

EMPOWERMENT OF KOREAN WOMEN FROM A FEMINIST PERSPECTIVE: A POSTMODERN HERMENEUTICAL STUDY

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	1
1.1	Women's experience	1
1.2	Korean women's experience	5
1.3	Problem statement	8
	1.3.1 Relevance of study	8
	1.3.2 Research plan	18
2	METHODS	20
2.1	Methods in Practical Theology	23
	2.1.1 Characteristics of Practical Theology	25
	2.1.2 Methods as scientific research	25
	2.1.3 Methods as logical research	29
2.2	Methods in postmodernism	31
	2.2.1 Characteristics of postmodernism	31
	2.2.2 Criticism	33
2.3	Methods in feminist theology	38
	2.3.1 Characteristics of feminist theology	39
	2.3.2 Deconstruction	40
	2.3.3 Feminist critique/ feminist criticism on literatures	42
3	UNDERSTANDING KOREAN WOMEN	48
3.1	The myth of Korean origin	48
	3.1.1 The story of myth	48
	3.1.2 Theological reflection	49
3.2	Political and historical understanding	50
	3.2.1 Korean history and the political situation in the premodern era	50
	3.2.2 Japanese colonialism	56
	3.2.3 Democratic republic of Korea	60

3.3	Economy	70
3.3.1	Primary structure	70
3.3.2	Industrial development	74
3.4	Religio-cultural background	78
3.4.1	Education	79
3.4.2	Religions	81
3.4.2.1	Shamanism	82
3.4.2.2	Confucianism	85
3.4.2.3	Christianity	92
4	THE BIBLE AND KOREAN CHRISTIAN WOMEN	105
4.1	Understandings of the Bible	105
4.1.1	Fundamentalist understanding of the Bible	107
4.1.1.1	Phenomena of fundamentalism	108
4.1.1.2	Fundamentalism in Korea	112
4.1.1.3	Criticism of fundamentalism	114
4.1.2	Feminists theologians' understandings of the Bible	117
4.2	The Social roles of women in the Bible and in early Christianity	120
4.2.1	Fundamentalists' view of society and culture	120
4.2.2	Gender meaning and roles	123
4.3	Images of Jesus in the view of Korean women	132
4.3.1	Traditional reflection	133
4.3.1.1	Jesus as the King and God	133
4.3.1.2	Jesus as the Savior	133
4.3.1.3	Jesus as suffering servant	135
4.3.1.4	Jesus as Lord	137
4.3.2	New emerging images of Jesus	138
4.3.2.1	Jesus as liberator	138
4.3.2.2	Jesus as mother and woman	143
4.3.2.3	Jesus as life-giver	147

5	FEMINIST CRITIQUE IN PRACTICE	149
5.1	Feminist critique about the story “a good wife” (Proverbs 31:10-31)	153
5.2	Feminist critique about Korean literatures	158
5.2.1	Simchung	158
5.2.2	Mi-Mang (the widow)	160
5.2.3	A happy woman	171
5.2.4	Gasi Gogi (a thony fish)	177
5.3	A woman’s prayer	188
6	CONCLUSION	192
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	197
	SUMMARY	222
	KEY TERMS	224

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Women's experience

Human experience is the starting point of a cycle of interpretation of the world, society and even the Bible. The fact that women are biologically different from men is not a completely irrelevant factor. Women, through their bodies, have some distinctive experiences of the world that men do not have. For example, men have never experienced the pain and joy of childbirth. Rosemary Radford Ruether (1985a:113; see also 1993:12-16) finds "women's experiences such as these a paradigm of divine-human relationships". Elisabeth Moltmann-Wendel (1991:ix) sees that "the difference between the sexes is governed not so much by the differences between their bodies, as by the different social relationships and insights that result from them, although sometimes, these are conditioned by the body". But that means that difference should not be reduced to the biological categories nor to eternal modes of being (ontological categories), but should include the historical experiences of women and men as they can be found today in analyses by social psychologists as well as in personal statements of women.

Some women's experiences have been created by social and cultural persuasion in a male dominant society. Letty Russell (1974:29; see in Russell & Clarkson 1996:257-258) says, "the domination of women by men is an ancient and persistent form of subjection of human being to a permanent status of inferiority because of sex". In such a society, women were treated as inferior and marginalized by male dominance. For example: in some cultures, menstruation and childbirth were interpreted by men and accepted by women as unclean or as pollution, so women were alienated from a positive understanding of their own bodily experience. Russell (1974:9; cf Firestone 1970:1-14; Foucault 1984a) realizes that "the oppression of women is the most universal form of exploitation, which supports and perpetuates other forms of exploitation in both church and society".

Women should now begin to use their experiences as a liberating empowerment from within the patriarchal cultural context. Women's experiences can be used to criticize androcentric interpretations, which define who and what women are. In the androcentric cultures of the biblical traditions, masculine characteristics are ascribed to God as a projection of male authority and superiority in society (Russell 1974:98). Women should begin to see this and to name their experiences. They should at last affirm their own bodies and their experiences as playing a good role for them. Then will they be able to free themselves from androcentric ideologies.

In some texts of the Bible, the woman of ancient Israel is portrayed as a class of property (Ex 20:19; Dt 5:21) and women of the early church were treated as inferior (1 Cor 11:3). A reading of the Bible provides different ways of talking about women, for example that women were created in the image of God (Gn 1:27), which means that women are valued in certain verses, but in other verses women were nameless and invisible. To illustrate the problem some evidence of the submissiveness of women is shown in this sample of biblical literature.

... If a woman conceives and bears a male child, then she shall be unclean seven days... But if she bears a female child, then she shall be unclean two weeks (Lv 12:2, 5).

The daughter of any priest, if she profanes herself by playing the harlot, profanes her father; she shall be burned with fire (Lv 21:9).

... the men of the city, base fellows, be set the house round about, beating on the door; and they said to the old man, the master of the house, "Bring out the man who came into your house, that we may know him." And the man, the master of the house, went out to them and said to them, "No, my brethren, do not act so wickedly...

here are my virgin daughter and his concubine;
let me bring them out now. Ravish them and do
with them what seems good to you; but against this
man do not do so vile a thing” (Jdg 19:22-24).

A certain woman threw an upper millstone upon
Abimelech’s head and crushed his skull. Then he
called hastily to the young man his armor-bearer,
and said to him, “Draw your sword and kill me,
lest they say of me, ‘A woman killed him’” (Jdg 9:53-54).

Now King David was old and advanced in years;
and although they covered him with clothes, he
could not get warm. Therefore his servants said
to him, “Let a young maiden be sought for my lord
the king... let her lie in your bosom, that my lord
the king may be warm.” So they sought for a beautiful
maiden throughout all the territory of Israel, and
found Abishag the Shunammite, and brought her to the
king (I Ki 1:1-4).

A good wife...

.....

She considers a field and buys it;
with the fruit of her hands she plants a vineyard.

She girds her loins with strength
and makes her arms strong.

She perceives that her merchandise is profitable (Pr 31:10, 16-18).

A continual dripping on a rainy day and a
contentious women are alike (Pr 27:15).

The lips of a loose woman drip honey,
and her speech is smoother than oil;
But in the end she is bitter as wormwood,
sharp as a two-edged sword (Pr 5:3-4).

The Lord has created a new thing on earth:
a woman protects [lit., encompasses] a man (Jr 31:22).

I will not punish your daughters
when they play the harlot,
nor your brides when they commit adultery;
for the men themselves go aside with harlot,
and sacrifice with cult prostitutes (Hs 4:14).

In the Old Testament, women are either heroines, for example Sarah, Deborah, Ruth, Esther, or villains, such as Jezebel, and Delilah. More often women are not mentioned at all. Women's names do not appear in the genealogies. Phyllis Bird (1974:41) points out that "the Old Testament is a 'Man's Book', where women appear for the most part simply as adjuncts of men, significant only in the context of men's activities". She continues, to say, "the Old Testament is a collection of writings by males from a society dominated by males".

The following New Testament texts are also examples of the androcentric biases of the male traditions.

"But I want you to understand that the head of every man
is Christ, the head of a woman is her husband, and the
head of Christ is God" (I Cor 11:3).

Any man who prays or prophesies with his head covered
dishonors his head, but any woman who prays or

prophesies with her head unveiled dishonors her head
it is the same as if her head were shaven (I Cor 11:4-5).

As in all the churches of the saints, the women should
keep silence in the churches. For they are not permitted
to speak, but should be subordinate, as even the law says (I Cor 14:34-35).

Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord.

For the husband is the head of wife as Christ

So also wives should submit to their husbands in everything (Ep 5:22-24).

These passages demonstrate the submissiveness of women in biblical times and cultures. The Bible is male-centered and seems to take a serious view of men and their activities. This is evident in its transmission, translation and interpretation, so far. Throughout history, there were many tyrannical rulers who ruled for short or long periods but were eventually, overthrown. But the regime of sexism seems to be unending. Women have experienced the oppression of women as one of the oldest forms of oppression in human history. Ruether (1985a:113) expresses it as follows.

Women's experience explores the exposing of classical theology as a critical force, including its foundational tradition in Scripture, as shaped by male experience rather than human experience. Women's experience makes the androcentric bias of the original formulations and ongoing interpretations of the tradition visible, rather than hidden behind the mystifications of divine authority.

1.2 Korean women's experience

Korean women have experienced classism, sexism, and tribal conflicts. Korean women have had a triple burden. Classism is basically caused by the politics, the economics, and the history of Korea. Sexism mainly resulted from ethical and religious discrimination in Korea. Tribal conflicts occurred in the family system.

Korean women have had experiences of social oppression in the history of Korea. Korea was an extremely patriarchal society in the pre-modern era. Confucianism had a significant influence on Koreans, during the Lee dynasty, which lasted 500 years (1394-1910). Korean society was a men-centered society; "Man is heaven and woman is earth, so woman must follow man" (Han KY¹ 1991:67). Women did not have any chance to participate in political activities. Women's role was only to feed the family and care for their households. Also, the king was considered to be heaven and people earth. Korean politics obviously had different social levels: people who were high class were rich but the low class was very poor. Their social level was an inheritance from their parents. Women's positions were decided according to their husbands and husbands' family. Women who were in the lower classes were treated harshly. Korean women were continually taught obedience and endurance without complaining. Some sayings expressed Korean women's experience in the pre-modern era: women should be blind, even though they saw something; women should be deaf, even though they heard something; women should be mute, even though they had something to say. The philosophy of Confucianism led Korea to discriminate against women in its history. Politically, Korea was a monarchy during the 19th century, and during the 20th century was colonized by Japan, experienced the Korean Civil War and military dictatorship, until it eventually settled for democratic government.

During the Japanese colonialization, many Korean women were forced to serve Japanese armies as "comfort women". The Japanese took 200 thousand young women under the name of "comfort women" to the field of war. Fifty thousand or seventy thousand among them became prostitutes for Japanese soldiers. They were between 16 and 32 years old. This was nothing short of forced prostitution for serving the Japanese soldiers in the World War II. The Korean government found this to be a shameful loss of morality. The government hid this reality officially until 1992. In Korean history, Korea was often powerless. Korean women were powerless, voiceless, and invisible. Many of the comfort women were killed by the Japanese when the Japanese lost World War II. Some of these women remained in Japan. A small number of them returned to their

¹ Because of the fact that a great number of the Korean population has the same surnames, it is necessary to write the author's initial name with the surname.

birthplaces in Korea, but they were seen as sinners or shameful persons. They were exploited by Japanese colonialization and ignored by the Korean government.

As far as religion is concerned, shamanism was an indigenous religion in the pre-modern era. Buddhism was a national religion from the end of the 9th century to the 13th century, and Confucianism was a national religion in the Lee dynasty (from the 14th century up to 1910). Women were not treated as valuable in Buddhism or Confucianism. When Christianity came to Korea, women were shocked by the teachings of Christianity. Korean women became aware of their miserable situation in society and cultural customs (see Lee OJ & Lee HS 1989:15-19, 31). Christianity spread rapidly among the peasant class. Missionaries had easier access to these classes. For example, women stayed at home. When they went out, they had to cover their faces. Women did not have the opportunity to be educated. Different social levels resulted in different roles and attitudes. Some people belonged to royal families and others were slaves from their birth. The first Korean churches were built in the shape of a “V” to conform to cultural customs. One line of the “V” was for women and the other line for men. Or, alternatively, in a conventional rectangular building, there was a curtain between the seats for men and women, because men and women could not sit and talk together. People of different classes could not sit together either. Christianity had broken the barriers of social classes and changed the dominant thinking. Christianity was the “Good News of liberation” for the poor, slaves, and women. However, since the Korean church became institutionalized, the system once again became hierarchical. Korean women became invisible once again.

Today, more than 20% of the population in Korea is Christian and more than half the members in Korean churches are women. But most of the clergy consists of men and they have taught the Bible from a male-centered perspective. In the past, Korean women were taught biblical interpretations and teachings by male ministers who were obviously one-sidedly men-centered. Regardless of this, Christian women wished to be good believers so they tried to obey those instructions. Women in Korean culture should sacrifice themselves for the family, society, and nation. Likewise, the Korean church also demands of female Christians to sacrifice themselves for the church.

However, the situation for women in Korean society altered drastically during the 19th century to the 20th. One reason for this is the change from premodernism to

modernism to postmodernism. Ways of thinking have changed, for example all human beings are considered to be valuable and equal. Women could also obtain human rights. Another reason is economical changes. An agricultural society turned into a multi-industrial society, which allowed the country to break free from underdevelopment and become a developing nation. Through these changes, more people began to move away from male-centered ideologies. Another reason is feminist theology. Feminist theology offers a different approach to the religious understanding of women and men by exposing the cultural conditioning of religious belief (Isherwood & McEwan 2001:74). Nevertheless, women in Korea have been secondary politically, economically, socially, and religiously. Korean women have been taught subordination in society and in the church. Female Christians have been struggling to find their position as Christian women, who want to accept the Bible. Korean women belong to Korean society, so they have experienced Korea's history as witnesses, as actors, or as victims.

1.3 Problem Statement

1.3.1 Relevance of Study

Many things have continually changed throughout the last 100 years: Koreans' customs, lifestyle, thinking, manner, political structures, the economic system, educational methods, international relationships with other countries, and so on. Korean history can be discussed from the perspective of the pre-modern, modern, and postmodern eras.

Korea in the premodern era was a patriarchy. Korean patriarchy was institutionalized by the "kingship system" that was the politico-legal institution recognized by the Lee dynasty, and was supported spiritually by Confucianism since 1394. This authoritative power of kingship ruled the country politically, socially, and culturally. Since every policy was decided under the authoritative name of kings, no one was allowed to resist that power. Patriarchy remained as a norm of living, influencing thinking, morals, and even affecting various religions. To support the patriarchal system, the family system was fully utilized. The father had absolute power at home, wives and children were subordinated to him. The women's inferiority in society corresponds to the patriarchal

structure of society. "Patriarchy" literally means "rule of the father". Patriarchy is the sanctuary of male authority over female and over younger people. For five hundred years, male dominated societies have accepted patriarchy as a "natural order": women should serve men, and children should serve their parents, because they are the ones with the weaker mind who should serve the stronger. Here, subordination is linked with inferiority. The authority of men with regard to women is based on superiority. Patriarchy creates order, and controls the economy and politics in society.

In the traditional Korean society, women were largely confined to the home. From a young age, women were required to learn the Confucian virtues of subordination and endurance to prepare for their future roles as wife and mother. While being denied any opportunity to participate in the management of the large extended family, women played an important role, as they served to maintain the family line. Women were invisible, voiceless, nameless, and treated as secondary in the pre modern era. Women were not allowed to work in public places, even though they dedicated themselves to their families as beloved wives, respected mothers and hard workers. Women were unable to obtain any rights in the family and in society; they were invisible. Women were neither allowed to speak or be heard in society or in their family. Women did not have the right to express their feelings; they were voiceless. When a baby girl was born, the parents were not happy, because they needed men for agricultural labour. Parents did not give their daughters names with meaning. After marriage, women lost their names. They were either called somebody's wife, somebody's mother or somebody's family member. Nobody remembered women's names. And even women themselves did not want to be called by their names officially; women were nameless. Women were forbidden to study at any public educational institutions in the premodern era. They were required to learn only housework. They were marginalized from politics, economy, cultures and even religions. Women were victims. Because people were influenced by patriarchal ideologies and men-centered education, women were treated as secondary, whereas men were given priority in all cases. What were the Korean women's identities in the premodern era? Women were to be virgins and obedient to their parents before marriage. They identified themselves with obligations to be quiet and obedient to their husbands

after marriage, and they strove to be a good assistant, a good cook, a good cleaner and a hard worker at home.

For Korean women, the modern era is seen as the period in time when they started to work and to be educated, so they came to self-awareness and learned to express their opinions individually or as a group in the society. Generally speaking, the modern era was closely connected to the development of capitalism. The Korean dynasty started to change into capitalism, not by choice, but because of the diplomatic relations with some powerful countries, forced on Korea by Japan, during more or less the end of the 19th century. During this time Korea became a Japanese colony. This means that the Korean women's experiences were very different from that of the women of other countries. Many Korean women became prostitutes. Despite the Japanese colonization, Korean women faced the modern era and their lives were changing as Korea came out of the premodern era.

The situation began to improve, however, thanks to the education of women, followed by the opening of the country to the outside world. Educated Korean women engaged in the arts, teaching, and religious work, as well as the enlightenment of other women. The self-awakening of women led to the realization of their national consciousness and patriotism against the Japanese occupation. Women took part in the independence movement with no less vigour, determination and courage than men did. A movement of women's liberation calling for expanded rights also began to emerge. Women began to ask what their tasks were for their society, their class, and their country. They began to ask how they themselves understood women's positions and problems, moreover how women could work together to solve their problems positively. For the first time, a number of educated elite women were seen to be very important by ordinary Korean women. Those elite women challenged Korean men and women. They broke through traditional thinking on, for instance, marriage, female education, and female activity in the society. They were not accepted in the traditional society. For example, most of them could not marry because bridegrooms did not want to marry educated brides. Men worried that they could not control educated wives. They feared that those women wished to control their husbands, and did not respect them. There was another reason for the elite women not to have married. While they studied, they had missed the chance to

get married because it was popular to get married at an early age. The other reason was that they rejected traditional marriage because they did not want to be as slaves. The elite women pointed out what women's problems were and criticized Korean society. They showed a new direction for the improvement of women's lives. But most of the Korean women were still poor farmers and workers. The educated women started to speak and act for the poor agricultural women who were the majority. Korean women began to realize that they too had personal and national rights as did women of other countries. But they did not deal deeply with the women's classic problems, in terms of improvement of social positions. This meant that there were no changes for the better regarding the official position of women.

With the establishment of the Republic of Korea in 1948, women attained constitutional rights to equal education and job opportunities and to participate in public life. A growing number of parents came to believe that their daughters needed to be educated in various fields, as the work of the female population was needed for industrialization. Korean men and women concentrated on only one task, which was to develop industry, during the modern era. There was nothing - because everything had been destroyed in the Korean Civil War (1950-1953). The modern era gave the opportunity for many factories to be built by the Korean government. It was time that women went to work in order to contribute to the economic and industrial growth of the country. Many young women were employed in factories for the first time. They were happy to earn money. But despite their service to Korean industry and economy, women were discriminated against in terms of low wages, a poor working environment, long working hours and being treated as inferior compared to their male workers. During this era, people came to realize the importance of women's labour. It was an important time for women to rise from obscurity and to show their value. But women's voices were still weak. They still mostly endured their bad conditions just as they had endured the traditional structures of the premodern era.

It is difficult to pinpoint the beginning of the postmodern era because the modern era and the postmodern eras are closely linked. It is necessary to understand the phenomenon of postmodernism in Korea. The Korean feminist theologian Kim Ai-Young (1995:228) criticizes Cox's (1965) insistence that postmodernism can be explained only in terms of

the societies of the United States of America and other western countries. Cox (1965) argues that other countries do not experience postmodernity. Kim AY criticizes Cox for his American superiority. Cox says that postmodernity cannot be experienced before a country has passed through modernity. Postmodern thinking was introduced in Korea by American literature and literary theories, such as the construction, deconstruction of western postmodernism, which are the main theories and methods of western literary analysis. The Koreans did not study and discuss postmodernism much, but they accepted it. Korean society did not have enough experience and had not spent enough time on modernism itself. Nevertheless, the life-style of Korean society is not very different from that of North America or any other western countries, and there is evidence of postmodern trends in Korea. It means that Korean society has been affected by the postmodern popularization of western capitalism, whose motto is "pursuit of profits" and "only emphasizing convenience". Postmodernism connects with the economy. Taking over of Western ideas in Korea started with the disillusionment of a dull labour market. Korea accepted postmodernism as a social stream with the collapse of the international socialism. Postmodernism and postmodern theologies, which are spreading in the world, seem to favour America in establishing their power in the world. The American economic system and politics are deeply intertwined with the politics and economies of the world. It can be seen as the late monopolistic capitalism. These factors do not make much allowance for pluralism in the world, with the possible exception of cultural plurality. Even though people speak positively of a variety of lives, various rhythms, theories, sounds, colours and opinions, reality does not reflect this positivity. The world can succumb to a kind of fascism, dictated by the American politics and economical system. Postmodern theologies are attempting to explain many phenomena of postmodernism, but there are limitations.

Knowledge of the world has changed in the past decades. Korea is not yet completely free from the ideologies of the Cold War, because the two parts of Korea still exist. Korea needs to consider postmodernism; for whom postmodernism applies to; for what the advantages and disadvantages of postmodernism are in Korea.

One characteristic associated with postmodernity is deconstruction. Korean women need to re-evaluate personal and social values of Confucianism, which is men-centered,

by means of a method of deconstruction. Confucian ethics and views on the world have been deeply imprinted on all facets of Korean society. Also, Korean Christians are not completely free from Confucian thought. Christianity represents the western culture, which is individualistic. But East Asia, including Korea, has a Confucian culture, which emphasizes family and family ties. When Kim, Jung Ha (1996:349) draws Asian-American women's lives, says that "Confucianism indicates an apparent stability and coherence of Asian-American families". However, this does not come without high costs, which are paid by Asian-American women in particular. The notion of family is seen as the basis of all human relations. The authority of fathers, who are the heads of each family, is important for guarding the security and harmony of their families. It follows that male superiority and female subordination is necessary in such a system. The Confucian notion of family is the foundation of the Korean educational system, religious institutions, political structures, and even personal relations in Korean society. Thus, today, Korean women need to analyze and deconstruct patriarchal values, which uphold the system of inequality. Through analysis and deconstruction, Korean women will be able to not only improve their social position, but also change the structures of society from their roots. I will deal with an analysis of Korean women and their lives through Korean literature in chapter 5.

Korea's economy will be dealt in chapter 3. A series of successful economic development plans have helped Korea achieve remarkable economic growth and social transformation. Women have had increasingly greater opportunities to take part in economic activities. Export-orientated industries in particular have come to require a large female labour force. As of 1995, there were 8.2 million working women who accounted for 40.4 % of the total work force (Facts 1998:85). Despite this increase, the number of women holding high positions in administration and management, is still very small. Korean women, however, are actively engaged in a wide variety of fields including education, medicine, science, engineering, scholarship, arts, literature and sports. The number of famous females, business executives and university presidents has been increasing. Although only a handful in number, some women have proven their ability as leaders, for example as cabinet ministers. From these examples it is clear that Korean women can develop their potential and make a significant contribution to society.

The government realized that it must develop new policies for women, because of the increasingly important role of women and the changes in Korean society. By a presidential decree, the National Committee on Women's Policies was formed in 1983 with representatives of the concerned government ministries (Facts 1998:87). The Korean Women's Development Institute was established in the same year to make a comprehensive study of women's issues and link its findings with actual policies. The government established the Ministry of Political Affairs to handle women's matters in 1988 in compliance with the changing social environment. In the same year, 15 Female Welfare Bureaus with women directors were also established at the Provincial Fare Divisions. Female chiefs in towns and counties assembled to deal with women's welfare issues (Facts 1998:94). In 1994, a special Committee on Women was established at the National Assembly as a permanent body to discuss and legislate women's affairs. In 1995, there were two women in the cabinet, serving as the Minister of Political Affairs and the Minister of Education (Facts 1998:94). The National Assembly would accept 30 female members in 2000, according to the proportional representation system. Women's roles in society have expanded to the highest decision-making levels. Suggestions by various women's organizations are reflected in policy decisions following the increase in the number of educated women as well as the social movement toward sexual equality.

Korean feminist theology began in Korea in the 1970's. The aim of Korean feminist theology was the establishment of human rights, and the resistance against political dictatorship between the 1960s and the 1970s. In the beginning of the 1980s, feminist theology blossomed in Korea. Some foreign feminist theological works (cf Ruether 1979, 1985b; Russell 1982; Tribble 1984; Schüssler Fiorenza 1981a) were translated into Korean and Korean women wrote many feminist books themselves (Lee OJ 1983, 1985, 1987, 1988; Kim YO 1988; Lee ES 1989, 1991; Lee HS 1992; Lee KS 1991; Lim HS 1991; Choi MJ 1987, 1990, 1991, 1995; Choi KS 1981; Chung HK 1990), sharing their own experiences. The following questions were addressed: How can women understand a male God (Ruether & Bianchi 1992)? What are the female characteristics of God (Moltmann-Wendel 1991)? What is the image of Jesus Christ from the perspective of the Korean women (Chung HK 1990)? What are the feminist theologians' opinions about

the Korean situation (Park SK 1983)? Feminist theology gave Korean women a wake-up call to become motivated and do something.

There is a specific theology called the “*Minjung* theology” in Korea. *Minjung* theology is an indigenous Korean theology (see Lee JH 1994:5, 159, 135-162; Choo CY 1983:73-79; Moon HS 1983:123-137; Ahn BM 1983:138-154; Suh KS 1983a:15-37, 1983b:38-46; Kim YB 1981:25-31). It emerged in the beginning of the 1970s. “*Minjung*” means “ordinary people”. *Minjung* theologians explained that *Minjung* represents the isolated people: the poor, those who were politically oppressed and the marginalized in society. Jesus is the liberator from economical poverty, social discrimination, cultural prejudice and political oppression. Jesus represents the ordinary person (*Minjung*). Jesus tried to liberate people, but was eventually crucified. *Minjung* theology is in a way similar in purpose and aims to the liberation theology in Latin America and the Dalit theology in India. Just as a feminist theology is significant for women, so is *Minjung* theology for the ordinary citizens of Korea. Theologically, Korea has been developing *Minjung* theology and feminist theology. Nevertheless, *Minjung* theology is not concerned in the liberation of women from the patriarchal system. Korean women were alienated completely as marginal and, as a result, they suffered from dual oppression: the oppression in patriarchy and indifference to women of *Minjung* theology. Korean feminist theologians attempt to articulate their identity as Korean women and to find their own way of theologizing as feminist. Despite the differences in cultures and societies, women’s oppression occurs everywhere in patriarchal societies, and is reinforced by patriarchal religion (Heine 1988:4). What can save women from destructive patterns of domination and violence that threaten women, all humans, and the planet itself? Sharma (1994:329) mentions that “women need to exorcise the androcentric model of humanity from their consciousness and replace it thoroughly and completely, once and for all, with an androgynous model of humanity”.

The gendering of social life comes from patriarchal and androcentric ideologies. It should be concerned with the representation, rights, and status of women and men. Women fight against authoritative patriarchy because women think patriarchy made them shrink. Women are invisible, nameless, worthless, and inferior in patriarchy. Moreover, Korean women have been required to obey men. Lisa Isherwood and Dorothea McEwan

(2001:75) say, "faith is not an act of obedience without growth of one's own power". Women want to overcome the barriers of patriarchal ideologies in the contemporary world and in the church; because women may experience life communion with Jesus; because women may live in interaction with Jesus according to the Gospel of Mark. Through theology, I have discovered the interaction between women and Jesus. The Jesus movement is as inconceivable without Jesus, as it is also inconceivable without women disciples. Women were always following and serving, yet they were not always recognized at the center of activity. But invisibly, they became partners of Jesus. They were considered authentic models by Jesus and Jesus said that their names would be remembered wherever the gospel was proclaimed e g a woman broke the jar and poured the perfume on Jesus' head (Mk 14:9). Nevertheless, even now, women are called to create and to maintain equality, to share their experiences of following Jesus and serving others, and to challenge men to be transformed until they commit themselves to solidarity with the powerless, by following Jesus who always goes before them (see Kinukawa 1994:143).

It is important for women to share equal discipleship in church and society, and to let women witness the true liberation of the oppressed. Women should achieve human liberty, equality, and full citizenship in contemporary democratic societies. Women should participate, for their freedom, in the feminist discourse of postmodernity. Women should no longer feel inferior, but rather, realize what the sexual and moral differences between men and women in the new society are. Furthermore, male or female Christians want to understand human beings as a whole or the nature in Christianity. The "whole gospel for the whole world" should be seen through both female and male eyes, be understood with both male and female hearts, and be borne witness to by a new community of both women and men. Elisabeth Moltmann-Wendel (1991:40) says, "for too long we have heard only half the gospel, with the male half of humankind. It is important today to understand it completely in the fullness of the female and male creation of humankind and with the fullness of Spirit".

The aim of this study is to gain an understanding of the reality of Korean women and how they have created an identity for themselves. Korean women have partaken in the entire Korean history alongside Korean men, but women have also had their own

experiences. I aim to illustrate the importance of the issue of female visibility through Korean literature from a Korean woman's perspective. Women are valuable to God but are treated as secondary in the dominant ideologies of the society. A focus on the place of women in the church can increase the knowledge of the history of Korean Christian women in two important ways: first, women have improved their positions in the society but second, women still need to continually liberate themselves in the church. However, the Korean church has not overcome spiritual dualism and social negation of women. Women continually need to rediscover themselves as the people of a promise, and unfold the new creation from a theological perspective. Women will be able to rediscover the unique theological insight and profound social meaning of Paul's "neither male nor female" in Christ. It was neither social reality alone, nor spirituality alone, to which Paul gave new definition. To be "in Christ" was to be a part to the ushering in of an entirely new mode of human existence.

Images of Jesus will be discussed to explore the possibilities of authentic life before God for Korean women. Sussane Heine (1988:139) explains that "Jesus goes the way of loneliness, to the victims, the lost and to women". Jesus Christ, the man, was an alien in his society as he strove against the dominant thinking and customs. Jesus was involved for the sake of others. Jesus showed compassion, sympathy, solidarity, and hope. Heine (1988:139) expresses that "involvement stands against desperation, togetherness stands against loneliness, compassion is against grief, and sympathy, solidarity, and hope are against evil." Both men and women suffer and are victims, but women more so than men. Jesus showed compassion to the weak, to the poor, to the sick, to the lost, and to women.

The aim of this study is not only to criticize some texts and society, but also to look for women's potential and the potential of a reformative society. So far, Korean feminist theologians have not yet analyzed Korean society thoroughly, because they have focused only on women themselves. Therefore they were not concerned with existing problems which are related to oppressive structures. Korean feminist theologians did not yet analyze sexism and other oppressive structures in Korean society and the Korean churches. In this study, Korean women's problems and the situations which they face will be described. Then, the situations and the reasons for the problems will be analyzed, criticized, and ways looked for, of solving them. Korean women need to overcome

gender-motivated readings of the gendered texts. I wish to stimulate a debate concerning gender, voices, and authority in biblical literature and Korean literature, in order to transcend the more traditional interpretations.

1.3.2 Research Plan

Methods of Practical Theology, postmodernism, and feminist theology will be investigated in chapter 2. Characteristics of practical theology, postmodernism and feminist theology will be explored, too. Practical theology allows the methods of scientific and logical research. Postmodernism is understood as having three main characteristics described as “antifoundational, antitotalizing, and demystifying” (Adam 1995:5). Postmodernism refuses to posit any one premise as the privileged one. Postmodernism allows for variety, for example various starting points and various interpretations. The postmodern way of thinking is as useful for me in criticizing Korean society and church, as is the feminist critique. Isherwood and McEwan (2001:150) say that “many feminist theologians embrace postmodernism as a useful companion, since it questions all meta-narratives, as feminist have been doing for many centuries, and works in limited truth claims”. Feminist theology, deconstructive methods and feminist critique will be explored in chapter 2.

In chapter 3, I will review some aspects concerning Korean women including Korean history, politics, economics, education, and the religio-cultural background. The Korean gender system will also be discussed in chapter 3.

In chapter 4, I will explore the perspectives of fundamentalists’ and feminist theologians’ view on the Bible. The approach of the Korean church is similar to that of the fundamentalists, who regard the Bible as infallible. The meaning of gender and the social roles of women in the early Christian, the Greco-Roman, the late Roman periods and the time of the letters of Paul, will be discussed. Korean Christian women’s understanding of Jesus will be studied. From Korean women’s perspectives Jesus is seen as Savior, as suffering servant, as Lord, as liberator, as mother and woman, and as life-giver.

In chapter 5, some of Korean literature will be explored from a Korean woman’s perspective and a postmodern hermeneutical perspective in Korean literature. Patriarchal

ideologies will be criticized with the methods of feminist critique and deconstruction. Lezbeth Goodman (1996:vii) explains literature "as a body of writing that aims to be creative. Literature includes forms of writing which deliberately and creatively experiment with language in order to create images and ideas which engage the reader's imagination and interpretation". Gender is a social or cultural category, influenced by stereotypes of "female" and "male" behaviour that exist in people's attitudes and beliefs. Such beliefs are produced or constructed by cultures. Men-centered factors will be analyzed and women's possibilities will be explored in the stories and in the society of Korea. For analysis of the Korean literature, there are some questions: who are the main characters? Is the main actor male or female? What prejudice do the actors reveal/describe? Which characters are active and which are passive? Is the system in the story male-centered or female-centered? What possibilities do women have in the society of the story? How do the texts contribute to the oppression of women? To what extent do women participate in the liberation of women? What is women's position on their inner selves? What are women's evaluations of the society? What factors allow people to reform the society?

Chapter 2

Methods

Three categories of different methods will be discussed in this chapter: methods of Practical Theology, methods of postmodernism, and methods of feminist theology. Pieterse (in Heyns & Pieterse 1990:46) describes “Practical Theology as a theological, operational science”. In Practical Theology, theoretical aspects are closely related to practical aspects. Theologians always try to reform contemporary situations, to offer Christians the most authentic truths, by means of theological research, interpretation of the Bible and traditions, theological analysis of politics, economics, social events and cultures. They want to achieve the honest truth for Christians. Truth, rationality, and objectivity have been regarded as key concepts of science, yet these concepts are also related to theology (see Hekman 1990:10-13).

