". Sincerity embraces "truth, diligence, and energy". Respect involves: respect for heaven which is defined as including "devotion to worthy causes such as the struggle for independence and social justice". Respect for man is "without social discrimination". And respect for things regards "the value of all things given by heaven, as in the protection of natural resources and the efficient production of goods". Faith is expressed in "embracing actions of complete honesty and personal loyalty in human relations, without social discrimination". ²⁵

For man's relations within society, the theory of Tong Kwil

II Che ("all men return to oneness") suggests the ultimate unity and communion of all lives. According to this assumption:

Human society is a collective, cooperative, organized body of individuals, and that the relationship of the individual to society as a whole can be linked to those of component parts of the human body to the whole body....The different parts function for the corordinated development of the whole body, and each part demonstrates its full capacity in order that continuous well-being of the whole body may be achieved....The optimum improvement of society cannot be achieved if the development of the individual is ignored....Gradually the optimum relationship will become a reality, and all mankind will have an equal freedom of oneness within society. ²⁶

This indicates the strong eschatological implication that "ultimately all good and righteous men would return to a unity of transcending selfish individual desires and interests". ²⁷

The final aspect of In Nae Chon principle is shown in the theology of Chisang Chonguk ("Heaven on earth, or utopia"). The ultimate thought of the Tonghak draws the conclusion that:

It envisioned an earthly paradise which should come into existence when the corrupt bureaucracy had been overthrown and the foreigners, with their disruptive ideas and their crude commercialism, had been driven away. ²⁸

The leading modern Tonghak theorists have particularly developed the term Chisang Chonguk, derived from In Nae Chon. The doctrine of Chisang Chonguk is accordingly subsumed in the following concept:

In Nae Chon was conceived in order to make this world a paradise. But this does not mean that In Nae Chon was created because the world had already become a paradise. This is to say, man has the quality to be a God, and the present world has the quality to be a paradise. Therefore, the prime task of In Nae Chon is to achieve the original purpose of man by means of developing the quality of man. ²⁹

The Tonghak movement culminated in early 1894, when General

Pong Jun Chun, a leader of the local Tonghak organisation, launched a national uprising against foreign colonialism and against tyrannical rule that oppressed the people. The purpose of General Chun's revolutionary action was seen in the twelve-point reform programmes which he issued:

1. The antagonism existing between Tonghak members and the government shall be wiped out, and mutual cooperation shall be sought.
2. Severe punishment shall be dealt out to greedy, corrupt officials.
3. High-handed wealthy people shall be punished.
4. Unprincipled Confucian scholars and yangban shall be reprimanded and reformed.
5. All slave records must be burned.
6. The treatment of the chil chon (seven lowest official occupations) shall be revised, and discriminatory headgear abolished.
7. Young widows shall be allowed to remarry.
8. All unnecessary taxation shall be entirely discontinued.
9. Employment of government officials shall be based on ability rather than family background.
10. Those who engage in conspiracy shall be severely punished.
11. All debts public or private, incurred in the past shall be cancelled.
12. Farm land shall be equitably redistributed.³⁰

The issue of No. 10 is contained in the concept: "Severely punish those who collaborate with the Japanese".³¹ All these items of the Tonghak revolution are seen as follows: the oppressive treatment of the minjung must be stopped by the government and the youngban (i.e., the dominant ruling class which occupied civil and military posts in the bureaucracy and which enjoyed a variety of

special privileges). The excessive economic exploitation of the peasants and outcasts and the discriminatory treatment based on social status must be abolished. And those who were in collusion with the Japanese in their aggressive designs must be punished.

Instead of securing freedom and justice for the poor and oppressed, the Tonghak revolution ironically played into the hands of a foreign power bent on conquest. Because the Korean government was unable to handle the Tonghak rebellion, it appealed to China for help. This provoked a Japanese reaction. The Japanese ship also sailed for Korea. On the soil of Korea, Chinese troops and Japanese troops fought each other for dominating Korea in the name of helping the unstable Korean political situation. Japan defeated China and then forced Korea to sign a series of agreements that it placed under Japanese rule. All Chinese residents were to depart. Korea was completely in Japanese hands. The Tonghak revolution was foiled by the intervention of Japanese military forces.

Despite the failure of the Tonghak movement, it gave way to a radical stream of enlightenment thought that assigned a higher priority to political, social and other institutional changes in Korean society. Especially, the interpretation of the Tonghak movement is significant in relation to the norm of minjung theology. It is no secret that Minjung theologians have explicitly acknowledged the marked influence which the Tonghak religious movement has had on its thought and on its practice. In the Tonghak, minjung theology has found what the historical realities of the past Korean society were and how the Tonghak acted to eliminate the international and national oppression and

enslavement of the low class. The teaching of the Tonghak is clear and definite about the future vision of minjung theology. Thus, minjung theologians in their writings ³² have tried to match their commitment to the implications of the Tonghak with an intention to make theology practical and relevant to the poor and oppressed. Furthermore, in Nam DongSuh's understanding, Bong Jun Chun, who was the leader of the Tonghak revolution in 1894, "was accepted as the Messiah of the minjung". ³³ Young Bok Kim, who has seen the Tonghak movement as the religion of minjung Messiah, has suggested calling Che U Choe (the founder of the Tonghak movement) "Messiah Choe" or "Jesus Choe". ³⁴

Another influence to animate minjung theologians is expressed in the case of Tae Il Chun's death in 1970. Chun was a Christian and had little education. As one among the workers of young boys and girls at the Pyonghwa Market Shop, Chun worked fifteen hours each day for less than thirty dollars a month. The working conditions at the Market were awful. He realized that without a certain challenge to the condition of the Market it would be difficult to improve his working conditions and to get a proper wage. He sent petitions to the President of Korea, the Mayor of Seoul, the Trade Union, and pastors to raise the unjust circumstances which he was faced with. However, he failed to go through the legal proceedings to get a hearing from the authorities. More and more he realized that no one else would be involved in his struggle to solve the existing problems.

With a copy of the nation's labour laws and with a fervent plea for justice for his fellow workers in one hand, Chun

committed suicide by self-immolation. At twenty two years of age he burned himself to death to draw attention to the social ills of the community. His flaming body evoked a groan of anguish and protest from workers and students. A few church pastors immediately began both to protest against the economic and political injustice of the policies of the Korean government and to preach against the oppressive situation of the wretched Pyonghwa Market Shop that caused the death of this young man. Students held demonstrations against this incident. "Hoping to prevent the drama of Chun's immolation from erupting into widescale demonstrations", and government proclaimed him "as a national hero".³⁵ The government, which feared that Chun would become a symbol of working-class resistance, declared that it would do its best to prevent the need for other workers to suffer as Chun did.

This incident helped to build the emergence of a new theological movement for backing the exploited. According to Byung Mu Ahn, Chun's death encouraged Korean theologians in leading an advance in the framework of minjung theology for eliminating the evil reality of Korea.³⁶ The event of Chun's immolation became a moment to open the eyes of people both to see the Korean society which was submerged under a system of exploitation and oppression and to engage in more direct participation via speaking and acting on social issues. This resulted in a passionate desire on the part of the minjung theologians to provide an opportunity to resolve social subjugation in work and life as a matter of urgency. No doubt Chun's suicide helped to create an active theology which

concentrates on the social, economic, and political concerns of Korea.

The final influence of a personal nature to minjung theology comes from Ji Ha Kim who was nominated for the Nobel Prize in both Peace and Literature and who is a poet. Kim confessed that he "resembles Albert Camus, as a man and artist who refuses to remain aloof from the suffering of his fellow creature".³⁷ Kim, who was a fascinating writer, was quick to react to provocation and unimpressed by the injustice of the government in relation to the unprivileged. He was a man who sought his own way to speak of the issues of the war between the rich and the poor in his time. He dealt with the current social and political situation of Korea in direct terms, expressing plainly and acting on his opinion within the limited scope allowed him. Because of "his courageous conduct and stirring poems",³⁸ Kim was sentenced to life imprisonment by the Korean government and released a few years ago. He is now living as a free person in Korea.

Kim wrote many poems which show the nature of his commitment and resistant attitude by endorsing entirely the programme of social justice. One of them encouraged minjung theologians to follow in its footsteps as a symbol of courageous resistance. This is "Chiang Il Tam", a ballad, which was written in 1977. The story of Chang Il Tam goes: Chang is the son of a butcher and a prostitute. As a thief, Chang is imprisoned. One day he escapes from prison and is then hunted by police. In proceeding on this lonely journey of a failed life, Chang meets various kinds of unprivileged people, experiences disgraceful things, and is

suddenly enlightened on the truth of hope. He becomes "a preacher of liberation". His message is the "communal ownership of property" and "revolution". His audience is the workers and farmers as opposed to "bourgeoisie". The main ideas in his preaching include:

The transformation of the lowest into heaven, the traveller's path from this world to heaven as revolution, the need to purge the wild beasts that lurk within human hearts, symbolic of the paekchong's occupation, and the corruption of this world and the paradise of the Eastern Sea (Korea) in the next. ³⁹

Here, what is important is that according to him this ballad

Chang Il Tam:

Emulates Im Kok Chong (Korea's legendary Robin Hood) in believing that the poor should "re-liberate" what the rich have stolen from them and divide it equally among the needy. He begins stealing from the rich and giving₄₀ to the poor, is arrested and thrown into jail.

Kok Chong Im, who lived in Korea in the mid-sixteenth century, was the most famous brigand leader. In Im's time, the poor were unable to meet their heavy obligation in the following three areas. Firstly, the tribute tax system levied the heaviest amount on the poor. The increased tribute taxes were not for the peasant farmers, but for the ultimate purpose of enriching the lives of the ruling class. As they were paid in rice, the peasants were unable to pay the amount of the tribute tax. Secondly, the military service system required the duty of the individual and the corvee labour obligation of a household in the peasant conscript system and the provider system. It was impossible for the poor to keep the duties of this double burden on their personal lives. Finally, the grain loan system which evolved into a form of usury at the expense of the poor, caused

them further distress. It was designed to provide grain for the needy peasant farmers during the Spring hunger season, before the winter barley crop came in. The grain loan was to be repaid from the harvest in the Fall. Yet the government lacked adequate supplies for the grain loan and the rate of interest charge to be repaid by the poor was higher.⁴¹

Unfortunately, the ruling class was slow to take action on these problems. Rather, this class' hunger for land grew. No one was concerned that the situation of the poor was aggravated by the ruling bureaucrats who expanded their political power and their agricultural estates. No one provided grain for the needy people during the Spring hunger season. But Kok Chong Im tried to steal rice and other things from the rich and then distributed them to the poor. As Robin Hood did, Im lived with the poor and robbed the rich to help the poor. This is why Chi Ha Kim has used Kok Chong Im as a symbolic model for his ballad Chang Il Tam which displays his solidarity with those who are exploited and demanding an absolutely necessary basis for action.

Here minjung theologians, whose impact has been in analyzing the the interconnection between the past and present inhuman realities of Korea, have discovered a weapon in the story of Chang Il Tam to attack the problems of man's exploitation by man and to turn the utopian dream of fraternity among men into reality. There is no alternative other than a liberating movement.⁴²

b. The Ecclesiastical Account

Traditionally, the Korean church has been carrying out its duty of proclaiming the gospel of the Lord, sharing the good news of Jesus Christ through lifestyle, deeds, and words by the power of the Holy Spirit. Within this concept, the Korean pastors have spoken of these tasks which are of crucial importance for most of the local churches in Korea. In the early 1960s, the social, economic and political situations of Korea however invited people to see the wounded men on the road to Jericho and to shoulder the responsibility for them. At that time, George E. Ogle, who was sent by the Methodist Mission Board of the United States of America to Korea as a missionary, began a ministry of Urban Industrial Mission in Inchun City in South Korea. At a new type of ministry for the Korean church, its mission object was the workers of industry. The UIM focused on a hospital visit, a call at the home of a sick, injured person, or counselling with individual workers.

With increasing social unrest because of the unjust political and economic policies of the Korean government, the UIM has gradually emerged as struggling for the workers of industrial firms. From the late 1960s, the concern of the UIM has "become more and more directly involved with the problems of workers as Korean economic policy concentrated on manufacturing for export".⁴³ The UIM, which has been opened to see the contextual situation, has worked with the urban poor and workers and supported them in their efforts to form unions in response to their needs. Needless to say, the UIM:

Has been focusing on some of the poorest areas of the country, such as the Young Don Po section of Seoul, where dozens of small textiles plants, plastic factories, and other such enterprises, usually employing between fifty and a hundred workers, pay wages lower than the minimum and disregard a law that provides for an eight-hour day and a six-day week; instead they often force their employees, many of them women, to work twelve or sixteen hours a day under sweatshop conditions. ⁴⁴

The work of the UIM consequently helped to stimulate minjung theologians' interest in the rights of poor people in the slums and workers in the factories. These theologians not only recognized the importance of labour unions but also commended them and clearly stated their support of the workers' right to strike. A large number of those involved in such action and in related human rights are still involved in demonstrating solidarity with the UIM struggle. The National Council of Churches of Korea clearly reaffirmed that "industrial evangelism is an essential part of the Church's mission". Nam Dong Suh also declared that with the UIM:

Several theologians....have been involved in the (recent) events and named the theological reflections on the cases "theology in praxis" or "theology in the actual context". I have a firm belief that the theological activities do not end with the exposition of texts of the salvation or liberation of man by God in the Bible, as in Exodus, the Passover, activities of the prophets, the event of the cross....by new insight, but they ought to be discovered and connections made with and through the cases of struggle for historical and political human liberation today. ⁴⁵

For Nam Dong Suh,, the Second Vatican Council of 1965 stimulated a great deal of discussion and reflection on "revolutionary political theology" ⁴⁶ (minjung theology). The spirit of the agenda that has developed from Vatican II is an encouraging sign of radical change and theological ferment in the

life of the Christian community. But in the literature of minjung theology, no articles have identified the extensive theological material borrowed directly from the Vatican Council. We wish to show that the import of Vatican II on minjung theology has been considerable as follows.

When we look back at the Second Vatican Council, it asks Christians to engage in social action whilst it does not encourage a purely individualistic ethic. Vatican II does not imply that the simplest way of starting this is to emphasize the responsibility of the Christian community to engage in a structure of revolutionary obligation. The teaching of the Council about human society evokes a response of service to others through government, university, political parties, voluntary associations, and the church. As a call to service, Vatican II demands active participation in society through these institutions with a view to social justice. Christians, who love others and justice, should engage themselves in solidarity with human beings who need such service. ⁴⁷

On service, the Second Vatican Council sees the role of the church in the modern world as one of exchange and dialogue with the world. As a visible assembly and a spiritual community, the church serves the world as a leaven. Our penetrating to the heavenly city is a fact assessable to the eyes of faith. At the same time, the church should strive to heal and elevate the dignity of the person by the way in which it strengthens the seams of human society and endows the daily activity of men with a deeper sense. Jesus Christ gave his church no proper mission in the economic, social and political order, rather he set before it

a religious task. But the church can become a function, a light and an energy which can serve to structure human society in accordance with the Bible. Doubtless, the church can contribute towards promoting human society and its history on earth.⁴⁸

Here the conviction of Minjung theology is that Vatican II calls upon us to make a positive contribution to Korean Christian life in changing its traditional ecclesiastical position. That is, this theology believes that a conservative reading, which distinguishes between the primary mission to preach the gospel and the secondary mission to serve the world, no longer exists in the Council. Vatican II no longer allows a dualistic reading of the church's mission but its social ministry is to include at one and the same time the engagement on behalf of social justice. The Council affirms the emancipation of the oppressed as a single mission with its inevitably political thrust.

Finally, the World Conference on Church and Society, held in Geneva in 1966, was one of the most important events that "marked the greatest participation for the Third World up to that time in the life of the ecumenical" and brought "into the centre of the activities of the World Council of Churches the commitment to social justice on a global basis".⁴⁹ For minjung theology, without doubt the Geneva Conference of 1966 opened radical social thinking to new concerns challenging many of the positions of the past and the present in Korea. One of the results of the 1966 Conference was to encourage minjung theologians who were in conflict with much that the Korean church traditionally stands for in regarding its mission in the absolute witness of the gospel in

keeping with Christian principles for salvation.

Under the official title of the 1966 Conference: "Christians in the Technical and Social Revolutions of Our Time", the new discussions of this Conference in social thinking were held on: "the potentialities of the scientific and technological revolution"; "the search for a new ethos for new societies"; and "the challenge and relevance of theology to the social revolutions of our time".⁵⁰ As the themes of the Conference indicate, the Conference concentrated on social change and economics and politics which play an important role in processes of change. When the Conference spoke on specific theological themes, its attention again focused on economics, politics, the meaning of the concept and reality of revolution. Therefore, A. Rich, who was a delegate of the Swiss Protestant Federation to the Conference, commented that the one thing:

Amongst the most significant and exciting events of the World Conference on Church and Society in Geneva was the fact that it did deal with this very theme "revolution" as one of its main subjects of discussion, thus proclaiming that the revolutionary world of today presents church and theology with a new task, which must be tackled in a positive way. Because it dealt with this theme, one may without exaggeration ascribe to this Conference a position of rank in the history of the Church.⁵¹

Specifically, the 1966 Conference paid attention to the consequences of the misuse of economic and political power at the national and international level. According to the Conference, at the national level the misuse of power by the authoritarians leads to exploitation, oppression, poverty and violation of human rights, whilst at the international level the misuse of power of the First World leads to the economic and political dependence of

the Third World. Pouring billions of dollars into the Third World countries did not liberate them from the problems of poverty. Rather, much aid fell into the wrong hands and had not been widely shared by the masses of people. Thus, the greatest prophetic voice of delegates "from Asia in relating Christian faith and theology to social justice and to the revolutionary needs of Asia" has continued for "more than a generation".⁵² The abuse of power by the First World is consequently seen as a major cause of all the world's war and violence in the eyes of the Conference. The economic and political domination of the developed nations contributed heavily to political conflicts and injustices in the undeveloped nations. In this sense, the Geneva Conference declared that:

The attempt to use "Third World" nations as instruments of Cold War politics, for example, has resulted in several international wars of major proportions, such as those in Korea and Vietnam, as well as many lesser conflicts. In areas where there have been tensions, the big powers have added to the risk of these situations escalating into war by their gifts and sales of military equipment. Furthermore, the economic and ideological interests of developed nations, particularly some of those in the North Atlantic area, have often led them to support - economically, diplomatically and militarily - ruling elites in the developing nations whose rule is oppressive and whose policies are clearly indifferent to the aspirations of the majority of those whom they govern.⁵³

As a result, the 1966 Conference identified the thinking of traditional theology as too abstract to meet the dilemma of action in a dehumanized world. For the participants of the Conference, the theological reflection of the themes of that meeting was not enough, but a new method of theological study is needed for radical social revolution in order to liberate people from bondage to physical need. As a result, the 1966 Conference:

Marked the beginning of a new theological strain in the World Council, which might be termed the theology of the powers. It is a reinterpretation of the Pauline theology of the "principalities and powers" in the context of today's functioning of political and economic power. ⁵⁴

Under the high priority of this movement in social, political and economic matters, no doubt the political dimension of Korea was more clearly seen by minjung theologians than ever. The sociopolitical consciousness of the Conference is particularly manifest in the theological articles of minjung theologians today. The participation of Christians in revolutionary and political movement is encouraged and supported by minjung theology and not considered as something immoral.

c. The Theological Account

Minjung theology has shown itself to be a new way of understanding and doing theology which demands serious engagement with the context. This theology cannot fall into the role of justifying the unjust action of the status quo. The most obvious desire of minjung theology contributes to the political issues of today which are misused by traditional theology to justify the domination of the existing social organization. With the question of the problematic issues in the traditional doctrines and in the liberal Protestant theologies, minjung theologians have raised their new theological tendencies which point towards fashionable theological speculations concerned with the struggle for a better human society.

Minjung theology has seen that Europe Protestant theology represented a reaction to the liberalism and optimism of the pre-

war era in the first period of the twentieth century (i.e., between 1920 and 1960). In worldwide terms, the Protestant thought of the traditional language survived and was revived. The majority of the world's Protestant theologians expressed their witnesses through a variety of sixteenth or seventeenth century dogmatic formulations which had succeeded in working their way into popular biblical and denominational language. This does not mean that their theological movements are implied to be in agreement with the biblical and theological interpretation of early Christianity, Martin Luther, and John Calvin.

Protestant theologians often made attacks upon modern-optimistic views of man and history and emphasized the church's message and mission to the values and goals of modern western society although they were in their appropriation and reinterpretation of the orthodox theological tradition. Their theologies were self-confident and on the offensive. Those who dominated twentieth century theological studies in the Christian world are: Karl Barth who taught the absolute transcendent sovereign God in contrast to sin-dominated mankind, a dialectical theological method which poses truth as a series of paradoxes (i.e., the infinite became the finite), and the Christocentric Word as the only sources of the knowledge of God; Emil Brunner who emphasized personal encounter of Jesus Christ as the centrepiece of the Christian faith and an ethical system that attempted to maintain a balance between individualism and community. He particularly believed the radical discontinuity between worldly existence and existence in faith. He saw that mythological ideas in the Bible need to be reinterpreted in

existentialist terms as to provide self-understanding for the scientific mind of the twentieth century (i.e., the fall of Adam as a statement of human sinfulness and finitude); Paul Tillich who presented the conception of the demonic in individual and social life and the method of correlation in which philosophy and theology should play a complementary role to each other. If philosophy poses problems and asks questions, the response of theology is to enter into dialogue with philosophy to understand its questions; and Reinhold Niebuhr who criticized liberal optimism concerning human potential and adopted a high view of divine sovereignty and a firm belief in the utter dependency of all existence upon God. He was shown as a contemporary apologist for Christianity by demonstrating the relevance of biblical faith for understanding the hard realities of our human nature and history.

This powerful theological movement, however, is now a matter of the past as a Korean minjung theologian has spelt out.⁵⁵ On the other hand, another minjung theologian has affirmed that minjung theology, not "as an imported product of the western theological writings", is seen "in the general theological area of Bonhoeffer's worldly interpretation of the Bible and the secular meaning of the Gospel".⁵⁶ Along with this, minjung theology has got the impression that Bonhoeffer looked for a non-religious interpretation of the Bible for modern man. For Bonhoeffer, the religious interpretation of the church should not be a metaphysical or an individualistic one, but operative in the conflict context of human history here and now. The traditional

church "turned its biblical interpretation into a system of abstract truths to be communicated to men by words" and "into an individualistic concern for the "salvation of souls" for a world beyond the boundary of death". 57 That is, past biblical and theological interpretations are to be criticized for their use of an ideology no longer acceptable to Bonhoeffer's present-day reality. The present task of non-religious interpretation must be hence understanding the Bible and theology in the light of Bonhoeffer's personal experience and his contemporary situation.

For instance, for today's situation we must transfer Jesus' attitude towards love into political categories as the paradigm of this worldly transcendence, not to alter Jesus' message to make it relevant to a religious interpretation of things. On the way to the non-religious interpretation of biblical concepts, Bonhoeffer realized that:

The Old Testament provides the key to "non-religious" interpretation of the Scriptures above all because of its this-worldliness (Diesseitigkeit). What is this worldliness? First of all, it is commitment to historical existence rather than preoccupation with deliverance beyond death. 58

As well as in the Old Testament, he thought that the story of redemption in the New Testament is primarily concerned with this-worldly things in history in time rather than with other-worldly philosophical discourse or concern for personal soul salvation. In his prison writings, Bonhoeffer concentrated on the problem of non-religious exegesis in most important biblical and theological terms. One of them is Christology which is the foundation of this worldly ontology in contrast to other-worldly metaphysics and

in the light of responsible action following Christ who restructures the empirical world in reality. The salvation of the gospel is not seen in the anthropocentric sense of liberal, mystic, pietistic, and ethical theology, but in the sense of this world.

Jurgen Moltmann was the other European theologian who stimulated minjung theologians directly and indirectly through his travelling to South Korea and his theology. As these theologians' reply to this view show, "a political hermeneutics of the Gospel" of Moltmann is a central contribution to minjung theology.⁵⁹ For minjung theology, Moltmann encouraged man's awareness of the possible - the assurance of the possibility and actuality of a new creation. It is possible for men to bring change in the world in the way that Moltmann saw both the exodus and the resurrection as the paradigms of God acting upon the present.⁶⁰ Man can bring resultant change within the world now. This means that human action is ^{concerned with} the possibility of creating society in terms of a future fulfilment. Thus, the theology of Moltmann "not only motivates but directs human activity"⁶¹ in the present situation which can develop.

In this regard, Moltmann suggested an accompanying political movement (or political theology) which aims at a transformed human society of the future. For him, the appropriate theological response to God's promise (i.e., of what will be in the future) "is not abstract contemplation but reflection aimed at institutional criticism and political activity in the present".⁶² Here Moltmann's eschatological notion, in the term of operational concept, should be interpreted as a political being

anticipating the transformation of the world through the presence of God in the cross (i.e., which implies Jesus' political identification with the cause of the poor and oppressed). This political action is not simply for the individual and his private destiny, but for the manifestation of the righteousness of God (i.e., "which creates anew" 63 and the freedom of man in their world of oppression and injustice.

The kingdom of God (the promised future) is ushered in by political movement. Through political theology which is based on the imagery of the cross, Moltmann hence tried to underline the public, societal, and political dimension of the Christian faith. This political theology, which affirms the Christian faith, must necessarily relate to social and political praxis. In Moltmann's thought, his political theology would be a tool to speak of God and with God for the sake of men's consciences in the midst of the public misery of society and struggle against this misery. Politics is an activity enjoyed by God as he disclosed himself to us in Jesus Christ. God does something in the political activity of humanity. Thus, political theology tells that politics can be used in bringing about the realization of the kingdom of God.

Our special concern is finally to introduce the representative Korean minjung theologians who have written articles and books leading to the conclusion that their authors are at the forefront of the making of minjung theology. The following minjung theologians who provide readers the most significant development of minjung theology are: Nam Dong Suh who studied theology in Dong Ji Sa Theological Seminary in Japan and

in Toronto Immanuel Theological Seminary in Canada; Byung Mu Ahn who studied sociology in Seoul National University in Korea and the New Testament in Heidelberg University in Germany; Yong Bock Kim who studied philosophy in Yon Se University in Korea and theology in Princeton Theological Seminary; and Wan Sang Han who studied sociology in Seoul National University and in the University of Emory in the U.S.A.

Conclusion

We have described what the motives of minjung theology are. The awareness of minjung theology started by considering the existing Korean church, the existing political power, and the existing poor and oppressed. The erroneous religious beliefs and authoritarian political power, which linger in bitterness in Korean society, create for minjung theology the conditions for the dehumanizing schemes of this world. That is, the present religious, social and political conditions of the minjung in Korea become an insignificant matter to the government and church. The message of the Korean church is not to invite the minjung to establish a city where they will not be exploited and to abolish the structure of inhuman institutions. The socio-economic and political system of Korea is seen in the fact that a few people control economic and political power and manipulate the government, but fail to deal adequately with the gruesome reality of the minjung.

However, minjung theologians have been inspired by the men who spent their lives for the struggle of humanization by national

and international ecclesiastical movements which doubtlessly elicited a renewal of the ecumenical and participation on the interrelated problems of poverty, oppression, exploitation and economic injustice in our time, and by European theologians who tried to develop their theologies in relation to the issues facing their contemporary realities. All these aspects are truly the inspiration of every strategy which breaks down the economic and political injustice of Korea to make way for the new. This inspiration is enough to provide minjung theologians with a sense of wholeness and to enable their meaningful participation in life. Therefore, the tendency of minjung theology seeks always to identify itself with particular causes and particular people and them to eliminate whatever issues that are in focus in the struggle.

ENDNOTES

1. The term "minjung" is defined in various ways depending on minjung theologians. According to Byung Mu Ahn, minjung are understood as 민중 (crowd) which means a concept entirely opposite to that of authority in his article "Jesus and the Minjung in the Gospel of Mark", Minjung Theology, ed. Yong Bock Kim (Toa Payoh: Christian Conference of Asia 1981), p. 137; nns in hia book The Story of Minjung Theology, (Seoul: Han Kuk Shin Hak Yun Gu So, 1987), p. 25. For Nam Dong Suh, minjung can be seen as those who are individually and collectively oppressed and exploited under the role and control of a sovereign in his book The Study of Minjung Theology, (Seoul: Han Kil Sa, 1983), p. 31; and in "Minjung Theology", Theological Thought 24, Spring 1979, p. 84. The minjung of Wan Sang Han are those who are politically alienated and controlled, mobilized, economically exploited, and culturally discriminated by a foreign power in his book Minjung Sociology, (Seoul: Jong Ro Su Juk, 1984), p. 26.
2. Byung Mu Ahn, "The Korean Church's Understanding of Jesus: An Historical View", International Review of Mission LXXIV(293), January, 1985, p. 81.
3. Joon Gon Kim, "Korea's Total Evangelization Movement", Korean Church Growth Explosion, eds. Bong Rin Ro and Marlin L. Nelson (Seoul: Word of Life Press, 1983). pp. 19-50.
4. David Kwang Sun Suh, "Minjung and Theology in Korea: A Biographical Sketch of an Asian Theological Consultation ", Minjung Theology, p.23.
5. Keun Won Park, "Evangelism and Mission in Korea: A Reflection from an Ecumenical Perspective", International Review of Mission LXXIV(293), January, 1985, p. 56.
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8. Byung Suh Kim, "The Explosive Growth of the Korean Church Today: A Sociological Analysis", International Review of Mission LXXIV(293), January 1985, p. 68.
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12. Chong Sik Lee, "South Korea in 1980: The Emergence of a New Authoritarian Order", Asian Studies 21(1), 1985, pp. 124-130.
13. Ibid., p. 130.
14. Chong Sik Lee, "South Korea in 1984", Asian Studies XXI(1), 1985, p. 81.
15. Byung My Ahn, The Liberator Jesus, (Seoul: Hyun Dae Sa Sang Sa, 1983), pp. 299-300.
16. Yong Bock Kim, Korean Minjung and Christianity. (Seoul: Hyung Sung Sa, 1988), p. 58.
17. Ibid., pp. 62-64.
18. Benjamin B. Weems, Reform, Rebellion and the Heavenly Way, (Arizona: The University of Arizona Press, 1966), p. 7.
19. Young Choon Kim, "The Chondogyo Ethics and its Significance in Korean Tradition", Papers of the 1st International Conference on Korean Studies, ed. Kyen Son Lee (Seoul: Shin Il Sa, 1980), p. 565.
20. "Tonghak Nan Saryo-Ilsong Nok Pyun - No. 1", (The Historical Sources on the Tonghak Rebellion - Excerpts from the Daily Records concerning National Affairs, No. 1), Asia Yonku (The Journal of Asiatic Studies) III, June 1960, p. 230.
21. Dong Hi Choi, "Donghak Philosophy", Korean Thoughts. ed. Shin Young Chun (Seoul: International Cultural Foundation, 1979), p. 69.
22. H. Weems, Reform, Rebellion and the Heavenly Way, p. 8.
23. Y. C. Kim, "The Chondgyo Ethics and its Significance in Korean Tradition", p. 568.
24. D. H. Choi, "Donghak Philosophy", p. 73.
25. H. M. Weems, Reform, Rebellion and the Heavenly Way, p. 10.
26. Ibid., p. 10.
27. Y. C. Kim, "The Chongogyo Ethics and its Significance in Korean Tradition", p. 573.
28. Woo Keun Han, The History of Korea, (Honolulu: The University Press of Hawaii, 1970), pp. 356-357.
29. H. Weems, Reform, Rebellion and the Heavenly Way, pp. 10-11.
30. Ibid., p. 40.

31. Ki Baik Lee, A New History of Korea, (London: Harvard University Press, 1980), p. 287.
32. Y. B. Kim, Korean Minjung and Christianity, pp. 165ff.; "Messiah and Minjung", Minjung and Korean Theology, ed. NCC (Seoul: Han Kuk Shin Hak Yeun Gu., 1987), pp. 294ff; and N. D. Suh, "Historical, References for a Theology of Minjung", Minjung Theology, p. 172.
33. N. D. Suh, "Historical References for a Theology of Minjung", Minjung Theology. p. 172.
34. Y. B. Kim, "Messiah and Minjung", p. 259; and Korean Minjung and Christianity, p. 166.
35. George E. Ogle, Liberty to the Captives, (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1977), p. 109; Kon Ho Song "A History of the Christian Movement in Korea", International Review of Mission LXXIV(293), January, 1985, and N. D. Suh, The Study of Minjung Theology, pp. 351-352.
36. B. M. Ahn, The Story of Minjung Theology, p. 286.
37. Chi Ha Kim The Gold-Crowned Jesus and their Writings (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1978), p. ix. Cf. as a humanist who believed that "freedom is the highest value and tolerance is the greatest virtue", Albert Camus was a man who left "a source of inspiration to another political thinker from a country where freedom was drastically curtailed" in his book Witness of Decline (Cranbury: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1974), pp. 249, 260.
38. Ibid., p. ix.
39. Ibid., p. 28.
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44. Ibid., p. 41.
45. Ibid., p. 45.
46. N. D. Suh, "Historical References for a Theology of Minjung", p. 167.

47. _____, "Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World at Vatican II, Gaudium et Spes, 7 December, 1965" Vatican Council II Vol. I, ed. Austin Flannery (Hereford: Fowler Wright Book Ltd., 1975), pp. 903-911.
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49. John C. Bennet, "The Geneva Conference of 1966 as a Climactic Event", The Ecumenical Review 37. 1985, p. 26. Cf. N. D. Suh, "Historical References for a Theology of Minjung", p. 167.
50. Greteke De Vries, "Asian Theologians on Science and Technology", Exchange 49. April 1988, p. 7.
51. Paul Albrecht, "Report Responses to the World Conference on Church and Society", The Ecumenical Review XX, 1968, p. 456.
52. J. C. Bennett, "The Geneva Conference of 1966 as a Climactic Event", p. 27.
53. Official Report of the World Conference on Church and Society, (Geneva: WCC, 1966), p. 140.
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56. D. K. S. Suh, "Minjung and Theology in Korea: A Biographical Sketch of an Asian Theological Consultation", pp. 18-19.
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60. Jurgen Moltmann, Religion, Revolution and the Future, (New York: Charles Scribner and Sons, 1969), p. 136.
61. James Gustafson, Theology and Ethics. (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1981), p. 45.
62. Jurgen Moltmann, The Experiment Hope, (London: SCM Press, 1975), p. 5.
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CHAPTER FIVE

THE METHODOLOGY OF MINJUNG THEOLOGY

In minjung theologians' understanding, the Christian church traditionally taught its belief that the wholly Other God can be reached only by a rejection of man's free existence in the world and by a religious way into the beyond. The faith of the church in God in the history of the Judaeo-Christian tradition and the Reformed tradition, however, has brought people not happiness but misery. People believed in God's call to them to utter God's words to the world, but they frequently discovered the fact that this faith has brought them nothing but contempt and suffering. Without engaging in a detailed discussion of a temporal view of reality in which man's autonomy and responsibility are recognized, for minjung theology, the church and its faith are shown as fruitless and erase all hope. In the face of the religious yearnings or dogmatic enterprises, theology cannot be seen in a recounting of the engagement of God with men in their own history.

Minjung theologians, therefore, have insisted that a meaningful belief in God requires the process of human existence - changing the structures of society that cause poverty. That is, theology should begin not with the dogmatic tradition of the church but with the human condition in the world. Theology should be said to reflect on God in the context of human existence, in the way in which we encounter God's historical acting (i.e., the event of the Exodus) towards us. In this sense, minjung theologians are interested in the social sciences in common, convinced that social theorists explain the facets of

ancient Israelite society and contemporary Korean society with special precision, and then employ their ideas by using them as the method of formulating a theology which tends to resolve all the existing problems of Korean society, not to explain them.

In the light of this, minjung theologians have been eager to use the social sciences as the method to construct a doing theology which aims at the liberation of the minjung from social, economic, and political bondage. Hence, this chapter will present four aspects: the historical aspect, the sociological aspect, the political aspect, and praxis which should be understood in order to adequately ascertain the meaning of minjung theology.

