

**Christianity and Modernity in Korea under Japanese Colonial Rule:
the Federal Council of Protestant Evangelical Missions in Korea,
Japanese Colonialism, and the Formation of Modern Korea**

Byongsung Lee
School of Religious Studies
McGill University, Montreal
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Abstract

This study critically examines the complex relationship between Christianity and modernity in Korea under Japanese colonial rule (1910-1945). Unlike Western colonies in Africa and Asia, Korea was colonized by Imperial Japan (1868-1947)—a non-white, non-Christian, non-Western imperial power. This unique Korean experience complicated the interactions of modernity, coloniality, and Christianity. Challenging the colonial modernity position, this study argues that a proper understanding of the formation of the modern in Korea requires an examination of the tripartite relationship among Japanese colonialism, the missionary enterprise, and the Korean pursuit of modernity. This trilateral relationship made both Korean Christianity and Korean modernity distinctively Korean, and made the colonial era the critical and transformative period in the formation of Korean modernity.

This study argues that modernity is an epistemological category characterized by Enlightenment, industrialization, democracy, “a secular age,” and the interaction between imperialism and colonial resistance, and that four conceptual distinctions are crucial for understanding the formation of modernity in colonial Korea: 1) the modern as a condition and as a normative frame, 2) the Western and the modern, 3) modernization and modernity, and 4) the colonial and the modern. This dissertation examines the impact of Christian modernity on the formation of Korean modernity, noting that Protestant missionaries in colonial Korea were a product of what Charles Taylor calls “a secular age” and that they embodied Christian modernity. Special attention is paid to the *Federal Council of Evangelical Missions in Korea* (the Federal Council), a union organization of Western missionaries in colonial Korea that embodied

characteristics of Anglo-American modernity, representing a microcosm of Anglo-Protestant civil society.

This study discusses the socio-political meanings and impacts of Christian modernity by focusing on three topics. First, it analyzes a controversial definition of “religion”—a Western modern concept—in the Korean context, and its relationship with “civilization” in colonial Korea, examining how civilization-oriented Protestant missions and the “civilized” rule of colonialists interacted with Koreans’ pursuit of a modern civilization and how this interaction contributed to the formation of Korean modernity in colonial Korea. Second, this study examines how social and moral teachings delivered by Protestant missionaries of the Federal Council interacted with the colonial moral order imposed by Japanese colonialists, and how this interaction influenced the formation of modern morality in colonial Korea. It also analyzes the socio-political impact of the hostile relationship between Christian modernity and Marxist modernity on the Korean peninsula. Finally, this study explores how the mode of organization of Protestant institutions inspired by mission institutions like the Federal Council embodied Anglo-American organizational modernity, colliding with the organizing principles of Japanese colonialists, who held a primarily hierarchical and authoritarian view of society and state.

Résumé

Cette étude explore de façon critique la relation complexe entre le christianisme et la modernité en Corée sous le règne colonial japonais (1910-1945). Différemment des colonies occidentales d'Afrique et d'Asie, la Corée fut colonisée par le Japon impérial (1868-1947) — un pouvoir impérial non-chrétien, non-occidental et non-blanc. Des interactions complexes découlèrent de cette expérience coréenne unique impliquant la modernité, la colonialité et le christianisme. Mettant au défi la position de la modernité coloniale, cette étude soutient qu'une bonne compréhension de l'établissement du moderne en Corée exige un examen de la relation tripartite entre le colonialisme japonais, l'entreprise missionnaire et la poursuite coréenne de la modernité. Cette relation trilatérale a rendu distinctement coréen le christianisme coréen et la modernité coréenne, où l'ère coloniale fut la période critique et transformatrice pour l'établissement de la modernité coréenne.

Cette étude soutient que la modernité est une catégorie épistémologique caractérisée par le Siècle des lumières, industrialisation, la démocratie, «une ère séculaire» et l'interaction entre l'impérialisme et la résistance coloniale, et que les missionnaires sont un produit de «l'ère séculaire», comme déclaré par Charles Taylor. Cette étude explore l'impact de la modernité chrétienne sur l'établissement de la modernité coréenne en accordant une attention particulière au *Conseil Fédéral des Missions Évangéliques en Corée* (le Conseil Fédéral), une organisation de missionnaires occidentaux en Corée coloniale qui incarna les caractéristiques de la modernité anglo-américaine, représentant un microcosme de la société anglo-protestante.

Cette étude aborde les impacts et définitions sociopolitiques de la modernité chrétienne en se concentrant sur trois sujets. Premièrement, une analyse d'une définition controversée de

la «religion» — un concept moderne occidental — dans le contexte coréen, et sa relation avec la «civilisation» en Corée coloniale, examinant comment les missions protestantes orientées vers la civilisation et le règne «civilisé» des colonialistes ont interagi avec la poursuite d'une civilisation moderne par le peuple coréen et comment cette interaction a contribué à l'établissement de la modernité coréenne en Corée coloniale. Deuxièmement, cette étude aborde les interactions impliquant l'enseignement moral et social des missionnaires protestants du Conseil fédéral avec l'ordre moral colonial imposé par les colonialistes japonais et comment ces interactions ont contribué à l'établissement de la moralité moderne dans la Corée coloniale. L'étude analyse également l'impact sociopolitique de la relation hostile entre la modernité chrétienne et la modernité marxiste sur la péninsule coréenne. Enfin, cette étude discute de l'organisation des institutions protestantes inspirée par institutions missionnaires telles que le Conseil Fédéral, incarnant la modernité organisationnelle anglo-américaine, et faisant face aux principes d'organisation des colonialistes japonais soutenant une vision principalement hiérarchique et totalitaire de la société et de l'État.

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List of Abbreviations

<i>AMFC</i>	<i>Annual Meeting of the Federal Council of Protestant Evangelical Missions in Korea (1912-1937)</i>
<i>AMGC</i>	<i>Annual Meeting of the General Council of Protestant Evangelical Missions in Korea (1906-1911)</i>
<i>Annual Report</i>	<i>Annual Report on Reforms and Progress In Korea (1907-1909); Annual Report on Reforms and Progress In Chosen (1910-1921); Annual Report on Administration of Chosen (1922-1936); Annual Report on Administration of Tyosen (1937-1939)</i>
Australian Presbyterian Mission	Korea Mission of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria
Canadian Mission	Korea Mission of the Presbyterian Church in Canada; Korea Mission of the United Church of Canada
Federal Council	Federal Council of Protestant Evangelical Missions in Korea
General Council	General Council of Protestant Evangelical Missions in Korea
<i>GSRS</i>	<i>Chosen Ni Okeru Shukyo Oyobi Koshi Yoran (1926-1941) (A General Survey of Religion and Shrines in Chosun)</i>
<i>JCYB</i>	<i>The Japan Christian Year Book (1903-1941)</i>
<i>KMF</i>	<i>Korea Mission Field (1905-1941)</i>
<i>KMYB</i>	<i>Korea Missions Year Book (1928, 1932)</i>
KNCC	Korean National Christian Council
Northern Methodist Mission	Korea Mission of the Methodist Episcopal Church
Northern Presbyterian Mission	Korea Mission of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America
Southern Methodist Mission	Korea Mission of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South
Southern Presbyterian Mission	Korea Mission of the Presbyterian Church in the United States

Introduction: Christianity and Modernity in Colonial Korea

1. Protestantism and Conversion to Modernity in Korea

Korean modernity has been shaped by a number of historical forces including the Treaty of Ganghwa, the Kapsin coup, the Sino-Japanese War, Kabo modernization reform, the Russo-Japanese war, Japanese colonialism and the independence movement, the liberation and division of Korea, the Korean civil war, state-led economic development, and the democratization movement. One of the distinguishing features of Korean modernity is the role of Christianity, which has been instrumental in building the modern Korean nation, forging the modern Korean state, and shaping modern Korean conceptions of the self and society.

A missionary commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the Protestant mission in Korea gave thanks that “God has opened closed doors”¹ of the “Hermit Kingdom.”² However, history shows that the door to Chosun³ Korea (1392-1897), which had been closed in order to protect the country from “Western barbarians,” was forced to open by a non-Western imperial power, Meiji Japan. It was not long before missionaries rushed into Korea through this “opened” door. Since the Meiji Restoration in 1868, Japan had been rapidly transforming itself from a pre-modern society into a modernized, militarized, and industrialized society. Emulating and

¹ Richard H. Baird, “Present Day Religious Problems,” in *The Fiftieth Anniversary Celebration of the Korea Mission of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., June 30-July 3, 1934*, ed. Harry A. Rhodes and Richard H. Baird (Seoul, Korea: Post Chapel, John D. Wells School, 1934), 134.

² The Chosun dynasty of Korea was often called a hermit kingdom by Westerners at the turn of the twentieth century. For instance, see William Elliot Griffis, *Corea, the Hermit Nation*, ed. Griffis William Elliot, 8th, rev. and enl. ed. (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1907). See also T. S. Soltau and R. Kilgour, *Korea, the Hermit Nation and Its Response to Christianity* (London: World dominion Press, 1932). For an overview of Korea as the “Hermit Kingdom” see, Bruce Cumings, *Korea's Place in the Sun: A Modern History*, Updated ed. (New York: W. W. Norton, 2005), 87-94.

³ Korean terms are Romanized based on the system of the Revised Romanization of Korean. According to the system, Chosun is to be spelled Joseon. However, this study employs the term Chosun instead of Joseon because the writings of most missionaries and English translation of colonialist documents in the colonial era used the term Chosun.

drawing upon the imperialist ideology of Western powers, Imperial Japan embarked upon its own imperial project. The first major target was Korea. In 1876, Korea—with its longstanding policy of isolation and seclusion—was forced to unlatch the door of the “Hermit Kingdom” by the gunboat diplomacy of Imperial Japan. The unequal treaty signed by Korea gave extraterritorial rights to the Japanese in Korea, allowing three ports to be open for trade. The treaty with Japan marked the beginning of Korea’s entrance into the modern world. The first treaty was followed by a series of treaties with Western powers: the United States (1882), the United Kingdom (1883), Germany (1883), Russia (1884), and France (1886).⁴ The Japanese imperial expansion radically changed the regional geo-political order and map of East Asia from the dominant Sinocentric system, which had existed for centuries, to the new modern order with the Japanese Empire in the center. This radical change was made possible by the victories of Japan in two major wars, whose major theaters of military operations were in and around the Korean Peninsula: the First Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895) and the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905). These military victories allowed Meiji Japan to finally colonize Korea in 1910.

The era of “new imperialism”⁵ at the turn of the twentieth century saw the emergence of two non-European powers—the United States and Japan—whose major interest, economic or territorial, lay in the Pacific Ocean. In the late nineteenth century, the United States found itself deeply involved with the colonialization of Korea. Unlike the international fashion for territorial imperialism, the United States preferred indirect rule based on the Open Door policy. However, the existence of the Philippines as an American colony complicated this policy,

⁴ See Cumings, *Korea's Place in the Sun*, 94-115. See also James Brown Scott, ed. *Korea, Treaties and Agreements* (Washington: The Endowment, 1921).

⁵ For a detailed explanation on “new imperialism,” see E. J. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Empire, 1875-1914* (New York: Vintage, 1989), 56-83.

creating tensions between the United States and Japan over the territorial expansion in the Pacific. The Taft-Katsura agreement in 1905 between the United States and Japan attempted to resolve these conflicts, acknowledging their mutual exclusive imperial interests in the colonies: American rule in the Philippines and Japanese rule in Korea.⁶

The two most profound and lasting themes of modern Korean history are Japanese imperialism and the division of the Korean peninsula, each of which falls into consecutive historical periods—the colonial experience (1910-1945) and the Korean War (1950-1953). These periods were dominated successively by Japan and the United States, and the two foreign powers were decisive factors in determining the direction of Korean modern history, with Russia (later the Soviet Union) playing significant geo-political roles in this evolving experience of modernity.

i) Japanese Aggression and Korean Conversion to Christianity

The cultural and historical relationship between Korea and Japan is long and complex. For example, Baekje (trad. 18 BCE – 660 CE), an ancient Korean Kingdom, transmitted Buddhism to Japan as early as the sixth century CE, arguably leaving a significant Korean impact on the culture and Buddhism of early Japan.⁷ On the other hand, Japanese modern colonial rule had been decisive in transforming pre-modern Korea into modern Korea. Their modern relationship, as Bruce Cumings nicely puts it, is “more akin to that between Germany and France or England

⁶ See Jongsuk Chay, “The Taft-Katsura Memorandum Reconsidered,” *Pacific Historical Review* 37, no. 3 (1968): 321-26; Cumings, *Korea's Place in the Sun*, 140-42.

⁷ Jonathan W. Best, “Paekche and the Incipency of Buddhism in Japan,” in *Currents and Countercurrents: Korean Influences on the East Asian Buddhist Traditions*, ed. Robert E. Buswell (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2005), 15-42.

and Ireland than to that between Belgium and Zaire or Portugal and Mozambique.”⁸ Anti-Japanese sentiment among Koreans had been a longstanding phenomenon since the Japanese invasion in the 1590s led by Hideyoshi Toyotomi of the Chosun Kingdom. These sentiments were strengthened by Japanese encroachment in the late nineteenth century. However, many leading Korean modernizers also looked to Meiji Japan as a model for Korea to follow. Interpreting Korea’s semi-colonization by a non-Western imperial power from the perspective of the social Darwinian core concept of “survival of the fittest,”⁹ many Korean intellectuals and nationalists at the turn of the century saw the modernization process as not just inevitable but also necessary for survival in the cut-throat world of modern geopolitics.

In this sense, the early Korean encounter with the modern could be described as neither pessimistic nor optimistic, but realistic. A “successful” modernization of Meiji Japan posed a national threat to pre-modern Korea, but the model of Meiji Japan paradoxically reinforced the desirability and necessity of modernization. On the verge of national collapse and colonization, this victim of Japanese imperialism accepted the reality that the modern forms of invasion and conquest were to be overcome by the modern power of science, technology and new knowledge. Koreans hated imperialistic international order and colonialism, but they also admired the wealth and power of modern nations. Thus, many reform-minded Korean intellectuals and leaders became devoted to modernization as a path to national revival. However, their efforts ended in failure.

⁸ Cumings, *Korea's Place in the Sun*, 140.

⁹ For a useful recent discussion on Social Darwinism in modern Korea, see V. Tikhonov, *Social Darwinism and Nationalism in Korea the Beginnings (1880s-1910s): “Survival” as an Ideology of Korean Modernity* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2010).

There were three failed reform efforts aimed at modernization before the annexation by Japan. First, a group called the “Enlightenment Party” attempted a failed coup in 1884, known as the Kapsin coup. Members of the party attempted to reform the Confucian Kingdom, the reform plan being modeled on the Meiji reform.¹⁰ The failed coup provided an opportunity for the first Protestant missionary, Horace Allen—an American medical doctor—to establish the first modern hospital in 1885, which is widely acknowledged as the first Protestant missionary enterprise. The first missionaries extended their efforts to establish modern educational institutions, in which many Korean elites were educated and trained as both Christians and modernizers. These elites became leading figures of the second major reform project. Organizing the Independence Club in 1896 inspired by American democracy and civilization, they proposed a programme of national reform for Korea.¹¹ However, this Protestant reform movement was suppressed by the Chosun court with its own top-down reform project. Finally, the last King of the Chosun dynasty, Gojong, made a desperate attempt—known as the Gwangmu Reform¹²—to rehabilitate the five-hundred-year-old dynasty, proclaiming a new empire called the Greater Korean Empire (Daehan Jeguk, 1897-1910) in 1897. This desperate effort was aimed at protecting national sovereignty from Japanese power through a partial modernization of many parts of the nation. Among the reform measures were abolition of the status system, educational modernization, and industrialization. However, the reform was not

¹⁰ See Yöng-Ho Ch'oe, “The Kapsin Coup of 1884: A Reassessment,” *Korean Studies* 6 (1982): 105-24.

¹¹ See Vipin Chandra, *Imperialism, Resistance, and Reform in Late Nineteenth-Century Korea: Enlightenment and the Independence Club* (Berkeley: Center for Korean Studies, Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, Berkeley, 1988).

¹² See Tong-no Kim and John B. Duncan, eds., *Reform and Modernity in the Taehan Empire* (Seoul: Jimoondang, 2006)

successful enough to protect the country from foreign aggression. Eventually, Japanese aggression led to the annexation of Korea in 1910.

Two major factors contributed to the failure of the three reform movements. First, the lack of popular support among Koreans prevented the reform efforts from being successful and effective. Both the Kapsin coup and Independence Club were initiated by a small group of reform-minded elites—one group inspired by the Japanese model and the other by the American model. However, both failed to mobilize the support of the Korean people. The final reform attempt by the dynasty itself was too late and too limited to transform pre-modern society into a modern power. Second, the imperialistic intervention of Japan obstructed any hope of success for internal reforms of the Korean Kingdom.

The Japanese imperial project to colonize Korea made Korean ruling elites and leading nationalists receptive to Protestant forms of Christianity. Fearful of Japanese aggression, the ruling elites made a desperate effort to keep their nation's sovereignty and independence by countering the aggression with the help of missionaries, who were believed to be instrumental in modernization and able to serve as a bridge between Korea and the Western powers, especially the United States. Since the introduction of Protestantism in 1885, Koreans embraced it as a positive force in shaping the modern and as a crucial part of their national survival project. In turn, Protestant missionaries effectively and persuasively represented themselves as pioneers of modernity. Missionaries and the modern religion met the Korean thirst for the modern as mission institutions served as the primary carriers for modern education and modern medicine. So in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Korea, being Christian was often a synonym for being modern.

ii) Christianity and Modernity

During the final years of the nineteenth century that witnessed the fall of Chosun Korea, a neo-Confucian Kingdom, British writer and traveler Isabella Bird-Bishop made a keen observation:

This feeblest of independent kingdoms, rudely shaken out of her sleep of centuries, half frightened and wholly dazed, finds herself confronted with an array of powerful, ambitious, aggressive, and not always over-scrupulous powers, bent, it may be, on overreaching her and each other, forcing her into new paths, ringing with rude hands the knell of time-honoured custom, clamouring for concessions, and bewildering her with reforms, suggestions, and panaceas, of which she sees neither the meaning nor the necessity. And so “The old order changeth, giving place to new.”¹³

She understood “new paths” and “new” order largely in terms of modern international power politics. Yet, in the late nineteenth century the new paths and new order were conditioned and determined by Western modernity, and they were fundamentally epistemological. James Scarth Gale, retiring after 40 years of mission work as a Canadian missionary in Korea, lamented the passing of old Korea in the final chapter of a series of articles on “A History of the Korean People”:

We weep over old Korea. ... Let us glance once more at the Korea that is gone, “the land of the superior man,” as China long ago called her; land of the scholar, land of the book and writing-brush, land of the beautiful vase and polished mirror; land of rarest, choicest fabrics; land of poems and painted pictures; land of the filial son, the devoted

¹³ Isabella L. Bird-Bishop, *Korea & Her Neighbours: A Narrative of Travel, with an Account of the Recent Vicissitudes and Present Position of the Country* (London: John Murray, 1898), 1: 14-5.

wife, the loyal courtier; land of the hermit, the deeply religious seer whose final goal was God.¹⁴

In the same article he rightly points out that the Confucian Kingdom was “a victim, not so much of political agencies, as of the social and intellectual revolution that has come from the West.”¹⁵ The new intellectual paradigm was Western modernity, which revolutionarily transformed thinking, behavior, and the economic life of all Koreans.

It is often argued that many Nordic and Southern European nations, like Sweden and Spain, had taken “different paths” to modernity over “different time frames” compared with leading modern countries like the United Kingdom and France.¹⁶ Yet, the Western European countries, although each went through a different social transformation, had the same epistemological foundation—that is, Western modernity. In contrast, East Asian countries had not so much taken “different paths” in a “different time frame” as gone through epistemological transformations as well as modern political change. A series of gunboat diplomacies—the Opium War in Qing China (1839-1842), the Black Ships of Commodore Matthew Perry in Tokugawa Japan (1853-1854), and the French and American expeditions in Chosun Korea (1860s)—led East Asians largely to face up to and, eventually, accept the Western modern. No one could fail to observe that East Asia in the nineteenth century was transformed more radically and fundamentally than ever before. These transformations were so radical that no area was unaffected, and they brought China and Korea into national crisis. In

¹⁴ J. S. Gale, “A History of the Korean People: Chapter Xxxviii,” *KMF*, September 1927, 196-97.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 196.

¹⁶ Magnus Jerneck, *Different Paths to Modernity: A Nordic and Spanish Perspective* (Lancaster: Nordic Academic, 2005), 16.

contrast with Korea, Japan rapidly and “successfully” transformed itself into a modern imperial power.

The global earthquake caused by modern capitalism and Western imperialism produced the political collapse of pre-modern East Asian states (Qing China, Tokukawa Japan, and Chosun Korea), whose political ideology was neo-Confucianism. The collapse of the Sinocentric neo-Confucian world order meant not just political crisis but also epistemological crisis and vacuum in East Asia, undermining traditional values and the basic understanding of reality. This vacuum was rapidly filled with Western modern epistemology.

The political shift to the modern political hierarchy and the revolutionary epistemological transformation radically changed Koreans’ perceptions of nation, economy, society, and the self, resulting in abrupt breaks from their own traditions. However, this radical and abrupt discontinuity did not mean that Koreans were living in a society totally different from the traditional. Rather, it meant that the modern provided new ways of perceiving the world, new ways of solving old social problems, and new ways of constructing a human society. This new epistemological frame changed ontological as well as political and social meanings.

Pre-modern Korea underwent several dynastic changes. This change was deeply associated with a shift in the political ideology. For example, the Chosun Kingdom (1392-1897) with neo-Confucian political ideology¹⁷ replaced the Koryo Kingdom (918-1388) with Buddhist political ideology.¹⁸ However, the change was not an epistemological shift because Chosun was

¹⁷ For a useful discussion of neo-Confucianism in Chosun Korea, see Martina Deuchler, *The Confucian Transformation of Korea: A Study of Society and Ideology* (Cambridge, Mass.: Council on East Asian Studies Harvard University, 1992); JaHyun Kim Haboush and William Theodore De Bary, eds., *The Rise of Neo-Confucianism in Korea*, Neo-Confucian Studies (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985).

¹⁸ For a fuller discussion of Buddhism in the Koryo dynasty, see Lewis R. Lancaster, Kikun Suh, and Chai-Shin Yu, eds., *Buddhism in Koryŏ : A Royal Religion* (Berkeley, Calif.: Institute of East Asian Studies, Univ. of Calif., 1996);

not fundamentally different from Koryŏ in terms of its epistemological foundations. This partly explains why the dynastic change was relatively smooth and without much violence. In pre-modern Korea, the Chinese philosophy—of which Confucianism is central—had been epistemologically fundamental to Korean thoughts, aesthetics, morality, and rituals. In contrast, the modern transformation starting in the mid-nineteenth century produced not just politically cataclysmic change but also a sudden and radical shift in epistemological underpinnings. No era in Korean history witnessed more revolutionary epistemological shifts than the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Gale recognized the significance of this epistemological shift:

Why does Korea pay this ancient Chinese [Confucius] so deep a meed of gratitude? Because she owed him practically all she had: her civilization, her religion, her social structure, her ranks and offices. All these hung upon the teachings of Confucius. When they were given up in 1894, Korea lost her soul, and by degrees has arrived at the intellectual and social chaos of today. Out of the broken fragments of the present it will take generations to build up as substantial a civilization as that which came down from the Great Master through three millenniums of time.¹⁹

Western modern civilization was both the cause of and remedy for the “intellectual and social chaos” in the late nineteenth century.

In this epistemological crisis, the acceptance of Western civilization was the only option for Koreans. Koreans saw Christianity as the root of Western values and ideas and the very

Sem Vermeersch, *The Power of the Buddhas : The Politics of Buddhism During the Koryŏ Dynasty (918-1392)* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center, 2008). For an introduction to Buddhism in Korea, see Robert E. Buswell, ed. *Currents and Countercurrents: Korean Influences on the East Asian Buddhist Traditions* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2005); The Korean Buddhist Research Institute, ed. *The History and Culture of Buddhism in Korea* (Seoul, Korea: Dongguk University Press, 1993); Lewis R. Lancaster and Chai-Shin Yu, eds., *Introduction of Buddhism to Korea : New Cultural Patterns* (Berkeley, Calif.: Asian Humanities Press, 1989)

¹⁹ J. S. Gale, “A History of the Korean People: Chapter XXX,” *KMF*, December 1926, 255.

embodiment of Western modernity, and not as just one of main intermediaries for channeling Western ideas and values. Koreans' desire to accept Christianity as a modern civilization coincided with and corresponded to the desire of missionaries to teach Western "civilized" life as an essential part of Christian teachings. This correspondence helped the Protestant form of Christianity to be smoothly and enthusiastically received by Koreans. So the conversion of Koreans to Protestantism at the turn of the century meant not just a conversion to a new religion but also a conversion to modernity.²⁰ The conversion was not forced, but neither was it voluntary in the Western individualistic sense. The conversion to Christianity was one of Koreans' desperate efforts to achieve modernity, which characterize the Korean narrative of modernity.

James Huntley Grayson describes the introduction of Protestantism in Korea as "implantation."²¹ However, the Protestant form of Christianity, which was introduced and accepted in the era of modern transformation, was not so much implantation as the advent of an epistemological foundation. When it was introduced in the late nineteenth century, Protestantism was fundamentally connected to Western modernity. Protestant form of Christianity was not just a religious belief system and institution in the modern Western sense, but also represented Western society—teaching and practicing Western modern civil life, political attitudes, and economic orientations.

²⁰ For a useful discussion of this, see Peter van der Veer, ed. *Conversion to Modernities: The Globalization of Christianity*, Zones of Religion (New York: Routledge, 1996); Webb Keane, *Christian Moderns: Freedom and Fetish in the Mission Encounter* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007).

²¹ James Huntley Grayson, *Early Buddhism and Christianity in Korea: A Study in the Implantation of Religion* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1985), 1-15. See also James H Grayson, "The Implantation of Christianity: An Anthropological Examination of the Korean Church," *Transformation: An International Journal of Holistic Mission Studies* 26, no. 3 (2009): 161-73.

2. Literary Review and Theoretical Considerations

i) Three Explanations for the “Success” of Protestantism in Korea

When it was introduced in the late nineteenth century, Protestantism was enthusiastically embraced by Koreans as a crucial part of a new civilization. In the colonial era Protestantism was still an emerging religion and not predominant in the numerical sense. In the post-colonial era, the Western religion steadily, indeed explosively, grew in numbers, and has now become a dominant religion in Korean society in terms of socio-political power—as Buddhism, a Sinicized Indian religion, and Confucianism, a Chinese religion, did centuries ago. Although church growth in Korea faces challenges today, the Protestant church in Korea over its 130-year history has been largely acknowledged as a “success” story in terms of church growth.²² In his 1934 work titled *Church Growth in Korea*, Alfred Washington Wasson noted that “among all modern mission fields Korea stands foremost for the rapidity with which converts have been won and a strong church established.”²³ In *Wildfire: Church Growth in Korea* published in 1966, Roy E. Shearer characterized the church growth as “wildfire.”²⁴ In 1983, Bong Rin Ro and Marlin L. Nelson described the growth of the Korean church as an “explosion.”²⁵ There are many theories about the distinctive popular receptivity of Koreans to Christian religion, but three explanations are worth discussing here.

In the late nineteenth century, when Protestantism was introduced, Korea was not only politically turbulent and chaotic but also religiously unstable. Buddhism had at that time been

²² For example, see David Chung and Kang-nam Oh, *Syncretism: The Religious Context of Christian Beginnings in Korea* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2001), 13ff. See also Timothy S. Lee, “Beleaguered Success : Korean Evangelicalism in the Last Decade of the Twentieth Century,” in *Christianity in Korea*, ed. Robert E. Buswell and Timothy S. Lee (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2006), 330-50.

²³ Alfred Washington Wasson, *Church Growth in Korea* (Concord, N.H.: Rumford press, 1934), 3.

²⁴ Roy E. Shearer, *Wildfire: Church Growth in Korea* (Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1966).

²⁵ Bong-Rin Ro and Marlin L. Nelson, *Korean Church Growth Explosion* (Seoul: Word of Life Press 1983).

suppressed and not yet revived. Confucianism had been gradually declining in terms of its religiosity as well as its ethical norms. The chaotic situation provided favorable conditions for Christianity to set its deep roots in Korean society. Some scholars argue that the syncretic tendency of Korean religious culture—that is, the inherent compatibility of traditional Korean spirituality and Christian faith—is responsible for the successful acceptance of Christianity.²⁶ For example, David Chung argues that Korean indigenous religious values, which are fundamentally shamanistic and have been influenced by Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism, are well “interwoven into the tapestry of” Christian teachings. The spiritual “tapestry,” he concludes, is the fundamental cause of this successful reception of Christianity.²⁷ The syncretic thesis contends that the Korean traditional belief in one supreme being helped Koreans to easily and enthusiastically believe in the Christian God. Indeed, *Hananim*, the Korean indigenous name for the one supreme being, became the standard Korean translation in the Bible for the Christian God. The apostle Paul’s appeal to an “unknown god” in ancient Athens resonates with missionary appeals to Korean concepts of the supreme being. This perspective was advanced by American missionary Homer B. Hulbert, working in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries:

Strange to say, the purest religious notion which the Korean to-day possesses is the belief in Hananim, a being entirely unconnected with either of the imported cults and as far removed from the crude nature-worship. This word Hananim is compounded of the words “heaven” (sky) and “master,” and is the pure Korean counterpart of the Chinese

²⁶ See, for instance, Grayson, *Early Buddhism and Christianity in Korea*; Kyong-jae Kim, *Christianity and the Encounter of Asian Religions: Method of Correlation, Fusion of Horizons, and Paradigm Shifts in the Korean Grafting Process* (Zoetermeer: Uitgeverij Boekencentrum, 1994).

²⁷ Chung, *Syncretism: The Religious Context of Christian Beginnings in Korea*, 90.

word “Lord of Heaven.” The Koreans all consider this being to be the Supreme Ruler of the universe. He is entirely separated from and outside the circle of the various spirits and demons that infest all nature. Considered from this standpoint, the Koreans are strictly monotheists, and the attributes and powers ascribed to this being are in such consonance with those of Jehovah that the foreign [Protestant] missionaries have almost universally accepted the term for use in teaching Christianity.²⁸

In this view, the enthusiastic receptivity among Koreans to Christianity was facilitated partly by religious syncretism in Korea. However, this syncretic tendency is not unique in Korean society: it is in some sense universal. Even putting aside many Christian missions in non-Western societies, Western Christianity itself developed through its own syncretism—for instance, the syncretism of early Christian theology and ancient Greek philosophy. Furthermore, this explanation fails to see the more fundamental historical setting in which religious syncretism and interreligious dialogue are unavoidable and inevitable.

Much research on Korean Studies in religion stresses the importance of religious factors in the growth and spread of Christianity. For instance, Grayson argues that “we cannot reduce the story of Korean Christians down to simple social, economic, and political motivations.”²⁹ Religious motivations and aspirations as an irreducible core, he concludes, are a main factor in the success of Korean Christianity. This position rightly criticizes sociological reductionism of religious history, but fails to see the larger context in which Protestantism emerged in the late nineteenth century as an advanced civilization, not just as a new religion. Furthermore, such a

²⁸ Homer B. Hulbert, *The Passing of Korea* (New York: Doubleday Page & Company, 1906), 404.

²⁹ James Huntley Grayson, “A Quarter-Millennium of Christianity in Korea,” in *Christianity in Korea*, ed. Robert E. Buswell and Timothy S. Lee (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2006), 7.

perspective fails to see the way in which the new modern term “religion,” which Protestantism represented and embodied, interacted with politics, economy, and eventually the new modern epistemology.

The second theory for the widespread reception of Christianity notes that Christianity, especially Protestantism, played a significant role in Korean nationalism—namely in resisting the Empire of Japan, a non-Western, non-Christian imperial power.³⁰ Introduced in the wake of political turmoil of the nineteenth century, Protestantism readily aligned itself with the Korean nation and the Korean people, resisting Japanese encroachment upon the Korean peninsula. In this political crisis, xenophobia and anti-foreignism in Korea were directed towards the Japanese more than towards Westerners or Christianity, while anti-foreignism in contemporary China had taken the form of anti-Western and anti-Christian movements, as in the case of the Boxer Rebellion (1899-1901).