Methods of scientific and logical research can be found in Practical Theology. The models of the scientific research are distinguished three models: the positive model, the scientific revolution (Thomas Kuhn’s theory), and the evolutionary growth (Karl Popper’s theory) (Mouton 1996a:16; 1996b:14-16). Four different models in scientific research are stated differently: the epistemic, sociological, economical, and managerial (Mouton 1996a:17; 1996b:17-19). The models of logical thinking entail the deductive and the inductive approaches. Practical Theology applies in both types of logical research: induction and deduction. Deductive thinking is applied when the findings of other theological disciplines are considered to be in the process of theory formation. Inductive thinking applies in the case of empirical studies, on the basis of which new theories are formed (Heyns & Pieterse 1990:26). Induction and deduction should not be regarded as mutually exclusive (Van der Merwe 1996:279). A practical-theological theory is a discussion or a consideration of existing and future ecclesiastic, and religious praxis. The concept “praxis” (see Bevans 1992:63-80) is the concrete action or actions by individuals or groups, in the church or society, aimed at furthering the kingdom of God. Also, in practical theology the concept “praxis” refers to communicative actions in the service of the gospel. With the methods of the scientific and the logical research, the

situation of Korean women can analyze politically, economically, socially, culturally, and religiously. This is done in chapter 3.

Postmodernism is characterized as antifoundational, antitotalizing, and demystifying (Adam 1995:5). Postmodernity allows unauthorized interpretation by individuals. Postmodernity is that which denies the “absolute”, including “absolute power” of men over women. Postmodern thought originates in the work of Heidegger (Megill 1985:138; Hoy 1985:47; Shapiro 1984:217; Ricoeur 1983:191). Heidegger (1977:128; see Hekman 1990:65) rejects what he identifies as the men-centeredness of the modern world. According to him, man is always historical, rooted, and a product of a particular manifestation of Being, so Heidegger rejects the transcendental, privileged status of the Cartesian subject. Postmodern criticism will be used in various ways:

- to critique Korean society and culture in chapter 3 and 5
- to describe the social contexts, e.g. the social roles of women in the Greco-Roman world, gender roles in Judaism, gender roles in the Jesus tradition, the letters of Paul, and in the early church (in chapter 4)
- to articulate a systematic analysis of the *kyriarchal* relations of domination, e.g. patriarchy in Korea and in Korean literature in chapter 3 and 5, a fundamentalist understanding of the Bible, phenomena of fundamentalism, fundamentalism in Korea and the criticism of fundamentalism in chapter 4
- to analyze social movements and cultural-religious values in Korea (in chapter 3, 4 and 5).

Feminist theologians indicate different ways in which the Bible can be read from a deconstructive perspective (see Schüssler Fiorenza 1994, 2000; Ruether & Bianchi 1992:7-16, 249-260). One method is to regard feminist theology as “a critique of the androcentric and misogynist views and judgments of patriarchal theology” (Isherwood & McEwan 2001:123). Deconstructive (Adam 1995:31-32) and feminist critique (Register 1975:2; Goodman 1996:71; Isherwood & McEwan 2001:75) are methods of feminist theology. The deconstructive method will be used in chapter 4 where the images of Jesus from the view of Korean women will be discussed. Through feminist criticism, the

interpreter discovers that the Bible reflects class conflicts and class interests. Ideological criticism, that is the combination of both political and economical aspects of biblical ideology, points out the oppressive or the liberating ideological contents of the Bible. Ideological criticism is also influenced by the critics' own ideologies (Adam 1995:51). The social and economical locations of biblical criticism also determine the critics' interpretations. Biblical ideological criticism aims to demystify the religious aura of the Bible, and to reinterpret the Bible taking into account the ideological conflicts (see Schüssler Fiorenza 1996; Felman 1981). Feminist theologians argue against the pervasive ideological bias in biblical studies. However, ideological criticism extends beyond the analysis and critique of patriarchal structure and class structure. With this criticism, scholars analyze the phenomena of politics, economy, and society.

Feminist criticism is concerned with the literary representation of sexual difference, with the ways in which literary genres have been shaped by masculine or feminine values. Virginia Woolf (1966:1, 204) calls it "the difference of view; the difference of standard". Feminist criticism is also concerned with the exclusion of the female voice from criticism, literature, and theory. Therefore, feminist criticism has established gender as a fundamental category of literary analysis. The basic concern of scholars is to develop theories of sexual difference in reading, writing, and literary interpretations.

Gustavo Gutierrez (1983:39) asserts that "a critical feminist theology of liberation does not simply seek to analyze and explain the socio-religious structure of domination that marginalize and exploit women and other non-persons". Instead, it aims to entirely transform the structures of alienation, exploitation, and exclusion. Its goal is to change the theoretical and theological religious knowledge, and the sociopolitical systems of domination and subordination. Such a feminist theology understands itself as a critical theology of liberation because its critical analysis and its intellectual practice for the production of religious knowledge aims to support struggles for women's liberation globally. Hence, Schüssler Fiorenza (1985:12) says, "its articulations are diverse, and is often in tension and conflict with each other". Deconstruction and postmodern biblical criticisms, including feminist critique, will be used to analyze "a story of a good wife (Pr 31:10-31)" and Korean literature in chapter 5.

2.1 Methods in Practical Theology

Practical Theology has two aspects: theoretic and practical. Practical Theology has within itself its own practical and theological theories and applies its own scientific methods to church society. Christians experience the actual religious events, which is the critical test of praxis. Therefore, Practical Theology emphasizes praxis (see McCann 1983:105-125; Moessner & Glaz 1991), in order that people learn to understand the worldly realities that make up human lives. A particular proposed praxis flows from a particular chosen theory. However, one of the most common pitfalls for practical theologians is that they can too easily lose sight of the force of reasoning, and instead, focus only on practical issues. When this happens, it becomes almost impossible to distinguish their models of doing praxis from that of psychology and practical application. If one remembers that a model is, epistemologically seen, the choice to bring a particular theory into practice or operation, one will also realize that there will always be a theory behind practice. In Practical Theology, this theory should be theological in nature (see Ballard 1992; Burkhart 1983:42-60; Browning 1983).

Practical Theology has a *theoretical* aspect. Here, the theory is not in opposition to the practical knowledge. Heitink (1999:102-103) states that Practical Theology is “a theological branch of learning with a theory of action”. He explains three theoretical tracks in practical theology: 1) a hermeneutical theory, 2) an empirical theory (see Van der Ven 1993), and 3) a strategic theory. It arises as a moment within Practical Theology itself, because human beings have had and will continue to have many experiences. It is necessary to recognize and analyze one’s experiences. To analyze an experience means to incorporate the various facets of the experience into human cognition. Ogletree (1983:85) explains that, “the possibility of objectifying a given experience is a phenomenon of self-consciousness, our power not only to relate to our world consciously, but also to do so with a consciousness of the manner of relating itself”. Thus, a theoretical orientation is closely related to the practical. Theoretical studies can be understood in simple terms - knowing, doing, and being. Human beings make it possible to understand the interactions of the theoretical and the practical, of the objective and the subjective, and of the fact and its value.

Heyns (in Heyns & Pieterse 1990:31) explains that the relationship between theory and practice is one of bipolar tension and that this “relationship of bipolar tension is best illustrated by an ellipse”. In the figure of an ellipse, the autonomy of each side should not be destroyed or abolished, and they should remain interdependent: unity without identity; diversity without division. Theory should test and criticize the church praxis, which continually analyzes and evaluates its own theoretical premises, goals, efficiency, and results.

Otherwise, Heyns (in Heyns & Pieterse 1990:38-40; cf Heitink 1999:106-108) categorizes that Practical Theology may be characterized as a theological operational (or active) science for the following reasons (see Lapsley 1983:167-186; Otto 1974:195-205; Tracy 1983:61-82; Vian 1999):

- Practical Theology studies human religious actions, especially those that mediate God’s coming to this world.
- Practical Theology studies people’s religious activity (religious praxis).
- Practical Theology takes the existing praxis seriously, reflects on it, considers the underlying theories, evaluates these, and develops new theories.
- Practical Theology is communicative. Christians are continually communicating to serve the cause of the Gospel and the Holy Spirit, the very thing that conjoins God’s communication to the church and the world.

To practical theologians, those who adopt a biblical hermeneutic perspective, praxis is secondary to scripture based theories, which are of primary importance. James W Fowler (1983:163) identifies and characterizes four constituent elements of a Practical Theology of Christian invention:

- a theory of the sovereign love of God as the pattern of action underlying and giving character to the cosmic process;
- a theory of development in faith;
- a theory of the virtues and affections of the Christian life;
- a theory of methodological principles and strategies for the formation in faith.

2.1.1 Characteristics of Practical Theology

Practical Theology has two characteristics: the constructive and the critical aspects. The constructive aspect is concerned with interpreting biblical myths and symbols in terms of “liberation”. And the critical aspect of a practical theology is based on “orthopraxis”. Gutierrez (1973:10) first coined the term “orthopraxis”. Literally, the concept means “the right sort of praxis”. It refers to the concrete struggles of “basic communities” seeking to be witnesses of Christianity. In the revolutionary situation, without necessarily involving counter-violence against the oppressors, “orthopraxis” is the “critical reflection on praxis” (cf McCann 1981:209-213). Thus, Practical Theology is redefined as the critical theory of Christians engaged in “orthopraxis”. Gutierrez (1973:11) explains “orthopraxis”, when he states:

But above all, we intend this term to express the theory of a definite practice. Theological reflection would, then, necessarily be a criticism of society and the church insofar as they are called and addressed by the Word of God; it would be critical theory, worked out in light of the Word accepted in faith and inspired by a practical purpose – and therefore indissolubly linked to historical praxis.

“Orthopraxis” is a kind of critical theory and “historical praxis” with which one can interpret the “Word of God”. The practical purposes of social action are both critical and constructive. Since the whole realm of theological discourse is subject to criticism based on praxis, the church’s traditions are criticized.

2.1.2 Methods as scientific research

Methods in Practical Theology are deeply rooted in modern scientific research (see Habermas 1987). Scholars are doing theology by means of rational thinking. Modern science is understood as

- the high expression and embodiment of the human spirit and of creativity,

- a symbol of alienation, destruction and pain,
- evidence of current debates on genetic engineering and animal experimentation,
- a process of knowledge production, and
- a production of knowledge (Mouton 1996a:15; 1996b:13).

In the fourth meaning, “science” means that a specific body of knowledge has certain features, such as validity, or internal consistency, or explanatory potential, or usefulness. Science also results in certain activities, such as the formulation of research problems, or data collection, experimentation, interpretation, validation, analysis, or the testing of theories. Science has two aspects - one is science as a product (scientific knowledge) and the other is science as a process (scientific research).

Mouton (1996a:16; 1996b:14-16) distinguishes three models of scientific research for the growth of scientific knowledge:

- The positive model: Science grows through the accumulation of facts that are accepted as true. Science is the range of confirmed rational theories from authentic results.
- Thomas Kuhn’s (1970) theory of scientific revolutions: His scientific revolution is a direct response to the positivist position on the growth of scientific knowledge. Kuhn formulated his views about scientific revolution in 1962. He distinguishes between normal science and scientific revolutions. Normal science is a traditional or dominant paradigm, while the scientific revolution is the rejection of the dominant paradigm, for example, Newton’s paradigm which was replaced by Einstein; the Copernican revolution; Darwin’s theory.

When Fiorenza studies the historical Jesus within a revolutionary paradigm shift, she analyzes the dominant discourses produced by Western science as an integral part of its research project. The logic of “difference” or the logic of “othering” (Fiorenza 2000:21) engenders such dominant discourses. Women are “others” because women are not–elite, not–white, not–male, not–civilized, not–educated, and not–powerful in the valued qualities of the hegemonic society.

The “others”, who include women, innocent children, nature, and noble savages, become the negative object. They are depicted in negative modes such as lazy, irrational, emotional, gossipy, or sex hungry. In a similar way, the West has authority over the Orient, so that the Orient is the “other” over against the West. The politics of “othering” does not recognize both differences and commonalities between past and present, between Mediterranean and contemporary democratic societies. The scientific discourses of domination seek to control the “other” of past societies by objectifying and alienating them (Mouton 1996a:22; 1996b:15). Thereby they lead to the fusion of common structures of domination across history.

- Karl Popper’s theory of evolutionary growth: Scientific theories evolve in the process of scientific research: the strongest theories survive, but the weakest perish. Popper’s theory (1963) is more moderate than Kuhn’s theory. The evolutionary growth of Popper’s theory used the same logic as the history of science (Popper 1964:32-44, 1987:20-23).

The advantages or disadvantages of each model are:

- The positive model has a possibility of the pitfalls of the ideal of objectivity and the dangers of determinism behind both deductive and inductive reasoning. Deductive is less objective but prone to determinism.
- Kuhn maintains that the history of science is the history of successive phases of normal science during which one research tradition or paradigm dominates, followed by “a scientific revolution to be followed again by another period of normal science” (Mouton 1996a:16; 1996b:16). The history of science can no longer be viewed as the accumulation of facts and truth. Scientific knowledge can be untenable. Thomas Kuhn’s theory of scientific revolutions has limitations. Scientific results are relational in terms of shared paradigms, but Kuhn’s theory is only valid in one paradigm and cannot be transposed to others. Scientific progress is no longer measured in terms of the so-called accumulation of knowledge, but rather by its explanatory power. Propositions explain data adequately or inadequately in terms of a specific paradigm. Inadequacy becomes clear when anomalies exist.

- Karl Popper's theory of evolutionary growth led to the concept of "falsification". It means that the validity of a scientific proposition is measured in terms of its *relevance*. When Popper's theory is combined with Kuhn's paradigm theory, a shift from one paradigm to the next is of revolutionary nature, e.g. that paradigms are often incompatible. Popper's theory is also critical of the positive notion of growth through accumulation, so the strongest theory in the contemporary situation might still be found. Popper's theory continually examines the self-correcting nature of scientific growth. It is a long process because of the extended research, the process of theory assessment, rational decision-making, and public scrutiny of research results.

The existence of a scientific tradition makes new research possible with theories, models and data on reality. Mouton (1996a:17; 1996b:13) says "science as a product and science as a process are interdependent". Science as a product also makes new research possible. Mouton (1996a:20; 1996b:17-19) defines "different models of the nature of scientific research".

- The epistemic model searches for truth. The term "epistemic" means "true and authentic" knowledge. Science is based on the assumption that "truth" is not unproblematic, but is *discovered* or *revealed*. The role of methods and procedures is emphasized and is valuable in the pursuit of truth.
- The sociological model studies communities and social conditions. Science is basically viewed as a social process.
- The economical model sees knowledge as a commodity that has a specific market value. All commodities, production or manufacture of knowledge requires certain resources and has a specific value (price).
- The managerial model focuses on manufacturing and production in its management of concepts.

These models produce a real change in the nature of scientific inquiry. Theological research is normally done within the epistemic and sociological models. Church growth theories make use of managerial and economic models. Individual research in the

epistemic model, large-scale professional and institutional research making use of sociological, economic, and managerial models and the globalization of scientific research are all of importance. Mouton (1996a:20) explains that “nowadays, the conceptions of science (epistemic, sociological, and economical) are rooted in real change in the nature of scientific inquiry”.

The gradual change in the nature of scientific research has brought two terms to our attention: “democratization” and “globalization”. Democratization refers to the shift from an exclusive approach to science to a more inclusive one. Globalization is explained as a logical consequence of modernization. Globalization of science means that science is done in an international and global context rather than in a national context only. But there are different contexts, such as the global, national, institutional, individual, and discipline-oriented contexts. The contribution of scientific research is important to each of the specific contexts and specific problems are inherent in each of these contexts.

2.1.3 Methods as logical research

Practical theologians use the relationship between theory and praxis to get a grip on their field of study, just as all scientists have certain methods and tools of the trade. The relationship between theory and praxis is indissoluble. This means that they are like two sides of a coin: distinguishable, but not divisible.

The concept “theory” refers to the *discussion, consideration* and *planning* pertaining to praxis. There are two methods of thinking in theories: the deductive and inductive approaches. Deductive thinking means that the theories in a particular situation are formed on the basis of general rules and principles. Deductive thinking progresses from the general to the particular. Russell (1974:53) says, “in the past, much theology was done by deductive conclusions from first principles established out of Christian tradition and philosophy”. Another method is by inductive thinking, where one proceeds from the particular to the general. In general feminist theologians, along with other liberation theologians, stress the inductive method rather than a deductive method.

The experiential nature of this inductive approach does not have any doctrines, but rather seeks out the appropriate questions from different approaches. Russell (1974:55)

explains that “such an experiential or inductive approach is dependent on the corporate support of the community of faith and action out of which it grows”. Feminist theologians draw the material for reflection from women’s life experiences as they relate to the message of the Gospel. The nature of the gospel is diverse and this emphasizes the *situation-variable*. Women are seeking answers from the gospel for their particular needs of liberation, each in her individual situation. The inductive approach is experimental in nature. It is a process of seeking the right questions from different hypotheses that arise. Women constantly devise questions about biblical and church traditions, as well as about the concepts of creation, redemption, sin, salvation, and incarnation. It is important for women to be engaged in actions and reflections in their groups through the constant exchange of material and ideas. However, there are the disadvantages to both deductive and inductive reasoning. One should be aware of the danger that theory-models can function in a deterministic way.

As far as methods are concerned, there are the quantitative and qualitative methods (or deductive method and inductive method). The quantitative or deductive method depends on questionnaires, or comparatives and tests by means of a computer or techniques like experiments. From this method, the large volume of raw data can be collected. Quantitative research aims at testing theories, determining facts, statistical analyses, demonstrating relationships between variables, and prediction. A researcher who is involved in quantitative research will typically choose to stay in the background and not become involved in the events or “objects” of inquiry, for example the research subject (Van der Merwe 1996:282). Meanwhile, the quantitative hypothesis testing is sophisticated and depends on the existing knowledge. Quantitative research includes exploration, explanation, verification by test, and description. The quantitative method actually requires a lot of material and knowledge.

Another method is the qualitative or inductive method, on the basis of material obtained from the interviews of people. Induction is understood as that by which one infers knowledge that is not generalized from a specific number of cases. Van der Merwe (1996:283) explains, “the qualitative research aims at the development of theories and understanding. Qualitative researchers do not regard themselves as collectors of “facts” about human behavior that will lead to verification and the extension of theories and

enable researchers to determine causes of and predict human behavior. This research emphasizes an improved *understanding* of human behavior. In inductive studies, one makes a general statement and tests its validity in individual cases each time, on new subjects. This means that one cannot keep testing the same group of people. One has to check whether hypotheses are valid for all individual cases in specific situations. This research is basic to the research approach of “participant involvement”. A researcher becomes actively involved in the community that is being studied. The researcher would have to be accommodated as the concepts of researcher and research subject are partners in the research process. However, when the knowledge is limited, the inductive research method is actually the ideal form. The inductive method includes description, but also exploration and explanation in a certain degree of sophistication.

2.2 Methods in postmodernism

2.2.1 Characteristics of postmodernism

Cornel West (1985, 1989; see Lyotard 1984, 1993; Jameson 1991; Habermas 1981; Rossouw 1995) explains that postmodernism is understood in three characteristic ways, which can be described as “antifoundational, antitotalizing, and demystifying”. Postmodernism is antifoundational in that it resolutely refuses to posit any one premise as the privileged and the unassailable starting point for establishing claims to the truth. Antifoundationalism refers to the relativity of all truth-claims. Postmodernism is also antitotalizing because the postmodern discourse suspects that any theory that claims to account for everything, is suppressing counter examples, or is applying warped criteria so that it can exclude recalcitrant cases (Adam 1995:5). “Antitotalizing” protects against the danger of systems. Lastly, postmodernism is also demystifying. Modernism tends to claim that certain assumptions are “natural”, but postmodern thinking shows that these are, in fact, ideological projections (Adam 1995:5). Demystification protects against the danger of theologizing ideologies as false consciousness, which is Karl Marx’s (1988:110-117) concept, while personal and group interests of a sociological nature are the generating power behind these ideologies or ideological projections.

Postmodernity understands itself over against “modernity” (Hekman 1990:1; Kim AY 1995:226). Some of the distinctions between modernity and postmodernity are the following (Adam 1995:18-19):

	Modernity	Postmodernity
Criticism	-absolute	-relative
Knowledge	-universal, unified, total -rests on a mystified account of intellectual discourse	-local, particular -rests on various forces
Implications	-political and personal struggles	-individual, various implications
Characteristic	-the appeal of a naturalized, universalized conception of reason	-antifoundational -antitotalizing -demystifying
Readers	-The putative totalities are privileged the text or the reader as the focus of interpretive power.	-Readers encounter several different versions of the text. -unauthorized interpretation
Approach to Interpretation	-the text itself	-emphasis on the reader's experience
Dream	-unified system of all purely relational knowledge	-illusionary
Presupposition	-specific attributes to their intellectual tradition	-Nothing is pure, nothing is absolute, and nothing is total, unified or individual.
Method	-reliance on science and scientific method -transcendental authority of reason	-demystification with science and reason -various interpretations -various starting points
Texts	-valuable for interpretation as a historical record of the past -mystified past	-Readers can interpret texts various ways from their experience or from their own perspectives.

The effect of postmodernism on hermeneutics can be seen as follows:

- Rorty (1983:585) expresses, “postmodernism rejects ‘meta-narratives’ – the absolute justifying mechanisms of foundational thought”. Various components of the Bible

are interwoven. One could indeed be tolerant to such an extent that unacceptable ideologies hidden in certain “master” or grand narratives are not exposed. Even though there are differences in people’s intentions and directions in their interpretation, postmodernism accepts the various ideologies. “Contra”-narratives in the Bible oppose grand narratives. For example the Zion narrative, which is an affirmation of the centralization of the temple in Jerusalem, supports the neglect of God’s righteousness towards widows, orphans, foreigners and the poor. The Jesus story is also a contra-narrative that opposes the temple ideology.

- Another function of the postmodern approach is textual studies. Modern critics tend to have emphasized the reader’s direct engagement with the text and the autonomy of the text itself. But Adam (1995:18) stated that “postmodern critics recognize much more complexity in the interaction of the text and the reader”. Postmodern perspectives break down the putative totalities of the text and the reader, hence readers encounter several different versions of the text. It is exactly this contribution of postmodernity that enhances the possibility to “read between the lines” in order to speak from the voiceless.
- Postmodern interpretations are unauthorized. There is neither a unified, nor a totalized reader, nor a unified or an autonomous text, so there are no authorized authors. Adam (1995:20) expresses, “the author” is recognized as an unsuitable foundation for criticism as “the text” of “the reader”. Postmodern interpreters may work freely without knowing the original intentions of the author. This position represents a more “radical” postmodern reading. A more “moderate” position would be to balance authorial intention with readers’ expectation. “Radical” postmodern reading focuses only on the present day reader. The more “moderate” method though, takes author, text, and reader all into consideration. It also considers the difference between the intended reader and the present actual reader.

2.2.2 Criticism

Michel Foucault produced a series of historical studies, called the “New Historicism” (Foucault 1973, 1979; cf Howard 1986:13-43; Veese 1989; Via 1992:369-88). Most historians typically seek the roots of events and ideas of the past, but Foucault (1979: 43;

see Adam 1995:46) seeks to undermine the notion that “sameness” persists in a body or institution over time. Modern historicists usually take aspects of the texts as reflections of prevalent ideas of a given historical moment in order to understand a text from that moment. They interpret a text on the basis of its historical context. Historicism is positivistic: seeking the truth in fixed, objective data. However, the New Historicists treat the context as reflecting not only the prevalent ideas of the past historical moments, but also the prevalent assumptions of the historicist’s own day. The New Historicists seek to situate the texts with cultural impulses and with the life of their texts’ times. It takes the historical context of the data and the historical context of the researcher dialectically into account. Postmodernism needs not be indifferent with regard to the aspect of historical or authorial intention.

New Historicists resist the “text”/“context” binary opposition; texts are part of their context and the historical context is woven into the text. Adam (1995:47) says, “the texts may be internally contested; the text may present the prevalent ideas, but it may be resisting the prevalent ideology at the same time”. Readers need to select the main ideas and must not accept the dominant ideology. The New Historicism is arguably more true to history, than its older precedents.

Criticism, which was developed from the New Historicism and political criticism by the work of Foucault (1972:215-237), is extended in the interpreter’s definition of “ideology”. The falsity of ideology comes from Marx and Engels’ analyses of political ideology (see Engels 1993:320; Marx 1988:110-126). Marx referred to the political ideology as *false consciousness*. The generality of ideology and the work of ideology come from the response to the Marxist definition. Marx and Engels were concerned with oppressive conditions in part because the social practices that dominated their lives expressed a misleading justification of their situation. Engels (1993:125) mentions that “the workers are cast out and ignored by the class in power, morally as well as physically and mentally”. In order to think coherently, people must attribute coherence to an incoherent world (Adam 1995:48). Oppressors have taught the oppressed, and rationalized their oppression. Transformation of oppressive systems should start at the pre-conceptual and pre-cognitive level. Some interpreters treat ideology, whose emphasis helps make the term valuable, as political assumptions, with a political agenda.

Their usage is more flexible than Marx's ideology, whose emphasis is on material and social conditions. These two definitions, "false consciousness" (Hegel 1977:733-36; cf Gadamer 1975:317) and "political agenda", are limited and vague. Here, other readers define "ideology" as a description of all the social interactions that ascribe "significance" to our behaviour. The term ideology involves the ideological component of oppression in Marx's insight, in any case of false consciousness, and in any possibility of consciousness. These assumptions have liberating effects.

In ideological criticism of biblical interpretation, scholars have stressed that the biblical writings reflect and reproduce the false consciousness of oppressed groups (Adam 1995:48). All composition and interpretation involve ideology, and the biblical texts can easily be constructed in ways that reinforce structures that oppress the lower classes. Readers should analyze what the biblical text seems to be interpreting in any given source. There are different approaches to interpretation and reading, political criticism, which undertakes the work of resisting interpretive complacency; the form of a New Historicism; the form of a feminist critique of patriarchy. Where critics subject modern (scientific, specialized, systematized) ideologies to demystification and deconstruction, is where we discern a different, postmodern political criticism.

Postmodern interpreters feel free to blur and cross over (transgress) the borderlines that separate biblical interpretation from the literary criticism of fiction, from art history, and from psychoanalytic discourses, and so on (Adam 1995:62). The dimension of postmodern biblical criticism is "not undisciplined" but "interdisciplinary". This potpourri approach to interpretation enlarges the insight derived from structuralism, which is based on the principle of the designation-denotation inter-relationship, e.g. signifier and signified. There are no pure discourses, no pure disciplines, and no pure genres. And people have generally lacked the knowledge of the difference between truth and fictional narratives; it is difficult to distinguish between "truth" and "history". The New Historicists point out that neither "history" nor "fiction" is the privileged one. Because of this, "the New Historicists may feel free to employ both of them as evidence, regardless of whether it is a 'factual' account or not" (Adam 1995:63).

The following comparative chart highlights some differences between modernism and

postmodernism:

Modernism	Postmodernism
-Political critics pay attention to modern interpretive discourses' foundational or totalizing claims.	-Postmodern ideological critics pay attention to the ideological function.
-Interpreters conceal an ideological aim.	-There is no universal discourse of truth that can distinguish between a true interpretation and an ideological interpretation.
-The nature of the historical argument rules out "advocacy" in interpretations.	-Critics act in a particular local set of truth.

Postmodern critics would explore the psychoanalytical significance of any biblical text. The biblical texts are understood as the record of a theological consciousness, or as writers' expressions of God. Postmodern interpreters use midrashic amplification or allegorization freely to make sense of the texts. Fredric Jameson (1981:31; cf Adam 1995:65-67) distinguishes four dimensions of significance of the biblical text:

Four Dimensions	Examples
1) The literal sense means the plain, grammatical, historical significance of a passage.	Literal reference: Jerusalem
2) The allegorical sense indicates the correspondence between the circumstances and other biblical narratives.	Allegorical significance: the Christian church or the city of God's people
3) The topological sense communicates the passage's value for moral instruction.	the topological sense: the believer's soul or the dwelling place of the faithful
4) The anagogical sense connects the passage with the anticipated circumstances of heaven and of the times at the end of the age.	Anagogical (political reading) significance: the heavenly city promised in the apocalyptic visions

Postmodern critics engage the imagination, which is a mode of rabbinic midrash, more than the theoretical faculties. Some postmodern interpreters have been impressed with the freedom that midrash seems to hold for interpretation (Adam 1995:67). Midrash and allegory permit interpreters to say what they imagine. But interpreters cannot make the Bible mean whatever they want it to mean, unless there are audiences that find those

interpretations convincing. So postmodern interpreters may seek out different audiences in a variety of conditions who understand their readings. Biblical critics of postmodernism engage the reader and the Bible, not on the terms that any privileged institution (the academy, the synagogue, the church, or the state) sets, but on the terms that interest particular readers and their audiences (Adam 1995:75). Thus, postmodern biblical criticism also opts for various gestures and means of expression such as games, drama, music, video, dance, writing, poetry and so on. Postmodern biblical criticism is bound up with political concerns as well as theoretical arguments about the nature of “criteria” and “disciplines” (Adam 1995:70). In the hermeneutics of postmodernism, interpreters resist totalities, but use political criticism and deconstruction as sources for their interpretation.

Postmodern ideological critics point out that the dominant social groups’ approaches to the Bible produce and reproduce oppressive social relations. They show how to counter-read and to compete with the prevalent interpretations. This counter-reading is not a dominant approach, but one of the alternative approaches to interpretation (cf Schüssler Fiorenza 2000). These approaches reflect the local truth for which the ideological critics stand.

In a postmodern ideological criticism, the Old and the New Testament are observed to express an internal contradiction with regard to the basis of the human relation with God. In conclusion, how people can rectify their relationship with God is neither inconsequential nor ideologically innocent. An example is the sacrificial system that reproduces a hierarchical, social economy. Women are pushed to the margins in several ways:

- Women are not allowed to be priests in a sacrificial economy. Men interact with the priesthood, chiefly as potential sources of defilement (many women were treated as witches in the Middle Ages).
- Women cannot offer sacrifices. A woman needs a reconciler on her behalf, that is, her father or husband. But the only woman whom the Bible describes in a situation close to “offering sacrifice” is Hannah (1 Sm 1-2). Her husband, Elkanah, allots Hannah a double share. Hannah does not bring the offering (or sacrifice) alone.

- The Bible shows that women themselves are value-laden assets (women disciples of Jesus: Mk 15:40-41, 15:47, 16:1), so women are sacrificed (Adam 1995: 55).

Any alternative of the sacrificial economy must address not only the theological model that enacts an exchange between men and God, and also the oppressive gender relations that exchange enforces, and the contemporary political and theological situations that make the sacrificial economy seem more or less “natural” (Adam 1995:56).

Another example is found in the jubiliary theology. Israel’s obligation to care for an economy was based not only on exchange, but also on sharing. “Righteousness” is to “care for the needy”. But the biblical jubiliary texts themselves, are not ideologically innocent. The biblical texts do not envision women’s participation in cultic leadership, and the tendency to oppress women is much stronger than is the case in the sacrificial economy.

Derrida (1992:19-20, 23-24; see also Graham 1996:21; Hekman 1986:171-187, 187-196) claims postmodernism to be symptomatic of poststructuralist thinking. The readers’ preparation for taking a different path to biblical interpretation is to practice “thinking the opposite”, considering critical possibilities that common wisdom proscribes or conceals. “Thinking the opposite” means to resist biblical and interpretive tendencies to pose mutually exclusive interpretive options. Readers can learn to think about the Pentateuch or the synoptic gospels without accepting the initial assumptions that impel modern scholars to define interpretive options in familiar ways. Another way of “thinking the opposite” involves the media of biblical interpretation (Adam 1995:76). Postmodern readers can explore other possible media, to communicate their interpretations of the Bible. For example videotapes, the computer, video, audience’s capacities, theater, film, oratory, sculpture, painting, or drawing are all ranges of interpretive media that allow readers to venture out on their own and extend beyond even these.

2.3 Methods in feminist theology

Feminist theology has come out of Christian feminist praxis (cf Ruether 1985b; Graham 1990, 1996; Graham & Halsey 1993; Ruether 1982, 1998). Graham (1988:129; cf

Walton 2000:196-201) explains that “feminist Practical Theology emerges from the encounter between faith and practice in the form of the values embodied and enacted in the diversities of pastoral response to women’s changing needs and perspectives”. It has been crucial to counter the invisibility of women. Women’s experiences of motherhood, work, growing older, caring and inequality were not mentioned and were not recognized in the Christian ministry (see Graham 1988:130-131; Graham & Halsey 1993:180-191; cf Gray 1988; Ruether 1985b; Neuger 2001; Willows & Lynch 1998:181-187; St Hilda Community 1991). Therefore, women criticized androcentric traditions, and brought a feminist perspective to Practical Theology. To criticize is necessarily followed by the task of “reconstruction”.

2.3.1 Characteristics of feminist theology

The characteristics of feminist theology are feminist criticism and feminist theology as “liberation theology”. The first and probably most familiar aspect of feminist criticism is the ideological criticism of the Bible. At first the historical-critical method which dominated for nearly a century was used, but its limitations and inherent prejudices are now being widely recognized. Current biblical studies demonstrate a diversity of methods: literary criticism, structuralism, social and sociological interpretation, as well as the various forms of spiritual and psychological interpretation. The varieties of feminist studies challenge traditional patriarchy, traditional exegesis, and dominant ideologies. All hermeneutics are dependent on interpreters, premises of historians, intelligent concepts, politics and prejudice. Therefore from these premises, feminist theologians criticize tradition and traditional theology that is per definition male-centered.

The other characteristic mentioned, namely feminist theology as liberation theology is concerned with classism, racism, and pursues liberation to achieve the freedom and dignity of the human being from various discriminating actions. In other words, feminist theology is understood as an instrument to realize God’s will of liberation for the whole human race. Letty Russell (1985:11-18) understands God as a liberator. She emphasizes various aspects of liberation namely the political, social, economical, psychological and religious dimension which are not separate from one another. Schüssler Fiorenza (1981b:106; 1982) disagrees with Russell in that the different kinds of oppression cannot

be generalized in one category. The oppressive experiences of women are obviously different in different cultures, religions, and backgrounds. Moreover, it is difficult for the oppressed to have concrete direction and a strategy. In spite of different opinions amongst theologians, they do agree that feminist theology is basically a liberation theology. Women's full humanity is the goal of feminist biblical hermeneutics in Ruether's view (1985b:11-18; see Russell 1985:115).

Feminist theology is not just talking or thinking about God. It involves action that is informed by reflection on situations and conditions as seen from a theological perspective. Like liberation theology, feminist theology is intended to be put into practice. Feminist theology is called "doing theology" (cf Fabella & Lee SA 1990). Action is concurrent with reflection or analysis. New questions emerge from the action. For example, feminist theologians meet three women who survive by prostitution in the Philippines (Ruether 1973:3). The theologians instead of condemning these women for their immorality would seek to understand and expose the conditions that force women into prostitution. They would expose the dehumanizing aspects and the evil and sin of patriarchal capitalism including the hypocrisy of the church. In the case of these three prostitutes, feminist theologians revealed the oppression through international sex-tourism that encourages such evils as prostitution.

