

3.3 The economy

3.3.1 Primary structure

All of the land belonged to the kings, which left the peasants constantly offering their products to their king, whether it was farm products or handicrafts, in return for the permission to practice agriculture on their king's lands. Moreover, young men had to undergo compulsory military service and provided manual labour from time to time. Women were excluded from military services and manual labour, but instead, they were obliged to provide materials such as cotton or hemp clothes, according to national needs. People paid taxes with their products such as rice, material, bamboo products, medical equipment/facilities, pots and some specific products such as ginseng. During the 17th century, material made by women, became especially important in Korea, so the material was treated as real money (Lee OJ & Lee HS 1989:17). These textile fabrics were exported and became a national financial resource. Women wove material not only for making costumes, but also to fulfil the demands of the national economic function. It was necessary for women to plant cotton and to weave fabric. This was very hard work and there are many folk songs about the women's work. These songs about the loom, the grinding mill, weaving by hand, spinning, farming, and sewing contain lyrics lamenting their miserable lives.

In the pre modern era the economy depended largely on agriculture, and the only commercial action was to barter goods with others. People could only use small amounts of money. The modern era of the economy began towards the end of the 19th century. At the time, Korean economy was closely connected to Korean politics. The Korean king was unable to exercise the sovereign right to govern. The rights to railroads, mines, and forests went into the hands of Russia, the USA, Japan, France, England and Germany (Korean History 1992:208). When the rights to a country's natural resources, which are the basis for building a powerful nation, were transferred into the hands of other countries, the Korean people began to denounce the government as corrupt and incapable. The Korean people demanded the reclamation of these rights which had been taken away.

This was also the time of Japanese colonial rule. The basic agricultural production in Korea was rice, which was the staple food for Koreans and Japanese. The Japanese investigated the land for opportunities for higher production and more development and possibilities for exploitation. The peasants became poorer and poorer. One hundred and fifty thousand Korean peasants left their homes in 1925 (Lee OJ & Lee HS 1989:99). The peasants became beggars or slash-and-burn farmers, or they left to look for jobs in Japan, Siberia and Manchuria. The numbers of beggars were ten thousand in 1926 and 169 thousand in 1931 (Lee OJ & Lee HS 1989:99). Seventy five percent of peasants were in debt with the colonial government. On account of the agricultural structure of the Japanese colony many peasants left their villages and towns. Unemployment increased, the poor grew in number and they gathered around cities. Working conditions became worse and the relationship between employers and employees deteriorated. There were only a few significant industries before the liberation from Japan after 35 years of colonial rule (1910-1945). During this time Korea's economic resources had been ruthlessly exploited. Through its publication of the Independent Newspaper the Korean Independence Movement urged the government to get rid of its policy of foreign dependency and to adopt a diplomatic policy of self-reliance. They also advocated the recovery of the rights taken away by foreign powers and insisted that the production of natural resources should be utilized to enhance the nation's own strength (Korean History 1992:209). However, after the expulsion of the other invading powers Japanese forces still succeeded in gradually infiltrating deeper and deeper into the country.

During Japanese colonial rule, large areas of land were taken by the Japanese. In 1912 the Temporary Land Surveying Bureau was established in the office of the Governor-general. By mobilizing tremendous funds and personnel, Japan took more land away from the Koreans (Korean History 1992:228). The Japanese announced that it was to reorganize land ownership by means of complicated processes such as ordering Koreans to re-register their land ownership. If people failed to do so or were late, their land, whether public or private, was repossessed by the Japanese Governor-general. In this way, about 40% of all farms in Korea were improperly repossessed by the Governor-general (Korean History II 1998:123). The land was sold at a low price to either development companies or private Japanese citizens. In the process Korean farmers lost

their land and became either tenant farmers or farm labourers. Those, who did not accept this Japanese policy, went to live in the mountains or were forced to become wanderers in Manchuria and Japan.

Towards the end of 1920, Japan heavily burdened Korea's agricultural economy. With the plundering of the land, Japan took several million *soks* (80 kg) of rice and soybeans a year. The so-called plan to increase rice production which was carried out by the Governor-general over a 10 year period beginning in 1920, was really a policy which was set up to find ways to more effectively obtain large amounts of rice (Korean History 1992:229). When rice was exported to Japan, Korea's food situation went from bad to worse. Thus, Korean people had to eat grass roots and tree bark. Because of the economic crisis in the world, the prices of the agricultural productions steadily decreased. While wages increased, interests and benefits decreased. Working hours became longer and employees were often fired for no apparent reason. Workers were treated like horses. They could not demand fair treatment and basic human rights. The economic crisis led to many social and moral evils. The difference between the rich and the poor was enormous. The rich lived sumptuous life-styles and their morals degenerated. They preferred luxurious consumer goods.

The Japanese Governor-general oppressed the development of Korean industry (Korean History 1992:230).

- A co-operation law, which interfered with industrial activities carried out by Koreans, was passed.
- A forestry law by which the Governor-general and private Japanese citizens occupied 40% or more of all Korean forests, was passed.
- The Japanese took control of the fishing industry.
- The Governor-general took possession of mines in Korea: gold, silver, iron, coals, tungsten, and other important mines were owned by the Japanese. Koreans owned only one three hundredth of the total quantity of minerals which were excavated from the mines in Korea.
- The Governor-general monopolized the operation of banks, railroads, harbours, roads, and communication facilities.

In 1910, the Japanese Governor-general did not allow Koreans to set up co-operations and factories. The fund for developing industries in Korea was 17% and the Japanese fund was 32% in 1910. In 1917, the Korean fund was 12.7% and the Japanese fund was 83.2% (Korean History II 1998:124). The Japanese Governor-general helped the Japanese to obtain rights with regard to the mines, while Koreans were not permitted to develop mines. In comparison, the distribution of mineral production was as follows: 4.8% by Koreans, 22.6% by Japanese and 72.6% foreigners in 1911 and 0.4% by Koreans, 79.9% by Japanese and 19.7% by foreigners in 1920 (Korean History II 1998:125).

When the development of Korean industry was suppressed by the Japanese, the Korean people were forced to buy Japanese made goods in exchange for food and to supply labour at low wages. In 1930, Japan built weapons factories in order to invade continental China and Russia. So, Japan demanded hard labor of Koreans.

While the Japanese economic aggression intensified, many Koreans emigrated to Manchuria, Japan, and the Maritime Province. Many left due to desolate economic conditions to search for a new life. The Korean villages were established beyond the reach of the Japanese. They built Korean national schools and trained independence fighters. The number of Koreans living abroad in early 1910 had exceeded 200,000 and under Japanese rule this number was further increased until at the time of liberation, there were over 400,000 Koreans living abroad (Korean History 1992:234). Japan negotiated with China for a railroad through Korea to China. Japan secretly expected to transfer their army through Korea to China. In exchange Japan gave Kando, which belonged to Korea, to China. Korea lost Kando forever.

Japan continued to oppress the Koreans living in Kando in eastern Manchuria. Koreans who were living abroad attacked Japanese armies in China and in Korea. The Japanese retaliated by attacking Korean villages from time to time. The Japanese massacre of Koreans at the end of 1920 which was carried out to avenge their defeat in Chungsan-ni, was especially cruel. More than 10,000 Koreans were massacred and their houses, schools, and churches burnt (Korean History 1992:236). Many Koreans in Japan had a hard time. In particular, after the Kwantong earthquake of 1923, the Japanese

massacred about 7,000 Koreans living in Japan without reason. Japanese politicians insisted the earthquake was caused by Koreans who were living in Japan. Even today people do not know what is the relation between the earthquake and the massacre. Many Koreans were sent to Japan when that country had labour shortages. Korean youths and women were forced to work in Japanese factories, mines and textile factories. The Japanese severely persecuted and discriminated against Koreans. During the Japanese colonialism, Korean women were exploited of their labours, their sexual purity, and even their staple food supplies by Japanese. Korean women had to learn to survive independently on their own to save their own lives and the lives of their loved ones.