Above all, nothing better exemplifies the leading role played by Protestantism in Korean nationalism than the March First Movement in 1919, a national independence movement protesting Japanese colonial rule.³¹ Sixteen out of thirty-three signatories in the Declaration of

³⁰ See, for instances, Kyong-bae Min, *Hanguk Gidok Gyohoesa: Hanguk Minjok Gyohoe Hyeongseong Gwajeongsa* (Seoul: Yeonse Daehakgyo Chulpanbu, 2007); Manyeol Lee, *Hanguk Gidokgyowa Minjoguisik: Hanguk Gidokgyosa Yeongu Nongo* (Seoul: Jisiksaneopsa, 1991); Gysik Chang, *Iljeha Hanguk Gidokgyo Minjokjuui Yeongu* (Seoul: Hyeon, 2001); Chijun Noh, *Iljeha Hanguk Gidokgyo Minjok Undong Yeongu* (Seoul: Hanguk Gidokgyo Yeoksa Yeonguso, 1993); Hangukgidokgyo Sahoemunjeyeuwon ed. *Minjokjuuiwa Gidokgyo* (Seoul: Minjungsa 1981).

³¹ For an introduction to the March First Movement, see Dae-yeol Ku, *Korea under Colonialism: The March First Movement and Anglo-Japanese Relations* (Seoul, Korea: Seoul Computer Press, 1985), 37-98; Jai-Keun Choi, *The Korean Church under Japanese Colonialism* (Seoul: Jimmundang, 2007), 67-96. See also Fred A. McKenzie, *Korea's Fight for Freedom* (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1920), 239-49; Hugh Heung-wo Cynn, *The Rebirth of Korea: The Reawakening of the People, Its Causes, and the Outlook* (New York: The Abingdon Press, 1920), 15-60. For the colonialist description of the March First Movement, see *Annual Report, 1918-1921*, 157-60.

Independence were Protestants.³² This is a prominent example of how a foreign religion became nationalized and Koreanized in a relatively short period, becoming deeply involved in the national liberation movement.

The Korean “success” in Christian mission history is often compared with “the general failure of Christianity in Japan.”³³ Mark Mullins argues that the widespread reception of Christianity in Korea is due to Christians’ deep involvement in the Korean national independence movement. On the other hand, the slow growth of the Japanese church, he concludes, is ascribed to the widespread belief among the Japanese that “the source of Christianity was ... the source of the greatest threat to Japanese autonomy.”³⁴ David Martin provides a similar interpretation of the difference of church growth between Japan and Korea. “The Korean experience is,” he claims, “in certain respects, the obverse of the Japanese; in other respects the two societies are very similar.” He notes that Christian nations like the United States were “liberators” to Koreans, while these nations were “rivals” to the Empire of Japan.³⁵

However, the interpretation of “success” or “failure” of church growth in terms of nationalism has significant limitations. First of all, this analysis does not explain the “explosive” church growth in post-colonial Korea, especially from the 1960s to the 1980s. In retrospect, the

³² Of the forty eight significant leaders of the movement, including thirty-three signatories, twenty one were Protestants, nineteen were member of Choendokyo (a Korean indigenous religion), two were Buddhists, and six were unconnected with either Protestantism, Chyondokyo, or Buddhism. See Kiyoshi Nakarai, *Relations between the Government and Christianity in Chosen* (n. p., 1921), 11-2; C. I. Eugene Kim, “Nationalist Movements and Students,” in *Korea's Response to Japan: The Colonial Period 1910-1945*, ed. C. I. Eugene Kim and Doretha Ellen Mortimore (Kalamazoo, Michigan: Center for Korean Studies, Western Michigan University, 1977), 269-74.

³³ Mark Mullins, *Christianity Made in Japan: A Study of Indigenous Movements* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1998), 170.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 171.

³⁵ David Martin, *Tongues of Fire: The Explosion of Protestantism in Latin America* (Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 1990), 155-56.

pre-colonial and colonial periods saw only modest numerical growth, although church growth in the colonial period provided a solid foundation for the rapid and explosive growth in the post-colonial period. Furthermore, in the colonial period following the March First Movement of 1919, the Protestant church was not necessarily anti-Japanese, and the colonial power was not always anti-Christian. Colonialists and Protestants were very cooperative in many areas, promoting colonial political virtues, economic ethic, and moralism. This amicable relationship significantly contributed to church growth in the 1920s and 1930s.

In sum, the national thesis does not fully explain the “success” of Korean Protestantism, although it gives a good account of the way in which the Korean church had been Koreanized. The relations between Korean Christianity and the colonial power were complex. This complexity cannot be entirely understood without explaining the complex relationships between the Christian modern and the colonial modern.

Finally, much research on the missionary enterprise in Korea sees Korean Christianity in general, and Protestantism in particular, as “an agency of modernization,”³⁶ and argues that the modernizing role of Protestantism was a major cause of church growth.³⁷ Indeed, Christian missionaries—particularly Protestant missionaries—opened the first modern schools and hospitals, and Korean Christians in the colonial era made up a disproportionately large percentage of the population of well-educated people. In 1932, there were fifteen higher

³⁶ Andrew Eungi Kim, “South Korea,” in *Christianities in Asia*, ed. Peter C. Phan (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 223.

³⁷ See Kirsteen Kim, “Christianity’s Role in the Modernization and Revitalization of Korean Society in the Twentieth-Century,” *International Journal of Public Theology* 4, no. 2 (2010): 212-36; Won Gue Lee, “A Sociological Study on the Factors of Church Growth and Decline in Korea,” *Korea Journal* 39, no. 4 (1999): 235-69; Byong-suh Kim, “The Explosive Growth of the Korean Church Today: A Sociological Analysis,” *International Review of Mission* 74, no. 293 (1985): 59-72; Yong-Shin Park, “Protestant Christianity and Its Place in a Changing Korea,” *Social Compass* 47, no. 4 (2000): 507-24.

education institutions in colonial Korea, four of which were Christian schools. The four Christian institutions enrolled about 35% of all Korean students studying in higher educational institutions in the early 1930s,³⁸ when Korean Protestants numbered around 250,000 or only 1.3% of the estimated population of 19.6 million.³⁹

The modernization theory suggests that Korean aspirations for modernization account for the eager reception of Christianity as a modern religion, emphasizing the importance of socio-economic factors in the development of the Christian movement. Yet, the theory does not sufficiently explain how the modernizing role of Protestantism was conditioned by a larger frame, modernity, and how the Protestant form of Christianity was connected to Western modernity.

These three theories put their main focus on numerical growth, exploring the cause of church growth and celebrating the “success” of the Protestant movement in Korea. Quantitative growth is an important element in understanding the role and impact of Christianity in Korean society, but it is more important to see a fundamental condition that made it possible for church growth in terms of its membership to have had such a transformative impact on Korean society. This is modernity as a global normative frame, which authorized Western missionaries to command a dominant position in the formation of modernity in the modern mission field, and Korean Protestants to take the initiative in forming Korean modernity. Thus, the extraordinary and unique phenomenon of the Christian movement in Korea needs to be understood through the interaction of modernity and Christianity.

³⁸ H. H. Underwood, “College Education in Korea,” *KMYB*, 1932, 31.

³⁹ These figures are calculated by the author based on statistics compiled by the colonial government. See *GSRS*, 1930, 49-57.

All three explanations—religious, political, and sociological—have their own strengths and shortcomings, but all of them overlook the complex relationship between Christianity and modernity in Korea. Modernity as an epistemological category is a fundamental condition that facilitated spiritual affinity or syncretism, the Christian contribution to Korean nationalism, and the role of churches as agents of modernization.

ii) Definition of Modernity and Four Conceptual Distinctions in the Korean Context

Every society has experienced a different timing and periodization of the beginning and progress of the modern. Koreans in the early nineteenth century saw and understood the world, the cosmos, the economy, and politics from neo-Confucian epistemic foundations, while contemporary Western people were transforming themselves through the industrial revolution, liberal democracy, and modern imperialism. From the mid-nineteenth century onward, the Western modern caused anomie, chaos, and desperation in East Asia, and at the same time dictated a new modern order, a new normative frame, and new modern values like freedom, equality, and democracy. The universal triumph of the West in the late nineteenth century made both inevitable and desirable the nation-state, free trade, industrial development, and modern democracy. The modern frame largely determined how Koreans perceived the world, evaluated their lives, and responded to the challenges they faced.

Modernity is not a chronological category. It does not mean so much a time difference or the nearness to today as it does an epistemological difference, which distinguishes the modern from the pre-modern. This study sees modernity as an epistemological category

characterized by Enlightenment, industrialization, democracy, “a secular age,”⁴⁰ and the interaction between imperialism and colonial resistance.⁴¹ This new category both presupposes and provides many new modern concepts, like “science,” “nation-state,” “economy,” “society,” “self,” “freedom,” and “religion.” These new terminologies necessitated new translations. The “translingual practice” is not so much the introduction of new knowledge as an epistemological transformation and revolution, which constituted “translated modernity.”⁴²

Every society has distinctive features of its own modern formation as conditioned by a global process of modernity. Four conceptual distinctions are crucial for understanding the formation of modernity in colonial Korea, and help clarify the nature and features of modernity in the Korean context: 1) the modern as a condition and as a normative frame, 2) the Western and the modern, 3) modernization and modernity, and 4) the colonial and the modern.

a) The Modern as a Condition vs. the Modern as a Normative Frame

First, it is important to distinguish the modern as a set of conditions from the modern as a normative frame although it is very difficult to draw the boundary between the two areas. The modern is an irresistible, irreversible, and global condition that left few social sectors intact, transforming all kinds of human activity including thoughts, behaviors, and sensibilities. No human area, including religion, politics, economic life, or culture, could escape from and be independent of this inexorable force.

⁴⁰ Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007).

⁴¹ Enrique Dussel, “Eurocentrism and Modernity,” in *The Postmodernism Debate in Latin America*, ed. John Beverley, Michael Aronna, and José Oviedo (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995), 75.

⁴² Lydia He Liu, *Translingual Practice: Literature, National Culture, and Translated Modernity—China, 1900-1937* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1995).

In his seminal works *A Secular Age* and *Sources of the Self*, Charles Taylor explores how the modern framework in the West arose and developed.⁴³ Western modernity has formed within its own historical process, as several sources of the process have been conflicting and interacting. However, Western modernity, as a historical product of the West, has been unilaterally and by force imposed through colonialism and imperialism on the non-West, including East Asia. Thus, the modern itself is not experienced as a historical option to the non-West, but as a forced condition. Only within the condition could and should non-Westerners make a choice. The formation of the modern in Korea has been made within this global condition. The new framework has reconstructed and reconfigured state, society, and self in modern Korea, deconstructing and destroying the fabric of traditional society. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the Western frame constrained and guided, although did not determine, the formation of Korean modernity.

On the other hand, the modern as an epistemological category has a normative power, providing a set of norms and values: freedom, equality, democracy, the market system, and the autonomous self, just to name a few. The modern normative frame developed in the modern West regulates and reformulates the non-West. It shapes and authorizes many normative principles like political virtues or economic ethics. The normative has two dimensions: emancipatory and ideological. When it sacrifices and fabricates freedom, justice, and democracy for other interests—for example, the justification of colonialism in the name of

⁴³ Taylor, *A Secular Age*; Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1989).

“advanced” civilization—the modern normative frame is ideological.⁴⁴ However, modernity as an epistemological system also has liberating potential, even though the ideological dimension has assumed the dominant position. The ideological side is inextricably tied up with the emancipatory, and this link often generates self-contradictions of modernity, which is a distinctive feature of modernity.

The normative dimension of the Western modern is often justified and legitimated by Western emancipating experiences and struggles (like the American and French Revolutions) for freedom, equality, and democracy. However, these experiences very often have been employed to justify and legitimize Western oppression of the non-West. Nevertheless, it is also true that the Western experience of emancipation provides a template for global emancipatory movements. The emancipatory narrative offers a self-critical understanding of modernity itself, embodying the liberation of those who suffer under the oppressive structure of economic exploitation, racism, sexism, and imperialism. In the modern world, a resistance to modernity is itself a modern product. The human aspiration for liberation and emancipation is basic and fundamental to human beings. This aspiration in modern society has been expressed and realized in the modern form.

b) The Western vs. the Modern

Second, the modern and the Western have been fundamentally inseparable but not identical. Western modernity is dominant but not universal. Western modernity, as a regional

⁴⁴ One theorist who unveiled this ideological side of modernity is Michel Foucault. Foucault argues that “discipline” is central to modernity. Disciplined and self-censored modern human beings have little power to be emancipatory and liberating. See Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. (New York: Vintage Books, 1979). For a Foucauldian analysis discussed in Korean on the Japanese colonial power, see Chong Kun-sik ed. *Kundae Chuch'e Wa Singminji Kyuyul Kwollyok*. (Soul-si: Munhwa kwahaksa, 2000).

phenomenon, has had a global impact, but it is only a constituent part of modernity. As Enrique Dussel well puts it, “Modernity is, in fact, a European phenomenon, but one constituted in a dialectical relation with a non-European alterity that is its ultimate content.”⁴⁵ Triumphant Western powers set a modern frame to which any non-Western society had no choice but to respond. Japanese modernity, Korean modernity, and Chinese modernity have been formed and shaped in dialectical relation primarily with Western modernity, by emulating, absorbing, and struggling against it. However, modernity itself is much more than the Western frame. Modernity was initiated by the internal dynamics of Western society as a self-contained entity, but has reformulated itself through interactions between West and non-West, among Western nations themselves, or among non-Western nations themselves.

Unlike many Western colonies, in which the Western was seen as almost equal to the modern, Koreans at the turn of the twentieth century saw substantial differences between the modern and the Western. Imperial Japan as a colonial power was a modern, but not Western, society and nation. Thus, the tacit assumptions among Western missionaries that the modern was equivalent to the Western were significantly challenged by the remarkable modernization of Meiji Japan. As modern Japan demonstrated the possibility of modernization without full Westernization, retaining national identity, many modern-oriented people throughout Asia crowded around Tokyo to learn about the Japanese experience and achievements. Among them were Chinese reformers Youwei Kang (1858-1927) and Qichao Liang (1878-1925), Chinese

⁴⁵ Dussel, “Eurocentrism and Modernity,” 65.

nationalist leader Yat-sen Sun (1866-1925), Korean leader in the Enlightenment Party Ok-Kyun Kim (1851-94), and Indian revolutionary Rash Behari Bose (1886-1945).⁴⁶

Western modernity is not monolithic and never has been. It has consisted of multifaceted, complex, and even contradicting ideas and thoughts. The complex, contradictory, and complicated features of Western modernity have been expressed as various forms of modernity: liberal modernity, capitalist modernity, Marxist modernity, and post-modernity. These diverse sources and different traditions have offered various interpretations of Western modern values like freedom, equality, democracy, and human rights. However, despite its multiplicity of modern voices, Western modernity has developed an overlapping consensus upon a common epistemological frame. Taylor makes this point in his book *Sources of the Self*. Despite profound disagreement in the modern West over “the constitutive goods,” Taylor notes, there is a “general agreement” in the tradition of the modern West: “We as inheritors of [the Western moral imperatives] feel particularly strongly the demand for universal justice and beneficence, are peculiarly sensitive to the claims of equality, feel the demands to freedom and self-rule as axiomatically justified, and put a very high priority on the avoidance of death and suffering.”⁴⁷

As Western modernity is accepted as a historical paradigm that originated and has been developed in the modern West—a geographically and epistemologically single entity, with diverse philosophical and political traditions—some East Asian scholars interpret the modernity that emerged in East Asia in terms of the impact of Confucian traditions on the region in the

⁴⁶ Sven Saaler, “Pan-Asianism in Modern Japanese History: Overcoming the Nation, Creating a Region, Forging an Empire,” in *Pan-Asianism in Modern Japanese History: Colonialism, Regionalism and Borders*, ed. Sven Saaler and J. Victor Koschmann (London: Routledge, 2007), 6, 9.

⁴⁷ Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity*, 495.

modern period. Calling this “East Asian modernity,” they note that Confucian morality and values are central to East Asian industrialism and society.⁴⁸ East Asian modernity here, like Western modernity in the “North Atlantic world,”⁴⁹ is viewed as a transnational modern phenomenon emerging in East Asia, a single geographical and cultural sphere.

Yet, many studies have been carried out in terms of national groups as a research unit, such as Korean modernity, Chinese modernity, or Japanese modernity. Such research has drawn largely upon what Ulrich Beck and Edgar Grande call “methodological nationalism.” Beck and Grande argue that methodological nationalism would “lose [its] epistemological monopoly position” in the “second modernity,” which they claim characterizes post-industrial society; they offer an alternative approach, “methodological cosmopolitanism.”⁵⁰ As they suggest, no nation today is an impervious self-contained whole. As South Korea today has been rapidly and deeply modernized and industrialized, globalization and multiculturalism have become not just a reality but also a modern norm. Transnational institutions, multicultural trends and international trade have radically transformed Korea today. Thus, strict methodological nationalism is not relevant to analyzing Korean society today.

However, as far as the era that this study takes interest in—that is, the colonial period—is concerned, Korean modernity was shaped and defined primarily in terms of Korean ethnic and national features. Although it is not and has never been a self-contained whole, Korea has been characterized by a high degree of homogeneity in terms of language, ethnicity, cultural

⁴⁸ See Wei-ming Tu, ed. *Confucian Traditions in East Asian Modernity: Moral Education and Economic Culture in Japan and the Four Mini-Dragons* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1996); Wei-ming Tu, “Multiple Modernities: A Preliminary Inquiry into the Implications of East Asian Modernity,” in *Culture Matters: How Values Shape Human Progress*, ed. Samuel P. Huntington and Lawrence E. Harrison (New York: Basic Books, 2000), 256-66.

⁴⁹ Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 21.

⁵⁰ Ulrich Beck and Edgar Grande, “Varieties of Second Modernity: The Cosmopolitan Turn in Social and Political Theory and Research,” *The British journal of sociology* 61, no. 3 (2010): 426-7.

commonalities, and historical continuity.⁵¹ This historically constructed and shaped homogeneity was reinforced by the foreign aggression in the late nineteenth century, which became an external condition strengthening Korean nationalism and Korean identity. Koreans in the colonial era were often united by the shared experience of colonial exploitation, but the shared experience did not necessarily make Koreans into a unified whole, partly because of the classical divide-and-rule tactics of the colonial regime, and partly because of the diversity of interests based on gender, religion, and class, which is an inherent feature of the modern. Nevertheless, Korean ethnic identity and an ethnic tie as a single national community were reinforced under Japanese colonial rule, largely for two reasons. First, Japanese colonial power discriminated against and exploited Koreans, defining them based upon ethnicity and language. Koreans under colonial rule were increasingly united as an ethnic community by the growing discrimination based on ethnicity and language, and the Korean national consciousness was strengthened by the way in which Koreans were discriminated against and unjustly treated. Second, Korean national identity was further reinforced by how Japan defined Japaneseness, to which *Nihonjinron*⁵² (the theory of Japanese uniqueness) and Shinto as a Japanese ethnic religion were central. When they ethnically defined Japaneseness, *Nihonjinron* and Shinto strengthened the Japanese ethnic identity as superior, and at the same time stigmatized colonial subjects in the Japanese empire, such as Koreans, as inferior.

To sum up, the historical homogeneity among Koreans and their shared experiences of oppression under colonial rule combined to contribute to the rise of the Korean modern

⁵¹ For a useful discussion on the homogeneity of Korean society, see Gregory Henderson, *Korea, the Politics of the Vortex* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968), 11-55.

⁵² For a critical review on *Nihonjinron*, see Harumi Befu, *Hegemony of Homogeneity: An Anthropological Analysis of "Nihonjinron"* (Melbourne: Trans Pacific Press 2001).

national consciousness, which was central to the formation of Korean modernity. Nevertheless, it is important to note here that various forms of modernity in Korean history have constituted Korean modernity—the colonial, Christian, liberal, or Marxist forms of modernity. These non-national forms of modernity further complicate the term “Korean modernity.”

c) Modernization vs. Modernity

An underlying driving force throughout modern Korean history is modernization. It has taken different forms in different historical stages: *civilization-enlightenment* (*munmyeong-gaehwa*, in Korean) at the turn of the twentieth century and in the colonial era, industrialization in the post-colonial era from 1960s to the 1980s, and globalization since the 1990s. In colonial Korea, modernization had three dimensions: colonization, Westernization, and Japanization. Modernization on the Japanese Archipelago largely meant Westernization with Japanese characteristics, but in colonial Korea it meant Japanization along with Westernization. Both Westernization and Japanization were justified in the name of advanced civilization. Yet, above all, Westernization and Japanization in colonial Korea were motivated and engineered by colonization. The overarching ideology incorporated partly Westernization and partly Japanization, though the two processes are not easily distinguishable. This politically engineered process is often conceptualized as “colonial modernity.”

Recent scholarship in the area of Korean Studies has rekindled interest in “colonial modernity” as part of attempts to rewrite Korean history in terms of the contribution of Japanese rule to the modernization of Korea, and in so doing to refute the national paradigm of

Korean historiography. One of the most important works is *Colonial Modernity in Korea*.⁵³ The book's contributors criticize the national paradigm for its "simplistic binary" of the resisting Korean nation versus the oppressive Japanese colonial state.⁵⁴ Calling for an inclusive pluralist approach to the colonial period, the book focuses on the complex interactions among colonialism, nationalism, and modernity. It views "the triangular field" of "colonialism, modernity, and nationalism" as three "interlocking" and "mutually reinforcing frames."⁵⁵ This frame of colonial modernity has been widely echoed among many scholars and researchers in the field of the colonial history in Korea.

It is true that this work helps many researchers to see the complex and diverse aspects of colonial rule. However, the book displays several theoretical shortcomings. First, it assumes that the modern in colonial Korea was monopolized by the colonial power, viewing colonial Korea as if it were cut off from Western influence and contained solely in the Japanese sphere. However, Korean modernity under colonial rule had another major source: Christian modernity, which was initiated, represented, and embodied by Western missionaries. Missionaries and their mission institutions served as a gateway to the modern through which Koreans could make direct contact with Western society, Western knowledge, and Western modernity. Many prominent Korean national leaders at that time were significantly influenced by Protestantism as a modern religion, and by its missionaries and modern institutions, and some of them

⁵³ Gi-Wook Shin and Michael Edson Robinson, eds., *Colonial Modernity in Korea* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center, 1999). See also Hae-dong Yun, *Sikminji Geundae Ui Paereodokseu* (Seoul: Hyumeoniseuteu, 2007).

⁵⁴ Gi-Wook Shin and Michael Edson Robinson, "Introduction: Rethinking Colonial Korea," in *Colonial Modernity in Korea*, ed. Shin and Robinson, 4.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 4-5.

received sponsorship from missionaries and had the opportunity to study in and experience the West (primarily the United States).

Second, the “triangular field” fails to consider modernity as an overarching framework in which the colonial and the national were conditioned, regulated, and structured. Japanese modernity and its colonial version, colonial modernity, were not entirely different from Western modernity, though each had its own distinctiveness. The Japanese modern was framed and conditioned by Western modernity, and the colonial modern was doubly conditioned by both Japanese modernity and Western modernity. Thus, the meaning and location of colonial modernity cannot be properly understood without considering Western modernity and its missionary version, Christian modernity. The book’s narrow focus on colonial modernity obscures the complex interaction among missionaries, colonialists, and Koreans in the formation of modernity in Korea.

Finally, the contributors to the book, challenging the nationalist frame, overstate the positive aspects of colonial modernization. They basically view modernization, whether it is colonial or not, as desirable and favorable without deeply considering the underside of this process. The colonial modernity position has much in common with modernization theory, a dominant concept prevalent in the 1950s and 1960s.⁵⁶ Both contend that economic development is fundamentally crucial to modernization and that modernization is critical to modern progress. The colonial modernity position emphasizes the continuity between colonial modernization and post-colonial state-led economic development, or “development

⁵⁶ Jürgen Kocka, “Multiple Modernities and Negotiated Universals,” in *Reflections on Multiple Modernities: European, Chinese, and Other Interpretations*, ed. Dominic Sachsenmaier, Jens Riedel, and S. N. Eisenstadt (Boston: Brill, 2002), 120. For a study applying modernization theory in Asia, see Robert Neelly Bellah, ed. *Religion and Progress in Modern Asia* (New York: Free Press, 1965).

dictatorship,”⁵⁷ and argues that colonial modernization and industrialization provided a favorable structural condition for the rapid economic growth of South Korea in the 1960s and 1970s.⁵⁸

The modernization position is theoretically based upon a Weberian thesis that religious or cultural values are essential to the development of capitalism or economic growth.⁵⁹ Two versions are prominent in the Korean context. The first is the Christian version, which argues that the Protestant form of Christianity in Korea as an “agency of modernization” made a major contribution to Korean modernization and economic growth, as we examined earlier. Second, the Confucian version of the Weberian thesis argues that Confucianism in East Asia has been “functionally equivalent to Protestantism in Western societies.”⁶⁰ The Confucian version has served, in the Korean context in particular and in the East Asian context in general, as both a blaming theory and *ex post* glorification. In the late nineteenth century, Weber blamed Confucian values and morals as the main cause of underdevelopment of China in particular and East Asia in general.⁶¹ However, the economic success of East Asian countries after the Second World War has led many observers to turn the Weberian theme upside down, not so much discarding it as revising it, so as to explain an East Asian phenomenon in the second half of

⁵⁷ For a fuller discussion of “development dictatorship” in South Korea, see Byeong-cheon Lee, ed. *Developmental Dictatorship and the Park Chung-Hee Era: The Shaping of Modernity in the Republic of Korea* (Paramus, N.J.: Homa & Sekey Books, 2006).

⁵⁸ See, for instance, Carter J. Eckert, *Offspring of Empire: The Koch'ang Kims and the Colonial Origins of Korean Capitalism, 1876-1945* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1991).

⁵⁹ Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, trans. Talcott Parsons (London; Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1989).

⁶⁰ Seok-Choon Lew, Woo-Young Choi, and Hye Suk Wang, “Confucian Ethics and the Spirit of Capitalism in Korea: The Significance of Filial Piety,” *Journal of East Asian Studies* 11, no. 2 (2011): 178. See also Tu, ed. *Confucian Traditions in East Asian Modernity*; Chang Chan Sup, “The Confucian Capitalism: Impact of Culture and the Management System on Economic Growth in South Korea,” *Journal of Third World Studies* 15, no. 2 (1998).

⁶¹ Max Weber, *The Religion of China: Confucianism and Taoism*, trans. Hans H. Gerth (New York: Free Press, 1951), 226-49.

twentieth century. The Weberian thesis now praises Confucian values and cultural underpinnings in East Asia as the main cause of the economic success of East Asia, although the same values a century ago were blamed for impediments to modernization. The Weberian thesis is insightful when it gives an elaborated analysis of the complex relations between religious values and economic, social modernization. However, it is also dangerously misleading when specific religious or cultural values are conveniently analyzed as either a culprit for failure or a main cause of success of modernization, whether the value system is “Tokugawa religion,”⁶² the Protestant work ethic, Confucian values, or even Shamanism.⁶³ The convenient selection leads to failure to see how the overarching frame of the modern—that is, modernity—transforms and reconfigure religious or cultural values, whether they are traditional or Western in origin, into civic virtues, public morality, or an economic ethic.

Both modernization theory and the colonial modernity position, focusing mainly on modernization and industrialization, fail to see the differences between modernization as a hegemonic political ideology and modernity as an epistemological category. Instead, by distinguishing between modernity and modernization, this study critically evaluates the distinctive features of Christian modernity represented by Western missionaries and of colonial modernity managed by the colonial state. This involves a third conceptual distinction that this dissertation employs to clarify the definition of modernity.

Modernization is not just a historical process but also a political project. The modern project is not a self-regulating process—the project was elaborated on, initiated, and controlled

⁶² Robert Neelly Bellah, *Tokugawa Religion the Cultural Roots of Modern Japan* (New York: Free Press, 1985).

⁶³ For example, see Laurel Kendall, “Korean Shamans and the Spirits of Capitalism,” *American Anthropologist* 98, no. 3 (1996). See also Eungi Andrew Kim, “Christianity, Shamanism, and Modernization in South Korea,” *Cross Currents* 50, no. 1 (2000).

by a modern state with a strong political intention. The modernization process as political ideology is a politically and socially motivated and engineered process. Modernization is concerned more with an artificial and arbitrary process initiated and enforced primarily by the modern nation-state. On the other hand, modernity is an epistemological framework that makes the modernizing process inevitable and desirable, and at the same time provides a critical and reflective frame on the process. Though modernization is carefully and comprehensively managed and controlled by a modern bureaucratic government, modernity itself is not something that can be controlled and managed. Modernization with strong political intention and orientation has very often created unintended consequences and unexpected results, sowing self-contradicting seeds in a modern society. These self-contradicting consequences have become a crucial part of modernity. Put simply, modernity is not teleological or self-regulating; rather it ceaselessly reconfigures itself by incorporating its self-contradictions.

d) The Colonial vs. the Modern

Finally, the Japanese colonial power has two dimensions: the colonial and the modern. Many confuse the violence of the modern and that of the colonial. Most Korean nationalist scholars attribute the evils, suffering, and violence inflicted by the colonial regime on Koreans under colonial rule only to Japanese colonialism. It is true that Japanese colonialism brought unspeakable evils and violence to Koreans, such as the “conspiracy case,”⁶⁴ the Jeamli

⁶⁴ For an observance of the issue by missionaries, see Arthur Judson Brown, *The Korean Conspiracy Case* (Northfield, Mass: Northfield Press, 1912). See also Fred A. McKenzie, *Korea's Fight for Freedom* (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1920), 236-37.

Massacre,⁶⁵ “comfort women,”⁶⁶ (the victims of its wartime sexual enslavement), forced labor, forced draft into the Japanese military, and lethal human experimentation undertaken by the Imperial Japanese Army.⁶⁷ However, such blame often overlooks the underside of the modern itself, assuming that the modern is desirable and the colonial is bad. The violence under Japanese rule was not only colonial but also modern in terms of its characteristics and origin.

As Koreans were victimized by modern violence, the Japanese people themselves had not been exempt from it. Many innocent Japanese suffered from modern violence, the notorious example being Japanese totalitarianism, a modern violent phenomenon, in the 1930s and the first half of the 1940s.⁶⁸ Both Koreans and Japanese suffered from modern violence, whose cause is forced capitalist development, totalitarian political mobilization, or educational indoctrination. Nevertheless, the suffering and violence in the first half of the twentieth century was more acute for Koreans. Colonial subjects shouldered the double burden of modern violence in general and colonial exploitation in particular. Coloniality, a constitutive element of modernity, maximized the violent side of the modern, oppressed the emancipatory values of modernity, and disguised colonial ideological rule as beneficiary.

⁶⁵ W. Schofield Frank, “The Massacre of Chai-Amm-Ni [Jeamli]. Report of Some Atrocities Committed by the Japanese Military and Police in Suppressing the Korean Nationalists,” in *Ganghanjaeneun Horangicheoreom Yakhanjaeneun Bidulgicheoreom: Seukopildeu Baksa Jaryojip*, ed. Seungtae Kim and Jin Yu (Seoul: Seouldaehakgyo Chulpanmunhwawon 2012), 529-35.

⁶⁶ For a fuller discussion of “comfort women,” see Young-Sook Shin and Cho Hye-Ran, “On the Characteristics and Special Nature of the Korean ‘Military Comfort Women’ under Japanese Rule,” *Korea Journal* 36 (1996); George L. Hicks, *The Comfort Women: Japan’s Brutal Regime of Enforced Prostitution in the Second World War* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1995). See also Chunghee Sarah Soh, *The Comfort Women: Sexual Violence and Postcolonial Memory in Korea and Japan* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008).

⁶⁷ See Hanminjokmunhwagyoryuhyeophoe, ed. *Ilbongwandonggun 731 Budae Saengche Silheom Jeunggeo Jaryojip* (Seoul: Hanminjokmunhwagyoryuhyeophoe, 2009). See also Tsuneishi Keiichi, “Unit 731 and the Japanese Imperial Army’s Biological Warfare Program,” in *Japan’s Wartime Medical Atrocities: Comparative Inquiries in Science, History, and Ethics*, ed. Jing-Bao Nie (New York, NY: Routledge, 2010), 23-30.