The purpose of doing theology in feminist theology is to discover a new way of action that brings change in society, and to seek ways to express women's faith and confidence in God (cf Hampton 1990:148-150). This Practical Theology brings action and reflection together. Therefore, Tapia (1989:171; see Chung HK 1990:100; cf Graham 1998:129-152; Ackermann 1998:75-102) rather calls this theology "God-praxis". Theology is not only a theoretical exercise. It is a commitment and participation in people's struggle for full humanity, and discernment of God's redemptive action in history. It is theology – *in action*.

2.3.2 Deconstruction

Deconstruction is one of the feminist approaches to biblical material. In line with the postmodernism rejection of unity or totality, the feminist method celebrates difference. Women have doubts about the structure of language, the concept of the self, the authority

and the truth. A strong faith in tradition should be deconstructed to set new standards and create new conceptions according to deconstruction. So this feminist approach is as a deconstruction of new reconstruction. Postmodern reasoning can help women to realize that there are no absolute criteria for what is right or wrong, and that those who have power decide what the truth is. Here power means not only political-economical power, but also power that can be extended to any active categories of human behaviour such as social power or religious power. So people need to discuss power, authority, and knowledge that are established by western culture and controlled by males everywhere in the world. Postmodernism seems to provide an analysis of feminism as a theoretical foundation. From this viewpoint, rejecting unity or totality is an important notion in contemporary feminism and feminist theology.

Deconstruction means to make a difference in the identity, which is not absolute, but differs in relation to others. Derrida (1992:8; Hekman 1990:22) has called deconstruction “logocentrism”, combining *logos* and centrism. This *logos* is subject to the question of what the foundation is. By posing the how-do-we-know question, deconstruction displaces the *logos* from its position of authority; deconstruction decentralizes that which has been constructed to be central. Deconstructive critics can work in various ways: “writing” or “speaking” (Derrida 1976:142, 7, 83, 159; see Johnson 1981:xiii). In “speaking”, a speaker uses a word and immediately refers to a particular “referential meaning” e.g “externalization”. In “writing” one uses a written word. Here, simultaneity, or the overlapping of the signifier (*logos*) and the signified (the principle of intertextuality) does not occur. Meaning is not fixed; the authority of the *logos* is displaced. The language user, when he/she uses a word, is always displaced to another word/expression/meaning. Deconstruction calls this principle difference. The quest for meaning is a journey that never ends.

When deconstruction moves into the discourse of biblical criticism, it displays some characteristics of interpretation:

- It is antifoundational, which means that there can be no absolute reference point by which we orient our interpretations: not the text, the author, the meaning, the real, the historical event, nor any other self-identical authoritative presence.

- Deconstruction demystifies the authoritative text. Careful readers need to separate history from fiction.
- Deconstruction shatters the totalities, and identifies the shadowy presence.
- Deconstruction is used for readers' purposes, although not by any means for all purposes.
- Deconstruction suggests to interpreters that there are no unnatural acts of textual intercourse (Adam 1995:31-32).

Postmodern deconstructive biblicists make a valuable contribution to the academy and the church. One such contribution is that that academically trained interpreters do not have an exclusive right to legitimacy in the field of biblical interpretation (Kim KH 1995:31-56; Adam 1995:33). There can be various interpretive interests in the wide hermeneutical field. A second contribution is that biblicists are freed from the modern anxiety to legitimate the interpretation with reference to history.

2.3.3 Feminist critique/ feminist criticism on literature

Feminist criticism is a part of postmodern criticism. Feminist criticism (see Anderson 1992:103-134; Strobel 1991; F Showalter 1983:130-149; E Showalter 1986a:5-6) has flourished in combination with every other critical approach from formalism to semiotics. The most well-known ideological criticism of the Bible is feminist criticism. Feminist theologians like Elizabeth Cady Stanton (1895, 1898) have produced a wide variety of ideological-critical readings, among others by using horrifying stories about women in the Bible (see Tribble 1984). Other feminist scholars criticize the androcentric, and patriarchal ideology (cf Gray 1982; Daly 1975, 1984; Ruether 1982). These scholars point out that men's lives are important and take priority but women have only secondary status in the Bible. Moreover, the problem is that the interpretive methods of modern historians are connected with patriarchal androcentrism.

Cheri Register (1975:2) distinguishes three subdivisions in feminist criticism, each with its own target:

- The analysis of the "image of women" as it appears in works by male authors.

- The examination of existing criticism of female authors.
- Prescriptive criticism attempts to set a standard for literature in order to guide authors who are writing literary works from a new feminist perspective.

Goodman (1996:71) gives three reasons why the gender of authors is a major concern in literary studies today:

- because there is a considerable body of writing, much of it by women, which was “silenced” or ignored in previous generations;
- because looking at this body of literature challenges the canon not only by increasing the number of texts studied, but also by adding themes, images and ideas to a list of literary concerns;
- because there is a freshness and mystery about literary texts which we have not encountered before or which have not been widely studied.

The first point concerns the historical treatment of women and women’s work economically, socially and culturally. The second concerns the conditions of women’s lives as expressed in their creative writing. The third is perhaps the most important point for readers: reading newly “discovered” texts can be particularly thought-provoking and enjoyable.

In its earliest years, “feminist criticism concentrated on exposing the misogyny of literary practice: the stereotyped images of women in literature as angels or monsters, the literary abuse or textual harassment of women in classic and popular male literature, and the exclusion of women from literary history” (Showalter 1986a:5-6). Feminist criticism focused on the connections between the literary and the social mistreatment of women, for example, pornography or rape. But over the past fifteen years, these efforts to make readers question the innocence, insignificance, or humor of antifeminist characterizations have succeeded in changing the atmosphere of the literary response. Sandra M Gilbert (1988:xiii; cf 1986:33) says that “assumptions about the sexes are entangled with some of the most fundamental assumptions western culture makes about the very nature of culture that is male dominant”. Even literary genres were deeply influenced by psychosocial

notions about gender. Gilbert (1986:33) found that, “though the pressures and oppressions of gender may be as invisible as air, women are also as inescapable as air and, like the weight of air, they imperceptibly shaped the forms and motions of our lives”. The focus on women’s writing as a specific field of inquiry led to a massive recovery and rereading of literature by women’s specific perspectives.

Women of different backgrounds, have their own internal differences. Whereas Anglo-American feminist criticism (Bell Hooks 1989; Donna Haraway 1987; Cora Kaplan 1987; Joan Scott 1988) tries to recover women’s historical experiences as readers and writers, French feminist theory (Rosemarie Tong 1989; Toril Moi 1985, 1986; Helene Cixous & Catherine Clement 1986; Claire Duchen 1986) studies the ways in which the “feminine” has been defined, represented, or repressed in the symbolic systems of language, metaphysics, psychoanalysis, and art. The most radical French feminist theorists also believe that the feminine is connected to the rhythms of the female body and to sexual pleasure, and that women have an advantage in producing this radically disruptive and subversive kind of writing (Showalter 1986b:9). They urge the woman writer to ally herself with everything in the culture which is muted or silenced, in order to destroy the existing systems that repress feminine difference. Mary Jacobus (1986:64) thinks feminist criticism has this underlying political assumption at its starting point, because women confront the basic theory of the language of dominance and literary tradition or culture that is manifested in writing by and about women. Irigaray (1985a:68-85) suggests that women would have a question about all systems and all forms whether it is women’s oppression or not. She points to criticize not only reading and writing, but also gestures or manners that are beyond cultural boundaries.

On the other hand, Cheri Register (1975:1) understands feminist reading to be an aspect of feminist criticism. The reader must depend on her personal response to the book and evaluate it in terms of her own tastes and priorities. Feminist criticism has a practical aim:

- the analysis of the “image of women” as it nearly always appears in works by male authors and
- the examination of existing criticism of female authors.

Women have been drawn as a particular stereotype. Barracano Schmidt (1971:900) points out three reasons for this.

- The writer used a common model.
- The character is a product of social ideal or social value.
- The character is a symbolic fulfillment of the writers' needs, a mythical being invented to give solace in an otherwise terrifying situation.

Schmidt opts for the third reason, claiming that the terrifying situation in this case is the rise of feminist consciousness and its threat to male dominance. A Christian feminist, Schüssler Fiorenza (1985:126), expresses the opinion that "feminist consciousness radically throws into question all traditional religious names, texts, rituals, law, and interpretive metaphors because women all bear 'our Father's names'". Carol Christ (1979:273-287) insists that "the central spiritual and religious feminist quest is the quest for women's self-determination". Feminist criticism started from a resistance against patriarchal ideologies, society, and religions. A critical analysis of patriarchy allows women to conceptualize the interaction of sexism, racism, classism, and militarist colonialism. Schüssler Fiorenza explains why women criticize patriarchy.

The patriarchal dehumanization and victimization of triple oppressed women exhibits the full death-dealing powers of patriarchy, while their struggles for liberation and courage to survive is the fullest experience of God's grace in our midst. A feminist critical theology of liberation must therefore be particular and concrete. It must theologically explore women's particular experiences of marginalization, victimization, and oppression. At the same time, it has to articulate our individual and historical experience of liberation (Schüssler Fiorenza 1985:128).

Feminist biblical interpretation must challenge the scriptural authority of patriarchal texts. Schüssler Fiorenza (1985:130-135) suggests the elements of criticism or critical interpretation should be as follows:

- suspicion rather than acceptance of biblical authority,
- critical evaluation rather than correlation,
- interpretation through proclamation,
- remembrance and historical reconstruction,
- interpretation through celebration and ritual.

I will explain in detail:

- Firstly, a hermeneutics of suspicion should be applied to the history of exegesis and contemporary interpretations. And the task of a hermeneutics of suspicion is to elaborate the patriarchal, destructive aspects and oppressive functions of the Bible.
- Secondly, critical analysis and evaluation of particular biblical texts is to examine how patriarchal structures are contained in the original historical contexts and contemporary situation. A feminist hermeneutics of critical evaluation has criteria and principles to evaluate certain texts. The criteria and principles are the affirmation and promotion of the full humanity of women. Thus, women can find some liberating paradigms in the biblical texts through a process of critical evaluation.
- Thirdly, the Bible is understood as interaction with contemporary culture, politics, and society. A hermeneutics of proclamation evaluates the contemporary political situation and psychological factors of biblical interpretations and texts. The question is how much the Bible does impact on women's oppression.
- Fourthly, such a hermeneutics of proclamation must be balanced by a hermeneutics of remembrance, which recovers all biblical traditions and texts through a feminist historical reconstruction. Women need to remember their sufferings, struggles, and even visions in the patriarchal biblical past, then they will proclaim their victories through the subversive power of the "remembered" past. A hermeneutics of remembrance seeks to develop a feminist critical method and historical model for

moving beyond the androcentric text to the history of women in biblical religion. In this way women become the center of biblical life.

- Fifthly, interpretation through remembrance and historical reconstruction must be supplemented by a hermeneutics of creative ritualization. Such an interpretation allows women to have historical imagination, artistic recreation, literary creativity, music, dance, and liturgical celebration through biblical stories. Women have opportunities to rewrite biblical stories, to image biblical visions, and to create feminist rituals for celebrating.

In Schüssler Fiorenza's elaboration, through structural and creative transformation, the Bible can become the Scripture for women as a holy book, and the biblical revelation will not be reduced to merely androcentric texts which originated within patriarchal structures. Through feminist criticism (see Anderson 1992:103-134), women explore all kinds of hidden connections between literature and sexuality, genre and gender, sexual identity and cultural authority, political issues and women, psychological feeling and historical facts. Bons-Storm (1988:9-26; see Graham & Halsey 1988: 129-152) refers to this as women doing "feminist Practical Theology".

Chapter 3

Understanding Korean women

3.1 The myth of Korean origin

3.1.1 The story of the myth

The myth of Korean origin is the myth of “*Dankun*”, which means “a useful person for others far and wide”. In the very beginning, there were two animals, a tiger and a bear. Both of them came before a heavenly god in the high mountains to ask to become human beings. The god told them to eat only garlic and water for 100 days in a dark cave with no light, if they wanted to become human beings. If they went out of the cave before the 100 days were over, they would lose their only chance of being transformed into humans.

During the first few days in the dark cave with only garlic and water, the two animals were hopeful and were able to endure their hunger. But day after day, they felt tired and hungry, slowly losing their consciousness of the meaning of being human. The tiger started to complain towards the god, saying how cruel the god was, how much it missed all the other food, the light, being outside, the fresh air, and the wild fields. The tiger went on about how tiring it was to eat only garlic, and how damp and misty the cave was, but the bear encouraged the tiger tenderly by telling the tiger that this would last only for a limited time, then they would change into human beings.

Although the bear consoled the tiger many times, the tiger could not resist the longing for other food and the light. The tiger went out of the cave, but the bear continued to think brightly of the future, and remained there alone. Finally, the 100 days were over. The god came to the bear and gave a blessing. The bear transformed into a beautiful woman. Her name became “*Woong-yo*”, meaning “a woman from a bear” or “a bear-woman”.

At that time, the god’s son came down from the high mountains and fell in love with “*Woong-yo*” at first sight. With permission from his father, the god, he stayed with “*Woong-yo*” on earth instead of returning to the mountains. They got married and soon after had a son, the first person in the myth of Korean origin. This first person was

named “*Dankun*”, meaning “a useful person for any others far and wide”. He was the first ancestor of Korea.

3.1.2 Theological Reflection

Tribes in the world have their own myths. Ruether (1993:8) says about evaluating myths:

“Myths” in the sense of exemplary stories, are not illegitimate. Moreover, history is never completely objective, but is always a selection and interpretation of the past to make meaning for the present. But this does not mean that there can be no historical knowledge apart from subjective wishes, nor that myth does not need to be examined for its spiritual and ethical values.

I think myths basically express people’s thinking. To understand the Korean myth is, in a sense, to understand the basic thinking of Koreans. This myth originated a long time ago during the time when animism prevailed. Ancient society was maternal and women’s power was strong. One scholar of Korean literature, A-Lyoung Lee (1983:24) says, “Korean characteristics are endurance and tenacity of purpose. Koreans have endured all kinds of problems in difficult situations of international politics, economics and histories, and overcome those situations”. Throughout history, Koreans have had many severe, bitter trials and difficulties, some caused by other countries and others within the Korean nation.

Here, firstly, I want to comment on the status of women as reflected in this Korean myth. *Woong-yo* endured her difficulties and gave birth to a son who was the first ancestor of Korea. Through this myth, it is emphasized that women should endure at all times. Women are taught to be obedient without complaint, because *Woong-yo* represents all Korean women. Secondly, after the appearance of *Dankun*, *Woong-yo*’s son, who governed Korea, *Woong-yo* disappeared from the story automatically. *Woong-yo* was just an assisting actor. Korean women are like *Woong-yo*. After their marriage, women lose their names. It means that their identity disappears. They are called “somebody’s wife”, “somebody’s daughter-in-law”, “somebody’s mother”, or “a member of somebody’s family”. Her disappearance means that her role is seen as secondary. It

was believed that the only role for a woman was to give birth to a baby. These ideologies and beliefs resulted in Korean women staying at home for a long time. Women were not allowed to work in public places. In this myth of Korean origin, it was possible to detect words that have been emphasized to Korean women by men – words such as endurance, obedience, women's invisibility, and women's secondary role.

3.2 Political and historical understanding

Korea has a history of 5000 years. I cannot explain the whole history, but I will give an overview of the history of Korea over the last 100 years. During one century, many things happened to Korean men and women historically, politically, economically, and socially. There were many dynasties before the 20th century. Korea had to face Japanese colonization for 36 years (1910-1945), after which Korea gained independence (1945). The Civil War (1950-1953) followed, then the division of Korea into the communist North Korea and the capitalist South, the dictatorship (1961-1979), and lastly the democratic governments (since 1992). Korean history is closely linked with Korean politics during this century. Therefore I deal with the politics and history of Korea together.

3.2.1 Korean history and the political situation in the premodern era

Korea has had a written history from 57 BC. There had been many dynasties that existed up to 1910. Politically, most structures were male-dominated during 2000 years in the dynasties except for three queens, who ruled before the year 1000. The Sundok queen (632-647), the Jindok queen (647-654), and the Jinsung queen (887-897) were very active (Choi MJ 1991:219). These three queens governed the country for 32 years altogether. The other dynasties did not have any queens.

In the 19th century there was confusion in the Lee dynasty or *Chosun* (which was the name of Korea at that time). Political factions were continually divided; and the family members of the king's wives influenced politics for about 60 years. The Lee dynasty established a patriarchal society and protected Confucianism in order to maintain the kingship. There were many political disputes amongst parties. Parties were created by

gathering together the people with a common denominator, such as those with the same surname, the same place of birth, the same family members, the same school and so on. If one party succeeded in obtaining rule in the government, the other parties would have been ruined. Therefore, politicians killed and slandered one another severely towards the end of Lee dynasty. This dynasty had a policy of political seclusion, there was no trade or other relationships with any other countries. This was a negative aspect in terms of foreign affairs. Japan attacked and defeated Korea many times during the dynasty, which rendered Korea powerless. Korea opened itself to foreign intercourse only when compelled to do so by more powerful countries. When Korea opened its doors internationally, they made a concession to other powerful countries. This was the time when a new religion, Christianity, came into Korea.

The provincial leaders, who were highly educated, economically powerful, and respected by the people of their provinces, had political ambitions and different opinions about the politics. They carried out a particular form of government by restraining the growth of any one particular faction and taking turns to exercise power. Later factionalism grew worse and had negative ramifications for the social and economic life of the Lee dynasty. Factionalism was not rooted out even after the country had suffered much on account of the international situation. Thus, factionalism grew in such intensity as to create not only political confusion but divisions in society as well.

Politicians never took an interest in the lives of ordinary people economically and fundamentally exploited them (Kuk Sa 1998:30-32, 34-36). Because of continuous disputing parties and political disorder, the Lee dynasty slowly lost its leadership. The farmers who comprised 90 % of the population were impoverished, social unrest heightened, and popular rebellions spread to various parts of the country. At that time, most of the rural areas were in a difficult situation, with peasants who paid large amounts of taxes. Official corruption created a problem. Thus people's lives were difficult. Moreover, foreign ships appeared on Korea's seacoasts to request commercial activities with Korea. People experienced a crisis on account of these domestic and foreign conditions. Therefore, the voice of the people became louder. People demanded order in government, that their livelihood be stabilized, that the inroads made by western powers be curbed, and that national peace be established in the country (Korean History

1992:183). In the latter part of the dynasty, Western civilization was introduced to Korea via China. Korea entered the international arena by signing treaties with various nations. The treaties were unfair during that time. Korea was forced to permit the rights of low tariff rates, extraterritoriality, and residence of foreign nationals in Korea. On account of this, it was possible for foreign countries to instigate political and economical aggression against Korea. Korea made many efforts to accept the modern civilizations of the West through the diplomatic and commercial trade. The government sent some of the elite to investigate and to learn about industry, how to manufacture modern weapons and how to train the army. Among the new developments in the army were that special military forces were organized and provided with modern military training. The government reorganized political, social, and military systems.

The government continually promoted policies to accept the modern civilization of the West. Confucian scholars rejected this and were strongly opposed to this movement. There were conflicts between the old military and the forces of reform. The government attempted rapid reformation in all fields in order to build Korea into a wealthy, modern nation with a powerful military. But before these reforms were completed the radical reform party was expelled. The retrenched politicians were angry. Civilians did not trust the government and many opposition movements were formed. Conservative politicians requested China to help them regain power and radical politicians asked Japan to allow them to maintain their power. Later this situation caused a war between the Chinese and Japanese in Korea (1937-1940).

Two important events at the end of the 19th century in the pre-modern era impacted greatly on women's lives. One was the Catholic and the other was the *Dong-hak* movement. In the 19th century Catholicism expanded widely throughout the country although it was persecuted. The influence of the newly founded ideas of *Dong-hak* began to grow gradually among the peasants (Korean History 1992:138). Catholicism opposed the Confucian social system, which was maintained by the Lee dynasty (Choi MJ 1991:224). Catholics believe that all human beings are equal in God's eyes. Catholicism rejected the Confucian sacrificial rituals practiced by Koreans. Koreans are spiritually inclined. They respect their ancestors. The last three generations conduct ceremonies for their dead ancestors - sons, daughters, offsprings and relatives gather on the evening of

the ancestor's of death. Women prepare food and set the table, which is called a ritual table. There are rules for setting the table – dried fruits, fresh fruits, a certain kind of biscuit, roast fish, wine, and so on. The oldest male calls on and serves the dead ancestors. During the sacrificial rite, women and children are not allowed to attend, or even to peep. All the males, from the eldest to the youngest must bow down three times in front of the table. People believed that the ancestor would descend and sit down on the other side of the table during the rite. Before the 1960's families were large so the rite would continue through the night. These kinds of Confucian sacrificial rituals took place many times in a year. It was a heavy burden on women to prepare for these rituals. Great amounts of food had to be provided for the many family members and relatives.

However, the Catholic Church in Korea rejected Confucian sacrificial rituals. When Catholicism came to Korea, Koreans thought this religion was rude because they denied the ancestors' worship (see Min KB 1983:36-39, 53-78). People asked where they could have come from if ancestors did not exist. The Catholics claimed that there was only one father, God, so they were against Confucianism. In Confucianism, people regarded the country as the most important, but in the Catholic religion, God was the most important. Catholicism was actually very good news for women believers (Min KB 1983:78). They were freed from their rituals and Confucian ideology, in which women were treated as inferiors. As a result of Catholic evangelization, the old family system was destroyed. A loyal group affirmed the Catholic religion, and governors started persecuting Catholicism. The persecution of the Catholic churches by the Lee dynasty was started in 1785 (Facts 1997:164). One of the Catholic ministers, Kim Bum Woo, who built the Han Yang Catholic Church, was killed at that time. Many believers were killed in prison in 1791, and 300 believers were killed in 1801. After that, 70 believers were killed including 3 Catholic ministers; 8,000 believers and 9 missionaries from France were killed in 1866 (Korean History II 1998:67). Many believers were burnt at the stake, decapitated, slugged, and insulted (Min KB 1993:93-103). One reason for persecution was that some leaders of the opposition party had accepted the Catholic faith. A king, whose name was Taewongun, felt threatened by the opposition party. He wanted to keep his long-term kingship. The other reason was that western knowledge and Catholicism were spreading

very rapidly and they evoked a private response from the people (Kim WM 1986:54, 131, 222). Many people believed and followed the western religion and knowledge.

Some women would reject marriage, which was shocking at that time. Some Catholic female believers would not marry because they wanted to devote their heart and their body to God. So many female believers died a martyr's death for their faith. Women realized their self-reliance and independence from the dominant social order.

A second new idea, which insisted, on the equality of men and women was the *Dong-hak* ideology. The meaning of *Dong-hak* is "oriental knowledge" in itself (Lee JH 1994:11). When the Catholic faith was introduced into the Lee dynasty, the ethics and rules of Confucian society were brought to a crisis. *Dong-hak* emerged against Western knowledge and Catholicism, and promoted itself under the motto of "protection for peasants and country" in the 1860's. *Dong-hak* started at grassroots level from among the peasants. Their aim was to reform politics, to save the country from political collapse and to protect it against other powerful countries. Many peasants followed this movement. *Dong-hak* included traditional and reformatory ideas. Therefore it appealed to people. The core of *Dong-hak's* ideas was anti-discrimination, anti-classism, anti-hierarchy, equality and prophetic ideas for a new world. The first advocate was Choi Jae Woo (Korean History II 1998:177-178). He belonged to the upper class in the society. He treated women with respect and he gave them hope. Moreover, he released two female slaves. One became his daughter-in-law, and the other became his adopted daughter. But he was burnt at the stake because of his revolutionary ideas. The second advocate was Choi Shi Hyung, who had to travel in disguise, because the government persecuted the followers of *Dong-hak*. He had witnessed male oppression, violence and female oppression. He realized that women, slaves, and children were the weakest in the order of Confucian society. So he wrote a prayer for women, children and slaves. His teaching was to serve and love them, like a heavenly god. The dignity of women in *Dong-hak's* idea was the starting point of emancipation for women in Korea.

A chief named Cho collected taxes for building a memorial for his father. He destroyed a reservoir, which people were used to, and had a new one built. The peasants labored without any wages to complete it. During the harvest, he forced the people to pay water fees. Because he broke his promises, a spokesman of the villagers complained

many times on their behalf. But there was no change and Chief Cho exploited the people even more with heavier taxation. Peasants and followers of *Dong-hak* invaded the chief's office and destroyed the reservoir in 1894 (Kuk Sa 1998:57-58). The government sent some investigators but they did not rebuke the chief on account of his deeds. Instead, investigators imprisoned the peasants and leaders of the invasion. The followers of *Dong-hak* and peasants of neighbouring villages joined to rise in revolt, which soon spread across the whole of the Southern province of Korea. The third advocator, Jeon Bong Jun was a leader. He emphasized reformation and protested against corrupt politics. His aim was peace for the people. This led to conflict between the peasants and the national army. The peasants gained victories in the battle of Whang To-Hyun and the battle of Jang Sung. The peasants and the followers of *Dong-hak* were victorious in many places. The followers of *Dong-hak* grew in number. The government could not restrain the uproar, so they asked China to send their army to help prevent the peasants from gaining further control. When China sent their army, Japan joined in. At last, the government began negotiating with the peasants and promised to reform politics. After that, peasants and soldiers went back to their homes to continue living their ordinary lives again. The peasants' effort for reformation failed because the Korean government called on the Japanese army to help them suppress the peasant revolt. Some years later, the Japanese army which had more sophisticated weapons did battle with the peasants who wanted to protect their country. The *Dong-hak* movement was jeopardized by wicked governors and the Japanese army (Korean History II 1998:178).

The *Dong-hak* movement was important as it emerged from the people of the lowest class distinction and it had a great effect in changing the ideas of people. The *Dong-hak* movement influenced women to become aware of their situation. Women were treated like slaves in the society, but in the teaching of *Dong-hak* equality was the essential basis of humanity. According to Confucianism widows should remain alone. There were many young widows at that time. The teaching of *Dong-hak*, however, recommended that young widows remarry (Lee OJ & Lee HS 1989:23-24). This meant that women's dignity should be accepted in the society. Women were oppressed and discriminated against in the traditional society, but both Catholicism (Western idea) and *Dong-hak* (Oriental idea) contributed to the realisation that men and women are indeed equal.

3.2.2 Japanese colonialism

At the end of the 19th century Russia and Japan, the neighbors of Korea, forced international relations. Since they were more powerful than Korea at that time, this resulted in an unequal relationship. Russia tried to build a naval base in Korea. Britain and Russia were pitted against each other in many places of the world. Therefore Britain gave its approval for Japan to benefit in Korea. Russia and Japan went to war in 1904. After starting the war, Japanese troops were stationed in Seoul and the provincial cities of Korea. Japan compelled Korea agree to their making use of Korean land for military installations, to gain ownership of Korea's economical resources and diplomacy. They forced Korea to forbid the use of the Korean language in schools and that all education should be done in Japanese. They did not allow Korean history to be taught in schools. The situation deteriorated rapidly after Japan won a victory against Russia. At that time Britain and America were exploiting East Asia under the name of political and economical supporting (Kuk Sa 1998:70). Moreover, they made Pacification (Protection Pacific countries by American force). Its intention of America was to have a power around the Pacific. Therefore, they accepted Japanese tacit consent. In 1910, Korea lost the national rights and became a colony of Japan (Kuk Sa 1998:110). Korea's freedom was severely restricted.

The Japanese dispersed the Korean army, which meant that the Korean military lost their power. Moreover, the Japanese took judicial power and dispensed with Korean police officers. The owners of farms became peasants. The Japanese exploited Korean resources for their own industrial development and they sold their products in Korea (Lee OJ & Lee HS 1989:98-103). Japanese colonial policy was to make Koreans their slaves and to exploit Korean resources for their own use. This has already been said Japan took possession of large food supplies which meant that Koreans were suffering from a shortage of provisions. Japan not only demanded material goods, but also human resources for the army, mines or factories. During World War Two, Japan especially needed young manpower for the military. Moreover, Korean women were used as prostitutes for their army. Korean traditions were eradicated and supplanted by the Japanese language and customs. People were forced to change their names to Japanese.

During Japanese colonial rule, women participated in the work force even though it did not mean that their social position improved. Women could, however become economically independent and could develop their own perspective on society.

Kang Jung-Suk (1994:86) indicated that the number of female workers was about 3.2 million, which was 33.1% of the female population of Korea. Lee Oo-Jung (in Lee OJ & Lee HS 1989:125) estimated that 90% of female workers belonged to the agricultural work force in 1930. Agriculture was still a family business as it was in the premodern era, and men were managing the production. Kang (1994:87) finds that because of colonial policy, women had to work in factories. This meant that families made up 89.7% of the work force in the agricultural sector, 1.8% in industrial factories, 4.0% in service work, and 4.4% in other sectors in 1940. Women became more involved in industrial work at a later stage. Under Japanese colonial rule women's working conditions were bad. Korean women's wages were half of that of Korean males, a quarter of that of Japanese males and the female teenagers' wages were only 1/7 that of that of Japanese males (Kang JS 1994:88). The wages were further diminished by taxation and compulsory savings. Working hours were far too long and working conditions poor. It was an unfair working system controlled by the Japanese. Many women workers lost their health and their lives. Many of them contracted diseases from the hard work. A labour law was established in Japan in 1929 (Kang JS 1994:88). This law protected Japanese female workers but Korean female workers were not protected in the same way because the Japanese were exploiting the colony for maximum benefit to themselves. They practiced monopolistic capitalism.

The Japanese declared war on China in 1937 and later also became involved in World War II. During this period (1937-1945), life was extremely difficult for unmarried Korean women. One example of their exploitation was the phenomenon of "comfort women" (Lee HS 1992:385-415). The women were compelled to be prostitutes for the Japanese soldiers. Initially they were called "female officers and patriots," then at a later stage, "army cleaners," and eventually "comfort women." The Japanese governor sent Korean traveling merchants to recruit young girls. They coerced them with swear words and took them to China where they served as prostitutes for the Japanese troops from beginning of 1938. They were treated as sexual tools for Japanese soldiers. From 1941

every valley in Korea had to provide an equal number of girls. A hundred thousand “comfort women” stayed on the borders of China and Russia in 1941. The Japanese took two hundred thousand young women under the name of “comfort women” to war front. Fifty to seventy thousand of them became prostitutes for Japanese soldiers. They were between sixteen and thirty two years old.

Japan engaged in World War II on the 8th of December 1941. During the first six months the Japanese won victories in East Asia (Malaysia, Burma). At that time all the army bases had prostitutes known as “comfort women”. By 1941 the Japanese began legally taking young Korean women by enforcement and compulsion. They made a law that stated that women and men were to work for Japan. One prostitute had to have sexual intercourse with approximately a hundred Japanese soldiers in a day. The Japanese wanted these women not to waste time, so they were not permitted to take the time to eat a proper meal. They were provided with instant fast foods like sandwiches. When the Japanese moved their army bases these women were sometimes left behind like dumpsters in the battle field, massacred by Japanese soldiers, or buried alive. When the Japanese lost the war many women were dying because of famine, disease, infections, lack of hygiene and facilities. A very small number of these women who became prisoners of war, were able to survive.

The Japanese, not wanting to acknowledge their crimes concerning the “comfort women,” destroyed all records in this regard (see Yu BN 1991:81-83). Similarly, the Korean victims hid their secret, since prostitutes were shamed by Confucian society. Therefore the facts only became partially known. The historical facts did not come to light officially before 1992. The Japanese government never apologized for their crimes and never compensated the “comfort women” or the Korean government.

Korean women devised a counter-plan to find out what the facts concerning the “comfort women” really were. They sent representatives to the Japanese government in 1992 to demand that (Ahn SY 1992a: 352-353):

- The Japanese government should admit to the atrocity that the “comfort women” were taken to Japanese military bases by force
- The Japanese government should apologize officially to the “comfort women”

- The Japanese government should stop denying what they had done
- The Japanese government should build cenotaphs to console the spirits of the dead comfort women
- The Japanese government should compensate those women who were still alive, as well as the families of the deceased
- The Japanese government should teach the younger generations the facts of this history in order to prevent something similar from happening in the future.

3.2 Democratic Republic of Korea

During Japanese colonialisation the Korean church faced many conflicts (Min KB 1983:215-228; see Chandra 1988). One of them was the demand to bow down to the Japanese emperor. The Japanese saw their living emperor as a god who never died, ruled over them and had to be respected. The Japanese proconsul built shrines and compelled Koreans to bow down to Japan. This began in 1931 and soon became a serious problem. The Catholic and Methodist church interpreted it not as a religious ritual, but as a political activity, so they accepted it in 1935. The Presbyterian Church accepted it in 1938. Japan made it a national obligation. Since the acceptance of the churches Christians had to take an oath: "We believe that the Japanese king is a god. We are his sons and daughters and we must obey him" (Min KB 1983:402-404). Before a worship service in Korean churches, Christians repeated this oath and bowed toward the east where the Japanese king was living. There were fixed regulations about the ceremony of the Japanese king in every official meeting of the Korean church. Some ministers refused to perform the ritual of the Japanese king and strongly moved ahead with a rejection plan. Because of this resistance 1200 churches had to close their doors, 2000 Christians were jailed, and more than 50 ministers died as martyrs for Christianity. The national women's meeting of the Korean church had different opinions on the matter. The national women's meeting was officially established in 1927. They worked to create a politically independent Korea and helped to educate and evangelize the poor women in China. They were wise enough to survive and to act against Japanese. They remained an independent movement. Although weak, they would fight against the self-righteous Presbyterian Church, stereotyped theological education, a wrong church system, Japanese aggressive activities and Japanization.

The Korean family and economic systems changed as a result of Japanese exploitation. Japan made new laws about inheritance and this law was upheld until the 1980s. Women were not allowed the right to be the head of the family during Japanese colonial rule. Married daughters were disqualified from receiving any inheritance from their maternal parents. Discrimination against women should be understood against the political, social, and economic background of the colonization of the Japanese.

3.2.3 Democratic Republic of Korea

Korea gained liberation from Japan in August of 1945. Japan surrendered during World War II, because of the atomic explosions and Korea became an independent country. The United States of America and the Soviet Union were involved in Korean liberation, because they were the most powerful countries in the United Nations. This gave the two countries the authority to influence Korea towards self-government. They divided Korea into two parts. The Soviet Union ruled North Korea and the United States of America were involved with South Korea in establishing its autonomy. The United States, Britain and the Soviet Union had a conference about Korean trusteeship in Yalta, Soviet Union. America wanted to transfer the control of Korea to the United Nations. The Soviets insisted that the United States, Britain and the Soviet Union were needed to solve the problems of Korean politics peacefully and that the best policy was for Korea to govern itself after the withdrawal of the armies of the Soviet Union and the United States. The two countries, the United States and the Soviet Union had an agreement, but decidedly different perspectives. It meant that two different countries had their own agendas for obtaining territory and power in Korea. The United Nations decided not to continue with a UN trusteeship, but rather to have a presidential election in North and South Korea (Kuk Sa 1998:162-164; Lee OJ & Lee HS 1989:123). The United Nations sent provisional consultants to survey the Korean election, but the Soviet Union did not allow them into the northern part of Korea. The United Nations decided on a presidential election in the south of Korea in 1948. President Lee was elected and the government of the Republic of Korea was established. The northern part of Korea adopted a new constitutional law, elected, and formed a new government, which was called the *Chosun* People's Republic of Korea (*Chosun* means Korea) (Kuk Sa 1998:165).