The Korean economy was further devastated by the Communist-provoked Korean War (1950-1953), where much damage was caused, and it took a long time to heal. The Korean government was unstable for 10 years after the War. The economy was shaky and troubled. As late as 1962, Korea was still suffering from the many difficulties commonly faced by less developed nations. On top of its extreme poverty, the population was growing annually by 3%. Unemployment prevailed and savings were insignificant. The nation had no notable exports, and it depended on imports for both raw materials and important manufactured goods.

3.3.2 Industrial development

Given the limited size of the domestic market, economic planners found it necessary to adopt an export-oriented industrialization strategy. This outward development strategy was particularly well suited to Korea's conditions in the early 1960s. The government initiatives played an important part in the development efforts. A more realistic single exchange rate was adopted and short term export financing was made available. Customs procedures were simplified, enabling exporters to easily import necessary raw materials. Foreign investment was also strongly encouraged.

Since 1962 Korea achieved what is widely acclaimed as "the economic miracle" (Facts 1998:66). The growth of the Korean economy was one of the fastest in the world. As a result Korea, once one of the world's poorest agrarian societies, has emerged as an upper middle-income, fast-industrializing country.

The Korean government implemented a 5 year (1962-66) “economic development plan”. This lay the foundation for industrialization. It succeeded in initiating and accelerating a structural readjustment of industry from subsistence agriculture to modern manufacturing and export trade. In the initial stage of industrialization, labour-intensive light industry, especially textiles, was the growth leader, but more recently the rapidly developing heavy and chemical industries have come to account for over half of the nation’s total manufacturing output. Korea became the 6th largest steel producer in the world in 1990 (Facts 1998: 64).

A Chinese theologian, Tu Wei-ming (1991:759) describes how traditional institutions and values have been relevant to Korean modernization. Centralized planning through the delicate art of negotiation, social stability, family cohesiveness, widespread educational opportunity, the work ethic, frugality – each trait has significantly contributed to Korea’s economic boom. Westernisation especially Americanization was accepted by a whole generation of Korean intellectual leaders as synonymous with modernization.

Korea has also been developing a wide range production of industrial machinery and equipment. The electronics industry is another major growth sector and provides an increasingly important foreign exchange benefit. The shipbuilding industry has already peaked and car manufacturing is experiencing a boom in both the local and overseas markets. Other principal industrial products include cement, processed foods, plywood, chemical fertilizers, footwear, ceramics, glass, nonferrous metals and farm implements.

Overall agricultural production doubled in the 15 years following the launching of the economic development plan in 1962. After that, growth has slowed, but the much emphasized goal of self-sufficiency in rice production, has been attained with an output of 4.70 million tons in 1995 (Facts 1998:65). To encourage agricultural development, a large fertilizer and pesticide industry has been developed to keep farmers adequately supplied with these products. There has been growth in fruits, vegetables and other high-value cash crops, and in livestock products. The spread of vinyl green houses has been a major factor in the increased vegetable harvest. The average farming household caught up with the average urban working family in terms of annual income since the 1980s. The farming population has decreased in accordance with the progress of

industrialization. But farm mechanization, which has progressed the most in planting and harvesting rice, solved the problem of the shortage of rural labor. The expansion and modernization of Korea's fishing industry has been remarkable over the past two decades. Korean fishing bases have been established in Western Samoa and Las Palmas.

The Korean government controlled imported goods from foreign countries in order to protect and development Korean products and industries. Deregulation of imports began in the mid-1970s with selected manufactured goods. The deregulation process accelerated after 1983 and now covers a wide range of goods and services, including agricultural products and finance. Tariffs have been abolished or reduced, and such non-tariff barriers as domestic regulatory laws relaxed. After having accepted market liberalization with international groups since 1980, Koreans have been challenged by competition with foreigners for service industries, such as banking, the life insurance market, the advertising market, trading, whole sale and investment.

In about three decades, from 1962 to 1995 Korea's gross national product increased from US \$2.3 billion to US \$451.7 billion, with per capita GNP soaring from US \$87 to about US \$10076 at current price levels (Facts 1998:61). The key to this success was the adoption of an outward looking development strategy, making exports the engine of a growth-strategy which reflected Korea's insufficient natural endowments, its limited domestic market, and its abundant, well-educated, industrious workforce.

The Korean economy, which successfully recovered from a deep recession caused by the second oil shock, continued a rapid pace of non-inflationary growth under stable conditions until 1988 (Facts 1998:61). However, from 1989 the Korean economy began experiencing difficulties once again. These included the slower growth of industries, high inflation and the deterioration of the balance of payment. In light of these economic difficulties the Korean government instituted a new economic policy. This was intended to foster private initiative and creativity at all levels of business and to free the economy from the constricting government planning and intervention characteristic of the past three decades in order to revitalize the economy. The Korean economy slowed down between the years 1991-1993. The GNP growth rate recorded a robust 8.7% in 1995, while industrial production grew at 9.1% per annum in the same year (Fact 1998:75). The employment rate declined to 2.1% in 1995 from 3.1% in 1993 (Facts 1998:75). In

spite of the economic recovery, price stability does not appear to be at risk. Consumer prices rose by a modest 4.5% per annum in 1995 (Facts 1998:75).

The author of the book Facts (1997:75) explains the situation of Korean economy as follows:

The recent globalization attempt will cultivate Korea's efforts to achieve a new economy. With the successful completion of the globalization effort, an educational system will be established where youngsters with creative minds and enterprising spirits are fostered and where self-discipline and competitiveness are emphasized. This will strengthen Korea's intellectual potential. A free market order based on fair competition will dictate all economic activities; all economic transactions will be carried out in a more transparent and fairer environment, more competition will be introduced in the financial market, and factors of production will be allowed to move across borders without interruption. Government activities will be geared towards providing public services to the private sector, and a dramatic deregulation of administrative procedures will be implemented to achieve a "small and efficient" government. Ways of thinking and behaviour will become geared toward cooperation with the rest the world.

Nevertheless, there are still negative factors in the Korean economy:

- An enormous disparity and glaringly unequal distribution of wealth and power, the widening gap between the rich and the poor, and the endemic consequences for the social, economic and political life of Korea are still prevalent (cf Lee HS 1992:241-250).
- The Korean economy is at present still a neo-colonial economy, structurally and materially controlled and manipulated by the economic superpowers or imperialistic powers such as the USA and Japan.
- Korea has achieved so-called economic miracles despite a relatively fragile economy. Therefore, Korea is very much dependent upon the vagaries of the international market and the fluctuations of international trade.

- Korea is in a severe debt crisis and is dependent upon and subject to the dictation of international financial institutions, such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank (Abraham 1990:4-6).
- The level of unemployment is very high (Abraham 1990:4).
- The rate of economical growth is virtually at a standstill. Prices of goods are high in accordance with the high wages, which means that price competition is internationally disadvantageous. Industrial competitiveness demands structural adjustment of industries, technological innovations, improvement of information networks, and the enforcement of fair competition rules. For instance, the agriculture and fishery industries are in need of a structural adjustment process (cf Lee HS 1992:380). It is necessary for the improvement of labour relations, the promotion of efficiency and the improvement of the domestic economic investment environment.
- Urban centres are plagued by workers' struggles and attempts to achieve justice and equality (see Lee OJ & Lee HS 1989:320-325). There are also organized actions by peasants in the countryside who continue to demand more control of the fruits of their labour. Organized consumer groups point out the lack of basic goods and basic and necessary services.