A. The Historical Aspect

In minjung theologians' views, the Bible speaks of God in the context of God's being for men in history. For instance, the central act of God in the Old Testament was the deliverance of Israel from the slavery and oppression of Egypt to the promised land. The central acts of God in the New Testament were the events of Galilee, Calvary, and Easter Day through Jesus Christ. These central events were the climactic acts in the biblical texts in which God's mighty power was seen at work throughout the whole history of the Jewish people. Here, the Bible mainly portrays God as Lord of history. His nature is revealed in his mighty acts. These central events, which were historically actualized and shown in their true light in salvation history in accordance with the Christian faith, however, are expressed by minjung theologies in

terms of representative symbols grounded in the mundane. The true historical events of the Exodus and the Christ-event are shown in the meaning of the historical symbols of salvation history which is supposed to relate eschatological salvation to world history. The stories of the Exodus and the Christ-event consequently allow minjung theologians to live their lives freely and to make human history as a history of liberation.¹

Therefore, minjung theology has had no place for the supernaturalism of traditional eschatology in the course of history. The biblical conception of providential history, in which the intervention of God in the natural course of events in favour of the Jewish people is a central theme, has been only for the man of religious beliefs. Theology must speak of historicity not in the traditional dualism of the Christian faith, when it speaks of human existence, its problems, and its salvation. This means that the salvation history of presupposition, which has been inaugurated from the very beginning of the Christian church, is rejected by minjung theology which has believed a single history in the midst of the general history of humanity.²

At this point, minjung theology has moved to overcome the Christian traditional dualism between the church and the world by giving a this-worldly interpretation of salvation. This eventually has led minjung theology to deny the basis for the elaboration of the Christian religious world view but to provide the new stage of the world which begins to be desacralized. The radical approach of minjung theology against the traditional two worlds cosmology is the fact that it is compatible with a secular history which leads to the work of real, this-worldly

transformation which happens in "the dimension of socio-economic history".³ There cannot exist the distinction between the present world and the world to come in dualistic and metaphysical terms. The drama of history should be understood only in the context of our existence in the world which should be the perfection of a concrete, historical community of justice, peace and freedom. The history of men is determined in the perspective of their salvation (i.e., of the accomplishment of their destiny) in the human world. The eschatological perspective of the Christian faith is no longer trans-historical regarding a salvation for individuals beyond history in eternity.

Minjung theology consequently has been forced to a radical reinterpretation of the traditional cosmological doctrine of Christianity. In rereading the events of the Exodus and the Christ-event, especially,, this theology has postulated that the acts of God in history are the clue to the direction of human history. The clue speaks of overthrowing the powers of evil that hold people in captivity and of the promise of liberation which is disclosed in the future. Of course, the acts of God are the historical events of the Christian religious faith. But minjung theology can allow God's activity in the past as the paradigm to be inseparably bound to a human history extending forward and backward along a temporal continuum. By rereading the past acts of God in the light of the present, thus, the eschatological terms (i.e., freedom, hope, promise, future, and fulfillment which are shown in the stories of the Exodus and the Christ-event) can be used by minjung theology in relation to human beings in the

crucial context of their striving for liberation. Here, man's action is justified and stimulated, because he sees himself as a one given a task and a purpose centring on liberation from oppression in the light of God's liberating deed.⁴

The historical consciousness of minjung theology in this understanding of history concerns the past and present acts of the minjung who have been alienated and forgotten by the historian and the Christian faith. That is, the historical consciousness must be no longer concerned with the minority ruling elites who have been represented by the historian and the Christian faith as the modes reflecting on the conditions of human life and leading history effectively, but to the majority minjung who have been actually destined to move forward towards the historical process and the just society against obstacles of history which should lead towards the humanization of life. The minjung have been the prime cause of the nation's greatest rights of struggle throughout the history of Korea. When the inquiry of history on the role of the minjung is adapted to investigate the past Korean society, it can teach us who the minjung were/are, what they have done, and how they have become the mightiest accelerators of the process of social transformation.⁵

All this means that it is a right time for minjung theology to see that the minority ruler's determination of the Korean historical process should be replaced by the majority minjung's determination of the Korean historical process. The challenge of minjung theology to history is both to say that the role of the ruling class can no longer be the mask of history in the radical movement against all forms of domination and exploitation and to

take a hold of the movement and struggle of the minjung for social emancipation in the opposition of the present. Hence, minjung theologians have called the minjung the subjective people of history who have lived to change the structure of history and its context.⁶ The minjung movement in history was the story of their struggle for the freedom and transformation of their own society (or reality). The minjung challenged Korean society to engage in rebellious participations for the more relevant understanding of development in the light of their own situation and experience, when they were ignored, exploited, and dominated by the minority ruling powers. Therefore, "the minjung are the masters of the world and history".⁷ The radical movement of the minjung:

Is a meaningful paradigm for minjung theology which shows that the minjung gradually liberate themselves from the position of being a historical object and become a historical subject. Minjung history and theology testify the fact that the minjung overcome with their own power external conditions which determine and confine them, and become the subjects who determine their own social situation and destiny.⁸

In this connection, the important thing is that in the history of Korea minjung theologians have found the term "Han" as the major key point for understanding the reality of the Korean minjung and for eliminating the situation of Han. The word Han literally means grudge or lamentation and is suggested as "a feeling of unresolved resentment against unjustifiable suffering".⁹ A more detailed description of the term is expressed in the following quotation:

Han is the minjung's anger and sad sentiments turned inward, hardened and stuck to their hearts. Han is caused as one's outgoingness is blocked and pressed for an external oppression and exploitation.¹⁰

The Han of the minjung can be drawn from more detailed examples of what happens to them in society. For instance, on a severely cold day a poor man walks by the window of a rich man and sees him, his wife, and his children sitting down in comfort to a nice steak dinner. But this poor man has little to take care of his wife and his children, and his personal life has been transformed into a tool in the hands of the rich. The poor have very little opportunity for their own decision-making to shape their lives. The poor live a life dominated by other human beings in their own society and even abroad, and then are in the growing marginalization of poverty in the economic, social, political, and religious life of their society. At the same time the poor also realize the expansion of foreign domination and the establishment of hatred. The economic, political, religious, and cultural conquest of the First World is the annihilation of the other. It is the establishment of the rule to dominate the other. The First World nations try to reshape a world dominated by their despotical and oppressive rule. They subject the poor nations to the hardest, roughest, most horrible servitude. The domination of the one is to reduce the other to the status of servant. It is the construction of a prison so that one nation can rule over another. All these aspects of life breed the feeling of Han in the hearts of the minjung. In addition to this view, Nam Dong Suh has noted that:

1. The Korean have suffered numerous invasions by surrounding powerful nations so that the very existence of the Korean nation has come to be understood as han.
2. Korean have continually suffered the tyranny of the rules so that they think of their existences as baecksung (i.e., individually and collectively those

who are under the rule and control of a sovereign). 3. Also, under Confucianism's strict imposition of laws, customs discriminating against women, the existence of woman was han itself. 4. At a certain point in Korean history, about half of the population was registered as hereditary slaves, and were treated as property rather than as people of the nation. These thought of their lives as han. These four may be called the Fourfold han of Korean people. Indeed, as the poet Ko Eun exclaims, "We Korean were born from the womb of han and brought up in the womb of han".¹¹

Therefore, the han of the Korean minjung is oppression, exploitation, dependency, hopelessness, marginalization, renunciation, discrimination, humiliation, resignation, nothingness, and defeat to fate. Han, which is "a deep awareness of the contradiction in a situation and of the unjust treatment meted out to the people or a person by the powerful",¹² on the other hand, lends the minjung the strength to initiate a hard and long struggle against the entrenched forces of the present-day society of Korea. By reaffirming the historical subjectivity of the minjung in social transformation, minjung theology has thought that the existing structures of Korean society must be challenged to be crushed. Without doubt, the experience of Han has encouraged minjung theologians to express their theological view and to erupt "the energy for a revolution or rebellion".¹³

Among many cases of the tendency of Han for social revolution, the 1960 student revolution against the Lee government is illustrated as follows: following Japan's unconditional surrender in August 1945, the United States of America occupied the territory south of the 38th parallel, whilst Russia occupied North Korea. The two super powers soon converted the military line into a political boundary behind which each consolidated its power and influence. The United States of America wanted South

Korean to build a democratic system, and the elections which were held in the south in 1948 brought into being the first assembly of the republic of Korea. The assembly elected Syng Man Lee the first President. Lee remained in power until April 1960, a month after his election to a fourth term in balloting marked by public interference and gross corruption. His fall was preceded by many student riotings, which the Army refused to suppress. In response to this, Lee resigned from office on 26th April 1960, thereby ending the rule of the first Republic. According to minjung theology, this successful massive student revolution was a result of the spirit of Han as a paradigm¹⁴ which cannot be avoided for the sake of continuing humanization of men (transformation of reality).

B. The Sociological Aspect

The contemporary society of Korea, which is badly organized and corrupted according to minjung theologians, totally contradicts the kingdom of God. These theologians have believed themselves to be commanded to work towards that kingdom. By speaking and writing, most minjung theologians have made a claim to a collective responsibility for the total resolution of the miserable reality in Korea. In this regard, the most significant thing discovered by minjung theologians is to profoundly comprehend the reality in which the minjung live and to do something for it. Without understanding the real facts of a given situation, we fail to link them in the struggle to change an

unjust society which is opposed to the kingdom of God.. Our interpretation of reality, which determines how we formulate plans for its transformation, thus ought to come from a socio-analytical vision. A deep regarding of our contemporary reality is impossible unless we are enlightened by socio-analytical tools which increase our understanding of its structures.

For minjung theologians, sociology can help to fully understand the human condition of the past and present. In the perspective which sociology provides as the raw material for theologising, the Korean which should be reconstructed for its mission of the twenty-first century. 15 In Minjung theologians' minds, our understanding of society is not given to us in prayer or contemplation. In the way of the Christian religious faith, we cannot find the real situation of society by reading the Scriptures, or by listening to the ministers of the church. We can attain this vision only by using our human intelligence and our life experience, and by making use of the scientific and analytical tools that are available to us. Along with our own human experience, these tools are absolutely necessary for minjung theology in terms of requiring the radical change of the miserable structures of Korean society.

Here, minjung theologians have already learned what sociology is about - and can do something for their theology which takes its position based on a deep and dynamic faith in order to promote justice in the structures and an integral participation of the entire people in the historical process. 16 Minjung theologians cannot understand how one hopes to speak of the current situation in South Korea without seriously seeking the contribution of

sociological investigation. The explanation of sociology is essential in any critical analysis of the situation in which the minjung live. Without a structural analysis of what is happening in Korea today, minjung theologians are unable to come up with a coherent understanding of Korean society, and their radical act is unrealistic. 17.

Throughout its history, the Korean church has concentrated too much on a gospel understanding of the Korean situation and not enough on a socio-analytical reading of it. The church has shown very little confidence in the social sciences and in scientific tools of analysis. The church has not understood its religion as a form of social consciousness, it has ignored the concrete social process of Korea. In other words, the church has not provided the way to look at Christianity from the point of view of the social sciences. The message of the church has not implied the development of the new content of the social consciousness but considered its role basically as one of integration and maintaining the existing social order, thereby blocking the study of religion as a factor of social change. Therefore, most ministers and theologians clearly have not admitted the need and obligation to employ the use of sociology in the context of biblical and theological interpretation and pastoral work. Their ministerial options in one way or another have placed them in a relationship of following the existing biblical and theological doctrines and of performing eucharistic rites. 18

Analyzing the circumstances of the minjung's lives through the method of sociology, on the contrary, minjung theologians have

come to a deeper awareness of the misery crushing their people. Realizing this, they have asked, how can God allow the suffering situation of the minjung? They then have come to discover that such misery is incompatible with going to the church, worshipping God, and a heart-love of God. It is necessary to examine this fallacy critically in order to realize that the root cause of misery is sociological. Material poverty is particularly a subhuman situation. These miserable circumstances do not just happen by chance. People create the situation and then other people can change it. The root cause of the suffering situation of the minjung is sociological but changeable. The scientific analysis of sociology allows minjung theologians to understand the surrounding reality and to tell them what they ought to do in this reality. ¹⁹

We now turn to present a perspective of an analysis stemming from a particular brand of sociology which has dealt with the past and present social realities of Korea as the objective articulation of minjung theology. According to Young Bock Kim, the past social biographies of the minjung have become a significant theological theme. Theological reflection on the past social life stories of the poor have been useful for the Christian witness in Korea today. ²⁰ In the picture of the social biography of the minjung, for instance, the Korean mask dance is a typical representative folk dance of suffering and hopelessness of the minjung. The mask dances "portray the pathetic life of the oppressed people and their deep sense of han" (the feeling of helpless suffering) and are "the vehicles for transmitting the han of the oppressed people". ²¹ The Korean

mask dance is "composed not only of dance but also rhythmic instrumental music, songs and dialogue between the performers and the musicians and between the performers and the audience". The mask dance is "full of humor, satire and vulgar expressions with a great deal of sex-related dirty words". The minjung through their mask dances "help people slip into the world of dream, fantasy and vision".²²

The mask dance of Korea is thus seen as a depiction of the minjung's own severe life experience in criticizing the ruling class which was the privileged class and manipulated the social systems of their time for their own benefit.²³ The constant consideration of change was, of course, a characteristic of the social system of the past Korean society. The profound alteration of the existing social structure was necessary. The past social stratas in Korean history were bound to become more restless and raise demands for the abolition of the system sooner or later. But the minjung were unable to become the powerful force of the important socio-economic components of their contemporary society. The expression of the suffering situation of the minjung through the mask dance was not enough to create a hope for a new type of society. Rather the ruling class enjoyed the monopoly of the socio-economic functions without transforming the social structures and continued to monopolize the destiny of the minjung. This is a fact among many social biographies of the Korean order to assemble any kind of picture of the social change in Korea in the context of the past.

In the last two decades, on the other hand, the rapid growth

of cities have created a new type of social structure in Korea which has aroused great attention among minjung theologians and sociologists. Especially, Seoul, capital of Korea, is par excellence the centre of progress and social change as the symbol of modernity. The new urbanized groups have taken a direct interest in social development and adjusted their behaviour to the demands of progress. In all Korean cities where urbanization has reached a significant stage of development, hence the mass rural-urban migration has become a decisive factor in promoting the transformation and improvement of the social structure. These new urbanised groups have been a fundamental element in the process of the economic, social, and political change of Korea.

An analysis of Korean sociologists, however, has presented us a picture of the new forms of social inequality which have emerged from the rapid urbanization and modernization in Korea. Despite the economic improvement as the result of the impact of modernization with rapid industrialization and urbanization, "the gap between the "haves" and the "have nots" became greater".²⁴ In the view of the new urbanization groups, political power should be kept within bounds by individual rights as ensuring the protection of those rights, whilst at the same time a strong central government should be capable of playing an active part in the guidance and control of the community and of the economy, and of ensuring a more equal distribution of benefits and opportunities among the population. It is the duty of the national state to promote social welfare and improve the general standard of living, to intervene in the economic machinery, and to ensure greater social justice by protecting the underprivileged

groups in the community.

However, the authoritarian action of the Korean government has laid stress on intervention by the dictatorial political authority, favoured the restriction of individual rights in the spheres of social justice, concentrated on the economy-first policy at any cost. The state has dominated its policies in both economic and political affairs. The Korean government might have been seen as an "entrepreneur" state not only in its strictly political aspects but also in economic matters, and in social change. The Korean government has not always laid sufficient stress on the initial ideological approval for the individual rights of the minjung in the various fields of human activity. According to Byung Suh Kim:

Consequently, the authoritarian bureaucracy bred a new group of power elites, and those who were in the marginal social status felt a keen sense of political alienation and apathy.²⁵

In detail, rapid industrialization has brought about a serious decline in the economic position of farm households relative to urban households. Industrial growth has been primarily a regional phenomenon, because urban growth and industrialization have concentrated in and near the special cities of Seoul and Pusan.²⁶ The economic strategy of Korea has led to increased regional disparities. In the process of economic development, increases in rural-urban disparities are not unusual; they are the consequence of higher productivity increases in industry than in agriculture. Therefore, the relative position of farm households has been less favourable than that of urban households. Farm income has also lagged behind

that of urban dwellers not only because of productive differences but also because of the government's grain price policy. The government has kept its purchase prices of rice and barley low, partly to stabilize prices but also to stimulate industrial growth by keeping the wage cost in urban areas down. Low prices for agricultural goods has not only had a depressing effect on farmers' real income, but also reduced their incentive to increase production.²⁷

For minjung theology, the external debt of the Korean government was the other problem. South Korea's economic growth has been based on borrowed money, and the government has been constantly faced with the problem of debt servicing and repayment of loans and interest. For example, the amount of outstanding foreign debt made South Korea the fourth biggest debtor nation in the world in mid-1984. Korean economic growth has experienced a slowdown which seems to have been aggravated since 1973 by the world-wide oil crisis and inflation in raw material costs. The slowdown also resulted from slackened economics in the United States of America and Japan which were Korea's primary export markets as well as the trade barriers. The United States of America and Japan have helped South Korea continue economic growth. But these countries and other foreign investors have concentrated in labour-intensive consumer goods, have exploited cheap Korean labour, and have not integrated into the balanced development of the Korean economy.²⁸

From the sociological standpoint, all these features for the social transformation of South Korea show how the existing social

structures make the minjung suffer and benefit their oppressors. Minjung sociology particularly looks upon the economic system as an accomplished fact for using the state machinery to create exceptional circumstances for the benefit of certain privileged groups. The analysis of minjung sociology reminds minjung theologians that the contemporary economic system of Korea has a dehumanizing, corrupting and exploiting effect. In this minjung sociology stimulates these theologians to keep up a more or less permanent quarrel with the privileges of the established order in the sense of freedom which is based on material equality of the minjung. Here, minjung theologians have come to the conclusion that basic pastoral work is possible only when it is engaged in the struggle for the liberation of the minjung from their standpoint in the social structure.²⁹ This puts the Korean church in a position in accordance with the social interests of the great majority of the oppressed and exploited.

The application of a sociological interpretation to the Scriptures is thus discovered in the minds of minjung theologians who have approached their theology from the standpoint of the inequality of wealth and poverty. When these theologians see the Bible in the eyes of sociology which delves deeply into man's social life and social situations, they can gain fresh insights into the understanding of the Bible and do something relevant to their contemporary social situations.³⁰ In this view, the interpretation of the Bible on the basis of upholding an authoritarian perspective for its eternal truth is clearly incorrect. The Bible, which was made by different people and groups for their communities to exist, says different things when

we read it from different assumptions in the light of sociology.³¹ When we tend to make a direct application of the Old and New Testaments to the social problem of our own present context, we can discover the meaning of the Bible not in the same way that the traditional church has understood it as a whole. The Bible clearly can motivate us to face the struggle of today which requires our recognition and participation.

Minjung theologians consequently have chosen their biblical hermeneutics from the perspective of reduction which means reducing theology to the social sciences seeking out "generalities, typicalities, and sameness within human groups".³² The approach of minjung theology to the Old Testament is hence interested in the story of early Israel to survey the development of an adequate socio-economic and cultural material inventory.

For instance, minjung theology should try to investigate the Israelite socio-cultural evolution: how Israel began as an ethnic pastoral nomadic community, how the twelve tribes of Israel managed to regain their solidarity with the move from self-contained pastoral nomadic modes of existence to agricultural, craft, and trading modes of existence, and how the event of the Exodus and the conquest of Canaan happened in Israel. Further, the sociological analysis of minjung theology should reach to discover cities, agricultural villages, relationship with neighbour nations, roads, fields, springs, irrigation, population size, distribution, and so on.³³

A religious fact of the Israelite social structures was

particularly the highly centralized religion of Yahweh. The religion of Israel was a social phenomenon and related to all the other social phenomena within the structures by the law of internal relations. The God of Israelite religion appeared as the creator and superior who rules human community. Thus God had a bond with Israel and manifested in enacting power, justice, mercy in human affairs past, present and future. In the particular sociopolitical, territorial and cultural formation of Israel, the God of Israel was active in expressing divine quality and action in the domain of life, society and history.

Thus we can no longer ignore the Israelite religious terms: God's word, promise, prediction, warning, exhortation, intervention, the belief and disbelief of the human being which appears in the Old Testament. In the knowledge of sociology, we should look at aspects of the Israelite religious experience to understand ancient Israel's social phenomena in the following way:

What are the social roots of that belief? Who believed this? What group gained in status by not only believing but promulgating that idea? And so on. If one see correctly that a charismatic leader has social substance only insofar as he is supported by popular acclamation, then how much more should one look for the social accompaniments of religious belief and try to assess its social impact. ³⁴

In the light of sociology, the review of Israelite prophecy is therefore the other important raw material for minjung theology. The prophets of the Old testament were powerful forces in their function as agents of social change to create the purest form of Israelite society. As relating the various forms of prophetic speech to their original social settings, Micah and Amos are the representative prophets whom minjung theologians have

described explicitly in delineating the characteristic patterns of those prophets' words. ³⁵ We find the two terms "my people" and "this people" in the book of Micah 1:9, 2:9, and 3:3-35. According to minjung theology, for Micah the term my people "should be understood not as the rich ruling class who lived in Jerusalem but as the country people who lived in the vicinity of Moresheth" ³⁶ which was the hometown of Micah. In 2:6-11, Micah censured the ruling class which took houses, land and property of powerless widows and which did not return them to the poor people. Here, Micah was concerned with human social justice and preached the ethical content of the message that distinguishes Hebrew prophecy. In this concept, "my people" of Micah:

Stands for the have-nots, the victims of social injustice....The term must be understood in the light of unjust structures giving rise to serious socio-economic problems.

On the contrary,

Micah calls government officials and soldiers not "my people" but "this people" in 2:11. He obviously contrasts "my people" with "this people". For Micah "this people" is the enemy of "my people"; and he stands between the two. He reproaches the former; his attitude makes it clear that he belongs to the latter. At the same time he sees himself as not subject to "my people". He regards himself as a judge who distinguishes between "my people" and "this people". In fact he discovers "my people" as a distinct group. ³⁷

Amos was the other prophet who reacted to what he saw in his contemporary society. In Amos 2:6-8. for instance, the prophet warned that the rich can either sell a poor person into slavery or can bribe judges to condemn an innocent person. The poor people, who tried to work hard and to make an honest living, had been exploited by the rich people who enjoyed their lives to control ordinary people in the dishonest manipulation of economic, social

and political matters. In 5:21-24, Amos also condemned the rich and powerful for oppressing the poor and for bribing judges to prevent redress in the court. In addition to this, minjung theology has noted that:

According to Amos, the upper class stole the middle class property and the middle class took the possessions of the lower class. In Amos, we vividly see a nation that was biting and devouring itself. Amos severely denounced the rulers who lived in the city of Samaria and denounced low class thieves (chapters 2 and 8).....The rich possessed houses made of ivory. In the time of Amos, religious, legal, military and political leaders conspired to promote their interests. Instead of working for the well-being of society as a whole, they created unjust situations. ³⁸

The composition of the New Testament has many of the same problems that minjung theologians have encountered in tracing the composition of the Old Testament. The value of sociology for the interpretation of the New Testament is that it can provide the important tool for the social dimension of minjung theology. Thus, the sociological interpretation of the New Testament is the major attention of minjung theology. In this sense, minjung theologians have attended to Oscar Cullmann's sociological concern that:

There needs to be a special branch of sociology devoted to the study of the laws which govern the growth of popular traditions. Form criticism will only be able to function profitably if conclusive results can be established in this area. In fact, the most serious defect in (form-critical) studies which has appeared thus far is the absence of any sociological basis. ³⁹

Here Gerd Theissen responded to Cullmann who raised the issue. Another concern of minjung theologians is to see "the fundamental character of early Christianity" as being "derived from anthropological and sociological studies of popular and

millenarian religious movements which have nothing to do with the time or region of the new Testament".⁴⁰ The final attention of minjung theologians is "the root of most recent sociological analysis of the New Testament" derived from "the sociology of knowledge".⁴¹

An important example of sociological analysis is the millenarian movement. As George Pixley suggested, minjung theology regards that in the first century of the Christian era the millenarian movement was not the movement of the Christian millenium (i.e., the kingdom of God in the supernatural imminent parousia) which "became a non-political category after the time of the Constantinian era".⁴² That is, the movement of the earliest Christian community was more or less co-opted by the lowest social and economic classes against the Roman occupiers who practiced the systematic taxation and rigid control of work and against the Jewish religious leaders who favoured a policy of peace with the Roman rulers and just awaiting God's action on Israel's behalf. After the Constantinian era, the church has been engaged as a depraved and immoderate superstition leading its community towards the religious and spiritual aspects of their lives, no matter how many defenses and explanations the apologists of the church might provide.

In the view of minjung theology, Christianity after the Constantinian era was simply unnecessary, possibly a harmful religion to the poor and oppressed. This means that minjung theology shows hostility towards the Christian movement after the Constantinian era in the history of the church. In this sense,

the earliest Christian movement should not be understood as the dominating figure of messianic religion in the apocalyptic presupposition, but as paying attention to the practical problems of the concern and aspiration of the community in its time. The earliest Christian community is seen in the generation of the millenarian out of a mass of deprived persons. For this, Nam Dong Suh has noted that:

The aspiration of the oppressed took the form of a longing for a millennium which is in a historical future rather than the form of the Kingdom of God which is beyond human history.....Accordingly, the Kingdom of God is understood as the place the believer enters when he dies, but the Millennium is understood as the point at which history and society are renewed. Therefore, in the Kingdom of God the salvation of the individual person is secured, but in the Millennium is secured the salvation of the whole social reality of humankind. Consequently, while the Kingdom of God is used in ideology of the ruler, the Millennium is the symbol of the aspiration of the minjung. ⁴³

We finally move to the gospel of Mark which is relevant to the crucial subject of minjung theology. Thirty years after the death of Jesus, Paul's gospel reached most of the nations surrounding Palestine. The Christ-faith of Paul, was the true centre of Jewish Christian proclamation in the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus. This message provided the basis for the Christian freedom from the law, sin and death. The consummation of the victory of Christians over sin and death was expected only at the parousia. Paul's doxology in his epistles (i.e., Romans, Ephesians, Colossians, and I Tim.) taught how the triumphal march of the gospel into the gentile world is understood as the decisive eschatological revelation of God's eternally hidden mystery.

However, minjung theology sees that the writer of Mark composed his gospel to meet the needs of the Jewish minjung of

his day after the Jewish War and Fall of Jerusalem (A.D. 66-70)⁴⁴ as opposed to the message of Paul which was based on the Christ of faith. In this hypothesis, Mark's four concerns in writing his gospel are: the first concern was to re-examine the whole tradition of Judea. The fall of Jerusalem, and the destruction of the Temple were a motive to make a break with the tradition of Israel. Many Jews had perished during the events of Jewish War, many thousands had been taken prisoner and sold as slaves in different parts of the world. Here, Mark turned his attention to the problems of his traditional religion and Jerusalem which was the symbol of his nation.

The second concern was how Mark witnesses the message of Jesus to non-Jewish people and particularly Jewish Christians who were doomed and absorbed into the nations of the Mediterranean world with the disappearance of their nation and religious centre. In Mark's understanding, the message of the self-revelation of Christ in the picture of cosmic dimension was not enough to encourage the Jews in the new settlement. Jesus must not be introduced as the heavenly and spiritual Christ but as someone who was deeply involved in the contemporary reality of the Jews.

Mark's third concern was to denounce the mainstream Christians who designated the universal church of Christ developing the ideas of the unified body of Christ in an encounter with God. The universal concept of the church and its mission over the world was not closely connected with the Jewish minjung who were condemned and deported to wrestle living in the disordered world. The writer of Mark, who felt the supernatural

mission of the Pauline church had nothing to do with the temporal building of the Jewish minjung's city, wanted to present the words and deeds of Jesus who took a hand in human liberation by his participation in earthly salvation.

The final concern of Mark was to consider the Jewish minjung who faced suffering and death without hope. In this sympathetic feeling, Mark tried to re-issue the cross event of Jesus to explain how his death was related to the Jewish minjung.⁴⁵ All these hypothetical aspects, which have been derived from the perspective of sociology, have become the essential themes of the gospel of Mark for minjung theology.

C. The Political Aspect

In the last two decades, the domination of the army and the poverty of many have posed a direct threat to the life of the Korean people and automatically led minjung theologians to struggle. The practical hegemonial form of the dominated class and sector in their efforts to improve their own situation has been the dynamic force in the development of a revolutionary consciousness, the rise of a spontaneous and organized revolutionary movement, and the eruption of the student as the new social and political subject. Developing a new religious and political consciousness, the student and the minjung theologian have become an unprecedented dynamic force both within the church and in society. In particular, the student as historical reality and the minjung theologian as theoretical concept have been a product of the struggle in which the authoritarian regime has resisted attacks on the economic exploitation and the political

oppression.

Students, intellectualism and the opposition parties have gradually expressed themselves politically in the uprising against the Korean government,. Within this movement the state and the dominating class have been incorporated in all sorts of organizational forms to break down the political movement. But the minjung theologian, who has seen the fact that the military government and the dominated class are unable to direct a process towards the social change of Korea, enthusiastically has favoured transforming the existing social, economic, and political condition in and to an open conflict between the minjung and the state. An important contribution in this regard has been delivered by minjung theologians. In other words, as a milestone in a new development within part of the Korean church which has started to involve the preferential political option for the poor and oppressed, the Christian Social Action Council at a convention in 1971, declared that:

The extremes of inequality, restriction and the suffocating oppression and poverty have driven the lives of innocent workers, farmers and petite bourgeoisie into an utter frustration, while the corruption, immorality, extravagance and dissipation on the part of a small number of privileged classes formed on the strength of the mixture of power, money, and skill, have totally degraded people's conscience and morals. ⁴⁰

The Council then strongly stressed that:

1. The clergy of all churches and intellectuals should struggle to realize social justice, standing on the side of oppressed people.
2. (Government authorities) should not suppress the voice of the genuine conscience of the people on the excuse of law and order.
3. (Government authorities) should promptly desist from using intelligence, terror policies and the sacred armed forces as tools for

oppressing campus freedom. ⁴⁷

The activist clergy and the theologians who have thought of political action as an essential part of their role in the community, have continually challenged what they have seen as the authoritarian regime's overly-comfortable accommodation of the existing political and economic system. They were ready to defend the poor and downtrodden and to denounce injustice and work for a change. These clergymen and theologians have launched an offensive to integrate the minjung into the church and to alleviate their poverty. They have stated again the theological declaration of Korean Christians in May 1973. In part, the declaration claimed that:

We make this declaration in the name of the Christian community in South Korea. However, under the present circumstances, in which one man controls all the powers of the three branches of government and uses military arms and the intelligence network to oppress the people, we hesitate to reveal those who signed this document. We must fight and struggle in the underground until our victory is achieved. ⁴⁸

This social and political aspect, linked to the rise of a new religious consciousness, started a dynamic process which promoted involvement in the revolutionary movement and the rise of a political consciousness. Many members of various groups started to participate in this movement. In a wave of the popular movement, "there developed a substantial movement among intellectuals, intelligentsia, students, opposition politicians, and many businessmen for a change in the autocratic power of the government". ⁴⁹

Minjung theologians, however, needed to have references from the biblical text for this movement. Most minjung theologians,

hesitating to agree with the biblical and theological verdict upon the tradition and institution, thus have tended to do the opposite with regard to the teaching of Pauline theologians and the teaching of the early theologians. These theologians ought to seek a new case study and ought to have the utmost care not to absolve Pauline teaching and traditional teaching, when they explain biblical texts to the Korean church. This means that minjung theology should reinterpret the whole biblical and theological representations which are found in Christian tradition as functioning critical-practical representations that have an impact in public political life. For example, minjung theology tries to see the soteriology of traditional theology as a political soteriology that applies human life to the new concrete historical and political conditions of the present day.

In considering biblical texts undergoing the process of reinterpretation in recent years therefore it is important to point out that the event of the Exodus has been challenged by the minjung theologian.⁵⁰ The slavery of the Hebrews in Egypt took its concrete feature from the political and economic plan of that time. The political leaders of Egypt used slaves, marginalized prisoners recently arrived and unstable peoples to build cities. When the Egyptian rulers felt how the Israelites had multiplied to become an internal threat to Egyptian socio-economic order, they determined to strengthen their bond of slavery. The Israelites as slaves belonged to the Egyptian political rulers and were afflicted with heavy burdens in building the new cities. The Israelites feared a policy of genocide by exterminating the male children and the possibility of capital punishment.

The attitude of the Egyptian government was oppressive and forced labour. It was an alienating situation in the same way as the Korean minjung as exploited at all levels by the military ruler and the dominating class of today. The alienation of the Israelites reached a limit that they were incapable of hoping for the liberation from the bondage of the Egyptian rulers. As a result, the Israelites groaned under their bondage and cried out for liberation. In minjung theologians' view, God, seeing the oppression and their desire for deliverance, decided to free the Israelites from the horrific slavery situation and identified himself as the one who heard the cry of human beings in oppression and suffering. God finally acted to liberate the Hebrew from Egyptian oppression and then to bring them to a promised land.

In this view, the faith of Israel towards God in the act of historical deliverance should be seen as a possible force for civil insurrection motivated by the Hebrew minjung against the Egyptian absolute monarch and at the same time the god of Israel should not be treated as the one who confronted other gods only in religious terms. If God had become the father of the Israelites by delivering them in history, he should become the same father of the other poor and oppressed by delivering them in ongoing history.⁵¹ The events of the Exodus ought to become a challenging memory, an announcement of liberation for the oppressed minjung of Korea. Here, the Exodus provides minjung theology with a striking paradigm of God's liberating power in the political sphere. God's action takes place in history and as history demonstrates the political character of history, because

it embraces the total life of the people. The Exodus doubtless speaks to the present reality of South Korea, because for minjung theology it reveals that God works in history and not outside it. As "one paradigm for the theology of minjung " according to Nam Don Suh,

The event of the Exodus is a political event which occurred in the area of socio-economic history. It is an event in the socio-economic history of the people of Israel who were used as slaves for the vast public works and as serfs working the farms of Egypt. These rebelled against the oppressive ruling of Egypt, and under the leadership of Moses escaped from Egypt. This political event is the nucleus of the story. Nevertheless, for two thousand years, the Christian church has viewed the event of the Exodus as in the realm of religious ideas, thus ridding the event of its historical nucleus.⁵²

As J. Severino Croatto who is one of the Latin American liberation theologians asserts, "the liberation of the Israelites in Egypt was an event of political and social implications" ⁵³ for minjung theology. This assumption has a radical hermeneutical consequence for the minjung theologian reading the story of the Exodus. The suffering and oppression of the Israelites are similar to the plight of the minjung today. The material of the Exodus should not be used in the same way of the religious dimension or the religious experience. The political event in the Exodus is more than a religious event. The Exodus cannot be rooted in the spirituality of the community of the Christian faith, because oppression in Egypt is of a political form and exercised from the political power of the ruling authorities.

When minjung theologians discuss the New Testament, they also take up the observation of the Exodus case again. In order to

understand our process of liberation in Jesus of Nazareth, we must first come to understand how he lived and died and then how we follow in his footsteps., For this, the discussion of the Christian religious life and the Christian moral life in both Pauline theology and traditional theology are not enough to protect against abuse of power in South Korea. In the light of the contemporary situation of political oppression in Korea, the metaphysical language and eucharistic rite cannot lead the minjung to overcome their suffering. If the Exodus account becomes a paradigm of political liberation for the Korean minjung, the life of Jesus can also become a paradigm of political salvation for them. Thus, the works and deeds Jesus are claimed by minjung theologians as the examples of how Jesus acts in history to bring human, physical liberation and defends the poor and denounces injustice.

The challenge of minjung theology to seeing hermeneutic as a mechanical science consequently chooses specific events from the whole biblical texts to highlight the need to reinterpret them in the light of both the political intention of the texts and the contemporary impact of words today. The reinterpreted implications of the selected texts then require us to find new forms for our present reality as new ideological forces that liberate us. Here the essential thing concerning the retranslation of the selected biblical materials is not to describe the mysterious religious concept and behaviour and to imitate them, but rather to discover their historical and political position as already stated, to realize anew a goal in our present world, and to do something contributing to human

salvation on earth. For instance, the sources of Jesus' earthly life have political dimensions and hence lend themselves to different interpretations. The sources of the Exodus and the trial of Jesus often cited by minjung theologians are used to show that political liberation comes through the participation of struggle. 54

D. Praxis

In minjung theologians' notion, the God of the Exodus and the life of Jesus cannot be approached through any religious concept and act. 55 God who showed himself in the Exodus and Jesus who demonstrated his life in the synoptic gospels are met through doing justice in society and not through the cult in the church. The Yahweh of the Exodus is not the one who exists for our cultic worship regardless of the relationship and participation in which we stand to the poor and the needy. God is not here and there and does not hear as long as Christians live in a society in which oppression, exploitation, domination and suffering exist. In the synoptics, Jesus' works among the Jewish people are also presented as evidence that he was the Christ who was to bring about justice on earth in history. Jesus' concern was the restoration of the marginalized people who were ignored in the maintenance of an unjust society.

All this means that God is no god and does not exist for Christians as the object of their worship, prayers and hymns. When God is described as the one who has nothing to do with historical existence, he cannot be said to be the being of eternal

truth. In this respect, today's message of the church on the basis of the entire mysterious and philosophical enterprise of traditional theology has diminished its importance and function in contemporary society. The whole of this proclamation reduces the presumed existence of God who is known in confronting the person with a self-interested choice for injustice to that of God who is known as a reality to be worshipped through a cult.