This was the beginning of communism in North Korea and capitalism in South Korea. Korea was the only country to remain divided, even after the reunification of Germany. The people of North and South Korea originally belonged to one tribe with one language, one culture, and one history. Many relatives and families were separated by the division into North and South. North and South Korea became political enemies. This division of the South and North drove the Korean Peninsula into a state of extreme tension. Furthermore, as the world political situation led by the United States and the Soviet Union was rapidly rushing into a cold war. The Korean Peninsula became a region of instability, not knowing when war might break out (Korean History 1992:271). Using this international political situation, North Korea obtained tremendous military aid from the Soviet Union and was soon equipped with a strong military force. Each government and its politicians emphasized their self-security, so they blamed each other in order to maintain their ideologies. The emergence of these two societies has caused a political division in Korea so that the question of division and reunification constitutes a major problem that has ideological, as well as political, economical, and social components.

After the establishment of the government of the Republic of Korea, the communist group in North Korea attacked various places in South Korea and after reinforcing its military, finally invaded South Korea without warning in June 1950 (Min KB 1983:463-475). The Republic of Korea's army that was confronted by this unforeseen attack fought with inferior weapons. The national army evacuated from Seoul, the capital city, and later retreated. Though the national army was rather weak, it began marching again with the aid of UN forces. The United Nations had already branded the North Korean communists the aggressors and sent forces composed of the armies of the 16 countries. With the participation of the UN forces, the tables were turned, but the Chinese Communist Army joined forces with the North Korean Communists. A new phase began in what was to be a protracted war. Finally, at the end of three years of fierce battles, South and North signed an Armistice (July 1953).

The Korean War left a deep scar on Korea (see Lee OJ & Lee HS 1989:173-175). There were millions of human casualties during the war. A high rate of 2.5 million soldiers, including South Koreans, North Koreans, Chinese, American and UN soldiers were killed in this war. Approximately 6 million people died, including civilians. Three

million people became refugees and 10 million people lost family members. The land was destroyed. Countless houses and factories were reduced to ashes. During the three years of war more bombs exploded in Korea than in Europe during World War II. Women, who became widows, were left to carry heavy burdens. They now had the sole responsibility of feeding their families. Women's social position was such that their wages were very low. Women worked both at home and in society. The "political tension" between North and South Korea started to deepen, due to the war. This is the reason why tension exists and confrontation continues even today, a generation after the war. Family members are still separated in North and South Korea; they cannot see one another; they cannot even send a letter to one another; and they do not know whether their family members are still alive or not. In Confucianism societies, families are close and family ties are strong. Therefore, the division of families was an extremely critical issue and had serious ramifications for women.

There were several reasons for Korea's division. The most apparent reason is the Korean Civil War. The division of the country actually started after the War. Firstly, the United States and the Soviet Union occupied two different areas, and had the authority to divide Korea into two parts - the Republic of Korea in the south and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in the north. The purpose of this was partly for the guidance of Korea into liberalism, but also for the powerful countries to gain more support (Kuk Sa 1998:163). Korea holds US military bases and facilities that have been set up to maintain an area of defense of "the free world" against the "communist world". The "red scare" was intense in Korea. Secondly, during Japanese colonial rule, Japan caused Korea to be separated into pro-Japanese and anti-Japanese groups (Lee OJ & Lee HS 1989:175). The politicians, ordinary people, and even the Christian believers divided themselves into these two groups. One group supported the United States and the other the Soviets.

Korea attempted to reconstruct its desolated lands after the armistice. The United States and Korea have had a mutual defense treaty in order to protect themselves against aggression. Koreans worked together to overcome the disasters of war. The first president Rhee Sung-man tried to reconstruct the political situation, the economy and people's lives that were ruined by the war. He emphasized anti-communism in South

Korea and wanted to attack North Korea in order to bring about reunification. Rhee exercised dictatorial rule. There was no democracy. However, he did not gain the people's confidence because his government was unable to establish democracy. The Liberal Party led by Rhee amended the constitution at will in order to extend their political power (Korean History 1992:274). Rhee abused government authority. The government initiated a constitutional amendment to allow the president Rhee long-term presidential rule. The government was corrupt and the people complained. In 1960, there were elections of the president and the vice president. The liberty party achieved a rigged election, e.g. bribery cases, illegal ballot boxes, improper ballot papers, and so on. The students of universities and citizens rose in revolt in April 1960 against irregularities and corruptness, the rigged election, and the dictatorship of liberty parties in many cities (see Kuk Sa 1998:175-177). The government declared martial law and quelled riots. But the students and civilians strongly demanded the president to resign. Then, President Rhee acceded and resigned after 12 years of presidency. This April revolution was significant - people demanded democracy (see Lee OJ & Lee HS 1989:233-236). They wanted human rights and freedom.

After the revolution a provisional government took over for the time being. The government preferred a parliamentary cabinet and a bicameral system. Constitutional reform was initiated and a general election held (Facts 1997:29). Yun Bo-sun was elected prime minister and Jang Myun was elected a premier through the National Assembly in 1960. People expected the new government to cease dictatorship and to develop the economy, but the government could not carry out the various reform projects. The ruling party divided into several parties because of the individuals' desire for personal benefits. The government did not succeed with democracy and their government lasted but a few months. Unwillingly, the government transferred power to a military government.

Before the newly formed democratic government took over, a group of soldiers under the general Park Chung-hee carried out a *coup de tat* and established a military government (May 1961). They immediately organized a political party and revised the constitution instituting a president-centered system. Park was the new president and a new government was formed. The new government established a National Assembly that

was to restore Korea and a military administration which governed for two and a half years. The military government emphasized anti-communism, economic growth, political security and new social reform. The military government made an amendment to the constitution, which was decided through a national plebiscite (Kuk Sa 1998:178-179). After that, there were elections for the president and members of the National Assembly according to the new constitution. Park Chung-hee was elected as president and the National Assembly was established in 1963. The president, supported by the government, concentrated on industrial development factories, offices and modern houses were built, jobs were created, new technologies developed, export increased, wages were increased, and people's lives were improved. He believed that diplomacy with many countries was important, so he established ties with other countries. In 1965 a treaty with equal rights was signed between Korea and Japan. This was the first time after Japanese colonial rule that Korea established a relationship with Japan. In the 1960s, the government sent the Korean army to Vietnam to negotiate peace.

Due to the division between North and South Korea the South Korean government increased armaments and military expansion, maintaining a strong army because of the need for security. Because too much money was spent on maintaining the military, the social welfare system of South Korea was hardly improved at all. This caused great suffering and grievances for women, especially among the poor, who became even poorer. Unequal opportunities for jobs created limitations: for instance, jobs in the defense industry and the military were not open to women. US military bases remained in Korea, for security reasons in preparation a possible attack by North Korea. One of these military bases was located in the centre of the capital city. Prostitutes were established near these bases, which caused Korean women to be sexually exploited by US soldiers.

Korean military policy supported the centralization of administrative power. This led to rapid economic development. A bureaucracy was formed on a classist basis. It functioned like a military hierarchy. It was male-centered and authoritarian. Women were isolated from the politics and did not stand a chance of promotion. Classism and sex discrimination functioned to keep as strong military in place.

President Park attempted to revitalize the spirit of loyalty and filial piety, but most liberal-minded intellectuals rejected his attempt, because they thought it ideological

manipulation. Nonetheless, it had educational value for the military establishment and the general populace (Lee OJ & Lee HS 1989:296, 297, 299, 300). The military government attempted to revitalize a sense of pride in the Korean past; the cultural elite was called *yangban*. They had enjoyed a high position in the past society. Tu Wei-ming (1991:760-761) observes three assumptions from the Park's military government:

- Korean culture depended on Confucian ethics.
- The legacy of *yangban* still relates deeply with the contemporary Korean society. Even today, people strive to reach a high position in society.
- Even though Koreans tried to achieve recognition within the first world culture, in terms of its economy under the name of a “national effort”, people were still unable to move completely away from personal opinion and prejudice. People could not rid themselves of prejudice of distinguishing between a “low class” job and a “high class” job. For example, jobs such as doctor, politician, teacher, and pastor were considered a “good” job, while jobs such as barber, merchant, and butcher were regarded with less worth.

Tu Wei-ming's (1991:762) study of the 1960s indicates that the overwhelming majority of the interpreters of modernization took it for granted that the Confucian tradition was a major inhibiting factor in Korea's concerted effort to modernize. Speculation abounds in 1960s Korean historiography on what might have happened if the “practical learning” school had been successful in freeing itself from the mainline Confucian tradition: could Korea have developed its own form of industrialization, making her immune to Japanese imperialism (Vipan Chandra 1988:54)? Unless Korea rids itself of its Confucian past, it could not become part of the modern world, because Confucianism connects authoritarianism, hierarchy and anti-democratic tendencies. Tu Wei-ming (1991:762) finds that “the Confucian values such as loyalty and filial piety implemented by President Park regime in order to enhance its authority, had the unintended consequence of the ideological bastardization of Confucian ethics and further alienated the intelligent from their Confucian roots”.

Although President Park was successful with economic improvement, he lacked the ability to create an active democracy. He enforced laws to amend the constitution often in order to hold on to long term political power. He oppressed opposing political parties and those who were too outspoken, so he was criticized as a dictator. After 10 years of presidency he anticipated that it would be difficult for him to be reelected in a democratic election. In 1972 he proclaimed that what Korea needed was its own style of democratic politics. According to his democratic policies the president could be re-elected through the National Assembly, which meant that he could remain president as long as he wanted. President Park was a dictator for a long time (1962-1978). People soon began protesting against his policies and demonstrated for a real democracy (Lee HS 1992:56). Many people were assassinated, tortured and sent to prison because of anti-government movements. In spite of public discontentment and opposition the government managed to keep its power until 1978 when President Park was killed by one of his conveyers. The president and his government had achieved economic growth very rapidly but the shortcoming of the government was that freedom and human rights were not priority. There was apparent growth and rapid changes in many respects, such as buildings, factories, bridges, and housing. In spite of the successes of the government, President Park ruled with long term dictatorship. Rapid growth came with many mistakes. For example, an apartment suddenly collapsed one night due to a failed operation after construction. Many people died. Even under poor working conditions, workers worked very hard, but they did not receive sufficient wages to satisfy even their basic needs (Lee HS 1992:94; see Lee OJ & Lee HS 1989:322-346). One worker committed suicide because he was very poor and there were many problems in his factory. His intention with his suicide was to bring the workers' poor conditions to the attention of the people. The government implemented a master plan to build new villages instead of old houses and huts. Sometimes villagers were simply expelled from their homes without receiving what their property was worth.

From the time when General Park Chung-hee seized power in 1961, a military government ruled for almost thirty years. The military government fell because of continual student demonstrations and labour union activities. Tu Wei-ming (1991:759) states that Korean political leadership, intent on whole sale modernization at any cost,

managed to secure the reluctant support of the intelligentsia and the tacit acceptance of the populace in a drastic restructuring of polity and society for the sake of economic development. The military and technocratic elite joined the political system towards presumed quick economic growth and development. The politicians emphasized national security. In other words, if there is any war between the North and the South, the country which has economical power will be win. The result was the perpetuation of political repression from within and imperialistic dictation from without so that “democratic space” was narrow and the presumed achievement of political independence is largely a farce (Abraham 1990:6). The dominant political realities of Korea were as follows (see Abraham 1990:6-10; cf Lee HS 1992:168-173):

- political structures of oppression and dominance;
- the violation and restriction of basic human rights and civil liberties;
- foreign intervention;
- the absence of authentic democratic political institutions through which popular will and sovereignty could be expressed;
- militarisation continues to be entrenched not only as a mode of political rule but also as a way of life in Korea.

Beyond the very direct expressions of militarization, however, there is also a process whereby military values, ideology, and patterns of behaviour continue to achieve a dominating influence on the political, social, economic and external affairs of the state (Abraham 1990:6). It has begun to seep not only into the political life but also into the structures of social, cultural, and educational life. During the military government the violation of human rights, subjugation of popular movements and organizations, suppression of dissenting factions, oppression, summary arrests and summary killings were the order of the day in Korea (Lee HS 1992:168). The value of obedience, subservience, and “cooperation”, which were predominant in the military ethos, were becoming equally inculcated in the cultural and educational life of Korea.

The women in North Korea faced the communist system, which insisted on equal labour of both men and women (Kim AY 1995:250). This, however, does not mean that

North Korean women have been liberated. Kim AY (1995: 250-251; cf Lee OJ & Lee HS 1989:183) distinguish three stages change in the lives of the women of North Korea:

- The first stage is that all women should work according to the law of the equality of men and women. This meant that the old feudalism was discarded. Kindergartens were built to encourage communism from an early age. All the children were sent to compulsory learning facilities, while their parents were at work. This gave the women less obligations and responsibilities for the care of their children and more freedom to get married or divorced.
- The second stage is that all women were given the same working conditions and labour wages as men. Women attained the same opportunities and positions as men.
- The third stage is that women had to play the role of mother in the communist style through family revolution (Kim AY 1995:251). They also had the duty to socialize the children.

North Korea denied people the right to own property (See Min KB 1983:486-488), because that would create classism, discrimination between the rich and the poor, and sexism, as was the case in South Korea. North Korea claimed that the structure of women's social working conditions made the equality of all people possible (Kuk Sa 1998:192-193). They thought that traditional gender roles in the family led to sexism, so the role of women as a mother at home was minimized. Nevertheless, sexual differences and sexual discrimination could not be eradicated in North Korea, even though the position of women was improved through social revolution. There were still charismatic governors and a heritage of political power in the family remained. They followed the traditional family system, an example of which is Kim Il Sung, the president of North Korea. His son, Kim Jung Il took over from him after his death. People should obey their president in North Korea and although they deny religion the president is treated as a god. This means that a new patriarchal or hierarchical social system was built.

The communist motto is to work equally; to share equally; to live equally. Taking advantage of this, the North Korean government paid low wages - to every person the same amount. The people were poor but had no insight that this was a fraudulent act.

Actually, the government deprived women in North Korea of their abilities, their potential in their work, wages, and lives in a way which all women are treated exactly same.

Women in South Korea rarely participated in politics. There were only limited opportunities for women during the dictatorship government. Actually the military government discriminated against women on a social level. Women dared not speak of political matters even when the government was wrong. Korean women tried to work very hard to improve their lives. They were given more opportunities to work in factories and in society. Attitudes towards women in the society were still influenced by traditional thinking. The prejudice that women were inferior was still rife, so they received lower wages than men did. However, women became more efficient both at home and at work. Because of an increased income, people could build more convenient houses and improved their lives in many ways. Women strove to improve their quality of life economically. But the political situation often made it difficult because their family members were often sent to prison, or were tortured, or lost their social positions suddenly. This often happened many to members of anti-government movements. Many students of universities were sent to jail or were expelled from their universities so they could not study and they could not get jobs. Their mothers were victims of the dictatorship.

Democracy settled in South Korea after long and hard times. The efforts of people who demanded political democracy brought this about. They persevered in emphasizing good prospects for the realization of a completely free country. This has been done for the 50 years since Korean independence. Korea has many tasks:

- among others to make progress in the dialogue between North South Korea the peaceful reunification of two countries;
- social welfare;
- fighting the accumulated public evils;
- the improvement of diplomatic relationships with other countries in the world;
- the elimination of injustice and corruption;
- guaranteeing civilians their rights and freedom (see Yang MK 1991:334-343).

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:

New catalogue no. 5 of the constitution

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.

Chapter 4

The Bible and Korean Christian Women

The aim of this chapter is to investigate how Korean Christian women understand the Bible. Their context is Korean churches which are fundamentalist in their approach, as well as the patriarchal ideology of Korean society. In this chapter, I endeavour to look critically at the phenomenon of fundamentalism. In the Korean churches Jesus is understood as the King and God, as suffering servant, as Savior, and as Lord. Korean churches have taught women to obey God and the king. This means in effect that Christian women need to obey men in Korean culture, and even in the Korean church. Women should endure their suffering as boldly as Jesus. Christian women, on the other hand, see Jesus as liberator, as mother and woman, and as life-giver. This chapter aims at empowering Korean Christian women to interpret the Bible as liberating and life-giving to them.

4.1 Understandings of the Bible

The Bible has religious authority. The Bible contains historical information and doctrinal data relevant to its foundational role in Christianity. Christians have been much affected by the text. James Barr (1980:52) points out that being a Christian is believing that there is a deity; it is believing in a particular God, the God who has manifested himself in a way that has some sort of unique and specific expression in the Bible. Since Christians understand their experiences partly in terms of these texts, it is very important that they be heard in appropriate ways, and misleading passages be challenged in the light of the Gospel. Theological interpretation prefers theological arguments on individual passages rather than the “women’s history” approach to the Bible suggested by the hegemony of historical study in modern biblical scholarship.

The androcentric bias of the Bible not only erases women’s presence in the past history of the community to a great extent, but also silences even the very questions about their absence (Ruether 1985a:113). Biblical texts are often not only contradictory but also sexist and racist. Some feminist reject the Bible and its authority because of such

reasons. Russell (1985:140-141) states that “no interpretation of authority that reinforces patriarchal structures of domination would be acceptable for feminist interpretation”. The Bible is understood as a “dangerous” book (cf Stanton 1898; Wright 1969). I realise that not everything the Bible says is equally helpful to each individual, especially to women of faith. Moreover, there are many cases of false interpretation and misuse of the Bible. Most Korean churches understand the Bible as “the Word of God”. Ernest Wright (1969:166-185) says that the Bible is especially dangerous if we call it “the Word of God” and think that divine right means that everything we read is right. Feminist approaches – criticism/deconstruction – try to liberate the Bible from patriarchy, which is the first step to theological consideration.

Questions of authority are ultimately understood in terms of the readers’ own religious, social, political, and economic background or context. It is important to make the context clear and invite others to share their own contexts and how these shape their views on authority. Schüssler Fiorenza (1985:135) sees the Bible as a structuring prototype of women-church rather than as a definite archetype; as an open-ended paradigm that sets experiences in motion and invites transformation. Russell (1985:138) confesses that “I myself have no intention of giving up the biblical basis of my theology, in spite of the patriarchal nature of the biblical texts”. Ruether (1985a:116-117) agrees that the “prophetic–messianic” message of continuing self-critique embodies a critical or liberating tradition in the Bible. The prevailing paradigm of authority is the dominant one in the Christian religion. The feminist paradigm on authority, however, is a shift to an interpretive framework that affects both religion and society. The feminist paradigm prevents feminist to accept authority as domination. Russell (1985:144) suggests authority of the feminist paradigm as partnership in biblical and theological truth. This means that people participate in the common task of creating an interdependent community of humanity and nature. Authority is exercised in community and tends to reinforce ideas of cooperation, with contributions from a wide diversity of people enriching the whole (Russell 1985:144). Difference is valued and respected. All humans are worthy as the New Creation in church and society.

Feminist provide new frameworks of authority. Ruether (1985a:111-124) depicts the interpretive key as God’s affirmation of the full humanity of women and all persons

seen in the prophetic witness of Scripture against injustice and dehumanization. Fiorenza's interpretive key is Jesus and the discipleship of equals (see Schüssler Fiorenza 1983). Russell's key is different from that of Ruether and Schüssler Fiorenza. Her key of interpretation is her own life's story: her own expectations of justice and liberty. Schüssler Fiorenza rejects Ruether's correlation between a biblical critical principle and a feminist critical principle as the key to understanding the biblical authority. Fiorenza's critical perspective is based on "the experience of women's struggle for liberation from patriarchal oppression". In the theory of prototype, authority exercised in community creates new possibilities because there are no unchanging archetypes as a basis for authority. From Fiorenza's prototype, the Bible can be understood from a synergetic perspective of authority in community. Bruce Birth (1982) shows that the perspective of authority in community no longer provides one external or one internal biblical key. Russell (1985:146) puts it as follows: "A de-absolutized Canon allows for the honoring of ancient witness to the degree that it reveals to us the basic truths of our faith, while at the same time honoring the power and authority of our own experience of God." The understanding of authority as partnership leads women such as myself to deem it unnecessary to avoid Scripture as a dangerous book of patriarchal ideas and structures. Scripture has given me the faith to be a Christian and the incentive to overcome patriarchal ideologies. Thus, I accept biblical authority and I will work in that category. According to James Barr (1980:55), "the Bible does not have the property of perfection, which belongs only to God himself."

4.1.1. Fundamentalist understanding of the Bible

A group of American Protestant lay people published a set of twelve books with the title *The fundamentals: A testimony of the truth during 1910-1915* (cf Marty & Appleby 1993a, 1993b, 1994; Sweet 1945:291-292; Riesebrodt 1990). These books, selling millions of copies, were given to several denominations of American Protestantism. It seemed to be interdenominational, which meant that there was no "fundamental creed". Stewart Grant Cole (1931:34), who was the pioneer historian of the movement, called it "the famous Five-Points statement of doctrine": the Deity of Christ, his virgin birth, the substitutionary atonement of Christ, his physical resurrection, and his coming bodily

return to earth. They insisted upon universal Christian acceptance of the inerrancy of the Scriptures. Despite its lack of a confessional basis, it provided the most important distinctive emphases of the movement of fundamentalism.

In the 1920s, fundamentalists in the United States formed their own denominations and had an impact on the nation's schools (cf Wuthnow & Lawson 1994:18-56). They organized campaigns against religious liberalism in churches and the teaching of evolution in schools (Ammerman 1994b:14). But while modern voices affected society, fundamentalists lost their crusades for institutional and rhetorical control. They concentrated on evangelism and missions, education and publishing. Nancy Ammerman (1994b:14) states that they maintained a vibrant subculture in the midst of the modern world, a way of life both very modern and defiantly anti-modern.

In the mid-1970s, fundamentalist preachers appeared on television in the United States (cf Marsden 1990:22-37). They seemed to change history rather than believe in an apocalyptic end to history. Thus, they involved themselves in political action in order to stimulate renewed public activism. They paid attention to the dynamic nature of the relationship between belief and culture. In order to change the world, fundamentalist doctrines and life-styles were transported into new cultures and new politics. In the mission field, the fundamentalists were born again to establish new beliefs and practices in a variety of different contexts. Dean M Kelley's (1977) book, *Why conservative churches are growing* shows that fundamentalist churches expand more than liberal or moderate churches. Because fundamentalist moral and doctrine are strict, such strictness is consistent with strong organization, zealous commitment, and bigger donations. Ammerman (1987) emphasizes that the sources of persistence in fundamentalism in the modern world lie in the social process. The community maintains fundamentalism with the experiences of the believer that provides order and legitimates moral discipline.

4.1.1.1 Phenomenon of fundamentalism

Fundamentalism is visible. The word "fundamentalist" was originally used in the early twentieth century to characterize a particular tendency within American Protestantism. Fundamentalism can be described as a heterogeneous miscellany of movements and sects.

Characteristic of fundamentalist thinking and attitudes is the following (see Cohen 1990; Jaroslav 1990; Williams P 1990:249-262; Williams R 1994:785-834):

- Fundamentalists emphasize the inerrancy of the Bible, which means that the Bible does not have any errors.
- Fundamentalists have a strong hostility to modern theology and to the methods, results and implications of the modern critical study of the Bible.
- Fundamentalists think of themselves as “true Christians”. They have an assurance that those who do not share their religious viewpoints are not really “true Christians” at all.

From these aspects, fundamentalism seems to be hostile, narrow, and sectarian. But fundamentalism is not defined clearly and simply in the complex society and religious movements. Dollar (1973:XV) is of the opinion that “historic fundamentalism is the literal exposition of all the affirmations and attitudes of the Bible and the militant exposure of all non-Biblical affirmations and attitudes”. According to his view fundamentalism is one form of revivalist evangelicalism (see Hunter 1987). Fundamentalists would stand up to keep the faith. Patrick M Arnold sees modern fundamentalism as an aggressive and marginalized religious movement. Arnold (1990:174) explains it “as a reaction to the perceived threat of modernity, seeking to return its home religion and nation to traditional orthodox principles, values, and texts through the co-option of the central executive and legislative power of both the religion itself and the modern national state”. His definition shows fundamentalism as much more than a purely religious movement; rather, it involves social and political forces as well. Mortimer Ostow (1990:100) indicates “what the characteristic of fundamentalism is: it is not the text, but the way it is used, the significance and meaning that are assigned to it”. What qualities identify the fundamental community? Fundamentalism is far from homogeneous and is also not coextensive with the evangelical movement. Its tendency has been to split into quarreling sub-units, which contend with each other over their differing positions on religious and social issues, and frequently on the degree of

accommodation that they are willing to extend to the outside community and to the realities of modern life (Ostow 1990:100; cf Herbert 1957).

One of the characteristics of fundamentalism is zeal, which sometimes translates to constructive energy, sometimes to divisive militancy. Fundamentalists reject politics: the political state and political democracy. They reject science, especially the theories of evolution, because science contradicts Scripture in which they believe. They have a negative attitude toward the cognition of the historical development of theology. Thus, Ostow (1990:103; see Harding 1994:57-78) says that “fundamentalism is basically apocalyptic and messianic”. Fundamentalists do not tolerate others. The most well-known phenomenon is the apocalypse – basically, all fundamentalists report a revelation. The world will be destroyed, but a remnant of humanity will be saved to rebuild the world, which will be new, happy, perfect, and immortal. Fundamentalists see themselves as saved people. The people whom others call “fundamentalists” think of their position as the only truly Christian one. Theologically speaking they are more conservative than liberal and so is their interpretation of the Bible. It is necessary to discuss what the phenomenon of fundamentalism is and how it operates.

Barr’s (1977:11) sees the religious basis of fundamentalism not in the Bible but in a particular kind of religion. Fundamentalists believe that a particular experience arises from the Bible and it then controls the interpretation of the Bible. They insist on doctrinal conformity and have a non-historical understanding of Christianity. Historical change has no effect on them as “true Christians”. They keep the faith practices of the church in the time of the New Testament. George M Marsden (1990:25) explains their understanding of the Bible: for fundamentalists “the Bible is not only an infallible authority in matters of faith and practice, but it is also accurate in all its historical and scientific assertions”.

In their view the Bible is the essential source or textbook for their religion, therefore it is the centre of their religion. In the fundamentalists’ mind, the Bible functions in correlation to Christ. While Christ is the true Saviour, fundamentalists put the Bible in the place of Christ. Therefore, the Bible is the sacred reality for them. If someone has a Bible, he or she has the earthly essence of the church. Fundamentalists accept the Bible and the religious tradition without question. They want to protect the Bible against

modes of interpretation which can “damage” the Bible. They understanding the Bible as a symbol: Christ speaks through the Bible. The Bible is the authority. From this symbolic function of the Bible it follows that they believe in the exact words of the Bible. This means that the Bible has absolute authority. The traditional fundamentalist has often been a serious Bible-reader with an excellent knowledge at least of the verbal form of the text, and his or her devotion to it is often based on deep personal experience of help, encouragement and inspiration gained from certain parts of it (Barr 1977:38). In other words the Bible is central to their faith in Christ and their experience of salvation. Such a personal conversion leads to a strengthening of the fundamentalist convictions.

The Bible in fundamentalism is the central symbol of a personal and existential commitment. Fundamentalists interpret the Bible literally and non-literally in order to avoid imputing error to the Bible. Marty and Appleby (1991:818) point out that fundamentalists tend to depict the revealed truth as whole, unified, and undifferentiated. The dominant fundamentalist assertions about the Bible are that it is divinely inspired and the infallible. The Bible contains no error of any kind – not only theological error, but also no historical, geographical, or scientific errors. Fundamentalist interpretation is not literal in itself. They believe that the Bible is authoritative, inspired, infallible, and inerrant because the Bible itself attests to this. Fundamentalist ideas about the Bible are following:

- There cannot be a single error anywhere in the Bible, because the smallest error would totally destroy the inspiration of the whole. There is some flexibility concerning the possible minor errors, but no actual instance of an error is admitted.
- When fundamentalists use the critical approach to biblical literature, it becomes possible to understand the literature, while disregarding all possible errors. Although errors do become important in influencing the meaning of the text in many different ways, they are in themselves, a matter of trivial concern, to scholars and other elements of the critical operation.

4.1.1.2 Fundamentalism in Korea

Most of the Christian churches in Korea also believe that the Bible is literally the “Word of God”. They believe that the Bible has absolute authority and everything is said based on the foundation of the Bible. Most Korean Christians today still adhere to this belief, especially in the conservative denominations. They believe that there is no error in the Bible because it is the “Word of God”. If so, the Bible exercises absolute authority in almost every sphere related to their existence. Most of the lay people think that the Bible is an errorless holy book. Therefore, what the Bible says, should be believed and followed unconditionally without questioning. They believe that this is the duty of those who believe in Christ. For them the Bible provides the norm and contains the truth. On the grounds of this understanding the Bible, these people believe that the ethical contents of the Bible should be observed completely and that the religious and cultural expression of it are all true.

Such a fundamentalist understanding of the Bible in Korean churches were taught by missionaries. American missionaries came to Korea during 1900-1920. Barr points out that the book *The Fundamentals* was published in America, during the years 1910-1915. Fundamentalism emphasizes elements of traditional doctrine such as the inspiration and authority of Scripture, the deity of Jesus Christ, the virgin birth and others (Barr 1977:2). Korean feminist theologian, K H Kim (1995:34) criticizes the missionaries’ stance that every letter in the Bible was inspired and that the Bible contains no errors whatsoever. This perspective on the Bible was a means to firmly establish patriarchal ideology in the Korean Christian tradition, which also affected the understanding of gender. Patriarchal aspects in the Bible were taken to be the irrefutable truth to be obeyed as the “Word of God”. This resulted in women being treated as secondary, both at home and at church. Throughout history a hierarchical structure prevailed in Korean churches, which had its origins in Confucianism. Christians have sometimes questioned biblical texts which include violence and discrimination. But in most cases church leaders have silenced their questions; therefore many questions remain unanswered in Korean churches today.

To criticize the understanding of the Bible in the Korean church causes a problem concerning the matter of biblical authority. The Bible has authority because its authority is built into the structure of Christian faith and the Christian religion (Barr 1980:52).

Biblical ideas of God and traditions about God are to be found in the Bible as a written primary source. Scripture is fundamental to the church of God, not because it is a book of true facts about God and about past events, but because it is built into the way in which salvation is achieved in itself (Ackermann & Bons-Storm 1998:53-54). This means that our involvement with the Bible is part of our general religious involvement with God, with the church, and with salvation (Ackermann & Bons-Storm 1998:54).

Barr (1980:54) points out that “biblical authority is part of a faith-attitude that is established by Christian faith in God”. The basis of the authority of the Bible lies in its efficacy in the faith-relation between man and God. Without the faith-relation, the authority of the Bible has no value. Faith is not about “accepting the contents of the Bible” or “believing the Bible”. Christian faith is not primarily faith in the Bible, but rather faith in God. According to Barr (1980:55), “the Bible is only the instrument or the expression of faith, rather than the object of faith”. Fundamentalists understand the Bible as the source of Christian faith itself.

Fundamentalist movements have been fruitful in doing evangelism in Korea. Fundamentalists are not open-minded about the authority of the truth, but rather takes an exclusive dogmatic position on the ultimate truth. Korean women who were Confucian were obligated to follow “the truth”. Fundamentalists, who came to Korea with Western superiority and military technology such as gunboats, firearms, and cannons, came into conflict with the Confucian heritage.

Jang Sang (1980:12), a Korean feminist theologian, points out some major problems in the Korean churches:

- Many denominations have remained separate for the sake of retaining their own points of view and power.
- Often, Christians and the churches are more interested in the economical growth of their church rather than spiritual growth.
- Theology has not developed much.

Jang Sang adds that it is mostly the female Christians, making up more than 60% of the Korean church population, who try to do something about these problems (see also Lee

H.S. 1992:179). In this context, Korean feminist theologians see their first task as overcoming the fundamentalist perspective on the Bible (see Kang NS 1995). They believe that this is the basic obstacle on the road to attaining equality between men and women.

I will now turn my attention to the position of women in the Korean churches. The first Mother's Union in Korea, established in Pyung Yang in 1898, supported many powerless women both in and outside of churches. Though women's efforts were recognized in Korean churches, they were still not allowed to attend Assemblies or church meetings where ministers discussed important matters. Women were always marginalized, yet their service was demanded to serve the church in any every possible way. In 1996 the ordination of women ministers and female elders were permitted in the Presbyterian denominations (the majority of Christian Koreans). This only happened 200 years after Christianity had first come to Korea. It may now seem that men and women have equal opportunity to serve the church. In reality, however, there is still much discrimination against women in people's thinking and in their social customs. Korean churches still tend to find it a problem that women preach from the "holy place": the altar. In the year 2000 the number of female ministers in the Presbyterian Church was only 145 – the same as is has been since 1996 (*KiDok KongBo* 2000:3). In other denominations the number of female ministers was even smaller. Regardless of the discouragement, the ordained women work in churches as ministers or assistant pastors, in schools as Christian educational teachers, and as missionaries in other countries. There were also 170 women who, after having completed the 3 years of preparatory courses, were not invited by any Christian organization or church to be ordained, because they were female (*KiDok Kong Bo* 2000:3). The female ministers in 2002 number 339 in the Presbyterian Church. The situation of female evangelists is even more serious. Their salaries are much lower than that of the males and they do not have the right to preach.

4.1.1.3 Criticism of fundamentalism

Barr (1977:74; see 1980:65-90) is of the opinion that "fundamentalists seem to use the personal loyalty of Christians towards Jesus as a lever to force them into fundamentalist positions on historical and literary matters". This leads to extreme distortions of the

Christian faith. Cox (1995:302) points out that the “fundamentals” are the non-negotiable bedrock beliefs of a religious tradition which has undergone cultural erosion or direct attack by secular forces in the modern age. Fundamentalists often treat fellow believers who do not agree with them more venomously than they do outsiders. Fundamentalists define inquisitors as heretics.

Even though fundamentalists insist that they are “traditional”, they also think of themselves as the “all modern by-products of religious crisis” of the twentieth century. Marty and Appleby (1991:826) find in their analysis that fundamentalists do not simply reaffirm the old doctrines; they subtly lift them from their original context, embellish and institutionalize them, and employ them as ideological weapons against a hostile world. Barr (1977:341) defines fundamentalism “as a highly self-enclosing ideology”.

As far as faith is concerned, fundamentalism emphasizes a personal faith in Christ which is made dependent on a rationalist proof of the inerrancy of the Bible. The promises of God are not considered trustworthy unless all statements in the Bible are “true” (Barr 1977:339). The essential connection between inspiration and inerrancy is formed by one link. If Scripture was inspired, it will necessarily be without errors, as far as historical facts are concerned.