3.4 Religio-cultural background

Cultures and religions in Korea are intermingled. Some religions are present in many cultures, and some cultures are open to several religions. The complexity of Korean religio-cultural reality is reflected in Shamanism, Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism and Christianity, which are the main philosophical and religious influences among Korean people, and which have long traditions of spiritual guidance to Korean people. Women have been treated as the inferior sex in almost all the racial and ethnic groups, cultures, and religions throughout the history of Korea. They have been exploited at home, at work and in their social life.

Women in the traditional society were expected to sacrifice themselves on behalf of their families and to devote themselves to their country by means of their labour. Patriarchal society never recognized women's roles, their labour and their contributions to society. Women's contributions were evaluated only privately. Even though women's

activities were confined to their houses, they contributed largely not only to society, but also their country. It is necessary to re-evaluate women's social roles and labours during the patriarchal society.

3.4.1 Education

In the premodern era, Korean women did not have an opportunity to be educated in private or public schools. After Christianity came into Korea, many schools were opened and Christian instruction made women encourage studying.

The attitudes toward female education before 1920 were as follows (see Kang JS 1994:97-98):

- A distinction was made between female education and female liberation. The purpose of female education was seen as contributing to the roles of mother and wife.
- Some had a negative opinion of female education. Even though women had studied it was difficult for them to get jobs. Thus, female education was not seen as particularly useful.
- Male opinion of female education was mostly negative.

During the period of Japanese colonialism, an enlightenment movement sprang up in Korea. Some Korean leaders believed that education was important for the future of Korea. Through education Koreans' abilities should be fostered for the construction of a modern nation. Thus, between 1905-1910, more than 5,000 nationalist schools were established at home and abroad (Korean History 1992:157). New academic learning along with national history and Korean language were taught. The purpose was the citizens' self-empowerment and autonomy as well as to foster patriotism among the people. Kang JS (1994:94) recognizes that Christianity and Christian missionaries contributed to female education. But after Korea lost its sovereignty completely, Japan suppressed Korean education and used force to close those schools. Japan emphasized colonial education in order to demand subservience to Japan. During Japanese colonial

rule, the Japanese tried to destroy the Koreans' identity. They initiated moral degradation and sold opium. They built public places for prostitutes. More people started to spend their money on buying alcoholic drinks and cigarettes in Korea. These negative economic conditions and low morals continued up until 1953. The Japanese colonial rule and the Korean Civil War were destructive to the Korean land and its people.

Nationalist education became active with the rise of the independence movement. Korean leaders established private schools in which students very often studied at night and the Japanese set up public schools. Even though schools had only small numbers of students in rural villages, the teachers and the students gathered to instill patriotism and teach the basics of education. Such activities of nationalist education at home and abroad not only aimed at developing Korean culture but also played a decisive role in training leaders of the independence movement.

Japan oppressed the study of Korean history and prohibited the use of the Korean language at school and at home. Moreover, Japan forced Koreans to change their names to Japanese names. During this time Korean literature and history regarded as the cultural heritage of the people, were secretly studied. For example, Chou Si-Kyong set up the Korean Language Institute to research and propagated the Korean language even under Japanese oppression (Korean History 1992:259). Many Korean scholars went to prison because of studying and using the Korean language. Some were martyred, for example, Shin Chaeho, who was captured by Japanese officers and put into the Lisoong Prison for having participated in the independence movement. He died in prison (Korean History 1992:259).

The leaders of the enlightenment movement published newspapers and magazines, for instance the Hwangsong Newspaper, the Cheguk Newspaper, the Taehan Newspaper and the Manseibo and Taehan Chagang monthly magazines. The leaders wrote patriotic editorials for the newspapers and magazines. The Japanese authorities often suspended these activities, confiscated the publishing houses and put a complete stop to it by 1940. As modern consciousness among the people grew, new developments could be seen in the fields of literature and art. New novels criticizing feudalistic morality and superstitions were written during the patriotic enlightenment period. In addition, people also sang songs which inspired in them a sense of independence and patriotism.

Since 1910, Korean women were often eager to study. Some reasons were:

- to gain economic independence,
- to obtain human rights,
- to fulfil their proper roles as mother and wife,
- to become more patriotic, and
- to be able to live independently if rejected by the husband's family (see Kang JS 1994:97-98).

After the Korean War, education improved in quality and quantity. Educational developments enabled people to accumulate knowledge and master technology in a short time. The literacy rate in Korea nears 99% and the secondary education standard has risen to high school level. Along with educational development Korea could rapidly gain economic growth and social development. Today, Korean women do not have any prohibition to education.

3.4.2 Religions

Korea has had many religions. Shamanism has a long history as a primitive religion (Facts 1997:159). There are two different categories in Korean religion: one is national and the other foreign religion. The national religion is indigenous to Korea, e.g. Shamanism, Cheondo that was caused by the *Dong-hak* movement, and Taechong. Cheondo possessed a strong nationalist consciousness that resisted the Japanese and played a pivotal role in the independence movement (Facts 1997:166). Cheondo still exists as a religion in Korea, but numbers are very few. Taechong is based on a Korean myth which people worship *Dankun*. It was nationalistic that was widely accepted in Korean society of Manchuria where armed independence struggles occurred (Korean History 1992:263). Taechon insists that it is the original Korean religion, but from the Christian perspective it seems to be more of a Shamanism. The national religions were established for Koreans' needs to protect the nation. The other foreign religions are Confucianism, Buddhism, and Christianity that were also spread widely as well as the

national religions. In this chapter 3, religions are dealt with: Shamanism, Confucianism, and Christianity.

Tu Wei-ming (1991:765) says, “Korean society has never lost its Confucian character”. The Confucian influence on family rituals, moral education, marriage arrangements, political alliance, genealogical concern and authority patterns is conspicuous. This means that Korea still has a Confucian tradition. The Korean search for cultural roots is intimately connected with the sense that what the “*han*”, the Korean people, experience is both a poignant reminder of the modern fate and a motivating force of realizing a future destiny (Tu Wei-ming 1991:765). Confucian revivalism, together with Christian evangelism and shamanism, provides the Korean people, especially the articulate minority, with a prophetic vision. Koreanized Confucianism and Koreanized Christianity become more authentic and suitable for Koreans than for the non-Koreans. The Korean people imported spiritual traditions (Buddhism as well as Confucianism and Christianity). It is not only the Korean culture or national religion but also the ethical and religious sentiments that empower the Korean Confucians and Christians. They are “fundamentalists” and “essentialists” in their faith so that they feel obligated to know and to interpret the true message in its genuine form.

Korea’s most ancient religions are Shamanism, Buddhism and Confucianism. All these played an important role in the country’s early cultural development and have greatly influenced thought and behaviour. Christianity was introduced approximately 200 years ago, but has spread rapidly to become one of the largest religions. There are also various minor religions, which consist of syncretized elements of these traditional religions.

According to the 1995 social statistics survey, 51.1% of Koreans follow a specific religious faith. Buddhists are 45.6%; Protestants are 38.7%; Catholics are 13.1%; and Confucians are 0.8% of the religious population (Facts 1998:158).