⁶⁸ For a useful discussion of the issue, see Richard H. Mitchell, *Thought Control in Prewar Japan* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1976); Elise K. Tipton, *The Japanese Police State: The Tokkô in Interwar Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1990).

In the Korean historiography over colonial rule, one of the big debates is whether colonization by Japan contributed modern development or modernization, or whether the colonial regime was primarily exploitative, impoverishing the Korean people.⁶⁹ However, the binary analysis of development and exploitation is misleading in understanding a colonial society. Colonialism is inherently exploitative, but also gives room for modern development. Exploitation is not incompatible with modernization. In colonial Korea, there is no distinct boundary between modernization and colonization, two processes under modern colonial rule. Colonial rule, unlike conventional nationalistic arguments, did not inhibit modernization but rather facilitated it, although colonial modernization was characterized by colonial subjugation, oppressive violence, and ideological justification. Modern colonial rule engendered a paradoxical situation in which the colonized were both victims of colonial oppression and disciples of modernization. Exploitation and development are not mutually exclusive in the modernizing process. To put it simply, the binary analysis fails to see the complex relation of exploitation and development in colonial rule. Thus, the focus of discussion should be shifted to why colonial rule requires colonial modernization. Modern development in the Japanese colony was crucial for legitimizing colonial rule both domestically and internationally. The colonial subjects in Korea—many of whom were yearning for modernization—followed colonial rule as far as the colonial regime improved everyday life in the name of modern civilization and modern progress. On the other hand, Western modern powers recognized Japanize colonial

⁶⁹ For a debate on the issue, see Stephan Haggard, David Kang, and Chung-In Moon, "Japanese Colonialism and Korean Development: A Critique," *World Development* 25, no. 6 (1997): 867-81; Atul Kohli, "Japanese Colonialism and Korean Development: A Reply," *ibid.*: 883-88; A. Kohli, "Where Do High Growth Political Economies Come From? The Japanese Lineage of Korea's "Developmental State," *ibid.* 22, no. 9 (1994): 1269-93.

rule when Japan, a modern ruler, showed its ability to govern the colony in terms of standards of modern civilization.

iii) A Tripartite Frame in Colonial Korea and the Formation of Korean modernity

What makes colonial Korea different from most colonial experiences—like India or Indonesia—is the unique and distinctive tripartite relationship in colonial Korea: Japanese colonialists, Western missionaries, and Koreans. Thus, the formation of Korean modernity cannot be adequately explained through the paradigm of Western colonies like colonial India.⁷⁰

In most Western colonies, colonial power provided a favorable environment for the missionary project, and the Christian mission and colonial mission encouraged each other in many areas⁷¹—although some do argue that there were examples of differences and tensions between colonialists and missionaries.⁷² In contrast, the colonial fault line in Korea was often drawn less between missionaries and Koreans than between non-Western colonialists and Christians, Western or Korean. The colonial regime was often counterbalanced by missionaries not just because missionaries had strong financial and human power but also because missionaries were from the modern West, by which Japanese modernity in the first half of the twentieth century had been conditioned and influenced. Colonial modernity, a filtered and managed modernity imposed on Koreans by Imperial Japan, was effectively challenged by the

⁷⁰ For a study that analyzes colonial Korea with the paradigm of colonial India, see Shin and Robinson, *Colonial Modernity in Korea*; Yun, *Sikminji Geundae Ui Paereodokseu*; Hae-dong Yun and Jun'ichi Isomae, eds. *Jonggyowa Sikminji Geundae* (Seoulsi Chaekgwahamkke, 2013).

⁷¹ For a fuller discussion of this, see William R. Hutchison, *Errand to the World: American Protestant Thought and Foreign Missions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987); Brian Stanley, *The Bible and the Flag: Protestant Missions and British Imperialism in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Leicester, England: Apollos, 1990); A. N. Porter, ed. *The Imperial Horizons of British Protestant Missions, 1880-1914* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans, 2003).

⁷² See, for example, Jeffrey Cox, *Imperial Fault Lines: Christianity and Colonial Power in India, 1818-1940* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2002); Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler, *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1997).

presence and activities of missionaries. Christian modernity as embodied by missionaries made it difficult or almost impossible for colonialists to monopolize modernizing programmes on the Korean peninsula.

What gave missionaries real power in colonial Korea, in spite of their small number, was the existence of Anglo-American hegemony—a fundamental geopolitical condition that made the tripartite frame possible and necessary. As long as Imperial Japan was modernized in the modern political order, Anglo-American hegemony was reinforced and strengthened in both the homeland of Japan and its colonies. In the early twentieth century, Western triumph was beyond doubt. Japanese modernization had been remarkable, but not strong enough to be on equal footing with its Western counterparts, especially the Anglo-American modernization.⁷³ In the early twentieth century, the United Kingdom and the United States were hegemonic political powers in international politics, the rulers of the world market, and at the same time the countries with the largest missionary enterprises. Under the shadow of Anglo-American hegemony, Japan could not deny the presence of Protestant missionaries, most of whom had come from either the United States or the United Kingdom (including Canada and Australia). Their very existence suggested the presence of Western power, although the number of missionaries never exceeded one thousand.⁷⁴

Japanese occupation and the continuing presence of Western missionaries led to the emergence of the tripartite frame, a key to the formation of the modern in colonial Korea. This tripartite frame complicates the widely accepted binary opposition in the mission enterprise:

⁷³ Bruce Cumings, "Archaeology, Descent, Emergence: Japan in British/American Hegemony, 1900-1950," in *Japan in the World*, ed. Masao Miyoshi and Harry D. Harootunian (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1993), 79-111.

⁷⁴ This is discussed in more detail in Chapter I.

the colonizing West and the colonized East, Western imperialism and non-Western subjugation, civilized West and barbaric East, superior whites and inferior non-whites, ruling whites and ruled non-whites. The trilateral relationship also made Korean modernity distinctively Korean, and made the colonial era the critical and transformative period in the formation of Korean modernity.

The three-cornered relationship between colonialists, missionaries, and Koreans allowed Koreans to take advantage of favorable circumstances and have certain leverage over colonial power. Koreans employed this Western influence to prevent the entire subordination of their nation to the interests of the Japanese. On the other hand, the Western triumphalism of missionaries was held in check by the non-Western ruling power. This unique historical situation made it difficult, if not impossible, for Western missionaries to act as agents of Western imperialism, which was what happened in most Western colonies. The rivalry and tension between colonialists and missionaries made a space where Korean Christianity could play a liberating and nationalistic role. Under the trilateral frame, Koreans neither remained passive nor were prepared to follow the lead of colonialists or missionaries. Rather, Koreans shaped their own modernity by taking advantage of the tripartite frame.

However, the active role of Koreans in the trilateral frame does not mean that Koreans played a leading and decisive role in the formation of the modern by skillfully playing colonialists off against missionaries or vice versa. As long as colonialists were dependent upon the Anglo-American hegemony and missionary enterprises were being undertaken in the colonial territory controlled by a non-Western power, the interlocking relationship of colonialists and missionaries within modern international politics provided a favorable

opportunity. Koreans seized this opportunity to shape a modernity of their own, seeking national dignity and upward social mobility. However, this breathing space contracted as much as missionaries recognized and supported the colonial rule as upholding law and order that served largely to oppress and exploit the colonized, and as much as colonialists succeeded in making friendly relations with missionaries for certain causes, one example being the alliance for anti-communism.

The formation and development of Korean modernity in the colonial period was not a simple takeover of Japanese modernity or a mere imposition by the Japanese colonial power. It was not a product of the missionary modern enterprise, either. Instead, Korean modernity took a unique course, absorbing, resisting, and synthesizing both Christian modernity and colonial modernity. Korean modernity constructed itself in a doubly dialectical relation with colonial modernity on the one hand and with Christian modernity on the other, producing a novel interpretation of modernity in the Korean context. In other words, the modern in Korea was formed within the interaction of the missionary enterprise, Japanese colonial rule, and the Korean struggle for freedom and power. None of the three historical agents—Japanese colonialists, Western missionaries, or Koreans—was the sole historical actor in determining Korean modernity. The critical element in the formation of Korean modernity was not a distinctive intention of each party or individual agent but the interaction within the trilateral frame. Distinctive reasons for the behavior of each party in the modern frame often resulted in not just unintended consequences but also self-contradictions, which constitute an integral part of modernity itself. The interaction of the three sides within the trilateral frame, subsuming the

unintended consequences and the self-contradictions, determined and shaped Korean modernity in the first half of the twentieth century.

3. Method and Materials

i) The Federal Council of Protestant Evangelical Missions in Korea

The unique and complex relationship between Christianity and modernity in colonial Korea raises several important questions. What are the distinctive features of Christian modernity in the colony? How did missionaries reflect and embody the Western modern? How different was Japanese modernity from Western modernity? What role did Koreans play in the formation of Korean modernity? In what ways did the Western modern and the Japanese modern collide and collude in the formation of Korean modernity? How was Korean Christianity integral to or in tension with the emerging nationalism in Korea in the face of Japanese colonial rule? How has the tripartite frame influenced Korean society today? This thesis is an attempt to explore these questions by analyzing and examining the Federal Council of Protestant Evangelical Missions in Korea, a union organization of missionaries. This study places its focus on the practices and discourses of this federal organization, rather than on individual missionaries or a denominational mission organization.

The Protestant mission in Korea was dominated from the outset by two theological and ecclesiastical traditions: Presbyterian and Methodist. It is widely accepted that Korean Protestantism was started in 1885 when Horace G. Underwood (Presbyterian) and Henry G. Appenzeller (Methodist) arrived in Korea.⁷⁵ In the early twentieth century, most missionaries in

⁷⁵ In 1883 the British and Foreign Bible Society began its work for Koreans as part of the North China Agency of the society, but it was not until 1895 that the British and Foreign Bible Society Korea Agency started its mission work in Korea. The Orthodox Church of Russia began its mission work in 1896. The Church of England Mission in Korea was

Korea joined a union organization to overcome denominational differences, remove possible frictions and conflicts over mission territory, seek harmonization of theological doctrine, and promote mission cooperation, the effectiveness of the Christian mission, and speedy evangelization. The General Council of Protestant Evangelical Missions in Korea (hereafter the General Council) was organized in 1905 by representatives of four Presbyterian and two Methodist Missions: the Korea Mission of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (hereafter the Northern Presbyterian Mission), the Korea Mission of the Presbyterian Church in the United States (hereafter the Southern Presbyterian Mission)⁷⁶, the Korea Mission of the Presbyterian Church in Canada (hereafter the Canadian Mission)⁷⁷, the Korea Mission of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria (hereafter the Australian Presbyterian Mission)⁷⁸, the Korea Mission of the Methodist Episcopal Church (hereafter the Northern Methodist Mission), and the Korea Mission of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South (hereafter the Southern Methodist Mission).⁷⁹ The General Council functioned until 1912 when it was reorganized with a new constitution under the name the Federal Council of Protestant Evangelical Missions in Korea

founded in 1898, the Oriental Missionary Society (Holiness) in 1901, the Seventh-Day Adventist Mission in 1904, and the Salvation Army in 1908. See KMYB, 1928, 141-44, 162-69, 182-93.

⁷⁶ For an introduction to the history of the two Presbyterian missions of the United States (the Northern Presbyterian Mission and the Southern Presbyterian Mission), see Harry A. Rhodes, *History of the Korea Mission, Presbyterian Church U.S.A.: 1884-1934* (Seoul: Chosen Mission Presbyterian Church U.S.A., 1934); Harry A. Rhodes and Arch Campbell, *History of the Korea Mission, Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.: Volume II, 1935-1959* (New York: Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations, United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., 1964).

⁷⁷ In 1925, the Mission was renamed the Korea Mission of the United Church of Canada. For an introduction to the history of the Canadian Mission, see William Scott, *Canadians in Korea: Brief Historical Sketch of Canadian Mission Work in Korea* (Nashville: Board of World Mission, Presbyterian Church U.S.A., 1970).

⁷⁸ For an introduction to the history of the Australian Presbyterian Mission, see Edith A. Kerr and George Anderson, eds., *The Australian Presbyterian Mission in Korea 1889-1941* (Sydney: Australian Presbyterian Board of Missions, 1970).

⁷⁹ For an introduction to the history of the two Methodists missions of the United States, see Charles A. Sauer, ed. *Within the Gate: Comprising the Addresses Delivered at the Fiftieth Anniversary of Korean Methodism, First Church, Seoul, Korea, June 19th-20th, 1934* (Seoul: Korea Methodist News Service, 1934); Ryang, J. S., ed. *Southern Methodism in Korea: Thirtieth Anniversary* (Seoul: Board of Missions, Korea Annual Conference, Methodist Episcopal Church, South, 1929).

(hereafter the Federal Council). This new organization, founded on a federal principle, was made up of constituents bodies,⁸⁰ rather than individual missionaries as the General Council was. The new federal organization extended its membership beyond the six major missions—four Presbyterian and two Methodist mission organizations—to other mission bodies: the British and Foreign Bible Society, Young Men's Christian Association (hereafter, YMCA), British Evangelistic Mission, Women's Foreign Missionary Society, and Christian Literature Society.⁸¹

ii) Missionary Narratives and Documents

Missionaries had produced a wide array of written documents: annual and personal reports, tables of statistics, financial reports, minutes, essays, journals, memoirs, advertisements, resolutions, obituaries, autobiographies, travel documents, private letters, manuscript materials, and so on. The documents detail missionary enterprises, personal or institutional, and offer a unique record of the thoughts, plans, aspirations, and reflections of missionaries. Missionary narratives and records are both realistic and poetic, descriptive and prescriptive, factual and interpretive. Their target audience is fellow missionaries, missionary societies, and financial and spiritual supporters of the mission effort in their home countries. Their style of writing is often sociological, historical, anthropological, theological, or ethnographic. The documents display missionaries' multi-layered, not easily distinguishable, motivations and purposes: personal and institutional, financial and denominational, political and theological.⁸²

⁸⁰ *AMFC*, 1913, 34.

⁸¹ The membership list is slightly different for each year as the six major missions continued to play a key role in the federal organization.

⁸² See Jean Comaroff and John L. Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 1: 32-9.

Protestant missionaries were products of and contributors to the modern West. When they created these documents, missionaries did not only provide stories about the missionized and details about their own mission enterprise. They also—as individuals of Western societies and citizens of Western nations—willingly or unwittingly represented and embodied the modern West itself, expressing their own motives, intentions, and desires.

Paying special attention to the Federal Council and its predecessor, the General Council, this study focuses on analyzing and exploring official documents edited and published by the missionary institution and written by member missionaries of the federal organization. Among these documents are *The Korea Mission Field* (1905-1941), *The Korea Mission Year Book* (1928, 1932), and minutes from the annual meetings of the General Council and the Federal Council: *Annual Meeting of the General Council of Protestant Evangelical Missions in Korea* (1905-1911) and *Annual Meeting of the Federal Council of Protestant Evangelical Missions in Korea* (1912-1937). In addition, *The Japan Christian Year Book* is a valuable resource that contains a number of articles and reports on Protestant missions in Korea. The missionary yearbook was initially published for the mission field in Japan by Western missionaries working there. However, as Imperial Japan underwent territorial expansion, the yearbook extended its scope to Japanese colonies—Formosa and Korea. The title of the yearbook changed several times, reflecting the Japanese imperial expansion and the imperialist and colonial dynamics among the national churches of Japan, Formosa, and Korea: *The Christian Movement in Its Relation to The New Life in Japan* (1903-1905); *The Christian Movement in Japan* (1906-1912); *The Christian Movement in Japan Including Korea and Formosa* (1913-1914); *The Christian Movement in the Japanese Empire* (1915-1920); *The Christian Movement in Japan, Korea and Formosa* (1921-1926); *The*

Japan Mission Year Book: The Christian Movement in Japan & Formosa. (1927-1931); and *The Japan Christian Year Book* (1932-1941).

The most extensive historical account of the mission movement in colonial Korea comes from the *Korea Mission Field* (hereafter the *KMF*).⁸³ Unlike official documents such as minutes of the Federal Council, the subjects and tone of articles published in the *KMF*, (including mission reports, reflections, essays, poems, obituaries, and prayer calendars) are complex: official and personal, historical and theological, devotional and analytical. Its average monthly circulation was approximately 1,000,⁸⁴ an audience that included fellow missionaries working in Korea and supporting Christians in home countries. The *KMF* included a variety of records and discourses of missionaries, covering most mission organizations in Korea, including non-federated mission organizations like the Anglican Church. In addition, several prominent Korean Christians and Japanese government officials contributed a significant number of articles to the magazine. The missionary publication not only provides a valuable historical record of modern Korea but also shows how missionaries understood and perceived Korean society, culture, and politics. In short, it offers a window into missionaries' perceptions and understandings of the modern.

The tripartite frame in colonial Korea requires us to cross-examine and cross-read missionary writings with colonial documents and the writings and the discourses of Koreans. This cross-examination helps us to explore how modern concepts—religion, education, self, economy, freedom, and society—were understood, redefined, and developed. Many educated

⁸³ Many contemporary missionaries highly valued the *KMF* as one of the “best” missionary magazines. To take one example, British missionary Hugh Miller observed, “When I was in London the scholarly secretary of the Religious Tract Society told me that of all the mission magazines reaching his desk he considered the *KMF* to be by far the best. Similar comments have been made by others.” See Hugh Miller, “The History of Co-Operation and the Federal Council,” *KMF*, December 1934, 257.

⁸⁴ Deokju Lee, “The Korea Mission Field Haeje,” In *The Korea Mission Field Hobyelmokchajip 1905.11—1941.11*, ed. Hangukgidokgyosayeonguhoe (Seoul: Hangukgidokgyosayeonguhoe, 1986), n. p. See also *AMGC*, 1911, 28.

Koreans, both Christian and non-Christian, produced many documents, written in Korean and English, on missionaries, Christianity, the West, Japan, and Koreans themselves. On the other hand, colonialists produced many documents about missionaries and Korean Christianity. Two documents published by the Government-General in Korea are highly relevant to this study. The first is *Chosen Ni Okeru Shukyo Oyobi Koshi Yoran* [A General Survey of Religion and Shrines in Korea] (1926-1941), written in Japanese. The other is the annual report published by both the Residents-General in Korea and the Government-General in Korea, written in English, the title of which changed several times: the *Annual Report on Reforms and Progress In Korea* (1907-1909), the *Annual Report on Reforms and Progress in Chosen* (1910-1921), the *Annual Report on Administration of Chosen* (1922-1936), and the *Annual Report on Administration of Tyosen* (1937-1939).

iii) The Period of the General and Federal Council (1905-1941) and Japanese Colonial Influence

The formal colonial era in Korea lasted from 1910 to 1945. However, colonial influence over Korea started in 1905 when Korea became a protectorate of Imperial Japan and the Japanese Residents-General (1905-1910) effectively began to control the Korean government.

The period that the General and Federal Council and the *KMF* covered almost perfectly matches the period of Japanese colonial influence (1905-1945)—protectorate Korea (1905-1910) and colonial Korea (1910-1945). The General Council was formed on September 11, 1905,⁸⁵ two months before the Japan-Korea Treaty was concluded on November 17, 1905, depriving Korea of its diplomatic sovereignty. Both the General Council and the Federal Council

⁸⁵ Miller, "The History of Co-operation and the Federal Council," 256.

were working and functioning during most of this period of colonial influence (1905-1941). Nothing better shows the remarkable coincidence of the two periods than the *KMF*, an official and monthly organ of the General and Federal Council. The *KMF* published its first issue in November 1905 and its last in November 1941, one month before Japan attacked Pearl Harbor to start the Pacific War. The beginning of the Pacific War brought an abrupt end to the missionary enterprise, which since 1885 had continued without interruption on a national level. As the war began, most Protestant missionaries were evacuated or expelled. Few missionary records and documents were kept from the final four years of the colonial period, which is often referred to as “the Silent Years.”⁸⁶

iv) Chapter Overview

The first chapter argues that Protestant missionaries in colonial Korea had four primary characteristics in common: 1) they were Anglo-American, 2) their mission enterprise was characterized as “evangelical missions,” 3) they were Protestant (as opposed to Catholic), and 4) they were institutionally associated with and represented by the Federal Council. This chapter explores in detail the meanings of each feature, seeing all of them as fundamental modern features of missionaries. In explaining how the Federal Council represented a microcosm of Anglo-Protestant civil society, the chapter asserts that this organization embodied characteristics of Anglo-American Protestant modernity in five ways: 1) the Federal Council as a voluntary and civil association, 2) federalism as a Western and modern organizing principle, 3) territorial division as a modern legal and economic feature, 4) the Federal Council

⁸⁶ Harry A. Rhodes and Arch Campbell, *History of the Korea Mission, Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.: Volume II, 1935-1959* (New York: Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations, United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., 1964), ix, 2-3.

as a modern nationwide organization, and 5) the Federal Council as a window to the modern global connection.

Chapter I focuses on the modern features of the Federal Council, while Chapters II, III, and IV discuss the socio-political meanings and impacts of Christian modernity in the tripartite frame in colonial Korea. The second chapter discusses a controversial definition of “religion”—a Western modern concept—in the Korean context, and its relationship with “civilization” in colonial Korea. First, this chapter explores how civilization-oriented Protestant missions and the “civilized” rule of colonialists interacted with Koreans’ pursuit of a modern civilization, and argues that this interaction contributed to the formation of Korean modernity in colonial Korea. Second, this chapter examines how Japanese colonialists used a legally modified notion of “religion” to reconfigure the religious domain in colonial Korea. It argues that the colonial power legally distinguished “religion” from Confucian ancestor worship, “quasi-religious groups,” and Shrine Shinto, and that this legal definition of “religion” served as a basis for colonial bureaucratic control of religions in Korea. In colonial Korea, religious freedom involved three primary dimensions: 1) freedom of propagation, 2) freedom of religious education, and 3) the institutional autonomy of Christians institutions. This chapter explores why Protestant missionaries’ understanding of religious freedom in these three domains came into a conflict with that of colonialists, who recognized religious freedom as a civilizational value. Finally, the chapter explores the relationship between the colonial regime and the Federal Council in colonial Korea, demonstrating the colonial policy on religion and missionaries’ favorable view of the colonial regime.

The third chapter examines how social and moral teachings delivered by Protestant missionaries of the Federal Council interacted with the colonial moral order imposed by Japanese colonialists, and how this interaction influenced the formation of modern morality in colonial Korea. First, the chapter focuses initially on the impact of modern education on moral formation in colonial Korea, examining how the colonial moral order was shaped in relation to Confucian ethics and Shinto values, and how Christian morality interacted with the colonial moral order. Second, this chapter pays special attention to the self-help ethic as an economic ethic, which was fundamental to the formation of modern capitalism in Korea. It argues that in colonial Korea Japanese colonizers, Korean Protestants, and missionaries of the Federal Council all stressed the importance of self-help, though with different emphasis, and that this new ethic was a contributing factor to economic modernization in colonial Korea, promoting modern capitalistic economic behavior. The final section of the chapter analyzes the hostility between Christian modernity and Marxist modernity in colonial Korea, discussing the anti-communist alliance between Japanese colonialists, Protestant missionaries, and Korean Christians, and the implications of the alliance to the formation of modern Korea during both the colonial and post-colonial periods.

The final chapter examines the modern impacts of Korean Protestant ecclesiastical, educational, and social institutions, which were established under the guidance of missionary institutions like the Federal Council. This chapter first explores the reasons for the relatively strong institutional autonomy of Korean Protestant institutions under colonial rule, examining Korean Protestants' efforts to build purely Korean institutions, Anglo-American protections, the membership formation of the Protestant church as an exclusive religious community, and the

favorable legal environment under the “cultural” colonial policy. Second, the chapter discusses the process by which the colonial policy of the wartime period (1931-45) eroded the institutional autonomy of Protestant institutions, and how colonial totalitarianism reorganized Korean Protestant institutions. The final section of this chapter discusses why and how the mode of organization of Protestant institutions inspired by mission institutions like the Federal Council collided with the organizing principles of Japanese colonialists, who held a primarily hierarchical and authoritarian view of society and state.

I. Missionaries, Modernity, and the Federal Council as a Modern Institution

Missionaries have often been analyzed through a dichotomy of the religious and the secular by many scholars in the area of mission and Korean studies on modern Korea. Assuming that the religious is the antithesis of the secular, scholars often fail to see the interplay between the secular and the religious. Hyaeweol Choi, for example, views Christian modernity—her central analytical concept—as “antithetical to secular modernity,”¹ when she analyzes discourse in writings in the colonial period by American missionary women and Korean women. Seeing that American missionaries represent Christian modernity,² she understands Japanese colonial power as a secular power and the Japanese colonial modernity as a form of “secular modernity.”³ However, Japanese colonial power has never been “secular” in the binary sense of the religious and the secular. In East Asia, the secular has had very different meanings from that in the West because these societies have traditionally been non-theistic and multi-religious, where various forms of Confucianism, Buddhism, and indigenous religions have coexisted. The Empire of Japan was neither a theocratic state nor a secular state; rather, it was a modern nation-state that had reconfigured relationships between religion and politics, religion and education, and religion and morality by accepting the modern Western definition

¹ Hyaeweol Choi, *Gender and Mission Encounters in Korea: New Women, Old Ways* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 8.

² Choi’s definition of “Christian modernity” is not so much epistemological as ideological. She defines Christian modernity as “an ideology that advocates the idea of an inevitable historical movement toward material and technological modernity and places the moral, cultural, and spiritual role of Christianity at the core of that enterprise.” See *Ibid.*, 10-1.

³ See Hyaeweol Choi, “Christian Modernity in Missionary Discourse from Korea 1905-10,” *East Asian History*, no. 29 (2005): 42, 68.

of religion. Modern Shinto, as a constituting part of Japanese modernity, was central to this reconfiguration and further complicated the religious-secular dynamic of modern Japan.⁴

Choi also fails to see that the secular and the Christian were not necessarily “antithetical” to each other. As Charles Taylor puts it, the secular is not the polar opposite of the religious but a set of conditions under which modern notions of religion are constructed and reconfigured.⁵ In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Protestantism as a modern religion and its missionaries as modern believers and Western citizens introduced modern values and practices to Koreans. It would be misleading to assert that missionaries merely appropriated the image of the modern and the West for the sole purpose of effective evangelism and a successful mission project. Missionaries themselves were particular products of and contributors to what Taylor calls “a secular age,” a fundamental aspect of Western modernity. Protestant missionaries as Christian modernizers both embodied and were embedded in the Western modern, especially the Anglo-American modern. Western missionaries did not just teach and practice Western Christianity; they also intentionally and unintentionally represented Western modernity, embodying the social, cultural, and political manifestations that characterized Western modernity: civil rights and liberties, political liberalism with religious freedom at the center, civil and voluntary associations, capitalist ethics, civic nationalism, and Western racial and gender views. Christian forms of modernity are constitutive of, not separate from, Western modernity.

Most Protestant missionaries in colonial Korea, a group that embodied Christian modernity, were Anglo-Americans. They were characterized by a striking overlapping

⁴ This is discussed in more detail in Chapters II, III, and IV.

⁵ Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007).

consensus, having shared a wide definition of Protestant missions. This consensus among Protestant missionaries afforded effective unity, which served as an institutional basis for collective decision-making and action in relation to both the Japanese colonial regime as a ruling power and the Koreans as missionized. The Federal Council institutionalized this consensus, embodying Anglo-American modernity.

Overall, the Protestant missionaries had four primary characteristics in common: 1) they were Anglo-American, 2) their mission enterprise was characterized as “evangelical missions,” 3) they were Protestant (as opposed to Catholic), and 4) they were institutionally associated with and represented by the Federal Council. The title of the union organization, the *Federal Council of Protestant Evangelical Missions in Korea*, explicitly shows three of these features—“evangelical missions,” “Protestant,” and “the Federal Council.” “Anglo-American” is implicit in the title, which was written in English, essentially the official language of most Protestant missionaries in colonial Korea.

1. Anglo-American Missionaries and the Federal Council

Missionaries have often been described as “cosmopolitan.” Missionaries as cosmopolitan teachers and religious people were believed to proclaim Jesus Christ as savior of the world, dismissing narrow-minded ethnic interests or regional perspectives and promoting cosmopolitan Christian religious teachings. For example, James Scarth Gale, a leading Canadian missionary, is often described as the embodiment of “cosmopolitanism”—not least because he was “half Scotch, half Dutch, half French, yet completely English, and somewhat bohemian.”⁶ However, in reality the “cosmopolitan” life of missionaries had taken its form from the Western

⁶ James Scarth Gale, *James Scarth Gale and His History of the Korean People*, ed. Richard Rutt (Seoul: Royal Asiatic Society, Korea Branch, 1972), 1.

Protestant tradition. Although they were transnational in terms of their personal background, mission enterprise, and network, most Protestant missionaries were predominantly Anglo-American in many ways; they carried an Anglo-American understanding of society and state, an Anglo-American common sense and ethos, and Anglo-American Christian experiences and beliefs. In a nutshell, these missionaries were Anglo-American as much as they were Christian, to borrow from Robert Wuthnow.⁷ They were citizens and products of Anglo-American nations and societies: the United States and the United Kingdom, including Canada and Australia. Thus, many Protestant missionaries in colonial Korea would agree with one American missionary in Japan, who confessed, “My [church] membership is in America where my citizenship is,” and not in Japan.⁸ Oliver R. Avison, another leading Canadian missionary, embodied this broad Anglo-American cultural, ethnic, and religious identity. He was born in England and grew up as a member of the Methodist Church of Canada, but was appointed as a medical missionary to Korea by the Northern Presbyterian Mission, an American mission body.⁹ The inscription on the monument erected at Yonsei University (called Chosen Christian College in the colonial era, of which he was the second president), summarizes his life journey as an Anglo-American missionary: “Born in England, reared and educated in Canada, served in Korea and died in the U.S.A.”¹⁰

Throughout the colonial period as well as the turn of the twentieth century, five national groups—the Americans, British (including Canadians, Australians, Scottish, and Irish), French, Germans, and Russians—accounted for most Western foreigners residing and working

⁷ Robert Wuthnow, *Boundless Faith: The Global Outreach of American Churches* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 246.

⁸ *JCYB*, 1940, 95-6.

⁹ Oliver R. Avison, *Memoirs of Life in Korea*, ed. H. W. Park (Seoul, Korea: Doctor's Weekly, 2012), 73-4.

¹⁰ Allen D. Clark, *Avison of Korea: The Life of Oliver R. Avison, M.D* (Seoul: Yonsei University Press, 1979), 153.

in colonial Korea. According to a survey conducted in 1909 by the Japanese Residency-General government, foreigners in Korea excluding Chinese and Japanese totaled 777.¹¹ Five nations accounted for the vast majority of these Westerners: 464 Americans, 153 British, 87 French, 33 Germans, and 14 Russians in terms of their citizenship. Missionaries represented a large portion of this foreign sector.¹² Male and female missionaries and their families accounted for 478 or 61.5% of all Westerners. American missionaries and their families accounted for 338, or 73% of all Americans in Korea. British missionaries and their families accounted for 56% of all British nationals, and French missionaries (most of whom were Roman Catholic) were 58% of all French people. According to a survey conducted in 1920 by the Government-General in Korea, the number of foreign residents from the Western countries had risen to 1265: 779 Americans, 255 British, 106 French, 50 Germans, and 32 Russians.¹³ The portion of missionaries and their families among foreigners slightly increased to 854, which accounted for 67.5% of all resident Western foreigners. In 1938, the Western residents were more diverse in terms of their nationality, now including Belgians, Greeks, Italians, Norwegians, Polish, Swedish, Swiss, and Turks.¹⁴ Nevertheless, the original five nations still dominated the number of Western foreign residents. The 1942 statistics reflect the way in which the foreign relations of the Empire of Japan had been affected by the outbreak of World War II in Europe in 1939 and the Pacific War

¹¹ Yeongsin Agademi Hangukhag Yeonguso, ed. *Joseon Jaeryu Gumiin Josarog, 1907 Yeon—1942 Yeon* (Seoul: Yeongsin Agademi Hangukhag Yeonguso, 1981), 57-8. This book consists of several yearly surveys on Western foreign residents in colonial Korea, which were conducted by the Japanese Residency-General government and the Government-General in Korea. The reports were titled "Directory of Foreign Residents in Chosen" or "Directory of European and American Residents and Consular List in Chosen."