Against the extremity of this traditional observation that God is a religious objective reality who exists without paying enthusiastic attention to spreading alienation, oppression, suffering, and widening gaps between rich and poor in the world, thus, minjung theology has demanded that the Korean church makes more efficient use of the Bible from the perspective of the Korean minjung. That is, the church which insists on the maintenance of a pietistic and private religious relationship to God must demonstrate the demand for change to the social and political miserable situation in Korea in the Scriptures taught by Jesus of Nazareth. When the Korean church is liberated from both its present inadequate theological confession of faith and its present evangelization of the world in betraying the wholeness of the Christian heritage, it can place itself at the service of the minjung and become a powerful motivating force for the mobilization of Christians in the teaching of Jesus to participate in Korea's ongoing struggle for full humanity.

For this perspective, the Korean church needs to develop a radical area of theology such as understanding the revolutionary challenge of the life of Jesus, participating in the struggle of his people. The theology of the church must lead us not just to

understand the sociopolitical, economic, and cultural systems that exploit and enslave the minjung, but to transform them through active involvement. This means ongoing historical struggling side by side with the marginalized and oppressed for their human dignity resulting from the meaning of the theological insights which take into account the total human situation. When the theology of the church investigates the present misery in the context of socio-politico-economic matters of society, it is sufficient for the church in the act of suffering to stretch itself towards the hope. But theology does not do it, it is seen as a false view of real human need. Theology merely offers a false remedy to man in religious terms of a future of other-worldly and enables Christians to justify all kinds of economic exploitation and political oppression in the name of God. 56

As ^{practical} theology which reads the message of Christ and his work in the light of criteria adequate to our human situation and contemporary experience, minjung theology is thus in revolt against the theological and metaphysical dogmatism of the Korean church and at the same time it is in favour of encouraging the church to participate in the struggle of the poor and oppressed, If the church maintains itself in a formal code of private values in the concept of spiritualism, it finds itself less and less capable of intervening in the economic sphere of Korea for the maximum benefit of the minjung. In minjung theologians' minds, the Korean church has become the ally of the status quo, relegating hopes for a better life to the hereafter and then has not posed a threat to the authority of the ruling government. This

has reduced both its relevance and its credibility among the minjung. However, because the economic condition of modern society necessarily affects the life and death of man, the social involvement of the church

Is an indispensable part of the Church's life. In this experience of the church of the poor, it is impossible to separate action in society from the proclamation of the liberating message of Jesus Christ, It is Christian mission. 57

On the other hand, it is strongly pointed out that there is a real possibility of developing the praxis of liberation rooted in the revolutionary movements which have occurred in the history of Korea through the minjung and students. Many minjung and students were already on revolutionary route which produced a strong impact on proceeding to minjung theology. For example, in the 1930s, the basic cause of the poverty of the Korean farmers lay in colonial exploitation by the Japanese Empire. The farmers thus felt the fact that the liberation from their poverty might come through the expulsion of the Japanese imperialists from the Korean soil, not through any enlightenment of them. 58 The farmers then strove for the improvement of their miserable problem. In the 1960s and 1970s, the Korean students were aware of the exploitation of the minjung by the ruler of democracy dictatorship, the military authoritarian regime, and powerful foreign nations. They knew about corruption, foreign development aid which was unsatisfactorily distributed to the people and particularly about militarism dominating to the people's disadvantage. All these factors were involved in forcing the students towards revolutionary uprisings. These social revolutions have brought about a process of secularization which

has produced a shaking of the traditional religious and moral foundations, but at the same time a new impulse of expressing a vision of a new humanity in the positive value of revolutionary movement.

As a normative function in relation to the social involvement of the church, minjung theology has tried in its struggle both to lead the Korean Christians in what to do and to show its solidarity with the minjung. The only way for minjung theology in a radical reorientation of Christian life by being open to evangelize Christians by the value and process of the dynamic movement of our times. In attempting the framework of the revolutionary process of history, therefore, minjung theologians boldly have appealed to the Korean people for praxis as follows:

The people in Korea are looking up to Christians and urging us to take action in the present grim situation. It is not because we deserve to represent them. We have often fallen short of deeper expectation, and yet we are urged and encouraged to move on this course of action because we are moved by their agony to call upon God for their deliverance from evil days.

As a special call for action and support, the statement of minjung theologians goes on to say that:

To the Christians in Korea: As preparation for the above struggle, we Christians should renew our churches by deepening our theological thinking, by our clear stance and solidarity with the oppressed and poor, by the relevant proclamation of the gospel of the Messianic Kingdom, and by praying for our nation; and we should prepare ourselves for martyrdom, if necessary, as our forefathers did. 59

Conclusion

Minjung theologians, who see their struggle as the essential task of the general defence of the poor and oppressed, play a

major role in shaping theory and action in which they are linked to society. In order to be a powerful force to give a special continuity and meaning to revolutionary movement, they are deeply sensitive to the implications of the social sciences in the framework of their theology. Their interest is to discover what the theological and social terms mean among the Korean minjung. Minjung theologians thus use the insights of other theologians, when they discuss any theological concept (i.e., salvation or kingdom) and any social concept (i.e., oppression or exploitation). To give satisfactory answer to the Christian and non-Christian concerning the principle of subjectivity as a basic measure of human existence and activity is not a serious matter of theory considering the philosophical and intellectual language of traditional theology, but of economic, social, political and historical practice.

This is what minjung theology does, and this is how it intends to do something for the subject of history - the minjung. Minjung theology does not need to commit itself completely to a supra-intellectual approach to God and Jesus, even though its stress on the will and imagination as essential elements in its understanding of them remains as a legacy to minjung theology itself. The only interesting point for minjung theologians is the endorsement of their theological method in the broad sense of social analysis as a disciplined study of the way we live. The contemporary social, economic and political system in which we live is the cause of this situation of injustice, poverty and marginalization. This fact might not be solved by traditional theology which emerges in the religious dimension of the human

spirit, but by minjung theology which tries to struggle for a society built in terms of the interest and aspiration of the minjung.

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CHAPTER SIX

THE CHRISTOLOGY OF MINJUNG THEOLOGY

As is generally recognized, minjung theologians have found that the traditional theological concepts of Christianity have failed to provide the incentives and motivations needed for life in an unjust society. The doctrinal formulas of the Christian church are actually preserving an incompleteness in theology in Korea today. For example, here is the endlessly perplexing doctrine of the three-in-oneness of God. The principle of the Trinity is not a biblical doctrine but represent concern for systematizing faith which is not close to the basis of the Bible. The Korean church within the trinitarian framework of theological interpretation has difficulty in bridging the gap between its own traditional orthodoxy and the active, developing life of the Korean people. The theology of the church should not intend to place its account of the automatic justification and interpretation of traditional theology for the purpose of an on-going march as the eternal truth of Christianity, because it has proved throughout history its inability to grasp the voice of the minjung for the creation of a new future which is rooted in human criteria.¹

The theology of minjung theologians, therefore, should proceed for the most part on theological reflection as a criticism of society and devote itself to truly practical matters in history. More and more, theology should foster a concern in the Korean church for its participation in society. On the other hand, it should move in the entire Judaeo-Christian tradition to

seek to justify the restricted classic dogmatism of the Christian faith less and less. As a result, serious questions and criticism of the classical doctrine of theology have appeared in the theological debate of Korean minjung theologians. These theologians have urged traditional theology to reduce its exclusively supernatural definition of Christianity and to concern itself with the basic question of the human condition. They have preferred to talk theology with the minjung who suffer in the midst of the misery of society and struggle against this misery.

Minjung theology consequently challenges all forms of traditional theology. The whole theology is accordingly challenged as to its relevance to the crucial questions to be answered in the face of social functionality. But the ultimate concern of this chapter is to survey the Christology of minjung theology which is the most questionable part for minjung theologians who are generally dissatisfied with traditional Christology as not relevant to today's reality. These theologians have tried to take the challenge of wrestling with the question "who is Jesus Christ" for the minjung today and to reshape their christology in the light of the Korean situation. Thus, chapter six will evaluate the theoretical assumption of minjung theologians on Jesus Christ in the same categories in which Latin American liberation theologians have interacted in chapter three.

A. The Purpose of Minjung Christology

In the history of Korea, minjung theologians quickly come to the realization that the majority of people of Korea experienced

deprivation as the poor in the depression. The ordinary people knew what it is not to eat not only qualitatively but also quantitatively. The ruling class treated the common people as slaves. Through economic, political, and military power, the privileged minority controlled all others. In the last decades, the concentration of economic and political matters in a few military hands was correlative to the monopolistic structure which controlled industrial and agricultural production. With regard to agricultural production within a market economy, the members of the ruling class enjoyed a distribution maintaining their own benefits. On the other hand, foreign aid and lending had been used not to help the poor but to achieve the political power of the minority class. The minjung had no voice in their most basic decisions on those matters.

Minjung theologians, therefore, see the poverty, misery, oppression, and inhumanity of Korean society. They are convinced that the deprived people are victims of the rich and foreign nations which are deliberately asserting economic growth with programmes designed to encourage development. The minjung cannot hope to control their destiny unless and until the powerful monopoly of internal and external oppression is broken by civilization-destroying riot. In this perspective, minjung theologians have attempted to resolve the minjung's suppressed Han which means the powerless, the frustrated experience, and the dominating feeling of defeat and nothingness. It is not sufficient for minjung theology to only have a sympathetic voice towards the economic and political exploitation of the ruling class and the First World nations. The main idea of minjung theologians brings

justice to the weak and oppressed in the historical perspective which is to come forth from the root of Jesus. which is to come forth from the root of Jesus.

Here, the expectation of the kingdom of God which was announced by Jesus motivates minjung theologians to assist the suffering minjung. That is, the kingdom of God is not the place where the rich get richer and the poor poorer. The kingdom is not made up to the destructive relationships of the sinful social structures of today. When Jesus inaugurated the eschatological kingdom, he meant it as the possible just and equal place for all the people who are socially marginalized, economically exploited, and politically powerless. Jesus' intention for that kingdom was never to save individuals in terms of apocalyptic tradition. The kingdom was not an adequate reflection of God's holiness but a kingdom of justice and peace in the world.² In the kingdom of God, man's life can be considered as a life of love, selflessness, hope, generosity, and so on. Boldly speaking, we can see the minjung - the poor, oppressed and deprived - in the kingdom of God. The rich and powerful are unable to be in that kingdom, since they are opposed to the poor and powerless.

Accordingly, it is hence impossible to conceive a correct Christology by thinking only about who Jesus was, without referring to the purpose of his coming. It is very important to have this in mind when minjung theologians continue to investigate a doing theology, particularly with regard to the question of Christology. In this sense, minjung theologians have always held firmly to the kingdom of God as the major priority and operational

concept of their theology.³ But the concept of minjung theology's kingdom springs not from the concept of the kingdom to be found in the traditional interpretation of the Christian faith. Minjung theology has believed that its concept of the kingdom is not seen in the definition of religion. The teaching of Jesus on the kingdom of God does not indicate the religious content behind the historically-conditioned human understanding. The kingdom of God as good news (liberation) to the poor and oppressed must not be a universal symbol of utopian hope, but more specifically the hope of those groups who suffer under some kind of social, political and economic oppression. The kingdom must be a new society which is totally transformed from a society corrupted by the rich and elite.⁴

This does not mean that the kingdom of God is seen in the concept of ethical form. The arrival (or realization) of the kingdom is not seen as product and a result of human ethical activities in common life. Christendom tried to provide more or less a social ethic that is consistent with the Christian responsibility for the world. The liberal theologians' attempt to return to the Jesus of history was motivated by a desire to reformulate the social ethics of the church without being bound to the traditional dogmas associated with Chalcedonian presupposition. But minjung theologians have refused to say that Jesus' perception of the kingdom of God is "essentially an ideal belonging to an ethically-determined society, or a vision of human culture pervaded by ethical purposes"⁵ as for both Albrecht Ritschl and Immanuel Kant. The fact that Jesus pointed to and preached the kingdom is not an indication of the way to achieve it

through the social ethics of Christianity.

For this reason, minjung theologians think of the place where Jesus spent most time engaging in his public ministry. In Jesus' time, the Roman Empire tried to make Jerusalem not only the capital of Judea but also of the whole Jewish race and foreign races. By providing Jerusalem with all the facilities of a modern Roman-Greek city, the Roman authorities encouraged the Jewish people to practice their religious pilgrimage to the Temple of Jerusalem three times a year, for Passover, the Feast of Weeks, and Tabernacles (Deut. 16:16; Ex. 23:10). The Temple was a struggling mass of people at festival time and prodigiously wealthy by the internal and external visitors' grand gesture of offering. Many hundreds of Levites, priests, scribes, and pious Jewish people worked in and around the Temple area and for the Roman Empire. These leading Jewish people, who seemed to have accepted foreign rule in general, avoided conflict between themselves and the Roman government for their own benefits.

However, the emphasis of the Jesus on the kingdom of God in Jerusalem is surprisingly shown as of secondary importance compared with that of Jesus in Galilee.⁶ Jesus in his public life was not interested in Jerusalem which was the most important place of ritual sacrifice in the religious life of Israel. It is obvious for minjung theology that Jesus showed himself to contrast the cult of sacrifice at Jerusalem with the ideal of a spiritual cult. Jesus' attitude towards the religious centre of the Jewish faith was negative without the slightest reservation regarding the value of the Israelite rites. On the contrary, minjung theology

assumes that the favourite place of Jesus was Galilee as a decisive event marking a turning-point in his public ministry. Jesus found his disciples and preached his message in the great part of his earthly ministry from Galilee. This is of great importance in minjung theologians' minds.

Here minjung theologians undoubtedly take special note of the fact that the connection of Jesus with Galilee is emphasized. Galilee was the place where zealous patriots, brigands, bandits, and the poor lived and especially when the Zealots operated their resistance movements against the foreign tyrants who ruled their territory and the ruling class which ignored the miserable reality of Galilee socially and economically. The Zealots, who were called Galileans, traditionally played a prominent part in the war against the Roman Empire. Their characteristic feature was their use of armed force to overthrow foreign dominators, in contrast with the political neutrality of the Pharisees.⁷ At the same time Galilee, remote from the Temple and the capital, was far behind Jerusalem in the matter of economics. What we find is a lot of land for the minority class and a little land for the majority peasant class. There was a growing realization by the majority that the condition in which they lived was unjust. The large landowner treated Galilean peasants like idiots and gave no proper wages to them. The peasants worked hard to support their families, but they were hungry. Their hard work failed to meet the demand for more food. The synoptics show us Galileans as day labourers (Mt. 20:1-16), deposed stewards faced with becoming manual beggars (Lk. 16:1-16), the fishermen who laboured all night to no avail (Lk. 5:1-11), and hired servants (Mk. 1:20), The

Galilean poor were suffering and hungry because of the exploitation and cheating of the rich. The Galilean peasants, who were socially and economically deprived by the ruling class, after all lost the capacity to change their environment in the historical destiny.⁸

In the view of minjung theology, Jesus clearly sided with those who regarded Jerusalem both as a form of separation from the people who were despised, oppressed and rejected and as obstacle to the general spread of humanity. In addition to this view, Nam Dong Suh has asserted that in Mark Galilee is seen as the place of the oppressed minjung whilst Jerusalem is seen as the place of the authoritarian's seat.⁹ This affords an explanation of why Jesus proclaimed the kingdom of God in Galilee rather than elsewhere. Jesus doubtlessly realized that the Galilean poor have the right to live in justice and liberty. His proclamation of the kingdom is therefore understood to resolve the desperation of the Galilean.

With this hypothesis, minjung theologians want to talk about Christology in the form of modern ideas and particularly in the development of an ideology of liberation (salvation) in terms of the social sciences. These theologians, who assume that Jesus bound himself to his fellow Galileans by the way of commitment to the new humanity he envisioned, try to recapture Jesus and his vision of the kingdom of God both to insert themselves in the life of the minjung and to spread their Christology which centres upon the kingdom which Jesus inaugurated and taught how to achieve.¹⁰ The Christology of minjung theology, hence, must be formed in the

belief that Jesus acted for liberating the minjung from the Han of the victim by oppression, exploitation, marginalization, discrimination, humiliation, and colonization. ¹¹.

B. The Beginning of Minjung Christology

Minjung theologians have been of the opinion that the life of Jesus may shed light on the Korean society which suffers injustice. In the study of the Christology of minjung theology, these theologians come to the direct question: What means had the apostle Paul, the early church theologians, the Reformed theologians, the liberal theologians, of knowing about Jesus of Nazareth? Minjung theologians then have carefully reviewed the Christologies which have been shaped by Paul, the theologians of Chalcedonian ages, of the Reformed ages, and of between the eighteenth century and the twentieth century. The Christological implications of those historical theologians, however, encourage minjung theologians to see the high point in depicting Jesus in religious, philosophical, and ethical terms of the church, not in actual terms of physical human concern in history.

What the past theologians intended to give us in their witnesses are: firstly, the important fact that Paul applied to Christology was his bearing upon his own intense faith in Christ. The vision that Paul saw was of Christ glorified. Jesus Christ appeared to him as Spirit. This Spiritual Christ controlled Paul's religious experience. At the same time, the glorified Christ was identical with the crucified Christ of Nazareth. After this experience, Paul was willing to accept Jesus as the pre-existent Son sent by God, but born of woman, born under the law

(Gal: 4:4). Paul believed in Adam in Genesis as the First Adam who was the fallen and sinned and died, but Christ as the Last Adam who was the Perfect Man and the eschatological Redeemer who transforms the redeemed. In these statements, Paul responded with all the ardour of his being to express that Jesus is the Christ, or that Jesus is the Lord. ¹²

Secondly, Chalcedonian Christology echoes the traditional two nature doctrine of Jesus Christ as "truly God and truly man in the way of a hypostatic union of two natures in one person". ¹³ This traditional approach to the Christology uses the man Jesus as the pre-existent Christ who descended from on high to take upon himself our humanity in the history of the world. By assuming our flesh and the condition of our life, the incarnate Jesus as the Son of God accomplishes the true human destiny that Adam and all his descendants failed to achieve. By dying and rising from the dead, Christ restores humanity to the presence of the kingdom of God which enables man to attain union with God through Christ.

Thirdly, for Martin Luther and for John Calvin, the most venerated creed was the western symbol which is called the Apostles' Creed in the first half of the second century. Luther and Calvin both placed the Creed in their catechisms for the reformed serviced of the public worship. Luther understood the Nicene and the Athanasian Creeds to be explanations of the Apostles' Creed. The Reformers put a richer meaning into the doctrine of the person of Christ than had ever been done before their day; and the thought of the divinity of Christ means more to them than it had done to their early predecessors. Luther's

Christology was based on Christ as true God and true Man in inseparable unity, although "he did not find in Scripture what the church's traditional interpretation said was there".¹⁴ Luther hesitated to divorce the God-man from the historical person of Jesus and from the work he came to fulfil in redeeming us. Calvin also sought to approve of the orthodox Christological doctrine of Chalcedon. Calvin concentrated on asserting that Christ was born of woman and descended from Abraham and David as scriptural proof for his full humanity, and that he "existed prior to the creation of the world and participation in it as God's Word",¹⁵ The most distinctive feature of Calvin is the threefold office of Jesus Christ as follows:

As king, Christ provides for his people; as priest, he makes satisfaction for sinful believers and shared his priesthood with them; as prophet, he receives the Spirit, heals, and preaches - roles that he passes on to the leaders in the church.¹⁶

Fourthly, since the eighteenth century, the tendency of Christology has been to try to depart from the traditional doctrine of the natures: "Jesus' personhood is bi-polar. It is as relational reality co-constituted by the two poles of humanity and divinity".¹⁷ For liberal theologians, this hypostatic union in traditional Christology cannot be related to the human Jesus who is portrayed in the gospel. The traditional formula of Christology is not to be interpreted and adapted by the ground of rational categories and historical thought. Protestant liberal theologians thus tried to redirect Jesus in terms of the moral and practical elements of Christianity rather than of the abstraction of orthodox Christianity. In detail, Dennis C. Duling says that:

Many Protestant scholars of the eighteenth and

nineteenth centuries reinterpreted, neutralized, or almost totally ignored the orthodox Christ of the creeds. Instead, they saw Jesus as a human prophet, or a teacher of morality, or at most as the pattern for true religious thinking, acting or feeling. The modern mind sought a modern Jesus Christ discovered by modern scientific-historical methods.¹⁸

Here, Christ's supernatural dignity is ignored and he looked upon as nothing more than man. His character is seen as moral and religious power building up moral and spiritual life by enlightening the conscience. In contrast to the earlier period of the history of the church, liberal theologians tried to reject metaphysical thinking about Jesus, but retain his moral and religious influence.

Finally, minjung theology finds that the kerygmatic Christology of Rudolf Bultmann started from the Christ of faith and dehistoricized the human Jesus. Bultmann showed more interest in the dogmatic Christ than in the historical Jesus.¹⁹ This means that Bultmann hesitated to establish faith in Christ by a historical basis that might be critically verified or rejected. Rather, he saw that Jesus is the preached Christ in the kerygma which "is not historically verifiable". For instance, as being discerned by faith, the cross and resurrection of Jesus are "linked in the kerygma as the divine act of judgment and the divine act of salvation". Here, this divine act in faith is not seen as "the historical phenomenon which acts as its bearer". In this observation, the kerygma of Bultmann:

Is thus not concerned with matters of historical fact, but with conveying the necessity of a decision on the part of its hearers, and thus transferring the eschatological moment from the past to the here and now of the proclamation itself: This means that Jesus Christ encounters...men in the kerygma and nowhere else.²⁰

Bultmann further challenged that:

The Gospels are not historical sources which can be used to compose a biography of Jesus. There is no scientific basis for the Marcan prejudice, namely, the idea that we can take for granted that the narrative framework of Mark is the most historically reliable. The difference between the Synoptics and the Fourth Gospel is one of degree rather than one of kind. ²¹

We are not surprised, in this connection, to see that minjung theology does not accept the kerygmatic Christ of Bultmann who does not begin from the historical figure of Jesus but from the Christ of faith as being given in the kerygma of the early church. The kerygmatic Christ of Bultmann is not grounded in the actual historical reality of Jesus of Nazareth for minjung theology. The correlation between the earthly Jesus and the Christ of faith is not satisfactory to minjung theology which has to engage in historical criticism solely in order to destroy the Christian tradition.

In the above approaches, we see that all the Christologies of the preceding theologians are the principal reasons for Christianity's continuity and its unequalled capacity for endless self-renewal. The Christian mind has maintained its sense of direction by keeping a firm grip upon the centrality of those christologies, even though the so-called Christian controversies have never stopped in the history of the church. Today, minjung theologians' assessment of the Christological implications of their predecessors is, however, cautious. Minjung theologians guard themselves against the cosmic religious dimension of Pauline Christology, the dogmatic dimension of classical Christology, and the ethical dimension of liberal Christology. In a false perspective from the beginning, Christian theologians revealed

differing ways of accounting for Jesus in his messianic character. They placed Jesus in cosmic, ontological, and mystical realms which are far removed from the existential situation in which man lives. As the glorified Christ in transcendental and metaphysical dimensions, Jesus is not to be regarded as the human figure of a man in a way meaningful to the historical viewpoint and contemporary man.

The Korean church, for minjung theology, is therefore wrong to see Jesus Christ as a dehistoricized man and as "an object of belief only with regard to the other world". This view is an obstacle to judging rightly who Jesus was and what he did in his life. The aspect of Jesus in faith has "nothing to do with everyday life filled with the struggle for survival, but serves as a place of escape from the reality of the world".²² We can avoid the abstract universalization of Jesus Christ in the unpredictable manner of history, if we are at a point of departure from the traditional Christological dogmas. For this, the eyes of historians are able to recover and reconstruct the actual man Jesus by critical methods.

In the historical studies of Jesus, minjung theology rejects traditional views of the origin and development of Christology in the history of the church. It demands no specific traditional theological disciplines, like exegesis, dogmatics, or moral theology. For his Christological perspective, thus, Byung Mu Ahn has preferred to "take sides with the historical, critical standpoint in order to get away from the orthodox dogma"²³ and a mere moral application of Jesus. Ahn has gone on that the human

nature in the texts of Chalcedon is "a dogmatic image with no relation to Jesus of Nazareth".²⁴ Nam Dong Suh has added that the attempt to define and systemize humanity and divinity in the man Jesus in terms of substance and nature has only a metaphorical structure in common.²⁵

Minjung theology has thus developed its Christology from a point of departure in a confession of faith in Jesus Christ. That is, the Christological framework of minjung theology starts from the historical Jesus.²⁶ Jesus has not preached a set of doctrine of religion. There is nothing in the teaching of Jesus about the satisfaction of the trinity, or about salvation through Jesus Christ in the light of apocalyptic notion. The Jesus of history can offer a way of reformulating a new Christology without being bound to the traditional Christological dogmas, such as atonement or Chalcedonian Christology. The truths in the life of the human Jesus can only be verified in their historical mediation. The historical Jesus refers to the actual and concrete person Jesus of Nazareth as he can be reconstructed through critical historical research. Thus, minjung theologians are interested in studies which have concentrated on the historical reconstruction of the life of Jesus - what sort of person Jesus seemed to be to the Jewish people whom he lived with and loved.

Minjung theologians admit that the methodic interpretation of Jesus Christ must begin with the man Jesus. In the humanity of Jesus, minjung theology finds the answer to the current Korean social and political situation. Jesus of Nazareth, not the Christ of faith, is the point of departure for our theological

understanding of Jesus. To explain Jesus to others we must begin with Jesus of Nazareth who lived as one among the Jewish minjung in Palestine in the first century. The historical Jesus reveals what it is to be a human being. In the historical Jesus we find his whole life reveals the meaning of his person and his message. All this may be understood as distinct from beginning the theological interpretation of Jesus Christ with the Christian dogmatic understanding of him as found in tradition. The traditional supposition of Jesus is the interpretation that needs reinterpretation today. The basis of Pauline biblical and dogmatic Christologies,²⁷ which has come from faith in Jesus as the Christ, cannot prove the real person of the earthly Jesus and is placed outside history, unrelated to the real stories.

According to the new view in history, therefore, the figure of the man Jesus pictured in the gospels is of one who partook in every way of human nature, and was bound by human limitations. As a man, Jesus was subject to all the conditions of man. He was clearly conditioned by his environment in his time. In this sense, the humanity of Jesus is given full weight in relation to an adequate Christological foundation for minjung theologians' thought and action on the social, economic and political issues of Korea, when he is reinterpreted in historical knowledge (historical science). This is a way to discover the actual historical Jesus as a person of Palestine as departing from the one-sidedness of traditional Christology. For this reason, the gospel of Mark²⁸ has a special weight as the textual ground for minjung Christology. The task of minjung theology in historical

research is to rescue the real historical Jesus from his imprisonment in traditional theology. That is the beginning of minjung Christology.

C. The Person of Jesus

The main contrast in minjung theology between the historical Jesus and the Christ of faith has its root in the fact that the Korean church has taught the man Jesus as the supernatural-endowed being who is seen in traditional theology. It is difficult to accept or justify the Christ of faith who is postulated by Christian faith. The Christ of faith, as conceived and formulated in the dogmatic development of the early Christian tradition, seems incompatible with what historical research has determined about the man Jesus of Nazareth. For minjung theology, the centrality of Jesus Christ for Christian faith can hardly be affirmed in regarding Jesus as the Christ who was the vitalizing principle of the church.²⁹ That is, the Christ of faith in the form of traditional Christology designates a Christology that presents the actual man Jesus of Palestine as the divine man (superhuman) by making use of motifs from the religious concept of eternal, saviour. The divine man Jesus in faith is the concept of the pre-existent redeemer as against his humanity in terms of the temporality of man's being.

The Christologizing of Jesus in this divine sense cannot take place today through the religious credibility of the sources which depend on the factuality of the Palestine statement and the doctrinal belief of the church, since faith cannot involve any assertion of historical propositions on the relativities of

biblical research. The portrait of Jesus should not be expressed in terms of the religious concept of the divine Man who descended to earth, took flesh in a woman's womb, lived among men, suffered and died on the cross for mankind's eternal salvation, rose from the dead, ascended into heaven, is now sitting at the right hand of God, and will come again to earth for the final judgment. This theological assumption contains the manipulation of the eschatological fantasies of the early Christians and the offer of privileges in another world.³⁰ The Christology of traditional belief is worked out not in relation to contemporary discussion of human existence, society, and politics, but to the sphere of religious truth to what is mediated through the figure of the mystery of Jesus as the superman.

Here, minjung theology has tried to rethink the divine Christology made by the idea of justification of religious faith. Minjung theologians' concern has been the significance of Jesus which is not based on his divine nature but his human nature which is speaking of Jesus as "a human being"³¹ who had his existence out of God. The historical Jesus was simply the man who lived in Palestine as he is pictured by the historical method of the historian. As a son of a carpenter, Jesus made his appearance in his hometown of Nazareth. But he was received with malice by his native town where he grew up. For example, when Jesus spoke to the people of repentance on a Sabbath, his auditors asked one another: "Is not this the son of the carpenter Joseph? Are not his mother and relatives among us? (Mt. 13:55). Jesus was taunted with the words: "Physician, heal thyself first" (Lk.

4:23). This hostile reception in his native city gave rise to the proverb: "A prophet is without honor in his own city" (Mt. 13:57).

Jesus however met with better success in Capernaum, a city on the western shore of the Sea of Tiberius. This city, where lived a greater number of men who were given to sin and vice and presented a more striking contrast between wealth and poverty, offered a larger field for the activities of Jesus. Here, his teaching met with a more favourable reception, and he found disciples among the low class who joined him and followed him. Jesus, who mostly associated with the people of the low class, succeeded in uplifting them by filling their hearts with preaching "the messianic politics of Jesus" which let the minjung realize for "their historical subject" and then make them "masters of their own historical destiny".³² The aim of Jesus' role was to reclaim the poor followers to transform the face of their contemporary reality in the light of political dimension, not of a religious dimension. This means that minjung theology sees the originality of Jesus and his life in regard to the social and political calculation of society rather than to the apocalyptic calculation of religion.

From all this, it seems reasonable for minjung theology to think that the brief biographical sketch of Jesus is a real process of growth in his own human consciousness and in his concrete historical situation. In and through the concrete path of his life growth, Jesus should not be shown as a theological manifestation grounded in his own concrete human consciousness. In the response both to his historical experience of his people and

to his own social experience of his time, Jesus was fully aware of his true humanity and began his public life as the necessary mediating factor of salvation history in a high political dimension, not in religious and theological dimensions.³³ Therefore, minjung theologians have taken a fresh look at Jesus and situated him in the real social and historical context of his day. The stress of minjung theology on the political dimension of Jesus' life consequently provides a critical and radical focus for people's thinking of their deeper historical meaning.

As we have noted above, Jesus, having his root in a concrete Palestine situation in his own time was a son of a modest family in Nazareth of Galilee and the focal point of the interest of the Jewish community. The practice of Jesus puts us in touch with a person whom we cannot appropriate by making him into a creative religious genius. It is hence impossible to gain Jesus as the Messiah in a historical understanding of his personal human journey. In minjung theologians' opinion, Jesus was not primarily the Messiah who is identified with the transcendental eschatological anointed one. His being characterised Messiah became the false presupposition for the introduction of the title Messiah after his death. The historical Jesus can be neither religious innovator, nor really Messiah. The man Jesus regarded himself not as the Messiah who was destined to come in the future in the eschatological sense. For minjung theology, the historical Jesus unfortunately disappeared totally through the pen of the early Christian church. The words and deeds of Jesus were made to be of permanent and universal religious

interest. 34

At the same time, for minjung theology the messianic feature of Jesus should not be shown in the struggle of the Jewish proletariat against their religious leaders and conquerors, the Romans. The belief of the eschatological Messiah was of course already ancient. For example, as the Saviour of the spirit of God, the Messiah shall have come to overwhelm the heathen, to restore the kingdom of Israel to its full power and to make Israel a spiritual centre for the whole world. This belief was still in the Jews' mind in Jesus' day. The Jewish people under the rule of the Roman oppressors had expected the messianic age which would restore their national fortunes. They believed that there must come a time of the glorious kingdom which is imagined as embracing not simply Palestine but the whole world. This earthly paradise was a dream of the Jews who say their nation as having entered its political decline. In minjung theologians' thinking, Jesus did not intend to establish the messianic kingdom regarding the concept of the Jewish tradition. This was not what Jesus tried to do in his life.

In the environment of looking forward to the coming of the messianic age, Jesus as the Messiah in the tradition of the Jewish apocalyptic eschatology was nearer the hearts of the Jewish proletariat who were dissatisfied with existing social, economic, and political conditions. On the other hand, the recorded doings of Jesus (i.e., his teaching, suffering, and death) were enough to convince the early Christians not only that Jesus Christ would soon return in power and majesty but also that he would establish a messianic kingdom on earth. After Jesus

who suffered and died, it was no longer the Jews but the Christians who elaborated prophecies³⁵ in the tradition of the Jewish apocalyptic faith and who continued to be inspired by them. Thus, it is not surprising that many of the early Christians were interested in the interpretation of Jesus Christ in terms of the apocalyptic eschatology. The church confidently has been expecting the triumphant advent of Jesus as the Messiah in the light of the parousia from day to day.

Minjung theology, however, sees Jesus as the Messiah who is identified with the suffering servant of Isaiah 53.³⁶ For traditional theology, Jesus as the pre-existent one who is equal to God, became a human being and suffered and died to redeem us as man's judge and representative. That is, as the suffering servant:

Jesus Christ not only takes our place as judge and our place as the judged, he also takes our judgment, our sentencing through His suffering, crucifixion and death....God becomes both the subject and the object being acted upon in Jesus Christ.³⁷

For minjung theology, there is no reason why Jesus' personal destiny is related to the mysterious figure of the messianic tradition entailing suffering and immolation in the light of the religious dimension of man's sin and his other-worldly salvation. The servant of God in certain passages of Deutero-Isaiah is not the one who suffers for the sins of his people and save them from their sins by his sacrificial death.

The concept of the suffering servant is the one who lived with his poor friends and who did not reserve his teaching and concern to the privileged group. Jesus showed himself to his

followers and made himself a suffering person to encourage the poor and oppressed. Jesus was unselfish and was not preoccupied with the future of his life and with the future of his work. He never destroyed any of the humanity in him and in his followers. He lived only for the minjung and died for them. This attraction did not make him flee from people. When Jesus finally died on the cross, the Jewish minjung recognised him as the Messiah. In this connection, minjung theology does not describe Jesus as the Messiah in terms of the glorious coming of the king of kings, but of the one who suffered and died in relation to consideration of and action about the social economic, and political conditions of his day. Jesus bore the grief and carried the sorrows of the minjung. He suffered with and for the oppressed whom he loved. Like the poor who were under those who had power, Jesus was poor and oppressed. Like the Lamb that was led to the slaughter, he was led to die on the cross. Jesus suffered because he participated in the pains of those who were exploited, alienated, and oppressed without hope. Jesus' suffering was the suffering of the poor and oppressed. In this suffering journey of Jesus the Jewish minjung discovered Jesus as their suffering Messiah. 38

Our final concern on the person of Jesus is the title the Son of Man. It was the favourite self-designation of Jesus, occurring many times in the synoptics and the gospel of John. Jesus in the traditional point of view used the title in claiming the authority to forgive sins, the explicitly redemptive character of his ministry, and his awareness of his centrality in the suffering ministry of his disciples and in the salvation of the

lost.³⁹ In the title the Son of Man, Jesus prophesied of his future suffering as disclosing his messianic awareness that he is to suffer as a ransom for many.⁴⁰ The title in the third person refers to his own rising as the son of man from the dead and to his promise that he will sit at the right hand of God and come with the clouds of heaven.⁴¹

In minjung theologians' speculation however, Jesus always called himself the Son of Man as the concept of simple flesh and blood. This means that the Son of Man signifies mere man. Jesus was man, a Galilean teacher who preached about God as Father and about other human beings as brothers. Of course, minjung theology has admitted that Jesus was special man who had a unique relationship with God.⁴² But this unique relationship does not alter the fact that he was no more than a man who existed in a place in history. It is inadequate for minjung theologians to assert that the Christian faith-tradition primarily knows Jesus in his divinity and humanity as the living Lord, present now: "I am the first and the last, and the living One; I was dead, and behold, I am the One alive for ever and ever"(Rev. 1:18). Thus, minjung theology has prepared its view to accept:

The meaning of Jesus as an ideal man:, "...the Son of Man is a prominent man, a man of truth and a representative of mankind who accomplished the example which the Creator of mankind cherished in his mind". Jesus is the ultimate model for humankind to follow. Therefore the "transcendental nature" of Jesus must be denied, since only then is the imitation of Christ (imitatio Christi) possible.⁴³

D. The Death of Jesus

For minjung Christology, the starting point for understanding the principle of Jesus' death is not characteristic of apostolic evangelization in general. It is difficult for the modern world to understand that Jesus' death is a divine event as an atonement for sin which is a foundational claim of the Bible, or of the Christian church. Minjung theologians here try to reject any speculative starting point for theologizing Jesus' death as atonement for one's life through blood, in favour of their respective sociohistorical context. In other words, Jesus' death is not the primary stage for faith and theology in terms of the mystery of a religious redemptive service for man.