3.4.2.1 Shamanism

Shamanism is one of the folk religions that has evolved amongst the people over generations. Shamanism is based on the belief that human beings are not the only possessors of spirits, but the believers of Shamanism reside in natural forces and animate

or inanimate objects (Facts 1998:165). Suh KS (in Fabella, Lee, & Suh 1992:4) says, "Korean Shamanism is probably the most basic and pervasive form of Korean religiosity or spirituality". Shamanism is also based on an effort to cope with the unknown, the imponderables, and the joys and tragedies of the human predicament. Shamanism deals with sicknesses, birth and death, fears and dreams, rivalries, the evil eye, spirits, propitiation to the gods, the weather, good and bad fortunes, harvests, and so forth (Abraham 1990: 10). These cults have priests and practitioners of rituals. Elaborate rituals have been invented for solving the needs of people on different occasions. Many women who went to the shaman priests would rather ask something for their husbands, children, or people around them than for themselves. They attended churches, temples, and shaman rituals. From this, it becomes clear that women play the role of "religious attorney" in their family and community, praying for family members, for peace, harmony, preservation of life and blessing. Women believers are the overwhelming majority in all of the religions in Korea.

Shamanism in Korea is a tradition that carries the longest history and is closely related to Korean women (Yang HH 1997:139-140). In general, Cha (1994:116) points out that "Confucianism is understood as a male culture whereas Shamanism is seen more as a female culture". Choi Kil-Sung (1981:94-95) also points out that Korean culture has a double system, one being the women-centered shaman culture and the other the men-centered culture of Confucianism. Choi Kil-Sung (1981:98) further states that "Shamanism has survived up to this day because of women's strong support for it". Kendall (1985:34) says, "women's commitment to Shamanism may be a result of their oppressed and miserable situation under the tyrannical government of patriarchy". Kim Yel Kyu (in Suh KS 1992:261) also points out that "the secular principle of Confucianism is androcentric, whereas the religious principle of folk faith is managed by a large number of women". Suh KS (1992:4) states that the study of the shamanic religious form which controls the consciousness of Korean women, is necessary in order to analyze the religious forms of Korean women. Female shamans are larger in number than male shamans in comparison to the other religions in Korea. A Korean female theologian, Chung Hyun Kyung (1990:112) calls Asian women's popular religiosity "cosmic religion", which revolves around the rhythm of the cosmos.

On the other hand male-domination is mainly found in the meta-cosmic religions, the so-called “higher world religions”. Meta-cosmic religions go beyond this material world in order to find the “purer forms” of spiritual reality. Many male scholars think of meta-cosmic religion as a higher form than cosmic religion. They define cosmic religion as “primitive”, just as patriarchal thinking defines women inferior to men. This idea likewise mirrors how women are perceived in patriarchal society: as immoral beings in need of male domination.

Shamanism displays some positive features. Korean Shamanism does not see the relation between the two sexes as a perpetual struggle. Cha (1994:131) explains that “it is neither possible nor necessary for one sex to dominate the other since both should be complementary if new life is to be created”. Hahm, Pyong-choon (1988:63) says, “Korean shamanism has never viewed the relations between the two sexes as a perpetual struggle”. If either sex has the right to boast of being more productive, it is the female. Shaman priests had to overcome much suffering in order to become a shaman. Cha (1994:117) calls the shaman priest prophet, healer and reconciler. Therefore, shamans are acquainted with other people’s sufferings on account of their own experiences of miserable lives and sicknesses (see Cha 1994:113-133). These values provide a positive opportunity to grow, to sublimate and to overcome difficulties and suffering. A shaman who has been through this process then assumes the role of alleviating the suffering and unpleasant feelings of others, in order to show them a better way. The shaman becomes a friend to the lonely, gives food to the hungry, cures the sick, and functions as a priest and a prophet. Not only through a living person, but also through the dead, shamans try to erase people’s sufferings. Their task is to reconcile the living and the dead and to bring about peace and harmony in the community. In places where the shaman rituals take place people may come to see the true facts that were hidden secrets. Falsehoods and hatched plots are exposed. These places of shaman ritual are sometimes places of social persecution, but they are also places where public opinion is formed. This having been said, all are welcome at these ritual ceremonies. Through the pleasant celebrations, the shamans bless the people and the people share their communal lives, which means to laugh together, to cry together, and to share their pains. Here lies the potential for women to keep the Korean community together. Even today, virtually all segments of

Korean society, including many university students are attracted to shamanistic song, dance, and ritual because of the explosive potential of the shaman style of symbolic expression in Korean politics. Through these impressive performances, people transform shamanistic art into a powerful message of political protest. In Korea, most of the priests in Shamanism are women. Korean shamanism exhibits women-defined popular religiosity, that is, the powerful evidence of women's resistance to patriarchal religions. Women's leadership is mostly respected as sacred in Shamanism. Korean women need what Shamanism offers: to rediscover the wisdom of life-giving religiosity in order to survive on Mother Earth, which is increasingly threatened by rapist-type technology and nuclear war.

Of course, there are also some negative factors in this religious phenomenon. Cha (1994:131) warns, "false religious passion can mislead women who need to be comforted". For instance, blessings, material prosperity, or personal desires are asked for. Shamanism did not have the power to heal or to liberate women from the patriarchal irrationality of Korea. Shamanism did not define the origin of women's unhappiness and did not provide an alternative worldview to remove women's "*han*" (emotional oppression). Rather, women would remove their "*han*" through personal catharsis (Lee, JH 1994:4-5, 14-16). Shaman taboos and a panic complex can make people extremely uncomfortable and scared. From this analysis came shamanism, in the form of an ideological function, which made women inefficient and legally incapable.

3.4.2.2 Confucianism

The teaching of Confucius does not reflect much on the supernatural, except for an impersonal divine order referred to as heaven, which leaves human affairs alone as long as relative order and good government prevails on earth (Facts 1998:168). In this sense, Confucianism is a religion without a god. Tu Wei-ming (1991:742; see Yang HH 1997:139) says, "Confucianism was commonly regarded as a form of social ethics and a way of life. It is one of the oldest spiritual traditions in human history". Confucianism lays an accent on right conduct, sincerity and honesty in personal and social public life. As the ages passed, the sage and his principal disciples were canonized by later followers

as a means of inculcating their doctrines among simple and uneducated people. Confucianism is noted for its wisdom books, the *Five Classics* and the *Four Books*:

- Political institutions (such as the court rituals and the examination system)
- Social organizations (such as community compacts, and local schools)
- Family ethics (notably, ancestral veneration and respect for parents)
- Single-minded attention to self-cultivation (Tu Wei-ming 1991:743)

Confucianism formed the philosophical and structural backbone of the state. Even with the establishment from the 10th century, the form of government did not materially change, except that the influence of Buddhism became more pronounced. The Confucian-oriented Lee dynasty (1392-1910) (often criticized, for political power struggles and clan feuds deriving from differing interpretations of Confucian doctrine) actually achieved a golden age of renaissance (Facts 1998:169). Confucianism in Korea was manifested as a system of education, ceremony, and civil administration. The civil service examination, which was adopted after the Chinese system in the late 10th century, greatly encouraged studies in the Confucian classics and deeply implanted Confucian values in Korean minds. Even today, Koreans can hardly be said to have discarded the customs, habits, and thought patterns derived from Confucian teachings.

The idea of "predominance of man over woman" came from Confucianism, which was the national religion 1000 years ago in Korea. From that time on, women have been treated as inferior to men in the family and in society. This idea enforced a traditional system in the Korean society. Marriage had the purpose of continuing the paternal line, so polygamy was officially recognized. This idea led to the emphasis of women's purity and being a vestal virgin. At the same time women's endurance of men's debauchery was expected. They were not to be jealous of their husbands' concubines. Widows were prohibited by Korean custom and law to remarry. The death of the husband often resulted in real suffering for the wife. A childless young widow was often compelled to finish her life without any opportunity to bear a child. Husbands on the other hand could get a divorce from his wife on account of "the seven grounds for divorce". Some of the reasons why a man could divorce his wife were:

- if she did not respect the husband's parents,
- if she did not obey the husband,
- if she was jealous of the husband's concubines,
- if she could not fall pregnant, if she did not have a son, etc.