¹² The majority of the Westerners were Christian missionaries, whether they were Protestant or Catholic. The other major jobs they pursued were mining and commerce.

¹³ Yeongsin, *Joseon Jaeryu Gumiin Josarog*, 577. The editor mistakenly ascribes this survey to the year 1929 in the table of contents. However, the survey was conducted in August 1920. See page 495.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 705.

in December 1941—the number of missionaries of American and British citizenship sharply dropped to only three American and five British citizens. In contrast, German nationals significantly rose to 92, reflecting the German-Japanese alliance as Axis powers. Many German residents were missionaries of the German Benedictine Missions. The number of French foreign residents, 68, did not drop much primarily because France was ruled by the Vichy regime, a puppet government for the Nazis.¹⁵ Most French nationals were members of the Paris Foreign Missions Society.

Foreigners from four out of the five main nations were religiously conspicuous. The majority from the United States and the United Kingdom were Protestant missionaries or their families. The majority of the French and German residents were Catholic missionaries. However, Russia's religious influence in colonial Korea was very limited. The Russian Orthodox Church formed a tiny minority in colonial Korea.¹⁶ Russian missions for the Orthodox Church in Korea were reported to have only one priest during most of the colonial era, and the church's adherents never exceeded one thousand.¹⁷ Nonetheless, while Russian influence in the Korean peninsula had been religiously negligible, it was ideologically significant since the 1920s through the powerful impact of communist revolutionary ideologies.¹⁸

¹⁵ Ibid., 960-1.

¹⁶ For an introduction of the history of the Russian Orthodox Church in Korea, see Dionisi Ppajeudeunyayepu, *Reosia Jeonggyohoe Hangukseongyo lyagi*, trans. Yohan Lee (Seoul: Hongsungsa, 2012).

¹⁷ See *GSRS*, 1926-1941. For example, the Korean member of the Russian Orthodox Church in 1930 numbered 744. See *GSRS*, 1930, 54.

¹⁸ Of the five nations, Russia (or the Soviet Union during the period from 1922 to 1991) has often made the category of the "West" problematic, but this nation has been largely accepted by East Asians as part of the Western and "White" nations. Russia has been a constant factor in modern Korean history, making a tremendous impact on the Korean peninsula and East Asia in general through the Russo-Japanese War, the Lenin-Marxist Revolution, and the Soviet Union's role in the establishments of the People's Republic of China and North Korea. For an overview of Russians in colonial Korea, see Donald N. Clark, *Living Dangerously in Korea: The Western Experience, 1900-1950* (Norwalk, CT: EastBridge, 2003), 142-55. See also F. I. Shabshina, *Sikminji Joseoneseo: Eoneu Reosia Jiseongi Sseun Yeoksahyeonjanggirok*, trans. Myeongho Kim (Seoul: Hanul, 1996).

In early twentieth century Korea, the West was represented predominantly by Anglo-American nations and people. Russia was significantly marginalized following the Russo-Japanese War, Imperial Germany had limited influence on the Korean peninsula, and France confined itself to the Indochina colony. In contrast, the United Kingdom and the United States exerted more direct power in East Asia than any other Western power, and Anglo-American power was further strengthened by the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, by the Taft-Katsura agreement, and by their diplomatic status as victory powers following World War I. During most of the colonial period just before the outbreak of World War II, Anglo-Americans dominated foreign demographics in colonial Korea. In 1923, for example—a high point of the Anglo-American missionary influence—American and British citizens accounted for 1,082 (78%) of all 1,385 Euro-Americans.¹⁹ As discussed above, the majority of English-speaking foreigners were missionaries and their families. The vast majority of missionaries from the Anglosphere were also Protestant while most Irish and some American missionaries were Catholic. As a result, Anglo-Americans largely defined the West and Western modernity in colonial Korea. As long as Protestant missionaries were mostly American and British citizens, Christian modernity in colonial Korea largely meant Anglo-American Protestant modernity with the predominantly American initiative.

Anglophone Protestant missionaries in colonial Korea consisted of missionaries with diverse and sometimes conflicting viewpoints on many theological and social issues: Arminianism versus Calvinism; American Republicanism versus the British constitutional monarchy; separation of church and state versus state-church views of constitutional order;

¹⁹ Yeongsin, *Joseon Jaeryu Gumiin Josarog*, 328.

pre-millennialism versus post-millennialism; evangelism versus social gospel; modernists versus fundamentalists; pro-Japanese versus anti-Japanese; and historically pro-slavery denominations versus anti-slavery denominations in the case of the four American missions. However, English-speaking Protestant missionaries were, despite substantial internal tensions and differences, characterized by a large area of consensus—that is, the Anglo-American “overlapping consensus,” to borrow from John Rawls.²⁰ The missionary overlapping consensus materialized in a wide definition of “evangelical missions” and a broad underlying vision of mission and society.

Consensus-building among Protestant missionaries was facilitated by three characteristics. In the first place, most of them came from Anglo-American countries: the United States, Canada, Australia, England, or Scotland. The relatively homogenous groups made easy and desirable the overwhelming and overlapping consensus of Anglo-Protestant missionaries. Second, linguistic unity was a major factor that made the consensus convenient, effective, and desirable. English is therefore the *de facto* official language of Protestant missionaries. Finally, the prominence of just two theological traditions—Presbyterianism and Methodism—made it easier to achieve broad consensus. These three elements combined to facilitate missionary consensus (more exactly, Anglo-American male missionary consensus), helping them to overcome conflicting views on theology, mission, and politics.

2. “Evangelical Missions” and the Federal Council

Most missionaries in the Korea mission field referred to their work as “evangelical missions,” as the title of the Federal Council shows. The term “evangelical” is a very elusive

²⁰ See John Rawls, *Political Liberalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 133-72.

concept, defying an exact definition. However, most of all it is a historical concept, carrying different emphasis and connotation in different times.²¹ In early twentieth century Korea, the term “evangelical” had wider meanings than the current use of the term. The “evangelical missions” of the Federal Council were not “evangelical” in the narrow sense of today’s evangelicalism any more than “The Federation of German Evangelical Churches” was “evangelical” in this narrow sense. The term was an umbrella over a wide spectrum of theological and social views ranging from liberal to conservative, at least before the rise of the modernist-fundamentalist controversy in the 1920s and 1930s. Although it did not mean a single coherent theological system, the term symbolized and represented an overarching and unifying vision of Anglo-American Protestant missions. The widely agreed-upon understanding among missionaries of the Federal Council of the “evangelical missions” can be explained in two ways.

First, the term “evangelical” carried by the Federal Council does not refer to fundamentalism, a conservative Christian movement emerging in the 1920s and 1930s. The Federal Council embodied the Anglo-Protestant ecumenical movement in the theological and ecclesiastical sense, unifying conservative and liberal evangelicals. Analyzing North American mission organization in the first half of the twentieth century, Joel A. Carpenter argues that in the 1930s 60% of the 12,000 North American Protestant missionaries belonged to the “mainline Protestant missionary societies,” which were marked by their strong liberal theological stance, while the remaining mission agencies belonged to the “conservative evangelical Protestant

²¹ See Timothy Larsen, “Defining and Locating Evangelicalism,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Evangelical Theology*, ed. Timothy Larsen and Daniel J. Treier (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 1-14. See also D. W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1989), 1-19; Mark A. Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism: The Age of Edwards, Whitefield and the Wesleys* (Leicester: IVP, 2004), 11-8.

missionary societies.”²² According to his analysis, five North American missionary societies, whose agencies were working in colonial Korea as member missions of the Federal Council, fall under the heading of “mainline Protestant missionary societies.”²³ The Australian mission also took a theological stance similar to that of the five North American missions. In contrast with the six major missions, mission societies that were not affiliated with the Federal Council—for example, the Seventh-Day Adventists and the Oriental Missionary Society—are sorted by Carpenter into “North American Conservative Evangelical Protestant Missionary Societies,” whose significant proportion was fundamentalist.²⁴ To sum up, the Federal Council and its member mission agencies were never fundamentalistic, although their member missionaries consisted of both liberal evangelicals and conservative evangelicals.

The term “evangelical” began to be contested along with the rise of the fundamentalist-modernist controversy in the 1920s and 1930s, especially in the American context. The theological and institutional conflicts between American modernists and fundamentalists had partially fragmented the once-dominant consensus among American Protestants, and thus “the previously resilient Protestant missionary consensus” of American Protestantism began to crumble in the mid-1930s.²⁵ The American controversy had an impact on Protestant missionaries in colonial Korea. The 1930s witnessed a fissure in the grand coalition between conservative and liberal evangelical missionaries in colonial Korea. Liberal-minded missionaries

²² Joel A. Carpenter, “Appendix: The Evangelical Missionary Force in the 1930s,” in *Earthen Vessels: American Evangelicals and Foreign Missions, 1880-1980*, ed. Joel A. Carpenter and Wilbert R. Shenk (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1990), 335-42.

²³ *Ibid.*, 339-40.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 340-2.

²⁵ James Alan Patterson, “The Loss of a Protestant Missionary Consensus: Foreign Missions and the Fundamentalist-Modernist Conflict,” in *Earthen Vessels: American Evangelicals and Foreign Missions, 1880-1980*, ed. Joel A. Carpenter and Wilbert R. Shenk (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1990), 77.

had dominated many mission boards and agencies at the institutional level, including the Federal Council. The Federal Council as a product of overlapping consensus among “evangelical” missionaries had increasingly become a stronghold to promote the Christian civilizing mission and social reform agenda rather than conservative theologies with an emphasis on salvation of the individual soul. In response, some conservative-minded American Presbyterian missionaries, who had come under the strong influence of fundamentalism and were fearful of liberalism in its theological and social views, established their own missionary association in 1932, “the Evangelical Fellowship of Korea.”²⁶ However, the reaction was not strong enough to undermine or divide the Federal Council. The consensus among Protestant missionaries in colonial Korea remained strong throughout most of the colonial era. Missionaries of the Federal Council had made and retained a wide non-fundamentalist coalition and alliance. Despite substantial tensions and differences over theology—including the definition of the mission, the relationship between church and state, and the Shinto controversy—the missionary institution maintained its organizational integrity until the rise of external pressure in the late 1930s and early 1940s from the colonial power (which eventually expelled Protestant missionaries from colonial Korea in the early 1940s). Central to this institutional integrity was missionary consensus on non-fundamentalist “evangelical missions.” The key association responsible for institutionalizing the Protestant missionary consensus on “evangelical missions” was the Federal Council.

²⁶ “The Evangelical Fellowship of Korea,” *Christianity Today*, February 1932, 23. See also Harvie M. Conn, “Studies in the Theology of the Korean Presbyterian Church: Part II, Liberal Theology in the Korean Church—to 1945, an Historical Outline,” *Westminster Theological Journal* 29, no. 2 (1967): 141.

Second, the “evangelical missions” of the Federal Council were civilization-oriented missions combining evangelization and civilization.²⁷ These missions were a unifying force to gather and bind together most, though not all, missionaries, although the 1920s and 1930s modernist-fundamentalist controversy did somewhat fracture this missionary consensus and its unifying vision. Modern education was a crucial component of the civilization-oriented mission, linking the twin process of “evangelical missions”—evangelizing and civilizing. The civilization-driven “evangelical” missionaries of the Federal Council were enthusiastic in establishing modern educational institutions, stressing the importance of moral and social reform not only through moral regeneration of sinful human nature but also through nurturing a modern responsible self and inculcating modern civic virtues, economic ethics, and modern morality. However, this emphasis on a civilization-oriented mission was often a major source of conflict between liberal and conservative evangelical missionaries. While liberal missionaries saw modern education as essential to the modern Christian mission but not so much as an effective tool for evangelism, conservative missionaries prioritized evangelism, atonement by the death of Christ, and individual salvation over modern education. Nevertheless, even conservative missionaries made efforts to reconcile evangelism with these more modernist tendencies because both Korean Christians and many non-Christian Korean were attracted to the civilization-driven “evangelical missions” and enthusiastic about learning and absorbing the new civilization in mission schools. As a result, in colonial Korea most conservative missionaries

²⁷ For a debate on the relation between civilization and mission, see Brian Stanley, ed. *Christian Missions and the Enlightenment* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans Pub., 2001).

accepted the Christian civilizing mission as a major part of the “evangelical missions,” believing that the civilizing mission was instrumental to evangelical maximization.²⁸

3. Protestant Missions as Opposed to Catholic Missions in Colonial Korea

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Catholic and Protestant missionaries in Korea were mutually antagonistic, harboring hatred and contempt for each other. An anti-Protestant attitude was strong among Catholic priests from France and Germany, who saw Protestantism as heresy, calling it a “false religion of Jesus.”²⁹ Similarly, anti-Catholic prejudice had prevailed among Anglo-American Protestant missionaries, who repudiated and feared the Roman Catholic Church and its faith and practices, rejecting papal authority.³⁰ However, this antagonism was significantly diminished, although it never died down completely, during the colonial era. Anti-Catholic sentiment among many leading missionaries of the Federal Council, which had taken a more liberal and ecumenical stance, noticeably decreased, although some Presbyterian missionaries continued to attack Catholicism as false teaching and an oppressor of religious freedom.³¹ Starting in the 1920s, the *KMYB* and the *KMF* presented several articles about Korean Catholicism, praising the martyrdom of many Korean Catholic faithful and acknowledging that “the blood of martyrs is the seed of Christians.”³² The

²⁸ This is discussed in more detail in Chapter II.

²⁹ For a brief overview of Korean Catholics’ critique of Protestantism in colonial Korea, see Gwangcheol Shin, *Cheonjugyowa Gaesingyo, Mannamgwa Galdeungui Yeoksa* (Seoul: Hanguk Kidokkyo Yeoksa Yeonguso, 1998), 115-22, quote from 119.

³⁰ For example, see H. G. Underwood, “Romanism on the Foreign Mission Fields,” in *Alliance of Reformed Churches Holding the Presbyterian System: Proceedings of the Fifth General Council, Toronto 1892* ed. G. D. Mathews (Toronto: Hart & Riddell, 1892), 409-15.

³¹ See Shin, *Cheonjugyowa Gaesingyo*, 196-201; Richard H. Baird, “Present Day Religious Problems,” in *The Fiftieth Anniversary Celebration of the Korea Mission of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., June 30-July 3, 1934*, ed. Harry A. Rhodes and Richard H. Baird (Seoul, Korea: Post Chapel, John D. Wells School, 1934), 140-41.

³² P. J. Byrne, “Catholic Missions in Korea,” *KMYB*, 1928, 155-62, quote from 158. See also Gerald Bonwick, *KMYB*, 1932, 119-23; C. A. Clark, “Korean Christians of One Hundred and Fifty Years Ago,” *KMF*, January 1936, 24-6.

KMYB classified Catholic missions in Korea as one of “churches not affiliated with the Federal Council” along with the English Church Mission and the Seventh-Day Adventist Mission.³³ After the death in 1933 of Archbishop G. C. Mutel, who had been head of Catholic missions in Korea for more than 40 years, Gerald Bonwick—a leading figure of the Federal Council—commemorated the archbishop as “a great example to all who labor for the spread of Christianity in Korea.”³⁴

Roman Catholicism in Korea is widely believed to have begun in 1784, one century earlier than Protestantism. However, Catholic believers were subject to harsh and brutal treatment in the four Great Persecutions in 1801, 1839, 1846, and 1866, and many were martyred. Chosun Korea and Confucianism, its official political ideology, outlawed Catholicism as an evil and subversive practice. As a result, Catholicism was slow to take root in Korea until the 1960s.³⁵ Unlike Protestant missions, which English-speaking countries dominated, Catholic missions were more diverse in terms of the language of missionaries and origins of home missions. In 1831, Pope Gregory XVI moved the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the territory of Korea from the Bishop of Beijing to the Paris Foreign Missions Society (*Société des Missions étrangères de Paris*, hereafter MEP), establishing the territory as the Vicariate Apostolic of Korea.³⁶ From then through the early twentieth century, the MEP dominated the Catholic mission in Korea, partly determining Korea-France foreign relations in the latter half of the

³³ See KMYB, 1932, 119-35.

³⁴ Gerald Bonwick, “The Late Archbishop G. C. Mutel, D. D.,” *KMF*, February 1933, 43-4, quote from 43.

³⁵ For a historical overview of Roman Catholicism in Korea, see Chang-mun Kim and Jae-sun Chung, eds., *Catholic Korea, Yesterday and Today* (Seoul: Catholic Korea Pub. Co., 1964); Hanguk Gyohoesa Yeonguso, ed. *Hanguk Cheonju Gyohoesa*, 5 vols. (Seoul-si: Hanguk Gyohoesa Yeonguso, 2009); Jai-Keun Choi, *The Origin of the Roman Catholic Church in Korea: An Examination of Popular and Governmental Responses to Catholic Missions in the Late Chosôn Dynasty* (Cheltenham: Hermit Kingdom Press, 2006).

³⁶ Kim and Chung, *Catholic Korea, Yesterday and Today*, 126-35, 692-3.

nineteenth century. The French mission was joined by the Order of St. Benedict, whose missionaries were from a congregation of St. Ottilien in Germany³⁷ in 1909, by the Catholic Foreign Mission Society of America (or the Maryknoll Mission)³⁸ in 1923, and by the St. Columban Foreign Mission Society³⁹ (an Irish mission) in 1933.

Although Protestantism lagged behind Catholicism by one century in the beginning of its mission enterprise, the younger church rapidly surpassed Catholicism in terms of both numbers and sociopolitical influence. By the early 1910s, Korean Protestants were far more numerous than Catholics. According to 1909 statistics compiled by the Catholic Church, Korean Catholics numbered 71,252,⁴⁰ while in the same year the members of Korean Presbyterian and Methodist Protestants under the leadership of six major Protestant missions were 42,254 and their “total converts” including probationers and catechumens numbered 180,078.⁴¹ According to statistics compiled by the Japanese Government-General in Korea, in 1916 Catholics totaled 83,893 while all Protestants including members of non-federated missions numbered 195,140.⁴² In 1940, Catholics totaled 112,401 and Protestants 388,611.⁴³ Protestants surpassed Catholics in terms of membership in the early colonial period, and three decade later Protestants accounted for 77.5% of all Christians in colonial Korea.⁴⁴

Protestantism did not only make a striking numerical advance, rapidly surpassing the adherents of Catholicism; Korean Protestants also overwhelmed Catholics in their social and

³⁷ Ibid., 705-7.

³⁸ Ibid., 695-6.

³⁹ Ibid., 693-5.

⁴⁰ Hanguk Kyohoesa Yonguso, trans. and ed. *Seoul Kyogu Yonbo II: 1904-1938* (Seoul: Myong-dong Chunju Kyohoe Parhaengso Hanguk Kyohoesa Yonguso, 1987), 68.

⁴¹ AMGC, 1909, 27-8.

⁴² GSRS, 1926, 54-5.

⁴³ GSRS, 1940, 80-3.

⁴⁴ Ibid. In 1940, the Korean membership of the Russian Orthodox Church numbered just 83.

political influence during the colonial period. Korean Catholicism at the turn of the century and colonial period did not make as strong an impact on the modern formation of Korea as Protestantism, although Catholics made a significant contribution in their own way to the formation of modern Korea.⁴⁵ Many Koreans saw the Protestant form of Christianity as a paradigmatic expression of the modern West, believing that the modern was intrinsic to Western Christianity and in particular to Anglo-Protestantism. The relatively small impact of Catholicism on the modern formation can be analyzed in two ways.

First, Korean Catholicism's deep connection to French imperialism seriously hampered the Catholics' contribution to the modern formation of Korea. Catholic missions with a strong state-oriented mission policy had been long in harsh conflict with the pre-modern Confucian Chosen dynasty. Korean Catholics collided with the Confucian state primarily over Confucian ancestor worship service, and this collision left many Catholics martyred. In response, Korean Catholics and French missionaries tried to protect their faith community and religious freedom by drawing upon French military power. The invasion of the French Fleet in 1866 under the pretext of protecting French ecclesiastical power and Korean Catholics is an illustrating example. The French invasion aimed to retaliate for the Great Persecution of 1866, which killed several French MEP missionaries, including Bishop Simeon Berneux, as well as many Korean

⁴⁵ In the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Roman Catholicism had a significant impact through an indirect channel on the introduction of modern thinking to Chosun Korea. As Donald Baker insightfully explains, the Jesuit-influenced Western thoughts transmitted from Qing China were widely studied by neo-Confucian scholars who wanted to apply new Western scientific ideas to reform the Confucian kingdom, describing them as "Western Learning" (*Seohak*, in Korean). However, the impact was limited in scope and depth because the modern ideas were discussed by only a small number of Confucian scholars marginalized from the Confucian power structure. Furthermore, the modern thoughts that Roman Catholic Jesuit missionaries brought to East Asia were confined to natural philosophy such as astronomy, geography, mathematics, and medicine, and so were not related to modern political values (such as freedom or democracy), modern economic ideas (such as capitalism or the economic ethic) or the formation of modern self. For a study of the influence of Jesuit natural philosophy in the late Chosun dynasty, see Donald Baker, "The Seeds of Modernity: Jesuit Natural Philosophy in Confucian Korea," *Pacific Rim Report* 48 (August 2007): 1-16.

Catholics.⁴⁶ The French military expedition was part of “France's role as protector of Catholic Christendom in the Orient,” including East Asia.⁴⁷ In response, the Confucian Kingdom accelerated anti-Catholic purges and decided on “closing up” the country from connection to the West, reasserting Confucianism as orthodox teaching and repudiating the Western religion as vicious teachings. The French invasion led to an acute heightening of anti-Catholic sentiment among many Korean nationalists as well as the Confucian royal and ruling class. However, Korea’s “open-port policy” in 1876 transformed the legal and social status of Korean Catholics and Catholic missionaries while making possible the beginning of Protestant missions in Korea. The diplomatic treaty with France in 1882 subsequently provided, although limited, a form of religious freedom for Korean Catholics. Nevertheless, the deep-rooted antagonism among many Koreans towards the French power and Roman Catholicism since the French military expedition did not easily subside.

Unlike Roman Catholicism, Protestantism was seen in a more favorable light in terms of both international politics and Korean domestic politics. In the face of increasing Japanese encroachment in the late nineteenth century, Korean ruling elites and leading nationalists were searching for outside help and alliances to modernize and strengthen the country, and they turned their attention toward Protestantism and its missionaries, viewing Anglo-American Protestantism as a source of Western power and prosperity that served as an effective counterweight to Japanese imperial power. The non-militaristic and education-oriented Protestant

⁴⁶ Kim and Chung, *Catholic Korea, Yesterday and Today*, 231-296.

⁴⁷ For the larger international and diplomatic context through which the French military expedition was connected to French imperialism, see Robert A. Graham, *Vatican Diplomacy: A Study of Church and State on the International Plane* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1959), 86-91, quote from 86.

mission enterprise was warmly welcomed by many Koreans, who were eager to transform their own country into a modern society.

Second, the French missionaries and their mission policy were less attractive to many leading Koreans because of their attitude regarding modern civilization in general and modern education in particular. Roman Catholicism in general in the latter half of nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was characterized by its struggle with modernization, industrialization, and secularization. Among the official teachings illustrating this struggle were The *Syllabus of Errors* of 1864, the Vatican Council of 1870, and the Oath against Modernism of 1910. Some Catholics in the first half of the twentieth century struggled with the Roman Catholic official teachings on modern culture and society, but they were condemned as “modernists.”⁴⁸

Korean Catholicism during the colonial era was generally caught in this ultramontanist movement of theological reaction towards modernization. French Catholic priests and missionaries were themselves, like Protestant missionaries, products of the modern West, but they were in general socially and theologically conservative. They were not as prominent in the Christian civilizing mission in colonial Korea as Protestant missionaries, partly because of their primary concern with ecclesiastical institutions and partly because of their dire experience in contemporary France, which was deeply associated with laïcité.⁴⁹ Catholic missionaries put

⁴⁸For a brief overview of “the modernist crisis” in Roman Catholicism, see Darrell Jodock, “Introduction I: The Modernist Crisis,” in *Catholicism Contending with Modernity: Roman Catholic Modernism and Anti-Modernism in Historical Context*, ed. Darrell Jodock (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 1-19.

⁴⁹Laïcité is a central principle of the religious policy of the French Third Republic (1870-1940), and was crucial to the French separation of church and state. Its legal culmination was the Separation Law of 1905. The strong anti-clerical stance that the modern French government had taken since the French Revolution put French Catholics on the defensive. The secular French government had built a very high wall between church and state, shutting down most Catholic parochial schools. This experience influenced the mission policy of French priests and bishops in colonial Korea. Emphasizing the separation of church and state to protect the church from the colonial power, they refrained from establishing educational institutions in order to minimize conflict with the colonial power and to concentrate their efforts on evangelism. However, this mission policy was unpopular among many leading Koreans,

more emphasis on aesthetically inspired rituals and architecture as a sacramental site, focusing far less on modern education and medicine than their Protestant counterparts.⁵⁰ Catholic priests and missionaries were not anti-modern, but their teaching and mission policy on education were not modern enough to attract many leading and ordinary Koreans, who yearned for advanced civilization and modernization.⁵¹ This stance by Catholic missionaries prevented Korean Catholics under Japanese rule from actively participating in the formation of modern Korean society. Thus, while Anglo-American Protestantism had played a leading role in many nationwide modern social, educational, and national movements, Korean Catholics refrained from joining these efforts. For example, many Korean Catholics today lament that no

for whom one of the major motives for conversion to Christianity was the expectation that the new religion could and would serve as a channel to modern education. For an overview of Separation Law of 1905, see John McManners, *Church and State in France, 1870-1914* (London: S.P.C.K. for the Church Historical Society, 1972), 140-48.

⁵⁰ See Bonwick, "Catholic Missions in Korea," 121.

⁵¹ During the colonial era, the Catholic mission landscape significantly changed after the German Benedictine Mission and the American Maryknoll Mission joined the Catholic missions in Korea, which had been previously dominated by the MEP. The younger missions significantly changed Catholic mission policy, putting more emphasis on education and social movements. German Benedictine monks and missionaries, whose mission started in 1909, were more concerned with education, publication, and social welfare than French missionaries. The Maryknoll American Mission was entrusted with the Prefecture Apostolic of Pyongyang established in 1927. The mission was a product of the modernized American Catholic Church, which was struggling with Protestant prejudice in the United States and transforming itself into an American religion by embracing American democracy and respecting the American version of church and state. The American mission was a strong force in making Korean Catholics more relevant to modern social and economic transformations. The mission contributed to lay Catholic movements like Catholic Action in colonial Korea, promoted Christian literature evangelism, and thus, effectively competed with Presbyterian missions in Pyongyang, a city with the largest Protestant force during the colonial era. In sum, German and American Catholic missions brought a different dynamic to MEP-dominated Korean Catholics, making a significant contribution to the formation of the Korean modern. However, their impact was limited because the number of Korean Catholics under their jurisdictions was relatively small compared both with Catholics under the jurisdiction of the MEP and with Korean Protestants. Furthermore, during the colonial period, these missions did not have enough time to effect a national impact on the modern-making. The missions started too late compared with the French Catholic missions and Protestant missions. For an overview of the German Benedictine mission in Korea, see Jeonglan Jang, "Oegugseongyohoeui Hangugseongyo: Dogil Benetigdohoeui Hangug Jinchulgwa Gyoyug Hwaldong," in *Hangug Geun-Hyeondae Baengnyeon Sog Ui Gadollig Gyohoe*, ed. Geunhyeondae Hanguk Katollik Yeongudan (Seoul: Katollik Chulpanbu, 2003), 1: 39-74; Jeonglan Jang, "Oegug Seongyohoeui Hangug Seongyo: Dogil Benedeogdohoeui Wonsangyogu Sidae (1920 -1949 Nyeon)," in *Hangug Geun-Hyeondae Baengnyeon Sog Ui Gadollig Gyohoe*, ed. Geunhyeondae Hanguk Katollik Yeongudan (Seoul: Katollik Chulpanbu, 2003), 2:61-114. For an overview of the Maryknoll American Mission in colonial Korea, Suta Kim, "1930nyeondae Melinol Oebangjeongyohoeui Seongyohwaldong," *Gyohoesayeongu* (2007): 97-132.

Korean Catholic leader joined the 33 signatories of the March First Independence Movement of 1919 when 16 of them were Korean Protestants. Similarly, several Protestant higher educational institutions competed with Japanese government-run institutions, but Catholics ran no college-level schools. Put simply, the Catholic emphasis on ritual, liturgy, and architecture was less appealing to many Koreans, who were more enthusiastic about the civilization-oriented form of Christianity.

4. The Federal Council as a Modern Institution

The key association to institutionalize the Protestant missionary consensus among Anglo-American missionaries on “evangelical missions” and to bring together Anglo-American missionaries was the Federal Council. This unified organization was not only an interdenominational religious institution to overcome exclusive denominationalism but also a civic institution. The missionary organization was itself a reflection of modern Western society, showing new modes of association. The modern organizing structures, principles, and expressions of the Federal Council reflected important features of Western modernity—more exactly, Anglo-American modernity. The Christian modernity embodied by the Federal Council distinguished Anglo-American modernity from Japanese colonial modernity and Russian-influenced Marxist modernity. The Federal Council embodied characteristics of Anglo-American Protestant modernity in five ways.

i) The Federal Council as a Voluntary and Civil Association

One of the distinctive features of the modern is a new mode of association. This is central not only to political associations but also to civil and religious associations. As Taylor puts it, a fundamental feature of Western modernity is “a new understanding of sociality, the

society of mutual benefit, whose functional differentiations are ultimately contingent, and whose members are fundamentally equal.”⁵² Modern autonomous individuals have constructed a Western modern society through this new mode of association, and in return the new organizing principle has made a major contribution to the formation of the modern self and political citizens. As a society is modernized, traditional associations like rural community break down and fragment, and the modern associations—religious, labor, and social organizations, which have been organized upon the new modern mode of association—rapidly supersede traditional associations, dismantling traditional modes of associations. No missionary organization in colonial Korea embodied these “new principles of sociality”⁵³ better than the General Council and the Federal Council.

Both the General Council and the Federal Council were a product of the Protestant ecumenical movement that emerged in the early twentieth century. The Edinburgh World Missionary Conference in 1910 marked a new epoch in the ecumenical movement.⁵⁴ As Kenneth Scott Latourette argues, the ecumenical movement was “in large part the outgrowth of the missionary movement.”⁵⁵ The worldwide Protestant ecumenical and missionary movement produced parallel developments elsewhere in mission fields around the world, establishing union institutions. Among these institutions are the General Council and Federal Council in Korea. Latourette saw union institutions as “a means to evangelism,” arguing that the

⁵² Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 168.

⁵³ Ibid., 169.

⁵⁴ For an overview of the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference in 1910, see Kenneth Scott Latourette, “Ecumenical Bearings of the Missionary Movement and the International Missionary Council,” in *A History of the Ecumenical Movement, 1517-1948*, ed. Ruth Rouse and Stephen Neill (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1993), 355-62.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 353.

“compelling motive” in all union movements in the twentieth century was “evangelism.”⁵⁶ However, union institutions were more than “a means to evangelism”; they were an expression of the Western modern, embodying new modes of association for modern individuals who cherished individual autonomy and at the same time made associations on the principle of what Taylor calls “mutual benefit.”

In colonial Korea, most non-governmental organizations were para-state organizations, government-sponsored organizations, or government-controlled organizations,⁵⁷ and characterized by the combination of bureaucratic control, colonial dominance, and modern mobilization.⁵⁸ In contrast, missionary institutions were not centralized or bureaucratically controlled, although they were well coordinated by the Federal Council. Protestant mission associations were intermediary institutions located between modern individuals and the modern nation-state, taking the Anglo-American form of civil and voluntary associations. In colonial Korea, the Anglo-American mission institutions (including the Federal Council) represented a microcosm of Anglo-Protestant civil society, not just Anglo-American Protestantism.