From this perspective, minjung theologians need not interpret Jesus' death for others in terms of his expiatory sacrifice as a divinely ordained action.⁴⁴ Jesus' death, which is seen by the church as the saving act of God and Jesus' voluntary self-sacrifice, is not the testimony in favour of life which can be correctly specified at the historical level. But it has deteriorated into a religious and abstract type of the testimony. The

notion of expiation in the event of Jesus' death has not grown out of the proof from the historical facts of Palestinian society under the Roman authorities who made themselves masters of Palestine with bloody hands. Hence in the context of the expiatory concept of the Christian tradition, the interpretation of Jesus' death makes it difficult for minjung theologians to speak of Jesus' humanity at the historical level. It is insufficient to stress the social aspect of Jesus' death at the theological level.⁴⁵

Here, the primitive Christian community's testimony to Jesus' death, which is connected with testimony giving basis and direction to faith in the mystery of Jesus Christ, should be reinterpreted on behalf of human life which reveals the deepest roots of elementary economic, social, political levels in history. In this sense, the very meaning of Jesus' death may be summed up in the focal point that he was sentenced to death because he sought to lead a movement regarding the principles for the removal of injustice and poverty for his brothers and sisters. Speaking generally, Jesus neither claimed to be nor behaved as a political leader of the low class, or as a revolutionary leader of the Zealots. Nevertheless, it is undeniable that Jesus was essentially part of the society of Israel, its political tensions, and its power conflicts. He saw

the task as one of opposition to the Roman authorities and the Jewish authorities whereby he exposed their injustice and inhumanity. In this view, Jesus' death was political. His crucifixion was not due to an understanding of his purely religious observation. But it was due to his political participation in the public social life of his minjung and his political critique of the Romans and the Jewish religious leaders. 46

Consequently, the central idea of the cross of Jesus Christ should be redefined in the eyes of minjung theologians who have discovered the new concept of Jesus' death not in the way of religious experience, but of the political dimension as a historical event. That is, the popular cross of Jesus which contains supernatural and mythological notions in traditional theological categories should be solved simply by the necessity of a just social order, based on loving and giving and on renunciation in order to share with those who have nothing. The cross of Jesus should not be the supreme demonstration of love of God which reveals the influence of theological interests. The cross cannot be expressed in the matter of supernatural attention, based on a mysterious conception in which its ultimate worth is its finished conquest and over sin and death. When a statement of Jesus crucified is understood from the vicarious standpoint of traditional theology, it is a stumbling block to modern man in the age of a scientific technology.

Hence, the concept of the cross must be separated from associated dogmatic elements in order to continue consideration of it in relation to the purely social, economic, and political implication.⁴⁷ Without having any traditional Christian belief, it is possible to understand the real original motif to Jesus' cross in the light of the social and political world of Galilee as portrayed in the gospels. It is not difficult to see how this picture corresponds to the social world of Palestine that has been depicted for us.

As we remember, in both the canonical and later Christian literature the terms "the cross" and "the crucifixion" took on a particularly important significance, because of their connection with the death of Jesus. Without thinking of a different meaning between them, the church has been using the two terms as the symbol of the sacrifice for human sin. The Christian church made no distinction between the two terms. It therefore automatically applied to the terms the cross and crucifixion as having a symbol of the will and act of God with eternal and cosmic significance in the light of religious perspective. The church has proclaimed that Jesus suffered and died on the cross according to God's saving purpose and according to the Scriptures.

But the word "crucifixion" is more meaningful than the words "the cross" for minjung theology. The reason for this is that in tracing crucifixion to the historical basis it was usually reserved for slaves, criminals of the

worst--sort from the lowest levels of society, and the rioters of political motivation. In this sense, the penalty of Jesus' crucifixion may be carried out by the Romans as a punishment considered too degrading for the social order of first century Palestine. Here, minjung theology has seen that the crucifixion of Jesus, instead of using the terms the cross of Jesus, is a more correct and meaningful expression of what happened to him in the sociopolitical situation under the Roman Empire in the first century Palestinian society. This is clearly seen in the writings of Nam Dong Suh who states:

The crucifixion of Jesus was changed into a religious symbol, the Cross, and the image of the Messiah, which had political implications, was changed into the Christ and carried a religious connotation. Consequently, the event of salvation lost its historical nucleus of meaning; and the purely religious symbol of the Cross could not have the power to change the course of human history. The basis of minjung theology is the crucifixion of Jesus which occurred in the political realm as a historical event.⁴⁸

Minjung theology obviously emphasizes that the Roman employed crucifixion as a horrible capital punishment for political rebels (only political criminals).⁴⁹ The Roman authorities crucified practical politicians (political dangers) against their Empire. In this sense, Jesus died on the cross as a political rebel, not as a dangerous religious rebel. This means that Jesus' end on the cross was by his political failure, not by his religious discrediting. Therefore, any understanding of crucifixion must include the fact related to the sociocultural context, and socio-economic history of first century Palestinian society.

As minjung theology fully admits, at the practical level, the scandal of Jesus' death on the cross was the unique example of an entirely voluntary acceptance of extreme

suffering and of agonising death in the presence of siding with the have-nots and the oppressed. In the event of the cross, Jesus identified himself with the poor and powerless of his own people in his lifetime. He gave dynamic witness to his followers in the struggle for their liberation as a model for the poor and the historical invitation of their liberation. Jesus on the cross formed the essentials of the Christian message not only as a sign of liberating love but also as a sign of devotional life to the lowliest and the lost. The crucifixion of Jesus still teaches us to suffer and die for the liberation of the minjung in the political dimension of the popular movement,⁵⁰ not in the religious dimension of the Christian faith.

E. The Resurrection of Jesus

According to the witness of the New Testament, the resurrection of Jesus is the essential point of the Christian church. In 1 Cor. 15:3ff., Paul describes the resurrection of Jesus as an integral part of the gospel. For him, the entire Christian faith is fallacious and ineffective, if Jesus did not literally rise from the dead. The preaching of the church is valueless, Christian tradition is false, no sins have been forgiven, and believers have perished without any Christian hope. Apart from the event of Jesus' resurrection, Christians are the most miserable of all people.

In this belief, Paul teaches the centrality of the resurrection in Rom. 1:3-4. His Christology is that Jesus was shown to be the Son of God, Christ, and Lord by his resurrection (Rom. 14:5). This provides salvation (Rom. 10:9-10) in the religious realm and ensures the resurrection of believers (1 Cor.

15:20; 11 Cor. 4:14; 1 Thess. 4:14). Similarly, Luke's writings relate several instances where the resurrection provides the basis for the Christian proclamation of the way of eternal life, resting on the reality of Jesus' victory over death. So Paul's teaching frequently utilized the resurrection as the basis of the gospel message in Acts 123:29-39); 17:30-31).

That Jesus Christ died on the cross and afterwards rose from the dead is, thus, both the central doctrine of Christian theology and the major fact in a defence of its teaching. Without the resurrection the Christian faith is nothing at all. The New Testament writers urge us to make up our minds about the resurrection of Jesus.

However, the concept of Jesus' resurrection in the history of the church is a problem for minjung theology. In Nam Dong Suh's view, traditional Roman Catholics defined the church as the body of the risen Christ on Paul's conception of that.⁵¹ Roman Catholics reproduced the substance of Paul's teaching that the church is the body of the risen Christ as "the fullness of Him who fills all in all" (Eph. 1:23), and that it is the organism to which Jesus gives spiritual life and through which he manifests the fullness of his power and grace on his death and resurrection. The Roman Catholic Church cannot be defined in merely human terms,

as an aggregate of individuals associated for benevolent and social purposes. It is a transcendent element existing in the world. In this sense, the Catholic church is the great company of persons whom the risen Christ has saved, in whom he dwells, to whom and through whom he reveals God. The church, which presupposes itself in union with the risen Christ is a divine organization that transforms the sinner into a Christian. This makes possible that vital and spiritual fellowship between individuals which constitutes the organizing principle of the church. The risen Jesus makes the church superior and more permanent than all humanitarian organization. Without a proper notion of this sublime relation of the church to the risen Lord we cannot properly appreciate our dignity as church members. The Catholic church thus stresses the identity of the visible church with the risen Jesus, everlastingly manifesting himself among men in a human form. 52.

It is difficult for minjung theology to agree with the Roman Catholic principle that speaks of the church as the body of the risen Christ in borrowing Paul's terms. Jesus was not resurrected as the Catholic church which means the society of those who are called to faith in him and which enables its members to attain their last salvation in the time of consummation of God's heavenly kingdom. The concept of the resurrection cannot be intended to apply to the church which spends all its time in prayer and mediation in the peaceful enjoyment of its spiritual heritage. The resurrection of Jesus contains a symbol of a new history which would come in the future in terms of the social, economic, and political aspects of present society. The

resurrection should be transformed to a universal symbol of hope to the extent that all the minjung share in some forms of crucifixion (rebellious death) as the possibility of survival.⁵³ Thus the church cannot be satisfied with its mysterious religious guidance to force human beings to enter their joys of heaven on the resurrection, but the symbol of hope rooted in a social reality.

On the other hand, minjung theology has indicated its view of the resurrection of Jesus in contrast to Rudolf Bultmann's position. Bultmann apparently held that it is just not permissible to argue that the resurrection of Jesus can be established by anybody, using the scientific techniques of modern history. The proper interpretation of the resurrection cannot depend upon the decision of man to regard the historical evidence adduced in its support as the real explanation of the origin of Christian faith and mission. Although the historical science properly investigates the event of the resurrection and then provides adequate evidence of sufficient quality to determine the matter, its historical (objective) conclusion may not in principle be susceptible of satisfactory treatment by the method. It seems undeniable that the scientific historian cannot prove the objective historicity of the resurrection no matter how many witnesses are cited. A dead person cannot return into the life of this world or rise from the grave as an historical fact. For instance, all these facts - Jesus appeared alive to the disciples and others, his tomb was found to be empty, and the disciples testified to Jesus' body - cannot be justified by the historical

procedure of modern man. ⁵⁴

In the light of this, Bultmann saw that faith is a matter of coming to the conviction that Jesus did rise from the dead. The resurrection of Jesus can only be understood in the response of faith itself. "The resurrection itself is not an event of past history" ⁵⁵ but "an article of faith" ⁵⁶ which cannot be invoked by means of historical investigation. According to Bultmann, the articulation of the faith in the resurrection:

Means for us what it meant for the first disciples - namely, the self-attestation of the risen Lord, the act of God in which the redemptive event of the cross is completed. ⁵⁷

Bultmann's demand for faith in the resurrection is here free of the alleged insecurity of historical assessment and leads us to the articulation of an understanding of faith as being independent of critical-historical enquiry. As a matter of faith, Bultmann treated the resurrection as a divinely designed event to accomplish man's salvation, in which the believer knows himself to be saved. This experience of salvation comes from the faith which is the subjective knowing of the claim of God's divine will in one's life.

The consequent result of Bultmann is to take the resurrection of Jesus as "mythical event" ⁵⁸ not a historical account. That is, for Bultmann, Jesus suffered and was crucified, but he did not literally rise again on the third day from the dead; he did not ascend into heaven. He does not literally sit on the right hand of God the Father and will not literally come again to judge the living and the dead. These words are devoid of any literal meaning. They are mythological, and do not denote any historical

objective reality. In Bultmann's view, the earliest Christians adopted all these mythical figures to express the significance of Jesus Christ for their new existence as believers and then to proclaim Jesus as the history of the exalted Lord, making it impossible to understand him "apart from the faith of primitive Christianity (the mythicization of history)".⁵⁹ The resurrection of Jesus thus becomes mythological, because it speaks of the revelatory and eschatological event in terms of images drawn from this world. For example, when the risen Jesus is spoken of in the gospel narratives of the appearances, he is pictured on analogy with his former earthly being. The reality of the resurrection is also pictured as an extension of the reality of this world.

Bultmann finally talked about the term kerygma which speaks of God's act in Jesus Christ calling people to the decision of faith and membership in the community faith.⁶⁰ It is certainly true that in the witness of the New Testament there is no separation of the kerygmatic proclamation from the Jesus of Nazareth who lived, preached, died and rose again from the dead. The Kerygma speaks about the crucifixion of Jesus which was a historical event and about the resurrection (the return of the crucified Jesus from the grave in which he was laid) which was a mythological event. But Jesus who was crucified and who rose again is meant as being alive in the word of preaching. In hearing this kerygma and appropriating it, one is not saved in the present but will be saved in the future which means the mythological statement of faith and realized the essential meaning into a contemporary world view which means the

existentialist understanding of man and his life. In the kerygma of Bultmann, thus, the cross and resurrection are not "the facts of salvation which precede faith" in terms of traditional apocalyptic concepts. A clear development is discernible in the following notion of Bultmann:

Belief in the cross means that a man takes up himself the cross of his parting from his old world, that he loses his life to God. And belief in the resurrection means that he himself rises to a life in freedom and in faith and love. ⁶¹

From Bultmann's point of view, minjung theology has got gained the impression that his theology is still a work of religious interpretation of the gospel regarding existential individualism, removed from social reality. Man is a being of concern. He is confronted by death. His problem is to find a significant existence in the face of these limitations. In seeking such man's actual situation as a being whose very nature drives him to find a purpose for his own individual existence, therefore, Bultmann tried to employ an existentialist theology for interpreting the religion of the New Testament in terms of sin, grace, faith and so on. As a result, Bultmann was aware that he lives in a different world from that of the New Testament, and then that he concentrated on the liberation of modern man. But minjung theology has criticised Bultmann as a western theologian who stripped the faith of any historical, social, political and economic dimension. There is no hope and revolutionary dimension in the resurrection of Bultmann against injustice and the oppressors. ⁶²

However, minjung theology is not interested in the main ways

of understanding and interpreting the resurrection of Jesus which have been explained and expanded by tradition and Bultmann in terms of religious presupposition. The resurrection, which is seen in the religious thinking of historical Christianity, is not a matter which minjung theology hopes to discuss. Hence the important thing to realize is that according to Mark "Galilee is the place for his disciples to go if they want to see the risen Jesus". In contrast to Mark, Luke sees: "Galilee is only a memento of Jesus' initial preaching; and appearances of the risen Jesus take place only in Jerusalem".⁶³ For minjung theology, Mark's point is that it is important to discover why the risen Jesus will be seen in Galilee which is regarded as the symbolic place of suffering people rather than in Jerusalem regarded as the symbolic place of dominating people.⁶⁴ That is, Galilee needed Jesus' resurrection to show how to deal with its own future survival. One thing minjung theology can say for sure is that Galilee was the place where Jesus lived with the Galilean poor and marginalized masses and was to risk his life in the midst of the upheavals that stimulated them to resist their integration into the Roman Empire. At the same time Galilee was the place where its native minjung anticipated the coming of the kingdom of God by moving out from under the yoke of unjust economic, social, and political control to set a destiny for themselves as free persons. In reality, it is clearly certain that Jesus was the dream and hope of the Galilean minjung who were dominated and overridden by foreign imperialism and religious authoritarianism.

In this connection, Mark tried to give good news (the appearances of the risen Jesus as a symbol of hope) to the

Galilean minjung who were disappointed at his death on the cross in Jerusalem, encouraging them to hope for their own personal survival.⁶⁵ In other words, Jesus' resurrection is that justice has triumphed over injustice. The traditional Easter faith is mythical and not based on the historical experience of Jesus. By considering the future of those despised by the ruling class, Jesus' resurrection is presented as a universal symbol of hope which Jesus produced by surrendering himself for others who were helpless and defenceless. The event of the risen Jesus was a result of Jesus' earthly life in historical reality, not in religious and philosophical realities. Jesus declared the coming of the kingdom of God to the poor, denounced the powerful authoritarian, was persecuted by them, condemned to death, and was crucified on the cross. This historical man was reversely identified with the risen Christ as a universal symbol of hope in terms of religion. But the resurrection story of Jesus should be seen as an encouragement to overcome the historical bitterness of injustice here and now in history.

That is more or less how minjung theologians understand the resurrection of Jesus. In that case, the resurrection event of Jesus happens to contemporary Galilean communities, when one is involved in the affairs of suffering human life. Jesus' resurrection is continually presented in following his footsteps in joining the ongoing reconstruction of society in the history of the world. For example, Kwang Young Song⁶⁶, who was a Korean student became a manifesto on the making of a revolutionary movement when social conditions for a revolution were present in

South Korea in 1985. Among these conditions are: the military regime's autocratic and totalitarian power over its people; the gap between the rich and the poor; gross violation of human rights; and a long history of foreign imperialist exploitation. In these conditions, Song committed suicide by burning himself to express the need to construct a democratic, just and peaceful society. His death was a protest against the military regime which was maintained by the torture and violence by the privileged groups, and then became a trigger to awake the minjung against the bondage and exploitation of the ruling class and foreign imperialism.

For minjung theology, Jesus' resurrection is here presented again in the event of Song's death in order to resolve the minjung's Han (accumulated frustration and resentment). In one sense, Song died as Jesus did. This historical incident cannot be allowed to become something simply in one's own interest in virtue of a hope in his own religious resurrection in terms of abstract characteristics. When one gives up his life for the others of this world - the exploited, despised, and marginalized people, his life directly bears Jesus' resurrection which is a symbol of hope. This present of suffering life is creating the historical awareness associated with the struggle of the common people. Jesus' resurrection is consequently happening again and again in the possibility of violent overthrow required by an expanding human participation in the struggle for freedom and for a new order in human affairs. ⁶⁷

As the expression of the profound meaning for minjung theology, finally, the resurrection of Jesus should be allowed to

show itself in the light of symbolic or ideological significance. That is, the resurrection should precede its being regarded as the minjung who appear on the stage of daily life as the subject of history for pursuing their economic, social, and political demands ⁶⁸ Jesus' resurrection is here integrated into the effort to restore the oppressed and exploited minjung as the historical subject. This leads them to determine the scope, depth, and significance of the revolutionary transformation. But the historical subject is distinguished from the political and social subject which only give certain political groups its power to support take-over of power. The minjung as the subject of history are the ultimate hope of society and a product of resurrection in forms of mobilisation and revolt, which the dehumanizing authorities and potentates of this dark world resist to continue the economic exploitation and the political oppression. The minjung sustain their hope by recalling the life and death of Jesus, seeking to reproduce the resurrection of Jesus here and now actively.

F. The Holy Spirit

For Byung Mu Ahn, the terms "ruah" and "nephesh" in the Old Testament cannot be applicable to their use in connection with the Holy Spirit in some way to the sphere of the divine personality. These terms may not be allowed to stand as the personality of "individuum". Especially, the primary significance of ruah appears to be energy in manifestation, or power. Hence, the word "pneuma" of Pauline teaching concerning the Holy Spirit can be

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According to Byung Mu Ahn, there are the two kinds of eschatologies - present eschatology and future one in Paul's perspective. However, the concept of pneumatology is differently understood dependent upon interpreting the concept of eschatology. When we see eschatology as a futuristic phenomena, the Holy Spirit is understood in the religious phenomena which expresses the universality of the salvation that has come in Jesus. On the contrary, when we treat eschatology as the present phenomena, the Holy Spirit is expressed in the present event of liberation to be done on earth. That is, the Holy Spirit as the power of activity in men helps to liberate the oppressed from their oppressors. For Ahn, the gospel of Mark emphasizes the image of the Holy Spirit that takes the here-and-now presence of the kingdom of God in full and complete form on this earth. Mark depicts the kingdom as focusing on the hope and aspiration of today, not on the prospect of another world which might alienate the minjung from their own reality but rather on a vision of this world, completely new and renewed. This indication means a radical statement about human existence and its utopian hope in the present world. But the Holy Spirit did not appear in Jesus' time, even though he was seen as having received the Spirit. The arrival, of the Holy Spirit is found in time after Jesus dies.⁷²

In the light of this, for Ahn the Pentecost was an important aspect of the eschatological perspective of the New Testament era, not the expectation of the parousia of Jesus, in which the Spirit was manifest in stimulating the minjung's revolutionary movement.⁷³ which discerns the power of God in its historical

fruits towards the realization of the minjung's historical aspirations for liberation. The beginning of the church for traditional Christianity was to hold the vital teaching of the Apostolic church in reference to the advent of the incarnate Lord. But that was wrong. Rather the Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit was the notable fact about revolution in order to bring the transformation of history and society. This is the presence of the Holy Spirit exposed the direction, the possibility, and the power of human liberation and human fulfilment in the world. The power of this presence compels us to fight existing powers and patterns of injustice and oppression, and to make room for a new order of freedom and liberation. ⁷⁴

For the transformation of the existing contradiction of Korean society into a process of liberation, the minjung movement is consequently interpreted as the movement of the Holy Spirit, ⁷⁵ because in the Apostolic age the presence of the power in relation to Jesus Christ was the revolutionary force to overthrow the existing society which produced the contradiction between the rich and the poor. In this sense, the March First Korean Independence Movement (1919) from the imperialistic rule of Japan, the April Student Revolution (1960) to restore the democratic form of government, and the student demonstrations (1970s-1980s) to destroy the military coup government are considered in accordance with the movement of the Holy Spirit which enlightens one to establish justice and to liberate the poor and oppressed. However, there is a great difference between becoming rich or powerful to liberate the rich and the powerful and becoming poor and oppressed to liberate the poor and

oppressed. The former is a contradiction to the original movement of the Holy Spirit, but the latter is not.⁷⁶ The belief in the Holy Spirit is not pushed into the background as the belief in a parousia is, but as the belief in the eschatological proviso of liberation is.

G. The Political Jesus

Concluding the Christology of minjung theology, we would like to make one more remark concerning the political dimension of Jesus in South Korea. For minjung theology, the rediscovering of the historical Jesus calls for a reinterpretation of Jesus' relation to the political condition of Palestine and the relation of the Jews to Jesus in his present day is vital to provide the sources which shall show the political aspect of Jesus in the questions of the historical detail not of theological interests. In Christian faith, Jesus became regarded as above history, as eternal, and as one who looked down upon the profane world of everyday life. The focal point of Jesus was not the Jesus of history but the Christ literally risen from the dead and seated at the right hand of God the Father. In this process of religious and philosophical reflection the humanity of Jesus was downgraded. In order to eliminate this false formal concept and to discover a real man in history, the description of the political aspect of Jesus in his time should be observed in the context of a certain autonomy in relation to minjung Christology.

To understand the political account of Jesus, it is necessary to go back to the social and political conditions of Palestine in

the first century. It is striking that the Roman Empire occupied Israel and that its authorities maintained their position as supreme rulers of the Jews in the time of Jesus. The occupation of the Romans was a desecration of the Godly Israel (i.e., which was "not monarchy, nor oligarchy, nor democracy, but "theocracy", or entrusting all sovereignty and authority to God")⁷⁷ by a nation of the cruel and pagan Romans. The Jewish people suffered appalling casualties and were far from reconciled to Roman rule. That the Jews were deprived of their autonomy was a horror which could be understood as evoking the drama of liberation from the oppression and injustice of Rome that became humanly intolerable. It was difficult for anyone to question the right of the Roman authorities to dominate Palestine with their brutal soldiers, to bleed the country for extending their colonial territory, and to massacre whenever their power was challenged. The Roman procurators, who neither knew anything about the Jewish religion nor were interested in it, just exercised their own function in a repressive way.

From the point of view of the political realism of the Roman colonialist imperialism, therefore, we see that the Jews were able to maintain a limited, uneasy independence. By the establishment of the Roman dynasty, Jewish independence was doomed and exploited materially and politically. Palestine was a small land and not a rich one. The Jews were too weak to resist the professional troops of the Roman Empire from keeping their tradition and land continually. Despite all this, the Jews tried to hope that they could expel the Romans and resume their existence as an independent nation. But the Romans could not

give up this tiny land Palestine, because as a corridor leading to the rich cornland of Egypt it was strategically important to Roman expansion. The tribute to the Roman Empire, particularly caused trouble in the time of Jesus. For example, the census under direct Roman administration in A.D. 6 was taken "for the purpose of instituting further taxation".⁷⁸ At this point, the census was the preliminary to taxation which was burdensome for the Jews. This kind of new Jewish tax regulation led the Jews to rebel in Galilee, denouncing the measure and urging the Israelites not to pay tribute to the Roman government. In such a situation, the Jewish minjung suffered and were less stable economically and socially.⁷⁹ Of course, the taxes collected by the Romans were used for the benefit of Palestinian public services. But the bulk of the money and goods collected was sent to Rome, was used to uphold Roman power in Palestine, and paid into the Roman authoritarian's account. In this sense, the Jews regarded the Roman Empire as a vehicle for exploitation and oppression.

From a religious point of view, Judaism continued to enjoy its traditional autonomy, although Palestine came under complete Roman subjugation. The Jewish religious groups profited little from the sociopolitical structure of Israel in the time of Jesus. The authority and political importance were reduced almost to nothing. The Roman procurators, for instance, "interfered in the selection of the high priest" and also "appointed or dismissed high priests as the Romans demanded".⁸⁰ As a result, the Jewish religious groups knew of many disappointments under the Roman occupation in Jesus' time. However, "they accepted the

realities of the Roman occupation, with one proviso: that the Romans must not flout the basic Jewish sanctities".⁸¹

The Sadducees, who were the priestly aristocracy and allied to other well-born families (the wealthy and official classes), tried in one way or another to preserve some kind of native independence and to shield their people from the horror of direct totalitarian Roman rule. But they in fact collaborated with the Roman government. Generally speaking, the Sadducees "always favoured looking for a negotiated settlement with the ruling Romans".⁸²

With the imposition of the Roman rule to Palestine between A.D. 6 and 66, the Sadducees not only became a major power within the Sanhedrin but also were able to control the high priesthood for many years. On the other hand, the Pharisees were the popular group, the representative of the middle classes in towns. They preserved the religious tradition for "fulfilling the law of Moses as the most important requirement of national life".⁸³ The Pharisees continued to be represented strongly in the Sanhedrin, the supreme legal court of the Jews. They held the majority in the Sanhedrin. By virtue of his office, the high priest acted as president of the Sanhedrin. Like the Sadducees, the moderate Pharisees also tried to be central in the struggle with the military superiority of the Romans. In reality, however, they were more fervently unrealistic than the Zealots in the social matters of Palestine. The Pharisees favoured the policy of peace with the Roman Procurators. That is, they are seen as those who tried to ally themselves with others who possessed political power and authority.

The problem with the Sadducees and the Pharisees was that

they had nothing to offer the humanization of human life. As in the light of our preceding observation, the two religious groups had practically no political power at all but an important function in Israelite society between the political and the religious. But the two parties did all in their power to oppose a new order of human affairs against poverty, exploitation and injustice. They were just concerned with their ideological role as embodiments of religious fanaticism in general to their desire for prestige. 84

In this regard, minjung theology has noted that in Jesus' time the Sadducees and the Pharisees totally ignored the "Am-ha-aretz" 85 who are defined by minjung theology as "the people of the land". 86 The Am-ha-aretz were the low group which was far removed from the privileged social groups. From then on, what minjung theology realizes is: the Am-ha-aretz were those who no longer inherited anything from the past and who no longer received their need from other groups. There was no hope for them whatsoever. In a quest for a future about which they knew from their religion at their parents' knee and from the sermons of the priests in their country synagogues. Yet any religious group helped not to destroy the imbalance of the existing society for the Am-ha-aretz in Jesus' day. Nobody inspired the Am-ha-aretz who were victimized both by Roman imperialism and by self-justifying self-righteousness. The Am-ha-aretz were only a miserable fact that must be changed from, one way to another. The question of violence in Jesus' day consequently was more urgent than ever. In minjung theologians' speculation, a consideration

of violence in social conflict and social change was inevitable for the Am-ha-aretz who were alienated and despised by their countrymen and foreign men. The issue of the Am-ha-aretz was, nonetheless, not a kind of serious question which pin-pointed a problem in a concern of Palestinian society for the leading religious groups of Jesus' time. 87

The Zealots seemingly realized that the indestructible power of the Roman Empire drove them to look more and more to the need for direct intervention by a heavenly God in human affairs. The society of Palestine gave evidence of a severe breakdown in its human and physical environment. The Zealots, who became the religious nationalists and the party of the violent opposition to Roman domination, marked an important point in the history of the social revolt which gained a new historical consciousness. The Zealots believed that God would come to their aid if they launched themselves against the Roman rule, whilst they did not believe that God would help the Israelite people if they merely waited passively for God's deliverance. In this conviction, what the Zealots could do in the severe circumstances of their nation was to upset the Romans and the Jewish leaders and to wait for the new order. The Zealots were ready to lay down their lives for the sake of property and national freedom.

The rebellious activities of the Zealots against the might of Rome led thus to the inevitable catastrophe between A.D. 6 and 73 according to minjung theology. They began to engage in a guerrilla warfare against the Roman government and its Jewish collaborators (its puppets - the Sadducees and the Pharisees). 88 Without doubt, the Roman government and its Jewish collaborators

of first century Palestinian society maintained an effective system of expanding their political, economic, religious interests. In order to counteract these oppressive powers, it was vital for the Zealots to seek to establish their own movement against the oppression and exploitation of foreign imperialism and the Jewish religious groups. According to Byung Mu Ahn, the Zealots particularly opposed the Sanhedrin and the high priests, who discriminated against the Galilean minjung religiously, and socially, more radically than imperial oppression. 89. The Zealots struggled and suffered for their ideals to take care of the workers and peasants who were exploited by the dominant classes in their own situations. The Romans and the Jewish leaders, who were in the positions of military power, of the domination of political power, and of the control of economic system, were thus treated by the Zealots as oppressors and exploiters of the large masses of the poor and powerless.

In all this social and political environment of Palestine in the first century, minjung theology has affirmed the political dimension of Jesus. Minjung theology has wanted to see Jesus just as he spent his childhood in the bitter condition of facing the reality of the Roman Empire and living a truly human life at an identifiable moment in public history. 90 Jesus was already preoccupied with the problem of his society and planned his attack on that central point. He was not a religious and philosophical man as were the Sadducees and the Pharisees and the philosophers of the Roman world. The Nazarite of Galilee experienced both the tyrannical attitude of the Roman authorities and pious attitude of

the Jewish authorities which tended to turn social contradictions into an open conflict between the external and internal oppressors and the Jewish minjung. In this realistic perspective, the reinterpretation of Jesus should be accessible to the social and political situations of the place of his upbringing, from which he lived his whole life in the valley of Galilee which was a place of miserable and dehumanizing conditions in terms of social and political existences without right to express the self-determination of its own destiny and even in Jerusalem which was the centre of culture and the home of the rich and the ruling class.⁹¹

Minjung theologians have not pointed to Jesus as a Zealot in first century Galilee. The fact that Jesus was a member of the Zealots movement is a danger confronting the presentation of Mark that took seriously the radical response of Jesus for others to the oppression and exploitation in Palestine in his day. In Byung Mu Ahn's opinion, the Zealots were those who everywhere led the riots and revolts against the dominating classes and sectors (the rich) who maintained the economic prosperity of life. That is, the Zealots were being connection with the struggle for their own survival. Not for the survival of the other poor but for their own empty stomach, the Zealots rejected and destroyed every possible economic dominator in cold-blood. Jesus, on the contrary, sought to speak for the minjung who were alienated and oppressed both by the Roman authorities and the Jewish religious authorities. He suffered and died not for seeking his personal advantage but that of the poorest minjung. Jesus saw the rule of the Romans and the desire of the Jewish leaders as the principal

cause of the exploitation and oppression of the Jewish minjung so that he spent his whole life for the suffering minjung. That is why Ahn concludes Jesus was little concerned with the Zealots. 92.

On the other hand, Wan Sang Han has seen Jesus as a man who was close to the Zealots in one way or another. Although Jesus was not an enthusiastic member of the Zealot movement, he could not escape from the fundamental influence of the Zealots in his time. Like the Zealots, Jesus criticised the corruption and hypocrisy of the religious hierarchy of Jerusalem who got on well with the Romans bleeding the Jewish minjung with the heavy tributes they imposed. At the same time, Jesus was a Jew who agreed with the Zealots' philosophy in God's exclusive sovereignty over Israel. As one of his disciples, Jesus chose Simon, who was known as a member of the Zealots. He encouraged his disciples to buy swords in preparation for possible events. He checked whether or not his disciples possessed swords with them in preparation for unexpected events, before he was arrested by the Roman troops to Gethsemane. For this, the synoptics clearly present that the Roman troops found a handful of rebels equipped with swords, when they arrived at Gethsemane. All this shows us that Jesus' attitude and words became part of the political movement of his time, even though he did not claim himself as a revolutionary among the Zealots. This means that Wan Sang Han is apparently interested in a more closely political version of Jesus' alternative to Zealotism rather than of his direct relation to the Zealots within the context of man to man. 93.

In considering the question of Jesus' relation to his

political life, minjung theologians have finally highlighted his trial as having resulted in co-operation between the Roman authorities and the Jewish authorities. The two elements of the trial before Pilate seem to have been important. The first one was Jesus' blasphemous claim to divinity. The second one was the destruction of the Temple. When we go back to look over the stage of Jesus' past public life, however, we come to realize that his trial was a resume of all his life and work.⁹⁴ The basic facts that Jesus sought to argue against the Jewish leaders and the Romans of his time became the "casus belli" preceding the drama of Jesus before his Council. For example, when Jesus with his disciples publicly violated the Sabbath on one occasion, "the Pharisees went out and immediately began taking counsel with the Herodians against Him, as to how they might destroy Him"(Mk. 3:6). Here the Pharisees joined with the politically-orientated Herodians to eliminate Jesus. For the Pharisees, Jesus twisted the law of Moses and its authoritative interpretation. In the gospels, the Pharisees separated themselves from unclean persons, that is, the non-synagogue-going Jews and non-Jews. One of their objections to Jesus was not only that he did not keep the ceremonial law in Mk. 7:1-15- but also that he sat down to eat with publicans and sinners in Mk. 2:15f. One more thing is that Jesus claimed himself as the one who scolded the Pharisees for their unforgiving attitude.

All these points that we have seen above have been directed against Jesus. In line with what has been said so far, Jesus was rejected by the elders, the priests and the scribes and then arrested by them as the way to bring his insurrection to an end.

The gospels doubtlessly present Jesus as the one who condemned the Sadducees, the Pharisees, and the Herodians. Jesus was against the Jewish hierarchy which collaborated with the Romans. In the eyes of the Jewish leaders, therefore, Jesus was a dangerous man who threatened to destroy the existing religious, social and political order which gave them the advantage of life in which their Palestinian compatriots were living unstable under the rule of the Romans. Jesus, however, began his work by concerning himself with the marginalized who suffered and were hungry under the double oppression of human selfishness and the religious authority. Nonetheless, the Jewish leaders plotted against Jesus in order to destroy him, because they did not see themselves as being stripped naked before humanity. 95

Jesus' entry into Jerusalem should not be seen as the march of the mere prophet or preacher portrayed in the religious concept of the early church and traditional theology but as a political act of great significance, consolidating his claim to be the Messiah who would put an end to the mandate of foreign domination and the Jewish leaders who ignored their minjung and rather collaborated with the forces of occupation for their own benefits. The trial of Jesus thus came from the result both of the Jewish authorities who saw him as their religious and political rival and the strategy of the Romans who enjoyed their political honeymoon with the Jewish hierarchy. Here the Jerusalem crisis began with Jesus' entry into Jerusalem and ended on the cross in the sociopolitical reality of Palestine between "official violence" and "counter violence". 96. Minjung theology hence has support

to depict Jesus as a political figure, since the cause of his death was the result of a political conflict against the rich and ruling class of Jerusalem. Jesus, who tried to unmask the oppressors of his time and to liberate the oppressed minjung from them, is obviously a political model for minjung theology..97.

Conclusion

In minjung theologians' perspective, they have been called more than ever to rethink the meaning of the message of God's kingdom in the light of the social sciences. The kingdom should be constructed at the level of contemporary historical and political engagement, and demonstrate its clear commitment to the minjung. God's kingdom is secured in the light of its historical juncture, when we take its concept from Jesus' words (i.e., "Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God" in Lk. 6:20) and deeds (i.e., his public ministry - from his capture to his death). The emphasis of this notion is to eliminate the concept of the kingdom which is framed by the Christian faith in religious terms and categories. On the contrary, minjung theology has tried to establish its concept of the kingdom which is rooted in the reading of the historical Jesus from the standpoint of historical reliability. Minjung theology believes that the kingdom of God provides the understanding for the historical situation in which Jesus acted for the minjung.