In ancient Korea, betrothals and marriages took place early, to ensure the continuation of the bloodline: girls were usually about fifteen when they got married; boys were younger. In most cases, the bride and the bridegroom had never met before their wedding day. Women did not have the legal right to request divorce until 1918 (Yang HH 1997:139; see Yang MK 1991:334-343).

When women wanted to marry, they did not have the right to choose husbands. Also, women were deprived the headship of the family, and inheritance of property. Women were treated as incapable people, expected to follow and obey the husband. Women were forbidden to decide about important matters independently. Kim Do-Su (1987:14-39) explains that "they were unable to keep their property and had to entrust their property to their husbands". Therefore, women depended on their husbands totally. They were expected to have a son for continuing the family bloodline, and for the welfare of the family, because men's labour was considered more important than that of women in the agricultural society. Women often could not manage the kinds of tasks that were expected of them and forced upon them. Women were therefore miserable and this led to their following different gods blindly. Women did not have any freedom. In patriarchal society they were not even allowed to leave their homes.

However, Confucianism had positive characteristics as well. The Confucians emphasized national and political stability, universal peace, social morality and solidarity. They also taught compassion, concern for personal well-being, concern for the other, sharing of possessions, love for the family or family harmony, respect for the elders, care of nature, and correct conduct in personal and public life. Furthermore, people were taught to respect their parents (filial duty). They were to promote peace and live in harmony with their brothers and sisters. They were to devote themselves to keep national independence. Faithfulness was considered an important value. People were to love

others, to be righteous, honest, and well mannered. They should be humble and frugal. People should have the ability to judge what is right and what is wrong, and to follow the right way. Peter Berger (1988:7-8) indicates that “Confucian performance for group orientation, collaborative effort, mutual support, and communicative rationality has greatly influenced Korean work ethic: “a positive attitude to the affairs of this world, a sustained lifestyle of discipline and self-cultivation, respect for authority, frugality, and overriding concern for stable family life”. Confucian ethics attempts to integrate the individual, communal and natural into a whole. The Confucian ideal of self-realization means the “unity of humanity and heavens”. The whole world, which includes the self, family, community, and nature, consists of interacting realities of life in harmony in order to build Heaven. Max Weber (1951:248) characterizes the Confucian life orientation as “adjustment to the world”. In his view, Confucianism tends to undermine cultural diversity and traditional patterns of social solidarity. Unfortunately, the conceptual apparatuses of Confucianism tend to give this mistaken impression.

Even though Confucianism had some positive characteristics, its instructions can also lead to prejudice. The Lee dynasty used Confucian ideology in order to retain their kingship and power. This meant that the common people and women were sacrificed to the force of politics. Ethics stressed loyalty and filial piety (obedience). Confucian devotion ensured a strong kingship. The people were devoted to only one king. Moreover, this philosophical theory supported the statement that a woman could not serve two husbands. Virtuous women were praised in Confucian society. It was said that a man was a servant to an absolute king of a nation, and a woman was a servant to serve a husband in a house. The woman’s active role was limited to her family system of patriarchy. A woman’s remarriage was not allowed in public. Lee Eek (1929:9), who was a loyal Confucian scholar in the Lee dynasty, said, “Wives must be diligent. They need no knowledge. They should know only what the differences between men and women are. Reading and studying is for men. If a wife tried to read and study, she would have been classified as a devil”.

Women did not have the chance to learn. They were socially and politically illiterate. They only had their private lives within their family structure. The thought that women’s

intellectual ability was inferior to that of men was in no way a proven fact, but was the result of patriarchal instruction.

Many sayings and proverbs in Korea originated within the ideology of Confucianism. They are often about comparisons between men and women. These sayings are popular and have had a large influence in Korea, both consciously and subconsciously. Sometimes they are used as propaganda for establishing and maintaining the social order. These sayings and proverbs mainly support the patriarchal tradition or the patriarchal ideology. Examples of this are the following:

- “When hens cluck in a house, that family will be destroyed.”

In this saying, “hens” mean women and “cluck” is referred to women’s nagging. Often when women give advice to husbands with all sincerity, the husbands simply ignore them. Women’s words are understood as being useless. This saying proves that men do not want to hear women’s comments, so women learned not to express themselves to men. This is often still the case today.

- “If the woman’s voice is carried over to the other side of the wall, the house of the woman will perish.”

This saying indicates that a woman’s loud voice is not a blessing. A woman’s voice should be tender, soft, and calm. Nothing though is mentioned about a man’s loud voice. Are men’s voices acceptable when loud? Why does this saying distinguish the man’s voice from the woman’s? Traditionally, the man’s loud voice is seen as “masculine”. In other words, if you do not want your house to perish, you the woman must not speak loudly. Unfortunately women were never in a position of authority to control their own household. Men have the control over women, just as the saying indicates.

- “A boy and a girl do not sit close together after seven years of age”.

This saying means: how can any woman understand men's deep ideas and thoughts; male and female roles are different, so they must not be allowed to talk to each other; after they are seven years old, women must only learn to do housework. Women should not be interested in outside work. They were taught to stay inside the house from that age on. Women's working outside was very rare up to 1970. From these roles, differences were emphasized, and women stayed "locked up" inside their houses.

- "A first born son is the pillar of the house".

This saying talks about the notion of preferring a son to a daughter. A man is more important than a woman in an agricultural society, because a man can do more strenuous work better than a woman can. To have sons is preferred by parents even nowadays. Traditionally, people thought that housework was easy, but that outside work was very difficult; women should be beautiful, but men should be masculine.

- "Women's and dogs' fates belong to their owners".

If the owner is good, their lives were bound to be happy. If not, their lives would be miserable.

According to a Korean proverb, there are five blessings, namely 1) longevity, 2) wealth, 3) health, 4) love of virtue, and 5) good death. A woman's life could be divided into three phases. Firstly, a woman depends on her father, when she is young. Secondly, a woman depends on her husband after marriage, and thirdly the woman depends on her son, when she is old. If she does not have a son, nobody would care for her in her old age. Therefore, people wanted to have a son. But people believed that these blessings came from God. People cannot bring about long life, wealth, health, love and good death. In the same way, women cannot decide their fate or fortune, whether she will have a good husband or not. So women need to endure their fate, even if it was bad. A woman's fate was similar to a dog's. Korean women's harsh lives can be illustrated through sayings such as these:

- “If a man comes into the kitchen, he will lose his pepper”. (Pepper refers to a man’s genital organ.)

Men were never allowed to enter a kitchen. This meant that men and women’s roles were different. Cooking, washing, cleaning the house and all kinds of housework were seen as the women’s task. This saying strongly expresses that men are exempted from housework. Instead, women need to work tirelessly in the house. Moreover, a man and a woman did not have their meals together. There was an order in which to have a meal. First of all, the men or the master of the house, for instance, the father, grandfather, and father’s brother, etc. ate. Next, the male children ate, and thirdly the women and the female children ate. Women prepared all the food, yet they ate last. There were usually three or four generations living together in a house, so the members of one family were more than 30 persons. To feed them all took a lot of hard work.

There are 146 sayings and proverbs that refer to women. From these 135 proverbs stereotype women as people lacking ability, subordinated, dependent people, tamed at home, having unreliable personalities and being jealous (Lee OJ & Lee HS 1989:16). A woman, who was educated and had great potential, was viewed “unlucky”. A clever woman was “ill-fated”. The male dominant culture strongly tried to prevent female intellectual development. The exclusively male intellectual ability was to enlarge and reproduce a men-centered ideology and patriarchy. Women became invisible. These sayings are common in Korean’s minds. The traditional education needs to be analyzed, in order to evaluate whether it is does good or harm. It will take some time to eradicate harmful education.