The Federal Council and other mission institutions had a profound impact on the formation of Korean Protestant institutions, inspiring and guiding many Korean nationwide

⁵⁶ Ibid., 402.

⁵⁷ Cheondogyo, a modernized Korean religion, was a major non-governmental organization with a nationwide network during the colonial period. The religious institution was significantly independent in terms of Korean leadership and financing. However, its institutional structure was highly centralized and hierarchical. Cheondogyo's council system exemplified this institutional structure. The council itself changed several times in the protectorate and colonial era: Chonginwon (1908), Uijeonghoe (1921), Jongeuiwon (1921), Jongbeobwon (1922), Buphoe (1925), and Chonghoe (1940). However, the hierarchical institutional structure remained the same. For a study of the institutional structure of Cheondogyo, see Gyutae Jo, “Iljegangjeomgi Cheondogyoui Uihoejedo Doipgwa Unyong,” *Hanguksayeongu*, no. 164 (2014): 237-86.

⁵⁸ This is discussed in more detail in Chapter IV.

organizations—not just ecclesiastical but also educational, medical, and charity institutions—to be organized in a modern and Western way. Many Koreans, not just Korean Christians, experienced a new mode of modern association through Protestant religious institutions or Protestant-run social and educational institutions such as the Young Men's Christian Association⁵⁹; the Korea Women's Christian Temperance Union⁶⁰; the Christian Literature Society of Korea⁶¹; Christian Educational Federation of Korea⁶²; Korea Council of Religious Education⁶³; Korea Medical Association⁶⁴; the Educational Association of Korea⁶⁵; and the Nurses' Association of Korea.⁶⁶

In the mid-nineteenth century, Alexis de Tocqueville saw civil associations as central to American liberal democracy and society. Calling American Protestantism “a democratic and republican religion,” he writes that religious associations were one fundamental constituent of “the immense assemblage of associations” in the United States, and thus significantly contributed to American democracy.⁶⁷ What Tocqueville calls “the art of association”⁶⁸ is central to American civilization and American modernity. The Federal Council and other mission institutions embodied this “art of association” of American civil society within a Korean context.

However, we should not reach the hasty conclusion that missionary-inspired civil associations contributed to liberal democracy in colonial Korea. Civil associations in American

⁵⁹ See B. P. Barnhart, “Young Men's Christian Association,” *KMYB*, 1928, 227-32.

⁶⁰ See B. W. Billings, “Temperance Work in Korea,” *KMF*, October 1928, 206-7.

⁶¹ See Harry A. Rhodes, “The Christian Literature Society,” *KMYB*, 1932, 72-4.

⁶² See H. G. Underwood, “A Significant Meeting,” *KMF*, May 1911, 135-36.

⁶³ See J. V. Lacy, “Korea Council of Religious Education,” *KMYB*, 1928, 73-7.

⁶⁴ See *AMFC*, 1922, 40-1.

⁶⁵ See *AMFC*, 1923, 44.

⁶⁶ Elizabeth J. Shepping, “The Nurses' Association of Korea,” *KMYB*, 1932, 52-4.

⁶⁷ Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, trans. Henry Reeve and Francis Bowen, Vintage Books Edition ed. (New York: Vintage Books, 1990), 1: 300; 2: 106.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 2:110.

liberal democracy, as Tocqueville argues, are indispensable and essential “to prevent the despotism of faction or the arbitrary power of a prince,”⁶⁹ and thus promote democracy. However, colonial rule—which was essentially arbitrary, tyrannical, and despotic—fundamentally blocked and prevented Korean civil associations inspired by missionary civil associations from developing into democratic institutions or making contributions to Korean democracy. In addition, the institutional autonomy of civil associations of Western Protestant missionaries paradoxically created heteronomy in Korean Protestant organizations, partly because Korean institutions were heavily dependent upon missionary institutions primarily for financial support. Nevertheless, missionary religious civil associations helped create a colonial public sphere, the characteristics of which are complex in many ways.⁷⁰

ii) The Federal Council as a Federal Institution

The second modern feature of the Federal Council is federalism as an organizing principle. The Federal Council consisted of denominational or interdenominational missionary organizations as constituent entities, and each missionary organization enjoyed its own institutional autonomy. This reflected the vertical division of power in Anglo-Protestant political and civil organizations. The constituent bodies of the federal institution were mission agencies with their own organizational structures, each having its own constitution. The institutional autonomy of member mission agencies was central to the federal organization, as the constitution of the Federal Council noted:

No decision of the [Federal] Council shall be binding upon or interfere with the autonomy of the Missions as regards the standing of the individual missionaries, their

⁶⁹ Ibid., 1:195.

⁷⁰ This is discussed in more detail in Chapter IV.

Mission methods, the application of Mission funds, and the instructions and regulations of the Home Boards or Assemblies and Conferences under whose direction the various Missions work.⁷¹

The constitution also noted that the Federal Council “has no authority to draw up a common creed or form of government or worship or in any way to limit the full autonomy of the Christian bodies adhering to it.”⁷² The Federal Council was not a supreme ecclesiastical council with binding authority, and did not have a substantial administrative authority. Instead, it possessed only the limited authority enumerated in its constitution, functioning with “advisory powers.”⁷³ Unlike Roman Catholicism characterized by a hierarchical ecclesiastical structure, the Federal Council was decentralized and had no central leadership. However, the consensus-based religious and civil association—institutionalizing consensus among Protestant missionaries and their mission agencies—served as an institutional basis for nationwide united efforts for Protestant “evangelical missions.” The Federal Council as the highest coordinating body integrated many Protestant activities across the nation in a harmonious way, facilitating and guiding many nationwide social and evangelical movements—some of which had a long-lasting and nationwide impact on Korean society in general.

The federal union institution illustrated an Anglo-American Protestant way, a largely American Protestant way, of overcoming denominational schisms and theological disputes for a common cause—that is, “evangelical missions” in colonial Korea—rather than a way to establish one national Korean church. The Protestant way was directed to respect and protect

⁷¹ *AMFC*, 1913, 34.

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ *Ibid.*

the institutional autonomy of member mission organizations. It was through the nationwide federal organization that the plural Christian missions were fused into the singular nationwide Christian movement. Both American denominationalism and its methods of overcoming the conflicts among denominations have made a considerable impact on Korean Protestant denominationalism and Protestant union movement, even to the present day.

iii) Territorial Division and Mutual Benefit of Mission Agencies

One of the major decisions of the General Council was a division of territory among Protestant missions. A series of agreements among missions between 1904 and 1909 set definite geographical limits to the region in which each mission was to work.⁷⁴ This mutual agreement on a territorial division was instrumental and indispensable for evangelical maximization. As Hugh Miller—chairman of the Federal Council in 1919—observed, the territorial division helped Protestant mission agencies “avoid confusion in efforts” and “hasten the evangelization,” and it prevented missionaries from “overlapping and sheep-stealing.”⁷⁵ Mission territories were divided chiefly along the administrative divisions,⁷⁶ which led to shaping territorially-defined denominations. These territorial agreements were abolished in 1935,⁷⁷ when two leading missions—the Northern Presbyterian Mission and the Northern Methodist Mission—celebrated fifty years of mission work in Korea.⁷⁸

⁷⁴ See *AMGC*, 1909, 32-4; C. D. Morris, “Division of the Territory between the Presbyterian and Methodist Missions,” *KMF*, January 1914, 18-9; Chas. A. Sauer, “Denominations by Geography,” *KMF*, October 1939, 205-6.

⁷⁵ Hugh Miller, “The History of Co-Operation and the Federal Council,” *KMF*, December 1934, 257.

⁷⁶ See Appendix: Allocation of Territory among Six Missions in Colonial Korea.

⁷⁷ This abolishment is an indicator that a nationwide union movement had weakened and denominationalism strengthened.

⁷⁸ Sauer, “Denominations by Geography,” 205-6.

The territorial agreement was made not just on the Korean peninsula but also transnationally. The transnational dimension of the territorial division is well highlighted by the mutual agreement among Bible societies performing their mission enterprises in the Korean peninsula. In the early twentieth century, three Bible societies—the British & Foreign Bible Society, the American Bible Society, and the National Bible Society of Scotland—worked together, sometimes competing with each other. In 1919, the British & Foreign Bible Society and the American Bible Society reached a territorial agreement whereby the American Bible Society retired from Korea; in return the British & Foreign Bible Society retired from the Philippines, a new American colony, exchanging mission territories.⁷⁹ As a result, the British & Foreign Bible Society—a member mission body of the Federal Council—became the sole bible agency covering the Korean peninsula. Following the agreement, the National Bible Society of Scotland functioned as part of the British & Foreign Bible Society in Korea.

The territorial agreement driven by the missionary union movement was not only ecclesiastical but also had a modern legal dimension regarding property rights. For example, the “comity agreement” dividing territory between the Northern Presbyterian Mission and the Northern Methodist Mission is full of vocabulary and phrases with modern legal and economic connotations: “exclusive rights,” “exclusive occupation,” “this territory to be more clearly delimited as soon as possible,” “The Presbyterian property ... shall be purchased by the Methodist Mission at a reasonable valuation,” and Seoul as “common territory.”⁸⁰ However, the territorial agreement was not driven only by, as some missionaries often said, “fraternal

⁷⁹ Hugh Miller, “British & Foreign Bible Society Korea Agency,” *KMYB*, 1928, 141-43, quote from 141.

⁸⁰ *AMGC*, 1909, 32-4.

spirit”⁸¹ or “a clear testimony to the essential oneness of all who hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity”⁸²; the agreement was also driven by a modern principle of mutual benefit, embodying the institutional version of what Taylor calls “the modern order of mutual benefit.”⁸³ As Taylor argues, “mutual benefit” among equal and autonomous individuals is a fundamental principle of a modern way of life and the modern normative order. Modern citizens associate themselves for mutual interest. However, the principle of “mutual benefit” does not regulate only agreement among individuals but also agreement among modern organizations with institutional autonomy. In modern society, religious and civil institutions act as autonomous individuals according to mutual benefit. Thus, agreement among institutions for mutual benefit creates a society of societies and an association of associations, promoting civil associations. In the Korea mission field, the mission agencies operated as and were treated like autonomous individuals, who behave and make agreements with other individuals out of mutual interest and self-interest. Nothing illustrates the institutional version of mutual interest better than the “comity” agreement on territorial division. The General Council played a central role in the territorial division, promoting the reciprocity of the comity arrangement. The Federal Council sought to maximize the Christian influence on Korean society in general through mutual benefit between mission bodies, drawing upon the comity agreement of nationwide territorial division.

⁸¹ James Scarth Gale, *Korea in Transition* (New York; Cincinnati: Eaton & Mains; Jennings & Graham, 1909), 238.

⁸² Morris, “Division of the Territory between the Presbyterian and Methodist Missions,” 19.

⁸³ Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 412.

iv) The Federal Council as a Nationwide Organization

The fourth modern characteristic of the Federal Council is that the federal organization was a modern form of nationwide organization. A modern feature of Korean Protestantism is that the new religion had taken off in newly urbanized areas. Unlike the modern West, in which urban areas are more secularized than rural and thus Christianity is less influential there, the Protestant form of Christianity in Korea was largely urban-centered because the new religion had a deep connection with the modern. Missionaries established their mission centers, schools, and stations in urban areas like Seoul and Pyongyang.⁸⁴ Missionaries used urban centers as mission bases and made itinerant and mission trips to nearby villages. Leadership training class and conferences for Korean pastors and church leaders were held in urban centers. The mission stations were fairly evenly distributed over the entire Korean peninsula, being located along the national network of railway stations. The Federal Council was a thread connecting all scattered mission stations and their organizations, taking advantage of railway transportation as a vital modern medium for communication and exchange.

The Federal Council was a unifying force at the national level. The federal organization provided “catholic unity”⁸⁵ on a nationwide scale, facilitating many nationwide union projects, including Chosen Christian College, Severance Union Medical College, Pyongyang Union Christian Hospital, Ewah Women's College, Union Christian College, Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Union Methodist Theological Seminary, Union Methodist Women's Bible School, Seoul Foreign School, Pyongyang Foreign School, Christian Literature Society, Union Hymn Book, Christian Messenger (a union newspaper), Union Publishing House, and Language School.

⁸⁴ For brief overview of 37 major mission stations of six federated missions, see *KMYB*, 1928, 1-135.

⁸⁵ *AMFC*, 1913, 34.

Most Protestant missions and churches were affiliated with the Federal council, but some were not. According to the *KMYB* in 1928, missions and churches not affiliated with the Federal Council (called the “non-federated” group by the Federal Council) include the English Church Mission, Oriental Missionary Society (Holiness), Ella Thing Memorial Mission (Baptist), Plymouth Brethren, Korean Congregational Church (the Kumiai Church in Japan), Salvation Army, Russian Orthodox Church, and Seventh-Day Adventist Church.⁸⁶ In 1932, federated groups accounted for 89% of all Protestants, while unaffiliated Protestants constituted only 11% of all Protestants.⁸⁷

This nationwide missionary organization was crucial in making a national network of Korean churches, and played a decisive role in the formation of the Korean National Christian Council (KNCC), which was organized in 1924.⁸⁸ Throughout the colonial period, Korean Protestantism had been one of the most well-organized social institutions—not just a well-organized religion—in terms of organizational structure and a nationwide network. This partially explains why a religious group that made up only 1-2% of the Korean population in the early part of the twentieth century was able to make such a decisive impact on Korean society in general.

v) The Federal Council and Its Global Connection

The Federal Council embodied a modern mode of association on three levels: as an association of autonomous individuals, as an association of autonomous institutions applying the federal principle, and as a modern form of a nationwide network. However, one more level

⁸⁶ See *KMYB*, 1928, 141-44, 162-69, 182-93.

⁸⁷ *GSRS*, 1932, 58-9. These figures are calculated by the author.

⁸⁸ *AMFC*, 1926, 28-39.

can be added to the modern mode of connection: the global network. The early twentieth century saw the rise of several kinds of internationalism, including international free trade, the emergence of the League of Nations as a council of powerful nation-states, and Marxist-Lenin internationalism. In response, the Christian movement also began to embrace the Christian version of internationalism, whose theological and ecclesiastical expression was the ecumenical movement. Mission bodies in colonial Korea were virtually the only major social institutions, besides the colonial government, that had direct links with Western societies and values at least until the rise of communist internationalism in the 1920s.

The General Council and Federal Council both reflected and promoted Protestant internationalism, deeply involving the Edinburgh Missionary Conference and the International Missionary Council.⁸⁹ In Protestant ecumenical internationalism, denominational mission bodies served as a main channel through which to connect Korean Christians with the world stage. However, the Federal Council as a union organization of denominational mission bodies also played a significant role in coordinating the diverse opinions of denominational mission bodies on Christian international connections, and in representing most Protestant mission bodies as a whole. For example, the Federal Council performed the functions of the Continuation Committee of the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference⁹⁰ and helped the KNCC to participate in the International Council of Missions at Jerusalem in 1928.⁹¹

⁸⁹ Established in 1921, the International Missionary Council made a decisive contribution, along with the World Conference on Faith and Order and the Universal Christian Council for Life and Work, to the formation of the World Council of Churches, which was organized in 1948. See Tislington Tatlow, "The World Conference on Faith and Order," in *A History of the Ecumenical Movement, 1517-1948*, ed. Ruth Rouse and Stephen Neill (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1993), 405-41; Nils Karlstrom, "Movements for International Friendship and Life and Work, 1910-1925," *ibid.*, 509-42.

⁹⁰ *AMFC*, 1918, 16.

⁹¹ *AMFC*, 1926, 34-6.

This global geographical perspective has an epistemological dimension in addition to its political and socio-economic aspects. The pre-modern Sinocentric worldview marginalized Koreans' view of the world geographically, and thus epistemologically. The modern, whether colonial or Western, dramatically shattered the old geographical and epistemological frame, expanding a world-view to the global level. The global connection mediated by missionary organizations (like the Federal Council) worked to cultivate an international mind among Korean Christians and nurture a spirit of internationalism—that is, “the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole.”⁹² Global consciousness was accelerated and materialized by Christian global connections such as the Edinburgh Missionary Conference or the International Missionary Conference. Christianity was a channel through which transnational Western connections flowed into Korea, and Koreans could now make direct contact with the West. In this international connection, the Federal Council functioned as a communication hub for Christian internationalism, fostering unprecedented ties between Korean Christians and transnational institutions.

⁹² Roland Robertson, *Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture* (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage, 1992), 8.

II. Protestantism, Civilization, and Religion in Colonial Korea

1. The Korean Quest for Modern Civilization, the Civilization-Oriented Mission of Protestant Missionaries, and Colonialism as Civilizational Rule

i) The Modern Western View of Religion and the Religious Landscape in Korea

Many Protestant missionaries and Western observers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries often claimed that Koreans were very irreligious. For example, in the late nineteenth century, Isabella Bird-Bishop wrote that “the religious faculty” among Koreans “is absent, there are no religious ideas to appeal to. ... The Korean has got on so well without a religion, in his own opinion, that he does not want to be troubled with one, specially a religion of restraint and sacrifice which has no worldly good to offer.”¹ Similarly, in 1908 Fred McKenzie said that “the Koreans were a singularly non-religious people.”² In 1927, the *Annual Report of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church* summarized the religious landscape in colonial Korea as “the relatively strong position of Christianity and the prevailing irreligion of the Korean people.” The report concluded that “there is no religious animosity... It is rather indifference to or disbelief in any religion... And it is easy to get converts but hard to hold them. Korea is suffering from religious apathy.”³ The missionary view of “the prevailing irreligion of the Korean people” was validated by modern religious statistics compiled and published by the colonial government.⁴ According to the statistics, the Korean religious population in colonial Korea accounted for only 2.02% of the Korean population in 1911, 3.92%

¹ Isabella L. Bird-Bishop, *Korea & Her Neighbours: A Narrative of Travel, with an Account of the Recent Vicissitudes and Present Position of the Country* (London: John Murray, 1898), 1: 67.

² Fred A. McKenzie, *The Tragedy of Korea* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1908), 29. See also William Woodville Rockhill, *China's Intercourse with Korea from the XVth Century to 1895* (London: Luzac & Co., 1905), 54-5.

³ *Annual Report of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, 1927, 152.

⁴ For example, see *Ibid.*

in 1920, 3.93% in 1930, and 4.82% in 1940.⁵ These modern statistics present Korea as a largely irreligious society without religious vitality.

However, the irreligion thesis is not the whole story of missionary view on Koreans' attitude toward religion. Other missionaries made different observations, arguing that Koreans' religious practices were predicated on the belief in a world full of spirits.⁶ For example, in 1898 James Scarth Gale witnessed that "here we discover the marks of heathenism. Their huts are the dwelling places of idolatry. They worship various spirits or gods in each room, one for the kitchen, one for the outer chamber, etc."⁷ In her 1931 book, *KMF* editor Ellasue Wagner noted that Koreans were "too religious," like Athenians in the time of the apostle Paul: "The Korean's religious beliefs, his superstitions shape every event of his life. They rule from birth to death, and after, for even the place of burial and whether or not his bones must be moved from hither to yon are all determined by religious rites."⁸ Many Protestant missionaries saw Koreans as very religious, noting that Koreans' religious beliefs and practices were full of "superstitions."

Both views offer contrasting interpretations of the religious landscape in Korea, but they share a common epistemological ground. They perceive and analyze the Korean religious landscape through the lens of a modern Western concept, "religion," which, arguably, is neither objective nor universal. As Talal Asad notes, "religion" is not "a transhistorical and transcultural

⁵ The percentage of the religious population among Koreans is calculated by the author based on the total population and the population of Koreans who identify as religious. For the statistics of religion among Koreans, see *Chōsen Sōtokufu Tōkei Nenpō 1920* (Seoul: Chōsen Sōtokufu), 64-5; *GSRS*, 1930, 14-5, 28-30, 41, 54-7; *GSRS*, 1940, 24-5, 46-9, 61, 80-83. For statistics of the total Korean population from 1910 to 1940, see *Chōsen Sōtokufu Tōkei Nenpō 1942* (Seoul: Chōsen Sōtokufu), 2-3.

⁶ For a typical perspective of Protestant missionaries on Korean religions in colonial Korea, see Horace Grant Underwood, *The Religions of Eastern Asia* (New York: The Macmillan company, 1910); Charles Allen Clark, *Religions of Old Korea* (New York: Revell, 1932). For a good overview of missionary studies of Korean religion, see Chong-so Kim, *Seoyanginui Hanguk Jonggyo Yeongu* (Seoul: Seoul Daehakkyo Chulpanbu, 2006).

⁷ James Scarth Gale, *Korean Sketches* (New York: Young People's Missionary Movement, 1898), 243.

⁸ Ellasue Canter Wagner, *Korea the Old and the New* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1931), 128.

phenomenon.”⁹ The term “religion” is a historical concept developed in Western culture. Thus, Western missionaries failed to properly grasp or describe the Korean religious matrix when they viewed it from a modern Western reference point.¹⁰ Not only Protestant missionaries but the colonial religious statistics also failed to fully represent Korean religions since the perspective of the colonial authorities on “religion” was determined largely by the Western modern definition of religion.¹¹ This failure was further intensified by the legal definition of religion put forward by colonial authorities, which differentiated officially recognized religions from “quasi-religious groups,” Confucian worship, and Shinto Shrine ceremonies.¹²

One of the most important features of Korean traditional religions is that their membership is not exclusive. However, the modern Western concept of religion did not grasp the non-exclusive nature of Korean religious life because the Western view presumes that religious membership is exclusive, reflecting Christianity as an exclusive religious community. Unlike the Western experience, exclusive religious commitment is not easy to find in multi-religious pre-modern East Asian societies in which diverse religious traditions such as Shamanism in Korea, Daoism in China, or Shinto in Japan coexisted with Confucianism and Buddhism. In pre-modern Korea, religious affiliations were rarely exclusive, and Koreans had no

⁹ Talal Asad, *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), 28.

¹⁰ This missionary view on religion was echoed by many contemporary Koreans. For example, see H. Namkung, “Presbyterian Church of Chosen,” *KMYB*, 1932, 8; Nak-chun Paik, *The History of Protestant Missions in Korea, 1832-1910*, 3rd ed. (Seoul, Korea: Yonsei University Press, 1980), 19, 27.

¹¹ The Japanese translated the term “religion” as shukyo, and the term was widely accepted by people in both Korea and China. For a good overview of the Japanese translation of religion as shukyo, see Jun’ichi Isomae, *Religious Discourse in Modern Japan: Religion, State, and Shintō* (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 27-36. See also Vincent Goossaert, “The Concept of Religion in China and the West,” *Diogenes* 52, no. 1 (2005): 13-20.

¹² This is discussed in more detail below in section 2.

difficulty reconciling several religious beliefs and practices.¹³ The same person could perform shamanistic rituals, Buddhist worship, or Confucian rites at different occasions at different times.¹⁴ Indeed, many ordinary Koreans were Buddhist, Confucian, or Shamanist at the same time,¹⁵ although some strict religious observers such as puritan-styled neo-Confucianists resisted these forms of interactions. There was no exact or exclusive criterion by which Buddhists, Confucians, or Shamanists could be identified.¹⁶ However, the introduction of Christianity in the modern period radically transformed the perception and practice of religious teachings. With the rise of Christianity in Korea, exclusive religious commitment became regarded as a crucial component defining religious membership, distinguishing Christianity from Korean traditional religions.

In conclusion, the modern concept of religion prevented both missionaries and colonialists from grasping the distinctive nature of the religious landscape in Korea. They touched only the surface of Korean spirituality since their accounts were shaped by a Western view of religion. However, the modern Western view of religion offered a prescription of how a

¹³ Arvind Sharma insightfully highlights how “multiple religious identity” is a prevalent attitude among many Asian cultures, including India. See Arvind Sharma, *Problematizing Religious Freedom* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2011), 200-2, 227.

¹⁴ For an overview of the non-exclusive nature of Korean traditional religions, see Don Baker, “The Religious Revolution in Modern Korean History: From Ethics to Theology and from Ritual Hegemony to Religious Freedom,” *The Review Of Korean Studies* (2006): 258-64. Missionaries had made a similar observation regarding the non-exclusive nature of the Korean experience with religion. See Homer B. Hulbert, *The Passing of Korea* (New York: Doubleday Page & Company, 1906), 403-4; Wagner, *Korea the Old and the New*, 128-29.

¹⁵ The non-exclusiveness of Korean religions prompted religious syncretism, creating the Korean version of a religiously pluralistic society. For a good study of the “syncretic” nature of Korean religions and the non-exclusiveness of Korean traditional religions, see David Chung, *Syncretism: The Religious Context of Christian Beginnings in Korea* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2001).

¹⁶ Non-exclusive religious affiliation in Japan and Korea is not just a traditional phenomenon but also a modern one. For example, in modern Japan the total number of adherents to the various religions often exceeds the total population of the nation, though, as many experts argue, the influence of religions in the Japanese society and life has decreased over time. See Nihon Tōkei Kyōkai, *Nihon Chōki Tōkei Sōran* Vol. 5 (Tōkyō: Nihon Tōkei Kyōkai, 1987), 314-5; Kimiko Tanaka, “Limitations for Measuring Religion in a Different Cultural Context—the Case of Japan,” *The Social science journal* 47, no. 4 (2010): 845-52.

modern religion should be constituted. In the modern and colonial legal frame, non-Christian Korean religions had to reconstruct themselves as a modern religious community in order to survive as a “religion” in the modern sense and be recognized by the colonial legal system.

ii) Korean Aspirations for Modern Civilization and Protestant Missions

a) The Korean View on Christianity as Civilization

When Protestantism was accepted into Korea in the late nineteenth century, Koreans saw the modern “religion” largely as a central teaching of Western civilization.¹⁷ For Koreans, the modern religion did not mean an individualistic belief but a modern way of life, which was fundamentally linked to human relations, economy, and politics. Koreans did not understand Christianity through fideism in the Kierkegaardian sense¹⁸; rather, they viewed Christian teachings as a foundation of modern Western civilization and a normative frame of modern humanity. For example, an 1897 editorial of *Dongnip Sinmun*, one of first modern newspapers in Korea, wrote that “any civilized nation is a nation which has a faith in either Catholicism or Protestantism” and “Christianity is necessary for *civilization and enlightenment*” (munmyeong-gaehwa, in Korean).¹⁹ Another Korean newspaper wrote in 1898 that “Protestantism is fundamental to civilization and the wealth of a nation,” and “What is called today *civilization and enlightenment* comes from this religion.”²⁰ Though he was not Christian, prominent Korean literary figure, Yi Kwang Su argued that “Christianity brought to Korea the dawning light of

¹⁷ For a study on the relationship between civilization and Christianity in Korea, see Songman Chang, “Gaehanggi Hanguksahoeui Jonggyo Gaenyeom Hyeongseonge Gwanhan Yeongu” (PhD diss., Seoul National University, 1992), 51-4; Hyonbom Cho, “Gaesingyoui Munmyeonghwa Damrone Gwanhan Yeongu,” *Jonggyomunhwabipyong* 1 (2002): 129.

¹⁸ See Søren Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling and, the Sickness Unto Death*, trans. Walter Lowrie (Princeton University Press, 2013).

¹⁹ Editorial, *Dongnip Sinmun*, December 23, 1897.

²⁰ Editorial, *Maeil Sinmun*, May 28, 1898.

[Western] civilization.”²¹ In 1906, C. E. Sharp, a member missionary of the General Council, highlighted the critical place of the civilizational “motive” for Koreans who converted to Christianity. He noted that Koreans believed that “the nations styled Christian are the ones that today possess the highest civilization and culture. ... Christianity means a kind of civilization only. They do not distinguish Christianity itself and some of its results. These people are calling for schools and Western learning and Western culture.”²² Many Koreans, both Christian and non-Christian, saw Christianity as a civilizing force and missionaries as teachers of modern civilization rather than religious propagandists or evangelists.²³ The Korean quest for modern civilization was a driving force behind the enthusiastic interest in the new religion.

Two kinds of Korean philosophical and cultural background made it possible for Koreans to zealously accept Protestantism as a modern way of life rather than a belief system. First, the Confucian holistic view of world and life promoted the Korean acceptance of Christianity as a fundamental teaching of Western civilization. East Asian intellectuals and people, who had never developed the modern Western term “religion,” generally viewed Confucianism and Buddhism as a form of “Learning” or the “Way,” calling them Confucian Learning and Buddhist Learning or the Confucian Way and the Buddhist Way.²⁴ In this sense, Catholicism was named Western Learning, and Shinto was translated as “Way of the Gods.” In pre-modern Chosun Korea, Confucian scholars and officials understood Neo-Confucianism as the Korean way of life,

²¹ Kwang Su Yi, “The Benefits Which Christianity Has Conferred on Korea,” *KMF*, March 1918, 34.

²² C. E. Sharp, “Motives for Seeking Christ,” *ibid.*, August 1906, 182-83. See also “The State of the Case,” *KMF*, May 1910, 121-23.

²³ For example, see Yi, “The Benefits which Christianity has Conferred on Korea,” 34; W. M. Barid, “Teaching Teachers,” *ibid.*, September 1906, 205-6. See also Lillias H. Underwood, *Underwood of Korea: Being an Intimate Record of the Life and Work of the Rev. H. G. Underwood, D.D., LL.D., for Thirty-One Years a Missionary of the Presbyterian Board in Korea* (New York: Fleming H. Revell company, 1918), 167-71.

²⁴ See William Theodore De Bary, *East Asian Civilizations: A Dialogue in Five Stages* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1988); Jang-tae Keum, *Confucianism and Korean Thoughts* (Seoul: Jimoondang Pub. Co., 2000).

calling its teaching as Learning of the Way (Dohak, in Korean).²⁵ This teaching provided an organic view of life, family, state, and world. The Confucian holistic understanding helped Koreans to accept Christianity as a comprehensive teaching of Western civilization. This Korean Confucian framework for seeing the world ironically made the conversion of Koreans to Protestantism fairly smooth at a time when Confucianism as a political ideology was collapsing. At the turn of the twentieth century, Koreans accepted the modern religion as a fundamental modern way of life rather than a privatized religious belief, as Koreans five centuries ago had accepted Confucian teachings as a fundamental way of life.

Second, Koreans' non-dualistic understanding of the material and the spiritual is another philosophical and cultural foundation on which Koreans accepted the civilizational form of Christianity. Tracing the origin of the modern "affirmation of ordinary life" to the early modern period, Charles Taylor sees this affirmation as a crucial modern Western feature, central to the rise of the secular in the modern West.²⁶ In the East Asian context, however, the affirmation of ordinary life was already prevalent in the pre-modern Confucian-dominated society. The Confucian affirmation of ordinary life was rooted largely in a non-dualistic understanding of the spiritual and the material.²⁷ It was reinforced by Korean Shaman traditions, a fundamental element of Korean religious life until today, which is not ascetic or

²⁵ See Keum, *Confucianism and Korean Thoughts*, 81-124.

²⁶ Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1989), Part III "The Affirmation of Ordinary Life," 209-302.

²⁷ For an introduction to non-dualistic Korean philosophy, see Hyo-Dong Lee, *Spirit, Qi, and the Multitude a Comparative Theology for the Democracy of Creation* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2014). See also Michael C. Kalton, *The Four-Seven Debate: An Annotated Translation of the Most Famous Controversy in Korean Neo-Confucian Thought* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994), xv-xxxv.

self-denying but rather this-worldly.²⁸ The non-dualistic Korean philosophy and religious life provided a favorable environment in which Christianity was seen as an essential teaching of Western civilization, and so the civilizing mission of Protestant missionaries was received with considerable enthusiasm.

b) Protestant Missionaries and the Civilizing Mission

The civilizing mission of Protestant missionaries corresponded well with Koreans' acceptance of the modern religion not as private belief but as modern civilization. Protestant missionaries were modernizers of Korean society and teachers of modern civilization. Missionary institutions were a civilizational conduit through which Western ideas and values, not just Christian beliefs and practices, flowed into Koreans. Christian buildings and facilities functioned not only as places of worship but as social centers where Koreans could learn and experience Western civilization and knowledge. The civilizational teachings of Protestant missionaries were suited to the needs and expectations of Koreans striving for modern civilization, which they believed to be necessary conditions for national and personal survival in the modern frame. In this sense, when converting to Christianity, Koreans were baptized not just in the name of Jesus Christ but also into modern civilization. Koreans who became member of the church or were taught in mission schools also underwent a baptism into modernity.