From this, minjung theology has felt it necessary to re-interpret faith in Christ. Jesus as the Christ of traditional theology does not enable us to affirm our humanity by struggling against the oppression and dehumanization of the minjung at the

hands of the Korean authoritarian government and Jesus' powerful life in us by overcoming our powerlessness in our struggle for liberation in the Korean context of life. In this view, the assessment of Jesus as a personality should be decided through historical inquiry. This means that the historical comprehensible references of Jesus are to keep us from losing sight of his real life during a highly politicized period of first-century Palestinian history. Thus, the most important thing is that as the starting point of the Christology of minjung theology the rediscovery of the historicity of Jesus can become not only the primary content of our faith but also a structural model for that faith.

The response to this challenge is to see Jesus in accordance with the gospel of Mark as an historical man as opposed to regarding him as co-equally divine by nature. That Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ in supernatural terms is an outright contradiction as they refused to apply historical-scientific methodology to him. The man Jesus of Nazareth, not the Christ of faith, is the point of departure for our theological understanding of Jesus Christ. Concrete history means the representation of a man's personality and career. This charge can hold the way of articulating the concrete historical reality of man. Minjung theology has used historical research to reconstruct imaginatively a portrait of the personality of Jesus and to speculate on how he lived in the midst of the world. As the relevance of the concrete history of Jesus for Christology, the actual sayings of Jesus and the happenings of his public career cannot be isolated

by the usual categories of historical investigation. The discussion of the structure of Jesus' personhood should be an interpretation of the anthropology exhibited in the words and deeds of Jesus as a clue to the form of his existence as a whole.

So minjung Christology must result from an interaction between the new Jesus reaching us through the reinterpretation of the gospel and the authentic experience of Jesus in the midst of the social struggle of man. In the analysis of Mark, the first understanding is that Jesus lived to defend the life and right of the minjung for whom the Jewish religious leaders were not concerned. Jesus directed his ministry in order to defend general anthropological matters about human beings. Thus, Jesus can be expressed historically in the light of his solidarity with the minjung and his attack on their oppressors. The other understanding is that Jesus was originated in a historico-political interpretation of his life on the part of the minjung engaged in revolutionary struggle. Jesus was a political leader in history who was experienced by the poor who were struggling for salvation in the given situation of the place and the country. For instance, the preaching of the coming of God's kingdom, some of his alleged statements, the entrance into Jerusalem, his trial, and his death on the cross could be interpreted as evidence for the political involvement which has become the integral part of minjung theology.

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CHAPTER SEVEN

A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE OF THE MOTIVES

A. Awareness

With the same way of looking at the picture of reality in the light of their own standpoint beginning as anthropological necessity, the first awareness for the motives of liberation theology (LT) and minjung theology (MT) is to see the reality of poverty which confronts the majority of people in both Latin America and South Korea. As can be clearly seen, the poor, the minjung, the oppressed, the exploited, the deprived, and the alienated are essential terms in the debate on the motives of the two theologies. These marginalized people of our society are apparently confined to those who are materially poor. The problem of the poor is created and maintained by the rich and powerful few. In this sense, LT and MT have attempted to speak for the poor whose lives have been determined by the dominance of the few over the majority of people.

This new awakening towards the poor cannot be ignored by the church, which has to show a deep concern for the message of the direct meaning of material poverty in the Bible. We should be seized with a new sense of urgency to do what we can to eliminate poverty and injustice and to bring about a just society in history. When we think of the poor as objects of our charity and good efforts, our efforts are not enough to take the necessary measures for those who are hungry. The two theologies here see that the church needs to be deepening its commitment to the struggle of the marginalized. The commitment of the church

should be based on its faith in Jesus and its biblical understanding of the poor(LK. 4:14-19; 10:25-37).

The attitudes of LT and MT and their associates towards the poor are impressive. It is leading the people of both Latin America and Korea to ask questions about the nature and destiny of the poor at the deepest levels. LT and MT very properly remind the Christian church that the rich should not remain as the highest stratum of society forever. The two theologies have a point in saying that Christians are also guilty of identifying themselves with the rich and perpetuating the social structure of injustice.

On the other hand, we are aware of the danger that the theologians of the two theologies imagine themselves and the poor as the oppressed victims who are dominated by others. They are the oppressed. Others are the oppressors. Thus LT particularly "categorizes people not as believers or unbelievers but as oppressors or oppressed".¹ MT itself also prefers to classify people as alienators or alienated rather than Christians or non-Christians. The two theologies then assert that history should be reread from the side of the poor or the minjung. LT and MT here urge us to examine ourselves whether or not we belong to the rich (the oppressors) or the poor (the oppressed) in terms of division and struggle against each other. In this regard, we are seen as allies of the oppressors and the exploiters, if we have a different view relating to that of the two theologies.

Here, an obvious fact produced by the two theologies is a consequent application of economic and social determinism to see man as an oppressor or oppressed. Through this view, the world is divided into two groups: the oppressed and the oppressors, or the alienated and the alienators. An important aspect of this one sided view leads to efforts on the part of Latin America and Korea to create an alliance of the poor against the rich. All this stand is very similar to that commonly assumed by Marx's position. Yet, the growing strength of LT and MT may not be concerned with providing the biblical evidence that the rich and the poor cannot be seen and treated merely in economic terms.

It is difficult for LT and MT to accept that we see need for preaching to extend the call of salvation to the human race regardless of the poor and the rich, or the oppressed and the oppressors who alike live in the sinful human condition in history.

Here, MT has always been the teacher and protector, the comforter and the enlightener of the minjung in Korea. Those who are most articulate in MT see themselves as obliged to be an extension of the survival teachers in the context of the Han of the minjung. Yet, minjung theologians are not quite able to recognize why they have been so slow to dialogue with their rich counterpart to produce reconciliation effectively. MT has never invited all both the rich and the poor, to produce the hope of reconciliation by their efforts, cooperation, and understanding. MT only offers the challenge of the rich's repentance within the context of freeing the minjung for their repression.

The second awakening feature of the two is the reality of foreign powers in Latin America and South Korea which are dependent upon rich nations. The theologians of LT and MT still see themselves as being exploited and dominated by external imperialism and internal ruling classes. Their present industry is not their own but that of foreign capitalist corporations. In this condition, their only hope is to break the chains of dependence from the capitalist power of the First World. In order to escape from a history of domination by western nations that were first to industrialize in the capitalist system, liberation theologians more positively try to grasp the view of Marxism on economic matters. That is, LT strived to use Marxist socialism as the chief safeguard against the capitalism regarded as the exploitative and dominating system. For LT, the majority of the population can get a right wage for their labour through Marxist analysis. On the other hand, although MT tries to avoid the expression of Marxist thought in its writings because of the legal position of the Korean government which is anti-Communist, it also contains the suggestion that the present capitalist system of the Korean industrial is a human failure and is in favour of diminishing the perception of capitalism, grounded in the industrial management of Korea.

In this sense, LT and MT confirm that the capitalist ideology of the First World has never eliminated the deeply ingrained social division in their countries. The lower classes have created more wealth for the already wealthy rather than for themselves. The owner of industrial capital has had much better chances for making higher profits in Latin America and South Korea

than in western countries. As a result, the social contrast is more evident between dominating and dominated nations. The campaign of the two against the foreign exploitation of defenseless people is inevitable to put an end of an evil according to the two theologies.

Yes, not a single nation in the world is in favour of seeing foreign power in its domestic affairs and foreign ownership in its industries. All this is linked to national pride. LT and MT here try to diminish dependency and to raise up the poor of Latin America and Korea from the prison of material poverty. This is the point at which the two theologies were born. This faith becomes a motive and justification for the involvement of liberation and minjung theologians in a revolutionary process. Thus, the fundamental fact for LT and MT today is in the relation of faith to social practice.

What matters is however that liberation and minjung theologians, who are sceptical about dependency theory and the situation of dependence in Latin America and Korea, are seemingly not eager to pursue innovations of their own. They are interested in freeing themselves from the domination of capitalism and try to integrate into the ideas of the Marxist analysis. If they do so, is it not dependency? Our point here is not to debate whether or not the Marxist system brings a higher standard of living for the

majority of people than capitalist systems. What matters is: If LT and MT switch from the capitalist over to the Marxist theory in their belief that the latter is essentially creditable for the poor, this is also a way to be dependent upon another "ism".

The third reality that LT has realized is the crying injustice of a system which the military dictators ruled as an absolute monarch, supported by the wealthy classes and by the powerful Catholic hierarchy in Latin America. MT also has in mind the evil of the military regime in South Korea: progressively authoritarian, depending upon the brutal methods of highly developed central intelligence agency, and imposing a fiercely exploitative pattern of economic development in the ignorance of the Korean church. LT and MT emerge from the similar contexts of their societies under the rule of military dictatorship propagating the political oppression and economic discrimination of the poor.

Yes, the emphasis of the scholars of LT and MT upon their historical context cannot be truly ignored by the church. These theologians, who have criticized economic injustice and political oppression in their argument in writings and played an active role in political movement for justice and liberation, can be perceived as the genius of consciousness to change the oppressive social structures operating within both Latin America and South Korea. We are in favour of giving them credit for humanity taking charge of creating a better social structure in terms of genuine exterior and interior freedom. Also, we cannot deny the fact that the persuasive power of this argument and activity in both Latin

America and South Korea is significant.

Nonetheless, the most crucial element in this radical movement is to be seen in that LT and MT always blame all the ruling class and those who show a negative attitude to this situation, as if they were attempting to cause the division of rich and poor and conflict between groups of people. This view would suggest a concern more for their self-justification to claim that the poor are always innocent victims rather than for theological clarity to denote that the fallenness of humanity is universal before God. That is, the problem of LT and MT is to accuse only certain groups of people in economic and political terms for making the evil structure of the whole world. Both theologies ignore the fact that the attitude of mankind regardless of whom they are is greed, pride, the willingness to enrich firstly oneself at the expense of one's neighbours.

Therefore, it might be the task of LT and MT to encourage all societies and all people to seek the fairness of life in Christian thinking drawn from the Scriptures rather than designating the powerful as enemies of the powerless in terms of evoking conflict as if it did not exist before. But this is not to say that LT and MT condone, as being inevitable phenomena, the military authorities and other corrupt people in both Latin America and South Korea or wish to have them as their leaders in history.

The final reality of awareness is that the church between the oppressing powers and the oppressed people has not sought to be the voice of the latter. LT as well as MT accuse the existing

church of only identifying salvation-history abstraction in terms of religious fantasy. In the eyes of both theologies, the church is silent about the unavoidable defects of the existing authorities of the state. It does not stand in opposition to the government. The church rather tries to identify itself with the bourgeoisie. As an obstacle to the reality of life, the church allows itself to be deeply invaded by meaningless mythologies and sacrilizing ideologies which take a modest step on the way to the awakening of national consciousness in the matter of history. In this regard, the church less and less has to do with the so-called subversion and more and more with the easy situation in Latin America and in South Korea where the tyranny of the strict order exists to cut off people's political movement against the power.

LT and MT here force the church to fight against the premise of the full authoritative autonomy of the state. For the two theologies, the nature of the church requires it to identify itself with the minjung so as to break down the barriers of the unjust system which exist in both Latin America and South Korea. The corruption and dishonesty of society's leadership, which destroy many aspects of society for humanity and which deprive people in one way or another as the depressed, the weak, the poor, and the violence must be abolished by the involvement of the church which strengthens its solidarity with the powerless. Thus, the church should be more aware of these things to give people opportunities for self-confidence and freedom which may be considered prerequisites for any attempt to promote human development.

In this section, LT and MT have created a new atmosphere in the Third World. The new atmosphere is that the two theologies politicise the church to involve it in the struggle for economic and social justice. That is, the central point of the church is to encourage persons to take charge of their own destinies and to free themselves from political, social, and economic oppression. For this reason, the church calls for a sensitivity that can respond politically to the plight of the poor. The concern of the church should not be for Christians but for the oppressed; its struggle not for itself in a way of religious service but for the liberation of the powerless. In relation to this ecclesiastical view, the church of, by, and for the poor must be the first priority of LT and MT.

MT, which is deeply sensitive to the immense poverty of the masses existing alongside the enormous wealth of the privileged few in Korea, particularly criticizes that the early Korean church failed to achieve its great ideal of the national salvation of Korea. Without doubt, the Korean church in the first stage of its history tried to carry a revolutionary dynamic in the wake of modernization in Korea. From this purpose, as a new role in Korean history the church's participation in society began to accomplish individual reformation and personal education in ethical terms. The purpose of this movement was to achieve or at least begin renewal of society for the Korean people. The church came like a fire to the Korean people who were in despair and established institutions of social

welfare, education, and medicine in various places in Korea. As a result, "preparation for the foundation of modernisation was made" under the influence of the church. The church established "a new role in Korean history"² as an imperishable mark.

For inspiring and shaping with one's struggle in the reality of life, however, it is not enough for minjung theologians that the function of the church on the social matter of society is maintained at an ethical level. On the matter of social and economic inequalities, the best service the church can do is not simply to apply Christian ethics(e.g., the ideal of righteousness and equality) to the individual as well as to society. In this sense, the Korean church from its first stage which did not try to reform society in political ways failed to see the economic, social, and political forms of Korea in a critical context. As a result, the problem of political involvement in participation in social issues is still existing in the Korean church as the best heritage that it ever had. For this reason, minjung theologians are less concerned with the traditional demands of the church and more concerned with the existential dimension of minjung in the economic and political reality of oppression by the powerful.³

B. Motivation

In the theme of the personal aspect, Bartolome de las Casas and Camilo Torres are the prophetic men who have given liberation

theologians their outstanding biographical statement on the corruption of their present societies. Casas and Torres as the most dramatic activities and statements⁴ of Christian humanism have become tremendously overpowering greatness to LT. At the same time, Che U Choe and Ji Ha Kim are perceived by minjung theologians as their heroes. The fact that Choe and Kim devoted their lives for the liberty of the minjung and believed in the urgency of a revolutionary change is worthy of investigation. For the two theologies, Casas, Torres, Choe, and Kim therefore have a unique position in the dimensions of the temporal and of history. LT and MT have been influenced by the four men's works to such a degree that the actual experience and its interpretation become inseparable, as Jurgen Moltmann's Theology of Hope.⁵ came in part from Fyodor Dostoyevsky who "believed that the intelligentsia of the bourgeoisie held little hope for humanity".⁶

Needless to say, Casas is regarded as the uniquely widespread example who strove to help the Indians threatened by the arrogance of the Spanish authorities, their impersonality, indifference, and ruthlessness. It is understandable that LT has been grown under the influence of Casas' priestly ministry towards Indian affairs. Yet LT has missed the vital element of Casas' priesthood in religious belief. In other words, LT simply considers one side of Casas in terms of strictly social and political analysis (or opinion) rather than of a deeper commitment to Christian religious categories. In order to make sense of its references to society and politics, LT ignores the essentially transcendental goals of Casas' ministry in the name of Jesus Christ as the Lord of the world.

Casas was apparently an ordained priest who devoted himself to the holy Catholic faith. He preserved the entire loyal burden of Catholicism which relied most heavily on the testimonies of the Bible and the traditional theologians (i.e., Saint Augustine and Thomas Aquinas) and on decrees of both the Councils and Popes of the Roman Catholic church.⁷ For this powerful Catholic church and pervasive religiosity, Casas paid considerable attention to the Indians. In Casas' mind, the message of the Christian faith must reach those who are outside of the church in "a method which persuades their understanding, and moves, exhorts and gently attracts their will."⁸ For Casas, "the obligation of the Church to preach the gospel to every nation does not provide an excuse for war, for force cannot be used to spread the gospel".⁹ Casas thus did his best to help the Spaniards establish the Roman Catholic church in Latin America "to conquer and Christianize the Indians" for eternal salvation through the blood of Jesus Christ "by peaceful means alone".¹⁰

LT is only capable of seeing Casas in terms of social and political analysis displaying the awareness of his work as the highest priority of his priestly ministry. The main ideal of such an approach is its capacity to work with the concept of social and political labels with the concepts of belief and commitment in religious terms of traditional Catholicism. This intention ignores and reduces the whole value of Casas who was rooted in religious belief and action. Thus, we cannot simply expect it to be assumed of Casas that he remains in the diffusion of his religious motivation grounded in widely varying styles of

action and intensity of commitment, in order to evangelize the Indians. Our concern is a prerequisite to a needed reconception of the whole question of the social action of Casas who is seen as a Spanish liberation theologian to Latin American theologians. It is important to avoid confusing any single kind of wrong assumption with reality.

The essential influence affecting liberation theologians was the movement of Camilo Torres. Torres, who rebelled against the Catholic hierarchy and the authoritarian regime to try to solve the problem of poverty and injustice among the marginal people, showcased by today's liberation theologians in a form of revolution. Our respect for Torres is doubtless that he sacrificed his life motivated by his desire to devote himself to the life of people by being in contact with socio-economic realities. On the other hand, Torres, who with taking off his priesthood came into immediate guerrilla conflict with his Communist followers, reduced his priestly vocation to "an sentimental devotion" which did not hesitate "to burn Communists alive".¹¹ In Torres' understanding, the Communist movement "with roots in the people, by the people, with the people and for the people" was what he saw "as the necessity of stimulating the masses"¹² to overthrow the privileged class in Colombia. This attraction of Torres' political career on Communism is the highest stimulating moment in LT.

It is not surprising that LT, faced with the tragic reality of Latin America, finds in such Torres' Marxian view a source of hopeful action and historical confidence. Torres' historical vision of a new society achieved by

human effort provides a powerful inspiration to LT's movement on the part of the exploited and oppressed masses around Latin America. The fundamental importance attributed by Torres to the struggle in the economic sphere of Latin America assists LT in overcoming the purely religious conception of salvation. This position gives a different emphasis to what is fundamentally a total church renewal with the derivative political implications. Torres and LT neglect the whole matter of faith in the Bible and in the church, as something unique and qualitatively different from Communism in which everything is situated in history. In a way similar to Torres' perspective, thus the church of LT should be concerned with serving man as a help to the struggle for earthly bread.

Che U Choe is upheld as a hero of MT. Minjung theologians use Choe to take a leap forward, seeing him as a visionary of today who is not seen elsewhere. Choe is the one who might have aided the solution of Korea's old and new practical problems. Consciously or unconsciously, in one form or another, something of Confucianism is alive in every Korean today. In this perspective, Choe's teaching Tonghak(Eastern learning) as opposed to the Confucianism of the Yi Dynasty(Yi Korea) helps to provide a philosophy for an active life. What might today's MT hope to garner as of permanent worth to preserve Choe's religious-political implications in a time of change?

According to Choe, Confucianism was a religion exclusively for the ruling class of that time. In theological terms, Confucianism never fully abandoned the supernatural, anthropomorphic notion of Heaven(天上帝, God) as the governor of man's fate, in spite of its this-worldly and rationalistic orientation to many human problems. Of course, the Confucian's attitude towards life was not totally subordinated to the notion of fate as controlled by supernatural agents. Nonetheless, the concept of man's fate of life was a major part of Confucianism. For example, Confucian scholars believed that death and life have their determined appointment; rich and poor depend upon Heaven. If my principles of life are to advance, it is so ordered by Heaven. If they are to fall to the ground, it is so ordered. In other words, Heaven is the supernatural arbiter of man's fate. Furthermore, Heaven is the controller of the political destiny of a king or a state, as well as the destiny of all things.

Consequently, it is said that the establishment of the Yi Dynasty was based upon the mandate of Heaven. Heaven exercised its authority over the ruling apparatus of the king, including the social order. The class division that was rationalized and perpetuated by the Confucian ruling class was also based upon the authority of Heaven. All this means that Heaven is not only in control of the social order but also has control over forces in nature and man. Here; Heaven is the principle

that manifests itself politics as well as in other realms of the universe and society.

In this outlook, Korean Confucianism created a Confucian state bureaucracy and inculcated its values, knowledge, and skills in the ruling class of the Yi Dynasty(1400-1900). It justified the class division of the Yi society for the last 500 years in terms of status and power, in a well-stratified hierarchical order. Here the Confucian teaching was the ideology of the ruling class that preserved their ruling status and that monopolized political power. It excluded the minjung from any form of participation in the government. No formal channels for social and political mobility were provided for the minjung, and they were forced to be the object, not the subject, of ruling.

In this situation, Choe saw that Confuciansim was behind the times. Confuciansim became an ideological instrument of the corrupt ruling class of Yi Korea. The Confucian philosophy already had been polluted by the interests of the officials and the ministers of the Yi Dynasty. The ruling class's idea of justice is for the maintenance of exploitative political and economic structures. The Confucian moral values were distorted for the benefit of the egoistic ruling people. Confuciansim as a state religion of the Yi Dynasty was seriously distorted and modified by the beneficiaries of the ruling system.

Choe here preached the Donghak religion in the call for justice against Confucianism which maintained an

exclusive status, creating great social and political problems for Yi Korea. In MT's point of view, Choe's call for justice is seen as the minjung's survival and protection of the nation from destruction. The call for justice in Choe's thought is a minjung-centred-approach through inductive integration from the cry of the oppressed people. Choe's inductive call for justice arises from the historical struggle of the minjung through their accumulated pains and agonizing experiences. Therefore, the ground of the call for justice is the socio-biography of the historically exploited and alienated minjung in a concrete situation.

In the meantime, Choe's idea towards God is quite different from the God of Christianity. Choe saw that everyone has God in his body and mind. In this perception, everyone must be treated honourably and equally. God in Choe's thought is thus relative to people, whilst God relates to people with the principle of equality and justice. So when we treat the common people in the norm of egalitarian justice, we serve God as well. On the basis of this egalitarian notion, the main purpose of Choe's sectarian cult is to build the kingdom of heaven(paradise) on earth. The paradise is not somewhere beyond this world, but in this world. Although God's mighty intervention in terms of apocalyptical transformation is mentioned to bring the paradise on earth, it is actually achieved through the political(revolutionary) movement of people for the

profit of the oppressed minjung.

In all this, Choe's religious nationalistic awakening, which led him to put his religion Tonghak against Confucianism, is attractive to minjung theologians who try to rescue the despised minjung from the present ruling class steeped as they are in a sense of superiority. Therefore, Choe has value from the perspective of MT, because he exhibits the fact that the poor must be alive and fight for their freedom and equality. Choe's contribution is important for MT in showing his commitment to the liberation of the exploited minjung and to uprising against the corrupt ruling class. His thought of paradise can be a living lesson to MT which is sensitive to the suffering of the minjung. His philosophy is seen as a minjung-centred-criteria, providing minjung theologians with the basis for creating a revolutionary movement of the minjung-the new human community-a qualitatively different society. In fact, Choe's teaching in the minjung's situation of suffering is definitely seen in and through minjung theologians who insist that theology must be identified with the minjung and their reality.

According to MT, Ji Ha Kim shows how to suffer and to hope in and with the minjung. As a minjung poet, Kim confesses that he benefited from Albert Camus, Fyodor Dostoyevsky, Leo Tolstoy, Camilo Torres, Ernest Troeltsch, Karl Marx, Fredrick Herzog, James Come, Richard Shaul, Paul Lehmann, Jurgen Moltmann, J.B. Metz, Hugo Assmann, Reinhold Niebuhr, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Tse-Tung Mao,

Paul Freire, Mahatma Gandhi, Vatican II, and others ¹³. In order to study the experience of social movement in other nations, Kim read the works of these people and then wrote the expression of his compassion for the minjung. Through the medium of his poetry, Kim with hope and vision persisted in the struggle for social justice in Korea.

From these writers and activities on social movements, Kim learned to protest against living conditions and circumstances. Both Camus who asserted that "what the world expects from Christians.....is that they free themselves from abstraction and look at the bloodstained face of history in our times" ¹⁴ and Mao who adopted the Marxist ideal of history and social movement and led the "Cultural Revolution" ¹⁵ in China are presumably the most impressive persons who inspired Kim to choose the line of resistance. Kim consequently sees Christianity as "a revolutionary religion" ¹⁶ which brings down the authoritarians, exploiters, and oppressors of society whereby it admits the oppressed and exploited minjung and sets them free. Kim identified himself with other deprived people and cried out against the suffering of life and death. Kim is a symbol of courageous resistance to minjung theologians. It might be possible for MT to say that Kim's effort is a voice to show the way towards justice and freedom in the midst of the corrupt military regime in South Korea.

Thus, MT is almost besotted with Kim's model as a guillotine which cuts off the stark nakedness of Korea's inhuman situation. MT, which is at the growing involvement in Kim's ideal, shows us its departure from a traditional Christian religion.

Kim's approach, which has for its starting point a commitment in a particular social context of oppression and alienation, has become a most effective ideal that has changed the theological perspective of minjung scholars. Nam Dong Suh,¹⁷ who devoted himself to introducing western modern theology to the Korean church, now declares that minjung theology would be a most popular and proper theology to the Korean church facing scepticism about human achievements in establishing a new and just social order in Korea. In this view, Suh praised Kim as the one who voiced enthusiasm for conscientization going on among theologians and Christians, in Korea in the struggle for liberation. Suh then tried to be an initiative and constructive contributor to the ongoing discussion of minjung theology.

As we have seen above, MT as well as LT has grown out of the experiences of the minjung who had been involved in the political struggle for social justice. That is, the two have their roots in the political activities of the suffering minjung in the context of history, and today play the role of critical corrective as they introduce into the historical process. Here, MT and LT are interested in a recovery

of the political dimension of human life from Casas, Torres, Choe, and Kim as the possible truth of substantial change. That is, the challenge to theology is to reflect from within history, not from outside. As historically situated beings, liberation and minjung theologians are bound not to reflect from the ahistorical conception of theology or from the ahistorical conception of human perspectives, but to reflect from particular historical perspectives rooted in the objective life situation of the poor. Here, LT and MT pay close attention to finding a bond for their lives within the political ideology or involvement ideology of a humanistic dependence on reason.

This brings us now to a consideration of Marxist-Maoist social ideology which is designed for liberation of man from economic and political oppression. As LT and Mt observe, Paul Lehmann also says:

Mao Tse-Tung belongs with Marx and Lenin as one of the great formulative minds and decisive shapes of human events in the twentieth century. He stands in the succession of those who pioneered a new order of human affairs and a new consciousness of the dynamics and the dimensions involved in being human in a world in which power continually threatens freedom.¹⁸

But it is a historical irony that the Marxist-Maoist humanist vision had been used in the making of totalitarian state structures. What the ideology of Marx and Mao has done is to be a bloody agent in destroying its own people in their quest for freedom. As a result, the possibility that the great weapon of the Marxist-Maoist dynamic and creative thought may turn into a suspicious ideology is not to be

denied. The perception of the ideology may be seen in the context of distorted truth.

In this situation, the concern of the church is how LT and MT react to discredit the move towards an application of the Marxist-Maoist faith to actual life in a practical way. Without the proper examination and explanation of this ironical fact, if MT particularly tries continually to speak for the solution of the social question by taking into account the Marxist-Maoist revolutionary philosophy, the monotony of the ideological discussion may give way to a less tense atmosphere in Korea. The Korean church, which looks forward to participating in the building of a new society of social justice, would hesitate to play the same role in the wishful thinking of MT. Without even offering any critique of Marxism, only when MT seeks to modify the prophetic biblical texts of equality and justice, will it be able to make some contribution to the Korean church.

One of the most important point that we do not raise is whether minjung theologians are Marxists-Maoists or not. The fact that they are Marxists-Maoists is open to doubt. It is in large measure determined where MT stands. We just acknowledge MT's debt to the Marxist-Maoist ideological faith.

Our next intention is to point out that LT and MT have been animated by the social teaching of ^{modern} ecclesiastical movements...In the point of view of both LT and MT, Vatican II endorsed the new humanistic ideal in which every human being is defined above all by his joint obligation for history and for one another. The Council asked Christians to decode the inhuman reality of society and to look upon their own nation from the alternative vision of engaging in the political arena and promoting greater social justice. Vatican II has doubtlessly sparked new ideas and a new imagination that account for the suffering people and offer solutions to present social problems in action in both theologies' points of view.

In our analysis, the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World (*Gaudium et spes*) of Vatican II shows the endorsement of the social responsibility of the church in solidarity with the human family. In modifying the Catholic church's traditional stance towards the subject of society, *Gaudium et spes* demands that the church engages itself in rightly using the technical, industrial, economic, political institutions of modern society as the instrument through which justice would come to all people. But it does not use the term "liberation" which is employed as the most dominating concept of the two theologies. Generally speaking, *Gaudium et spes* clearly states that Jesus Christ gave his church no proper mission in the social, economic, and political order. The real purpose that Jesus set his church is a religious mission. In this notion, *Gaudium et spes* presents the following proposition:

The Church is not motivated by an earthly ambition but

is interested in one thing only - to carry on the work of Christ under the guidance of the Holy Spirit....The Church was founded by Christ in time and gathered into one by the Holy Spirit. It has a saving and eschatological purpose, which can be fully attained only in the next life. 19

For LT, at Medellín the Latin American Catholic church officially took up the subject of intense sociological debate and showed its commitment to transforming Latin American society through a radical change in violence. Ten years after Medellín, the Puebla Conference again acknowledged the existence of political structures and ecclesiastical institutions against the powerless and the poor, and it spoke out against the domination and manipulation of the people by the political elite. In liberation theologians' opinion, the two ecclesiastical conferences thus urge them to follow the direction of the conferences and to create a new humanistic religious thought drawn from their own economic, social, and political context.

On the other hand, MT has never had an ecclesiastical conference of the same size in South Korea like those of Medellín and Puebla in Latin America. But the movement of the Urban Industrial Mission trying to help the lower income workers of industrial cities has influenced minjung theologians to follow its industrial mission. The first priority of the UIM, which led the trade union movement in matters related to wages and working conditions, so impressed minjung theologians, that they joined with the UIM in forming nation-wide trade unions and in improving the miserable working conditions and the low wages of labour. The social thought of the World Conference on Church and Society was the other essential impact on minjung theologians. Through the

World Council of Churches which began to make an impact on the social thought of the contemporary church, MT has learned the responsibility of the church and its functions in the field of economic and political life.

In the ecclesiastical conferences of Medellin, Puebla and the World Council of Churches and the movement of the UIM, on the other hand, the two theologies alike learn of the two issues which exploit and oppress the majority poor of Latin America and of South Korea: the capitalist system caused by the external imperialism and the division of social classes created by the inequitable distribution of the internal ruling class. Needless to say, the conferences mark the single most important milestone in the recent development of the two theologies. The ecclesiastical movements provide a broad reconsideration of all aspects of Christian life, locating them with specific reference to the present transformation of both Latin America and South Korea. For LT and MT, the church's concern with the dimension of reality hence is inevitable, because its mission cannot virtuously choose to ignore this temporal home.

When we come to basic motivation that LT and MT emerge first of all in Latin America and Korea, they are not raised initially at a theoretical level, but out of the interaction of the social movement of the church in the last two decades. For example, the puzzle and pain of human community in the life of human situation were the inescapable factors to provide an exposition of the main themes of MT in ^{the} 1960s and ^{the} 1970s. This made it all the more important for the church, locally and nationally, to have

not only clear policies which address the issues of social problem, but also a supporting presence within the community. This required something much deeper than conventional tolerance which takes such a step as the occasion demands.

Under such circumstance, the task of the Korean church was thus a double one: both to criticize and work to change the social disorder as an active protagonist for minjung with regard to issues of justice and truth. But at best the Korean church was comparatively indifferent to that social and political involvement which gives the poor and the deprived chance for a better life. The Korean church significantly ignored the question of human dignity. The resultant indifference would give rise to the factors which produced variation in MT. It might be true to say that a responsibility of the rise of MT would have to begin with the ignorance of the social insights of the Korean church.

Consequently, this section should enlighten us about the unique relationship between LT and MT in terms of their commitment to the poor.²⁰ This relation between LT and MT is clearly seen in saying that the task of the church is no longer to define for believers and unbelievers, the meaning of salvation. The church seeks to discern the historical priority according to which salvation is expected primarily in a given situation in the light of social, political, and economic normative role.

The final comparative study of this chapter is the theological root of the two theologies. As described above, LT and MT agree that theology should find a new practical theology in favour of the humanization of those who are completely ignored. Both theologies refuse to accept traditional theology and liberal theology and try to transform theology in the light of their new understanding of human existence and their new interpretation of selected biblical subjects. Like LT, MT sees the previous theologies of Europe as an academic discipline for scholars in terms of religious and philosophical games which never answered to the immense social problems the world faced. The common critical view of the two theologies is that the traditional theological debate of the existence and attributes of God seems so insensitive to modern man. On the contrary, doing theology is only a theology which is relevant to the needs of the oppressive human conditions as an agent for the liberation of the poor.

Here, our focus has been to examine what was the greatest influence of all on LT and MT. David Kwang-Sun Suh boldly confesses that:

In the light of political theology, we have discovered that throughout the history of the Korean church we have indeed been doing political theology. ²¹

Unlike the minjung theologian, most liberation theologians with a few exceptions, have never been willing to spell out from where their theology has come. By separating themselves from Jurgen Moltmann and other political theologians, Latin American liberation theologians try to stress the uniqueness and

independence of LT and to expose the failure of European political theology in not giving sufficient credit to human beings for their social, economic and political benefits. Though not all the liberation theologians would necessarily agree with the theology of European political theologians, the former's theology is apparently engaged in an ongoing dialogue with that of the latter. For example, Rebecca S. Chopp says that:

In its early years Latin American liberation theology understood itself as having real affinities to German political theology. Latin American liberation theologians agreed with German political theology that faith and world could no longer be two separate realms.....The critique made by Johan Baptist Metz and Jurgen Moltmann of the privatization of religion in the first world was understood by Latin American liberation theologians as an example of the need for self-critique in theology. To the Latin American liberation theologians, political theology suggested new categories of religious language, introducing distinctively political concepts such as liberation, privatization, ideology, and oppression through its political hermeneutics. The language of salvation and redemption now designated concrete historical condition, thus providing new possibilities for understanding and speaking to the pressing problems of oppression, suffering and poverty.²²

On this basis, it is difficult to deny that the most significant aspect of LT is its use of European political theology as an ideological instrument in a doing theology. According to Antonio Perry-Escharin, "liberation theology has had a clear impact on the more recent stages of Metz and Moltmann's thought".²³ Curt Cadorette as well as Glyn Richards sees that Bonhoeffer had "a tremendous impact on Gustavo Gutierrez as a human being and theologian". Gutierrez responded in his theology to "Bonhoeffer's challenge to remake society and history from the bottom up, from the viewpoint of the powerless and despised".²⁴ In order to remake the world in a revolutionary way from the view

of the poor who live in the miserable reality of Latin America, LT has adopted Bonhoeffer's basic notion of his action and thought.

This does not mean that we agree with the relationship of father and son between LT and political theology in terms of theological kinship. In the context of the history of suffering, LT like MT tries to work with the church in the present realities of oppression by responding to the needs of the poor, whilst political theology tries to draw a theoretical critique of modern man's understanding of the human subject, history and freedom. In this sense, the former is concerned with a more direct relation to collective political action than the latter is prepared to admit. In weighing up the contribution of political theology to LT, nonetheless, we assume that both agree on the fact of present human life and on the need of human existence in history. The interest of the former is the interest of the latter at large.

The most interesting thing here is that minjung theologians vigorously oppose the idea that their theology is an imported LT from Latin America and western nations. In other words MT is not the theology "as a Korean version of a Latin American revolutionary theology inspired by Marxist ideology", and "as an imported product of western theological writings".²⁵ LT and western theological writings have nothing in common with MT. Whilst dissociating itself from imported theological models from Latin America and western countries, MT as a pure Korean theology however sees its way to follow the usage of European political theology including that of Bonhoeffer. The impulse of political theology helps minjung theologians to produce a doing

theology under the title of MT. Like liberation theologians, minjung theologians draw inspiration for their theology from the thought of European political theology.

Also minjung theologians quickly follow the step of liberation theologians in speaking of their theology. The thinking of minjung theologians, which is grounded in European political theology, is unavoidably seen to establish solidarity with the implication of liberation theologians which tries to provide a massive and collective political movement for a radical break with the status quo and a change to a new order of society. In doing so, MT and LT in the same voice of action and change in human existence urgently demand freedom, justice and equality in the present historical situation. At the same time, both treat western traditional theology and political theology as not challenging the bourgeois class radically through their concrete praxis of commitment to those who are exploited and oppressed, whilst in one way or another they are aware that political theology provides a new theological paradigm for themselves. Within this deepest sense, we assume that minjung theologian's close identification with liberation theologians really arises from their work of leading humanity towards the fulfilment of social justice.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we feel that liberation and minjung scholars begin their theologies with the same motives which are sufficiently rooted in man's experiences of exploitation and oppression. Without the difference in the motives derived from the world and from history, LT and MT are firmly developed in the light of the common task to make a better society. If one sees the difference in the motives between LT and MT, this view is hardly fair.

In this sense, we do not see that LT and MT begin with the biblical promise of God which is the primary category in revelation. It is difficult for the two theologies that our primary motives in thinking of theology should be concrete, real-life existence in assenting to the full panoply of both Christian belief and ethical practice. In considering the reality of human condition on earth, LT and MT only remain in the struggle for challenging oppression and dehumanization. Liberation from dependence, equal rights for everyone, and solidarity with fellow human beings are facts that the two theologies cannot ignore.