The main characteristic of patriarchy is a hierarchy. Korea has been an absolute hierarchical society. The standard of evaluation of people was based on coming from a “good family”. Korean society emphasizes “shame”. In such a culture it is important to uphold the reputation, both personal and the reputation of the family. To use shame, as a means to control a community, results in the double oppression of women.

One says that the beginning of human society was matriarchy, and the gender of women who created lives was revered. Patriarchal society regarded the female gender the power of creation. So the male desired to rule over the female. The female sex is

oppressed by means of this dualistic ideology. However, Schüssler Fiorenza (1981a:34; see Kim YO 1994:40) sees patriarchal oppression not merely as a dualistic ideology or in the construction of the androcentric world by means of language, but also as a social structure and a socio-political system which is managed by subordination or oppression. I agree with Fiorenza. Korean patriarchy has maintained its dominant, social, and political structure through out history. It has influenced the whole of Korean culture and politics. Under patriarchy women are used as sex objects. Such sexual ethics are still the order of the day. This causes not only women to suffer, but men also.

To understand Korean culture, it is necessary to understand Korean religions. Basically Confucianism was a national religion for 500 years in Korea so it influenced people's ideology and ethics, their consciousness and sub-conscious. Korean culture, which was influenced by Confucianism, has been a powerful means for the perpetuation of oppressive relationships and social structures. The collective consciousness of the both the dominant and the dominated is thus strengthened and handed down from generation to generation in a way that oppression is legitimized and accepted even by the oppressed. Liberation would mean for them to be freed of the power of such inhibitions, fears, and myths.

3.4.2.3 Christianity

Christianity reached Korea during the 17th century, when copies of the Catholic missionary Matteo Ricci's works in Chinese were brought back from Beijing by the annual tributary mission to the Chinese emperor (Facts 1998:163). Along with religious doctrine, these books included aspects of Western learning such as a more accurate calendar system and other matters that attracted the attention of scholars of Western studies, or the School of Practical Learning.

By the 18th century, there were several converts or potential converts among these scholars and their families, but no priests entered Korea until 1785, when a Jesuit, Father Peter Grammont, crossed the border secretly and began baptizing believers and ordaining clergy (Facts 1998:170). The number of converts continued to increase, although the propagation of a foreign religion in Korea was still illegal. There were sporadic

persecutions. By the year 1863, 12 Korean priests presided over a community of some 23000 believers.

A governor of the Lee dynasty, whose name was Taewongun, persecuted many believers (1863–1876). He was a xenophobic regent. Persecution continued until 1876, when the prince regent lost his power and Korea was forced to sign treaties with Western powers. In 1925, 79 Koreans who had been martyred during the Lee dynasty persecutions were beatified at St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, and in 1968 an additional 24 were beatified (Facts 1997:164).

In 1910, socialism was introduced to Korea. It involved social reformation, e.g. rejected classism and insisted on the equality of human beings. At that time, Koreans who supported socialism, criticized Christianity. Especially the communists were very critical of Christianity. According to Lee, Oo Jung (in Lee OJ & Lee HS 1989:102), socialists and communists thought that, "Christianity derived from modern American capitalism. It was believed that materialism and the power of the USA army influenced Koreans negatively or spoiled them. It made Koreans obedient, tolerant and submissive". Misdeeds of American missionaries were exposed and Koreans began expressing anti-missionary sentiments. Some Koreans attacked Christians as well as Christian churches in 1926. Christian churches in Korea tried to implement reforms within the situation, which consisted of Japanese exploitation, depravity, a financial crisis in the world and the influence of communism (Kim YO 1991:229). Korean churches started a revolt for various reasons, such as political, economic, and theological reasons. In the 1920s the Christian churches built hospitals for patients with mental problems, leprosy patients, tuberculosis patients and for social improvement. The churches turned their interest to the peasants and their social problems. They made many efforts to save Koreans from bad situations, They taught them to save money, buy good products and worked toward the abolition of public prostitution by Japanese. These kinds of activities spread to many places. In spite of Christian efforts in this regard, Korean Christianity was not mainly concerned with politics Korean theology was satisfied with colonial occupation. The evangelistic efforts were conservative and did not promote revolution. Christianity ignored the larger problem of Japanese exploitation. It meant that Christianity did not make an impact in Korea.

The YMCA was established in 1922 and Christian women founded an Association of Christian Moderation in 1923 (Lee OJ & Lee HS 1989:111). Their aims were female education and the improvement of women's lives. They organized movements against smoking, alcohol, and public prostitutes. The YMCA especially concentrated on the improvement of peasants' lives and on education for peasants, who were 80% of the Korean population at that time (Kang JS 1994:104-105). The YWCA was a pioneer movement for peasants. The YWCA had limited scope under colonial occupation that meant that not much was achieved for the women's social liberation.

During Japanese colonization, Christianity contributed to evangelism and participation in independent organizations (Lee OJ & Lee HS 1989:165). Many of the leaders of the famous March Fist Movement (1919) were Christians. Even though Japanese authorities continued to jail and torture Korean Christians, Christian organizations took part in political activities. They severely criticized national endeavors as well as Confucian institutions.

After independence, Korean churches divided into many denominations. One reason was that there were differences of opinion concerning the issue of bowing to the Japanese god or refusing to do so. Many sincere pastors and believers went to prison as they refused to worship the Japanese god. When they were released from prison they organized a synod by the name of "*Jai Kun Hoi*" (meaning "rebuilt") (Lee OJ & Lee HS 1989:186-187). Another reason for the division was that missionaries came from different denominations and they wanted to establish their own denominations in Korea. American missionaries influenced Korea's theological fundamentalism. They were generally very conservative. On account of the division Christians Korea could not unite into one church. After having been released from prison, a woman named Choi Duck-Jee evangelized people and took care of Christians in the synod of *Jai Kun Hoi* (Lee OJ & Lee HS 1989:187). This rebuilding movement strengthened the churches. The number of members increased rapidly. People repented of their sins and became committed Christians. She criticized the Korean church at that time, implying that the Korean church was

- not God-centered but men-centered,

- not truth-centered but power-centered,
- not faith-centered but project-centered,
- not Bible-centered but knowledge-centered,
- not future (heaven)-centered but present-centered,
- not patriotic but selfish, and
- not independent ideas but enslaved ideas.

(Choi MJ 1981: 115-116)

Choi Duck-Jee was the first female pastor. She was ordained in April 1951. Because of her, female ordination was written in the constitution of her denomination:

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We agree to the equality of men and women (Gn 1:27). Both genders can be burnt in sacrificial offering of the Old Testament (Gn 15:9, Lv 3:6). Female priests are allowed in the Millenium world of the Lord (Rv 20:4-6). There are no differences between men and women in pastoral service (Ep 4:11). Women's rights are allowed in the ends (Jl 2:29).(what does this mean?) The principle of the blessing of the cross cannot discriminate between men and women (Gl 3:28). In Protestantism women can be ordained as priests according to I Peter 2:4,5,9 (Lee OJ & Lee HS 1989:187-188).