The mission enterprise of Protestant missionaries was marked by a grand transformative narrative of self, society, and world. Immediately before Korea became a victim of Japanese

²⁸ It should be noted that Korean Buddhist teachings functioned as a basis for ascetic practices, and the Buddhist influence promoted a non-theistic dualism of its own sense. However, under Confucian rule, which dominated Chosun Korea for nearly five centuries, Buddhist teachings were marginalized in many quarters of Korean life. For an overview of the Confucian critique of ascetic Buddhist life and practices, see, Jang-tae Keum, *Yugyowa Hanguk Sasang* (Seoul: Seonggyungwandaehakgyo Chulpanbu, 1980), 93-136.

Imperialism, Horace G. Underwood—a leading figure in both the General Council and the Federal Council—described his grand vision of Korea:

Let us consider the vision of the future, promised and justified by our review of the past. It seems to me that I can see plainly before me to-day a new Korea, a nation emancipated, completely emancipated, politically, intellectually, spiritually, from the thralldom of misrule, ignorance, and superstition—a Christian Korea. ... I have a vision of Christian homes, Christian villages, Christian rulers, and Christian government; and, guiding, controlling, influencing it all I see an organized Church with a competent, well-trained, thoroughly consecrated native ministry, a united non-sectarian Church of Christ.²⁹

As Underwood dreamt it, Protestant missionaries sought to create a Christian nation on the Korean peninsula through Christianization. Although they did not attempt to establish a theocracy, many missionaries, like American Puritans, found ways to establish a Christianized nation in terms of not just religion but also politics and social arrangements, envisioning the establishment of a new “city on a hill”³⁰; American missionaries in particular hoped to create a country reshaped after their own nostalgic longing for an idealized puritan society. After the annexation of Korea by Japan missionaries refrained from publicly promoting this sociopolitical vision of a “Christian Korea,” but they never abandoned their own grand social vision. Under colonial rule, they often expressed a non-political and economically oriented Christian vision of colonial Korea. For example, they dreamt of “establishing a permanent industry for the Korean

²⁹ H. G. Underwood, “Twenty Year's Missionary Work in Korea,” *The Missionary Review of the World* 28, no. 5 (1905): 375-76.

³⁰ See Daniel M. Davies, “Building a City on a Hill in Korea: The Work of Henry G. Appenzeller,” *Church History* 61, no. 4 (1992): 422-35.

Christians with Christian capital and run on Christian principles,”³¹ believing that an economy based on “Christian principles” was essential to the Christianization of Korean society.

This grand narrative of making a “Christian Korea” out of the non-Christian society was theologically and practically embodied in the dual Protestant mission, a Christian project both Christianizing and civilizing Korean society and people. The twin pillars of this mission, like the double helix of DNA structure, were inseparably intertwined, being twisted and curved to each other. The double helix structure was the product of what Taylor calls “a secular age.” In “a secular age” of the modern West, in which the secular provides modern “conditions of beliefs,”³² Christian groups ceaselessly reconfigured themselves to adapt to the secularizing process, resisting any effort to marginalize religion and pushing for the maximization of religious force in the secular world. In the secular frame, Christian teachings were reformulated in the modern political and socio-economic context so that Western civilization and Christian teachings were well reconciled.

In “a secular age,” the Christian mission itself was also reconfigured in the secular frame. The Protestant mission in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries was a modern mission, significantly different from an ancient mission like that of Paul the apostle, or even an early modern Catholic mission like that of Mateo Ricci.³³ In the modern Protestant mission, the modern secular became a fundamental part of the religious project, and most missionaries,

³¹ C. H. Deal, “A Self-Supporting Industrial Department,” *KMF*, October 1918, 223.

³² Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007), 20.

³³ In the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, in which Mateo Ricci (1552-1610) was active in Catholic China missions, the secular frame in Europe was not strong enough to influence Christian teachings. Influenced by this historical conditions, Ricci, unlike modern Protestant missionaries, did not view Catholic missions in China through the prism of civilization-driven teachings. In Ming China, he did not attempt to replace neo-Confucianism, a philosophically and politically dominant teaching, with Catholic teachings, and instead, he worked to make Catholicism compatible and complementary with Confucianism. See Matteo Ricci, *The True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven (T'ien-Chu Shih-I)*, trans. Douglas Lancashire, A Chinese-English ed. (Taipei: Institut Ricci, 1985).

who had secular as well as Christian education, saw Western political, educational, economic, and moral endeavors as essential parts of Christian teachings. In the mission fields, the missionaries both consciously and unconsciously saw themselves as modernizers, believing that the civilizing mission was central to a modern Christian mission. To put it simply, the Christian modernity practiced and embraced by Protestant missionaries was embedded in a “secular age,” largely reflecting Western modernity.

In many non-Western mission fields, the civilizing mission often took the form of cultural imperialism and was often criticized as the “moral equivalent for imperialism.”³⁴ However, in the Korea mission field, the secular elements and values of Protestant missions were welcomed by Koreans because Koreans enthusiastically sought the civilizing elements of the modern West. Koreans were therefore not passive objects but active subjects in receiving and advancing the Christian civilizing mission.³⁵

c) Civilization-Oriented Protestant Missions and the Blurred Boundary between Secular and Religious

The Christian dual mission—civilizing and Christianizing—was a major source of internal tension between liberal-minded and conservative missionaries, although the secular frame

³⁴ William R. Hutchison, *Errand to the World: American Protestant Thought and Foreign Missions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 91-124, quote from 91. See also Torben Christensen and William R. Hutchison, *Missionary Ideologies in the Imperialist Era, 1880-1920: Papers from the Durham Consultation, 1981*, 2nd ed. ed. (Århus, Denmark: Aros, 1983); Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., “The Missionary Enterprise and Theories of Imperialism,” in *The Missionary Enterprise in China and America*, ed. John King Fairbank (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974), 336-73.

³⁵ It is also important to note that the tripartite frame in colonial Korea made it difficult for Protestant missionaries to act as cultural imperialists. The presence of Japanese non-Western imperialism effectively prevented Western missionaries from playing the role of Western imperialists. However, the defeat of Japan and victory of the United States in the Pacific War changed this dynamic, providing favorable conditions in which American missionaries could exert a more imperialistic influence on Korea. Immediately after the liberation of Korea from Japanese rule in 1945, the American Military Government (1945-48) was established and many Protestant missionaries had a deep connection with the government. Missionaries were a crucial part of American imperialism in the post-colonial era. For further discussion, see Concluding Remarks.

tightly bound the dual missions into a double helical structure. Nevertheless, the Korean quest for modern civilization promoted and encouraged the civilizational side of Protestant missions. The Christian civilizing mission and Koreans' attitude toward Christianity as a civilizational teaching combined to contribute to the rise of civilization-oriented Christian teachings in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The civilization-oriented Protestant mission blurred conventional divisions in the mission field of the secular and the religious. In the Korea mission field, the conventional Christian binary of the religious and the secular was, although not entirely shattered, reconfigured in a way that had a porous, blurry boundary. Illuminating examples of this blurring can be found in the forms of modern education taught in Christian schools. In modern education, no hard and fast line could be drawn between the spiritual and the secular, and there was instead a constant flux between the two. In addition, many modern missionaries themselves easily crossed the boundary of the secular and the religious. For example, Horace Newton Allen, widely recognized as the first Presbyterian missionary in Korea, went to Korea as a medical missionary but became a leading diplomat in Korea for the American government, and also took on a number of business interests in Korean products.³⁶ Horace H. Underwood, a leading figure of the Federal Council during the colonial era, became an adviser to the United States Army Military Government in Korea (1945-8).³⁷

³⁶ For a study of his missionary and secular work in Korea, see Fred Harvey Harrington, *God, Mammon, and the Japanese: Dr. Horace N. Allen and Korean-American Relations, 1884-1905* (Madison, Wis.: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1944).

³⁷ See Horace H. Underwood, *Tragedy and Faith in Korea* (New York: Friendship Press, 1951); An Jong Chol, "No Distinction between Sacred and Secular: Horace H. Underwood and Korean-American Relations, 1934-1948," *Seoul Journal of Korean Studies* 23, no. 2 (2010): 225-46.

The civilization-oriented Protestant mission also blurred the conventional division in the mission field between “direct” and “indirect” mission. Many scholars in Korean Studies often analyze the Christian mission, and specifically the Protestant mission, by distinguishing “direct” from “indirect” mission.³⁸ Educational and medical missions were categorized as an “indirect” means of promoting evangelization, while evangelism itself was a “direct” mission. However, this division is not appropriate for understanding the civilization-oriented nature of the Protestant mission. In Korea, the twin processes of the modern mission—evangelizing and civilizing—were mutually constitutive. What is called “indirect” mission was essential to the modern Protestant mission in Korea. Though conservative and liberal missionaries did not agree over relations between “evangelistic” and non-evangelistic missions,³⁹ they nonetheless held a broad definition of “evangelical missions” (as we explored in Chapter I). This broad definition helped blur the boundary between direct and indirect missions until the rise of fundamentalism led to a sharp division among missionaries. The civilization-oriented mission also disrupted the dividing line between believers and outsiders. The double-stranded Protestant missions pushed missionaries to go beyond the insider/outsider binary although church membership was emphasized. Many Protestant missionaries in Korea sought to spread Christian social teachings to many non-Christians, seeing the expansion of the teachings as a crucial part of their mission.

³⁸ For example, see Songman Chang, “Iljesidae Jonggyo Gaenyeomui Pyeonseong: Jonggyogaenyeomui Jedohwawa Naemyeonhwa,” in *Jonggyowa Sikminji Geundae*, ed. Hae-dong Yun and Jun’ichi Isomae (Seoul: Chaekgwahamkke, 2013), 78. Some authors argue that the Protestant mission was concerned more with the “indirect mission” and the Catholic mission more with the “direct mission.” See Seonja Yun, *Iljeui Jonggyojeongchaekgwa Cheonjugyohoe* (Seoul: Gyeongmunhwa, 2002), 41-3; Gwangcheol Shin, *Cheonjugyowa Gaesingyo, Mannamgwa Galdeungui Yeoksa* (Seoul: Hanguk Kidokkyo Yeoksa Yeonguso, 1998), 63, 77.

³⁹ The Federal Council report often grouped the mission enterprise into four categories: “evangelistic,” “educational,” “medical,” and “others,” which included literature work and social and charity centers. All four categories constituted “evangelical missions” in a complex way. See, “Statistics,” *AMFC*, 1926, no page; *AMFC*, 1927, 32.

iii) Civilization and the Colonial Power

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Protestant missions in Korea were characterized by a civilization-oriented mission enterprise. However, after the annexation of Korea by Japan in 1910, the civilization-oriented Protestant mission was fundamentally challenged by the increasing role of Japanese colonizers in modernization.

Japanese colonial rule was not perceived to be legitimate since the annexation and the colonial rule were against the will of the Korean people; the colonial power had no political legitimacy derived from the consent of the governed in the modern democratic sense. Instead, colonialists sought to legitimize their rule by claiming that the Japanese rule would civilize and modernize Korea.⁴⁰ They believed that political stability could be attained through modern progress and advancement in civilization, for which most Koreans were yearning. Thus, Masakata Terauchi—the final resident-general and first governor-general of Korea—in his official document titled *Proclamation of Annexation by Resident-General* promised that colonial rule would promote “civilization” for the Korean people,⁴¹ emphasizing that colonial education and religious freedom were crucial to the advancement of “civilization” in the colony. Celebrating the fifteenth anniversary of the colonial regime in 1925, Governor-General Makoto Saitō promised that if Koreans cooperated with the colonial government, it would “place [colonial Korea] on a par with the most civilized countries of the world, so that its eighteen million inhabitants may for ever enjoy the full bliss of an enlightened rule.”⁴² In 1937, in its *Annual Report* the colonial regime praised itself for twenty-seven years of colonial rule in Korea

⁴⁰ For a study of the impact of the civilization paradigm on Japanese colonialism on the Korean peninsula, see Andre Schmid, *Korea between Empires, 1895-1919* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002).

⁴¹ Masakata Terauchi, “Proclamation of Annexation by Resident-General,” *Annual Report*, 1910-1911, 244.

⁴² Makoto Saitō, “Governor-General's Statement on the Fifteenth Anniversary of the Present Regime in Chosen,” *Annual Report*, 1924-1926, 192.

by claiming that Japanese rule “brought with it many of the advantages of modern civilized life to the Korean people.”⁴³ Believing that the promotion of modern civilization was essential to maintaining political stability in colonial Korea, Japanese colonizers sought to establish political legitimacy of their rule by drawing upon the civilization paradigm.

This civilizational discourse of colonialists was a basis for the colonial ideology condemning what colonialists called the “corrupt” and backward Chosun dynasty of Korea.⁴⁴ Japanese colonizers claimed that Japanese “civilized” rule was “the best way to save” Chosun Korea,⁴⁵ boasting that the “civilized” colonial regime embodied “benevolent rule.”⁴⁶ The argument of “civilized” rule rested upon a series of contrasts: civilization and barbarianism, development and underdevelopment, advanced and backward, old and new.⁴⁷ This recurring contrasts between the supposedly incompetent and “corrupt” Korean former government and the modern and “civilized” current Japanese government functioned as an ideological legitimization to justify Japanese rule as benevolent colonialism.

This civilizational discourse was used to glorify Japanese colonial rule in Korea. Promotion of the “welfare” or “happiness” of Koreans was a key indicator to show civilizational advancement. However, the colonial power defined these modern terms without recognizing or respecting individual happiness, human dignity, and freedom.⁴⁸ Instead, advancement in

⁴³ *Annual Report, 1937-1938*, 6. See also “Address by Mr. R. Ohno, Vice Governor-General,” *AMFC*, 1936, 25.

⁴⁴ *Annual Report, 1922-1923*, 92.

⁴⁵ *Annual Report, 1937-1938*, 2-3; See also Kazushige Ugaki, *The Bright Future for Chosen* (Keijo, Chosen: Foreign Affairs Section, 1934), 9-10.

⁴⁶ Terauchi, “Proclamation of Annexation by Resident-General,” 242.

⁴⁷ See *Annual Report, 1918-1921*, 1; *Annual Report, 1937-1938*, 3; “Address of Hon. Rentaro Midzuno,” *AMFC*, 1921, 17.

⁴⁸ For example, see “Imperial Rescript on Annexation,” *Annual Report, 1910-1911*, 237. See also “Declaration on Annexation Communicated to Powers Concerned,” *Annual Report, 1910-1911*, 240; “Instruction to Residents by the Resident-General,” *Annual Report, 1910-1911*, 246-7; “Governor-General's Message to the Governors of the Provinces,” *Annual Report, 1936-1937*, 224.

civilization was measured largely in the collective sense, like expansion of modern education or economic development. Aggregated statistical figures, as shown in the *Annual Report*, were presented to support modern progress in colonial Korea. The collective measurement presented by colonialists was used to promote a colonial utilitarianism. The colonial version of a greatest happiness principle provided justification for colonial rule just as utilitarianism was used in the modern West to support slavery.⁴⁹

Advancement in civilization is an overarching theme in modern Korean history from the late nineteenth century to before the end of the Second World War. In modern colonial Korea, the impacts and influences of civilizational paradigms were complex, because the civilization-oriented Protestant mission, colonialist claim of “civilized” rule, and Korean desire for civilization intermingled and interacted. Though most Korean people still saw the colonial rule as illegitimate, colonialist efforts to promote modern civilization significantly contributed to the stabilization of colonial rule. As long as colonial authorities promoted civilizational advancement, the resistance among Koreans to the colonial regime was weakened. Koreans’ desire for modern civilization facilitated the civilization-oriented Protestant mission as many Koreans enthusiastically accepted the Protestant form of Christianity as a foundation for engaging with modern Western civilization.

These civilizational discourses, on the other hand, brought colonialists and missionaries together, even though there were tensions over the interpretation and understanding of modern civilization—as in the case of disagreement over religious freedom or educational freedom. Colonialists acknowledged the missionary contribution to the advancement of

⁴⁹ Ian Shapiro, *The Moral Foundations of Politics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 39.

modern civilization among Koreans. For instance, when Government-General Administrative Superintendent Rentaro Mizuno delivered a speech to the Federal Council, he said that “It can be said without any appearance of flattery that [Korea] owes much of her advancement in civilization to your labours.”⁵⁰ Missionaries and colonialists were, he claimed, “co-workers” for the advancement of modern civilization in Korean.⁵¹ In response, missionaries of the Federal Council showed their “appreciation” of the request by the colonial government for “cooperation” between colonialists and missionaries in promoting modern civilization among Koreans.⁵²

In sum, the “civilized” rule of colonialists and civilization-oriented Protestant missions interacted in complicated and convoluted ways with Koreans’ pursuit of a modern civilization, and this interaction was a contributing factor to the formation of Korean modernity in colonial Korea.

vi) Civilization-oriented Religion and Faith-centered Religion

The civilizational dimension of Protestantism facilitated Koreans’ acceptance of the new religion at the turn of the twentieth century. This civilizational element in the mission remained strong until at least the late 1920s, when the civilization-oriented Protestant mission faced a turning point. Throughout the colonial era, civilization-oriented Protestantism was gradually transformed into a faith-centered religion. This transformation was propelled by both external and internal factors.

⁵⁰ “Address of Hon. Rentaro Midzuno,” *AMFC*, 1921, 17.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 20. See also “Address of M. S. Ariyoshi, Administrative Superintendent of the Government General,” *AMFC*, 1923, 25-6; “Address of Mr. Shimo-Oka, Administrative Superintendent in the Government General,” *AMFC*, 1925, 28-9; “Address of Mr. Imaida, Vice Governor General of Chosen,” *AMFC*, 1934, 40.

⁵² “Report of the Committee on Government Relations,” *AMFC*, 1925, 24; See also “Report of Committee on Government Relations,” *AMFC*, 1923, 27; “Committee on Government Relations,” *AMFC*, 1931, 20.

The colonial regime was an external factor driving this transformation. Japanese colonizers saw civilizational motives prevalent among Korean Christians as a political threat because civilizational discourse and practices necessarily involved political, educational, and social movements, which had strong nationalistic implications in the Korean context. Colonialists therefore sought to deprive the civilization-driven Protestant movement of any “political” potential,⁵³ and the colonial power demanded that missionaries confine their mission activities to “purely religious work without any intermeddling in political affairs.”⁵⁴ It led to suppression of what colonialists considered to be the “political” possibilities in Korean Christianity. The colonial efforts to confine Christian and missionary enterprise to “purely religious work” put a fundamental limit on the nationwide expansion of civilization-oriented Christian movement. In addition, the legal definition of “religion” imposed by the colonial power further delimited the movement, accelerating the differentiation of “purely religious work” from the civilizational form of Christian missions like educational and social work.⁵⁵

The civilization-oriented Protestant movement was also challenged by a growing number of conservative missionaries themselves, who emphasized the centrality of faith in the Christian movement. Since the outset of the missionary enterprise, conservative missionaries associated with the General Council or the Federal Council had been worried about the depth and sincerity of Korean conversion to the Christian faith. Sharply distinguishing Christian faith and Western civilization, they were suspicious of Koreans’ motives for the conversion. For example, Sharp noted that many Koreans in the first decade of the twentieth century converted

⁵³ *Annual Report*, 1911-1912, 38; See also *Annual Report*, 1910-1911, 75-7.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 51-2.

⁵⁵ This topic shall be discussed fully below.

to Christianity in pursuit of modern civilization, or for “protection and power”⁵⁶ in a politically turbulent time. Thus, he lamented that “many of them do not know what spiritual hunger is, and when the spiritual nature of Christianity is explained to them they turn from it.”⁵⁷ Many Koreans interested in Christianity did not distinguish between “spiritual hunger” and civilizational hunger, but conservative-minded missionaries emphasized the primacy of “spiritual” conversion. For the missionaries, many of Korean Christians appeared to be a nominal Christian.

Nevertheless, the civilization-driven Protestant mission remained strong until the rise of the fundamentalist-modernist controversy in the 1930s. Throughout most of the colonial period, civilizational impulses dominated Protestant missionaries and especially their umbrella organization, the Federal Council. Conservative missionaries did not seriously challenge the civilization-oriented missionary enterprise because they believed that the mission approach was a major contributor to the rapid growth of Korean churches. However, as the colonial regime increasingly played a significant role in the expansion of modern civilization, an emphatically conservative voice emerged. For instance, when many liberal-minded missionaries of the Federal Council saw mission hospitals as a “Christianizing agency,”⁵⁸ not just an excellent evangelistic agency, some conservative-minded missionaries posed a challenge to the civilization-oriented mission enterprise by asking “Why maintain mission hospitals in a country where the [colonial] government is providing medical care ?”⁵⁹ As the modernizing role of the colonial power expanded, fundamentalist and conservative critiques of the civilization-

⁵⁶ Sharp, “Motives for Seeking Christ,” 182.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 183.

⁵⁸ A. Garfield Anderson, “Medical Mission,” *KMYB*, 1932, 45.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

motivated mission enterprise grew stronger. Against the backdrop of the rising modernizing role of colonialists, the fundamentalist-modernist controversy among both missionaries and Korean Christians accelerated the transition of Korean Protestantism to a faith-based religious stance.

This “purely religious” dimension of the Christian movement was encouraged and strengthened not only by colonialists and conservative missionaries but also by Koreans themselves. During the first two decades of the Protestant mission after the beginning of Korean Protestantism in 1885, the civilizing desire of Koreans dominated their motivation to convert to Christianity. However, faith-centered religious experiences increasingly influenced Korean Protestantism. A series of revival movements beginning in the first decade of the twentieth century signaled a turning point towards the interiorization of Korean Protestantism. The first revival occurred in 1903 in Wonsan, one of the Canadian mission stations.⁶⁰ In 1907, widely accepted as “the Great Revival Year,”⁶¹ a major revival occurred in Pyongyang. This revival was followed by the One Million Souls movement⁶² of 1910, initiated and coordinated by the General Council. Such movements sweeping over most Korean churches had a great impact on Korean Protestantism, slowly but steadily pushing a civilization-oriented religious movement toward a faith-centered one. The effervescent experience of revivals promoted the interiorization of Christian teachings among Koreans, encouraging personal religious experience

⁶⁰ A key figure in the revival was Robert A. Hardie, a Canadian missionary who later became chairman of the Federal Council in 1925. See William Scott, *Canadians in Korea: Brief Historical Sketch of Canadian Mission Work in Korea* (Nashville: Board of World Mission, Presbyterian Church U.S.A., 1970), 29-33. See also Alfred Washington Wasson, *Church Growth in Korea* (Concord, N.H.: Rumford press, 1934), 13-4.

⁶¹ J. Z. Moore, “The Great Revival Year,” *KMF*, August 1907, 113.

⁶² “One Mission Souls for Christ in Korea This Year,” *AMGC*, 1909, 16. See also “The Million Movement and Its Results,” *KMF*, January 1911, 5-6.

and internal transformation into a pious life in the Christian sense.⁶³ Christian teachings of the original sin, humans as sinners, and the atonement death of Christ began to appeal to Korean Christians. The revival movement led Korean Protestantism to reach a new phase. In the following years, the civilizational mode of Christian teachings was increasingly replaced by faith-centered Christian doctrines and practices.

The emergence of Korean fundamentalism in the 1930s accelerated this transition to the faith-centered religion. During this period, a growing number of Korean Christians favored a theologically conservative view on the world, humanity and salvation. A series of ecclesiastical and theological controversies in the Korean Presbyterian Church, the largest denomination of the Korean Protestant church, marked the transition. Three issues in particular were critical to the transition, bringing the General Assemblies of the Korean Presbyterian Church to a theological division: the Mosaic authorship of Genesis, the rights and status of women in the church hierarchy, and the Korean translation of the Abingdon Commentary, whose theological view was liberal.⁶⁴

The Korean fundamentalist controversy reflected an internal cleavage within missionaries of the Federal Council,⁶⁵ who suffered the theological split, though not an institutional divide. The missionaries were never a unified whole but did keep a sturdy coalition among themselves, retaining a wide definition of “evangelical missions.” However, the 1930s witnessed the rise of internal dissention among missionaries. A fundamentalist critique was

⁶³ See Kyong-bae Min, *Hanguk Gidok Gyohoesa: Hanguk Minjok Gyohoe Hyeongseong Gwajeongsa* (Seoulsi: Yeonse Daehakgyo Chulpanbu, 2007), 287-308.

⁶⁴ Harvie M. Conn, “Studies in the Theology of the Korean Presbyterian Church: Part II, Liberal Theology in the Korean Church—to 1945, an Historical Outline,” *Westminster Theological Journal* 29, no. 2 (1967): 154-58. See also Min, *Hanguk Gidok Gyohoesa*, 496-7.

⁶⁵ M. B. Stokes, “The Future of the Federal Council,” *AMFC*, 1936, 22.

levelled against civilization-driven and social gospel-oriented mission methodology. Conservative missionaries perceived individual salvation from a sinful world as the fundamental mission goal, while liberal-minded missionaries sought to understand “how to relate the Christian life to the good things of this world.”⁶⁶ Conservative missionaries, mostly American, were deeply affected by a series of the American fundamentalist-modernist controversies such as the Scopes monkey trial.⁶⁷ Increasingly based on a fundamentalist interpretation of the Bible, their theological conservatism had a deep impact on the formation of the Korean conservative faction, especially in the Korean Presbyterian Church, strengthening faith-oriented Christian teachings among Korean Christians in the 1930s.

By the 1930s, the faith-based Protestant movement increasingly dominated Korean Protestant churches. For instance, in 1934, when Presbyterian and Methodist Christians celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the Protestant mission, a leading Korean theologian published an article titled “The Crisis of Korean Christianity today: Civilization and Faith.” He deplored the fact that many Korean Christians did not distinguish between “civilization” and “faith.”⁶⁸ In conclusion, all three parties—colonialists, missionaries, and Koreans—contributed to the rise of the “purely religious” Protestant movement, transforming the civilization-oriented Protestant movement. Nevertheless, it is important to note that the civilization-oriented Protestant movement did not weaken easily or quickly, lasting at least until the early 1930s. The

⁶⁶ D. A. MacDonald, “Evangelism among Leaders in Social, Educational, Political and Cultural Fields,” *ibid.*, 1937, 21. See also Richard H. Baird, “Present Day Religious Problems,” in *The Fiftieth Anniversary Celebration of the Korea Mission of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., June 30-July 3, 1934*, ed. Harry A. Rhodes and Richard H. Baird (Seoul, Korea: Post Chapel, John D. Wells School, 1934), 142-43.

⁶⁷ For an overview of the Scopes monkey trial, see Barry Hankins, *American Evangelicals: A Contemporary History of a Mainstream Religious Movement* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2008), 59-67.

⁶⁸ Changgeun Song, “The Crisis of Korean Christianity Today: Civilization and Faith,” *Sinhakjinam* 3 (1934): 24-5. See also Baird, “Present Day Religious Problems,” 143.

Protestant movement as a civilizational and social force, not just a religious movement, remained powerful in the 1910s and 1920s.

2. Colonial Definition of Religion, Religious Freedom, and the Federal Council

i) The Colonial Policy of Religion and Protestantism

a) Modernization and Religion

In the European context, secularization has been widely considered a crucial dimension of Western modernity—modernization is believed to necessarily marginalize religion and prompt secularization. However, this was not the case for Japan and Korea.⁶⁹ Japanese and Korean societies at the turn of the twentieth century were not secularized but rather religiously dynamic. Religion had a pivotal role in the modern transformation of society, in nationalism as a modern political phenomenon, and in modern nation-state building. In Meiji Japan, diverse religious activities were culturally and socially vital. Shinto was enthusiastically promoted as a spiritual and ethical foundation for modern nation-building, and Buddhism was rapidly modernized and became an essential element of modern Japanese life. In Korea, the role of religion in modernization was remarkable. Protestant Christianity played a leading role in the modernization of Korean society and education. Modernization prompted Korean Buddhism, once marginalized under the Confucian rule of the Chosun dynasty, to regain strength and validity in modern life.

Religion itself was crucial to the formation of modernity in the Korean context. The rise of religion in modern Korea was constitutive of a modern age, and the modern transformation

⁶⁹ The secularization theory also does not adequately explain religious phenomena in the United States. See José Casanova, “Public Religions Revisited,” in *Religion: Beyond a Concept*, ed. Hent de Vries (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008), 105-6. For a critical study of the secularization theory, see Craig J. Calhoun, Mark Juergensmeyer, and Jonathan VanAntwerpen, eds., *Rethinking Secularism* (Oxford, N.Y.: Oxford University Press, 2011).

of traditional forms of Korean religion were essential parts of the formation of Korean modernity. As Korean society modernized and Westernized in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Korean traditional teachings like Confucianism⁷⁰ and Choendokyo,⁷¹ which were equivalent of what the modern West called religion, were increasingly religionized. When religion as a modern Western concept was introduced in Korea, Korean traditional teachings, called “Learning” or “Way,” could not help but reconstruct themselves in accordance with the modern frame of religion to survive. At the center of this religionization was the rise of Christianity as a civilizational teaching and a social force. The religionization did not entail either the rise or decline of religion, but a modern reconfiguration of Korean traditional teachings. The rise of modernity as a global frame made such religionization inevitable and desirable. Taylor argues that in the North Atlantic context the secular is a condition of religious beliefs and practices. However, it is not the secular but the modern frame that conditioned the religious belief and practices of Koreans at the turn of the twentieth century. While “a secular age,” as Taylor argues, is a “default option” to the West,⁷² the modern frame itself was the “default option” to Koreans, through which every dimension of Korean life and society—including religion—was reconfigured.

⁷⁰ For an overview of religionization of Confucianism in twentieth-century Korea, see Keum, *Confucianism and Korean Thoughts*, 205-219. For a general introduction to Confucianism as religion, see Yong Chen, *Confucianism as Religion: Controversies and Consequences* (Leiden: Brill, 2013); Weiming Tu, *Confucian Thought: Selfhood as Creative Transformation* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1985), 131-48.

⁷¹ Cheondogyo (Religion of the Heavenly Way), a new Korean religion, was established in 1905, changing its name from Donghak (Eastern Learning), which was a revolutionary peasant social and religious movement that emerged in the mid-nineteenth century. The name change signified the religionization of a Korean indigenous religious movement. For an introduction to the establishment of Cheondogyo, see Carl F. Young, *Eastern Learning and the Heavenly Way: The Tonghak and Ch'öndogyo Movements and the Twilight of Korean Independence* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, Center for Korean Studies, 2014); Ik-che Oh, *Cheondogyo Undong Yaksa* (Seoul: Cheondogyo Jungangchongbu Chulpanbu, 1986).

⁷² Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 12-4.

b) The Legal Definition of Religion in Colonial Korea

Colonialists saw the colonial policy on religion as a crucial element of colonial rule because the social impact of religion was widespread and deep in colonial Korea. The colonial policy on religion in general and Protestantism in particular was split into four time periods, each with different policy aims and political implications. The first period (1910-1915) was marked by repression by the colonial regime of religious activities in public space. The second period (1915-1919) was characterized by two colonial regulations: *Regulations for Religious Propagation* and *Regulations of Private Schools*. These regulations imposed legal restrictions on Christian institutions, though *Regulations for Religious Propagation* also granted legal status to Christianity. Following the March First Movement of 1919, the religious policy was significantly changed in response to the demands of Korean Christians and missionaries. In the third period (1919-1931), religious freedom was relatively well respected in the area of religious propagation and Christian schools. However, the wartime period (1931-1945) saw the rise of colonial totalitarianism, which fundamentally hindered religious freedom and the institutional autonomy of Christian social and ecclesiastical institutions, forcing Christian institutions to restructure to meet the needs of the totalitarian policy.⁷³

What Japanese colonizers called “religion” in colonial Korea was not just a civilizational category but also a legal category.⁷⁴ The colonial regime legally defined what “religion” meant

⁷³ For an overview of the colonial policy on religion, see Juhyeon Seong, *Sikminjisigi Jonggyowa Minjogundong* (Seoul: Seonin, 2013), 15-45; Seunggil Park, “Ilje Mudantongchi Sidaui Jonggyojeongchaekgwa Geu Yeonghyang,” in *Hyeondaehangugui Jonggyowa Sahoe*, ed. Hanguksahoesayeonguhoe (Seoul: Munhakkwa Chisongsa, 1992), 11-65.