In fact, theology should plumb the depth of the Christian message: the Good News which is liberating for both sinners and the victims of sin. But the traditional church stresses the former but often forgets the latter, whilst LT and MT emphasizes the latter but ignore the former. Thus Christian theology should enable the church to extend it to the end of the earth and the depth of human life in the light of

the Good News. Theology in both sinners and the victims of sin should enable the church to transmit the faith with integrity by clarifying and organizing its content, analyzing its context, and critically evaluating its communication.

In particular, it is unfortunate that too often MT and the mainline Korean church have been viewed as adversaries rather than partners. Minjung theologians say relatively little about the gospel in terms of repentance and faith in Christ. The Korean church has a hard time seeing the relevance of theology for its task in the struggle of humanity. In order to be an effective servant of the faith by relating the message to the deepest spiritual and materialistic needs of humankind, MT and the Korean church should have complementary roles in Christian faith. Both need to understand each other to fulfill these roles. The Korean church, as MT, is not satisfied to leave the future in the hands of those who now control the present, because the present is still unjust. Hence, although MT feels that the Korean church is not responsive enough to its radical demand, it should come to think more closely in terms of a theological model which is faithful to the gospel. When MT says: take the gospel message seriously, the future of the Korean church could take on a different configuration. An impact of the Korean church upon the thinking of MT would be well placed to take flesh in the men and women of the Korean community.

FOOTNOTES

1. Gustavo Gutierrez, "South American Liberation Theology", Contemporary American Theologies II. ed. Dean William Fenn (New York: The Seabury Press, 1982), p. 110.
2. Ha Eun Chung, "Eighty Years History of Korean Social Ethics," Korean Struggles for Christ, eds. Harold S. Hong, Won Y. Il, and Chung C. Kim (Seoul: Christian Literature Society of Korea, 1973), p. 38.
3. David Kwan-Sun Suh, "Who Do You Say That I Am?", Reformed World 40(4), December 1988, 36.
4. Lewis Hanke, Bartolome De Las Casas Historian. (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1952); The Life and Writings of Bartolome de las Casas, ed. Henry R. Wagner (Albuquerque: The University of New Mexico Press, 1967); In Defense of the Indians. ed. Stafford Poole (Dekalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1974); Camilo Torres, Revolutionary Writings, (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1972); and German Guzman, Camilo Torres, (New York: Sheed and Ward, Inc., 1969).
5. Jurgen Moltmann, The Experiment Hope, (London: SCM Press, 1975), p. 85. Moltmann here denotes that "Dostoevsky helped me to understand myself and situation which was full of dreams and faces".
6. Anthony Campolo, Partly Right, (______); Jarrel, 1985), p. 195.
7. In Defense of the Indians, p. xvi.
8. L. Hanke, Bartolome De Las Casas, p.2.
9. In Defense of the Indians, p. ix.
- 10.. L. Hanke, Bartolome De Las Casas, p. 2.
- 11.. German Guzman, Camilo Torres, p. 13..
- 12.. Ibid., pp. 180-181.
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CHAPTER EIGHT

A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE OF THE METHODOLOGIES

As chapters two and five show, the foundations for LT and MT are the social sciences. This social scientific foundation provides the basis for the construction of a doing theology that contains a proper dynamic towards an integral salvation (liberation) for the poor (the minjung). In terms of an integral salvation, the theologians of both have likewise upheld the way of the doing theology - the so-called liberation theology and minjung theology.

A. The Historical Aspect

In the light of the above perspective, we find that both have remained constant in a unified version of seeing history as presenting a challenge. LT and MT similarly agree with one history as against the dualistic history of traditional theology. History in the midst of the general history of humanity is the story of nations that occurred as a result of political systems and social systems. In human history, LT and MT hence find natural interests, the plan for foreign domination, the lust for economic power, the struggle for hegemonical power by political groups, the dreams of idealists, and the expression of religion. Human history is grounded in occasions for human development and achievement in terms of the nature of hope, pleasure, courage, joy, discouragement, zeal and sadness.

Secondly, human history provides the raw material for the framework of a doing theology. Like LT, MT acquires a deeper

insight into the economic and political conditioning of the historical process through its studies of past and present history. Both discover the crucial role of class struggle in pushing history forward. For example, MT finds the Han of the minjung as being opposed to those who were in the position of the highest social status, whilst LT acknowledges the gruesome panorama of the Indians and the mestizos who suffered under the privileged conquistadors. The two theologies also accept the fact that human history has been written by culturally well-educated bourgeoisie elites concentrating on the selected events which are said to be made by certain heroes, groups, and nations as the producers of history. In this way, Enrique Dussel asserts that "the history of the poor, oppressed, dominated, remains largely undocumented",¹ and that like the minjung theologian "he seeks to interpret history from the perspective of those suffering injustice."² That is, the historical record that has come down to us is reinterpreted from the marginalised people.

Thirdly, in the relation to the preceding eras of both Latin American history and Korean history, the two theologies equally discover the Latin American poor and the Korean minjung as the subject of history.³ Historical reality is mostly formulated in causal connection with the fact of the majority poor's development in their activities as social beings. That is, the dispossessed and oppressed produce the raw materials by participating in eking out their survival in history in their

material poverty. But the poor have been alienated, misused and denigrated by the educated elites in the past, although they have been the subject of history against an unending array of injustices and schemes of exploitation.

The final consequent realization of LT and MT is the human responsibility towards history. In somewhat the same way, the two theologies use the Exodus event and the Christ event as the paradigms of historical process.⁴ The experiences of the Exodus and of Jesus as paradigmatic remain vital and contemporary due to similar historical experiences which the poor and oppressed undergo. The Exodus event and the Christ event are contained not by indicating a paradoxical transcendental fulfilment beyond history, but by pointing to the symbolized revolutionary character of liberation in history. Here man has a responsibility to initiate the direction of history in the light of the historical consciousness dramatized in the paradigms of the Exodus and Jesus' work.

On the matter of the historical aspect, we feel that the key of MT is the term "Han:" As indicated in Chapter four, MT finds the Han of the Korean minjung in and through the part of events of historical and the present events. From this point, when the people of Korea suffer foreign invasions, the existence of their nation has a sense of Han. For instance, Korea became annexed to Japan in August 1910.⁵ This was the day that the Korean people lost their nation and became ^{enslaved} as subjects to the Japanese Empire. The immediate response of the Korean people to this event was characterized by widespread patriotic suicide.

Some officials of the Korean government chose suicide rather than a life of humiliation. After the annexation of Korea, the political repression of the Japanese Empire became more and more desperate and cruel. One of the most important was that many Christians were imprisoned and tortured when they refused the order to worship at Japanese Shinto gods.⁶ The Japanese takeover of Korea is the Han experience of the Korean people.

The liberation of Korea in 1945 after the thirty six years of the Japanese rule awakened in the entire people of Korea the burning zeal to rebuild their own country by themselves in every field of their life. This happiness was soon overshadowed, however, by the domestic political confusion of the Korean people and the collision of the United States of America and the Soviet Russia which divided Korea and its people. The historical testimony for this reality says that:

One of the agreements reached after Russia's entry into the war against Japan had been that, upon a Japanese surrender, Russian troops should occupy Korea north of the thirty eighth parallel, which those of the United States should occupy the area south of it. On the part of the United States, at any rate, this was thought of as a purely temporary arrangement, until such time as a Korean government could be formed and national elections held under the supervision of the United States. It was soon to become clear that the Russians saw it differently.⁷

The dismay of the Korean people over the division of their nation was soon apparent. The division of Korea into two occupation zones was a disillusionment after Korea's long struggle for independence. The division was "alienated against itself despite the fundamental homogeneity of the

Korean people."⁸ Obviously, this historical drama is another Han experience which MT never forgets.

In the other experience of Han, one more example is seen in the exploitation of the Korean minjung by the developed countries. ...Korea is experiencing a growing loss of national control over its economic, social, political, and cultural life, because of its dependence on the First World(mainly Japan and the United States of America). The condition of being dependent is with being undemocratic and made possible by low wages and rigid political controls. In addition, when the military regime is linked to external forces of domination, it is against the fundamental rights of man and damages the common good of the nation. All this result is the Korean people experiencing Han, . . .

Here, minjung theologians raise a radical dimension to overcome the vicious circle of the minjung's Han. To stop the vicious circle of the Han(revenge), the minjung should destroy, hate, avenge, and even kill their exploiters, alienators, oppressors, and foreign invaders in economic, political, military, and cultural terms. For MT, this is "a concrete vision that allows" the minjung of Han "to be creatively engaged in the determination of the political future of the Korean people."⁹

The tendency to this movement is therefore to reach forward to an epochal-making position of the minjung as the determiners and protagonists of Korean history.¹⁰ This denies the fact that the foreign expansionists and the homegrown dictators participate in and control the decision making process of the individual and national destiny. It is a no longer question of elites deciding what it means to be Korean or how best to run the country. Those decisions lie in the hands of the minjung, for they alone understand the reality of oppression. Thus, the character of MT on the matter of Han lies in the fact that the minjung should be realized as the active subjects of history which is reconciled with the force shaping their fate. Often the minjung looked outside themselves for an answer. They fawned on western culture as if it were a model for their own development. But it was mistake. MT now realizes that it is a time to look inward for a solution, instead of outward. For MT, the answer to the minjung's agonies can be achieved by themselves. What this implies is that the minjung can and must make their own history.

Viewed in this light, our insistence is that LT may also talk about the Han of the Latin American poor in the same way of what MT says. It is clear that LT never uses the term Han to express the character of the poor. But like MT LT discovers the Han of the Latin American minjung

(e.g., the Indians, mestizos, and mulattos) in and through both the past events of Latin American history and the present human situation. For this view, we assume that what liberation theologians tell us about the Latin American poor is not the spiritual poor, but the materialistic poor who are socially marginalized, economically exploited, politically oppressed, and culturally discriminated in history. The perspective of LT towards the poor is not about spiritual poverty in the light of a genuinely religious message. The concept of LT's poor refers first of all to the materialistic poor who need food, drink, clothing, welcoming, visiting, and etc. Hence as a primary task of the theological aspect, the emphasis of liberation theologians tries to become the defenders and avengers of the Latin American poor who have been suffering in the scandalous reality of economic and political imbalances in history.¹¹

This assumption generally leads us to see that there is no way to deny that LT is also a theology of Han. In their historical events and their present situations, liberation theologians see the grown Han and growing Han of the majority of the Latin American people. The clearest emergence of this similarity between the Han of the Korean minjung and that of the Latin American poor is seen in the context of the Latin American people's struggle under the Spanish Empire, the First World domination, the military dictatorship, and the ignorance of the Catholic church. Needless to say, the historical stories of Latin

America and Korea are the testimony of suffering to produce Han. Latin America and Korea are parables of human suffering which need to be continually healed in history in accordance with LT and MT.

B. The Sociological Aspect

In thinking of sociology in terms of its functional contribution to society, firstly LT and MT alike accept sociology as a desirable tool producing a lot of material that helps methodological refinement in ways applicable to a doing theology. Doing theology should be based^{on} and informed by social analysis which discloses a particular way of looking at reality. In this sense, the critical social investigation of reality becomes an essential element in the theory inspiring a doing theology. Through the critical social research of both the past world in which we lived and the present world in which we now live, the two theologies discover the most serious mistakes made by a few dominating classes in history as giving impetus to the implication of their theological work. Both cannot therefore take on the neutral position from which sociology delves more deeply into man's social life of the past and present.

We believe that LT and MT's debt to a modified Marxist sociology is great. Minjung theologians never mentioned Marxist sociological perspective as their fundamental tool in the adequate analytical explanation of social reality. But we suppose that the two similarly advance to important points regarding a Marxist social analysis. Of course, the two are

critical of Marxist sociological thought at certain points, for refusing to take account of the religious dimension of human existence.¹² This means that both dismiss Marx's anti-religious thought in his sociology which intends to explain the manifestation of the socio-economic infrastructure in relation to class struggle. Marxist sociology is not in favour of its application of the conception of religion but of the framework of historical materialism, whilst the two theologies see a positive role in social reconstruction to be employed by a religious consciousness. Like Max Weber, LT and MT's tendency is to regard religion "as a source of creative innovation in sociocultural system".¹³

However, it is clear that LT and MT enthusiastically use the sociological analysis of Marxism to develop a doing theology. For both, the modified sociology of Marxism is the representation of sociology most able to formulate a practice-orientated theology. In one way or another, LT and MT appropriate a number of Marxist sociological implications in the development of their social analysis. These contain the concept of class analysis, oppression, exploitation, alienation, dependency, domination, suffering, poverty, the manipulation of the ruling class, and the lack of freedom. For example, the class analysis of Marxist sociology leads the two theologies to integrate the relational concept of the ruling class and the oppressed worker into their work as a function of the commitment to change the latter.¹⁴ As an effective weapon in the social struggle of the poor and oppressed for survival, the explanation of the social situation derived from Marxist sociological view is

an absolutely necessary preparation for the discussion of the two theologies

LT and MT, which find a loss of human values and the oppressive and enslaving structures of society pointed out by social analysis, re-read the biblical texts with a sociological perspective which presents them with raw materials in a reductionist way. Indeed, it is quite clear that the enterprise of sociology contains within itself an enormous potential to gear with collective responsibility for both the needs of individuals as subjects and the development of a more human society. Sociology as an integral part of that incorporates the task of a doing theology focusing humanity in the challenge to form a future that is humanly just and equitable. In all this, the tension of a sociological interpretation of the Bible is vital and inevitable for the two theologies against the biblical explanation of the Christian faith encouraging loyalty to a typical Christian cell.

In some way, the use of sociological analysis can offer broader frames of interpretation that stimulate theologians to look for further new questions and the assimilation of new information - the consequences for the social system of religious belief and practice. Like theologians, sociologists in their academic field can participate in expressing what the society and social life of the first Christian context were. It might be quite clear that sociology can assist us in an adequate biblical interpretation in order to determine and articulate rightly the social system and religious belief of the first Christian community.¹⁵ The working relationship between a social

scientific investigator who stands for the secular perspective and a theologian who stands for the spiritual reality not of this world might be considered as constructive for theology. This way of a political-oriented theology in relation to sociology is revolutionary in the history of the Korean church and therefore is a significant contribution to the theological enterprise. In some way, this perspective shift would help non-minjung theologians to understand Scripture better.

All of this helps us to understand why MT not only has no fear of sociology but also supports it as having a methodological foundation of theology. Here, the strong point of MT on the matter of sociological implication in the Korean context is to help the consciousness of the minjung and the development of their hope and vision for full humanity. The sociology of MT analyzes the ruling structures, showing how the structures make the minjung suffer and who benefits from the existing social structures. Like ^uGustavo Gutierrez's action implication,¹⁶ MT's sociology captures the minjung social thought, their social criticism, and articulates it in terms of the praxis of the minjung. In this sense, it is an action-oriented sociology based on the minjung experience, developed to support the realization of the minjung's subjectivity in society.

In doing so, the sociology of MT attacks the false consciousness proposed by the ideological propaganda produced by the typical dictatorial regime, whilst studying the "Pansori"(Korean opera), "Talchoom"(mask

dance), and minjung literature to uncover the accumulated Han of the victims of exploitation, starvation, political oppression, and social injustice. The consciousness of the ruling class, their literatures, and their ideologies are not the window through which MT can find the minjung's Han. Rather, these have always been obstacles to finding the problem of the Han of the minjung. Pansori and Talchoom are not only expressions of the minjung's Han at a personal level and at a social level but also criticise the pretensions of the ruling class. Here, they may be called vehicles for expressing the potential liberation of the minjung and finding their own identity.

In MT's sociological perspective, hence the most interesting aspect of this section is the social implication of the mask dance which was briefly mentioned in chapter five. The mask dance of the Korean minjung movement is scientifically analysed by minjung theologians. It is something which LT has never used as a theological source. The mask dance has its roots in an old village festival in the light of both "religious ceremonies asking for the blessing of the gods for better crops for the year" and criticizing the oppressors in expressing "jokes, satire, and laughter,"¹⁷ the mask dance was performed by "Sangmin (common people)" and "the Chonmin (low-born people)" who was slave born.¹⁸ In minjung theologians' opinion, the mask dance is a way to criticize the uppermost social class which preserved their privileged status quo and monopolized political power by the ideology of Confucianism. As an act of a critical reflection, the low class enjoyed the mask dance to explode the suppressed feeling of Han into

reality. In their laughter in the mask dance, the marginalized people experience and express a critical reflection on their ruling class composed of the royal families and the Yangban(aristocrats).¹⁹ Nam Dong Suh also suggests that the mask dance of the minjung was a religious ritual to achieve their liberation from oppression by the ruling power.²⁰

However, it would be true that today's minjung scholars do not consider the mask dance as the best way to express and solve the present Han of the minjung in terms of religious rituals in small villages. The performance of the mask dance in villages in the way of the past is not enough for MT to shake up the economic and political disorder of the present Korea. The mask dance as a play of the suppressed minjung would be effective expression of the minjung consciousness, but not enough to improve their social status and to liberate the minjung. The performance of the mask dance is just to become a channel to show the minjung's feelings for one another. It creates the identity of the minjung through its dynamic performance. It also contains its courageous resistance against the minjung's ruling class and their hope-filled vision of a new society. All this is not enough for MT.

Unfortunately, the other negative thing is that the minjung are not the intellectuals. The minjung are those who are in a situation of weakness, of powerlessness, or of dependency in academic and economic concepts. The minjung are not seen as the well-educated elites but rather

as those who are exploited and live in dependency, because of their weakness and powerlessness. The hope of the minjung is not in themselves but actually in the powerful arms of those who commit themselves willingly to opposing the systems of domination and exploitation. That is, the minjung cannot be entitled to develop their theology for the themselves. It is essential for the minjung to need those who identify themselves with them and articulate their particular demand in a politically relevant way. The minjung need those who organize a political force to protect themselves against repressive measures by those who oppose change.

Minjung scholars, who have been enlightened by the spirit of the old mask dance, therefore want to be a loudspeaker for the voice of the minjung and to participate in the minjung movement wherever it is necessary. They try to use the mask dance as source of theology to be involved in speaking and acting politically for the minjung. Minjung scholars endeavour to develop a theology, even though they do not belong to the class of the minjung. In this sense, the modern mask dance of the minjung is performed by minjung theologians in speaking(or writing) and acting for the real minjung, not in small villages in religious ceremonies but in every city of Korea and even in the world in the social scientific terms. One way or another, minjung scholars are hence the performers of the modern mask dance in the name of minjung theology to side with the minjung in the way of voicing and acting.

C. The Political Aspect

In the eyes of the two theologies, the authoritarian governments of Latin America and of South Korea during the last two decades embarked on the programmes of modernization, industrialization, urbanization, and democracy to improve the quality of the life of the population. Much of the change produced by these programmes, however, proved to be superficial for LT and MT. It actually touched only a minority of the population. Democracy in Latin America and in South Korea has proven to be very ineffectual. One of the most striking characteristics in these countries from 1960s onwards was similarly a growing disillusionment with democracy. That is, the Latin American military and the Korean military overthrew the existing government to take power, instituted a dictatorship favourable to the privileged minority, and played a significant role in shaping the destinies of each nation.

The oppression, exploitation, greed, corruption, and brutality of the military governments were their effective allies. In these political circumstances, the students and members of the tiny elite joined the opposition to the military authoritarian governments. Liberation theologians as well as minjung theologians supported and participated in the task of overthrowing the existing governments. For abolishing a shameless dictatorship devoid of any freedom and justice, liberation theologians needed a valuable ideology which would be a weapon

against the ruling class. For them, the political perspective of Marxism is an ideology par excellence. Marx's political thought seems to offer the most adequate interpretation of present social injustice and participation of the masses in the political process. Liberation theologians here expanded their theology as critical reflection and political participation by suggesting that Marx's political model effectively motivates a desire for change and develops an analysis of such issues as class, power, as instruments for change.

However, minjung theologians did not dare to include an emphasis on the political view of Marx for articulating their theology on the dimension of political involvement. Unlike liberation theologians, minjung theologians had nothing to say publicly about the incredible proposal of Marxist political thinking as an alternative to destroy both the existing government that prohibited Korea's political development and formulate a doing theology engaging itself in solidarity with the minjung within history. As a perspective, however, the methodological approach of MT would seek to learn from the advance of Marxism in respect. of its status of the materialist conception of history and revolutionary transformation of society. At this point, we see that MT turns its head to Marxist methodology for analyzing the political scene of South Korea. For further evidence, Deane W. Ferm adds that Byung Mu Ahn clearly:

Contends that contemporary theologians must come to terms with the Marxist challenge to capitalism. Ahn notes that it is extremely dangerous in Korea these days to express any sympathy towards Marxist social analysis. Indeed there is no way in South Korea to be a professing Marxist without exposing oneself to the

danger of imprisonment and even death. Still, Ahn contends that it was Karl Marx who helped open the eyes of the oppressed to the enormous uprightness of a capitalist society. Theologians today simply cannot adhere to the old theologies that have not come to terms with Marxist social analysis.²¹

For Ahn who sees the minjung at the level of material concept,²² the task of the church is thus to consider the emancipation of society (or the minjung) from private property (or the privileged class) for establishing egalitarian society (or egalitarian communism), as has been implied by Marxism.¹⁸ Thus, Ahn cannot ignore the organizing force for the radical transformation of society which means the core of an emancipatory vision. The church should be clearly concerned with the considerable role of economics in social change. As Marx assumes, the political activity on the matter of economics is inevitably bound to a greater or lesser extent to partiality. Capitalism's downfall (or the privileged class's downfall) consequently becomes inevitable as it is unable to meet the material needs of the majority minjung. In this sense, we feel that the position of MT explicitly and implicitly requires attention to the ideological framework of Marxism, though there is difficulty in identifying the correlation between MT and Marx's thought.

Also, the two theologies have equally tended to re-interpret the Exodus event progressively in favour of a political agent.²³ For them, Israel's liberation from Egypt stands out as the prototype for the contemporary human struggle for political liberation. As embracing the entire process of humanization, the occurrence of the liberation from Egypt is always resumed in the

political struggle of human liberation in all ages, not in the repetition of the meaning of absolute religious ideals. For the purpose of motivating a political action in the situation of injustice and exploitation, the story of Israel's liberation should be guided by the light of natural reason reflecting the reality of the given world. The Exodus experience, which implies a political liberation, still remains vital due to similar historical experiences which the Latin American poor and the Korean minjung undergo.

In rejecting traditional biblical interpretation as merely instruments that enforce the dominant ideology of society for a few ruling classes in the name of religion, LT and MT here raise the problem of the interpretation and the proper use of the Bible in terms of the political struggle against the authoritarian governments in their society. The biblical interpretation of the past was to avoid harmonizing the historical biblical materials with our present situation under the guise of eternal ahistorical truth. Therefore, liberation theologians and minjung theologians are aware of the theological biases which they bring into their biblical exegesis in the light of the historical critical study of the Bible in our own life context.

With their overtly political stance derived from a Marxist analysis of society, LT and MT shake us out of the political apathy of traditional theology and remind us of what Marx said about political involvement on the behalf of the oppressed and alienated. Yet let us review the prediction of Marx which played

an important part in thinking about his political speculation. According to Marx, in the capitalist system of the most advanced industrialized nations the workers would become increasingly impoverished, whilst wealth would be more and more concentrated in the hands of a minority. Instead of developing the potential inherent in man's power, capitalist society burns up the power as if it were a fuel and leaves the individual worker much poorer. This shows us that the advanced capitalist society is ripe for a political and revolutionary thrust. For Marx, the destruction of capitalist society is thus a real alternative to Marxism. Marxism as a successor to capitalism teaches the exploited that they can bring a new utopian egalitarian society thorough a revolutionary movement made by themselves. But this dream has apparently turned out quite differently.

In this point of view, LT is highly suspicious of the claim of Marxism. Politically as well as ideologically, Marxism has been rather unfruitful in the capitalist industrialist nations. Contrary to Marx, history is now gradually entering into a new world which cannot be explained solely as an example of class struggle in Marxist terms. That is, the failure of the Marxist regime is evident and undeniable. It would be impossible to hide the truth. Perhaps, LT would be in the face of a crisis which should reread the view of the directly political focus on Marxism as an opportunity for the radical restructuring of society.

On the other hand, MT does not go all the way with Marx.

Although the Marxist line of MT is not straight, however it is significant to note that the source of Marxist political ideology lies in the inventive minds of minjung theologians, succeeding in their own minjung movement projects. The important point is here to understand that Marxist political thought and Maoist political thought²⁴ are directly and indirectly embodied in the outcome of MT to opt for the side with the minjung. To grasp the actual handling of political supremacy, it would be inevitable for minjung theologians.

However, the class struggle of MT in Marxist terms seems to be a new dividing line between MT and the Korean church and between minjung theologians and the majority of the Korean people. The Korean church has experienced the religious policy of the Communist government of North Korea which placed religious people in the same category as the rich, exploiters, and oppressors, whilst treating the Christian church as an heretical perversion for the authentic aspirations of man and society. The Korean people remember the fact that over 400,000 civilians were killed, and that millions fled to the South for refuge including many and many Christians, when the North Korean Communists invaded South Korea on Sunday, 25th June 1950. Following the war, the church and the Korean people have taken a sharply negative attitude to North Korea ideologically, politically, culturally, and religiously.

Therefore, the bloody lesson which happened to the Korean people by the political ideology of the North Korean

Communists would be a negative one of obstruction rather than a positive one of stimulation for MT. If minjung theologians continually try to indulge their theology in an idealistic reading of the humanistic side of Marx without entering further into a clarifying discussion of their actual playing of theology in the light of religious standpoints,²⁵ the crisis engaged in MT would divide Korean Christians with opposing religious and political stances. If doing so still, the notion and spread of MT's ideological movement would be interrupted by the Korean church, even though its fundamental concentration on the minjung is good and necessary.

D. Praxis

History, according to LT and MT, teaches us that the theology of the church has been wrongly used by those who were in power in order to maintain and justify their repressive practices. Christian theology as a whole has never been the source of Marxism for action, because it has been the essential feature of a religious tradition that mediates a genuinely transcendent faith. Whenever the two theologies think of traditional theology in the light of the faith-categories such as the kingdom, salvation, love

and the Eucharist and so on, it is insufficient for the dynamic action of change in relation to the social reality of the poor and oppressed.

Here LT and MT alike feel it is necessary to formulate a doing theology interplaying the social, economic, political, and ideological forces to achieve the value and process of the revolution of our times. In a socio-economic-political sense, theology should be reshaped to join with other social forces acting at a revolutionary level to curse the existing imbalance and contradiction in materialistic terms. At this level of awareness, LT has preferred Marx's philosophy of practice which anticipates revolution as the gateway to tomorrow. LT as well as Marx's thought has insisted that through their historical action the exploited can transcend the class boundaries, which cripple their material conditions, for the transformation of society reality. In this way, the poor as the agent of change for their own destiny can bring down the capitalist society which is the root of man's exploitation of man.

Minjung theologians also speak on the relation of liberation theologians to praxis in their theology. Without mentioning a leaning to Marx's philosophy of practice apparent in their writings, minjung theologians have tried to underline the political and revolutionary movements of Korean history. As we have discussed in this work, the movements are very much part of the practical participation upon which minjung theologians reflect. As the minjung's aspiration, the past revolutionary movements have brought a new dimension to the discussion and participation of contemporary revolution by creating awareness

among the minjung about economic and political freedom. For MT, thus the capitalist system which takes place at the minjung's cost and also against their humanistic will must be smashed by liberating practice of the minjung. When the capitalist structure of Korean society is destroyed by the minjung's liberating participation, the struggle between the alienators and alienated will disappear from Korean society.

With the course of the revolutionary struggle in theology, LT and MT similarly ensure the historical practice of the marginal people as having inherited it from Marxism for LT and from the past historical revolutionary movements of Korea for MT. Although their roots of the philosophy of historical practice are seemingly different from each other, the main goal of LT is identical with that of MT, i.e., to stimulate qualitative social change towards an egalitarian world through revolutionary participation. In order to threaten and eliminate the socio-economic-political structures of Latin America and of South Korea which are said to produce the two groups - an innocent victim class and a corrupt oppressor class - the two theologies encourage the exploited to make a decision and to confirm this decision with their action. For LT and MT, theology should be engaged in a more revolutionary commitment to countless people who are suffering under the systematic exploitation of capitalism.

Similarly, LT and MT thus seek the interpretation of praxis in the biblical text allowing them to orientate themselves in the process of transforming the exploiting capitalist system of our society through participation in history. This hermeneutical

principle grounds the historical activity of the poor through the Bible providing paradigmatic criterions for obeying the will of God and overthrowing the present order of oppression. That is, the central hermeneutical task of the two theologies should be the linking of the radical dimension of the struggle for social justice with a continuing exposure to biblical texts. This interpretation sets the agenda guiding the minjung's praxis in the reality of exploitation and oppression. In this radical hermeneutic way, for instance, Jesus is depicted as the ultimate paradigm of the underlying struggle of men for their humanity.

The Christian praxis of the two theologies is certainly a major force within our world which cannot be ignored. Therefore rather than ignoring it, we ought to see where we can form an alliance between our Christian faith and praxis. The activity of the two theologies, in some way or other, has brought about profound social and political processes of change in Latin America and in South Korea. We should be grateful for the advance of liberation and minjung theologians' social and political action which can be seen as an outworking of God's commission to man to fill the earth and subdue it. There is a right sense in which we should learn to adopt them.

From the preceding discussion, it may be seen that LT strongly stays within revolutionary praxis, following most formal step of Marxist analysis. In this regard, the Bible is the first theological reference point to determine the content of the praxis of liberation. The praxis of MT is also said as a methodological innovation of minjung theologians. But the praxis of MT seemingly learns from

the various historical revolutionary movements of Korea, which responded to the ruling class for protection from hunger and exploitation or even from the threat of colonial powers, more than the praxis of Marxist philosophy.

An example of the minjung revolutionary movements is the revolutionary uprising of the Tonghak Peasant Army given rise by Pong Jun Chun in 1984(cf., chapter four). At that time in Korea, the oppression and exploitation of the people by the ruling class reached an unprecedented scale due to the intensifying social contradiction between the ruling class and the peasants, whilst both the factional strife among the ruling class was increased and Korea degenerated into the status of a colonial country as a result of the struggles for domination between China, Japan, and European nations. On the basis of the situation, the bankruptcy of the ruling Yangban class reached its high point to the minds of the minjung. The nation faced serious threat and actual colonization by the international pressure. The social, economic, and political situation of Korea became worse day by day.

Unable to improve the above situation any longer, the rebellion developed into a great peasant uprising called the Tonghak revolution. The uprising was not carried out effectively and sacrificed one million people for the struggle for the minjung and the nation. According to Young Soo Kim,

This revolution was only bigger than the French Revolution in scale, but also became a decisive occasion for modern democratization. But it was frustrated because of the intervention of foreign force. However, this movement led Korea to overthrow the feudalistic system and to have a

new era for modernization.²⁶

The other one is the March First Independence Uprising against the Japanese imperialism which robbed Korea of the national rights by its aggressive policy of expansion in 1910. The Korean People's response to the aggressive desire of the invasion of Japan appeared as the activities on the part of Righteous Army for the restoration of the national strength. At last, the Independence Movement, which was instigated by the Wilsonian philosophy of the self-determination of peoples(or nations), erupted on March First 1910. As a strong expression of national independence spirit,

This movement was the product of the national capacity accumulated for at least 20 years in the national movement. This movement was the total accululation of the nationalistic movement for the establishment of a modern nation state... which stood for free civil rights at the end of the 19th century. ²⁷

The leaders who organized a nationwide Independence Uprising were thirty three men. They included 16 Protestants, 15 ChundoKyo members, and 2 Buddhists. Among the participants in the national resistance movement who were killed and arrested by the Japanese police, about fifty per-cent were members of various religious groups. In this sense, the Korean Christian community which participated in the resistance movement against the tyranny of the Japanese colonial power is another paradigm to minjung theologians who try to inculcate a consciousness of manhood and nationhood in the minjung, preparatory to praxis. Minjung theologians are here thinking of the Tonghak Uprising and the March First Independence Movement, which are deeply

rooted not in the religious experience of the mysterious and metaphysical theology, but in the historical experience of the Korean minjung, provide them a methodological tool of theology which a liberating praxis as a continuity identification.²⁸

Conclusion

As we have seen above, the tools that LT and MT use to examine and understand the situation of the poor and oppressed do not come primarily from religious and philosophical positions but from the social sciences (the Marxist social analysis) discovering the structures and process that determine many aspects of the life of man in society and in history. Thus, the social sciences are not used by the two theologies to mean primary social, economic, political, and cultural theories as they are taught in the classrooms of universities. The main purpose in using the modified Marxist analysis . . . and the historical revolutionary movements of Korea is that a praxis-orientated theology ought to employ its insights taking concrete action to overcome the sinful forces of the Third World that cause ignorance, oppression, alienation, and exploitation. In the heart of the social and political situation of society, a theology of involvement should be identified with the method of social research rather than that of religious and philosophical presuppositions.

Here, there is little room for a contribution from

biblical revelation for the method of the two theologies. The methodological innovation of LT and MT do not come from biblical revelation and the confessional method of traditional theology which are the Christian's fundamental source of truth, but from the purity and normativeness of the social sciences. That is, biblical revelation and traditional theology are not allowed a full part in the hermeneutical process of the two theologies. Biblical revelation and traditional theology are only used to make a contribution to LT and MT in the formation of a new revolutionary language of faith. The interpretation of LT and MT which seek to maximize the project for the minjung's liberation in present history is therefore the same as the hermeneutic of historical elements from the past. This hermeneutical methodology is a critical reflection on historical documents in the light of contemporary reality. This interpretation might be called a hermeneutic of political action.

All of these seem to argue for a pessimism with regard to the capacity of traditional theology to respond adequately the crisis of global liberation. LT and MT show us how the social sciences guide their reconstruction of the method of theology, the conceptions of God, Christ, faith, sin, and salvation as well as their biblical hermeneutics. Here the decisive question is not whether a theology can do without the social sciences but whether they are adequate to both the normative tradition of Christian faith and the task of theology to interpret

that tradition in view of the central crisis of present reality.

In this regard, among LT and MT's strong points are their observations on the participating nature of all scriptural interpretation. It would be fair to say that there is something valid about the attempt of liberation and minjung theologians to use the social sciences as basic components of theology. The weaknesses of the two are methodological inconsistencies pertaining to their critique of a priori theological approach and a tendency to overemphasize social analysis as a critical role for interpreting Scripture coupled with a tendency to undercut Scripture's capacity to critique the ideological apparatus of a given social analysis. As a result, MT's negative point is not able to distinguish the cosmic and human dimensions of all aspects of Jesus' lordship besides the social and structural.

FOOTNOTES

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CHAPTER NINE

A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE OF THE PURPOSES AND BEGINNINGS

A. The Purposes of the Two Christologies

As we have seen in chapters three and six, God's Kingdom of liberation theology (LT) and minjung theology (MT) means a society of justice and equality concerning the materials with which man has to work. The kingdom which radically focuses on humanistic hope means the liberation of man from the present inhuman conditions which the capitalist society produces. The working people's struggle against class systems that systematically exploit them is thus inevitable and the ultimate way to bring a new earth which is not brought about by divine action or grace. The realization of the kingdom which would look and be different from the present should begin with the liberation of man from the contemporary inhuman realities in Latin America and South Korea.

God's kingdom of LT and MT, in this sense, is for the poor and not ^{only} for believers. This implies that the eschatological kingdom is not for individual believers who expect the final redemption of eternity which is ushered in at the return of Jesus Christ. The kingdom is directly related to the hope for those who are poor according to the two theologies.¹ Here the kingdom should be defined on the plane of the present historical engagement and not in the realm of beyond history in terms of the apocalyptic act of Jesus Christ at the end of the age. The kingdom of LT and MT has nothing to do with the active exercise of God's divine power in accord with his own will but with the action of those who engage in breaking the bonds of the political and social status quo.