Fundamentalists understand eschatology, the movement towards the future, as a movement in which God does new things within this present age. The tendency in evangelism has been to emphasize a totally new age. A new era is a form of a renewed impact of God’s will upon human beings. On the whole, things get worse rather than better. Apart from a glorious future completely disconnected from the present world, the realization of God’s will lies only in the past. Changing the world is making it worse.

Fundamentalism comes into confrontation with modernity and its characteristics of rationality, pluralism, the public/private dualism, and secularism. Fundamentalists feel hostile towards modern theology and a critical approach to the Bible, because they believe that their religious faith is the truth. Modern theology and biblical criticism would break the intellectual link with the Bible. Fundamentalism is an inclination to base both religious authority and the rejection of modernity upon a literal reading of Scriptural texts. The significance of Scripturalism is that it establishes very clear symbolic boundaries between good and evil, right and wrong (Hunter 1990:68). Fundamentalists

have the criteria with which to distinguish between the faithful and the unfaithful and infidel. From the clash with modernity two issues arise. Firstly the question: how do fundamentalists react to and overcome the crisis in which modern thinking has placed them? Modernity threatens the religious self-identity of the believers of fundamental religion and threatens the very survival of the faith of the orthodox. Christian fundamentalists concede that their frantic efforts to oppose modernity is their fatal flaw. Their prosaic view of the Bible and their cognitive conception of faith – epitomized by a shrill defense of Scriptural “inerrancy” – place fundamentalists squarely in the modern world. Cox (1995:303) sees fundamentalism not as a retrieval of the religious tradition at all, but a distortion of it. The irony is that fundamentalists attempt to fend off modernity by using the weapons of modernity. Secondly, the various “fundamentalisms” in the world today react in different ways or adopt modernity. They do, however, retain their original article: they differ from the classical and historical expressions of their traditions. In other words, truth has transformed itself. How then do fundamentalists define the moral boundaries in order to maintain the orthodox faith? Cox (1995:303) points out that “fundamentalists might seem to undermine their plausibility”. It is difficult for fundamentalists to maintain their absolute truth because of the transformation of absoluteness. Today’s world is open to religious diversity; even fundamentalists have different opinions. The emergence of an assortment of fundamentalisms over decades has led to inevitable discord between them rather than a new beginning for the spirit.

In the modern era, fundamentalism has been challenged by the issues of literary criticism: questions of authorship, unity of books, diversity of sources and dates. Fundamentalists have missed out on the original research because of their position on literary criticism. For example, they have difficulties with the relation to historical narrative and the quest for the “historical Jesus”. The question of the accuracy of the historical reporting in the Gospels brings a completely different perspective to the origin of Scripture. Fundamentalist understanding of faith is related to historical data, but faith cannot be built upon historical data and the authorship of books.

Feminist theologians criticize fundamentalism. Schüssler Fiorenza (2000:5) speaks from the rhetorical context of struggle over meaning and points out that the proliferation of historical-Jesus books for popular and scientific consumption by male-stream biblical

and theological studies functions as the reverse side of the fundamentalist and literal coin. According to Margaret Farelly (1985:41) Scripture is judged by feminist to be a source of faith for theology, ethics, and life, and it also functions to discern the meaning of specific texts and specific aspects of the biblical story. Jesus Christ is reduced to a single, definite discourse of meaning through the fundamentalist perspective (see Lee ES 1989, 1991). Jesus is studied as a factual and historical production. Just as fundamentalist readings, books on the historical-Jesus are concerned with authority. Fundamentalists assert Jesus not as theological revelatory positivism, but as historical positivism. Fundamentalists aim to create an “accurate”, reliable biography of Jesus (see Schüssler Fiorenza 2000:5).

4.1.2 Feminist theologians’ understandings of the Bible

There is a variety of contemporary feminist hermeneutics and hermeneutical problems which feminist confront. A choice needs to be made of how to reflect on the vast existing literature on the topic. Osiek (1997:960-965) discusses five possibilities within contemporary feminism: the rejectionist, revisionist, loyalist, sublimationist and liberationist alternative.

Rejectionist alternative

- Scholars reject the Bible and religious tradition as useless.
- Exponents of this approach are Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Mary Daly.
- Women leave the irredeemable Judeo-Christian legacy to form a new post-Christian faith which transcends its negative power.
- Scholars rejecting the redemption of Judaism and Christianity
- They reject the possibility of conversion
- The rejectionist alternative is a kind of extreme apocalyptic finalism which cannot yield to a dynamic conversion.
- It is not rooted in historical fact or the social present.

Revisionist alternative

- The patriarchal mould the Judeo-Christian tradition is historical but not theologically determined.
- The tradition has been male-dominated, androcentric and discriminatory because of social and historical factors.
- Tradition can be reformed.
- An exponent of this approach is the Old Testament theologian, Catherine Sakenfeld.
- Women's history is explored for neglected sources of information in the tradition.
- Historical sources are re-examined and re-interpreted to find a positive role of women.
- This approach provides a moderate voice against the situation.
- No direct frontal attack on the system is launched.
- This approach manifests a lack of political strategy in its efforts.

Loyalist alternative

- The Bible is the ultimate expression of God's authority.
- The Bible as the Word of God cannot be oppressive in its nature.
- Large numbers of intelligent American women belong here.
- Scholars need to reconcile with the blatant biblical messages of female submission.
- They accept the biblical authority and revelation.
- The problem is seen with narrow-minded interpreters rather than with the text itself.
- This approach is vulnerable in the way it stretches history and the literal meaning of texts.
- The political implications of divine revelation are accepted.

Sublimationist alternative

- Its basic premise is the otherness of femininity as manifested in female imagery and symbolism in human culture.
- Rosemary Radford Ruether is an exponent of this approach.
- Scholars use biblical symbolism and maternal imagery for glorification of the eternal femininity.

- Its tendency is exclusivist and separatist – there is little engagement with the socio-political dimension.
- The inclination is towards dogmatism on the question of female and social roles.

Liberationist alternative

- The premise is a radical reinterpretation of biblical liberation from patriarchal domination in order that all human persons can be partners and equals.
- Letty Russell started the movement, and Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza and Rosemary Ruether developed it theoretically.
- The central message of the Bible is human liberation, which is the meaning of salvation.
- Scholars reinterpret the Bible within a vision of salvation and new creation.
- The aim is to lead transformation of the social order through structural conversion, both individually and communally.
- Ruether finds the biblical message of liberation in the prophetic tradition. Preaching conversion in an unjust society must be free from any kind of oppression. The hermeneutical dynamic came from biblical texts that are androcentric or patriarchal. Women need to deal freely with “feminist historical reconstruction”. Israel and Christian origins have pragmatic value, but they risk reinforcing a theologically unsatisfactory way of reading Scripture in historical and cultural contexts.
- Schüssler Fiorenza focuses on the texts of the New Testament which transcend androcentric-patriarchal structures, in order to express a new vision of redeemed humanity. The God of the Bible is a patriarchal God, but women believe in God who is not patriarchal. People need to understand the biblical God and it is necessary to criticize the Bible in order to know the true God. Schüssler Fiorenza (see 1985:125-136) understands the Bible in a movement from the “mythic archetype” to the “historical prototype” in order to find the true meaning of the Bible. The “mythic archetype” means to accept the Bible without any critical views and to accept the Bible as the Word of God. The Bible of the “mythic archetype” is the timeless, unchangeable, absolute truth. The biblical understanding of the “historical prototype” is a critical evaluation of the Bible. Sexual/sexist texts of the Bible are not the Words

of God, but they are meanings illustrating male ideologies and cultures. It must be freed from the literal meaning.

- This approach takes a partisan position on revelation.
- The criterion of revelation is narrow in its historical approach to biblical literature.

The five alternatives represent different way of understanding the Bible and have different premises, hermeneutical principles and weaknesses.

4.2 The social roles of women in the Bible and early Christianity

4.2.1 Fundamentalist view of society and culture

The Fundamentalist view of society and culture is explained by Martin Riesebrodt (1990:11) who says that “fundamentalism is primarily a radical patriarchy”. The view of fundamentalist Christians on social and political matters is mostly conservative and connected. The Bible is an example of such connectedness: the image of God in man, the economic laws of the Old Testament, the social criticism of the prophets, the solidarity of Jesus for the poor, and the primitive communism of the early church. American fundamentalism has commonly been strongly aligned with extreme political conservatism during the World War II (Barr 1977:109). Christianity is understood to give complete sanction to the capitalist system and socialist Christian. The evangelical message of fundamentalism however, does not accept capitalist society and its business ideology. Fundamentalists are often accused of socialism and communism. Moreover, the fundamentalist understanding of the gospel and the biblical message challenges all human security. Fundamentalists criticize government intervention in social arrangements, the welfare state, mildly reformist attitudes, higher criticism of the Bible, modern theology, radicalism, liberalism, and socialism, which are all alike, seen as forms of communism masquerading under another name. According to this understanding being a socialist Christian is inconceivable (Barr 1977:109).

The expectation that an ideal society that will supersede the current imperfect society yields utopianism (Ostow 1990:105). The world is a painful reality and is affected by fundamentalists. They see a world filled with immorality, violence, corruption and sin. The experience of conversion is called “rebirth” and a person then becomes a “reborn Christian”. Christ was crucified, then resurrected. In the same way salvation can be understood as a rebirth.

It is ironical that, even though the fundamentalist religion reject capitalistic systems, fundamentalist Christians support the United States uncritically (Pinnock 1990:38-55; Ginsberg 1993:2-21). A Christian country such as the United States is perceived as being ruled by Christian values, using military force against the enemies of God, and enforcing God’s will through laws and policies. Nancy Ammerman (1994a:158) points out that “fundamentalists can usually be assured of legal protection and a certain level of community acceptance that is not automatically afforded a new movement”. When religion becomes the ideological guarantor of the rightness of the existing social order, the claim of the evangelical gospel to be a radical questioning on the inner bases of human self-certainty is suddenly reversed (Barr 1977:110). Such a reversal or contradiction can be seen in several analogous phenomena and it is not accidental in conservative evangelism. Conservative evangelism fits well with nationalistic feeling. An example is the church with a strongly Protestant background in Scotland, Northern Ireland, and Wales which supports the nationalistic trend.

The political involvement and social concern of fundamentalists is seen as an individual matter, because the individual takes political and social decisions as a single unit. Fundamentalists are not accustomed to working in a society in which a multitude of different voices are heard. Moreover, the theological convictions of fundamentalists lie in their personal faith, acceptance and repentance. The gospel is effective only through individual responsibility. Fundamentalists do not accept a social gospel. Liberalism, modernism and biblical criticism agree that the function of a social gospel is very important. Fundamentalists emphasize devotion, not as Christians with a social responsibility, but as individuals. The fundamentalist theory is that the dedicated Christian, through personal involvement in industry or in society, does help to bring about social change. If people themselves have been changed through the true gospel,

then they in turn will change society. It is the two sides of the same coin: one is a personal gospel and the other is a social gospel.

In the late twentieth century, patriarchal structures of family and absolute distinctions between male and female roles were challenged by social changes. Feminism, bureaucratic structures, social morals and modern depersonalization have replaced patriarchal structure. Fundamentalists drew upon modern organizational methods and structures; they also benefited from the support of colonial powers and later took advantage of the openness of secular democracies (Marty & Appleby 1991:828). The creation of a fundamentalist movement is a dynamic social process in which the raw materials of culture and discontent are shaped by the particular ideological and social resources of the movement itself. Fundamentalist social movements link the past and the future, or so they claim. They are dedicated to a renewed future for the sacred texts and authority. Nancy Ammerman (1994a:158) points out that “fundamentalist movements are likely to establish leadership structures that are strictly hierarchical in form”.

Economic imperatives force women into the work place. Powerful feminist and homosexual movements challenge fundamentalist intellectuality and philosophy. Martin Riesebrodt (1990:11) analyzed fundamentalist ideologies in terms of their posited ideal social order as patriarchal structures. The ideal family is the patriarchal family where the father is responsible for the public sphere (economy, politics) and the women for the private sphere (home, children). The economic ideal includes family enterprise and a religious integration of “capital” and “labour” instead of institutionalized class-conflict, “big business” and “big labor” (Riesebrodt 1990:11-15).

Fundamentalist women position themselves as follows:

- Women involved in Islam and Christian fundamentalist movements wish to be recognized as morally upright members of their religion, seriously engaged in addressing contemporary social programs (Hardacre 1993:141)
- Many women fundamentalists recognize that many men are weak and passive husbands. Family members seek female leadership. They agree that both parents take responsibility for their children’s spiritual development, not only one.

- Women fundamentalists discover and explore alternative values and ways of life. They realize that their society is unequal as far as the sexes are concerned.
- These women idealize obedience and submissiveness. They receive little support for the development of alternatives.
- Many women find that modernity presents them with difficult choices to make about things they were raised to believe inevitable (Hardacre 1993:143). Through revolutionary changes, women have to choose marriage, support themselves and take control of their fertility. Since marriage is seen as holy women are to sacrifice themselves by which they will earn their salvation.

Fundamentalism remains marginal in the different societies and plays sectarian, oppositionist roles. For fundamentalists, it is valuable to note that the majority of the people in the world take part in the social order, and are commonly involved in secular ideologies or various religious programs. As contemporary fundamentalist movements aim to achieve a sound religious reformation throughout the world, religious communities may well have a future that may even stabilize the urban society, globally.

4.2.2 Gender meaning and roles

The system of gender has been influenced by political, economical and cultural aspects. Schüssler Fiorenza (2000:10) regards gender as a cultural category, which is a primary issue and part of the order of things. Men and women had to perform their cultural roles according to their social status. Even in modernity the genders are seen as representing and legitimating the social-political order. Schüssler Fiorenza (2000:10) points out that “the ancients did not need the facts of sexual difference to support their claim that women were inferior to men and therefore subordinate beings”. Here, I will analyze different gender roles within different contexts: gender roles in Greco-Roman culture; Judaism; the Jesus tradition; the letters of Paul; and in the Early Church. The problem of gender inculturation (see Niebuhr 1951) may be the most complex to analyze in the Jesus tradition which was influenced by the Greco-Roman world, because the sources are not consistent.

- **Gender roles in the Greco-Roman world**

In the first century Greco-Roman culture made a definite distinction between the roles of males and females in society. The different roles are described by Ross Kraemer (1988:29-30):

Market-places and council-halls and law-courts and gatherings and meetings where a large number of people are assembled, and open-air life with full scope for discussion and action – all these are suitable to men both in war and peace. The women are best suited to the indoor life which never strays from the house, within which the middle door is taken by the maidens as their boundary, and the outer by those who have reached full womanhood.

According to this distinction, men were associated with the public sphere and women with the private sphere such as the home. The value of honour and shame were pivotal to maintaining traditional Mediterranean societies. Women from elite families, who were for instance the wives of Roman emperors and leaders, influenced politics. An example in the Bible is the book of Acts (25:23) where Bernice the sister of Herod Agrippa II, participates with her brother and the Roman governor in the interrogation of a Roman citizen (Stegemann & Ekkehard 1999:368). Women were involved in politics as advisors of their husbands and sons. Some women had jobs outside the household, for example, as market women, agricultural labourers. Women also participated in the cult and at banquets. However, women's activities in the cult were restricted to subordinate functions and marginal roles in Rome and Greece. Stegemann & Ekkehard (1999:373) explain that mostly women's role was to remain in the house, for they were the repositories of male honor.

Male deities ruled the Olympic family while powerful goddesses guided creativity and fertility. With such ultimate gender definitions the human roles were clear. Men are the ultimate authorities and make the ultimate, public decisions. Women create cultural values and future generations. They do that privately. Women danced, played music, while men officiated at religious sacrificial rites and controlled political activity. Women were not officially allowed to attend meals. They cooked and served. Luise Schottruff

(1993:80-87) explains that “the role of women who were slaves changed during the late republic and early empire of the Roman world in 195 B C E”. Women were then free to act in public, to own property and to be educated (Snyder 1999:177).

- **Gender roles in Judaism**

God the Creator was one God and definitely masculine according to Israelite tradition. Jesus as male was the image of God. Traditional thinking about women was that they were still in the thrall of Eve’s birth pains and submission to their husbands. Elizabeth A Clark (1983:17) points out that “marriage by definition placed women in an inferior role: sexual functioning in itself made women subordinated”. Women were only valuable on account of their sexual function in the ancient era. The priesthood with its sacramental and public teaching offices was closed to women.

Women were subordinate to male authority. Although there were no female hierarchical leaders in Israel, there were women leaders such as Miriam and Deborah, and women heroes such as Judith, Jael, Tamar, Rahab, and Esther (see Niditch 1991:25-45). Men and women shared religious activities in the synagogue. Judaism at the time of the New Testament was more flexible, because it had adopted a more liberal Roman attitude (cf Hengel 1989). Two major roles of women are seen in Judaism in the first century: devout followers (Ac 13:50) or in the role of leaders in a synagogue (Ac 9:36). Much of the biblical evidence is not conclusive as to women’s roles. Though Lydia (Ac 16:14) was not explicitly called a leading citizen or a wealthy donor, she did invite Paul to her home, where most probably the first house church in Philippi assembled (Snyder 1999:180).

- **Gender roles in the Jesus tradition**

Generally, a woman’s place was at home; men worked in public places in the society. Women could not attend political meetings and judicial proceedings and could not speak in public. Stegemann & Ekkehard (1999:366) point out that the gender-specific character of the exclusion of women from the public realm of “municipal administration” is confirmed by the following insight: the basic free access of all men to the political self-governance of the city was graduated socially and legally. The social level was strictly in

order from free male, freed man, then slave. Women's social position generally prohibited access to politics. The significant role of women in the Early Church, however, is shown in the Gospels and in Acts. Attitudes toward women in the New Testament reflect both theologically and socially, a first-century Jewish religious and cultural cast. Parvey (1974:118; cf Hensman 1985) points out that "the Early Church embodied theologically and socially different attitudes toward women as a consequence of Jesus' coming". Jesus had a liberated attitude towards women. The parables of Jesus and stories about Jesus' life reflect his relationship with women (see Moltmann-Wendel 1982) and the social status of women in the worship, teaching, and missionary life of the church. In Acts women from all social levels were drawn to the first century churches (Parvey 1974:146). In worship, teaching, institutional and missionary life the Spirit, indeed, was poured out on both "sons and daughters". Women had a role of leadership. Margaret MacDonald (1996:29) discusses early Christian women by means of pagan critique. She mentions that church women could be accused of being too frequently absent from the home, remiss in domestic affairs and ultimately of being sexually immoral. The honor and shame syndrome distinguished the roles within female private space and male public space in early Christianity.

Women in the Jewish tradition do not generally appear to have been treated well, except in Luke 8:1-3 (women on Jesus' mission trips) and Mark 15:40-41 (the women at the crucifixion). Women clearly played an important role as witnesses of the crucifixion and of the empty tomb in the Jesus movement. The Jesus tradition does not have the Jewish sense of female uncleanness. Jesus cured a woman who was bleeding (Mk 5:34); Jesus raised a young maiden from death (Mk 5:41).

• **Gender roles in the letters of Paul**

In Paul's letters, women are not only functionaries, but also speak in public and interpret the faith tradition (Snyder 1999:182). Women led the gathered community in prayer and interpreted the faith to them in the Corinthian Church (I Cor 11:2-16) and the Church at Cenchreae (Rm 16:1-2). Women, such as Prisca, appear as leaders in house churches which were made available by women.

Prisca and Junia were committed to the work of spreading the gospel message. Schüssler Fiorenza (1983:173) says that “missionaries took their wives around as Christian sisters rather than spouses, to be their fellow-ministers in relation to housewives, through whom the Lord’s teaching penetrated into the women’s quarters without scandal”. Despite the activities of some women in the public place, the dominant cultural ideal of women was for them to stay at home. Paul, devoted to establishing a community set apart from the world while leaving every possible door open to win the unbeliever (cf I Cor 8:10; 14:22-25), certainly was aware of the evangelizing potential of household relationships (MacDonald 1996:217). This potential is suggested indirectly by his mention of household conversions (I Cor 1:14-16; 16:15-18; cf Ac 16:32-33; 18:8) and explicitly by his treatment of mixed marriage (I Cor 7:12-16).

According to Paul’s letters the Early Church gathered in houses. It is clear that early Christians were building a household-based movement that would be depicted as suspiciously female-oriented by the pagan critics of the second century (MacDonald 1996:30). The Early Church can be seen as a house church. House churches can be found in Ephesians 5:21-6:9. House churches also had a public dimension. Some women, such as Paul’s co-workers, had leadership roles (Phlp 4:2-3). They spread the Gospel actively. The lives of early Christian women differed from one another in many ways due to personal factors related to particular geographic location and wealth.

Paul’s theology of equality in Christ provided a vehicle for building a new religious and social basis for women-men relationships (Parvey 1974:146). However, dualism was still prevalent in the Early Church. Men were seen as belonging to this world and doing the work of church, whereas women belonged to the next world and acted in the church only as hidden helpers and servants to men (Parvey 1974:146). Men are of this world, but women are of the Spirit. This idea provided the impetus to maintain the status-quo on ethical and social level by the subordinating women, while they were emphasizing women’s spiritual equality before God. Women have been precluded from receiving or developing full responsibility and equal roles in the life of the church.

In Paul’s letters, the married woman is charged with the care of her husband and family and the virgin is seen as sacred and pure; therefore Paul’s advice is for women to keep their virginity so as to receive spiritual privileges. Schüssler Fiorenza (1983:225-

226) wonders how Paul could have made such a theological point when he had Prisca as his friend and knew other missionary couples (Prisca and Aquila, Andronicus and Junia, possibly also Philologus and Julia as well as Nereus and his sister) who were living examples of the opposite. Women in early Christianity often rejected marriage in order to keep their bodies pure as a bride of Christ. It is fitting that the symbol of the female body is expressed as a corporate identity in early Christianity. By doing so they broke with cultural expectations. These women followed Jesus who liberated them to their full potential. Jesus had them from traditional patriarchal ideology. The liberation of women led to conversion. Married Christian women were characterized as “discreet and modest wives”. According to Clark (1990:20-22) early Christianity offered only two innovations to the marital ethics of late ancient, pagan society: a single standard of sexual morality and the condemnation of divorce and remarriage.

Paul was envisioning the new interdependence of men and women in Christ on a theological level. Paul makes a fundamental breakthrough in making new images possible for women. On the cultural and social level, however, he clearly identifies himself as a first-century Israelite teacher for whom custom has authority and a validity of their own (Parvey 1974:128).

- **Gender roles in the early church**

Church order called for the subordination of citizens to the emperor, of wives to husbands, of children to parents, and of slaves to masters (Col 3:18; Eph 5:21-6:9; I Pt 2:11-3:12; I Tm 2:8-15; 5:1-2; 6:1-2; Tt 2:1-10; 3:1). Church leaders adopted the order to maintain the authority of the church. Female leadership stressed the independence of women and rejected social authority and social order (see Heine 1987). Inculturation of the Jesus tradition regarding language, social structure, architecture, food, and calendar – all could occur because the faith community lived in relative peace (Snyder 1999:188; cf Martey 1994; Niebubr 1974). However, gender issues did not fare well. As churches became bigger and more institutionalized female leadership was no longer acceptable. The church preferred to follow the old order. Therefore, women participated freely in a private family life and in the local faith community, but their public role did not change much in the Jesus tradition. The impact of culture can be seen as the reason for this.

Also, male authors wrote down the Jesus tradition from a male perspective. In the second to early fourth centuries a new class of Christian literature rose.

In the second and third centuries, Gnosticism swept the Mediterranean world. It promised the “elect” salvation from the evils of this present life (see Ruether & Clarkson 1996:127-128). During this period, the Apocryphal Acts, which was the origin of the canonical Acts, came into being. Gnosticism advocated that God’s creation, including human bodies, were good since it was the Creator who gave humans sex organs and told the first couple to “reproduce and multiply” (Gn 1:28). They believed that sexual intercourse and childbearing were not to be pronounced as evil.

The fourth century brought new possibilities for women’s public lives. Christian women became good models for piety and mentors for others. Many Christian women obtained wealth, and were socially respected because of the sacrifices they made. Although women were not to be priests or public teachers officially, some of the Early Christian women were outstanding in their knowledge of Scriptures. One sect in the second century allowed women high leadership positions, even sacramental ones. Charismatic movements pleaded for a larger role for women because they believed that the Holy Spirit inspired women as well as men. Kraemer (1988:239; see Witherington 1990) wrote that in later times “early Christians unashamedly gave deaconesses the special responsibility of infiltrating pagan households to minister to their women. Women’s ministry and leadership were shown even in the early Christianity.” Karen Jo Torjesen (1993:113; see Schottroff 1995) did research on women’s leadership in the Early Church. A woman who adopted leadership roles in Greco-Roman society, was always vulnerable to being “attacked for abandoning women’s social space, the household, and for forsaking the womanly virtue of chastity, which meant keeping her sexual presence far from the public eye” (Torjesen 1993:113).

Unmarried women in early Christianity acquired an independence, which produced conflict with society; but married women remained in conformity to society, confined within the patriarchal family (MacDonald 1996:183). Widows are portrayed as not merely passive recipients of community charity. They were actively involved in ministerial roles. Therefore, the church tended to protect widows (cf Ac 6:1; I Tm 5:16). The Early Church distinguished between the real widows who were role models for

believers and the younger widows who were disloyal. The church supported the needs of the “real widows”. A woman with a dishonorable past, could sometimes serve as a model of piety. MacDonald (1996:229) explains that unmarried women who found refuge in the church could be called upon to exhibit the virtues of the ideal wife. Acceptance in the group for those who had faith was not made impossible on the basis of an immoral past. More than respectable appearances and virtuous backgrounds, married church women had to cultivate an attitude of single-hearted loyalty to husbands and to Christ in order to remain untainted by the immoral world (Eph 5:21-33).

In the Early Church, marriage practices between believers and nonbelievers became clear. Non-Christians propagated endogamy, which encouraged marriage between people who adhered to the same religion. Paul says, if any brother has a wife who is not a believer and she is willing to live with him, he must not divorce her. And if a woman has a husband who is not a believer and he is willing to live with her, she must not divorce him (I Cor 7:12-13). However, Christians were strongly encouraged to marry only “in the Lord” (cf I Cor 7:39). The pure bride was a symbol of the holy and unblemished church over against the nonbelievers’ evil world (Eph 5:25-27; cf Eph 5:1, 4:17). The relationship of Christian couples was infused with religious significance. It was likened with the relationship between Christ and the church (Eph 5:32). The husband is as Christ and the wife is as the Church in Ephesians 5:21-33. Hosea’s metaphor of marriage describes the relationship between God and Israel. This idea also appears in the household codes of Greco-Roman culture. The household codes in the New Testament. The interactions between the pairs of relationships are in the household: wives/husbands, children/parents and slaves/masters (Col 3:18-4:1; Eph 5:21-6:9; I Pt 2:13-3:17; I Tm 2:8-15; 3:4; 6:1-2; Tt 2:1-10, 3:1). They reflect order and submission according to Greco-Roman ideals. MacDonald (1996:231) points out that the comparison in Ephesians of marriage to the relationship between Christ and the Church is in keeping with the tendency to depict household relationships as a reflection of a wider social reality in the Early Church. The unblemished bride became the perfect image of the Christian church to convey to the public. The purity and submissiveness of the Christian wife challenged the nonbelievers’ immorality. The household traditions in Ephesians and the ideal Christian marriage are viewed as a reflection of the love of Christ for the Church.

Wives are to love the Lord and to be satisfied with their husbands in flesh and spirit, and husbands are to love their wives as the Lord loved the church. However, Elizabeth Johnson (1992:341) has different ideas about Ephesians 5:21-33. She reads the adoption of the household code as a response to perilous relations with outsiders and concludes that this development had unfortunate consequences for women. "By subordinating the interests of the women in the congregation to the interests of the church's public image, the other apparently operates more from fear than from faith" (Johnson 1992:341).

The husband/Christ and wife/church comparisons reveal similarities with the Mediterranean idea of male and female roles. Women were to be submissive to authority structures of the home and remained oppressed by cultural systems. The teachings of hierarchical marriage caught women in oppressive relationships yet again. Nevertheless, the traditional Christian wife was empowered in her role as mediator between the church and the world. Margaret MacDonald (1996:242) explains it as follows:

Woman is more than simply a "static" symbol of family stability; through her housework she transforms matter into a culturally accepted substance and maintains it in this state. For example, through her cooking, food becomes suitable to eat. A woman keeps dirt from penetrating the house. She prevents family matters from becoming gossip. Moreover, concerns about what comes in and what goes out from the house parallels concern for maintenance of the woman's body. These attitudes reflect a larger preoccupation with the identity of the family.

The Christian wife who spent much of her time caring for children and managing her household (I Tm 5:14) should not be viewed simply as a participant in hierarchical marriage arrangements. The Christian wife was attempting to build a harmonious home and to contribute to the harmony of the church as the bride of Christ. Women were not to act in a self-motivated manner, but had the task of quieting down the hostile reactions of the outside world. Christian women were to act as mediators between the private and the public spaces in early Christianity. The reality of women's lives in the Early Church was shaped by the complex interchange between concrete historical events and the symbols

which were active in both church and society. Christian women of the Early Church should not be written off as submissive conformists to society on account of the patriarchal texts that witnessed to their lives. Christian women were actively involved in the church and thereby challenged the world.

4.3 Images of Jesus in the view of Korean Women

People retain many different images of Jesus from Scripture, spirituality, theology, literature, art and film. It is not only religion but also cultural productions that are permeated with images of Jesus. Schüssler Fiorenza (2000:58; cf Ruether 1996:95-110; Heyward I 1984) observes that the Jesus women have assimilated through sermons, Bible studies, hymns, literature, pictures, and movies correlates with cultural religious values of gender, race, class and ethnicity. In other words, how Korean women see Jesus bespeaks the values that both Korean women and hegemonic Korean culture consider important. According to Marcus Borg (1994:194-195) the images of Jesus correlate with the images of Christian life:

Given this correlation, the question is not so much whether images of Jesus ought to have theological significance at the very practical immediate level of Christian understanding, devotion, and piety. Our choice is to let that significance be largely unrecognized, unconscious, and unchallenged or to be conscious and intentional about that relationship. In short, because historical scholarship about Jesus affects our image of Jesus and thus our image of the Christian life, it matters.

Korean Christian women desire to discover Jesus for themselves. H K Chung (1990:53-73) distinguishes two categories of images Korean women have of Jesus - the traditional and the new emerging image. Western missionaries taught Koreans the traditional images of Jesus for their own benefit. The traditional images are based on Western theology and androcentric interpretation. Therefore, Korean women are seeking new images (Ahn BM 1993:163-172; Chung HK 1993:223-246; cf Song CS 1979), which can express both the old and new meanings of Jesus images.

4.3.1 Traditional reflections

4.3.1.1 Jesus as the King and God

Christian imagination, worship, and hymnody are that of 'KINGAFAP'- the King – God – Almighty – Father – All – Powerful – Protector (Brian Wren 1991:119, cf Moltmann 1981). These kinds of expressions can be found in abundance in Christian prayer and liturgy. God is worshiped as the powerful king and majesty, who rules by word of command and stabilizes the cosmic order. *He* is the Creator, a merciful Lord, and Father, who is Almighty and All-powerful. The Almighty God has only one Son, Jesus Christ. Since evil enemies have invaded the Father's kingly realm of creation, the crown prince obediently surrenders his royal power and privileges and, at his Father's command, becomes human (Schüssler Fiorenza 1994:107). Even though the royal prince is killed due to sin and evil, he is soon after lifted up to the glorious throne of his kingly Father. Then the only son Jesus, who is Christ, rules with KINGAFAP. This is a Christian myth, which claims the authority of orthodoxy. A similar image of the imperial Christ can be found in the Hebrew Messianism and in Greek philosophy. The Israelite messiah is described as a warrior-king who would overthrow enemy empires. Ruether (1981:49) believes that the imperial Christology triumphs in the fourth century as a sacramental vision of patriarchal, hierarchic, and Euro-centered imperial control.

Feminist studies have revealed that androcentric language and culture not only place elite *Man* in the center of historical scientific discourses, but also relegates women to the margins or silently passes them over (Schüssler Fiorenza 2000:11). Hence, women belong to "the disappeared" in history. Since Jesus is seen as a great charismatic leader and heroic or divine man, he reinforces the ideological power of androcentrism and the immasculation of women (cf Tambasco 1991). The discourse of Jesus is later changed to be described as the victory of the Messiah as the protector of the oppressed.

4.3.1.2 Jesus as the Saviour

The term of salvation is often used in the Bible. When people were cured from bad diseases; when people overcame difficult conditions; when Jesus took away people's sins

and declared them to be “forgiven”; when a dead boy was risen; when evil spirits were driven out from people on Jesus’ command; when a tax collector repented; that was “salvation”. When people moved out of their suffering, it was believed that Jesus had saved them.

A Korean theologian J Y Lee links Jesus Christ with Oriental thinking. Lee (1979:92-94) regards sin as “nothing but humanity’s desire to be, rather than to become; it is our unwillingness to change”. He explains that the sin is the desire and to overcome this desire, means salvation. Salvation is to follow the ways of change without resignation. Jesus says, “I am the Way” and he shows people how to change. Lee explains “the way of change” in relation with the oriental thinking. In Oriental philosophy, two factors affect reality – *Yin* and *Yang* (Lee JY 1979:92). *Yin* originally came from the image of “shadow” and *Yang* from “brightness”. *Yin* came to signify female, receptiveness, passivity, coldness, while *Yang* represents male creativity, activity, and warmth. However, they are not “bad” or “good”. *Yin* and *Yang* are not in conflict but are complementary opposites. Together they represent wholeness rather than partiality. These two have different functions. If man is *Yang*, woman is *Yin*. Men and women need to cooperate and contribute to one another. *Yin* alone, in itself, is incomplete, and so is *Yang* on its own. *Yang* cannot exist without *Yin* just as *Yin* presupposes the necessity of *Yang* (Lee JY 1976:34). *Yin* and *Yang*, both create perfect wholeness and completion, if they are together in harmony. Anton Wessels (1990:156; see Lee JY 1976:34-35) states that *Yin-Yang* thinking contributes to the co-existence of Christianity with other religions in a creative process of “becoming”. The opinion of Lee (1976:34) is that “Jesus is *Yang* and Christians are *Yin*”. It is *Yang*’s function to act and to initiate, and *Yin*’s is to respond and to follow. When Christians respond to Jesus’ creative actions, Christians themselves become active and creatively involved through their response. Lee explains the Christian experience, paradoxically. In a sense, the way of change by Jesus is also a paradox, just as it is in the *Yin-Yang* thinking. Salvation is in harmony between the change and the changing, or between the creator and the creation as is the harmony of *Yin* and *Yang* (Lee JY 1979:94-95).