⁷⁴ For a study of the colonial policy on religion in the colonial legal system, see Yurim An, “Iljeha Gidokgyo Tongjebeopryeonggwa Joseongidokgyo” (PhD Diss., Ewha Womans University, 2013). For a general discussion of religion as a legal category in the Japanese context, see Jason Ānanda Josephson, *The Invention of Religion in Japan* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2012).

and what constituted “religious groups,” and the legal definition led to the fundamental reconfiguration of religious landscape in colonial Korea. The most important legal document in the colonial supervision of religious matters was the *Regulations for Religious Propagation* promulgated in 1915.⁷⁵ The colonial regulation officially recognized only three religions: Sect Shinto (Kyoha Shinto), Buddhism, and Christianity.⁷⁶ On the other hand, the same regulations categorized traditional forms of Korean religious teachings and new religious movements as “quasi-religious groups.”⁷⁷

c) Buddhism, Confucianism, and “Quasi-Religious Groups” in Colonial Korea

The colonial regime did not recognize Confucianism, a traditional form of Korean religious teaching, as an official religion.⁷⁸ Instead, the regime put Confucianism outside legal category of “religion,” classifying Confucian rituals and ancestor worship as non-religious traditional ceremonies.⁷⁹ Unlike Confucianism, Buddhism—which suffered persecution under the neo-Confucian Chosun dynasty—was granted a legal status as a government-recognized religion. The social position of Buddhist monks was significantly improved and the social influence of Buddhism noticeably expanded. However, although Buddhism was elevated to the status of an officially recognized religion, it nonetheless did not enjoy as much religious freedom and institutional autonomy as Christianity. In the *Proclamation of Annexation by Resident-General* issued in 1910, Resident-General Terauchi claimed that “all religions shall be

⁷⁵ GSRS, 1926, 87-91. For the brief summary of the regulation by the colonial government, see *Annual Report*, 1917-1918, 169.

⁷⁶ GSRS, 1926, 87. In modern Japan, the three religions (Sect Shinto, Buddhism and Christianity) were also officially recognized. See Shigeyoshi Murakami, *Japanese Religion in the Modern Century* (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1980), 44-8.

⁷⁷ GSRS, 1926, 90. See also *Annual Report*, 1918-1921, 88.

⁷⁸ For a description of colonial policy on Confucian institutions, see *Annual Report*, 1911-1912, 210-1; 1918-1921, 84.

⁷⁹ *Annual Report*, 1933-1934, 87.

treated equally,”⁸⁰ but the colonial reality was very different. The colonial power did not treat all “religions” equally, offering a relatively favorable legal environment to Christianity and imposing discriminatory measures on Buddhism. The colonial power removed the traditional restriction on Buddhism imposed by the Confucian Chosun dynasty, but in turn it imposed a more modern form of restriction on Korean Buddhism. Korean Buddhism was controlled and supervised by an additional colonial regulation: the *Temple Ordinance* promulgated in 1911 and revised in 1920.⁸¹ The regulation significantly crippled religious freedom of Buddhists and the institutional autonomy of Buddhist temples. Korean Buddhist temples were forced to reorganize into a system of the thirty main temples. These thirty temples and their affiliated temples were required to gain approval from the government-general whenever they elected heads or made important institutional or financial decisions.⁸²

In colonial Korea, Korean indigenous religions were legally categorized as “quasi-religious groups” (Jonggyo Yusa Danche, in Korean; Shukyoruijidantai, in Japanese). This constituted a grave legal discrimination against these religions. The colonial government defined “quasi-religious groups” as “religions of native origin” that did not have “the true marks of religion.”⁸³ Among them were Cheondogyo, Sicheongyo, Taegeukgyo, Daejonggyo, Dangungyo, Cheongnimgyo, Heumchigyo, Taeulgyo, Seondogyo, Baekbaekgyo, and

⁸⁰ Terauchi, “Proclamation of Annexation by Resident-General,” 244.

⁸¹ *Annual Report*, 1911-1912, 35-6; 1912-1913, 25-6. *GSRS*, 1926, 77-81. For a brief overview of the Temple Ordinance and the abolition movement launched by Korean Buddhists, see Sun-seok Kim, *Iljesidae Joseonchongdokbuui Bulgyojeongchaekgwa Bulgyogyeuidaeeung* (Seoul: Gyeonginmunhwasa, 2003), 43-68, 113-20.

⁸² *Annual Report*, 1911-1912, 35-6; 1912-1913, 37-8; 1913-1914, 25-6; 1917-1918, 169. See also Henrik H. Sorensen, “Buddhism and Secular Power in Twentieth-Century Korea,” in *Buddhism and Politics in Twentieth-Century Asia*, ed. Ian Charles Harris (London: Pinter, 1999), 132-36.

⁸³ *Annual Report*, 1937, 103. For a complete survey commissioned by the colonial regime of what colonialists called “quasi-religious groups,” see Chijun Murayama, *Chōsen No Ruiji Shūkyō* (Keijō: Chōsen Sōtokufu, 1935). For a brief overview of “quasi-religious groups” in contemporary Japan, which are now called new religious movements, see Murakami, *Japanese Religion in the Modern Century*, 82-94.

Bocheongyo.⁸⁴ These indigenous religions had emerged at the turn of the twentieth century, influenced by traditional Korean religions—Confucianism, Buddhism, Daoism and Shamanism—and Donghak, a revolutionary teaching emerged in the mid-nineteenth century. These new religious movements were themselves modern phenomena produced by Korean efforts to seek human meaning in a radically and violently transforming modern period characterized by colonialization and turbulent modernization.

The legal stigmatization of what were labelled as “quasi-religious groups” led to penalization of them by the colonial regime. The colonial power persecuted “quasi-religious groups” on the grounds that such teachings were “beguiling of the populace” and “superstitious.”⁸⁵ The modern definition of religion created a modern notion of superstition, and the colonial regime used this modern concept to condemn “quasi-religious groups.” However, the colonial authorities did not see these religions as simply “superstitious,” but also as a political threat to colonial rule and public security. Indeed, many “quasi-religious groups” were anti-Japanese and anti-Western, envisioning the recovery of Korean sovereignty and cherishing long-held Korean traditions. Thus, Japanese colonial authorities severely cracked down on “quasi-religious groups,” emphatically denouncing them for “the vicious custom of mixing religion and politics.”⁸⁶ The mode of crackdown sometimes did take the form of weeding out “superstition,” but the main goal was to suppress anti-Japanese sentiment and resistance. “Quasi-religious groups” were therefore supervised and controlled not by the religious administration but by the police power, even though officially recognized religions were for the

⁸⁴ *Annual Report*, 1911-1912, 51; 1918-1921, 86; 1937-1938, 103. See also *Chōsen Sōtokufu Shisei Nenpō*, 1917-1918, 154; 1918-1920, 145-5.

⁸⁵ *Annual Report*, 1918-1920, 86. See also Government-General of Chosen, *Thriving Chosen: A Survey of Twenty-Five Years' Administration* (Keijo: Taisho Shashin Kogeisho, 1935), 36; *Annual Report*, 1937-1938, 103.

⁸⁶ *Annual Report*, 1937-1938, 103.

most part bureaucratically supervised by the religious section in the Educational Bureau.⁸⁷ Throughout the colonial period, the colonial power treated quasi-religious groups more harshly than any officially recognized religion.

d) Shinto and Religion

Shinto was modernized around the Meiji Restoration. Modern Shinto was a modern construction⁸⁸ of Japanese ethnic religion, much like Hinduism was a modern construction in response to the rise of organized Christian religion backed by British colonialism.⁸⁹ Under the guidance of the Meiji government, widespread but unsystematic and decentralized pre-modern Shinto popular beliefs and rituals were unified, centralized, and institutionalized in order to manifest Japanese uniqueness.⁹⁰ Modernized Shinto was central to Japanese nation-building in the late nineteenth century, establishing the Empire of Japan as a divine kingdom, constituting a source of Japanese modern moral order, and providing a vehicle for attaining Japanese national cohesion. The modern construction of Shinto was a Japanese way to reconstruct itself

⁸⁷ See Masaaki Aono, "Joseonchongdokbuui Sinsajeongchaekgwa Yusajonggyo: Gukgasindo Nonrireul Jungsimeuro," in *Jonggyowa Sikminji Geundae*, ed. Hae-dong Yun and Jun'ichi Isomae (Seoulsi Chaekgwahamkke, 2013), 198-200; Gyeongdal Cho, *Minjungwa Yutopia* (Seoul: Yeoksabipyongsas, 2009), 297-98; Joseonchongdokbu Gyeongmuguk, *Iljesikmintongchibisa: Iljeha Joseonui Chian Sanghwang*, trans. Pong-U Kim (Seoul: Cheongachulpansa, 1989), 59-68.

⁸⁸ Some scholars see modern Shinto as one of the "inventions" of modern Japan. For instance, Jason Ānanda Josephson disuses this in his book, *The Invention of Religion in Japan* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2012). For a general overview of the "invention" tradition in modern Japan, see Stephen Vlastos, ed. *Mirror of Modernity: Invented Traditions of Modern Japan* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1998).

⁸⁹ Gauri Viswanathan, "Colonialism and the Construction of Hinduism," in *The Blackwell Companion to Hinduism*, ed. Gavin D. Flood (Oxford: Blackwell Pub., 2003), 23-44.

⁹⁰ Pre-modern Shinto developed through syncretic influence from Buddhism, which is called shinbutsushugo (the syncretism of Shinto and Buddhism). The Meiji Restoration (1868) was a key moment in which Shinto was authenticated. Along with the Meiji Restoration, the locally fragmented Shinto rituals were centralized and nationalized. The authentication began with the separation of Shinto from Buddhism, which was argued by many nationalistic scholars and leaders to be a foreign religion. This process was called shinbutsubunri (the separation of Shinto from Buddhism). The shinbutsubunri of the late nineteenth century was accompanied by a violent anti-Buddhist movement, known as, haibutsukishaku (abolish Buddhism and destroy Shakyamuni), and the driving force behind which was a Japanese modern nationalism. Put simply, modern Shinto gave a national significance to the newly emerged nation-state. See Murakami, *Japanese Religion in the Modern Century*, 22-32; Isomae, *Religious Discourse in Modern Japan*, 98-118.

in the modern period, providing unique Japanese feature. Shinto was therefore a central pillar of Japanese modernity, connecting tradition and modern, religiosity and secularity, political and spiritual.⁹¹

In modern Japan, Shinto was largely divided into Sect Shinto (Kyoha Shinto) and Shrine Shinto (Jinja Shinto).⁹² In colonial Korea, four schools of Sect Shinto were active in their religious activities: Tenrikyo, Konkokyo, Shinrikyo, and Taishakyo.⁹³ Most adherents of Sect Shinto in colonial Korea were Japanese.⁹⁴ While Sect Shinto was recognized as “religion” by the colonial power, Shrine Shinto was not categorized as “religion.” Instead, Shrine Shinto ceremonies were claimed by the colonial regime to be “absolutely distinct from those of a purely religious nature.”⁹⁵ Colonialists asserted that Shrine Shinto worships were “state ceremonies” and Jinja (Shinto shrine) was “an institution in which state ceremonies are to be held.”⁹⁶ Shinto shrines were established solely “for the purpose of doing honor to the illustrious dead” recognized by the colonial government as Japanese “national deities.”⁹⁷ In 1938, 58 Jinja were established throughout the Korean peninsula.⁹⁸ The greatest of them was Chosen Jingu (the Korea Shrine) built at Seoul in 1925.⁹⁹ It enshrined Amaterasu Omikami, a major Shinto god

⁹¹ For an analysis of the relationship between the modern construction of Shinto and the nation-building of modern Japan, see Isomae, *Religious Discourse in Modern Japan*; Trent Elliott Maxey, *The “Greatest Problem”: Religion and State Formation in Meiji Japan* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2014).

⁹² See Murakami, *Japanese Religion in the Modern Century*, 41-6. For a general overview of Shinto, see Stuart D. B. Picken, *Essentials of Shinto: An Analytical Guide to Principal Teachings* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1994).

⁹³ *Annual Report*, 1918-1921, 86; *GSRS*, 1930, 9-15.

⁹⁴ In 1926, Japanese adherents of Sect Shinto in colonial Korea numbered 75,810, and Korean adherents only 9,299. In the same year, a total number of Korean Christians stood on 293,470. See *GSRS*, 1926, 16, 55. See also *Annual Report*, 1937-1938, 104.

⁹⁵ *Annual Report*, 1924-1926, 104.

⁹⁶ *Annual Report*, 1937-1938, 100.

⁹⁷ *Annual Report*, 1917-1918, 169.

⁹⁸ *Annual Report*, 1937-1938, 100.

⁹⁹ *Annual Report*, 1924-1926, 104; 1927-1938, 100. See also Murakami, *Japanese Religion in the Modern Century*, 111-3.

(*kami*, in Japanese) and also the Emperor Meiji, who was a founder of modern Japan but viewed as a conqueror by Koreans because the last years of his reign were marked by the annexation of Korea.

Political elites seeking nation-building often pay attention to the socially cohesive role of religion in society, believing that a major religion in which a vast majority of people believe could function to glue a society together. However, in the Japanese Empire—including colonial Korea—religion was seen not as cohesive but as divisive. This is partly because Japan and Korea were religiously diverse societies in which various religious traditions such as Confucianism, Buddhism, and folk religions competed with each other, but more importantly because Christianity, an emerging foreign religion, was seen as a threat to national and social cohesion. At a time when many Western modern nations were looking for a solution to the divisive character of religion (due to denominational conflict or hostility between Catholics and Protestants, for example) in the separation of church and state or in secularization, the Japanese Empire took the different path. Japanese modern leaders invented Shrine Shinto ceremonies as non-religious patriotic activity. They did not regard Shinto worship as state religion though it was significantly similar to a Western state church in terms of state function. Instead, modern Japan differentiated Shrine Shinto from religion, giving new meaning and definition to it. For the Japanese, Shrine Shinto worship was neither secular nor religious, but rather sacred. In the face of growing anxiety that the existence of various religious traditions might have an adverse effect on social cohesion, the Japanese ruling elites believed that Shinto as a national belief and practice could play a central role in holding society together.

Japanese colonizers also saw Shinto worship as a social glue necessary for holding colonial subjects together, and thus extended Shinto worship to colonial Korea. When Shrine Shinto was dissociated from its religious dimension, worship in Shrine Shinto became a supra-religious state ceremony, the attendance at which was a sacred duty of colonial subjects. Regarding religion as a destabilizing force, Japanese colonialists did not want the Korean people to be segregated and segmented into their own religious worlds, so Shinto worships as non-religious state ceremonies were promoted to prevent diverse religious groups from tearing society apart. Shinto state ceremony was also promoted to provide an overarching foundation of colonial public morality, and to nurture Koreans as loyal and submissive subjects of the Empire of Japan.

In colonial Korea, however, Shinto worship led to controversy, bringing “the vexed question of the meaning of shrine veneration”¹⁰⁰ both to missionaries¹⁰¹ and to Korean Christians. In the 1930s, the Shinto policy was rigorously enforced to promote colonial totalitarianism, and colonial subjects were required to attend worship at Shinto shrines. The Shinto controversy centered around the definition of religion, and the relationship between Shinto and religion.¹⁰²

e) The Colonial Policy of Religion and Korean Protestantism

The colonial regime claimed that it would remain neutral regarding religious affairs, promising to offer equal treatment to every form of religion.¹⁰³ However, the colonial regime

¹⁰⁰ C. Kerr, “Shinto Shrines in Chosen,” *KMF*, April 1925, 82.

¹⁰¹ For a debate among missionaries in Japan proper over Shinto, see *JCYB*, 1931, 39-66.

¹⁰² For further discussion, see Chapter IV.

¹⁰³ Terauchi, “Proclamation of Annexation by Resident-General,” 244. See also “Address of M. S. Ariyoshi, Administrative Superintendent of the Government General,” *AMFC*, 1923, 25.

was never religiously neutral, and took different approaches to diverse religious communities. Adopting a modern definition of religion, the regime granted legal status of “religion” only to Buddhism, Sect Shinto, and Christianity. The colonial power systematically persecuted most Korean indigenous religions under the pretext of public security, legally categorizing them as “quasi-religious groups.” In addition, colonialists gave new meaning and power to Shrine Shinto, distinguishing it from what they called “religion.” Overall, colonialists arranged the various forms of religious practices (in the wider sense of the term) into a hierarchy, with “quasi-religious groups” at the bottom, officially recognized religions in the middle, and Shrine Shinto at the top. The colonial legal frame of religion provided a hierarchical structure of religious groups in colonial Korea.

This colonial policy of religion largely reflected the religious policy in Japan proper. Japan’s modern transformation and its international status under Anglo-American hegemony made impossible *cuius regio, eius religio*, a key principle of Augsburg Peace in sixteenth-century Europe. Modern Japan acknowledged that religious freedom should be recognized in “civilized” nations, but at the same time its ruling elites saw an urgent need to control religious organizations. Thus, modern Japan sought to circumvent the modern frame of “religion” by legally reconfiguring the term. Though “religion” was a largely universalized Western concept, modern Japan modified the concept to suit the needs of its national goal of modernization. This semantic shift in the legal definition of religion was part of Japanese efforts to shape Japanese modernity on the condition that modern Japan should accept Western modernity as a global condition.

Japanese colonialists used this modified notion of “religion” to reconfigure the religious domain in colonial Korea. The colonial power legally distinguished “religion” from Confucian ancestor worship, “quasi-religious groups,” and Shrine Shinto, and the legal definition of “religion” served as a basis of colonial bureaucratic control of religions in Korea. Although the legal definition of “religion” was already applied and practiced in Japan proper, the colonial religious policy had a unique dimension as a colonial enforcement. In particular, ethnic-based oppression in the religious domain was an inherent element of the colonial religious policy. Religious institutions in colonial Korea, including those of indigenous origins, were Korean institutions with Korean leadership and memberships and a Korean ethos. When purely Korean institutions were suppressed under the guise of the eradication of superstition and maintaining public order, such oppression often aimed at holding the rise of Korean nationalism in check. In colonial Korea, persecution of “quasi-religious groups” was more severe and brutal than that in Japan proper.¹⁰⁴ While Shinto, that is, a Japanese indigenous religion, was elevated to either recognized religion or foundation of state ceremonies, most of Korean indigenous religions were branded as “quasi-religious groups,” and the branding led to stigmatization and persecution. Korean Buddhism was also severely suppressed, although it was one of the legally recognized religions.

However, unlike “quasi-religious groups” or Buddhism, Christianity in Korea had relatively friendly relationships with the colonial power. Although it was also persecuted under colonial rule, Christianity in Korea and especially Protestantism enjoyed way more legal

¹⁰⁴ While the persecution of “quasi-religious groups” in colonial Korea began in the early 1910s, the persecution in Japan proper did not begin until 1935. For a brief overview of the suppression of “quasi-religious groups” in Japan proper, see Masao Fujii, “The Growth of New Religious Movements,” in *A History of Japanese Religion*, ed. Kazuo Kasahara (Tokyo: Kosei Pub., 2001).

privileges than what was labelled as “quasi-religious groups” or Korean Buddhism. Under the colonial legal frame of religion, Protestantism was granted a special status. Though the officially recognized religions all were supervised by the *Regulations for Religious Propagation*, details of the regulation were less harsh to Protestantism than to Korean Buddhism. This favorable legal environment allowed Protestantism to enjoy a significant level of religious freedom and institutional autonomy, which helped Korean Protestantism to make a deep impact on Korean society in general. In the face of growing expansion of socio-political influences from Christian groups, colonialists sought to curb wide penetration of Christian institutions by drawing upon the Western principle of separation of church and state. A crucial part of the separation in colonial Korea was a privatization of religious beliefs and practices through which the colonial power wanted to deprive Protestantism of any political significance.

ii) Religious Freedom, Colonial Power, and the Federal Council

a) Religious Freedom as a Civilizational Value

In a modern democratic tradition, freedom is considered a fundamental democratic value. Religious freedom is a basic part of modern freedom. However, in colonial Korea, religious freedom (and freedom in general) was considered not a democratic value but a civilizational value. In the *Proclamation of Annexation by Resident-General* issued in 1910, Resident-General Terauchi insisted that “the freedom of religious belief is recognized in all civilized countries.”¹⁰⁵ The colonialist view reflected the prevailing view among the ruling class in Meiji Japan. Japanese modern leaders saw religious freedom primarily as a marker of a “civilized” nation. For instance, Hirobumi Itō, the first prime minister of Meiji Japan and the first

¹⁰⁵ Terauchi, “Proclamation of Annexation by Resident-General,” 244. See also “Address of Mr. Z. Shibata in behalf of the Governor-General,” *AMFC*, 1919, 36.

resident-general of Korea (1905-9)—often called “the constitutional evangelist”¹⁰⁶—claimed that “freedom of religious belief is to be regarded as one of the most beautiful fruits of modern civilization.”¹⁰⁷ Echoing the view in modern Japan, Japanese colonizers claimed that their ruling mission was to “civilize” “backward” Korea, and religious freedom therefore was granted to Koreans as part of benign and “civilized” rule.¹⁰⁸ However, this was ultimately only a ruling and colonial ideology, because in pre-colonial Korea, Christian groups exercised a significant degree of religious freedom, although official recognition by the Korean government was not yet given. Catholic and Protestant missionaries carried out their mission efforts without major interference from the Korean government, establishing Christian institutions like mission schools throughout the Korean peninsula.¹⁰⁹ When Korea was colonized, Christians actually faced a hostile legal environment. Although colonial rule was declared to be “civilized,” brutal violations of human dignity and rights were justified under the pretext of expanding and deepening “civilized” rule. Democratic values like political freedom, freedom of conscience and thought, freedom of the press, and freedom of assembly were never guaranteed. Only religious freedom was singled out to legitimize the “civilized” rule. To colonialists, religious freedom was not an inherent value of a modern nation but an instrumental value to boost modern civilization.

¹⁰⁶ Kazuhiro Takii, *Itō Hirobumi: Japan's First Prime Minister and Father of the Meiji Constitution*, trans. Manabu Takechi (London: Routledge, 2014), 88.

¹⁰⁷ Hirobumi Itō, *Commentaries on the Constitution of the Empire of Japan*, trans. Miyoji Itō (Tokio: Chu-o Daigaku, 1906), 59.

¹⁰⁸ Terauchi, “Proclamation of Annexation by Resident-General,” 244.

¹⁰⁹ See The Federal Council of Protestant Evangelical Missions in Korea, *A Communication to His Excellency, Baron Saito, Governor-General of Chosen from the Federal Council of Protestant Evangelical Missions in Korea* (n. p., 1919), 1; Chang-mun Kim and Jae-sun Chung, eds., *Catholic Korea, Yesterday and Today* (Seoul: Catholic Korea Pub. Co., 1964), 312-14. This was also confirmed by the colonial regime. See *Annual Report*, 1918-1921, 88; 1937-1938, 105.

The recognition by the colonial power of religious freedom had a geo-political dimension in the modern global system. The Japanese emphasis on religious freedom was part of larger efforts by modern Japan to be recognized as one of the “civilized” nations. When modern Japan sought to gain recognition from Western powers as a member of the “civilized” world, it was required to follow Western normative standards as defined and prescribed by Western modernity—and one of the key standards was religious freedom. When modern Japan recognized religious freedom as a civilizational value, it helped Japan to achieve recognition as a “civilized” nation, and also helped Japanese colonial rule in Korea to be accepted as “civilized” in the Western-centered international normative system.

The recognition by modern Japan of religious freedom reflected international power politics. Japan could not ignore Anglo-American hegemony as a global diplomatic and military force. The Japanese government was very cautious of dealing with the issue of religious freedom not just because it was a symbol of modern civilization, but also because of the historical reality that Western powers often invaded a nation on the pretext of securing religious freedom and protecting Western missionaries. Thus, when the annexation of Korea by Japan was proclaimed, Japanese colonialists recognized religious freedom as one of the privileges granted to Christian missionaries (most of whom were from Western powers), ensuring that under colonial rule missionaries could “fully carry out their propagating work without any anxiety or fear.”¹¹⁰ This colonialist emphasis on religious freedom illustrates how religious freedom in the international context was emphasized to protect primarily Christian religion.

¹¹⁰ *Annual Report*, 1910-1911, 39.

b) Three Dimensions of Religious Freedom

Religious freedom provided a favorable environment in which religious people could enjoy their practices and religious institutions could be protected although religious freedom under colonial rule was guaranteed in only a very limited way. In the colonial Korea, those who benefited the most from religious freedom, a central principle of the modern international normative frame, were Christians. Colonialist efforts to effect “civilized” colonial rule provided a space in which Protestant Christianity could grow into a substantial and powerful sector of the Korean religious demography. However, seeing the rapid growth of this new religion as a potential threat to colonial rule, the colonial power also sought to find ways to regulate and control the new religious group. One of the primary colonial strategies was to place a legal limit on religious freedom.

In the Empire of Japan and its colonies, the Meiji Constitution provided a legal and normative foundation for religious freedom,¹¹¹ and both colonialists and missionaries stressed the importance of religious freedom by referring to the constitution. When the *Annual Report* of the Japanese government-general noted that religious freedom as “secured” in the Meiji Constitution was extended to colonial Korea,¹¹² the Federal Council also hoped that “religious Liberty, which is already guaranteed by the constitution of the Empire of Japan, as of all other

¹¹¹ Article XXVIII of the Meiji Constitution stipulated that “Japanese subjects shall, within limits not prejudicial to peace and order, and not antagonistic to their duties as subjects, enjoy freedom of religious belief.” For an interpretation of religious freedom by a Meiji leader, see Itō, *Commentaries on the Constitution of the Empire of Japan*, 58-61.

¹¹² *Annual Report*, 1914-1915, 160. See also “Address of Mr. Z. Shibata in behalf of the Governor-General,” *AMFC*, 1919, 36.

great nations, [would] be made effective”¹¹³ in the Korean peninsula. However, missionary interpretations of religious freedom were very different from those of colonialists. In colonial Korea, religious freedom involved three primary dimensions: 1) freedom of propagation, 2) freedom of religious education, and 3) the institutional autonomy of Christians institutions. Protestant missionaries’ understanding of religious freedom in the three domains often stood in tension or conflict with that of colonialists.

1) “Legitimate Propagation” and Freedom of Propagation

In the wake of the March First Movement in 1919, the Federal Council presented its official document titled *A Communication to His Excellency, Baron Saito, Governor-General of Chosen from the Federal Council of Protestant Evangelical Missions in Korea* (hereafter, *Communication*)¹¹⁴ to the newly appointed Governor-General Saitō. The document succinctly summarized how the first decade of colonial rule had hampered the religious propagation of Protestant churches and missionaries:

Christian workers have been interfered with when attempting to preach by the roadside, on the street and in the market places. Groups have been prevented from meeting for worship in Christian homes on the ground that they do not have a permit. Permits are required before organizing a church or preaching place. ... Even Bible classes, evangelistic services and meetings of church officers are not free from needless restrictions and unwarranted interferences. Missionaries in their travels have been

¹¹³ The Federal Council of Protestant Evangelical Missions in Korea, *A Communication to His Excellency, Baron Saito, Governor-General of Chosen from the Federal Council of Protestant Evangelical Missions in Korea*, 2. See also “Educational Committee,” AMGC, 1909, 23-5.

¹¹⁴ For a brief explanation of the process of drafting and finalizing the document, see Harry A. Rhodes, ed. *History of the Korea Mission, Presbyterian Church U.S.A.: 1884-1934* (Seoul: Chosen Mission Presbyterian Church U.S.A., 1934), 502-3.

watched constantly and often needlessly interfered with by officials. The arrival of each foreign guest must be reported within a day's time.¹¹⁵

The Federal Council's document concluded that religious freedom, including freedom of religious propagation, had been "continually hindered" during the first nine years of the colonial regime.¹¹⁶

In the early colonial period, an area of significant contention between colonialists and Protestant Christians (including missionaries) was the proper domain of religious propagation. In the first decade of colonial rule—characterized by military rule—the primary goal of the colonial policy on religion was "control of religious teaching."¹¹⁷ Colonialists saw the Protestant movement as contaminated by political movements like the Korean national movement for independence, and doubted Koreans' motives for conversion to Christianity. For example, the *Annual Report* of 1911 concluded that a major factor to explain "the wonderful increase of [Korean] converts" to Protestantism in the first decade of the twentieth century was "political reasons," such as political protection with the help of missionaries.¹¹⁸ To counter the political involvement of the Christian movement and "control" Christian teachings, Japanese colonizers from the very beginning of colonial rule differentiated "legitimate propagation"¹¹⁹ from illegitimate propagation. Governor-General Terauchi summarized this position: when a religious group would not "conflict with [the colonial regime] but really help it in attaining the purpose it [has] in view," the religious activities were considered as "legitimate propagation," but when a religious group would "pursue political intrigues under the name of religious propaganda," it

¹¹⁵ *Communication*, 3.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 2.

¹¹⁷ *Annual Report*, 1911-1912, 51.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 38.

¹¹⁹ Terauchi, "Proclamation of Annexation by Resident-General," 244.

was seen as illegitimate propagation.¹²⁰ The political aims of the colonial power were a criterion deciding whether religious propagation was “legitimate” or not. The differentiation between “legitimate” and illegitimate propagation was part of colonial efforts to politically emasculate colonial people, a colonial ruling strategy engineered by colonialists. To colonialists, “legitimate propagation” should not involve what they defined “political” activities.

The colonial policy on religion was significantly changed after the March First Movement of 1919. Immediately after the end of the First World War, long-simmering anger and resentment among Koreans led to a national movement demanding independence. The March First Movement did not result in independence from the Empire of Japan but it did push the Japanese colonial power to drastically change its colonial policy from military rule to “cultural” rule,¹²¹ which was marked by conciliatory measures such as the replacement of the gendarme system with a regular police system, and the significant (though limited) expansion of freedom of association, press, and publication. The conciliatory policy aimed to gain broad consent of the ruled in the face of rising resentment among Koreans.

The new colonial policy in the 1920s left more room for the Korean Protestant movement, leading to improvements in religious freedom including propagation. Many laws and regulations relating to Christianity were revised to reflect the requests of Korean Christians

¹²⁰ Ibid. See also *Annual Report*, 1911-1912, 51; 1912-1913, 62-3.

¹²¹ *Annual Report*, 1918-1921, 88. The *Annual Report* of 1921-1922 summarized the main points of the “cultural” policy: “(1) Stabilization of peace and order. (2) Respect for public opinion. (3) Abatement of officialism. (4) Renovation of administration. (5) Promotion of facilities for the people. (6) Advancement of civilization and welfare of the people. And to accomplish the above-mentioned points plans were drawn up regarding the following: (1) Non-discrimination between Japanese and Korean officials. (2) Simplification of laws and regulations. (3) Prompt transaction of State business. (4) Decentralization policy. (5) Improvement in local organization. (6) Respect for native culture and customs. (7) Freedom of speech, meeting, and press. (8) Spread of education and development of industry. (9) Re-organization of the police system. (10) Enlargement of medical and sanitary organs. (11) Guidance of the people. (12) Advancement of men of talent. (13) Friendly feeling between Japanese and Koreans.” *Annual Report*, 1921-1922, 7.

and the Federal Council.¹²² Among them were *The Chosen (Korea) Educational Ordinance*, *Regulations for Private Schools*, and *Regulations for Religious Propagation*. The previous strict restrictions were mitigated, and in particular freedom of propagation was significantly improved under the appeasement policy. For instances, the previous regulations required permission from the government-general to establish churches and preaching houses, but the revised regulations made it sufficient merely to report the establishment to colonial authorities.¹²³ This conciliatory policy continued well into early 1930s. However, the colonial regime never changed a principle of its religious policy devised in the early 1910s, that is, the differentiation of “legitimate propagation” from politically motivated religious propagation. Colonialists continued to stress that religion, especially Protestant institutions, should not be “a political tool.”¹²⁴ “Political” elements in the Christian movement were closely monitored and sometimes brutally suppressed.