Thus, LT and MT do not accept that in ethical terms the kingdom is realized in a gradually achieved higher social system (or order) in the ongoing course of world events. It is difficult to speak of the eschatological hope that is fulfilled by Christian ethics. MT has seen that in the outworking of Christian ethics the right of the poor and oppressed to life has never been treated as a priority of the church. In this secondary sense, the ethical requirement of Christian faith has not been visualized as the coming of the kingdom and was not enough to overthrow the existing society as something that should be abolished in order that the new may come. For LT, hence it is impossible to think of the kingdom of God without taking into account the political dimension of the church. The eschatological hope of our time should be radically against existing society as it is, and take a stand in favour of a new society. Here both theologies alike try to take a new look at Christian life in the light of an increasing radicalization of political praxis and to remain closely allied to the old utopian socialism in the name of the kingdom of God.²

The practical paradigm of LT and MT's kingdom is hence clearest in the case of Jesus' Galilean ministry in which he showed an extraordinary interest in Galilee.³ According to the critique of LT and MT, in Jesus' time Jerusalem was the city where bourgeois culture flourished and Galilee was the place which needed the revolution to transform its present miserable situation and to vitiate the meaningfulness and value of Jerusalem. In this respect, Jesus carried out his political ministry among the poor and oppressed in Galilee and went to Jerusalem to threaten and overthrow the foundation of the Jerusalem authority which was

responsible for the alienation of the Galilean people. It seems that LT and MT cite Jesus' Galilean ministry as a possible factor bearing directly on the present Latin American and Korean societies. The growth of capitalism under the protection of the conservative religious representatives and the ruling class in Latin America and in Korea has created a society very similar to Galilean society known in Jesus' day. The realization of God's kingdom^{is} thus understood when the Galilean society of today is changed for the benefit of those who are suffering in it.

LT and MT concentrate on the hypothetical reinterpretation of Jesus' life as the source of the kingdom. In terms of the elaboration of a hypothesis, Jesus lived, worked, and taught with a sense of concrete eschatological urgency, foreseeing a somewhat different or radical context in a history and human destiny. Both theologies have tried to depict Jesus as the one who worked with human hands in the construction of the earthly kingdom. The two impel Christian faith down a road where the interpretation of the announcement of the kingdom begins to sow the seed of a political Christology presented in the light of a future just society as a goal to be reached at a given point in time. But LT and MT in the need for a message of liberation for the poor seek to reduce the mystery of Jesus Christ to a model for a better society in terms of materiality. The two use Jesus as supportive of the integration of a world vision kingdom.

LT and MT's subsequent idea of the kingdom, which begins in the transformation of the social and political oriented movement in Latin America and South Korea, is negative to the various traditional and liberal theological interpretations of eschatology which have been expressed in looking for this worldly progress in social, ethical, and evolutionary ways or looking for an other worldly hope in a supernatural way. For example, according to Albrecht Ritschl, the kingdom of God is "realized concretely in the moral transformation of society through the personal vocation of selfless love as exemplified in the dutiful, virtuous lives of man;"⁴ in Adolf von Harnack's sense, Jesus' preaching of the kingdom is "the rule of the holy God in the hearts of individuals;"⁵ for Walter Rauschenbuch, God's kingdom is seen not "as a purely internal, spiritual possession of the individual" but in terms of "the social redemption of the entire life of the human race on earth;"⁶ in Albert Schweitzer's view, "the kingdom is understood in Jesus' announcement of the impending eschaton" in the context of "the Jewish apocalyptic world view;"⁷ according to the evolutionary approach of Teilhard de Chardin, "the natural evolution up to humanity and the supernatural descent in the incarnation have emerged the form a unity in salvation history;"⁸ C.H. Dodd locates the kingdom for man in the sacrament of the communion in the church;⁹ and Rudolf Bultmann regards the kingdom as the kerygmatic impact preventing every moment of critical decision for something essentially new, when man is "an absolute uncertainty as

to when he has to decide".¹⁰

LT and MT also accuse God's kingdom of Christian faith as being unable to provide them with the ground for their emphasis on an actual transformation of this world. The Christian church sees a final end of all history in the Coming One in salvation and judgment. The kingdom is the redemptive rule of God in Christ defeating Satan and the powers of evil and delivering men from the sway of evil. The kingdom is the reign of God in Christ destroying all that is hostile to the divine rule. Entrance into the kingdom means deliverance from the power of darkness and is accomplished by the new birth. This kingdom is built and ruled by the supernatural Being who calls men to enter his own kingdom. This eschatological salvation is described as God's kingdom into the age to come and for eternal life. Believers only become the citizens of the heavenly City.

Without hope for an actual transformation of the present world, the kingdom faith in the light of the religious and theological dimension is abstract, empty, and meaningless for LT and MT. The eschatological expectation of Christian faith is in contrast to most of the popular messianic hope and expectation to create the social and political conditions of the realization of the total man. The kingdom of God's future, which is interested in the eternal hope beyond and above history, is a stumbling block to LT and MT seeking to the present-directed political revolutionary implication of eschatology in society as an ideological utopia. In the

present world, the kingdom in religious theological terms is an erratic assumption, continuously in danger of becoming a stumbling block. Considering the kingdom in this context, Carl E. Braaten notes that:

This means that the eschatological symbols of the Bible are turned away from an other-worldly future to the historical transformation of the material conditions of life."

Liberation and minjung theologians hence close their eyes to the sociopolitical implication of God's kingdom and devote their energy to attempting to solve the urgent issues of the contemporary misery. In considering Jesus as their source of inspiration for the new world to come, LT and MT perceive him as the one who lived as a revolutionary seeking to bring the kingdom and who encouraged the minjung in every action to look at themselves as the subjects of their own historical destiny. The two here find the minjung as being the subjects of the transformation of today's social and political situations. That is, the minjung do not receive the kingdom, but they establish it. The minjung build the kingdom as their ultimate goal in history. They are no longer the so-called deprived people, but the subjects of the creation of their own history and their society. The minjung are protagonists in bringing about the kingdom which means better social, economic, and political conditions and a better world. Yong Bock Kim says that:

The minjung as historical subject transcends the socio-economic determination of history and unfolds its stories beyond mere historical

possibilities to historical novelty-a new drama "beyond" the present history to a new transformed history.¹²

As a consequence of upholding the notion of the earthly kingdom and the role and position of the minjung in that kingdom, Nam Dong Suh particularly labels Joachim of Fiore who was teaching in Italy around the 1100s,¹³ as representing the most significant form of history to have come about as follows. Joachim's history in the light of eschatology is divided into three ages: the age of the Father, the age of the Son, and the age of the Holy Spirit. The first period of the world as the age of the Father is the creation and preservation of the world where God ruled over all things through his providence and power. The second period of the world as the age of the Son is the redemption from sin through the servitude of the Son. Through the Son in this period, people became the children of God instead of slaves. The third age of history is the fullness of the spiritual intelligence that will be given by the Holy Spirit.¹⁴ In the third period, every individual has the divine spirit within himself. The spiritual man has:

A unique ability and a fertile mind which enabled him to understand the future because the future was a part of historical patterns that he conceived from grasping the external part.¹⁵

On the basis of Joachim's historical ideas, Suh argued that today is the third epoch of the world which means: the age of the minjung.¹⁶ The reason for this is

that Joachim did not place the third age in the next world (the other-worldly) but in this^{world} as Jurgen Moltmann sees.¹⁷ This view is very attractive in the eyes of MT. In minjung theologians' understanding, Joachim planted seeds of new thought that were later to be secularized in the form of God's kingdom on earth in socialistic utopian terms.

On the other hand, the minjung are identified by MT as of the same sort of the spiritual men of the third age. The minjung, who are the leading role to be engaged in the struggle against the present ecclesiastical institutions and the present inhuman structures of society for bringing the kingdom, are the subjects of the third age as the new spiritual men. In Joachim's vision of the third age, according to Suh there would be no more slave labours, poverty, misery, exploitation, and oppression by the ruling class. The power of the exploiting class would fall into the hands of the minjung. The dictatorship of the state would wither away. No more false authorities abuse of power, or misuse of law. There would emerge a new humanity in a new society, totally liberated and free for the reign of peace and justice here on earth. MT's vision of the end-state is of a classless society rising from the annihilation of the present ruling class and dictators. In the minds of minjung theologians, the third age of Joachim is therefore of, by, and for the minjung.¹⁸

Needless to say, the historical philosophy of Joachim created one way or another an intellectual perspective on the matter of the new age to come. His influence

was extraordinarily deep and far reaching. The idea of the third age and the spiritual men provided attractive in an era of rapid social change. In the case of G.E. Lessing's progressive idea, for instance, the third age assimilated to Joachim's new age is replaced by education, because its age is seen by Lessing "as the coming reign of reason and human self-realization and yet as the fulfillment of the Christian revelation."¹⁹ According to Karl Lowith, the Marxist dialectics of the three stages of primitive communism, class society, and final communism are displayed in the sense of a principle of Joachim's historical philosophy.²⁰ August Comte saw history unfolding in three stages: the mythological stage of theology as the age of human invention; the metaphysical stage of western philosophy as the age of the intermediate; and the positive stage of science as the final mode by any science or any society. "The positive stage, according to Comte, is the final mode to be assumed by any science; the two first being destined only to prepare the way gradually for it."²¹

Nam Dong Suh, who is imbued with the sense that something new is happening today, also enthusiastically proclaimed his positivistic third stage in the thought of Joachim as the age of the minjung, as we see above. Yet we wonder whether or not Suh becomes rightly involved himself in expressing his theoretical implication in borrowing from Joachim's apocalyptic theology to the interpretation of the kingdom. In response to this, it would be ambiguous to those who believe that Joachim's third age means the socialistic . . . utopian stage of history. Using a combination

of typological(presupposing a purpose in history wrought out from age to age) and allegorical(resting in the imagination regardless of the actual truth of the matter) exegesis, Joachim constructed a theological framework within which history could be into parallel stages.²² In his trinitarian division of history into three stages, Joachim's third age is the period of the Holy Spirit leading the last crucial thrust of evangelical preaching in preparation for the Second Advent of Christ as the final event of salvation history.²³ In addition to this, Joachim asserts that:

The mission of the Church in the third epoch would be to carry the Gospel to the ends of the earth. With the completion of that work would come the final tribulation of Gog and Magog..., the Lord Judgment, and the Heavenly Jerusalem.²⁴

Here Joachim's third age would be seen as similar Christian thought on apocalyptic interpretation. The third age would not be like that which MT understands as the period of earthly prosperity for the minjung in the vision of sociopolitical matters.

The other ambiguity of MT is that the spiritual men of Joachim are identified by Suh as the minjung who are predominant in the third age. But Joachim's third stage is the age of spiritual men led by the great monastic order which is associated with the Holy Spirit and which represents the age of love. Joachim emphasized the spiritual men (Benedictive contemplatives) as a special characteristic of the order in the third age. For Joachim, "the supreme life was to be found only in the silence of contemplation,"

whilst the monk must be "a mediating between those at the top and those at the bottom."²⁵ As an illustration, we can look at his design of history as follows:

Joachim's conception of the third epoch was that the existing structure of society was to be recognized, and the existing leadership to be replaced by a new order of contemplative monks ... The first epoch had been led by the laity, the second epoch had been by the secular clergy, but in the new age, the Holy Spirit would appoint a monastic order of contemplative monks to direct the affairs of church and state.²⁶

Here, the third status is ascribed to the Holy Spirit working through the monastic order. The subjects of the third age are apparently the Benedictin monks who would not have been treated as those deprived of social and political opportunities and economic advantage. Joachim's spiritual men would hence be remote from the minjung who are identified as the materially poor and politically oppressed. His first priority on the spiritual men would not come to comprehend the "have-not." In this sense, MT would be confused to see the minjung as the same sort of Joachim's spiritual men who are seen as a special characteristic of the religious order in the third age.

B. The Beginning of the Two Christologies

Seeking in the life of Jesus an inspirational model for the materialistic world view of the kingdom, LT and MT alike come to a radical Christology which gives birth to a vision of the church and its mission with a socio-political dimension. For both, the traditional perspective of Christology shows little evidence of

the correct interpretation

of Jesus' life. This perspective sees Jesus as the object of Christian belief and becomes a stimulus to speak of a redemptive-historical incarnation of the Christ in theological terms. The image of Jesus that emerged from the gospel of John, the Pauline epistles, and traditional creeds is hence transcendent, moving always in the divine sphere. It is the absence of the political dimension of Christology which tends to divorce Jesus from the social, economical and political problems of his day and today. The confessional Christology in faith cannot give LT and MT an answer to the current social situations in Latin America and South Korea.

LT and MT consequently find the Christologies existing in the history of theology inadequate to meet the realities of Latin America and South Korea. For instance, the Pauline Christological approach,²⁷ the Chalcedonian Christological approach, the Reformed Christological approach, the liberal Christological approach,²⁸ and the kerygmatic Christological approach^{all} start from the divinity, power and glory of Christ in mystical and mythical terms of religion and from the ethical aspect of Jesus, which show a total incapacity to grasp the catastrophe of traditional Christology. Their approach directly and indirectly allow\$ them to dehistoricize the man Jesus who was a historical person among the oppressed alienated of Nazareth. As a result, the traditional shape of Christology in faith is unable to present Jesus as a real man in historical terms. The Christ of faith, who is a spiritual being in heavenly and omnipresent terms, should be re-announced as the man of Nazareth, giving emphasis to his

humanity.

In order to attempt a politically orientated Christology, LT and MT thus proceed with the methodology of scientific history. Both are in favour of concentrating on the critical-historical reconstruction of Jesus' life—what sort of person Jesus seemed to be to the poor with whom he lived in Palestine. The historical manifestation of Jesus is only able to recover and reconstruct him by its critical historical method used "as a scholarly tool" which "represents a prejudgement in the sense of a prior decision concerning the outcome".²⁹ Here, in taking an antisupernaturalist position, the historical investigations of LT and MT equally criticise the religious presuppositions of Jesus. In maintaining their standard in opposition to the demands of divine revelation, both begin with their Christology from the historical figure of Jesus.

LT and MT, which raise the problem that occupies the man Jesus as a divine man^{and} as an object of religious belief according to Christian faith, consequently look for a radical hermeneutical orientation of a doing Christology in relation to the man who is viewed as leader and liberator of the poor and oppressed, but not of the rich, ^{the} intellectuals, ^{the} religionists and the political rulers of the world. Hence, the words and deeds of Jesus, which had been reduced to the confession of faith made by religious groups, must be reinterpreted as the representative examples calling for involvement in the political world against any manipulation of religion for the purpose of today's ecclesiastical groups and of the rich for the purpose of the status quo.

We now turn to an appraisal of the treatment of the

historical Jesus favoured by LT and MT. In historical thinking of the two, we find that there is a unanimous acceptance of the separation of Jesus from the heavenly and spiritual Christ. Their main aim is to believe in the historical Jesus implying the rejection of the Christ of faith. In a sense, some people can hold the historical Jesus as the possible ground for their conviction in reasoning in order to arrive at their apriori concern which is to seek him in the midst of the ongoingness of liberating reality from the existing ideological chains of Latin America and South Korea.

What is under discussion here, however, is that the historical Jesus of LT and MT might have already been worked out by precisely those scholars who were most actual aware of the difficulties of the Christ of faith. As a matter of fact, this new development is recognized in the beginning of the quest for the historical Jesus which can be dated to the 1770s, when Gotthold Ephraim Lessing published the book (The Fragments) on the lecture notes of Hermann Samuel Reimarus (1694-1768).³⁰ Reimarus challenged the traditional portrait of Jesus found in the New Testament and the church. For him, Jesus never made any messianic claim, never instituted any sacrament, never predicted his death nor rose from the dead in accord with theological enterprise as a whole.³¹ Furthermore, he insisted in the historical-critical study of Jesus that the story of Jesus was a deliberate falsehood by the disciples. In presenting a distinction between the actual historical Jesus and apostolic interpretation, Reimarus asserted that:

Jesus left us nothing in writing; everything we know of his teaching and deeds is contained in the writings of his disciples....However, I find great cause to separate completely what the apostles say in their own writings from that which Jesus himself actually said and taught, for the apostles were themselves teachers and consequently present their own view.³²

Moreover, according to Reimarus "the Christian view of the Son of God and the atonement was a creation of the disciples and did not correspond to Jesus' own views".³³ In their ministry, "the Disciples were not faithful to his teaching when they released Gentile converts from the Jewish laws".³⁴

In keeping with this extreme deviation from the biblical text and traditional Christology, Reimarus concluded that:

Jesus had no interest in revealing "articles of faith and mysteries". Jesus always remained a Jew and had no intention of founding a new religion. He urged nothing more than purely moral duties, a true love of God and one's neighbour.³⁵

Then he clearly posed "certain historical question: who was Jesus? What did he teach? How did Christianity originate" Here Reimarus "not only raises historical questions; he approaches them with historical imagination". In his thinking, "New Testament phraseology has overtones resulting from its use by the Christian churches for centuries".³⁶

As for his answers, Reimarus principally concentrated on the following three: atonement, resurrection and second coming. Jesus did not die for our sins. "His intention was to awaken the Jews to the hope of the worldly Messiah, and a speedy worldly deliverance". Jesus' resurrection was not real, because it involves "all kinds of contradiction in the evidence and in the logic of the arguments"³⁷ in historical terms. The second coming of Jesus also contradicts the facts of history. Jesus never

stretched the kingdom beyond the Jews' eschatological hope in Palestine. The entry into Jerusalem planned by Jesus was to demonstrate the coming of the Messiah as the saviour of Israel.

The action of Jesus is:

To found his Kingdom and shake off the Roman yoke. He goes to the Temple, chases out the money-changers, etc., and launches out against the Pharisees and the Sanhedrin. Therefore, he acts as Messiah and Lord. When the crowd cries "Hosanna to the son of David", Jesus accepts this as a right.³⁸

In short, Albert Schweitzer also added that Reimarus "believed that Jesus' intention was to be a political ruler, the son of David".³⁹ According to David J. Hawkin, Reimarus described Jesus "in very bold and simple terms" as follows: "Jesus was a revolutionary who failed, and his disciples salvaged what they could from the disaster by giving out a spiritual interpretation of this life".⁴⁰

During the nineteenth century, the dominating method of research in the quest was rationalism. Research attempted to explain the life of Jesus Christ rationally. A major turning point came when David Friedrich Strauss (1808-1874)'s The Life of Christ was published in 1830s. In his rationalistic approach, a historical account of Jesus' life, Strauss was convinced that the history of Jesus is a problem, and that the miraculous in the gospel was to be understood as non-historical myth.⁴¹ Strauss here marked an epoch in calling contemporary Christology to reject traditional Christology.

Strauss thus objected to the authors of the gospels as those who had intention to write the origin of the gospel sources in unhistorical and mythical principles. In the field of historical

criticism, the various supernatural events in the gospels are only recognized in the form of myth.

The mythical expression of the gospels should not be considered as the expression of actual facts which happened to Jesus, but as the religious imagination of the earliest believers. Whilst Reimarus asserted that the gospel writers gave a lying and distorted account of the man Jesus, Strauss assumed that the mythical elements in the gospels were the inevitable expression of the religious creative ideas on "a reflection of the gospel writers", social condition and cultural outlook, although they yet raise "to the level of abstract conceptualization".⁴²

The result of Strauss' searching analysis was that the Christ of faith as the Christian proclamation could not be treated as the primitive evidence for "having any essential or necessary connection with any historical event".⁴³ "The only positive fact which Strauss knew for certain was that Jesus was not supernatural and did nothing supernatural".⁴⁴ On this point, Strauss rejected Jesus of Nazareth, in his divinity, his resurrection and his messianic-eschatological role in the sense in which traditional theology has always used these designations. All these aspects cannot answer the question which remains; how to explain the relationship of the Jesus of history with the Christ of faith, since the religious and dogmatical presupposition of the traditional Christian faith belongs solely to the sphere of the imagination which is quite apart from the historical standpoint in the academic world. Therefore, Strauss clearly:

Drew the conclusion that the historical Jesus has at best only an accidental connection with the ideal or archetypal Christ, thus effectively denying the significance of the historical individual Jesus of Nazareth for Christian faith.⁴⁵

The other German theologian who was the major representative of the History of Religion School in the nineteenth century, Ernst Troeltsch (1856-1923), was linked with the scientific historical method for the religious consciousness. He saw the modern awareness of history as the key to understanding our cultural affairs. In his essay "On Historical and Dogmatic Method in Theology" (1898), Troeltsch expressed the three principles⁴⁶ (criticism, analogy and correlation) of historical inquiry on traditional Christian theology. According to Edgar Krentz, the principle of criticism:

Allows history to be scientific, for historical knowledge is capable of verification or correction by a re-examination of the evidence. This openness to correct implies that historical research produces only probabilities, a conclusion which raises questions about certainty of faith and its object in theology.⁴⁷

The principle of analogy brings us to assume that the occurrence and experience of the present can become the standard of probability in the past. "The events of the past are similar to the events of the present".⁴⁸

That is, Troeltsch's claim is that historical judgements use only explanatory models which can be justified in the present. Here, the divine nature and resurrection of Jesus and the supernatural events of miracle make it impossible to assess the degree of probability of orthodox assertion. The principle of correlation implies that "historical phenomena are interrelated in such a manner that events must be interpreted in terms of their

antecedents and consequences".⁴⁹ In this way, historical mutual comprehension is about correlating causes and effects in history. Every event cannot be isolated from its historically conditioned time and space. This means that every event has resulted as the product of natural forces and is relative to every other event.

Troeltsch's concern with social and political question led to a sociological treatment of the history of Christianity in his best known work - The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches (1910s). The title of his 1911 lecture "The significance of the Historical Existence of Jesus for Faith"⁵⁰ in particular contains the following phrases: the historical existence of Jesus, the historical person of Jesus, the historical Jesus, the image of Christ, the historical Christ, the fact of Christ and the symbol of Christ. In the light of this, for Troeltsch, Jesus of Nazareth must be the actual earthly Jesus from the historian's Jesus, by the historian's reconstruction of the earthly Jesus. Jesus' earthliness should not be forgotten in interpreting the gospel accounts of Jesus' life in the method of the historical work without having the entire understanding of revelation. Here Troeltsch presented a sense of Christocentric position in Christianity, not based on the theological consideration of a qualitatively unique relationship between Jesus Christ and God, but "on historical research into the life and personality of Jesus through critical treatment of the sources".⁵¹ He goes on to say that the Christological claim of dogmatic expression must be re-articulated in terms of general social phenomena, because the significance of Jesus Christ was declared necessary both for the community's social cohesion and for the individual's various

needs.⁵²

In all this, we feel that LT and MT have been influenced by Reimarus, Strauss, and Troeltsch's radical application of the critical historical method leading to opposition to the unique historical revelation in Jesus Christ, and that they set out to present a more clear historical representation for doing Christology than of their predecessors. Of course, it is still an invaluable reading for anyone wishing to understand that LT and MT's historical view of Jesus is coupled with these scholars' view of its role in order to overcome the dissolution of the Christ of faith. It is difficult to agree that there is much truth in saying that LT and MT follow exactly the same figure of Jesus stated by the historical method of the three theologians.

It is quite common to see in the history of theology that at one time a theologian will read other theologians and then be influenced by them, but his theology subsequently develops and goes far beyond them. Hence, it is equally evident that liberation and minjung theologians and the three scholars have common roots on the same side of the historical Jesus for starting their own contemporary Christology directed against traditional Christology. LT and MT are faithful to the historical critical investigation (on Jesus Christ) of the three theologians as examined above. The sort of Christianity that both theologies are sketching is surprisingly similar to that held by Reimarus, Strauss, and Troeltsch in their emphasis on

keeping Jesus as only a focal symbol in the conception of a historical man as a human being. It is clear that liberation and minjung theologians and the three thinkers are equally in favour of reducing the cause of the Lord Jesus Christ to the cause of a historical man. There is a unity in all these scholars' books which is powerful enough to be found in a common presupposition. The focus of their Christology is based on the history of Jesus from below rather than on the action of God from above. Jesus of Nazareth whom these theologians discuss is the radical point of departure from the traditional understanding of Jesus Christ as the regulative and stabilizing expression of the internalized norm of Christianity.

But the plausibility of historical investigation has been challenged by some theologians who are concerned with the centre and substance of the church's proclamation: the historic Christ of the Bible as the preached word of God. One such ^{theologian} was Martin Kahler who warned against the modern historicism which represents a faithless form of objectivism in terms of the quest of the historical Jesus. According to Kahler:

The historical Jesus was nothing less than an illicit Christology bootlegged into the theology under the guise of history, since it reduced the biblical preached Christ to the dimensions of a historical person to whom the laws of historical causation and psychological development apply as to any other person, whereas the Gospels present us with the sinless of Son of God. 53

In Rudolf Bultmann's view, the academic estimate of the historical Jesus against the religious interpretation of Christian faith is also negative.

To recapture Jesus as He moved in Galilee and to know "precisely what took place" in A.D. 27-30. The Gospels do not give scientific biography; they offer no psychological study. There is no fascination with Jesus' claim, no window into His "inner life". 54

Also in same measure, the complicated problem of the relation between the Jesus of history and the Christ of faith is:

Intensely reinforced by the theological presupposition of Kierkegaard that eternity and time are qualitatively distinct and that therefore we can learn nothing from history about the revelation of the Absolute. The relative, Kierkegaard assumes, cannot contain the Absolute; and therefore from history we learn nothing about Jesus Christ. Indeed as we have already quoted him, "knowledge demolishes Jesus Christ. 55

LT and MT, nevertheless, assert that with the historical hypothesis which is basically incompatible with traditional Christian faith they can reach beyond time and verify the original Christian view concerning the gospel of history in Jesus Christ. With regard to Reimarus, Strauss and Troeltsch, the two observe that it is a pre-eminently proper time for a political Christology to present the flesh portrait of Jesus wearing new clothes relevant to human concern in the light of the present reality in Latin America and South Korea. In this respect, LT and MT believe that the human picture of Jesus is essentially that of Mark. By establishing the priority of Mark, both help to recover a real historical Jesus. The gospel of Mark has a blueprint showing the historical picture of Jesus which is a real process of growth in his own human consciousness in terms of self-suffering brought an ideal to bear on the economic, social and political conflicts in the world.

On the basis of Mark, LT and MT thus ignore all the material of John's gospel and the Pauline framework of Christology. The two reject or limit the traditional material of John and Paul for their Christological approach on the historical Jesus. Besides Mark or the synoptics, the other biblical texts have nothing to say to the homogeneous historical material of the man Jesus. The reason for this is that John's gospel and Paul's letters are highly religious and present theological arguments rather unlike those of Mark. The picture of the Johannine Jesus in comparison with material drawn from Mark is more a dogmatic application which is present in part of the Pauline tradition.

In general, the historical problem of Jesus is doubtlessly of peculiar difficulty in John for those who employ methods of criticism of solid historical value. It is a question of whether the historical value of the Johannine presentation provides us with a contribution to the portrait of Jesus in his actual human condition. Also, it is difficult to see that the writers of the synoptics and John's gospel alike have reliable historical interest, although the former is viewed as containing more historical elements compared to the latter. Presumably, all the authors of the four gospels may equally have left out historical facts that may have proved to have biographical interest for us. Here Gunther Bornkamm, who treated John's gospel as a secondary source in the light of historical research, clearly admitted that:

The synoptic Gospels themselves are not simply historical sources which the historian, enquiring after Jesus of Nazareth as a figure of the past, could use without examination and criticism. 56

Thus, no one can prove all the four gospels as having the maximum value of historical facts about the Jesus of Nazareth which are required by the techniques of historical criticism, although some scholars allow that there are more reliable historical sources about Jesus in the synoptics than those in John. In the view of history, it is true that the existence, selfhood, and life of Jesus are the possible subjects of historical research. However, in the case of Jesus of Nazareth, the sources for his biography are unfortunately lacking. In our estimation, the four gospels were not written with the purpose of describing how Jesus developed. In his gospel research, William Wrede adds that:

The secrecy motif in the Gospels, especially dominant in Mark, was quite without historical foundation: "the messianic secret" was a theological idea, one of a number of dogmatic conceptions that stemmed from primitive Christian traditions antedating the Gospels and controlling their creation. 57:

He goes on to say that:

The Gospels were preeminently theological and not historical works, their creators being more interested in the cultivation of religious belief than in the presentation of historical facts. 58

As the outset of his gospel (i.e., "the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ" in 1:1) indicates, Mark did not become historically single-minded in stamping Jesus' entire life with the historical motif, but he had an interest in

presenting him as the one whose his "destiny is to suffer, die, and rise, and his meaning for Christian faith cannot be understood apart from this destiny."⁵⁹ Mark perhaps intended to write the gospel of Jesus not for "simply a movement within Judaism" or the historical demonstration of his time, but for the "features of a religious belief system." Therefore:

Essentially the Gospel of Mark proclaims for its community the promise of salvation based on the redemptive work of God in Christ. Moreover, this redemptive work envisions humanity in its scope, and that is why the good news of redemption is to be proclaimed to all the nations.⁶⁰

Here we learn that for some theologians the significant statement of Mark as a whole should not be treated in isolation from the key phrase which Mark placed at the beginning, although there is little agreement among scholars on Mark's precise intention. But LT and MT have little interest in the possibility of the religious and theological elements of Mark's gospel as distortions in the real picture of Jesus.

Consequently, the relation between the Jesus of history and the Christ of faith constitutes a complicated problem. This problem cannot be answered all at once. We just assume that in general the contemporary scholarly opinion is that we can know little about the historical Jesus. The historical critical method could neither absolutely prove nor disprove what happened to Jesus in history. This view is based partly on the nature of historical knowledge and partly on the lack of a consistent picture of the historical Jesus.

Conclusion

The consistent application of the Christology of LT and MT means that we must discover ways in which we can seek the kingdom as if it is possible with regard to the present historical context. The significant recognition of both theologies of Christology is that they are fully involved in mankind's own effort grassroots movements fighting in the name of the historical Jesus for the creation of better human condition on the earth. In this sense, the scholars of LT and MT try to be winners in the economic and political structures of the world in committing themselves to improving the present situations of Latin America and South Korea.

The two, which see the liberation of the poor from the rich as a sign of the presence of God's kingdom, thus start their Christology from the man Jesus defined by the historical critical method. It is a necessary historical imperative to identify Jesus with a historical man as the one who initiated the politically active hope for the kingdom of the marginalized. Here the need of the church-in-trouble today is not to find new ways to adapt to traditional ideas about the Christ of faith but to discover a new Christology that makes sense for our age. The survival of liberation and minjung Christology can only depend on a new assessment of the Jesus of Nazareth.

Throughout the position advanced in the preceding pages, we learn that LT and MT show an open attitude to Christology. They are not slavishly bound by the Christology of traditional theology. The two are more concerned with

the historical Jesus than the Christ of faith. For LT and MT, the spirit of the historical Jesus is more important. In other words, the two approach Jesus not because he is the person of the God-Man but because he is the man Jesus who lived in Palestine as an unforgettable human being in motivating and creating a higher political and social model for LT and MT. This radical vision of Jesus invites us to see him differently.

In a religious sense, on the other hand, the objective reality of the divine human Christ described in the Bible and in primitive Christianity cannot be ignored by modern historical criteria. As far as the picture of Jesus is concerned, it would not be sufficient to dismiss certain facts of the Christ of faith as impossible to accept by liberation and minjung theologians. The four gospels or the New Testament picture contains a good deal which can cause even non-Christian readers to wonder what sort of a man Jesus was. When we turn to the Bible, we discover that it does not give us an historical account of the life of Jesus in terms of providing a biographical sketch of what happened. Instead the Bible presents us primarily with a faith-picture of the early Christian experience and understanding of Jesus who is the Christ.

Therefore, it would be difficult for LT and MT to ignore totally that every book of the four gospels or the New Testament provides its own measure of information concerning the picture of the Christ of faith entertained by apologetical Christians of that time in the object of

religion. The gospel material, which is now regarded as a useful aid for going back to the historical life of Jesus, contains a delicately balanced combination of religion and theology as the factors of faith. This is a major road block which LF and MF should overcome for a mature political Christology of creation to develop, even though Scripture as a primary source of revelation is yet open to the questions raised by the interpreters's historical situation.

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CHAPTER TEN

A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE OF THE MAJOR ELEMENTS OF CHRISTOLOGY

Having read chapters III, VI and IX, we see there are similarities between liberation theology (LT) and minjung theology (MT) in which their language and their basic idea come very close in expressing their Christological development. We assume that with no suggestion of contradiction or inconsistency, the Christological stand of LT and MT has taken on a humanistic mentality. Both seem to be equally sympathetic to their modern man who starts with the human phenomenon of Jesus of Nazareth and defines him in the light of his function towards the worldly matters of man. In this chapter, thus we finally try to consider the reaction of LT and MT to the major elements of Christology which are the essential principles of containing emancipatory potential and providing stimulus for radical change.

A. The Person of Jesus

The Christological emphasis of LT and MT adapts the historical-critical method in emphasising Jesus' full humanity in terms of the flesh-like-us in the interest of ignoring his full divinity. Christology's insistence that Jesus was both divine and human leads us to wonder how to envisage both God and the historical man in relation to the unity of God-manhood in him as the Christ as both credible and realistic. The Jesus of LT and MT is hence supposed to be a man who lived in the attitude of unconditional self-giving to those who were afflicted by the military, economic, political, social and religious oppression of the Roman and Jewish authorities in Palestine in the first century. As a son of a poor family, Jesus saw the monstrous

extent of oppression and exploitation we see today. In this environment, the political or revolutionary option was available to Jesus as it is today.

In this way, the man Jesus must be understood in a different way in order to escape the problem of dogmatic subjectivity in which a series of theological statements about him takes the place of Jesus Christ as the Saviour of mankind. For LT and MT, thus Jesus cannot be enclosed as the Son of God in the principle of his divine sonship, as the Lord in having universal absolute dominion not only over man but also over the whole universe of created beings, as the Messiah who will be the eschatological bringer of redemption, and as the Son of man who gave his life as a ransom for many in religious terms.

With regard to the radical view of Christology furnished by LT and MT, we feel that Jesus cannot be literally translated or understood as the Christ in the sense of the doctrine of God's incarnation in him. This means rejecting that God has been manifest in a human form without ceasing to be God. God has not become a poor person in Jesus of Nazareth. As a human being, Jesus was only equal to any human being, but just chose the poor as the social class in which he lived his historical life. He lived among the poor and from there entered into conflict with the political and religious authorities of his time. In theory, for instance, the relationship of Jesus to God as the Son of God in the perspective of theological symbol only appeared in Jesus' submission to God's will which demanded the practice of social and political justice in history. When Jesus suffered and died in the midst of participating in unjust social conditions, his

filiation was expressed in the form in which God was present in his life for others and not as a personal union to God the Father.

Liberation and minjung theologians here try to make Jesus a politician or revolutionary as the prototype or archetype of those who look for a new and useful ideological model need to destroy the existing social and political order of Latin America and South Korea. These theologians, who concentrate on the matters of their present socio-political realities, tend to lose the essential sight of the Christian belief that has seen Jesus as the all-encompassing Saviour in the name of Christ. Both neglect to present the universal Jesus Christ of the biblical texts who reigns over all in favour of a conflictive Jesus from the perspective of the poor. This implies a doing or liberating Christology which originates the reduction of Jesus Christ's divinity by considering him a simple man.

Through LT and MT, we are consequently forced to talk of discovering Jesus in the poor of the Third world. This leads us to articulate a political Christology based upon Jesus as the supreme model of those who challenge the injustice in the socio-economic and political context of society. In assessing the distinctive feature of the Galilean social and political situation, therefore liberation and minjung theologians write: "Jesus was a Jew"¹ or "one of the minjung."² Jesus was born in a manger like a child is born in a farmhouse and in a humble form. This interpretation of Jesus is by no means abstract, mythical, or mysterious but directly from the minjung's own life situation. As a

true human being, Jesus was only on God's side of reality. He is almost exactly the same kind of figure as those who are seeking to prevent the minjung from sinking into submission to the ruling class and foreign domination and to raise their hope of liberation.

Similiarly, LT and MT here recognize that the minjung's hope is fulfilled in an undreamt of way by the lowly one, the earthly one, the one born of woman in the ordinary pattern of nature. This sort of man is Jesus, as a potent source of renewal, who lived, struggled, and learned about his God in a gradual progressive manner. That is, Jesus did not begin with the omniscient knowledge of his destiny like the Son of God defined by the inherited tradition of Christianity. The two here have a genuine concern with articulating the humanistic dimension of Jesus rather than with exploring the meaning of ultimate reality disclosed by him with his absolute religious claims on mankind.

On this model, we learn that the Jesus of LT and MT is the historical man, a real human being and little more expressed as the result of anti-supernatural bases of the historical method. In one respect, we see that LT and MT are alike as standing in Christology-from-below camp which starts as follows:

All Christological language must take its beginning in the historical Jesus; that this historical man, Jesus, is the locus where one can learn to speak about God.³

The fact that Christology-from-below tends to offer the real significance inherent in the distinctive feature

of Jesus of Nazareth as a real historical man, is directly and indirectly related to the question of who Jesus was in humanistic terms of LT and MT. This does not mean that the two present Jesus in the same manner which lives structure as the Christology-from-below does. We just find the stream of LT and MT's Christology and the same under the Christology-from-below in a similar fashion which shows Jesus' fundamental integrity, living in the real human world. From this point of view, Jesus appears as truly human and his fundamental choice is the real world.