Joanne Carlson Brown (1989:2) points to a negative factor in Christianity. Christianity has been the primary force in shaping women’s acceptance of abuse.

Christianity becomes an abusive theology that glorifies suffering. According to Brown, the message is further complicated by the theology that says “Christ suffered in obedience to his Father’s will”. Brown (1989:2) claims: “‘Divine child abuse’ is paraded as salvation and the child who suffers without even raising a voice is landed as the hope of the world.” Jesus’ suffering is redemptive, as Jesus’ image is of the Saviour of the world on the cross. The implication is that, if one suffers for others, one will save the world. Brown points out that self-sacrifice and obedience are the definitions of a faithful identity in the whole of Judeo-Christian tradition. People endure pain, humiliation and violation because of the promise of resurrection. There is much deceit in modern society when the predominant image or theology of the culture is that of “divine child abuse”.

4.3.1.3 Jesus as a suffering servant

Ruether explores “gender and sin” in her article, “Christian understandings of human nature and gender”. Ruether (1996:99) says that “all classical traditions agree in stressing woman’s priority in sin, and its consequence being female subjugation”. It means that women’s suffering is natural through painful childbearing and subjugation to their husbands. Women can get salvation through their suffering in male-centered classical teachings (cf Consuelo del Prado 1989:140-141; Heyward 1989).

For a reasonably long time, the most prevailing image of Jesus in Korean churches was that of “suffering servant”. Korean Christian women seemed to feel most comfortable with this image. Jesus is defined as “the prophetic Messiah”, whose role is that of a “suffering servant”, the one who “offers himself as ransom for many”. In this image women view suffering as being good and the status of a servant as being the status of Christ himself. This is the reason why they have accepted the debasement of their role in life, even though they were being dehumanized and often hurt physically as well as emotionally. Sacrificing for their family and community was their lot. Images of Jesus as the suffering servant turning into a “triumphant king” and “authoritative high priest” served to support a patriarchal religious consciousness in the church and in theology. Jung Ha Kim, a Korean-American feminist theologian, has experienced the suffering of an immigrant Korean woman in America. She writes about what another Korean-American Christian minister said to a suffering woman. Kim (1996:352) relates his

advice to the woman that “suffering from domestic violence provided her with a good opportunity to contemplate and to identify with how much Christ suffered on the cross. By bearing the cross for the whole family, she was actually working out her own salvation and will be rewarded hundreds-fold in the life to come after her death”. The key message of the minister is “endure and be faithful unto death”. Kim (1996:351) criticizes traditional Korean culture that places the blame on the wife when she is abused. The idea is that, when a man is dissatisfied enough, he is justified in hitting his wife. The assumption is that personal and familial shame and blame has its roots in women’s selfishness. Traditional Korean society demands of women their unconditional endurance of pain and suffering; their faithfulness unto death; their silent suffering as a noble spiritual calling.

Recently however, Korean women have met Jesus through their own experience. They are discovering that Jesus is compassionate towards silenced Korean women in his solidarity with all oppressed people. This Jesus becomes to Korean women their new lover, comrade, and fellow suffering servant, since they are familiar with suffering and obedience in the family and society. Jesus suffered for others as Korean women suffer for their families and community. As Jesus’ suffering was salvific, Korean women are beginning to view their own suffering as being redemptive. As Jesus’ suffering for others was life giving, so is Korean women’s suffering is seen as a source of empowerment for themselves. A Hong Kong feminist theologian, Kwok Pui-lan (1984:230; cf Lee KH 1992:106-120) says that “it is the very person on the cross that suffers like us, who was rendered as a no-body that illuminates the tragic human existence and speaks to countless women in Asia... We see Jesus as the God who takes the human form and suffers and weeps with us”.

Through the aid of missionaries, Korean women are beginning to break away from the christological mould by which they were influenced. Western colonialism and neo-colonialism not only brought Christianity into Asia (Korea included), but also opium and guns. Death and love are connected in mission history. In the name of mission or in the name of democracy, there is evidence of many contradictory personal and political experiences. Jesus actually identified himself with the oppressed because he was compassionate. He took responsibility for all he taught and carried it out to action.

Korean women are learning to distinguish between the suffering imposed by an oppressor and the suffering for justice and human dignity.

Bonhoeffer (1967:178-179) identified with Jesus as a Martyr. His own experience of suffering was as a victim of Nazi repression and as a martyr-witness of God's helpless love in the political conditions of his time. Throughout his suffering and weakness he believed in the God of the Bible. Bonhoeffer (1967:196) expresses it as follows: "God (Jesus) lets himself be pushed out of the world and on to the cross. He is weak and powerless in the world, and that is precisely the way, the only way, in which he is with us and helps us. Matthew 8:17 makes it quite clear that Christ helps us, not by virtue of his omnipotence, but by virtue of his weakness and suffering." He asks the question: who is Jesus Christ for us today? Bonhoeffer (1967:178) gives the answer that "the God of the Christian faith is the God who suffers in Jesus Christ". This means that when Jesus suffers, God too, suffers. He suggests that a Christian should share in the suffering of God.

4.3.1.4 Jesus as Lord

Traditionally, patriarchal culture based on Confucianism in the Korean context has been the dominant power: women should obey the men in their lives. The Korean women's husband was her lord. Korean women have been enforced to such belief by the dominant male stereotype.

Western colonialism used images of Jesus as Lord to justify political and economical domination. Missionaries taught that Jesus was the ruler of the whole universe in much the same way as their imperial "lord" and "masters", and that western colonialists were "subjects" of Jesus as Koreans were the subjects of foreign powers. Therefore, to be Christian meant to obey Jesus and the western power that brought the religion to Korea. This kind of thinking is quite common in Asia. Philippine female theologians demonstrate that the lordship ideology of colonial Christianity domesticated the vibrant pre-colonial Philippine women's self-understanding and power in the community (cf Honclada 1985:13-19; cf Pope-Levison & Levison 1992:55-88). Philippine women changed their active image of themselves into one of passive submission and obedience as a result of colonialism.

However, Letty Russell (see 1974:104-130) is of the opinion that Jesus' lordship is more about his service and mutuality with the intent of liberation. Ruether (1995:116-137) believes that there are many possibilities for Jesus to have lordship over other people, instead of emphasizing Jesus as a unique "Lord". Ruether cites Mary of Magdala. S K Park (1983:51) illustrates that the lordship of Christ is the exact opposite of patriarchal lordship. Christ frees Asian women from false authority and encourages them to obey only God, not men. The lordship of Jesus is an indication of the power which liberates people. The power and authority of Jesus' lordship is totally different from patriarchal lordship or colonial lordship. All authority and power "should return to its origin", which is God, says Park. The lordship in this world should be turned around to serve the salvation of human beings and promote the righteousness, justice and the providence of God. Therefore, the lordship of Jesus destroys patriarchal domination and the false authority and power of this world, returning it all to God.

4.3.2 New emerging images of Jesus

New emerging images of Jesus came from women's experiences. Pieris Aloysius (1988:128; see Ovey NM 1993:9-24; Seiichi Yagi 1993:25-45) says that "Asian theology is a way of sensing and doing things as the Asian style". It means that Koreans need to find images of Jesus in the Korean style. However, people's perspectives repeatedly seem to coordinate with changing politics, economy and cultural ideologies. As these factors have changed it is interesting to explore how the images of Jesus have changed in Korea. People see reflections of changing perspectives in the faith, the piety, as well as the theological conceptions. Such images also emanated from the Korean women's movement. Three categories will be explored: that of Jesus as Liberator, Jesus as Mother and Woman, and Jesus as Worker and Grain.

4.3.2.1 Jesus as Liberator

Jesus was the charismatic male leader of male and female followers. Historically he was not a political revolutionary and had nothing whatsoever to do with the zealots, a militant movement of his time. Nevertheless, Pieris (1988:111) says, "Jesus has new reality from Romans' religious experience and knowledge. Jesus is Christ or Messiah for the Jews.

Jesus is liberator or black Christ for Africans (cf Oduyoye 1995; Oduyoye & Kanyoro 1993; Okure 1990; Pitt 1990:29-35; Gordon 2001; Wilmore & Cone 1979). Jesus is the priest of '*han (weeping)*' for Koreans". Jesus' image is that of someone concerned with politics in Korean *minjung* theology. Schüssler Fiorenza (2000:12) observes that Jesus, who was executed by the Romans for sedition, had become a peasant leader and social religious reformer.

Jesus' image as liberator is common in Latin America (cf Pope-Levison & Levison 1992:26-54; Arthur McGovern 1992:77-78). People need to see Jesus as liberator (see Heyward 1984). Their concern is to discover the political dimensions of Jesus' historical actions. Levison (in Pope-Levison & Levison 1992:31) states that, "they want to understand the relevance of the historical Jesus for their own Latin American context". The passion for liberation creates the image of Jesus as liberator. This image is prevalent especially in socio-historical and political contexts characterized by domination and oppression. Anton Wessels (1990:75; cf Melancton 1987:20-29) views "the christology of Jesus as liberator in opposition to a christology which supports the whole process of colonization and domination". Gutierrez (1983:13) sees "the nucleus of the biblical message in the relationship between God and the poor. Jesus Christ is precisely God become poor". Jesus, who is recognized as the Son of his Father, led an unfortunate life in the form of a human being. He was born in a manger, which alludes to social poverty. Jesus' public life was with the poor. His messages about heaven, which appeared to be a threat to the rich, were eminently suitable to the poor. The kingdom of God which Jesus proclaimed was about justice and liberation to the poor, the oppressed and the marginalized. The proclamation of the kingdom, this struggle for justice, eventually led to his death (Gutierrez 1983:14). In effect, Jesus' life and death bring people to the realization that justice is only possible in God's love and kingdom. From the perspective of the poor, Jesus is understood as a liberator. Jesus is the God of the poor (cf Pieterse 2001) and the God of the Bible, but Jesus is not the God of the masters. The implications are as follows:

The spirit of the Lord Yahweh has been given to me,
for Yahweh has anointed me.

He has sent me to bring good news to the poor,
to bind up hearts that are broken;
to proclaim liberty to captives,
freedom to those in prison;
to proclaim a year of favor from Yahweh,
a day of vengeance for our God (Is 61:1-2)

God has taken the side of the poor. The rich are considered blasphemous because they manipulate and speak of God in order to better oppress the poor.

Listen, my dear brothers: it was those who are poor according to the world that God chose, to be rich in faith and to be the heirs to the kingdom which he promised to those who love him. In spite of this, you have no respect for anybody who is poor. Isn't it always the rich who are against you? Isn't it always their doing when you are dragged before the court? Aren't they the ones who insult the honorable name to which you have been dedicated? (Ja 2:5-7)

Gutierrez (1973:11) defines three levels of liberation: liberation in the economic/political sphere, liberation from dehumanization and liberation from sin. Jesus is seen as the one who liberates from each of these oppressions (see Pope-Levison & Levison 1992:35). The liberation of Jesus Christ is not theoretical but practical. Liberation extends to the whole of Jesus' life, to everything he did and said during his public ministry in the concrete historical situation of the first century. This places a strong accent on the "imitation" of Jesus. Jesus was not the only person sent to be crucified. Many women and men suffered the same form of death in the Roman Empire. For example, political renegades, seditious provincials and rebellious slaves were killed through crucifixion. Jesus was charged with a "political crime". A placard on which his the proclamation of his crime, "the King of the Jews", was announced, was attached to the cross. Politically speaking he certainly looked like a liberator. He was treated as such.

Jesus was also seen as a charismatic preacher. He debated with religious leaders, re-interpreted the laws of Moses, threatened to destroy and replace the temple and even attempted to overthrow the government in Jerusalem. He worked many miracles and preached in a new manner. He was treated as a Davidic Messiah of Israel; actually he was a religious liberator.

The significance of Jesus manifests in the reconciliation and redemption of many Christians. In addition, the significance of Jesus' salvation is the well-being brought to people and creation. This means that Jesus is the liberator. Salvation is connected with Jesus as the Saviour, but moreover, the significance of Jesus is for the good of the social and political situation of oppression and poverty. Latin American theologians of liberation as well as African and Asian theologians, consistently point out the inseparable connection between "redemption" and "liberation" (Gutierrez 1990:184).

Three different understandings of salvation can be traced:

- Missionaries taught Christianity. Salvation to them meant liberation from sin.
- A second perspective is liberation as being freed from oppressive political, social and economical conditions.
- The understanding of salvation which comes from Africa is described by Malcolm McVeigh (1980:60) as liberation from the subject forces of evil which cause sickness, misfortune and in the daily tragedies of life. Jesus was concerned about the forgiveness of sins, but also about the healing of diseases and the liberation of the poor and the oppressed, to whom he brought good news (McVeigh 1980:60).

Black feminist theologian Jacquelyn Grant (1989:66) points out that "the white feminist theologians focus on white female experiences". She emphasizes that black women are quiet about sexism and about their survival on account of having been through the oppression of slavery. White feminist theologians on the other hand, are interested in the lady-hood of the Victorian era in the Western world (Grant 1989:66). Grant claims that black women had believed Jesus to be with them when they were suffering and therefore Jesus had given his divine nature to them. Because Jesus had also suffered in his time, he gave them the strength to overcome their sufferings. This brought

black people to believe that Jesus is a political Messiah for the weak (cf Wilmore & Cone 1979) – Jesus is a liberator. In the same way, Asian Christians depict Jesus with an Asian face (Sugirtharajah 1993:i-viii, 3-8, 127-130, 258-264).

Jesus Christ is portrayed as a liberator in Korea on account of the historical situation (Ahn BM 1993:163-172). Women have experienced colonialism, neo-colonialism, poverty and military dictatorship. Therefore, they sought liberation. Pauline Hensman (1985:116), who is a feminist from Sri Lanka, describes Jesus as one who “came with good news to the poor, oppressed and downtrodden” and through whom “humankind was released from servitude and alienation by those who dominated and oppressed them”. Korean *minjung* theologians and feminist theologians also agree that Jesus came primarily for the poor and the oppressed. There are many stories of Jesus as a liberator in the Korean church. In the beginning of the Korean church (see Yang HH 1997:136-168), Jeon San Duck, who was the first baptized woman in west-northern Korea, had served her mother-in-law and tolerated her husband who had a concubine before accepting Jesus into her life. She tried not to hear, nor see, nor speak even though she had eyes, ears, and mouth. It is actually the duty of a woman in patriarchal society to not complain about her life. Jeon San Duck did, however, hold a grudge at having to spend her life in the irrational patriarchy. She saw Christianity as an opportunity for Korean women. Women, at that time, were isolated in every way. Jeon wanted to know more about Christianity, so she walked to the San Jung Hyun church, 48 km from her house. She decided to attend church regularly, after having met missionary W J Hall. Two years later in 1895, she was baptized. Despite the persecution by her husband and her mother-in-law, she built nine churches and some girls’ schools in north-western Korea before her death in 1932. She had experienced great change after accepting Jesus into her life. Jeon San Duck testified: “after I have come to know Jesus, I am an independent woman. Jesus was a liberator” (in Yang HH 1997:141).

The first girls’ school built by missionaries, was the E-wha school. Lee Kyung Suk (1991:141) was the first Korean woman who was employed there as a teacher. She had been widowed and had known a bitter life in Korea. After her conversion she, too, became a new person. Other widows had no hope. Her hope was in Jesus. Choi Naomi was the first missionary aboard. She was treated badly by her husband and her husband’s

family because of her inability to fall pregnant. She was liberated by Jesus. An evangelist, Joo Lullu (see Lee OJ & Lee HS 1989:141) tells dramatic story. Lullu was the daughter of a shaman. She was very poor. After her marriage, she was shocked by the ill-treatment she received from her husband's family. The shock was so great that she became mentally ill. Soon, she started to believe that God liberate from her miserable life in her husband's household. She accepted Jesus and became an evangelist. Although women were unable to find independence or freedom in Confucianism or Shamanism, they saw hope and light in Christianity in which men and women were equal. Only through Christianity were women finally able to be liberated from male authority. They realized they could be themselves, moving away from traditional sexism and instead be considered valuable.

4.3.2.2 Jesus as Mother and Woman

Some women portray Jesus as "mother". The role of Jesus as a mother is generally seen in three reasons:

- Jesus' death on the cross is understood in the same sense as a mother's parity.
- Jesus' love is seen as equal to a mother's love towards her children.
- The blood and body of Christ in Holy Communion is seen as a mother nurturing her baby.

When women are suffering, Jesus also feels with them and weeps for them. There are some verses in the Bible that depict Jesus as a "woman". "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killed the prophets. How often would I have gathered thy children together, even a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, and you would not" (Mt 23:37). Jesus cried out for Jerusalem, with a sorrow so deep, Matthew had to use a "feminine metaphor" in an attempt to describe the strong sentiment he felt. Jesus' character sometimes reveals a mother's mind – gentle, kind, loving and compassionate. As a mother handles her baby gently and wears a smile when she is able to satisfy the baby's needs, Jesus does the same for the people.

Women were not trivial to the Early Christianity. If they were it would have been impossible to understand why Luke wrote Infancy Narrative of Jesus, or why the woman of the Apocalypse was so important to the vision, or why the dignity of women in marriage was so important to the Pauline tradition. Somehow, God is always made manifest in the lives of real women as they lead a life of faith and holiness. The ancient understanding of God as the life-giver of all things, is renewed in the preaching of the gospel, especially in the writings of John and Paul. Jesus too, is understood as a life-giver.

Anselm, who was an archbishop of the 12th century (1033-1109), called Jesus "mother". He said, "You are a mother of all mothers. You are a mother who has experienced death for the sake of giving your children lives" (see Ahn SY 1992b:51). Julian of Norwich (1961, 1978), who was inspired by Anselm and who was probably the first "feminist theologian" to do so, also called Jesus "mother". Norwich (1978:295-297) stated: "As truly as God is our Father, so truly is God our Mother". She further says that, "a human mother would nurse her baby to suck. Our lovely mother, Jesus, gave us his body through holy communions. His body was and is an important food for all sincere lives" (Norwich 1978:296-298). Julian of Norwich's image of Jesus, our Mother, is one way to express the "incarnation" as the continuing birth-giving element of the Word (Wilson-Kastner 1983:96).

An experiment can be conducted when Jesus is seen as having a female feature: being our "mother in heaven". Many women had such unhappy experiences with their physical father, that they find it difficult to build a relationship of trust with a male parental figure. Jesus as a mother figure would help them to do this. Nonetheless, many women also have difficult relationships with their mothers. Their mothers have insulted, threatened and punished them instead of loving, caring for and encouraging them. Such mothers were the authority of whom children were afraid. They would then get on much better with their fathers if they experienced acceptance from them. Child-bearing is stereotypically connected with loving, caring, overseeing, clothing, feeding, managing the household and chores. These tasks are seen as "typically" feminine. Justice, law, anger, punishment and power are regarded as "typically" masculine. Women with bad experiences of their fathers may be helped by the image of Jesus as mother. Likewise,

the father trait of Jesus can also be of help. Heine (1988:31) suggests that if one reflects on the terrifying variety of possibilities of violence between parents and children, then the “disembodied” and transcendent concept of Jesus’ image becomes the “wholly other” to relate with her/himself.

Kwok Pui-lan (1984) wrote an essay about the idea that “God weeps with our pain”. Jesus weeps because of our suffering in the same way a mother weeps for her children when they are in pain. The image of Jesus as a mother destroys the patriarchal and hierarchical way of thinking and creates a delicate relationship between all of humankind. S K Park (1983:51) sees Jesus as a female figure. Jesus is seen to have a male physical form but becomes a female symbol to the oppressed, because he is able to identify with those who are at the height of pain and suffering. On a symbolic level, women think of Jesus as the “Woman Messiah” who is a liberator of the oppressed (Park SK 1983:51; see also James Cone 1975). Christ should be liberated from the patriarchal church, where women are oppressed. Therefore, they claim that Jesus allows females their freedom.

Another female image of Jesus emerges from shamanism, an indigenous Korean religion. H K Chung (1990:64) explains that “shamanism is the only religion among the various Korean religious traditions, where women have been the center all throughout its development”. Shaman role is to solve “*han*” which means grief, bitterness, broken-heartedness and the raw energy for the struggle towards liberation. Chung sees Jesus as a priest of “*han*” for *minjung* women, for the sufferers, for the poor, and for working women. Salvation and redemption means for *minjung* women to remove their accumulated “*han*”. When Christ is seen as a priest of “*han*”, Korean women are able to accept him more readily. Most of the priests of “*han*” have been women in the past. Their understanding of Jesus as a priest of “*han*” does not reduce Jesus’ divinity, but helps them to enter into him more fully with dedication and thus allows the experience of the liberation.

Rita Gross (1977:1147) asserts that “the female image of Jesus is connected between religious experience and female experiences such as menstruation and childbirth”. Gross (see 1977:1147-1181) understands female experiences as a creative power. Gabriel Dietrich (1985) also makes a connection between women’s menstruation and Jesus’ shedding of blood on the cross. Women’s monthly bleeding has been treated as

“unclean” in androcentric texts. But without this bleeding there is no birth and no life. Jesus also bled on the cross and through it he was able to offer life to men and women. Gabriele Dietrich (1985:78) says that “women’s menstruation is a holy Eucharist through which the renewal of life becomes possible; Jesus joins women in his life-giving bleeding”.

Feminist theologian Rita Nakashima Brock (1988:50-53) who works in the United States, made a sculpture of a female Christ, naming it “*Christa*”. This female Christ sculpture hangs on the cross in the St. John’s Cathedral in New York. The name “*Christa*” is engraved onto the top of the cross. She is not to be understood as factual, but as a metaphor. There is a great correspondence between the suffering of the crucifixion and the suffering of women in real life. Traditional meanings of Jesus Christ have kept women at a distance. But when women see the *Christa* on the cross, they can relate more with that figure than with a male Jesus. Rita Brock sees her Christology as taking shape within a *Christa* community rather than from the “same old” Jesus. In her christology Jesus is the redeemer of the *Christa* community. According to her, the traditional Christology was distorted to make the Nazarene Jesus into a male hero, which separated him from the God-Kingdom. Thus, the *Christa* community works as a metaphor to create a new recognition of Christ and the faith community. In opposing theory, Brock (1988:52) sees the male-centered interpretation of christology: the church as a bride and Jesus as the groom; the bride obeys him. Jesus can only be the Christ because of his maleness. It was because of this community where the real meaning of Jesus was lost, that Rita Brock felt the need to develop a new community, the “*Christa* community”. According to her, Jesus is a redeemer who himself has attained wholeness as a human being. Only Jesus can therefore restore people’s lives; heal broken relationships, wounded minds and an overpowering feeling of meaninglessness. Rita Brock focuses on the study of the Gospel of Mark. She tries to rediscover the meaning of the Jesus community from the restored interpretation of patriarchy.

The man Jesus takes the place of women, as they are: the sick, the well to do, the highly placed, prostitutes, housewives, girls and children. This representation of Jesus does not set conditions, but seeks the broken hearted. Mary Magdalene longs to be healed. Johanna feels unfulfilled in spite of the money and prestige of her husband. The

great sinner wants to be able to live without contempt. Martha begins to understand that housework cannot be everything. Jesus the man holds the power to alter their situations.

4.3.2.3 Jesus as Life-giver

The insight that women are made in the image of God, is often disregarded. The most obvious image of woman is that of a life-giver. The picture runs far beyond that of the simple child-bearer. Women bring life not only to children, but also to men. The power extends to giving instruction, at least by example; ultimately, it extends to a sanctifying power that gives the life of faith to husbands. The initial insight was stated in Genesis 2-3. Man is incomplete without woman; he needs her to find some sort of answer to the riddle of who he, himself is. Woman may also be a mystery, but she is the Lady Wisdom. As the later Christian tradition expressed it, Mary became the Mother of God. Women become the life-giver, not just the child-bearer but also the Christ-bearer and that reveals to us all that we are truly sons and daughters of God.

Hisako Kinukawa, a Japanese feminist theologian, identifies with the life of Jesus as an outcast of society. She uses the term “outcasts” in its widest sense. Kinukawa (1994:140) depicts the outcasts in Mark’s gospel as:

- those who are considered a threat to the “integrity” of the elect in society
- those who have no means of demanding their right to live in society, and
- those who are marginalized and afflicted.

To have solidarity with someone premises an interrelational involvement of human lives, in terms of reciprocal life-communion. Kinukawa (1994:140) sees Jesus as a “life-giver”, which has social implications. Jesus had threatened the authorities of the social order which is sustained by patriarchy, hierarchy and monarchy. Jesus also rejected the temple-centered religion and state. A typical example of an outcast is the poor widow, who gave the offering of two coins (Mk 12:41-44). The widow represents those who are rejected by the temple-centered religion. Her life spoke boldly in silence but Jesus in his perceptiveness responded to her. Jesus said that she committed her whole life to God. The “life-giving” Jesus restored the marginalized to fullness of life.

Kinukawa (1994:141) says that “as long as women were considered to be men’s property, women had to suffer from unequal rights”. Inequality is much in evidence in patriarchal power structures. Therefore, Kinukawa (1994:141) emphasizes that the woman who dared to initiate an encounter with Jesus, out of desperation, sparked his consciousness for being a suffering servant, which in turn made Jesus become truly Jesus Christ.

Chapter 5

Feminist Critique in Practice

The current critical inquiry wrestles with “historical”, “literary”, and “contextual” approaches of the Bible and passes through “author-centered”, “text-centered”, and “reader-centered” phases (Surgitharajah 1995:3). In the postmodern era, when people read the Bible and other literature, it is vital to practice different kinds of interpretation. There are a variety of contexts and, therefore, also of perspectives. Feminist literary critique is one of the current critical approaches to biblical interpretation. It criticizes not only simple stories, but also the underlying social systems that affect the situations of people, politics, history, and culture. Women are never the central focus in human history, and are often non-existent also in the records of unofficial history. Feminist theology and feminism places the emphasis on socio-cultural situations and women’s stories about their experiences (Sauter & Barton 2000; Gilbert 1980:391-417). Women can find healing not only by means of the results of rational and theoretical research, but also through oral folklore, by sharing personal problems. Korean feminist theologians and other theologians in the Third World are currently using this method positively. Women are able to express their experiences of oppression in the past.

The starting point of feminist critique is the experience and the situation of the people (see Tamez 1991:61). Questions such as the following are posed: is the main character a woman? Are there black, poor, and marginal people? When these questions are focused on in the text, this approach can be identified as reader-centered. The reader is important, and it is they who look for their own questions from the Bible and texts. The reader-centered approach has the following presuppositions.

- The meaning of the text is produced by mutual interaction between the reader and the text. The reader engages the text and the text also engages the reader. The reader invents the meaning from the text.
- From the text each reader finds personal meaning in relation to his/her social, cultural, and locative situations (Farley 1985:22).

Women read the Bible in their context (Juschka 2001). There are criteria by means of which to evaluate the Bible and any other texts in order to liberate women (Kim YO 1994:81-97; see Farley 1985:44-45):

- Is the system male- or female-centered? What possibilities do women have to liberate themselves and others? How much do women participate to liberate women themselves in the social system? What is the evaluation of women in the society?
- What are the factors that can reform a society?
- What are the women's positions in society? What do women think about themselves?
- Patriarchal texts must be identified and oppression of women exposed (Kim SY 1995:73-74; see Sakenfeld 1985:57-59). It is likely to find these texts in a male-centered mode, or male-advocated mode, or a mode propagating female inferiority. Women need to find out, whether the texts have undergone distorted editing.
- It is necessary to re-interpret oppressive texts from a female perspective. Women need to find texts which are more positive towards women. Then, women's status will be upgraded in society, and the opportunity of women for social activities and employment will be expanded.
- Women can use various methods when interpreting the Bible and other literature – historical criticism, literary criticism, sociological analysis, psychological methods, archeological specimens, and economical and political analysis. Women need to find the origin of female oppression in order to see how it can be changed.

One example of a woman that has successfully made use of the contextual approach is Dorothee Sölle who has read the Magnificat (the song of Mary in Luke 1:46-56) and interpreted it for women. The Magnificat is rewritten by Dorothee Sölle (Schüssler Schüssler Fiorenza 1992:243) as follows:

It is written that Mary said:

my soul doth magnify the lord

and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my saviour

for he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden

for behold from henceforth
all generations shall call me blessed

Today we express that differently:
my soul sees the land of freedom
my spirit will leave anxiety behind
the empty faces of women will be filled with life
we will become human beings
long awaited by the generations sacrificed before us

It is written that Mary said:
for he that is might hath done to me great things
and holy is his name
and his mercy is on them that fear him
from generation to generation

Today we express that differently:
the great change that is taking place in us and through us
will reach all- or it will not take place
charity will come about when the oppressed
can give up their wasted lives
and learn to live themselves

It is written that Mary said:
he hath shewed strength with his arm
he hath scattered the proud
he hath put down the mighty from their seats
and exalted them of low degree

Today we express that differently:
we shall dispossess our owners and we shall laugh

at those who claim to understand feminine nature
the rule of males over females will end
objects will become subjects
they will achieve their own better right

It is written that Mary said:

he hath filled the hungry with good things
and the rich he hath sent empty away
he hath holpen his servant Israel
in remembrance of his mercy

Today we express that differently:

women will go to the moon and sit in parliaments
their desire for self-determination will be fulfilled
the craving for power will go unheeded
their fears will be unnecessary
and exploitation will come to an end

Women read the Bible from their own perspectives. Kwok suggests “dialogical imagination” as an alternative way of reading the biblical truth from Asian women’s perspective. Kwok (1987:17) says: “Asian Christians are heir to both the biblical story and to our own story as Asian people, and we are concerned to bring the two in dialogue with one another. It is dialogue. And it is imagination.” According to Kwok (1987:8), “dialogical imagination looks at both the Bible and our own Asian reality anew, challenging the established ‘order of things’”. When women read the Bible, through “dialogical imagination”, they discover both biblical stories and their people’s stories for women’s survival and their liberation. Women’s perspective shows that there are possibilities for women and that they can dream and see new visions (see Gilbert & Gubar 1979; Irigaray 1985b; Jacobus 1979). This allows women to strive for their liberation and achievement of full humanity as women.

5.1 Feminist critique about the story “a good wife”

(Proverbs 31:10-31)

According to Sakenfeld (1985:5-6), recognizing the patriarchy of biblical material, Christian feminist approach the text with at least three different emphases:

- Looking to texts about women to counteract famous texts used “against” women.
- Looking to the Bible generally (not particularly to texts about women) for a theological perspective offering a critique of patriarchy (some may call this a “liberation perspective”).
- Looking to texts about women to learn from the intersection of history and stories of ancient and modern women living in patriarchal cultures.

This text of Proverbs 31:10-31 belongs to the third category. I would like to reread the text from a woman’s perspective. This text addresses the condition of women as persons oppressed because of their sex and as persons yearning to be free (Sakenfeld 1985:52).

In the Bible, a good wife is described in Proverbs 31:10-31. Frequently, women hear in churches what a wife is from these passages. Sometimes, women want to follow this example of a “good” wife. These passages will be analyzed on what being a “good” wife requires a woman to do and what her characteristics and position would be.

The “good” wife” is a “good” worker; she girds her loins with strength and strengthens her arms for work (17). Strength and majesty must be her clothing (25), as she endeavours to work well. She is a good organizer and manager. She gives her maids their jobs (15). Her work is organized in detail. Firstly, she likes to spin (13, 19, 24). She should know how to sow in order to make a dress (21, 22, 24). In today's world, she could be considered to be a clothing manufacturer or in the textile industry. Secondly, she is also a farmer and a trader (16,18,24). In today’s world she would probably be a self-employed worker. Thirdly, her skills and talents are recognized by others. Even her husband believe in her and her sons rise up to bless her (28, 29, 31).

Firstly it is necessary to understand her character:

- She is an optimist. When she works, she has pleasure in the work of her hands (13). In today's terms, she finds her job satisfactory.
- She is diligent, because she rises while it is still dark and she does not put out her lamp at night (15, 18). She does a full day's work. Yet, she does not watch the clock.
- She helps others. She stretches out her hand to the poor, and extends her help to the needy (20). She has a warm heart.
- She prepares for the future, so that even when it snows, her family will be clothed well (21). She laughs at the uncertain future (25).
- She is wise enough to teach others. She opens her mouth to speak wisdom, sound teaching is on her tongue (26). She is a teacher as well as a practical worker.
- She is sincere and devoted to God. Her attitude and life-style are pious. It is this woman, who fears Yahweh, that deserves praise (30). She has great spiritual strength.

Secondly, her position is as follows:

- She is rich: she has a household and maids. She has a vineyard with a good production. She earns good interest from trade. Her economic position is above average (15, 16, 24).
- Her social standing is high. She opens her mouth to speak wisdom and sound teaching is on her tongue (26). To speak wisdom is based on being educated. In the Old Testament one who taught wisdom had a high position which was usually limited to males. The quality of her clothes reveals her high status in society (21). The clothing her family wears shows that they are rich.

Women are socialized to play roles allotted to them because they are female. Ruether (1985:113) describes it as "women's experiences created by social and cultural appropriation of biological differences in a male dominated society". Bons-Storm (1996:55) states that many women are socialized according to the patriarchal socio-cultural narrative. They are trained to play only the roles prescribed to them from childhood. They are warned against all alternatives. Women are trained to be

dutiful and obedient daughters; virgins as long as they are not married; good helpmates for the projects of men; good, serving wives; self-sacrificing mothers; and then nothing. Women are expected to not be a nuisance, but to be silent and quiet.

- At home, her husband has confidence in her (11) and sings her praise (28). Her sons rise up and bless her (29). Her household obeys her. Her maids also respect her because she misses nothing that goes on (27). She has high social and economic status. Proverbs 31:10-31 is clearly about a woman of position and ability in her own right (8). She is not a meek little house-person: she is an efficient manager of large household and business enterprises. She buys property and plants vineyards. She provides her house and servants with all their needs. She has knowledge and charm. She is diligent, wise and caring. She can actually be regarded as a prototype of the modern, liberated women. The role of the mother plays an important part in the passages. This mother is mentioned in a positive way and she is described as a good wife.

The “theological meaning” of the concept “capable woman” (*'eshêt-hajil*) (see Whybray 1972:182, 183) in Proverbs 31:10-31 will be explored from a woman’s perspective. This expression can be literally translated as “a woman of parts”. It appears in verses 10 and 29. In verse 29 the plural women/daughters is used: “Many a woman shows how capable she is; but you excel them all” (Whybray 1972:183). “Many women of parts” refers to polygamy in ancient literature. Polygamy and monogamy will not be discussed in depth. The wives often had a good relationship with each other, but there was always some tension among them. Sometimes they were emotionally distressed, for example Hanna who did not have a child of her own and was provoked by her rival until she wept and would not eat (1 Sam 1:7). In Proverbs the husband of the good wife praised her. This could mean that the other wives could have been jealous of her. Could the husband treat his wives equally?