However, the other churches did not recognize female ordination and treated the synod which allowed female ordination, as heretical. They did not allow women to be pastors and elders, but they recognized the need for female evangelists and female deacons. As a result of this, there were divisions between those who supported feminism and those who never accepted female pastors and female elders. At that time, there was a lack of knowledge about feminist theology. Choi Duck-Jee's personal effort was recognized and people knew her strong position in the church. But the other denominations did not accept her as an ordained pastor. The political power system in

Christianity and traditional ideology, which were men-centered, caused female ordination to disappear in 1954. Male-centeredness prevailed throughout the modern era and up to this day. It manifests in many different ways in the Korean church. Korean church is men-centered in its ideology and order. Female ordination has been reinstated in the Presbyterian Church in 1996 and Methodist church in 1933. Since Allen and Apenseller, the first Protestant missionaries, came into Korea, Korean churches accepted the theology of missionaries from Japan. During this period (1885-1935), most of the theological education and pastoral care, medical education and general studies were based on orthodox and fundamental theology. Korean churches were forced to obey by Japan and were taught subservience by missionaries. Because of Japanese colonization, missionaries went back to their countries and theological seminaries were closed since 1936.

Because of the Korean Civil War, Christians in North Korea faced religious risks. North Korea had never allowed religious freedom. When the war broke out, many Christians from North Korea fled to South Korea, where there was freedom of religion. Many ministers were kidnapped and killed by the Communists during the war. North Korea believed that Christianity was a supporter of capitalism and the church was recognized as a ruling group, which made Christianity an enemy to communist North Korea. Communism supported proletariats and ordinary people. North Korea has denied all religion (Min KB 1983:486).

A Chinese scholar Tu Wei-ming (1991:762) understands Korean Christianity as based on Confucianism.

The moral fabric of the society defined in Confucian terms has a delicate texture of shamanistic sensitivity. Whether or not this is the main reason for Korea's receptivity to Christian evangelism, the shamanistic stratum in the Korean psyche seems well-disposed to mass emotional appeal. The emotional intensity in Korean religious life and political culture makes the Confucian heritages an integral part of the dynamism of meetings, rallies campaigns, and demonstrations

Tu Wei-ming (1991:763) points out that the majority of Korean Christians accept the solemn ritual of honouring deceased ancestors through the age-old practice of communal offering as the proper way of being Korean. They do not find it to be at all in conflict with the Christian doctrine forbidding idolatry. Tu Wei-ming (1991:763) concludes that “Korean Christians in this sense are also Confucians”. Kwang-sun Suh (1992:31) says, “Korean Christianity has been shamanized”. The history of Christianity in Korea is short. Nevertheless Korean Christianity has taken root in the indigenous Korean religiosity and has become strong and vital. However, *minjung* and feminist theologians have found that Korean Christianity has taken over the liberating spirituality of the indigenous religions. For example, the shaman ritual makes the community whole and united, and revitalizes people’s energy to labour and love. Therefore, *minjung* theologian Suh KS (1992:35) says, “we do not have to ‘de-shamanize’, Korean Christianity but ‘re-shamanize’ it”.

Park Yong-ok (1975:48; Yang HH 1997:137) points out the contributions of Christianity to Korean women as follows:

- Women have the soul of God, in terms of equality of human beings.
- Women could go to the church, rather than remain at home.
- Women learned to read the Bible. It meant that women were given the equal chance of education.
- Many girls’ schools were opened, so women could go to the school. They were permitted scientific knowledge. Moreover, some women went abroad to study. Many wives realized that they wanted to study further, to grow and develop.
- Women started to participate in social work, became independent, developed themselves, and joined national movements.

Christianity contributed to the liberation of women from the pressures of patriarchal society, but there were limitations. Christians and missionaries were not too concerned with political matters. Christianity followed the Japanese colonial policies without question. Missionaries adhered to their conservative faith and emphasized only heavenly lives. They lacked a social opinion.

When Korean feminist theology was introduced to Korea in 1970s, it was divided into three categories (Kim YO 1994:61-84):

- Feminist theology started off by criticizing the wrongs of society, where women were not treated as human beings (Lee HS 1992:54; Lee OJ & Lee HS 1989:293). Feminist theology would criticize the social systems, social thoughts, or traditional theology that treated women as secondary. Feminist theology aimed to improve the thinking of women who had felt, saw, heard, and experienced discrimination throughout history.
- Feminist theology opened new visions of better relationships between men and women. It showed that men and women could have mutual relationships and partnerships in God's image.
- Feminist theology tried to reform society. Women needed to be liberated from oppression and oppressed situations.

During the 1970s, Korean feminist theologians were not working for the society and they were not working practically. They had personal and psychological work. The reason was that feminist theology in Korea did not have enough time to study and to practice. During 1980-1990, Korean feminist theologians did not focus on criticizing the patriarchal character of the Korean church but tried to find female liberation in the Bible (cf Lee OJ & Lee HS 1989:400). Their biblical approaches focused on texts, which were positive toward women and were liberating for women. Choi Man Ja (1995:26) criticized Korean feminist theology for not having a clear idea of the authority of the Bible. Nevertheless, Korean feminist theologians found liberating traditions and prophetic-critical traditions in the Bible. They used the methods of historical critique and social critique. They needed time to confirm a feminist theology of their own. Since 1990, the endeavors of the feminist theologians are directed toward the peaceful unification of women of the North and the South, demonstrations against the use of "comfort women" by the Japanese and Korean governments, an awareness campaign for women to favour Korean products especially agricultural products, and actions for the decrease of arms.

Korean feminist theology realized their own situations of Korea, up to the beginning of the 1990s. The Feminist Theologians' Association in Korea was established in 1985. For the first time, they tried to find their identity and to find specific tasks for Korean women. The Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians (EATWOT) asked Korean feminist theologians to prepare some essays on "Woman theology and the relativity of the context" for the seminar in 1985 (Chung HK 1990:15). Korean feminist theologians worked hard at this and together formed the Feminist Theologians' Association in Korea (Sohn SH 1994: Forward). Korean feminist theologians turned their attention to rural women, female workers, and poor women in Korea. Korean feminist theologians tried to theologize about and sociologically analyze their lives (see Lee OJ 1987; 1988). The EATWOT seminar was decisive as to which direction Korean feminist theology would take. Many practical essays were published after the seminar. Social groups for women's liberation were founded in the mid-1980s in Korea. The Feminist Theologians' Association in Korea participated in human rights movements, i.e., the movement of abolition of female retirement at the age of 25, the movement for the disclosure of the real facts when a policeman committed obscene acts toward a university girl, and many more.

A Korean feminist theologian Park Sun-Kyung (1982:5) asked: "who are feminist theologians in Korea?" She says that feminist theologians consist not only of professional theologians such as lecturers and specialists of theology, but also of Christian women who study theology from their experience of oppression in the Third World. She adds that women need to re-define word "feminist theologian" because of the ideological changes (paradigm shift) that have taken place. Feminist theologians include those who are female ministers, missionaries, educators, and Christian women who stay at home (Kim YO 1991:54). She saw all Christian women as feminist theologians.

Korean feminist theologians use hermeneutical methods to express their experiences. Women attempt to theologize about their experiences and to connect Korean women's stories with the stories of women in the Bible (see Lee OJ 1987). Story-telling is actually a woman's way of sharing and relating, because women have been excluded from education (Chung HK 1990:104). Through story-telling, people can understand their

lives. Women from various backgrounds come together and listen to stories of victimization and liberation. Korean feminist theologians are committed to inviting poor farmers, workers in factories, slum-dwellers, and prostitutes to tell the stories of their lives. When women listen to the stories of other women, they can relate their experiences to their own (Chung HK 1990:104-105). Then they can analyze society, culture, the tradition and people's ideas. Women talk about their concrete, historical life experiences, so the stories embody their truth, and it is powerful. The story-telling moves in cycles: listening to an individual's situation, social analysis, theological analysis, then finding possibilities to help or finding solutions.