Here the basic problem for traditional theology is the question of the reality of the belief. Is the Christ of faith really the same person as the Jesus who walked the paths of Galilee and Jerusalem? Is the commitment to the proclaimed Christ based on what really is? Or is it mere unfound faith? Without an empirical reference, the Christ of faith is somewhat unreal and vague. On the other hand, the man Jesus of LT and MT depends for his success upon establishing his historical contentions with objective certainty. This, however, proves difficult to do. Perhaps, historical research plays a part in determining what is possible. In this dilemma, the gap between the conclusions of Christian faith and objective historical evidence, remains here and there.

Nonetheless, there are indications that traditional theology comes to a possible perception of Jesus. It is on the basis of something more than merely natural perception.

For this faith, we firstly see that most scholars regardless of who they are recognize Jesus of Nazareth as a historical man who lived in Palestine in the first century. They assert that at a particular time Jesus was actually in existence. He said and did certain things. There is a remarkable concurrence upon this point by a large number of theologians, although they have addressed various questions to Jesus Christ in the thought-forms of their day and in the social milieu and the psychological situation of their day.

Secondly, the synoptics reveal the more matter-of-fact reporting of words and deeds of Jesus, whilst the writings of Paul and the fourth gospel contain more explicitly theological interpretations. This would be closely tied to gain our assumption that this sort of combination and interaction takes place when the Christian thinker sees the facts of the life of Jesus to be facts having immediate relevance to his own living. In this sense, whilst Christian faith arises out of the witness of the church, that witness always includes the picture of Jesus of Nazareth.

Finally, the gospels present that Jesus considered himself to be posed of more than ordinary significance.⁴

Gunther Bornkamm also suggests that:

Everyone of the scenes described in the Gospels reveals Jesus' astounding sovereignty in dealing with situations according to the kind of people he encounters.⁵

In addition, Jesus' declaration-"something greater" (MT. 12: 41, 42; LK. 11: 31-32)- would have peculiar significance

on the part of a life-or-death distinction in mysterious terms. The gospels here say that Jesus was conscious of fulfilling a peculiar mission. All these are parts of the New Testament picture concerned with attributing some sort of uniqueness to Jesus. It is just an example of a satisfactory view point of the uniqueness of which Christian faith has been speaking.

However, for LT as well as MT the survival of Jesus can and must depend upon a new assessment of Jesus for man today. The new assessment of Jesus can and must be made in the thought-forms of this age. Of course, everyone can discover himself, together with his own point of view and his own circle of interest, in this Jesus Christ. But this stance should find a new language, new structures, and new methods whereby its message can become relevant to our time. In this situation, if we stand in the elements of Jesus' uniqueness which are shown in the above description, our religious faith would become more and more an embarrassment at the points where we have to continue the peculiar tradition within the religious framework of Christology.

B. The Death of Jesus

As usual, LT and MT are unanimously unwilling to allow Jesus'

death, which is represented as the payment of a ransom, to deliver heaven and earth as a result of the fall (Rom. 9:19-21). The death of Jesus came as a result of his radical life and solidarity with those who suffered economically and politically and of his constant criticism of oppression, injustice and foreign domination. As a freedom fighter, Jesus dedicated his suffering life to rebel against the existing privileged class of land owners, religious authorities and foreign authorities who dominated and exploited the poor of Palestine. Such secular messianic acts of Jesus were one of the major causes of his death on the cross.

LT and MT here do not deal with the essential significance of the cross of Jesus under the rubric of the atonement. The vicarious significance of the death of Jesus does not seem relevant to our contemporary situation. Both insist that it is necessary for the church to abandon the traditional belief of the cross event which has caused the way to become a mere religious habit in early Christianity. In opposing the view^{of} traditional theology, for LT and MT, the cross is not an act of love in terms of the purpose of the substitutionary atonement. Rather, it is directly related to Jesus' ministry that brought him into political conflict with the existing powers of his day. In this way, LT and MT see the cross event of Jesus in the light of the political significance for the humanization of the majority of people.

According to LT and MT, thus the cross of Jesus is a symbol of suffering appealing to radical political practices. The cross is a specific symbol that reflects on the political ideology and

practice being used in the struggle for freedom. In other words, the cross event is both enlightenment and emancipation mediated in relation to an activity of human freedom representing the identity of the subject (the poor) in history. The message of the cross explicitly forces both the relocation of Jesus' suffering experience in the anthropology of critical action and the reinterpretation of Christianity in the light of a social commitment in which Jesus chose to be on the side of the exploited and oppressed. As the representative experience of humanity, the cross of LT and MT demands its continuity as a paradigm of transformation in the midst of the anguish of history.

In the theme of the cross, unlike minjung theologians liberation theologians strongly show us that they are theologically closer to Jurgen Moltmann who sees the cross as God's identification with human suffering. For example, Jon Sobrino,⁶ who upholds in his trinitarian identity of the cross the way of orthopraxis, learns a theological principle from the suffering of the Father in the cross of Jesus which is stated by Moltmann. According to Moltmann, God in the cross is involved in the suffering of the helpless and the oppressed. In this respect, LT reassume that the presence of God in Jesus' cross permits the formation of two lines: the first stresses that God does not allow injustice to prevail over any individual, society, or nation. God in the cross of Jesus thus calls for a change of Christian attitude to prevail in this

identification. That is, Jesus' cross calls into question every form of oppression, domination, and exploitation. The second is that God is envisaged in transcendental terms. In the event of Jesus' cross, man discovers once again what God is like. God is revealed in his identification with the suffering of Jesus on the cross and exhibited in weakness and in service.

On the other hand, MT is more concerned with non-theological terms on Jesus' cross. Jesus died on the cross as a political criminal who fought for the truth that liberate those who are deprived of life's most basic things. In this sense, the cross of Jesus is not a moral or theological concept but a political one. MT sees in the cross that the suffering love of Jesus constitutes the ultimate basis of the power of human love to continue in the midst of opposition. But MT does not turn its tone to say: God manifests himself in a particular form of Jesus' cross to be on the side of the oppressed and against the oppressors. There is no room under this revelation of the cross in the trinitarian perspective that God revealed himself in the relationship of the Father and the Son. In the light of the above realization, MT tries to transform the Korean consciousness of suffering for others. The cross should be always demonstrated in man's working to end all kinds of oppressive power and suffering.

The two expressions-LT's more theologically-based statement and MT's more sociologically-based statement on the matter of Jesus' death open up possible translations

which are given by open minds of creative theological enquiry. This alternative leads us to depreciate traditional theology which regards Jesus' death as the project of the personal revelation of God. It may be tempting to look elsewhere. As a result, the two reduce Christian faith to social ideology and action. Jesus Christ should be reduced to the good man who showed his sacrificial life on the cross in terms of raising the social question of his neighbour's material need. As Albert Camus's response to Jesus' cross is "to meet the need of our neighbour's others",⁷ and as Mahatma Gandhi cannot think of Jesus "without his death on the cross"⁸ which means his self-suffering love for common humanity, so LT and MT adopt the idea that the self-suffering cross of Jesus as for the poor is applicable to any individual or any nation in solidarity with the wretched majority of the Third World. In other words, the blood of the sacrifice of Jesus who gave himself for others is used by LT and MT as a powerful weapon which prevails over all the fear and exploitation in the world, not as an exercise aimed at eternal redemption in the light of the primal event of faith.

C. The Resurrection of Jesus

With a view to relating the Christological quest for the historical Jesus more faithfully to the miserable realities of Latin America and South Korea, LT and MT see the resurrection of Jesus through the same eyes of social and political witnesses. Both are setting forth the resurrection in terms which exclude the supernatural. For LT and MT, the question of the

resurrection of Jesus has been depreciated and considered by traditional and liberal perspectives in supernatural or moral terms. The idea of the supernatural permeated the resurrection event so thoroughly that no human Jesus could be found there.

Like LT, MT goes on to reinterpret the resurrection of Jesus. To begin with, it is of considerable note that in regard to the content of the paschal event, the four gospels agree on very little beyond the discovery of the empty tomb. From there on, MT finds the disagreement of the gospels on the resurrection accounts: when, where, and whom the risen Jesus appears; what he says to his followers; and when he withdraws once and for all from their presence. The resurrection is never presented as an event which could have been observed by simply anyone. This means that collectively the gospels do not put forth one impartial witness as the central event of Christian faith. In this sense, Jesus was still the Galilean subversive whose life and message were cut short on the cross. This is the only way whereby MT might rescue the credibility of certain historical evidence regarding those things in his life that led to the cross and resurrection and honour to some extent the historical dimension of liberation movements.

LT and MT therefore seek to bind the resurrection of Jesus with his life, death, and proclamation of the reign of God. The notion of the resurrection, which arises out of the crucified Jesus who was motivated by the very nature of the history of injustice, is the demonstration of the

righteousness that is able in principle to usher in the dawn of utopia taking a real place in the world. The resurrection represents the ultimate victory or hope in righteousness in which there would be no room for permitting the defeat of goodness and the success of evil. As evidence of the triumph of justice over discrimination and freedom over oppression, the resurrection of the crucified Jesus has in its symbolic significance^{the fact} that he anticipated the earthly kingdom of history as the one who represented the suffering of the innocent people in the fulfilment of liberating history. For LT and MT, thus Jesus' resurrection must be the disclosure that his solitary life with the weak is not defeated by power but transforms it into the possibility of freedom.

According to this account, LT and MT suggest that the resurrection derives a certain effective illuminating force from the historical understanding of Jesus by focusing on his death on the cross. This illuminating force as invisible creative power urges us to participate in the fundamental conflict between oppression and liberation in the world in the light of the dialectic of suffering and hope. In this sense, the resurrection of the crucified Jesus is to be found again and again within the daily routine of our lives against the existing oppressors. For example, Ernesto Cardenal, who was a priest and involved in the guerilla activities of the Sandinistas in Nicaragua, ignored his personal life and became more active in the struggle against the dictatorship of the Somaza government. He incorporated Marxism into liberation theology in order to build a society in Nicaragua that would be far more just and humane. Chong Chol Park was a

student of Seoul National University and a demonstrator against the Korean military government which was founded on the rigid economic and political apparatus built up as a logical consequence of capitalist doctrine. Because of his democratization activity, Park was taken by the national police and then died from torture in January 1987. For LT and MT, these sort of movements are actually the resurrection, the rising again and again from suffering experiences in the light of the suffering death of Jesus. Liberation and minjung theologians are able to experience the hypothetical resurrection in their suffering lives in serving the poor and minjung.

Therefore, LT and MT's reflection on the resurrection does not seek simply to create a religious experience of the encounter with the risen Jesus. Both seek to find the liberating power of the resurrection symbol as noted above. When one speaks of Jesus' resurrection as the symbol of social participation to improve the lot of the earthly needy, it might be possible to agree with LT and MT's assessment of the importance of the resurrection shaping the ongoing testimony of following Jesus in solidarity with the poor. In this hypothetical exposition of the resurrection in their request for an ideological tool for use in the midst of repressive society, liberation and minjung theologians try to find the social and political witness to righteousness and freedom. Here the resurrection is a useful exercise as long as it enables liberation and minjung theologians to deepen their commitment to the

radically historical task of humanization.

. Here, it is clear that LT and MT speak of the resurrection as an expression of hope for mankind in symbolic terms. Unlike traditional theology which regards the resurrection as a sign of the coming resurrection for the entrance to an eternal life, the two see it as a historical sign which creates a new kind of hope for the future of mankind. The two's resurrection is not necessary synonymous with that of traditional theology. What is meant by the two's resurrection is: Jesus taught men to live for others and not for themselves. Jesus himself lived out what he taught. He lived to serve the minjung. The whole life of Jesus was a demonstration in flesh and blood of what it means to empty out one's self, to make oneself nothing for others. In this way, when LT and MT confess that God raised Jesus from the dead, they are testifying to the source of spiritual strength which enables them to overcome lethargy, to continue in the bearing of the cross, and to become involved in the pain and suffering of the world with an attitude of hope. Whenever liberation and minjung theologians are inspired and strengthened for acts of love in the promotion of social justice and human welfare, the presence of the risen Jesus is to be hailed. In the word of the resurrection, this is the hope of LT and MT.

Scholars see theology as subject to fashion. As "a co-operative enterprise," theology is "necessary subject to fashion and changes of fashion." In this respect, Peter Carnley affirms that:

Theologians are stimulated and challenged by one another's ideas and prompted to articulate new theological insights as they correct the flaws seen in one another's work or otherwise build upon what others have done.⁹

This also is characteristic of man's being in the world: man never undergoes this world with total passivity but has to do something with this world. Considered in this way, what we are saying is not so much a falling away from what LT and MT present.

D. The Holy Spirit

When we turn to the concept of the Holy Spirit in LT and MT, as usual it is easy to see that they are not concerned with the mystery of the trinity-the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit-each distinct, and having own character, co-eternal and coequal, and so on. For both theologies, very little attention has been paid to the question on the threeness in the trinity. As a mere speculation of abstractness, the Holy Spirit in the past seems outdated in the social as well as the personal sphere. In dealing with the pneumatology of the church, Jesus is not regarded as the subject of the human experience of Jesus in the sense of socio-political concerns. In this context, there is no real

place for the dynamic implication of the Holy Spirit except in terms of something unrelated to the mysterious unity. The classical trinitarianism of the church is incomprehensible and unacceptable for modern society.

On this perspective, LT and MT do not think of the Holy Spirit in personal terms. The Holy Spirit is not simply God, not God the Father, not God in Jesus, nor God in any other mode of his self-revelation to mankind and his contact with the world of his creation. Both here start with the synoptic gospel picture of a man inspired by the Spirit. This means that the presence of the Holy Spirit does not supersede the historical presence of Jesus. It is impossible that Jesus' promise can refer to anything other than his presence in the Spirit, not in the personal subject. It is a mistake to assert that Paul and the creeds identified the Holy Spirit with the exalted Jesus Christ as the mediator of all divine truth in personal terms.

In a sense, the Holy Spirit as something impersonal and as a field of force is simply an energy and a working formula to designate God's activity in the world. That is, the Holy Spirit as the power of God is a limitless, flowing and moving endowment of power from God. This idea is obvious: the Holy Spirit as power moves and flows dynamically to strengthen, inspire and impel the oppressed and poor into unusual achievement. The Holy Spirit is the motive force of liberation and leads the poor to use violence in liberating human beings oppressed and exploited by economical, social and political structures. The Holy Spirit thus gives us a liberating vision as was seen in the Exodus event and in Jesus' suffering life for others.

We are sure that there is a good reason why LT and MT try to reverse the traditional concept of the Holy Spirit into a new symbolical power that culminates in men, in history, even in the political sphere. As God's force manifested in Jesus as a dynamic power leading him into a state of enthusiasm for overcoming the evil situation as an essential part of the process of human emancipation, the same Spirit is present in the socially and economically mariginalized people to be part of their specific responsibility on political activity. LT and MT here focus on that specific point to take advantage of the inclusion of the symbolic factor to encourage all political activity under the new hermeneutics of pneumatology. As in the case of Jesus, the Spirit operates in and through the poor to stimulate them to create some new quality, some new structure in effectual ideological resistance.

After considering all these suggestions, we feel that as part of Christology the Holy Spirit seen in LT and MT has been developed in the pneumatological model of Luke. There are many references to the Holy Spirit in the writings of the apostolic fathers, of the pateristic theologians, and of the modern theologians, but these usually have to do with the inspiration of the OT and NT Scriptures and of the theological presupposition of biblical intellectualism. The Spirit is here mentioned in doxologies, in the baptismal formula, and in the form of the pre-existent Christ, implying the idea of the Word of God. But the pneumatological perspective of LT and MT would be motivated by certain sources associated with Luke rather than with

the whole biblical text.

For this reason, we come now to the elements of Luke 4:16ff. Luke applies the event of Jesus baptism and the prophecy of Isaiah 61:1-12 to Jesus: the Spirit descends upon Jesus at his baptism, whilst the Father addresses him from heaven as his Son; Jesus has been anointed as the bearer of the Spirit who will bring good news to the poor; here he says himself to be the one who bears the Spirit; he authoritatively states his messianic work to be the fulfilment of an OT prophecy; and he represents his messiahship and messianic activity as an existence and activity in the Spirit of God.

To speak of the pneumatological perspective of the two should not be construed as an assumption of Luke as a whole. But liberation and minjung theologians do not invent the category of Christ's pre-existence nor do they initiate the concern for their pneumatological standpoint on the subjective reality of God's revelation which makes possible and real the existence of Christianity in the world, whilst traditional theologians have repeatedly been tempted to introduce their pneumatological ideas in connection with the influence of philosophical and religious concepts. LT and MT rather discover in Luke that the Spirit of God is mostly seen as the Spirit who prompts Jesus into political messianic activity. The Spirit makes Jesus capable of doing-the capacity for messianic activity. Here Luke does not see the subject of the Spirit in the light of an

ontological Christology. As the anointed, Jesus is the recipient and bearer of the Spirit. He is correspondingly described as the Son of God. That is, Jesus' anointing with the Holy Spirit is not viewed as Christ's own being in accordance essential to the Godhead. LT and MT also learn that the Spirit primarily enables Jesus to proclaim the gospel to the poor sociologically, implying their liberation and freedom. Jesus here conceives himself as sent first of all to those who have been driven to poverty through degrading circumstances.

If this so, it is no wonder LT as well as MT produces a fully worked out pneumatology which is directly connected to Luke 4:16ff. This assumption does not in every respect coincide but certain elements do stand out as being characteristic of the two's perspective on the Holy Spirit as part of their Christology. The extent of LT and MT's Holy Spirit is, therefore, in one way or another rooted in Lukan pneumatological expression. Whenever liberation and minjung theologians look at the context of the passage in Luke, Jesus is a pneumatic existence for their theology.

In some way, also by the same token LT and MT may enjoy a view of the Spirit Christology.¹⁰ Needless to say, neither have ever mentioned the terms "the spirit Christology" in their writings. It is difficult for us to assert LT and MT consistently follow through on the model of the Spirit Christology. But we assume that there is a common ground of

faith as shown in their writings and that there is no problem identifying the humanity of Jesus when he is seen as a man inspired by the Spirit, which is a way of speaking about God's reality in relation to all that exists and happens. In and through Jesus, the Spirit acted in a new way. Here Jesus' mission was to obey God's will (as is represented by the term Son) represented by his suffering and death in the affairs of social and political change for the poor. Jesus was identified with the prophets, rabbis, judges and so on, whilst at the same time he is distinguished from them in his experience with the Spirit.

In addition, we suppose that MT has been inspired by the ideas of Joachim of Fiore (i.e., in chapter nine). In the influence of Joachim, MT states that as the creative power the Holy Spirit acts in the world to transform the inhuman reality of the world.¹¹ The Spirit refers in minjung theologians' thought to liberate action, action intending the overcoming of oppression and exploitation in society. In this sense, it is difficult for MT to see that the apostles and other Christian thinkers experienced the presence of the Holy Spirit as the presence of the divine person directing them to new acceptance of new life and a new power to love their neighbours in religious attitudes. Rather the experience of Pentecost was represented by the priority of revolutionary experience in sociopolitical sense and by the mounting importance of strategy for the political purposes and possibilities of the minjung. The experience of the Spirit was understood

as a forcing power in terms of creativity, as the purpose of human freedom and the direction of human achievement.

This kind of the Spirit is given to the minjung, because the Spirit is the Spirit of the Messiah(Jesus) according to Yong Bock Kim.¹² Jesus is the Messiah of the minjung. From this point of view, the Spirit of Jesus acts through the minjung in history. When the minjung are directed by the Spirit, they are able to challenge the social order, based as it is on the privileges of the rich. By the constantly renewed influence of the Holy Spirit, the minjung are raised to an higher level. This means that the minjung have a special privilege in the political direction of the world: to achieve the so-called socialistic utopia. The Spirit of MT is, therefore, at work among the minjung. It is awakening the minjung to their liberation and bringing them to act with new spirit.

Ultimately, LT and MT are clear about pneumatology. In the way of the contemporary emphasis on openness to the future rather than on the absolutizing of the past, the two similarly reiterate the importance of pneumatology, seeking to reassess its origination and function not in terms of the distinctively Christian treatment of God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, but in terms of being a symbolic power capable of enlightening the process of human emancipation. This is why LT and MT intend the non-literal interpretation of the Holy Spirit which means the paradigmatic interpretation of certain OT and NT passages

in the course of the present analysis. By the paradigmatic insight, the two theologies discern the presence and power of God at work, giving hope to human life, with, and under the concrete course of human events. In this way, the initial theological theme of liberation and minjung scholars seek to liberate pneumatology from its academic, traditional, and religious imprisonment and return to the centre of the practice of the social reality of Latin America and Korea.

On the other hand, in different books the Holy Spirit is regarded from different points of view in the history of Christian doctrine during the first four hundred years of its course, although the writers proposed to give a simple expression of the facts of pneumatology. Doubtless, the early church tried to explain the mystery of pneumatology which is contained the collections of writings which form the New Testament, but was slow to discern the person and work of the Holy Spirit clearly. The main points in the pneumatological conception of the early church still remain obscure and lead to the clear and fuller expression of the Holy Spirit. That is, the early church offered little clarification in this matter.

As a result, there are no still grounds for believing some historical defence on the personhood of the Holy Spirit from the recorded words of Jesus and the early church. So it would be interesting for LT and MT to observe the pneumatological practice in using impersonal language of the Holy Spirit.

E. The Political Jesus

On the road to reshaping Jesus Christ in historical terms for their struggle against social structures, LT and MT finally view Jesus as the greatest man who suffered in the crucible of political messianic identity, function and destiny. There is considerable agreement between LT and MT in their accounts of Jesus, in their understanding of the significance of his presence in human history and of the significance of his life-style in the question of revolutionary or political perspective. In the light of this radicalization, both presuppose that Jesus was brought up in the conditions of political instability and economic stagnation which existed in Galilee as a result of Roman imperialism and the ignorance of the Jewish religious authorities. In this context, the historical significance of Jesus' life in the contest between poverty and wealth represents a fundamental radical value demanding the inescapable socio-political fight between the poor and the rich.

Here LT and MT share the same view that the pertinence of Jesus of Nazareth to the question of political involvement is evident from his life context that generates dynamics and direction in human affairs. The political ministry of Jesus should be located within his social and religious struggles that marked his age. A study of the historical situation of Jesus requires at least that he played an earthly role of exceptional historical importance which needed the reconstruction of the economic and political system of Galilee as a result of the Jewish authorities and the Roman Empire in the first century. Only in this context,

is it possible for LT and MT to determine with accuracy the contribution Jesus the Galilean made.

In making such a claim, the intention of the two is to show us Jesus of Nazareth who lived his restless life on the periphery of Galilean society. Here the Beatitudes are viewed by LT as Jesus' economic and political platform for establishing a new social order. With a different perception from that of the traditional theology, LT uses the content of the Beatitudes as the political creed which aims at the liberation of the poor and the reanimation of individual initiatives against repressive societies. The Sermon on the Mount provides an excellent source for the self-justifying endeavour of LT to maximize the ideological factors and functions of messianic politics. As the concrete points of reference, the presentation of the Beatitudes is a maximum ordering of priorities and strategies in implementing political goals and actions. As the declaration of solidarity with people who suffer under injustice, power, and poverty, the Sermon on the Mount is an informed and formative awareness of the political mobility in the planning and implementation of resistance to oppression by existing power structures.

In favour of acting in opposition to traditional theology, LT ignores the Beatitudes as "the general ethical principles of Jesus." For the church, the contents of the Beatitudes regarding moral perfection:

Represent the most creative element in Christian ethics and is applicable both within the Christian

fellowship and in relationship to those outside of it. 14

In this regard, the Sermon on the Mount is treated in Christian ethics as an ethics of response to God's divine will and activity. The most distinctive ethical element of the Beatitudes would be summarized in a process of learning to care(love). This direction not only provides a pattern of Christian life to follow but also gives us the desire and the strength to walk in that way, although our walk is admittedly imperfect. This is the initial and continuing imitation of Jesus to his followers in his time in accordance with traditional theology. Yet the Sermon on the Mount is a specific social and political expression and direction in opposition to an influence on the ethical reflection of the church.

On the foundation of the political Jesus, in the same way LT and MF do not neglect to pay diligent attention to Jesus as the bearer of the political movement of his day in connection with the movement of the Zealots. Among liberation theologians as well as among minjung theologians, of course there is no agreement over the whole question of Jesus' relationship to the Zealots in the agitated political atmosphere of his day. For some among them, Jesus was on the side of the Zealots. For others, he did not engage in the Zealot resistance against the Rome rule.

In the eyes of the theological presupposition, we see that it seems difficult to agree that Jesus clearly adopted a critical attitude towards the political authority and

power of his time in the debate over his possible Zealotism. For this reason, we suppose that there were in Jesus no restorative national tendencies of any sort. In the name of his Father, Jesus had his disciples pray for the gathering of God's people, but not for the glorification of Jerusalem or for the liberation of Israel from Roman domination. This attitude of Jesus, in a sense, rejects the efforts of the Zealots. Jesus was concerned with Israel's existence. He sought the renewal of Israel, the gathering of the true Israel, and Israel which follow the will of God. But Jesus was not a nationalist like the Zealots.

The fact that Jesus possibly associated himself with the Zealot movement is thus first of all negative. According to S.G.F. Brandon, Jesus' "selection of a professed Zealot as one of his inner band of disciples" suggests "the probability that Jesus was not a Zealot and his movement was not integral part of the Zealot resistance against Rome." Brandon additionally explains that:

The inclusion of a professed Zealot in the apostolic band also indicates that Jesus did not regard the profession of Zealot principles as incompatible with intimate participation in his own mission.¹⁵

This reference indicates that although the study of Jesus in his historical setting was a possible enterprise when he was executed with the Barabban rebellion, he actually was not a Zealot and disassociated himself from encouraging the nationalist expectation which had been aroused by the political messianic movement of the Zealots.¹⁶

In the light of this political analysis, LF tries to read Jesus' entry into Jerusalem in the same way as those who

forged their political revolutionary spirit to overthrow the existing dehumanizing reality of social and political order. Jesus' entry is also viewed by MT as the march of the political task for the economic and cultural liberation of the minjung from the oppression of the Roman authorities and from the hypocritical conscience of the Jewish authorities in Jerusalem. Both coincide with the entry event as the representative aspect necessary in holding the principle of political movement in the name of the powerless against the expansionist policies of powerful states and the internal classes of modern society.

Subsequently, liberation and minjung theologians unanimously agree that the trial of Jesus resulted from his political attitude. He was arrested and treated for being a politically suspect person, because he possibly associated himself with a political movement in confrontation with the public authorities of his day. The trial of Jesus before Pilate, therefore, measured up to his political mission particularly with regard to the poor in purely temporal terms of the social sciences. The trial is in fact the supreme sign of the historical Jesus' liberating pressure among human beings in classical terms of political involvement.

Both LT and MT provide the radical reinterpretation of the entry event in terms of the socio-political character of Jesus' historical mission. In some sense, but MT more notably stresses that Jesus' long march from Galilee to Jerusalem is the unveiling of mankind's visibility, making room for revolutionary renewal. MT sees Galilee as

the place of suffering and marginalization, whilst seeing Jerusalem as the place of domination and corruption. As a Galilean confronting Jerusalem, Jesus marched to Jerusalem to challenge the religious authorities of Israel and the military authorities of the Roman Empire. He confronted an inhuman structured system to which he did not belong. In determining to go from Galilee to Jerusalem, Jesus accepted the difficult part of his public mission. But it was the culmination of his salvific ministry.

In a sense, the struggle of Jesus against the religious and political powers of Jerusalem introduces the radical change to the minjung needs. It is a call to take a radical alternative in the world. It is also a call to invite the minjung to this radical way. As Jesus' Galilean followers were called to go with him, today the minjung are likewise called to go with him and in him to the Jerusalem of today's world. Here the entry should be derived from the political action of making an old society into a new one in terms of modern social sciences. It can be manifest in a parallel series of social reforms in history. It is a suitable time for MT to spell out the import of this positive historical action and to stress that today's church should show willingness to take side with the poor. The church should bear indisputable witness to the political mission of Jesus and be disposed to prove its credibility in that way.

In this awakening, MT asserts that the Jerusalem of today's society is Seoul, the Capital of South Korea.¹⁷ Seoul is the site of the greater theological schools where

the Korean intellectuals go to study so that eventually they could become ministers and theologians. But they dominate the masses through a type of intellectual moralism inasmuch as they impose their knowledge as God's ways. Seoul is also the centre of economic, political and military domination. It is the gathering site of the great merchants and landowners. The dominant ruling class cooperate with the foreign authorities in maintaining the status that favours their own money-making interests and their own political power. All this means that as a symbol of the structural absolutism, Seoul is today's Korean Jerusalem where the church leadership, the political community, and the academic community work together in the ongoing domination of the basis of society.

For MT, the march to that Jerusalem is, therefore, seen as the only way for the true liberation of the minjung. This type of witness should continue today. It should continue in the vast regions of Korea, where thousands of persons are devoting their lives to the kingdom.

Conclusion

By the same token LT and MT, which assert that the Christology of traditional Christology fails to provide an adequate basis for social and political responsibility, view with great interest the political possibility of Jesus of Nazareth. Both find a correcting element in dialogue with the realization of the human in Jesus.

From this point of Jesus' reality, we discover that the Jesus of LT and MT let God be God. That is, the two theoretically disagree that Jesus of Nazareth is in harmony with the biblical view of the Christ of faith as true God and true Man. In theological language, rather Jesus realized and obeyed to the full God's final demand expressed by the prophets in OT. For instance, Jesus walked in history humbly with his God as Micah 6: 8 says. There LT analyses Jesus as he actually was. LT compares "Jesus with other historical figures" like the OT prophets-"Amos and Jeremiah" who were "forceful in their denunciation of oppressors."¹⁸ This type of exegesis seeks to explain the OT prophets and Jesus in a similar way as to make them come alive for contemporary readers. At the same time, MT compares Jesus with those who planted the seeds of popular social and political reform among the Korean people. In this regard, Yong Bock Kim speaks of Che U Choe, as "Choe Messiah or Choe Jesus,"¹⁹ who was the initiator and founder of the Tonghak movement against the political and economic inequities perpetrated by the

ruling Yangban class, whilst Nam Dong Suh sees Ji Ha Kim, as Jesus who appeared in the 1970s,²⁰ who was seized, tortured, and imprisoned again and again because of his commitment to the struggle against the corrupt Park military regime in South Korea.

Here the broad perspective of LT and MT on the political Jesus leads us to suppose that in hermeneutic concern their attitude is free to contact the biblical text and to assume new dimensions and meaning as it relates to new contexts. The credibility of the biblical text for LT and MT should not come from its ability to lead people to the theological legitimacy of religion but to the actual procedure of liberation from the basis of the suffering of the minjung. From the political point of view, therefore liberation and minjung theologians try to select and use certain contents of the biblical text as being able to speak to new situations. Consequently, the hermeneutic attitude of the two is more concerned with what the biblical text means today rather than what it meant in the past. This approach ignores a specific meaning for the first authors and readers of the text. That is, theology or Christology cannot operate on the basis of given words that provide us with some insight into the mysterious secret of God and his transcendent ground. Rather they only look at creating using the concepts

of God and the stories of Jesus in Scripture in order to provide a framework for the reality of life in the world. This attitude is intended to humanize life and to relativize our ideas and projects to reconstruct a human world as opposed to religion and religious traditions.

In all this, we see some of the inherent problems in LT and MT's approach of interpretation. The two's fundamental difficulty to Christology is apt to become a subject for historical investigation as any other human being of ancient times. Inevitably, the hermeneutic conclusion of the two does not spring from the direct and whole reading of the biblical text, but is influenced by their prior political commitment in an existential way. The hermeneutical purpose of the two, therefore, begins not with the intention of offering explanation but of effecting changes in history. In attempting this hermeneutical assumption, we wish to demonstrate how LT and MT can yet benefit from the biblical hermeneutics of liberation in relation to the demands of forces for the construction of a better society.

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CONCLUSION

This dissertation has attempted to examine the relationship between liberation theology and minjung theology. Specifically, this study has concentrated on the Christologies of both theologies in an effort to analyze how liberation and minjung theologians have grappled with their Christological approach in their writings and to make a comparison between them. The purpose of this closing chapter will be to provide briefly a critical evaluation of the Christological approach of both theologies and a personal reaffirmation of traditional Christology.

In this study, we have concluded that LT and MT share almost the same concerns when compared with the composite languages and literal meanings of their theological motives, theological methodologies and Christological approaches. In the assertion of the historical actuality of Jesus aimed at the current role of liberating the poor and oppressed today, there is no difference between LT and MT which represent radically a way of legitimizing society by means of critical deliberation and reflection. They are twins in different parts of the world, participating in the political struggle of the oppressed for the transformation of existing social structures in the late twentieth century. We cannot distinguish and separate any fundamentally different principles of Christology between LT and MT. Both Christological projects presented in this dissertation are running not on parallel tracks but on the same one generating the political imperative of the Christian life.

It is also true that LT and MT make a great effort to defend

those who suffer from the dominant classes. Under the Christology of liberation extending its meaning to political action, the positive side of LT and MT gives not only the encouragement but also the impetus to overcome the existing reality of oppression and exploitation and to strive for more just social structures. The image of a liberating Christology becomes a powerful means of stimulating those who experience oppression in economic and political affairs. Those who seek a sense of personal freedom from the political oppression and economic exploitation that the existing governments of Latin America and South Korea impose on their poor people are awakened to the demands of social justice in the effort to accomplish the vision that the doing Christology offers.

In some way, traditional Christology here should listen and learn from the Christological implication of LT and MT in order to feed the hungry and liberate the oppressed. It is accurate to categorize the Christological perspective of traditional theology as other-worldly. But this other-worldly gaze does not become in traditional theology an occasion for irresponsibility by disdaining what God has ordained for man's use. Thus man should recognize that his concentration on the other world is for the purpose of providing an impetus for Christian life in this world. Man cannot come to Jesus Christ without first humbling himself by putting away desire for earthly glory and worldly ambition in terms of the social sciences. The fact that the love of God is understood through Jesus in

the way of the incarnation is "an act of complete divine self-giving"¹ in accord with Christian faith. Here the church should try to apply the imitation of Jesus' self-giving life for mankind as the ethical outlook of the Christian to make an impact on humanity in a very decisive way. This is the right way to love life and to carry our life in our hands for others.

On the other hand, for the church LT and MT bear a negative characteristic. The implication of the liberating Christology tends to be reductionist. Both, in seeing that their context is the real situation experienced here and now in the street and in the working place, reduce the width and depth of the Christology of the biblical text to a more narrow role that supports ideologically the political efforts of the marginalized people to service in an atmosphere of oppression and exploitation. Here, the key point of the two's use of Scripture is the argument that each theologian comes to the reading of Scripture with an accompanying ideological perspective. They maintain that the theologian should bring ideological suspicion to his reading of Jesus' life story in the Bible in order to surface new interpretations which promote transformation of social reality.

In that way, consequently what is important for LT and MT is to liberate Jesus from the fourth gospel and

Pauline letters which are regarded as containing a real impact on popular religious awareness. The synoptics are capable of presenting Jesus as he actually was in the light of the spiritual experience of the minjung. In the gospels, the two see how Jesus lived, what he taught, and why he was treated as he was by the people of his time. It is important to see the life and death of Jesus as it is actually portrayed in the synoptics. On the other hand, the two try to liberate Jesus from traditional theology that did not bear witness to the real human life of Jesus according to them. Here traditional theology has to liberate itself to follow more closely the teaching of Jesus as we know the lifework of Jesus rather than from the theological elaboration of the church. The two hence protest against any metaphysical abstraction, which could not grasp the reality of the historical Jesus.

To us, the tendency of the Christology of the two is therefore clear. The theological confessional languages- Jesus, the Christ, the Son of God, the Son of Man, the cross, the resurrection, and salvation- are retained in LT and MT's Christology, but these are seen as symbols which have to be reinterpreted one by one. The political manhood of Jesus is given an emphasis that it has so far rarely had in the history of the church, even by liberal theologians who were their strong ally in the battle against Calvinist Christology and social injustice in the light of the historical Jesus. Here LT and MT try to

induct traditional theology into scientific and historical methods, with their purging of superstition and distortion of the Christian tradition of Christology. The two's emphasis on the historical Jesus provides the norm for the criticism and simplification of Christian faith.

In focusing attention on the Christological implication of LT and MT, we feel that this sort of alternative is a living phenomenon, because it comes out of real life situations in Latin America and South Korea. On the other hand, we learn that the ongoing Christian traditions of the biblical witness play an important role, because they suggest new configurations, latent meanings, potential extensions, and applications of a political Christology for LT and MT which appropriate the past for the sake of the present.

Yet it is difficult to see how this sort of approach to Christology would be reconciled effectively with the whole range of the biblical message. To treat our understanding of Jesus as essentially a human construct that has its origin in our need to create an ultimate environment for ourselves is to understate the . . . significance of the other side of Christology, namely that Jesus is in fact the Christ of faith.

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