The good wife in Proverbs does housework. Whether she does this willingly or not, she is tied to housework from early in the morning until late at night. The housework is unceasing and unchanging. Her duty is not only housework. She also controls her household and plants a vineyard. She is concerned with trade. She makes dresses and

sells them, and she supplies sashes to merchants. She manages to do an enormous amount of work. Though she is probably overworked, she puts on a brave face as a dutiful wife would. There are many examples of this in today's world as well. For example, a wife and a husband work together in the same factory. During the daytime, they are both engaged in their work. When they return home, the husband can have a rest while the wife is expected to prepare a dinner, wash clothes, and clean the house. This wife has another role at home. This is a common occurrence in Korea. The housework is obligatory women's in Korean culture and tradition.

Compared to the wife's her many tasks in Proverbs 31, much less is about the husband's work. He is a man of high status. He sits with the elders of the district (23). The Korean patriarchal (Choi MJ 1995:103) male also has the opportunity to just sit. Korean tradition taught men that they were kings who had the right to sit and do nothing while women carried water, planted vegetables, fed the animals and did other house work. In the premodern era, boys and men over the age of seven were not allowed to enter the kitchen. Koreans believed that there were specific separate functions to be performed by males and females. Housework was women's work. In patriarchy (cf Kang NS 1995:265-273) men just sit while women work in the house. When women are described it is often done by stating their relation to men – "wife of so and so". Men are not described in relation to women. Sexual discrimination between man and woman can be seen in these cultural traditions. The contention is that, if there is love between man and woman, the woman should give everything, even her life. Therefore, women have been encouraged to sacrifice themselves for their family in order to serve God better. The question is: Did God create man and woman equally?

In Proverbs 31 the good wife is in a good economic position compared to the many poor people in the world today. The poor do not have maids, a field or a vineyard and expensive clothes. How can the poor identify with this rich woman? She is a complete woman, wife and mother. She is "perfect", which makes it difficult for any woman to identify her. This ideal wife is a creation of patriarchal culture.

In the world there are poor women, alienated women, the oppressed, the uneducated, the sick, women whose husbands have turned their backs on them, and many more.

Women experience many different situations. It is impossible to indicate one such situation as the ideal and to state: "This way is the right way. Come here, follow me!"

Many women who live in difficult circumstances are also good wives. I am inspired to write a poem about them.

She is a domestic worker

The madam of the house,

where she works,

calls her "the maid"

She does not have a name

But she is a good wife

She sometimes skips meals

because of the shortage of food

Her face always holds a smile

because she always manages to find something

to make of her husband and children's meals

Her name is "Poor",

But she is a good wife

She knits sweaters for her family until late at night

The light is dim

because she conserves the energy

She saves in every way that she can

Her name is "Love"

She is a good wife

The owner of the house comes

to urge her to pay

for several months rent fees

Today her name is "Crying"

But she remains a good wife
She does all her housework
in the early morning
Washes clothes and dishes,
Feeds children to take them to school
No steady income from her husband
Yet her name is “Hope”
She is a good wife

Compared to the woman in Proverbs 31: 10-31 very few women can be a “good wife”. But there are many good wives who fear God and live faithfully in their given situations. Interpretations of the stories of women in the Bible can help women to gain a new understanding of their lives. Korean literature, which is much read by women, mostly depicts the traditional ways of thinking. Now, in postmodern times, it is necessary for Korean women to analyze Korean literature critically in order to find for themselves a better way of understanding themselves. Ruether (1985:139) emphasizes “God’s affirmation of the full humanity of women and all persons seen in the prophetic witness and scripture against injustice and dehumanization”.

5.2 Feminist critique about Korean literature

5.2.1 Simchung

This story is an ancient Korean novel. A summary of the Korean legend of the Simchung story is as follows:

Simchung was an only daughter born into a poor family. Her father was blind and unemployed, while her mother had died in childbirth. Simchung’s father was able to raise her through her infancy by begging for milk from the village women who

nursed at the time. When Simchung grew up she became a beggar just like her father, pleading for food from others.

One day, some seamen came to the village in search of a young girl whom they wanted to buy for the price of 3000 sacks (80 kg per sack) of rice. They believed that the sea gods would grant them favorable sea conditions if a girl was sacrificed. Simchung decided to sell herself for the 3000 sacks of rice, so that her father did not have to beg for food ever again. Simchung was taken to the deep seas and thrown overboard in worship of the sea gods. The highest of the sea gods saw Simchung's sincerity and love for her father and decided to grant her mercy. On a big floating cactus, he set her above the waters. A few days later she was discovered and rescued. She was presented to the king as a gift, because she was so beautiful. The king wanted to marry Simchung. At their wedding ceremony she asked the king for one wish. She requested a feast to be held for all the blind people of the country.

Simchung's father had become rich and was able to remarry. His wife was a greedy woman of bad morals. She did not take care of her blind husband, but instead, thought only of herself and spent their wealth freely. Soon, Simchung's father was reduced to poverty and his former lowly status once again. One day, hearing of a feast held for all blind people of the country, he headed towards the king's palace.

Simchung, determined and eager to find her father, checked every blind person for the face she loved. She recognized her father and shed tears of joy. She ran towards him and grabbing his hands, cried out to him: "Father! Father! Father!" Simchung's father was in a state of shock and told her that she had the voice of his daughter, but his daughter was already dead. She replied, "Father, I am your daughter Simchung!" Simchung's father shouted, "Let me see my daughter. Let me see!" Suddenly, at the great shock of finding his daughter whom he had thought dead, his eyes opened and he could see.

There are many stories about exemplary and virtuous women in the ancient Korean literature. When the story of Simchung was written patriarchal ideology prevailed. The

intention of the author is to convey the message that a woman's sacrifice strengthens the family; that she should respect her father; and that she should sacrifice herself for her father. According to this story the father (man) is important, but the daughter (woman) is not. The father is old. He does not have a wife, money, or sight. Simchung is young with her life still ahead of her. She begs for food for herself and her father. The question would be why the father did not sacrifice himself for his daughter's life.

There are dramatic changes in the story from the blind gaining sight, the poor becoming rich, and the miserable beggar attaining a high level of nobility. Even though Simchung is a small girl, she has faith and hope to overcome their suffering.

The story of Simchung relates to the lives of many young Korean girls who have been working in factories since the 1970s (cf Song HS 1989:196-200; Chang NS 1989:202-204). They are poor and uneducated. They sacrifice their young lives to develop Korean industry. They work in poor conditions and suffering bad treatment, poor health and low wages. They hope to overcome their suffering and have faith in the future of Korea. Without workers' sacrifices, Korean industry would not have developed as it has. The workers have saved Korea as Simchung has saved her father. Jesus too, saved people in his life of sacrifice and devotion to his calling. Korean theologian, Suh ND (1983:355-356) says: "Christ is the ground of life, and my faith is in the midst of this working life and workers." Many workers in factories see Christ within themselves and their hard struggle for survival. Jesus is not a rich and famous person in their eyes. Jesus is seen as one of the fellow workers who endure despair, humiliation, and hard work, nevertheless share their love and resources with other workers.

5.2.2 Mi-Mang (the widow)

The author of *Mi-Mang*, Park Wan-Suh (1931- alive), is a popular Korean author. Since attaining fame at the age of 40, she has written more than 100 stories. She won a prestigious literary award with her 920-page book, *Mi-Mang*, which was written when she was 65 years old. The setting of the novel is the end of the 20th century Korea. At that time the country was unstable in its politics, economy and social values. The end of the monarchy was approaching, the class system was starting to collapse and people began to see money as the most valuable resource.

Mi-Mang is a family story. The old man, Jeon Cheh-Man, had risen from poverty to become a millionaire. He was born in a city in the northern part of Korea that is still famous for the production of Ginseng. He was very poor in his youth and was a victim of classism. This story spans four generations of Cheh-Man.

The title of the book “Mi-Mang” means a widow. There are two different words for widow in the Korean language. One is “Koa-Bu”, and the other is “Mi-Mang”. “Koa-Bu” just means “widow”, but “Mi-Mang” refers to “one who really wishes to die with her husband, but cannot, so she just lives”, or “one who has not died yet”. A long time ago, Indian women followed their husbands when they died. These women were burnt alive alongside with the dead bodies of their husbands. They are called “Sati” (Ahn SY 1992b:214; Ivy 1996: 358-376). If a husband loses his wife he is not called “Mi-Mang”. The word “Mi-Mang” is used exclusively for women. Another oppressive custom of Korean patriarchy was that the widow was to remain faithful to her deceased husband and not remarry; she would stay with her husband’s family until she died. A man, on the other hand, could remarry if he chose to. A woman who got married more than twice, would have been regarded as not better than an animal. If a woman was engaged to a man, but he died before their wedding, she was to never marry another man.

When the Japanese attacked Korea, many Korean women were faced with the loss of their husbands. Because of the ethics, they then followed the steps of their husbands, and killed themselves. “Wives should be submissive” was the principle of the ethics. This ethics had important beliefs such that women “belonged” to men, and girls were to protect their virginity. After the Korean Civil War in 1953, many women became widows. Most of them did not remarry, but struggled to feed and raise the children on their own. Widows at the time were considered unblessed since it was believed that the death of their husband at a young age was due on part of the women’s unfortunate fate. As described, there was lots of prejudice existent in the patriarchal society that widows were isolated and led the most pitiful lives of society.

Stories about widows can be found in the Bible: the prophet Anna in Luke 2:36-38, the widow at Zarephath in I Kings 17:8-16, the raising of the widow’s son in Luke 7:11-17, the widow and the judge in Luke 18:1-8, and a coin offered by a widow in Luke 21:1-4. A Korean feminist theologian, S K Park (in Ahn SY 1992b:213) interprets “Mi-Mang”

as follows: “Mi-Mang keeps hold of a woman’s life and death.” The author (Ahn 1992b:213-233) asks the question, “Does the social system of male dominance allow for man to take God’s rights?” When a husband passes away, it is not due to a mistake of the wife, neither is it her fault. God is in control of life and death. The cultural ideas of marriage should be changed.

Register (1975:1) says about the interpretation of literature that “the reader depends on her/his personal response to the book and evaluates it in terms of her/his own tastes and priorities”. The social background of *Mi-Mang* is patriarchy and a men-centered society, but the main character is a female by the name of Tai-Yim. The author portrays the lives of the people, the changing society, the changing times, and the political and economic circumstance from Tai-Yim’s perspective. The author also gives the reader insight into the different life styles, people’s inner thoughts, their feelings, their conflicts, and their neighbours’ responses. The story aims to liberate women from the accepted social customs.

Once feminist criticism has identified female stereotypes in literature and discussed their political implications, the question is how an antifeminist literary work should be evaluated. Shulamith Firestone (1970:167-169, see Register 1975:6) categorizes male authors according to motive:

- “male protest art” which “self-consciously glorifies the male reality” as a reaction against feminism;
- “the male angle” which fails to achieve a comprehensive world-view because it does not recognize that male reality does not equal reality at large;
- an “individually cultivated androgynous mentality” which gives “descriptions not of a liberated sexuality but of a still-unresolved conflict between the sexual and the human identity”.

Register (1975:19) insists that, to earn feminist approval, literature must perform one or more of the following functions:

- To serve as a forum for women. Literature is illuminated female experience. Then women can become humanized in the cultural value system.
- To help to achieve cultural androgyny.
- To provide role-models.
- To promote sisterhood.
- To promote consciousness-raising. Literature should provide realistic insights into female personality development, self-perception, interpersonal relationships, and other “private” or “internal” consequences of sexism in order to promote consciousness-raising.

This book, *Mi-Mang*, meets Register’s criteria and therefore earns feminist approval. Three generations of women, Tai-Yim’s mother who is a widow, she herself and her daughter try to overcome their difficult circumstances. Luce Irigaray (1976:61) describes the relationship between mother and daughter as one of entrapment: “I look at myself in you, you look at yourself in me.” When these three generations of women confront the dominant customs of their society, they have liberating experiences. Tai-Yim’s mother has a sexual relationship with a servant, which rarely happened in the pre-modern era since it was taboo to socialize across class boundaries. Nowadays there is almost no classism in Korea. Marriages between different classes are acceptable. During her time, however, Tai-Yim’s mother’s act was seen as shameful immorality. She asked the servant to run away with her but he refused. The author’s intention is to break down both the classist system and the prejudice about widows.

Tai-Yim goes against the custom of marriage at an early age. She marries a poor man despite her wealth. Women did not have the opportunity to study, but Tai-Yim is educated. It means she has achieved a respected position in society. The author portrays Tai-Yim as a liberated woman. Her daughter is also an unconventional character. She loves a man who already has a wife. The wife lives with the husband’s parents. Tai-Yim’s daughter goes against the custom and marries the man. She is blamed by others, and experiences much inner conflict. When her friend’s husband tries to rape her, she stabs him with a knife. The author depicts the experiences of the powerless, how they overcome their circumstances and what the neighbours’ reactions are. This story is

woman-centered, even though the social system is still patriarchal. Tai-Yim is not an ordinary woman, because she participates positively in the social system. She continually expands her wealth and supports independent movements.

The story also highlights the prevailing patriarchy. When Tai-Yim's mother is widowed, she sees it as her mother's fault because she had married against her will according to the custom of arranged marriages. In the 1920s some educated women rejected the arranged marriage (Kang JS 1994:101). This kind of marriage was a family matter. The parents, and especially the father's opinion was important. When women got married, they were burdened with all the housework of her husband's family. Women had no time to themselves. They had to learn the rules of the husband's family. The husband's parents expected them to have a baby soon. Offspring were valued as future labourers. People especially wanted to have many sons. Tai-Yim thinks like a liberated woman in the story.

- When Tai-Yim expresses her thoughts to her grand father, he answers that "fate of the woman is not decided by herself, but by her parents". Parents give you your body, so it is right for you to follow the decision of your parents about your marriage. You should marry the man chosen by your parents (Park WS 1996a:96).
- Tai-Yim's mother fell pregnant by the servant. The night her son was born, her mother told her, "After giving birth to a baby, a woman must go out on that day to work in the fields. So your mother did, and your sister-in-law as well" (Park WS 1996a:166). She wanted to have a rest but her mother forced her to get up.
- When Tai-Yim's daughter wants to study, her mother responds with: "What? New knowledge? You want to learn new knowledge? Your knowledge has been much more than any other women's. What can you do with more knowledge, especially as a woman?" (Park WS 1996a:181).
- Woman's fate is even worse than that of animals. It is hard, and harsh (Park WS 1996a:331).
- If woman had lost her chastity, she must only die (Park WS 1996a:332).

Tai-Yim's daughter gets married to a man who is already married. People blame and reject her. "Such a frivolous woman was explained as one who robbed a husband from the other, and one who robbed the living rights of the husband's house. She was wicked, therefore the husband's ex-wife deleted her name from the family register" (Park WS 1996b:316). At that time, the second wife did not have the right to put her name into the family register, a right that people considered to be as precious as life itself.

Marriage customs of earlier times can be seen in the story. The reason for these customs comes from the history of Korea. Korean women were sent to China as maids-of-honor during 88-1400 A D. China was the country of the king and Korea was the slave country. Korea sent many gifts to China, including many young women. During Japanese colonization (1910-1945), Japan took many young Korean women as "comfort women". They were actually prostitutes for Japanese soldiers. Parents were always worried about their daughters' future. Therefore they married them off at an early age, somewhere between 10 and 18.

The preference of a son over a daughter is shown in the story. A teacher says to Tai-Nam: "Who is so blessed as to have such a wonderful son as you?" (Park WS 1996b:36). This notion is the heritage of Confucianism. The first son is especially valuable since he continues the family line and takes responsibility for the ancestor memorial services, a ritual of Confucianism. This idea seems to be bound up with eternal life in Confucianism. A chief or grandfather is the head of the family who should always obey their elders. The hierarchy continued as follows: children should obey their parents; young people should obey older people; women should obey men; the lowly and the poor should obey those of higher social standing; the people should obey the king. There were different classes not only in a family, but also in the society. A distinction was made between men and women. Male names were important for genealogies. The role of women was to bear male children. When a woman gave a birth to a boy, she was acknowledged as a good wife. A woman's role was to be a mother. Even today, Koreans prefer to have male children. In Korea, the population is made up of more men than women.

In the Bible genealogies are also male-centered (Gn 11:29-22:23; Nm 26:33-27:11; I Chr 7:20-27; Mt 1:1-12; Lk 3:23-38). The genealogy of Israel emphasizes the purity of tribe and the purity of their faith. Unexpected people appear in the genealogy of Jesus:

the women Tamar, Ruth, Rahab, and the wife of Uriah. They have two common features. They were gentile women who had bad reputations at that time. The acceptable mothers, Sarah, Rebecca, and Rahel, did not appear in the genealogy. This genealogy provides two challenges: the inclusion of the gentile women challenges Israelite exclusivity and its male-centered society; and the other challenge is the openness of the Jesus community for the poor, the oppressed, the isolated, and marginalized women (Yang MK 1991:338).

Y A Kim (1994:174) points out that, "the patriarchal society divides everything into two structures: one is powerful, namely men who are identified with anything that is positive, another is the powerless group, namely women who are identified with anything that is negative". Patriarchy has dual moral structures. The feeling of "shame" was emphasized in order to maintain patriarchal ethics. The ideology of "shame" and "honour" is emphasized to function as the standard of norms. Korean culture, just as that of the Bible, may be called a culture of "shame and honor" (see Choi MJ 1995:103-145). The "shame" attributed to women in such cultures give them a basic feeling of guilt (Plevnik 1993:161; Gilmore 1966:391-417). Korean culture especially teaches that a woman who is shy or feels shame is feminine, so the Korean society has emphasized women's shame. On account of this women consider themselves to be inferior and have difficulty finding their true identities. Korean women do not experience their "real lives".

Also similar to biblical culture, Korean society was a composite family-centered structure. One member's shameful behaviour brings shame on the family as a whole, and also on their community. Emphasis on the value of "shame" is therefore a means of social control. This shame made women doubly oppressed. For example, in comparison to the other countries, there are many patients of anthropobia in Korea. Their mental instability is caused by their fear of others. Kim YA (1994:175) finds that "Korean women feel more shame than men do, because of false education". However, if a man felt shame, he would not be considered "masculine". This was commonly accepted in patriarchy, which meant that the feeling of shame is connected with gender roles. Hisako Kinukawa (1994:16, 17), a Japanese theologian, explains that "honor is claimed only in negative ways by avoiding shameful behavior, thoughts and language, and honor has always been attributed to men". Thus, "honour" is a norm of the community; the

individual is expected to restrain her/his deeds and words for the sake of maintaining a good reputation in the community to which she/he belongs. Riet Bons-Storm (1996:18) says, "being ashamed easily leads to silence". Each member of society should adapt to social norms. Avoiding disgrace means being honourable; people did not want to be shamed, so they remained silent in pre-modern and even modern societies. Korean parents also use "shame and honour" to control their children. In this story, all the characters thinking primarily about "shame and honor" whenever they are confronted with new situations. Schüssler Fiorenza (1985:127) defines patriarchy as:

not just ideological dualism or androcentric world construction in language but a social, economic, and political system of graded subjugations and oppressions Patriarchy as a male pyramid specifies women's oppression in terms of the class, race, country, or religion of the men to whom they "belong" In patriarchal society or religion, all women are bound into a system of male privilege and domination, but impoverished. Third World women constitute the bottom of the oppressive patriarchal pyramid.

Patriarchy is basically built on the imbalance of power. Oppressing others or taking what belongs to them is the result of a lack of ego strength. Those who feel incompetent or insecure on the inside, try to gain power on the outside. The powerful group perpetuates their oppression of others by means of religious legitimation and social control. They advocate absolute power for themselves and want others to obey without questions. The powerful group has illusions of being permanently powerful and in control. This, however, leads to a vicious circle: men control women and think that they have real power; however, this power is not real and brings them to a feeling of emptiness and isolation. They are alienated from their own humanness, from nature, other people and the cosmos. Women were considered to be weak which required men to protect them. But protection was not women's real need.

An insidious problem of patriarchy is male violence. A powerful man, who is the head of a family, is free to make use of violence without being challenged. The reasons often given for their violence is they demand recognition and "respect" from their family.

Y A Kim (1994:169-210) says that “women, who have had violent experiences, feel the same as one who is in prison, psychologically”. Consequences for women are low self-confidence, impulsive acts, non-identity and dependence. They take the blame for everything that goes wrong. They do not find their rightful place in society and often experience isolation and alienation from society. Women under patriarchy have an experience similar to being in prison. They are in the prison of an oppressive ideology, propagated by men. Even though the woman may have good relationship with her husband, she cannot be honest about her feelings toward the husband’s family. She is to endure all in order to maintain the welfare and harmony of the family.

Patriarchal principles have also caused the relationship of human beings and nature to become one of exploitation. It is a necessary for systemic change to be brought about: powerless people should be empowered and the world changed for the better. A woman’s problem is not only personal and individual, because she is part of society. Women’s problems can be seen as a social problem. The well-being of *all* its members contributes to the health society as a whole. Therefore personal and social reform are necessary. Social ideologies of dominance are not easy to change. Though both husband and wife may aspire to an egalitarian relationship it is difficult to overcome the social customs or tradition. A new paradigm is not easy to be settled into at home or in the society.

In patriarchal theology, femaleness is understood in two ways: good femaleness and bad femaleness. The bad femaleness represents the creative will, which is identified as the desires of the body, and revolts against the mastery of the divine male mind. Ruether (1979:3-4) says that “femaleness in its ‘natural status’ is expressed as sin, which is to be mastered or spurned in the flight to the Father, the flight away from the body, the woman and the world”. On the other hand, good femaleness is being the passive or receptive container for the divine male will. Here, creation is symbolized as a female in relation to the transcendent Creator – the Father. Christ is the bridegroom and in relation, the church is the bride. The male clergy is depicted as the bridegroom, and the laity as the bride. Males, who have higher authority, can also experience their “feminine” side ultimately in relation to God. Women, however, never represent God, Christ, or

masculine leadership. This theological notion has been a root cause why women were excluded from ministry.

A human being is not defined only in terms of psychological individualism. A new psychological and religious understanding takes social, political, and religious contexts of suffering into account (Miller-McLemore 1998:188). There have been many factors contributing to Korean women's oppression throughout their history. Though women differ, come from different backgrounds, religions, have different spiritualities and personalities, belong to different age groups and are on different levels of economical, educational, and political development, Korean women's experiences in patriarchy can be summed up as follows (see Kim YA 1994:196-198, 203-206).

- Women suffer from dual oppression under patriarchy, which results in their feeling inferior.
- Women's roles are limited and they are often excluded from participation because of the social values. Women need to be affirmed in the society, at home, and within themselves.
- Women often have negative experiences of males because of their father's excessive authority. This causes them to distrust males.
- Women and their children have often had painful experiences on account of violence perpetrated by the head of the family. Repetitive cycles of violence are found in families from generation to generation.
- Women have inner conflict and guilt feelings on account of their faith that requires them to accept patriarchal ideology in the Korean church and Christian communities.

General female experiences Kim YA 1994:139) include those related to their female bodies. Women experience menstruation, parturition (childbirth), and feeding babies. Because of their biology, women cannot compete with men and are treated as inferior. People were conditioned to believe that the female gender is negative, and the male is positive and aggressive. This resulted in the custom that women should work inside the house and men in society. Women's experiences of oppression were also caused by social values and the social system. According to the power game, the powerless should

learn the language and viewpoints of the dominant culture. If not, the powerless cannot survive. As a result the powerless become bi-cultural. They are using both languages, that of the ruler and that of the powerless.

There are two factors that are relevant when considering women's position in society: how they feel about themselves and how they are perceived by and treated in society. In the story, Tai-Yim's mother is forced to play the traditional role. She stays at home. She does not have any position in society. Society demands from her to conform to the values of female morality. She experiences shame because of her immoral behaviour. In patriarchal society women are burdened with excessive shame. The woman struggles with non-identity and, at last, commits suicide. However, Hai-Jeong also lives in patriarchy, but her lifestyle is different from that of Tai-Yim's mother. She marries a man she does not want. He has strong patriarchal ideas. He tries to rape her daughter, who then stabs him with a knife. Hai-Jeong comes into the room and sees everything. She is disillusioned with her husband. He asks of her to conduct herself according to the traditional role of a woman, but she demands a divorce and leaves the house. She proclaims herself liberated, free from tradition. She is self-confident. Both her social position and inner evaluation of herself are definitely positive. She shows that a woman does not marry without mutual love, respect, appreciation, and responsibility between the husband and wife.

The author depicts Tai-Yim as a woman with self-confidence and inner strength who cannot be ignored. Jongsang has a friend whose name is Park Sung-Jai. When Park sees Tai-Yim, he falls in love with her even though he is already married. He has a high political position during the time of Japanese colonization. He has a desire for Tai-Yim, who is so elegant and self-confident. Park cannot ignore her and this creates inner conflict, even though he is a powerful person and he thinks of himself as the absolute being. Park's inner conflict shows how he gradually breaks away from patriarchal ideology. According to the story, women can have self-respect and self-confidence, and then they can achieve a positive position in society and feel positively about themselves. Factors in the story indicating reform in society are the following:

- Women started getting the opportunity to study in public schools. Tai-Yim's daughter and some female actresses are lucky enough to receive an education. Many girls' schools were only opened in the 20th century in Korea.
- Tai-Yim has her own business. It shows that she is not financially dependent on her husband. Due to unemployment this is not possible for many women in Korea. Until the 1960's women did not have the right to inherit. In order to gain a good position at home and in society, women need to have jobs and earn their own money. Therefore, Tai-Yim can be seen as a role-model.
- After Jongsang's marriage, he does not touch his wife's money. Rather, he encourages his wife to do well in her business. The husband supports his wife and discusses everything with her as an equal.
- Tai-Yim confronts all male dominance. Even though she has her inner conflicts, she does not let herself be defeated by male authority or patriarchal ideology. Such individual courage is the beginning of reformation in society.
- If family members are healthy, the family as a whole will be healthy and then society will be healthy. To reform the society is to reform all members of the family. In this story, the author transforms distorted ideas which harm society and people. For example, she propagates the idea that man and woman are equal; all human beings are worthy of respect; people should try to use their personal abilities to the fullest; people should try to overcome unfortunate circumstances.

5.2.3 A happy woman

The summary of this story is as follows: The novel begins with Chang-Soo, interviewing his prospective bride named Young-Ja. Chang-Soo is a commissioned officer. His parents force him to have the interview with this woman from a large neighbouring town. Chang-Soo loves a widow named Bok-Hee from another town. He calls her Na-lit, meaning wild lily. This wild lily is a small and beautiful, precious and rare flower that grows in the high mountains. Four years earlier, she had moved from the big city to be married to the son of a chief magistrate named Mun-Tae. When Mun-Tae was 14 years old, while swimming in a river, he met with an unfortunate accident after which he could no longer have children of his own. This was kept a secret. His parents forced him to get

married since he was an only child and they wished to have grandchildren. His father, who alone knows the secret about his son, begs his son's wife Bok-Hee to sleep with him. Bok-Hee falls pregnant with the child of her father-in-law. After one year of marriage, Mun-Tae, knowing that his wife had slept with someone else commits suicide. Bok-Hee gives birth a son and her son is now 4 years old.

Chang-Soo and Bok-Hee fall in love, but their love is illicit. Chang-Soo's parents cannot accept the fact that their son is in love with a widow and immediately prepares for his wedding with a woman he has only seen once. Chang-Soo is forced to marry Young-Ja. But even after this marriage, Chan-Soo's relation with Bok-Hee continues. Chang-Soo goes to live in the military compound since he is a commissioned officer. His wife Young-Ja lives with his parents in town. Chang-Soo does not come home very often, but every time he returns home, he sees Bok-Hee again. Although Young-Ja is bound to the role of his wife, she is not a very loving person and he receives more love from Bok-Hee. Young-Ja does not mention the relationship between her husband and the widow, though she knows about it. After the birth of twin girls, however, she demands that Chang-Soo should make a clean break and end all contact with Bok-Hee. Chang-Soo does not consider this a reasonable demand from his wife. After some serious quarrels, Young-Ja proclaims that she will remain only under one condition: that she and Chang-Soo meet Bok-Hee together. Chang-Soo should then tell Bok-Hee that he wishes to end all relations between them. Chang-Soo agrees to do this only for his parents' sake. After he had done as they wished, his male pride is shattered and from then on he treats his wife coldly and distantly.

The widow Bok-Hee soon falls pregnant with Chang-Soo's child. A widow falling pregnant is extremely shameful in society. She bears her humiliation patiently. Her first child was also the fruit of immorality and therefore born in sin. Meanwhile Young-Ja falls pregnant a second time. Because of her husband's behaviour she feels very lonely during her pregnancy. Her loneliness causes her leave home one night and to sleep with another man. She returns home with a venereal disease. Chang-Soo finds out and Young-Ja eventually turns into an alcoholic. One day she falls into the river and dies – her distant and cold relationship with her husband uncured.

Sodam is a friend of Chang-Soo's sister. She has loved Chang-Soo from an early age. She lost her mother at the age of six. Her stepmother hated, abused and beat her. Sodam has never felt love from her family. Bok-Hee had often asked Sodam to deliver her letters to Chang-Soo. Despite Sodam's feelings for Chang-Soo she has kindly acted as a messenger between Chang-Soo and Bok-Hee. Sodam does this out of pity for Bok-Hee, as she appears to be very lonely. Sodam leaves her house because of her stepmother's terrible mistreatment. Living in a big city, she gives birth to a son for a woman who could not have a baby of her own. She earns good money from this. Afterwards, she moves to a place close Chang-Soo's army base which is also near her birthplace. She uses the money to open a shop. Sodam is kind-hearted and helps her neighbours. She take care of Chang-Soo's children when Young-Ja turns into an alcoholic and also after her suicide. Chang-Soo feels responsible for his wife's death and therefore stays away from Bok-Hee. Finally, Chang-Soo marries Sodam with whom he is comfortable. Chang-Soo's three children already love Sodam and together they begin a new life. Chang-Soo makes duty-bound visits to Bok-Hee and his daughter though he no longer loves her.

The author portrays life in a small town very well. In such a town most villagers know of everything that is going on. The author describes the minds and social lives of the people: the widow's loneliness, Chang-Soo's wife Young-Ja's feeling of jealousy and isolation, Chang-Soo's feeling of guilt and love. This story happens in rural Korea of the 1960-70's. After marriage, the daughter-in-law lives with the husband's parents, even though the husband works and lives away from home. Traditional belief is that the new bride should learn the life style of the husband's family and should serve her husband's family for a while or for her entire life. A large family living together under one roof, includes parents, the brothers and their wives and children. About 30-40 people lived like this under one roof until approximately the 1960s. The relationship between husband and wife was less important than a good relationship between the bride and the husband's parents. Even the husband did not want to live with his wife, she would still have to live with his parents. After marriage women were treated as a member of their husband's family. There is an expression which says that "when a baby girl is born, her parents

think that the girl would be of no help to them". When she grew up, she would leave to follow her husband anyway.

While the designations "female" and "male" are *sex* categories, the imaginative ideas associated with these differences include a range of cultural and individual ideas about *gender*. Preconceptions about gender might include the idea of women's obedience and men's domination. So "*gender* can be read in sexual stereotypes and in power relations between individuals and groups" (Goodman 1996:viii). Stereotypes about *gender* are connected with social values of *gender* in society. The stereotypes about *gender* can be seen in many texts. For example, stereotypes of the relationship between *gender* and genre are shown (Goodman 1996:27, 50):

- Feminine: soft, suggestive, non-linear, symbolic, flowing, helpless, joyous.
- Masculine: strong, assertive, focused, clear, powerful, pride, possessive, direct.

In this story, the strong influence of the stereotypes that reverberate throughout society at all levels can be seen. Life is clearly men-centered in the rural village, whereas women have little possibilities and are underestimated in the story.

Young-Ja saw the immorality of her husband from the start, but she could not blame him or complain about it until she had the twin girls. When a woman has a baby, her position in the family is assured. Only after the birth of her babies was Young-Ja's position strong enough that she could demand of her husband to break with his concubine. It is a reasonable request for a wife to make. Young-Ja wanted to bury the past start a new life together. It is natural for Chang-Soo to feel guilty towards his wife for what he had done, but he could not stop meeting Bok-Hee. There are two reasons for this: he had strong feelings for Bok-Hee and in patriarchy a man's immorality is met with silent approval. After Bok-Hee had a baby girl by Chang-Soo, his parents became involved. They suspected that the baby girl was their son's child and they wanted her. This is another trait of patriarchy. Women are seen as containers for the production of babies. The question of who is the father is, is the pertinent one. In Korean terms, the "seed" (paternal blood) is of the utmost importance.

Bok-Hee is not portrayed in traditional Korean way. She is not depicted as an ordinary Korean woman. She has liberated ideas for herself and her miserable life. Even though she is a concubine of Chang-Soo in the story, she is an encouragement for women who feel shame. Bok-Hee could survive through her pregnancy. It must have been an extremely shameful experience for her. She was the main topic of neighbourly gossip and was definitely isolated by them. But she can overcome the situation. The reason for that is that she was rich which meant that she could afford to feel superior. The neighbours, who are poor, officially had no right to blame her because of her standing. Bok-Hee tolerated her shame because of her “superior” power over the “inferior” neighbours. Another reason for Bok-Hee’s survival through this shame could be the great love between her and Chang-Soo. My opinion is that the main reason is the power games of patriarchy: even though Bok-Hee displayed the most shameful behaviour, she could overcome the shame with her powerful, “superior” position.

Sodam is described as a self-sacrificing woman, who tries to make others happy without demanding happiness for herself. Sodam is the typical figure of the woman in patriarchy: unconditional obedience is the virtue of the woman’s role. When Sodam meets K, she sees how K’s son, who is blind and without a child, is greatly influenced by his father. While his daughter-in-law is away K tells his son that “it is not shameful that a man has many wives. It is important for us to have many babies, to increase our chances of having a baby who will grow to be a successor. We are rich enough to have two daughters-in-law. Sodam has a warm heart and her face is pretty, so there is nothing wrong for her to become pregnant by you” (Lim SY 1989:120). Sodam accepts and falls pregnant. When K’s daughter-in-law returns home, K tells her of Sodam and her pregnancy. K’s daughter-in-law does not feel angry or act in any way against Sodam, but she feels so sorry for herself that she can not fall pregnant herself. K’s daughter-in-law says to Sodam: “I really thank you for being pregnant for me” (Lim SY 1989:127-128), and she continually tells her husband that he had done the right thing for the good of their family.

Before her marriage to Chang-Soo, Sodam was held in contempt by Chang-Soo’s mother. Sodam had to endure constant insults from her. Though Chang-Soo himself had three children, his mother tried to find a virgin for him to marry. Chang-Soo’s mother

did not like Sodam very much because she was not educated enough. Her lack of education was due to her stepmother who beat her, treated her harshly and did not care for her. Chang-Soo's mother rejected Sodam for many reasons. One such reason was because of Sodam's giving birth to a child. This is an indication of the patriarchal dual evaluation: the pattern that "what the man is doing is all right, but for a woman it is not acceptable". In patriarchy, man is valued. Chang-Soo's mother said, "if a man is handsome and excellent, he can have ten women as sexual partners" (Lim SY 1989:186). This patriarchal idea came from a woman's mouth. It is sad that women, themselves victims of patriarchy, have been so conditioned by patriarchy that they cooperate to perpetuate these ideas.