Lee Oo Jung (1982:89), a Korean feminist theologian sees "women's stories as theological sources". She compiled stories from folk tales, legends, myths, proverbs, and the songs of battles, which were not written down, but were related orally, among the ordinary Korean people. These showed the extent to which Korean women had been oppressed, isolated and dehumanized in history, and how they could overcome those situations in order to feel optimistic about their future. The stories empower other women who are dehumanized. Korean *minjung* theologian Kim Young Bok (1983:78-92), who is a male, feels deep solidarity with women's struggles in Korea. He understands the story-telling method socio-biography. Story-telling is not explained with social and scientific methods or by means of historical and philosophical knowledge. There is also Bible story-telling by means of which Christian women get closer to the Bible.

Korean women interpret the Bible from their own perspective. Kwok Pui-lan (1987:70-91; see Chung HK 1990:107) refers to biblical interpretation as a "dialogical imagination". Christian women have the biblical story and their own story. They try to bring the two in dialogue with each other. When women read the Bible, they use their imagination to discover the wisdom from both biblical stories and their own stories for their own understanding and liberation. When one reads a woman's story in the Bible, one understands it not as a personal story, but as representing the whole of women's experience. Take for example the story of the Hebrew midwives, Shiphrah and Puah (Ex.1:15). Pharaoh, who was a dictator, ordered every son who was born to the Hebrew people to be killed. The action of the midwives who saved baby boys, is not understood

as a personal act, but as the model for many women. The story of Moses' mother is not a personal story either, since many mothers at that time tried to save their sons. When one reads this story, one sees many women's efforts and their rage. The story of the poor Korean girl *Simchung* who sold her body for her father, is also interpreted as the story of all poor girls in Korea. Her story lives on today. Kim Kyung Suk was born in a poor rural area. She could not be educated properly. She went to Seoul to work in a factory, where she received low wages and worked under poor conditions. She became ill, insisted on improved working conditions for the many poor workers. She confronted the employer on behalf of all the women. Yet, many people cannot remember her name. She tried to act for the liberation of poor women and fight for better working conditions. On account of her story, people realized the serious social situation in the 1970s. Development of industry was considered to be most important, which meant that human rights were infringed. Feminist theologians discover social problems from one personal story (cf Lyu 1991:80-88). They understand one woman's experience as being part of many women's experiences. They use sociological analysis and historic criticism to solve women's problems.

Lee Oo Jung (1982:89-91) explains that, if women confront evil, they would overcome the evil powers with their wisdom and their sacrificial love such as can be seen in Korean folk tales and legends, e.g. *Sim-chung*, *Chun-Hyang*, and princess *Bari*. The women in the stories did not use any violence to triumph over evil. Those who understand Jesus' suffering, death, and resurrection can be disciples of Jesus, who bring real peace and salvation to the world. Choi Man-Ja (1990:259) studies Korean Shamanism as a Christian woman. She tries to find the characteristics of Shamanism in the Christian God. The fact is that God is a God of comfort and can solve people's problems. These two feminist theologians, Choi MJ and Lee OJ, started to define the oppressive experiences of Korean women and attempt to help women to be happy. It is important for Korean women to develop an understanding of women's problems in order to find solutions.

Korean feminist theology is surely to empower Korean female Christians (Choi MJ 1987; Choi HK 1981). Theological education for Korean women has been expanded. It is necessary that women's issues are preached about in order to wake up the lay people.

The liturgist should use inclusive language rather than exclusive male language. Heidegger (1987) thinks of language as creative power. Wittgenstein's view about language is concerned with the conceptual grammar and the power of pictures created in the mind. Wittgenstein's (1980:289-298; 1994:139-170) notion of conceptual grammar pertains to the pre-cognitive level. Language is bound up with judgement and forms of life. The language of the Korean church is men-centered which is a result of patriarchy. Important metaphors in the church are those of God as "father" and "king" and the congregations are "sons" or "brothers". Male language helps to create a male-centered ideology that excludes females. Nelle Morton (1972:182) says, "as women questioned the generic use of male words they were promptly put down repeatedly with ridicule. Finally it became quite evident to them that male and not the generic in the male terminology was meant". Letty Russell (1974:95) mentions that nowhere is woman's experience of male dominated language more pervasive than in the church and synagogue. The Korean church teaches women that they are created in the image of God, but then uses masculine language to refer to God. This double message creates a conscious or subconscious conflict within women. For women to get closer to the image of God, they feel they must disregard their femininity. Male God-language contributes to women feeling worthless and inferior. Brian Wren, a male theologian and hymn writer, points out that male-centered language is problematic. He said that man is depicted as the controller and woman as subordinate, and God has been usurped to legitimate a male centered ideology. Wren (1991:1-2) asks "whether it is God's will or the people's distortion and the result of sin that caused men to become dominant?" He insists men and women must repent about male control and female subordination. The male centered language influences the relationship between man and woman as a ruler and an obedient one. The Korean language is different from English. The Korean language does not have a sexual distinction in itself. Koreans do not call God "He". Therefore Koreans are not so sensitive about male-centered language. However, prayers, liturgies, and the symbols of the Korean church are male-centered and that does affect people's thinking. In order to introduce inclusive language in Korean churches the procedure will have to be: theological persuasion, ecumenical agreement, a paradigm shift among ministers and the education of church members.

The worship service is a ritual where believers make use of both body and mind. So the ritual and the whole process of a worship service must be developed from various ideas. Feelings were seen as inferior to reason, so feelings are treated carelessly in worship services. Women's feelings are not adequately expressed. Women's voices have been lost. Women want to express their experiences about meeting God with joyfulness and freedom. One example of a female creed written by Korean feminist theologians for use in the celebration of the Asian week, will be given here. This creed was also used in the opening ceremony of the 6th meeting of the Feminist Theologians' Association in Korea. I translated the prayer as follows (Lim HS 1991:279-280):

Leader: We believe in God.

People: God created men and women in God's image and gave the world to both men and women to care for.

Leader: We believe in Jesus.

People: Jesus is the only chosen son of God. Jesus was born of the holy mother Mary.

Leader: Jesus heard women's voices, loved women. Jesus stayed with them and talked to them about the new kingdom.

People: Therefore female disciples followed and served him.

Leader: We believe in Jesus.

People: Jesus spoke to a woman about theology near the well. Jesus told her his Messianic ideas for the first time. Jesus sent her to spread the good news in the village. We believe in him.

Leader: We believe in Jesus on whose head one woman poured ointment of pure nard in Simon's house.

People: We believe in Jesus who scolded male guests, who said wherever the Gospel is preached in the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her.

Leader: We believe in Jesus who healed a woman suffering from hemorrhage for twelve years. Jesus rejected the superstition about the blood.

People: We believe in Jesus who straightened a woman's back on a Sabbath because Jesus loved women.

Leader: We believe in Jesus who spoke to people about God in parables. God is as a woman looking for her lost golden coin in a parable. And God was explained as a crying woman who was looking for her baby.

People: We believe in Jesus who thought the process of birth was the process of renewal and change.

Leader: We believe in Jesus who thought of himself as a hen which gathers her brood under her wings.

People: We believe in Jesus who appeared before Mary Magdalene after his resurrection and gave her the joyful message.

Leader: We believe in Jesus who was unimpaired.

People: There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female in Christ Jesus.

Leader: We believe in the existence of the Holy Spirit because we are all one in Jesus' redemption.

People: We believe in the Holy Spirit, as we bring forth our prayers and many stories to pray.

All: We believe in the Holy Spirit of God, who created us, gave us life, and protects us continually as a hen protects her brood under her wings.