According to patriarchal ideology, a woman should sacrifice herself for her family, even at the cost of her own happiness. Sodam's role in the story is to take care of the three children of Chang-Soo. After her marriage to Chang-Soo, her role is always helping parents, feeding children, caring for her neighbours and supporting her husband. She is portrayed as a "silent being". The author knows the traditional woman's role, for she is depicted as a "good" wife, a "good" mother, a "good" daughter-in-law, and a "good" neighbour. Sodam is invisible but she absolutely necessary just like air. People need air but it is not visible. In patriarchy, women are like air.

Young-Ja, who is the first wife of Chang-Soo, agrees to their marriage. She says, "I willingly follow the decisions of my parents and your parents about our marriage" (Lim SY 1989:61). In premodern and even in modern times marriage in Korea was not a personal choice, but was dependent on the family or on the decision of the parents. In the pre-modern era a bride and a groom often had never seen each other before the day of the wedding. The honour of the parents who had arranged the wedding was at stake. Because of this women in particular never thought of divorce. Instead they would do what they could to fulfill her husband's needs. This custom is no longer followed today. In Bok-Hee's case, she knows nothing of her husband's sexual malformation. Her husband's father rapes Bok-Hee for the sake of bearing a successor. In those days, to continue the paternal line was of crucial importance. When a woman was raped, she experienced much shame in patriarchal society. Bok-Hee wants to escape from her position of being a widow and asks Chang-Soo to run away with her to somewhere far

from their village. But Chang-Soo refuses her request and Bok-Hee accepts this as fate. Bok-Hee is a depiction of the many Korean women who were in misery. Korean women of those times could not express their feelings freely. They were taught to keep their feelings inside and to accept everything, fortunate or unfortunate, as destiny. This is why they simply distinguished themselves as either the “unfortunate woman”, or as the “blessed woman”. The Korean church has taken over this idea and emphasizes being “blessed” by God. Silent women who could not express their feelings were often actually very unhappy. They were the victims of patriarchal ideology. Women in patriarchy expected far too much from their children. Their children had to be everything; they were their only happiness. Children became spoilt and incompetent. Either this they were treated as their mother’s personal possessions This left them without a future.

Chang-Soo’s male pride causes his wife Young-Ja to commit suicide. In patriarchy, the male pride and honour were of the utmost importance. Without that a male person as not “a man”. If man had lost his pride it was as though he had lost his identity. In this story the main character’s pride caused much tragedy.

5.2.4 Gasi Gogi (a thorny fish)

The summary of this story is as follows: This novel’s main focus is on Daum, who is a ten-year-old boy with leukemia. His father, Jung Ho-Yun is a poet, who remembering his own unfortunate childhood, is striving to be the “perfect father”. Jung Ho-Yun’s father was a coal-miner who had lost his leg in an accident. Without any compensation, he was forced to resign. He threatened his employers with a knife and was thrown into jail. Finally, when he was released, he had not chance of employment. Because of the growing poverty within the family the mother ran away from home. The father lost all hope and suggested to his son Ho-Yun, that they should eat rat poisoning and die together. Ho-Yun did not want to die, so his father took him to the police station and was never seen again.

Ho-Yun was moved from orphanage to orphanage, trying to be accepted, and faced much misery, loneliness and pain. He was seen as the stereotypical orphan who could never succeed in life. Nevertheless, he made the most of his opportunities, managed to complete his university studies and became a successful poet. His wife had studied art at

the same university. They had a son whom they named Daum. Daum was the great joy of Ho-Yun's life. Jung Ho-Yun worked with the press and continued writing poems. But his salary did not meet his wife's expectations, since she came from a wealthy background. After 6 years of marriage, Ho-Yun's wife demanded a divorce in order to continue her art studies. She remarried an art teacher 20 years older than herself and they left for France. She sent a letter to her ex-husband, saying that she would no longer take responsibility for her son, Daum.

Daum's leukaemia was discovered shortly after the divorce of his parents. The first time he was admitted to hospital, but soon recovered sufficiently to return home. Six months later when the sickness reappeared, he was sent to the hospital and there was no telling when he would be able to return home. Daum suffered immensely, from radiotherapy, the countless pills, to the unsalted food. The treatment for leukemia was too much for the 10-year-old boy. He decided that he would record all his feelings and emotions in a diary. These entries are especially focused on the main source of his encouragement, his father. Without him he would not have been able to make it. Regardless of his yearning to have a mother just like all of his friends, he believed that he owed everything to his father.

After two years of treatment, there was no sign of recovery for Daum. The painful radiotherapy did not offer recovery either. It was then that they were left with only one other possible treatment: to transplant some blood cells from someone who had the same blood type as Daum. This was going to cost a fortune and cause twice as much pain as he had already experienced. The father had not money. He had already sold his house and all their possessions to pay for Daum's stay of two years in hospital. He suffered much but hoped for his son's recovery and agreed to the treatment. Their search for a donor proved to be unsuccessful. Hope faded and Ho-Yun requested that his son be released from hospital.

A week before Daum's release, Jung Ho-Yun read in the papers that his ex-wife had returned to Korea to hold an art exhibition. Ho-Yun went to the exhibition to find his ex-wife. He wanted to tell her of the situation and urge her to come and see her son before it was too late. But there was no sign of her. Eventually the day of Daum's release arrived. With what they had left they managed to buy a car in order to drive down to the coast. It

was Daum's final wish was to see the ocean. Down at the coast they unexpectedly came upon an old man who lived in the mountains. He was a herbalist, selling medicinal plants from the mountains for a living. The old man had had a fatal lung disease. That brought him to the mountains where he recovered. That is how it came that Daum and his father went to live in the mountains. After about a month Daum's illness recurred and they had to go back to the hospital. They discovered that the doctor and Ho Yun's ex-wife had been searching for them. The doctor told them that he had found a girl in Japan who had the same blood type as Daum. The transplant was now possible, if only the father could afford it. The father had heard that one could make much money by selling an organ. He secretly planned to sell one of his kidneys to pay for the transplantation. When Ho Yun went for a physical checkup in order to sell his kidneys, they discovered that he had severe liver cancer. His was going to die within a month. During the last years he had been too focused on his son's health to realize that he too had problems. He was despondent. His ex-wife suddenly decided that she would share in caring for Daum and paying the hospital fees. The father felt that the best he could do for his son before his death, was to care for him until the end.

Secretly, the father sold the cornea of his one eye and earned just enough for the transplant. Daum fully recovered. Jung Ho-Yun forced Daum to go to France with his mother in order for him to have a better life. His own sorrow, pain and suffering should be kept secret from his son. That was for the best, he believed. Ho-Yun died alone in the mountains where he and his son had spent a peaceful month together.

The explanation of the title "a thorny fish" is as follows. Daum's father reminded him of a thorny fish. A thorny fish is one of the smallest fishes in the sea. The mother fish lays eggs and leaves immediately. The father fish remains to keep watch over the eggs. When the eggs hatch and the baby fishes grow, they go their own way, leaving the father fish behind. The father fish knows that his job as a father is completed, hence he bangs his head on a rock and kills himself.

The rapidly changing Korean society since the 1960s has been influenced by science and technology, the unification of world trade, travel and communication, certain cultural trends and religion (see Lee HS 1992:45-53). Lifestyles, practices and relationships have

been modernized in the Korean family and society. Fundamentalism has led to conservatism in culture and religion, people defending their privilege and attacks on what is considered to be “different” as well as on other religions. Capitalism and free enterprise encourage freedom of religion, but support the values of the capitalistic system. Consumerism is spread through trade, aid, education and development policies. Its negative effects include abuses such as drug addiction, prostitution, corruption and the undesirable influence of the mass media. The world powers through their impact on economic, political, and military issues have an influence on Korea’s culture and even on the religious attitudes of Korean people.

Korean society no longer teaches the necessity of values in life, values in society and moral values. The most precious value has been economical growth. Koreans have become materialists and money has become the first consideration. The materialism sets Koreans on a competitive course, which drives people to desire social success and promotion. Materialism has brought about a trend toward nuclear families rather than large families. Many people do not know how to teach their children social and moral values. In the traditional family system, children naturally learned the values of life from the many members of the family. However, modernism made people meet in dialogue around basic core values and fundamental inspirations, which contribute powerfully towards integral human liberation and the fulfillment of people.

Since the end of 1980, Koreans have been experiencing postmodernity (Kim AY 1995:224-230; see Choi MJ 1995:103-145). This included a loss of authority and instead, the democratization of social, economic and political life occurred. People seem to be lost their search for a new direction and clear objectives. Some Koreans are living in the pre-modern, some are in the modern and some in the postmodern era. There are divergences that emerge from peculiar historical, cultural, religious, and social factors.

The context of this story is the 1990s. At that time the social position and image of fathers had changed from being the absolute authority and the only powerful one to having lost many of their traditional “rights”. The father as dictator to be obeyed and respected by children remained until the 1970s. At the beginning of the 1990s the fathers’ authority has declined and many fathers lost their prestige. Postmodern thinking denies the “absolute”. Also, many fathers work very hard and are rarely seen by the

children. They are treated as the “money maker” or “money machine”. The father’s role in the home has become much weaker since Korean industrial development. The father works from early in the morning till night. The father comes back home only shortly after the children are sleeping. The father could not play with his children during the holidays, because he needs rest. So the children sometimes think that the father is “a worker” or “a sleeping person”. However, the mother organized the family finances uses in a family’s economy. The mother provides for the family’s needs. During the 1990s, many wives, who had enough time and enough money but their husbands could not fill their sexual desire, have deviated from their proper roles as mother and as wife. This has become a big social issue. In this story, the author replaces the image of the authoritarian and powerful father with that of a father who cares deeply for his child and is prepared to sacrifice all for him. In this way the author broke away from the traditional male role.

Here, it is necessary to study “God the Father” in contemporary culture and theology. Hamerton-Kelly (1979:foreword) says that, “a near century of psycho-analytic research and reflection on the cultural importance of traditional symbols has shown that the term ‘father’ is both more significant and often more problematic than prior generations explicitly realized”. The description of God as Father seems to portray a judge and a fearful image to the Israelites in the Old Testament. People’s initial preconception of God is contradictory to the surface reading of the biblical texts.

The psychologist, Sigmund Freud, insisted on the centrality of the “father” in human consciousness. This cannot remain unchallenged, because the Father’s figure is the reflection on the place of that figure in people’s cultural heritage (Hamerton-Kelly 1979:5). Mary Daly’s opinion about the image of God as father is expressed in her book “Beyond God the Father”. She sees the image of the father as the cornerstone of a self-alienating mode of existence, which produces rape, genocide and war. When the father-God and his works are renounced, a new heaven and earth of mutual respect, truth, and vitality will come about. She argues for symbolization which is not anthropomorphic. “....Neither the Father, nor the Son, nor the mother is God who transcends anthropomorphic symbolization” (Daly 1973). She argues that a re-visioning of God must focus on the experiences of becoming, rather than the sense of structure and permanence, and in this emphasis acknowledges a certain affinity with theologians.

Mary Daly analyzes societies where patriarchy was and is the root of all evil. However, there are many other factors that need to be considered when analyzing the roots of societies: the individual's perversity, the love of death and destruction that defeats all attempts to strive for goodness. Daly's (1973:6) challenge is that "the patriarchal shape of Judaism and Christianity has contributed mightily to the ills which these religions are committed to relieve; that the religions are, in short, self-contradictory; and that this is caused by their devotion to the symbol of 'father' for God". Her promise is that, when women move beyond the father symbol, they will enter into new realms of energy and possibilities for human happiness (Daly 1973:6). To share in God's blessing, one had to belong to a family, so the status of the father was divinely sanctioned, and the divinity was involved in the history of the individual and society at the most intimate level – the level of family. From early on in the history of the development of god conceptions, earthly fatherhood was seen as the source of life and the guarantor of order in the family. God was associated with the experience of sustenance and education from the history of fatherhood in Israel (Daly 1973:27; see De Boer 1974:966-969). Israel was a patriarchal society which was organized in families, tribes and clans according to patrilineal relationships. A family was called "the house of the father" and usually composed of three generations. It was essential to be buried with the father and to remain within the sphere of the family blessing. Therefore, the father's power was absolute.

In the Old Testament, God is depicted as Savior (Ex 3:7-8), as a sincere God (Ps 146:6), as an almighty God (Gn 17:1; Ps 91:1), a fearful God (Jr 5:24; Ec12:13), as a warrior (Jr 20:11), as a wise God (Job 12:13), as a judge (Is 33:22), as The Holy One (Hs 11:9), as the creator (Is 40:28; Dt 33:27), and as God the Father (Ps 89:26; Jr 3:19; Is 64:8; Ps 68:5). The Israelite God is expressed in many ways. God is also seen as mother or woman:

The Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them (Gn 3:21).

He shielded him and cared for him;

He guarded him as the apple of his eye (Dt 32:10).

You deserted the Rock, who fathered you;
you forgot the God who gave you birth (Dt 32:18).

Keep me as the apple of your eye; hide me in the shadow of your wings (Ps 17:8).

I cry out to the God Most High,
to God, who fulfills his purpose for me (Ps 57:2).

Because you are my help,
I sing in the shadow of your wings (Ps 63:7).

He will cover you with his feathers,
and under his wings you will find refuge;
his faithfulness will be your shield and rampart (Ps 91:4).

But I have stilled and quietened my soul;
like a weaned child with its mother,
like a weaned child is my soul within me (Ps 131:2).

But now, like a woman in childbirth,
I cry out, I grasp and pant (Is 42:14).

Listen to me, O house of Jacob,
all you who remain of the house of Israel,
you whom I have upheld since you were conceived,
and have carried since your birth.
Even to your old age and gray hairs
I am he, I am he who will sustain you.
I have made you and I will carry you;
I will sustain you and I will rescue you (Is 46:3-4).

Can a woman forget the baby at her breast
and have no compassion on the child She has born?
Though she may forget, I will not forget you! (Is 49:15)

This is what the Lord says:
“A voice is heard in Ramah,
mourning and great weeping,
Rachel weeping for her children
and refusing to be comforted,
because her children are no more” (Jr 31:15)

This what the Lord says:
“Restrain your voice from weeping
and your eyes from tears,
for your work will be rewarded,”
declares the Lord (Jr 31:16).

I will extend peace to her like a river,
and the wealth of nations like a flooding stream;
you will nurse and be carried on her arm
and dandled on her knees.
As a mother comforts her child,
so will I comfort you;
and you will be comforted over Jerusalem” (Is 66:12-13).

When Israel was a child, I loved him,
and out of Egypt I called my son.
But the more I called Israel
the further they went from met
they sacrificed to the Baals

and they burned incense to images.

It was I who taught Ephraim to walk,

taking them by the arms;

but they did not realize

it was I who healed them.

I led them with cords of human kindness,

with ties of love;

I lifted the yoke from their neck

and bent down to feed them (Hs 11:1-4).

The use of female sexual imagery for God in Hosea is illuminated by feminist theoretical considerations. Setel (1985:95) says that “a central issue for contemporary religious feminist is the extent to which the use of these (and other) biblical writings continues to so define women in our own societies”. The passages of the female features of God provide acknowledged female experience and allow women to redefine the relationship between God and women”.

There was a serious ambivalence in the early Christian attitude towards the father’s authority. It is most evident in the sayings about the status of women, which express contempt (I Cor 14:34) and unparalleled affirmation (Gl 3:28) sometimes. This situation represents the confrontation between the impulse for reformation of the patriarchy on the one hand, which Jesus shows, and the resistance of entrenched privilege on the other. Jesus broke the forms of the patriarchal family in the name of God the Father and recognized the natural right of women to equal humanity with men. Jesus had women in his entourage (Mk 15:40-41). Jesus spoke with women in public (Jn 4:27). Jesus spent time teaching them (Lk 10:39). Jesus let a woman wash his feet, and let her perform a service for him, which was a sign of the characteristic of a wife’s duty for her husband (Lk 7:36-38). Jesus paid special attention to mothers and children, regardless of the characteristic objections from his disciples (Mk 10:13-16). Jesus refused to condemn an adulteress, knowing how unfair the law on adultery was to women, upon whom alone it laid the obligation of absolute marital fidelity (Jn 7:53-8:11). Jesus allows neither the subordination of one partner to the other, nor the treating of women as a chattel, whose

adultery infringes the man's property rights. Jesus seems to reject patriarchy – the absolute authority.

Woman was required to give up in her individual profession for the sake of the traditional idea of a woman's role of keeping peace and maintaining the family. Daum's mother's opinions are very different. She breaks away from this idea; she wants to study. The mother tries to further her own position in the society as best she can. She seems to be a liberated woman. She is portrayed as the opposite of the traditional model wife and mother. She does whatever she pleases. Whatever she wants to say, she says. The author portrays a model father. The author describes the mother as follows: She leaves her family because of the poor conditions; she gives up the right of nurturing her child when she is divorced; she is described as careless, unkind and unfaithful. She seems to be influenced by financial matters. She changes her mind, depending on what is to her advantage; she denies responsibility for her child at first, but later she wants to help him. Daum's father is portrayed as mild and gentle. He is most attentive to his son. The mother does not endure any pain and seems to act on momentary impulses. She does not consider others' conditions and feelings. The author expresses dualistic notions of good and bad. Daum's father is caring for his son very well without a wife. Readers can feel the betrayal of Daum's mother. She does not act in the traditional way. The author leads the readers to trust and have confidence in Daum's father.

The role of Daum's mother is not that of a traditional mother or wife. The theory as seen in the story, is that the one who has money and power, can have a child too. The powerful person (Daum's mother) continually maintains power, but the powerless person (Daum's father) seems unable to overcome his difficulties. She suddenly proclaims a divorce without consideration of what the husband and her child have to feel and go through. The husband must endure many things: his loneliness, the pain of rejection and abandonment, his dissatisfying work and financial problems, his lovely son's bitter suffering, the lack of proper treatment for his son, and the pain and anguish at his incapability to be of any help to his son. Even though Daum's father is male, his actions are like that of a female in the traditional culture and still in current times. The author tries to describe the good father, but he has made a mistake in opposing male and female in this way. The patriarchal power game is depicted in the story, the only difference

being that the roles related to gender, are reversed. Some factors concerning social reformation can be distinguished in the story.

- Daum's mother tries to liberate herself from her circumstances.
- The definite roles of male and female are changing. A father also has the responsibility to feed his children. Child-rearing is not only a woman's task. Daum's father took really good care of his child. This challenges many Korean men and fathers. The author breaks through the traditional thinking about male and female roles.

The father, Chung Ho-Yun, said to his son in his mind when he died: "I am not going to die forever, even though I am dead. I am living in you, whom I have left behind in the world. You can see, hear, and touch me, because I am walking with you always. As I accompany you, I worry that you may fall down, be tired, or stop walking." Daum becomes the successor of his father. Herein the meaning of resurrection can be seen. The successor is important to Oriental thinking, because the old generations have to die but the new generation can live on with their images and passion. A female model in Confucianism is "motherhood", which means that a mother must bear a son as a successor of the father. Only after giving birth to a boy, is a woman recognized as a "human being". This idea is still prevalent among women today who want to get a firm position in the family, irrespective of how educated they are. A Korean female novelist asks: "Is it natural for today's women to try to get a boy in so many ways?" (Lee NH 1996:188).

When Ho-Yun loses all hope, he goes to the hospital chapel. He is anxious for the recovery of his son, so he begs the absolute being to let his son receive life in the place of his own life. He is not a Christian so he does not know who the absolute being in whom his son believes, is. Religion is necessary in people's minds, especially when people are weak. Christ can be imaged through Ho-Yun who gives his body for his son.

In Ho-Yun's prayer, the prayer of Korean mothers over the centuries can be recognized. The ancient ritual has been passed down through the oral tradition. A woman's prayer is her own wishes or blessings on her and her family; her own divinity or

family's blessings are honored in a ritual within herself. It is very private and a self-affirmation for Korean women.

5.3 A woman's prayer

Women believe in the work of the Holy Spirit whose characteristics are life-creation and the spirit of freedom. Firstly, women can understand the role of the Holy Spirit as creator of life because they have the experiences giving birth and feeding children. Women believe that God gives people life and love, because of their own experience of raising children. Women pray for their children's safety from accidents and sickness. The most frightening matter for women is war, because through wars, many children and family members are lost. It is women who suffer most from this. Women also want to protect nature. Their loved ones need to eat fresh produce, breathe fresh air and drink fresh water. Women's minds are connected with life-creation.

Secondly, the Holy Spirit is the spirit of freedom. Women need freedom from oppression. Women realize that the reason for their subordination in society or in the church is due to sexism, which is immoral, unjust, improper and unrighteous. Women did not receive proper treatment politically, socially and economically in the past. The Holy Spirit does not seem to give women the gift of the Spirit equally with the men in Korean churches. Korean Christian women have been hearing the message of service and sacrifice continuously. A feminist theologian Yang Hyun-Hai points out the problem within the Korean churches. When Christianity first came to Korea, women experienced liberation and independence when they heard the message (see Yang HH 1997:136-166). Liberal ideas in the Gospel, revitalized Korean female Christians. But after the Korean churches had become institutionalized and systematized, sexism and "male-stream" theology appeared. Korean women want to be free of this. Only the Spirit of freedom could help Korean women to feel free from political and social sexism and discrimination in the church.

It is necessary for women to express their spirit in various forms, through the Holy Spirit. Naomi Janowitz and Maggie Wenig (1979:176) expressed this in the article "Sabbath prayer for women". Magnified, sanctified, blessed, glorified, exalted and

honored and praised is the great Name of God through the world that She created according to Her will. It is a start for women to refer to God as “She”.

Blessed is She who spoke

Blessed is She who spoke and the world became. Blessed is She.

Blessed is She who in the beginning, gave birth.

Blessed is She who says and performs.

Blessed is She who declares and fulfills.

Blessed is She whose womb covers the earth.

Blessed is She whose womb protects all creatures.

Blessed is She who nourishes those who are in awe of Her.

Blessed is She who lives forever and exists eternally.

Blessed is She who redeems and saves. Blessed is Her name.

Women struggle with the meaning of their relationship with God. Women’s ideas and metaphors have the power to shape their worldview and give meaning to their experiences. Christian women need to re-interpret the Bible, Christian tradition, liturgy, and prayers in order to encourage women. Women need to look critically at literature in order to find the renewed the meaning of all that has been passed down already structured to women.

Women need to exorcize patriarchal ideologies. They need to cleanse the deeply rooted mindset of men-centered dominance. Women need to be filled with positive images of the strength and beauty of feminism. They need to reform the old system and the old ideologies of society and the church, and the dominant customs. Women need to proclaim the new world, filled with righteousness, peace, and equality.

In preparation for the ancient Korean rituals, a woman firstly purifies herself through a bath or a shower. She starts at dawn. She prepares some water in a bowl. The place of ancient Korean women was usually a terrace where soy sauce crocks were placed. Every house had a terrace at the back of the garden. Zsuzsanna Budapest (1979:269) says that the altar is an important part of woman’s rituals, and a very female part of dwellings. It

was a woman's own place, so Korean women used to have a clean altar there, for the house spirits, for the ancestors. She arranges the altar in a creative manner, for example, with a white cloth. Ancient Koreans always wore white cloth. The water is a powerful symbol: there is no organic life without water, it is the life force. After preparing herself, she kneels down in front of a water bowl. During her prayer, she joins her hands and continually rubs them, murmuring: "Bless myself and my family members." She mentions each family member by name and prays for their needs, one by one. Her wishful blessings can be divided into five categories: health, having a son, wealth, success or honor, and longevity for herself and for her family members. The most important wish of a Korean woman is for their peace and well-being. When she finishes the ritual chanting, she scatters some salt on her altar and around the house. The salt has the meaning of cleansing a dirty mind and environment, and exorcising bad conditions. Koreans started their daily lives with this blessings of their mothers' prayers.

A Hungarian-born woman, Zsuzsanna E. Budapest (1979:269-272), found the "woman spirit from a ritual" similar to that of Korean women. The self-blessing is very important: women affirm the divinity within themselves through the ritual. Women have internalized their oppression, inferior experiences, and unclean feelings, therefore they need to change the influences working deep in their minds. Through rituals, women can fill their minds with positive thinking.

The male stream theology distinguishes the roles of man and woman. For example, even though both man and woman have been spiritualized by the Holy Spirit, the proclamation of the Gospel is the role of man, and the service of the church is the role of woman. Woman is as an assistant to the male. But there is a female prophet, Anna, in Luke 1:36-38. The news of Jesus' birth was proclaimed by Anna. There are female prophets in the New Testament. Philip's four daughters preach God's words and God's will in Acts 21:9. There was a woman who was called a female disciple in Acts 9:36-43. She was called Tabitha, or Dorcas in Joppa. She was good enough to share many things. When the church was started, the style was that of a house church, closely related to women's activity. The houses of John's mother Mary (Ac 12:12-17), the house of Lydia who was a seller of purple (Ac 16:11-15), and the house of Nymphas in Laodicea (Col 4:15) were used as house churches. Priscilla was a teacher and a leader of worship

services, with her husband Aquila (Ac 18:26-28). She was called a coordinator of Paul, in Rome 16:3. Phebe was working in the Cenchræa church. She was a female minister in today's language. Paul recommended her to the Rome church in Romans 16:1-2. Paul called her "sister". "Sister" means the evangelist or a leader of a church. There are many women whose names are recorded in the Bible. For example, salute Tryphena and Tryphosa, who laboured in the Lord, and the beloved Persis, who laboured much in the Lord (Rm 16:12), salute Rufus chosen in the Lord, and his mother (Rm 16:13). Christianity was spread in the world because of the many undiscovered efforts of women, in the past. Women's undiscovered stories are not unimportant.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

In the first chapter I described women's and specifically Korean women's experience. In Korea, the family system has been patriarchal and the political system classist (see chapter 3, section 3.2). The economical system has evolved from a pre-modern aristocratic to an industrialized bureaucracy (see chapter 3, section 3.3). The social system has been influenced by capitalism and is still steeped in Confucianism (see chapter 3, section 3.4.2.2). Confucianism is a system of male hierarchy (Tu Wei-ming 1991:765). Within this system Korean women did not have an identity of their own. They were isolated in their homes and were expected to be subservient. Christian women continued to live their lives within such a value system. In Korean churches, women would obey the words of the minister as though they were the Word of God, which has absolute authority.

Women in Korea have been rendered voiceless by a male-dominated society. They did not have a way of effectively expressing themselves either politically, economically, or religiously. In the modern Korean bureaucratic society being highborn is valued, along with a prominent position in society, having power, being educated, and having much money. People evaluate others according to these norms. Because of societal structures women have been unable to attain what is highly valued by society and they have been without political or economic power. This study has shown that Korean women experience violence on many levels in their lives. In this regard Thistlethwaite (1985:104) states that physical violence is not the only form of abuse. Verbal intimidation, economic deprivation, and deliberate humiliation also characterize the violent relationship." In order to better understand the lives and experience of Korean women the following factors relevant to the formation of their context were described and analyzed (chapter 3; chapter 5, section 5.2):

- the myth of Korean origin;
- political and historical developments;

- economic developments;
- the religio-cultural background;
- the influence of and expression by means of Korean literature.

Methodology was discussed in chapter 2. The aim of the study was to develop an interdisciplinary method by means of which the historical situation of the Korean society could be explained not only in theological, but also in sociological terms. This engaged hermeneutical approach concurs with the wisdom of Richard Rorty (1982: xiii):

There is nothing deep down inside us except what we have put there ourselves, no criterion that we have not created in the course of creating a practice, no standard of rationality that is not our appeal to such a criterion, no rigorous argumentation that is not obedience to our own conventions.

According to Nietzsche (1964:104), “man arrives at a ‘sense for truth’ only because he is unconscious of the origins of truth, that is, that man himself is the creator of truth. If he could ever ‘get out of the prison walls of this faith’ his self-consciousness would be destroyed at once.” In *Beyond good and evil* (1964), Nietzsche extends his discussion of truth to include women (Hekman 1990:27). Hekman (1990:28) says, “Nietzsche is one of the first critics of modernism to reveal that the ‘deconstruction’ of western rationality necessarily entails the rejection of the masculine definition of ‘truth’”. From a postmodern perspective, I analyzed the *kyriarchal* relations of domination and fundamentalism in Korean churches (see chapter 4, section 4-1). Using postmodern ideas as startingpoint, the cultural-religious values in Korea and the social position of Korean women were explored by means of Korean literature (see chapter 5, section 5-2).

Feminist deconstructive approaches and feminist critique were used to explain how female sexuality has been constituted in Korean society (see chapter 5). An attempt was made to recover an authentic female sexuality from the distortions of patriarchal thought. This issue was explored by means of certain biblical passages (esp Pr 31:10-31; see chapter 5, section 5.1).

My findings are both positive and negative. On the negative side it has become clear that there are no immediate answers to time-conditioned problems of present-day Korean women. The Bible does not give a direct answer to the questions concerning women's issues, such as for example equal payment for equal work. Prejudice against women in the church can easily be legitimated by quoting texts out of their contexts. Often Bible translations concerning women or female participation in for instance the Jesus movement have been exposed as inaccurate and biased. Women still have only a small chance of an attaining an official position in the church. Married women are still solely responsible for serving their husbands and feeding their families. Their proper place is still considered to be the home. If married women do succeed in obtaining responsible positions in the broader society, their burdens and work load are doubled – as housewives and as contributing members of society. The dominant socio-cultural narrative concerning women is still prevalent in church and society, in spite of many developments toward a postmodern world. Christian women often still believe themselves to be small people. They also believe, however, that God uses small people in God's history.

The positive findings are that the Bible does still have something constructive to say to women who are willing to face the challenges of present times with wisdom and with faith in the value of their female perspective, and to seek theological meanings for political and social problems. Song, Choan-Seng (1982:14) points out that "women in many parts of the world are searching for a new image of woman in the human community dominated for centuries by patriarchal systems and male-centered social structures." Positive insights, positive thinking, a positive perspective, and positive actions can provide a strong momentum toward the liberation of Korean women. Awkward biblical passages can be challenged by critical theological interpretation without denying what is being said or the patriarchal context in which it was said. The force of *kyriarchal* passages can be relativised and minimized by seeing them in the light of Jesus' vision. Such an engaged hermeneutics helps us to see the difference between the law (or tradition) and the Gospel.

Male-centered patriarchal culture has brought violence, victimization, and domination over women and nature; it has brought violence in the form of colonialism, capitalism, militarism, and nuclear weapons. In response to this, and following in the footsteps of

Jesus, female culture should endeavour to bring love, equality, justice, peace, and care for others to the societies of this world. If the androcentric culture is related with oppression, the female culture should relate with the struggle of the oppressed for liberation and self-realization. If patriarchal theology discriminated against women, then feminist theology should help to transform male-dominant relationships to partnership and participation. Female culture and theology should, therefore, be people-oriented rather than authority-centered, and life-giving rather than death-dealing. If the Korean church truly wants to be the community of Jesus Christ, which lives in love as one body, seeking the reign of God, then the practice of classism, sexism, and racism in the church should not be permitted. Instead, the community should be a living witness to a fellowship of sharing, cooperation and peace among all.

The scene of God's creation can be reimagined. God said, "Let there be woman" (Fisher 1979); and there was woman. And God saw that the woman was good. God called the woman female, and God blessed her. It is beautiful that God recognized woman in herself. What women need to achieve are:

- To realize that they are a precious creation by God.
- To find and develop the roles of their potential.
- To be able to express their experienced officially and no longer feel ashamed of themselves as women.
- To open their eyes and see the poor and the oppressed, those who are the subject of social and political change.
- To speak women's experiences and narratives for those women who do not yet have the courage to speak.

My finding on account of this study is that there is a need to deal with the following issues: women should criticize authoritarian culture and distinguish the liberating and enslaving aspects of such a culture. Korean women need to extend the expression of their experiences in many ways: through the arts, music, architecture, drama, and so on. Women need to help to resolve cultural and ethnic conflicts actively, which are classism, sexism, and racism. Women need to participate in social issues in a positive way.

Doing theology as a liberated Christian woman within the realities of today, means being faced by many challenges: women need to discern the core of the Gospel of Jesus. Jesus' lifestyle was free. His instruction was very different from the dominant teachings. Korean Christian women also need to be free from men-centered instruction. Women need to develop a spirituality in order to obtain inner liberation to heal the social, political, economical, and religious damages done. Women' experience could contribute to the change and renewal of Christian theology and Christian churches. Then women could participate in human relations of truth, love, justice and peace. Korean Christian women should be empowered to also interpret the Bible. Androcentric and patriarchal interpretation of the Bible is not helpful for women anymore. Korean Christian women no longer relate to the dominant socio-cultural narratives of the Bible. Women hope to find new, liberating and life-giving ways of interpreting of the Bible. Korean women need to do theology for women's liberation and for the transformation of society and Christian churches. Women should contribute their wisdom and love freely by joining counseling, pastoral and discipleship actions of the church.

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Summary

Women experience the world differently from men: biologically, politically, socially, culturally, and religiously. Korean women have been taught subordination in the Korean patriarchal churches and society. As the world changed from premodern to modern to postmodern, the position of Korean women has improved. However liberation is still necessary.

This study introduces Korean women's experience by reflecting on political and historical developments, societal structures and situations, the cultural background and their lives as members of Christian churches. The method of research in this study to investigate Korean women's situations avoids positivism and is deliberately postmodern in its approach. By means of postmodern methodology both modernistic male-dominated culture and Korean literature were critically described. With the support of feminist hermeneutics the situation of the Korean church was seen from a Korean woman's perspective.

This study surveys Korean women's backgrounds from the premodern to the postmodern era. Korean women were politically marginalized in the premodern and modern eras. During the postmodern era women's positions and participation in politics have improved. Up to the 1970s Koreans had experienced widespread poverty. Their desire was to become rich individually and as a nation, so they worked very hard in many fields of industry. During that time the socio-cultural narrative was patriarchal and hierarchical. Korean women were treated as inferior and secondary in the society and even in the Korean churches. Even though Korean Christian women have found a liberating message in Christianity, the men-centered ideology of the culture prevailed also in the churches.

This study discusses and criticizes fundamentalism in general as well as the fundamentalist trait of Korean theology. The study advocates the need for Korean Christian women to read the Bible from their own gender perspectives. The social roles of women in the Bible and early Christianity are closely related to the experiences of Korean women through the ages. Korean women have been socially stereotyped and reduced to gender roles in the Korean churches. However, this study shows that women's roles need not be restricted to the gender conventions of a male-dominated

society. There were women leaders in Israel and the New Testament also witnesses to female leadership. The study especially discusses who Jesus was and what his vision could mean for Korean women.

Key Terms

- Feminist critique
- Fundamentalism
- Hermeneutics
- Image of Jesus
- Korean Christian women
- Women's experience