In the modern democratic context, religious freedom as an essential part of modern freedom historically has had significant political implications because of its deep connection with freedom of thought, freedom of conscience, and freedom of assembly.¹²⁵ However, the colonial power put a fundamental limit on the political dimension of religious freedom by confining religious beliefs and practices to a marginalized private corral. Religious freedom in the colony was permitted only on the condition that religious practices were depoliticized and privatized. The colonial power recognized religious freedom as long as it was a highly personal

¹²² For example, see *Communication*, 3.

¹²³ *Annual Report*, 1918-1921, 91; Kiyoshi Nakarai, *Relations between the Government and Christianity in Chosen* (n. p., 1921), 19.

¹²⁴ Nakarai, *Relations between the Government and Christianity in Chosen*, 19.

¹²⁵ See John Witte, *God's Joust, God's Justice: Law and Religion in the Western Tradition* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Pub., 2006), 70-4.

matter, and prohibited this marginalized personal domain from flowing overtly into the public or political domain. As a necessary corollary of the colonial limit on religious freedom, Japanese colonizers interpreted freedom of religious propagation in a very limited manner, differentiating “a purely religious propagation” from impure religious propagation, which they believed was tainted with “a political motive.”¹²⁶ Colonialists sought to relegate freedom of propagation to the “purely religious” domain so that they could easily hold religion in general and Christianity in particular in check. These colonial efforts to marginalize Christian faith and practices necessarily came into conflict with Protestant efforts to Christianize the country. However, it was not because Christians including missionaries were inherently rebellious. Rather, it was because the Protestant movement was marked by civilization-oriented teachings and practices. As long as Christian teachings and practices were civilizational, they tended to flow over the edge of a personal space into the public and political arena. They could not be contained and controlled within the “purely religious” domain because civilizational teachings crisscrossed the political and the religious, the public and the private, and the material and the spiritual. Protestants, both Korean and missionary, were concerned not just with evangelization but also with civilizing Korean society at both personal and national levels, launching social, moral, and educational movements. The civilization-oriented Protestant mission did not meaningfully distinguish “purely religious work” from civilizational teachings, which had strong national and social dimensions. As long as missionaries ran modern schools and taught modern civilization to Korean students, Christian teachings necessarily diffused Western social, ethical, and even political thought among Koreans. These comprehensive teachings appealed to many

¹²⁶ *Annual Report*, 1911-1912, 51.

ordinary Koreans and prominent Korean leaders, who were seeking modernity. In sum, civilization-oriented Christian teachings held a broad view of religious freedom and freedom of propagation, and it implied that the Korean Protestant movement should have widespread socio-political ramifications throughout the Korean society. This created conflict with colonialists, who attempted to monopolize political matters.

It is important to note here that when the colonial power pushed religion to a privatized sphere, that sphere was not a private space defined in a liberal democracy but a colonial private space. In a liberal society, the private sphere is a modern liberal space in which the “buffered self”¹²⁷ as an autonomous self leads a life. The liberal private space is an autonomous domain in which an individual being as a free agent can enjoy privacy and intimacy without interference from state power. However, privatized space in the colonial political setting was never autonomous or “buffered,” but a marginalized space in which anything involving the public or the political was excluded, such that colonial subjects were deprived of any political power. Therefore, the colonial private sphere all the time became vulnerable to colonial discipline and enforcement.

Colonialists sought not only to take religion out of the political sphere and reconfigure religious affairs as a private matter, but also to subordinate religious practices to colonial political agendas. As long as the moral and social teachings of religious groups were compatible with colonial policy, the public role of religion was permissible and encouraged. For example, Protestant social teachings on economic ethics or law-observance were welcomed and

¹²⁷ Taylor describes the modern self as a “buffered self.” For his view on “buffered self,” see Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 37-41.

encouraged by the colonial regime.¹²⁸ However, when the social teachings of religious groups, either directly or indirectly, involved political discourses like the independence movement or political freedom, they were strictly prohibited. The public role of religion was permitted only so long as it served the political aims of the colonial regime and its teachings were delivered to support colonial rule.¹²⁹ If Protestants, both Korean and missionary, saw the public role of the new religion as an autonomous domain, the colonial power would take the move as a political threat to the colonial power, categorizing it as impure religious work and illegitimate propagation.

2) Separation of Religion and Education, and “Educational Freedom”

For Protestant missionaries, the second dimension of religious freedom was a guarantee of “educational freedom”¹³⁰ in Christian institutions. From the beginning of the Protestant mission on the Korean peninsula, Protestant missionaries of the Federal Council viewed “educational freedom”—the major part of which was “freedom of religious teaching”—as “one of the greatest considerations” of their mission institution.¹³¹ The missionary view of “educational freedom” as a fundamental part of religious freedom brought missionaries into conflict with colonialists, who sought to monopolize modern education in colonial Korea and thus put constraints on missionary educational institutions. Since the beginning of colonial rule, a fundamental objective of colonial education policy was the separation of religion and education. When he issued the *Chosen Educational Ordinance* in 1911, Governor-General Terauchi claimed that “the education of the people shall stand independent of religion” and

¹²⁸ This is discussed more in Chapter III.

¹²⁹ See Terauchi, “Proclamation of Annexation by Resident-General,” 244.

¹³⁰ *Communication*, 1.

¹³¹ “Educational Committee,” *AMGC*, 1909, 25.

that no school, whether run by government or private institutions, “can be allowed to enforce religious education or conduct any religious ceremonies.”¹³² However, this principle of colonial education was not necessarily directed toward secularization, as the Shinto-centered moral education was emphasized throughout the colonial era.¹³³ Rather, it targeted primarily Protestant mission schools because the majority of modern private schools were run by missionaries. It aimed to remove missionary influence in modern education in order to maximize colonial power in Korean society. When *Regulations for Private Schools* was revised in 1915,¹³⁴ the colonial power imposed harsh and strict rules on Christian schools, hammering out details of the separation. For example, Bible class had to be removed from the curriculum of all private schools and religious education and ceremonies were prohibited.¹³⁵

However, the March First Movement provided an opportunity to revise these regulations. In the aftermath of the movement, missionaries of the Federal Council strongly called for the revision of *Regulations for Private Schools*, criticizing the colonial rule of the previous nine years for its severe restrictions on “educational freedom.”¹³⁶ In the *Communication*, the Federal Council requested that the colonial power include Bible class and Christian religious ceremonies in the curricula of Christian schools. The missionary document appealed to the colonial power by invoking the “civilization” standard. Missionaries also asked

¹³² Masakata Terauchi, “Proclamation Concerning the Enforcement of the Educational Ordinance in Chosen,” *Annual Report*, 1911-1912, 230.

¹³³ This is discussed in Chapter IV.

¹³⁴ *Annual Report*, 1914-1915, 159-160; 1916-1917, 117-8.

¹³⁵ Missionaries of the Federal Council expressed their concern over the revision of the regulation, saying, “In our judgment the conditions proposed would cripple if not completely close our Christian schools.” See “Report of the Joint Meeting of the Legal and Executive Committee,” *AMFC*, 1915, 32. See also W. A. Nobles, “Statement Concerning Pai Chai Schools Made Before The Federal Council,” *AMFC*, 1916, 33-7.

¹³⁶ *Communication*, 1.

for “the same liberty of religious instruction as is granted to private schools in Japan proper.”¹³⁷ Eventually, the regulation was revised in 1920. The revised *Regulations for Private Schools* permitted teaching of the Bible to be included in the curricula of Christian schools and allowed religious exercises in private schools.¹³⁸ Nevertheless, the general principle of “separation of religion and education” did not change at all, although the conciliatory colonial policy in the 1920s mitigated the colonial control of Christian schools.¹³⁹ Furthermore, the colonial totalitarianism that dominated the final fifteen years of colonial rule entirely removed Christian and missionary elements from mission schools, trampling “educational freedom.”

The colonial effort to separate religion and education was a major part of the colonial policy for separation of religion and politics, and separation of church and state was a pillar of colonial policy on Christianity since the establishment of the residency-general in 1905. When Itō was appointed first resident-general, he emphasized that a precondition of religious freedom was a sharp distinction between the political domain and the religious domain, in which “the moral and spiritual salvation of the Korean people” was entrusted to missionaries.¹⁴⁰ The distinction made by Itō became a guiding principle of colonial policy on religion, as shown in the *Annual Report*,¹⁴¹ serving as a foundation for the colonial form of separation of church and state after annexation. The colonial separation of church and state was marked by the marginalization of religious activities to what the colonial power called “purely religious work.” For colonialists, school education did not belong to the “purely

¹³⁷ Ibid., 4.

¹³⁸ See Nakarai, *Relations between the Government and Christianity in Chosen*, 19; The Government-General of Chosen Bureau of Education, *Manual of Education in Chosen* (Keijo: Government-General of Chosen, 1920), 106-11.

¹³⁹ The Government-General of Chosen Bureau of Education, *Manual of Education in Chosen*, 113.

¹⁴⁰ Nakarai, *Relations between the Government and Christianity in Chosen*, 6.

¹⁴¹ For example, see *Annual Report*, 1910-1911, 39; 1918-1921, 88-9; 1937-1938, 106.

religious work” but to the political domain, which was monopolized by the colonial regime. If Korean Protestantism wanted religious freedom to be protected, colonialists claimed, then the church should refrain from school education and focus on “purely religious work.” This view necessarily came into conflict with the view of Protestants, including missionaries, who saw “educational freedom” as a constituting element of their religious freedom.

For many modern states in the early twentieth century, separation of religion and education was one of central elements in their nation-building. Modern states sought to find ways to control the national educational system because they believed that nationwide modern education was a crucial element in the formation of the modern state. It led to jurisdictional disputes in the domain of modern education between religious groups and state power. This was the case in modern Japan¹⁴² and colonial Korea. However, in colonial Korea, the legal separation of religion and education in colonial Korea was not just a modern project to build a modern education system, but also a colonial project. The colonial education system was devised to legitimize Japanese rule, nurture loyal colonial subjects, and inculcate discipline and conformity among Korean students. Separation of religion and education, although applied to religion in general, was primarily directed toward Christianity (and especially Protestantism), because the Korean Protestant church was a vital force in establishing many modern educational institutions and teaching modern thought to many Koreans. The underlying motivation behind the separation of religion and education was to deprive Protestant Christianity of its voice and power at the national level, to block the penetration of nationalistic sentiment among Koreans, and to dissociate Koreans from missionary and Western influence.

¹⁴² Teruhisa Horio, *Educational Thought and Ideology in Modern Japan: State Authority and Intellectual Freedom*, ed. & trans. Steven Platzer (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1994), 72-80.

3) Institutional Autonomy and Religious Freedom

The final dimension of religious freedom is a guarantee of institutional autonomy for Christian ecclesiastical, educational, and social institutions. In the colonial era, the institutional autonomy of Protestant institutions was frequently infringed upon under the pretense of preserving public peace and order. When the colonial regime issued the *Regulations for Religious Propagation* in 1905, an objective of the regulations was to establish tight control over all religious institutions, including Christian churches. In response, the Joint Meeting of the Legal and Executive Committee of the Federal Council immediately expressed its “apprehensions of an infringement upon the right of the Christian churches to appoint their own officers and decide upon their qualifications.”¹⁴³ These “apprehensions” became a reality. As the Federal Council noted in *Communication*, the colonial power frequently interfered in the management of Christian institutions through intricate regulations and restrictions, seriously hampering institutional autonomy and the self-government of Protestant churches and institutions.¹⁴⁴ Seeing institutional autonomy as a crucial part of religious freedom, the Federal Council formally requested “liberty in the management” of Christian schools and “freedom from unnecessary official interference” in Christian institutions like mission hospitals.¹⁴⁵

However, the colonial power feared the institutional autonomy of Protestant institutions, believing that self-governing institutions were recalcitrant and indocile as much as autonomous and that institutional autonomy would promote entrenched resistance. Educational institutions were a particular bone of contention between colonialists and

¹⁴³ “Report of the Joint Meeting of the Legal and Executive Committee,” *AMFC*, 1915, 32.

¹⁴⁴ *Communication*, 2.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 4, 6.

Protestants. After annexation, as education increasingly became a bureaucratic apparatus of the colonial regime, Christian educational institutions sought institutional autonomy. Protestant Christians wanted autonomy for their educational institutions in order to defend their way of life and promote their vision of society, though they did not attempt to build a two-tiered system in the colony. The Christian effort created a permanent tension with colonialists, whose main concern was to entirely assimilate Koreans into the Japanese empire. The colonial regime wanted every social and religious institution to be organically connected and hierarchically integrated within the colonial system, seeing it as essential to colonial assimilation. With the rise of colonial totalitarianism in the 1930s, the institutional autonomy of Protestant institutions was completely suppressed by the totalitarian regime.¹⁴⁶

iii) The Church-and-State Relationship in Colonial Korea and the Federal Council

a) The Colonial Political Order and Protestant Missionaries

In the 1910s, the relationship between Korean Protestantism and the colonial regime was marked by acute tensions. Arthur Judson Brown, a leading figure of the American Presbyterian mission board, described the Korean Protestant churches and their affiliated organizations as “a hotbed of revolutionary opportunity.”¹⁴⁷ Although his description is somewhat exaggerated because Korean churches were never “revolutionary” in the sense of a political movement, it is true that many Korean Protestants in the 1910s were very nationalistic and resistant to Japanese colonialism. Two political events in the 1910s illustrates the

¹⁴⁶ This is discussed in more detail in Chapter IV.

¹⁴⁷ Arthur Judson Brown, *The Mastery of the Far East: The Story of Korea's Transformation and Japan's Rise to Supremacy in the Orient* (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1919), 570.

nationalistic role of Korean Protestantism: the Conspiracy Case in 1911-1912,¹⁴⁸ and the March First Independence Movement in 1919. The nationalistic role of Korean Protestantism led Japanese colonialists to claim that “Christian work in this peninsula is a cloak under which political intrigues are carried on.”¹⁴⁹ Throughout the first decade of the colonial era, Japanese colonizers regarded Korean Protestantism as a danger to the colonial system. Colonial laws and regulations on religion and education were therefore devised to keep a tight rein on primarily the Korean Protestant movement. Although harsh restrictions imposed upon Protestantism were eased after the launch of the “cultural” policy, the tension between Korean Protestants and colonialists prevailed throughout most of the colonial era.

However, unlike the strained relations between Korean Protestants and Japanese colonizers, the relationship between missionaries and colonialists was relatively cordial, at least until the rise of Shinto controversy in the mid-1930s. Most Protestant missionaries were not antagonistic toward Japanese rule, although different understandings of religious freedom put missionaries at odds with Japanese colonialists. Upon the annexation of Korea by Japan, they recognized the colonial power as a legitimate ruler in colonial Korea without hesitation. In the early years of colonial rule, the Joint Meeting of the Legal and Executive Committee of the Federal Council expressed their recognition of the colonial power as “the constituted civil authorities as ordained by God and to be duly honored and obeyed in accordance with the

¹⁴⁸ The Conspiracy Case, also known as the 105-Man Incident, was a political machination devised by the colonial regime to domesticate and tame Korean Protestants, whom the colonial power saw as a political threat. The Conspiracy Case attracted much attention from Protestant missionaries although still less than the March First Movement. See Arthur Judson Brown, *The Korean Conspiracy Case* (Northfield, Mass: Northfield Press, 1912); Fred A. McKenzie, *Korea's Fight for Freedom* (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1920), 236-37; Jai-Keun Choi, *The Korean Church under Japanese Colonialism* (Seoul: Jimmundang, 2007), 39-66.. For the colonialist view on the Conspiracy Case, see *Annual Report*, 1912-1913, 56-9; 1914-1915, 47-9.

¹⁴⁹ Nakarai, *Relations between the Government and Christianity in Chosen*, “Preface,” n. page.

Word of God.”¹⁵⁰ Most missionaries in colonial Korea supported colonial political order, offering theological legitimation to the regime.

The 1920s were a high point for this cordial relationship between colonialists and missionaries. Many missionaries highly praised the accomplishments of the “cultural” rule launched by Governor-General Saitō, who ruled colonial Korea from 1919 to 1927 and 1929 to 1931. In 1932, E. H. Miller—a member missionary of the Federal Council—described the period under the rule of Governor-General Saitō as the “best days” in terms of the relationship between colonialists and missionaries.¹⁵¹ This amicable relationship was evidenced by conferment of a decoration by the colonial regime to missionaries. O. R. Avison, who was then president of Chosun Christian College and served as vice chairman of the General Council in 1910, was conferred the fourth degree of the Order of the Sacred Treasure by the Empire of Japan.¹⁵² S. A. Moffett, who was in 1933 elected chairman of the Federal Council, was bestowed a gold medal by the Imperial Educational Association, an institution sponsored by the colonial regime.¹⁵³

Missionaries saw political stability and public security as a foundation of political legitimacy. They did not want Korea as a mission field to be a failed state. As long as the freedom of religion was granted and not extremely violated, a government—whether colonial or Korean—was a good government if it could maintain public peace and order. Colonial law and order was oppressive and violent to Koreans but many missionaries recognized Japan as a

¹⁵⁰ AMFC, 1915, 31. See also *Annual Report of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, 1911, 30.

¹⁵¹ E. H. Miller, “General Survey of the Christian Movement,” *KMYB*, 1932, 5.

¹⁵² Rhodes, *History of the Korea Mission, Presbyterian Church U.S.A.*, 504. See also Miller, “General Survey of the Christian Movement,” 7.

¹⁵³ Rhodes, *History of the Korea Mission, Presbyterian Church U.S.A.*, 504-5.

legitimate ruler because they believed that such iron-fisted rule offered a political stability. Celebrating in 1934 the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the Northern Presbyterian Mission, Richard H. Baird claimed that “surely we missionaries ... [had] enjoyed the safety and security given by the strong Japanese government.”¹⁵⁴ At the same anniversary, Herbert E. Blair—who served as chairman of the Federal Council in 1937—praised Japanese rule for bringing “peace and security of life and property.”¹⁵⁵ He added, “What the Church of Korea might have been at this time of Jubilee, had there been a different political environment, no one can say.”¹⁵⁶

Praise for colonial rule by missionaries was reinforced by their anti-communism. The 1920s witnessed the rise of a communist movement throughout colonial Korea, and missionaries of the Federal Council argued that the rise of Korean communism was subversive to colonial political order. They were very pleased with the efforts of the colonial power to suppress Korean communists, calling the communist movement as a “dangerous thought.”¹⁵⁷ For instance, when Korean communism posed a serious challenge to both colonial rule and mission enterprise, E. H. Miller expressed gratitude to the colonial power: “The missionary movement is thankful for the order maintained in the peninsula by the Government-General, it gladly renders unto the powers that be the things due them, praying God's guidance in these very difficult times.”¹⁵⁸ Richard H. Baird expressed similar relief: “If the iron hand of the Japanese government should be removed, just how strong the red influences would prove to

¹⁵⁴ Baird, “Present Day Religious Problems,” 139. See also Wasson, *Church Growth in Korea*, 88.

¹⁵⁵ Herbert E. Blair, “Fifty Years of Development of the Korean Church,” in *The Fiftieth Anniversary Celebration of the Korea Mission of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., June 30-July 3, 1934*, ed. Harry A. Rhodes and Richard H. Baird (Seoul, Korea: Post Chapel, John D. Wells School, 1934), 118.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵⁷ Miller, “General Survey of the Christian Movement,” 7.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

be, is impossible to know.”¹⁵⁹ Despite the Shinto controversy in the early 1930s, which began to take center stage in religious matters, missionaries felt relieved by the way that the colonial regime cracked down on what they called “purely materialistic”¹⁶⁰ ideology.

In their political thought, missionaries put more emphasis on stability and order than political freedom, justice, and liberation, seeing a high degree of political stability as a fundamental condition for religious freedom. The Korean aspiration for independence was not on the agenda of missionaries. Though the colonial power ruled Koreans with an iron hand, Protestant missionaries supported the order and security of colonial rule, fearing the social chaos that the national independent movement might bring. In *Report of the Committee on the Promotion of International Friendship* in 1921, missionaries of the Federal Council described the politically “ideal condition” in colonial Korea as “one in which [the colonial regime] shall enjoy the entire loyalty and obedience of its [colonial subjects], and in which all resident foreigners shall have relations with the authorities and with the people of free and friendly intercourse and cooperation for highest welfare of the country.”¹⁶¹ The “ideal condition,” however, did not include human dignity, human rights, or democratic values such as freedom and equality. Missionaries did not understand the suffering and agony of colonial subjects, who were subject to arbitrary power and colonial oppression.¹⁶² Many missionaries were largely Augustinian in the sense of their political attitude in a mission field, seeing real politics through the lens of the

¹⁵⁹ Baird, “Present Day Religious Problems,” 138.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

¹⁶¹ AMFC, 1921, 35.

¹⁶² Many American missionaries were proud of the American Revolution, during which Americans rejected the British rule and established the independent United States of America. For example, see Horace H. Underwood, “Washington,” *KMF*, February 1934.

primacy of public security.¹⁶³ The missionary form of Augustinian politics was instrumental to the acceptance by missionaries of the colonial power as a legitimate ruler. In this sense, the Federal Council affirmed the colonial regime as “the constituted civil authorities as ordained by God,”¹⁶⁴ although the colonial rule was established against the will of Koreans. Missionaries exhorted Korean Christians to obey the colonial authorities, admiring the imperial peace and security effected by the colonial power, which they believed was crucial to religious freedom.

However, the imperial peace that Protestant missionaries cherished nonetheless backfired on them in the late 1930s. Colonial totalitarianism in the 1930s turned the peace and order paradigm to the disadvantage of missionaries: immediately before the outbreak of the Pacific War, colonialists expelled and deported most Western missionaries in order to preserve national and public security in colonial Korea. It was a historical irony.

b) Protestant Missionaries and the Politics of Neutrality

When the colonial power harshly cracked down on the national efforts of Koreans for independence, missionaries were extremely patient with the Japanese brutality and injustice exerted upon Koreans. However, this is not to say that missionaries were entirely on the side of colonialists. They had dual strategy for their mission enterprise. Missionaries, on the one hand, threw their political support behind the colonial regime, taking the regime as a legitimate ruler in both the political and theological sense. On the other hand, they also sought to find ways to cater to the needs of Koreans for modern civilization, building up social and educational

¹⁶³ See Paul Weithman, “Augustine’s Political Philosophy,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Augustine*, ed. Eleonore Stump and Norman Kretzmann (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 234-52.

¹⁶⁴ AMFC, 1915, 31. See also *Annual Report of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, 1911, 30.

institutions. The two strategies were not mutually exclusive. Protestant missionaries sought to harmonize the two mission strategies in order to maximize the mission enterprise.

Political neutrality was central to the harmony of the two mission strategies. As a missionary noted, Protestant missionaries kept “a position of neutrality in all political matters”¹⁶⁵ throughout most of the colonial era. However, the missionary neutrality did not mean that missionaries were apolitical, taking no interest in any political matter in the peninsula; rather, political neutrality was itself the political stance of missionaries in the Japanese colony. This politics of neutrality was a strategic stance to harmonize two opposing relationships, one with Koreans and the other with Japanese colonialists. When international power politics threw Korea into a politically desperate situation to the point of annexation, and Koreans were unjustly treated under Japanese colonial rule, missionaries held a sympathetic feeling toward Koreans. This was well illustrated by a Presbyterian missionary, who wrote,

It was but natural that the missionaries were sympathetic with the Koreans at a time of encroachment upon Korea on the part of any foreign country, whether it was China, Russia, Japan, or some other country. No outside group are so close to the Korean people as are the missionaries who know the Korean language and who enter intimately and sympathetically into the lives, hopes, and interests of the people.¹⁶⁶

Nevertheless, their sympathy toward Koreans did not prevent missionaries from endorsing the colonial power as a legitimate ruler. When annexation and Japanese colonial rule became a political reality, most missionaries never questioned the legitimacy of the colonial rule.

¹⁶⁵ Rhodes, *History of the Korea Mission, Presbyterian Church U.S.A*, 498. See also Frank Herron Smith, *The Other Side of the Korean Question: Fresh Light on Some Important Factors* (Seoul: The Seoul Press 1920), 7.

¹⁶⁶ Rhodes, *History of the Korea Mission, Presbyterian Church U.S.A*, 498.

However, when Korean Christians were persecuted because of political matters, missionaries found themselves drawn into growing involvement in the political affairs of colonial Korea. While missionaries stood in an awkward position between colonialists and Koreans, they desperately struggled to remain politically neutral. Immediately after the March First Movement, a leading missionary confessed that missionaries were “pro-Korean but that did not necessarily imply that [they were] anti-Japanese.”¹⁶⁷ If they were to take sides with either Japanese colonizers or Koreans, missionaries were keenly aware of the danger of losing friendly relations with the other group. Thus, they tried best to steer a middle course between colonialists and Koreans in political matters like the independence movement. They did so believing that missionary politics of neutrality would bring best results for their mission enterprise.

When the March First Independence Movement created political turmoil, it posed a dilemma for missionaries, and put the missionary politics of neutrality to the test. Some missionaries were outright supporters of Japanese colonialism and its police power, condemning Korean protesters. F. Herron Smith, an American missionary, claimed that Korean demonstrators should be subject to the “severest punishment,” saying that Koreans were not “fit for independence” and “Korea yelling for independence is like an American youth yelling to vote.”¹⁶⁸ However, the brutality and cruelty inflicted on peaceful protesters by Japanese police and gendarmes created an immense wave of sympathy for Koreans among many

¹⁶⁷ Smith, *The Other Side of the Korean Question*, 7-8.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., 5-6.

missionaries.¹⁶⁹ The colonial violence prompted missionaries to shift their neutrality from “absolute neutrality” to “sympathetic neutrality”¹⁷⁰ and take a stance of “no neutrality for brutality.”¹⁷¹ Missionaries condemned the inhumane actions of the colonial regime upon Koreans, many of whom were Protestant Christians. Missionaries of the Federal Council strongly denounced the colonial regime for the “cruelty, barbarity and injustice”¹⁷² of its repressive tactics against Korean protesters.¹⁷³

Nevertheless, their politics of neutrality did not meaningfully change. Protestant missionaries recognized police brutality, but did not recognize the inherent brutality of colonialism itself. Instead, missionaries requested a change of colonial policy when most Koreans called for immediate independence. The nationwide resistance of Koreans and unsympathetic international opinion—largely influenced by the reports and witnesses of missionaries—combined to prompt the colonial power to shift its policy towards the “cultural” policy. Welcoming the changed policy, the Federal Council expressed its hope that the policy launched by a new governor-general would bring about “genuine reforms”¹⁷⁴ in colonial Korea. However, missionaries never cast doubt on the legitimacy of Japanese rule even as they condemned torture, excessive police violence, and poor governance.¹⁷⁵

¹⁶⁹ For example, see Herbert Welch, “The Missionaries’ Attitude Towards the Government in the Present Crisis,” *KMF*, March 1920, 56-8.

¹⁷⁰ Smith, *The Other Side of the Korean Question*, 7-8.

¹⁷¹ Samuel H. Moffett, *The Christians of Korea* (New York: Friendship Press, 1962), 71.

¹⁷² *Communication*, 10.

¹⁷³ When he delivered a speech before the Federal Council, Arthur D. Berry, a leading missionary working in Japan also condemned the police brutality as “inhumane” and “barbarous.” See Arthur D. Berry, “Address of the Fraternal Delegate from the Conference of Federated Missions in Japan before the Federal Council of Missions in Korea,” *AMFC*, 1919, 39.

¹⁷⁴ *Communication*, 10.

¹⁷⁵ It is important to note here that some missionaries condemned Japanese imperialism in Korea not because the imperialism was unjust and brutal but because it eroded and undermined Christian civilization and Western Christian values, which were expressed and embodied in their civilization-oriented mission. They aligned

Protestant missionaries were not consistent in their stance of political neutrality. Political neutrality was not an official policy of missionaries under the pre-colonial Korean government. Rather, they politically and diplomatically supported the Korean government of Daehan Jekuk even though the American government called on missionaries not to become involved in Korean politics.¹⁷⁶ In the last decade of the nineteenth century and the first of the twentieth, missionaries enjoyed a deep and cordial connection with the king and royal family of Korea.¹⁷⁷ They used these connections to facilitate “the furtherance of the Gospel”¹⁷⁸ and to promote Protestantism as “a good and loyal doctrine”¹⁷⁹ to both elite and ordinary Koreans. However, after the onset of colonial rule in 1910, missionaries rapidly retreated from their initial involvement in Korean politics. Under colonial rule, missionaries adopted a new political principle—that is, the politics of neutrality. While missionary efforts to garner the royal favor of the pre-colonial Korean dynasty and government were not consistent with their subsequent emphasis on political neutrality during the colonial era, nevertheless missionaries had one consistent goal from the late nineteenth century onward, namely maximization of the effects of their mission enterprise. In order to achieve this goal, missionaries tended to entrench

themselves with Koreans fighting against colonial rule partly out of sympathy with Koreans’ struggle for freedom and partly out of feeling that Japanese rule was inferior to Western colonial rule. They believed that Westerners were better colonizers than their Japanese counterpart. To put it other way, it is important to distinguish opposition to Japanese imperialism from opposition to imperialism itself. The missionaries did not see any structural or inherent evil in colonial rule itself. For instances, see Brown, *The Mastery of the Far East: The Story of Korea’s Transformation and Japan’s Rise to Supremacy in the Orient*, 370-1; Hulbert, *The Passing of Korea*, 8-9; Oliver R. Avison, *Guhanmal Birok*, Trans. Ebiseun Ginyeomsaeophoe (Daegusi: Daegudaehak Chulpanbu, 1986), 2: 116. For an insightful discussion on this topic, see Andre Schmid, “Two Americans in Seoul, Evaluating an Oriental Empire, 1905-1910,” *Korean Histories* 2:2 (2010): 15-23.

¹⁷⁶ See Tyler Dennett, *Americans in Eastern Asia: A Critical Study of the Policy of the United States with Reference to China, Japan and Korea in the 19th Century* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1922), 572.

¹⁷⁷ See Underwood, *Underwood of Korea*, 136-154; Robert E. Speer, *Missions and Politics in Asia: Studies of the Spirit of the Eastern Peoples, the Present Making of History in Asia, and the Part Therein of Christian Missions* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1898), 253-57.

¹⁷⁸ Horace Grant Underwood, *The Call of Korea: Political, Social, Religious* (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1908), 102.

¹⁷⁹ Underwood, *Underwood of Korea*, 165.

themselves into the status quo of the existing political order, which they believed would create a political climate favorable to their mission enterprise. Thus, they established political connections with the Daehan Jekuk before annexation, but after the annexation they supported Japanese rule in Korea.

c) The Federal Council and the Colonial Regime

Protestant missionaries were enthusiastic supporters of the colonial political order, and sought to maximize the mission enterprise by drawing upon the politics of neutrality. The Federal Council was a key mission institution embodying neutrality politics, playing a central role in relationships between the colonial regime and Korean Protestantism. The 1920s saw the emergence of Korean leadership in the Korean Protestant movement, as illustrated by the formation in 1923 of the KNCC uniting Korean Presbyterian and Methodist churches and other Protestant institutions.¹⁸⁰ However, the role of the KNCC was very limited compared with that of the Federal Council even though the KNCC took over a number of duties formerly entrusted to the Federal Council.¹⁸¹ The Federal Council in much of the colonial era took a leading role whenever the Korean Protestant church made important decisions with a nationwide impact. Most of all, the Federal Council was a pivotal Protestant institution in communicating and negotiating with the colonial government, representing most Protestant forces (including missionaries) and leading Korean Protestantism as a unifying movement. Two committees of the Federal Council and its predecessor the General Council—the Legal Committee and the Committee on Government Relations—played a key role in the church-government relationship

¹⁸⁰ Rhodes, *History of the Korea Mission, Presbyterian Church U.S.A.*, 455-7.

¹⁸¹ Charles Allen Clark, *The Nevius Plan for Mission Work, Illustrated in Korea*, 2nd ed. (Seoul: Christian Literature Society, 1937), 217.

in colonial Korea.¹⁸² Unlike the Federal Council, the KNCC had no government relationship committee in the colonial era.¹⁸³

The Legal Committee was established in 1909 and superseded by the Committee on Government Relations in 1921, which functioned as one of the standing committees of the Federal Council. In 1937, it was absorbed into the Executive Committee.¹⁸⁴ In 1928, an attempt was made to drop the committee from the list of the committees of the Federal Council, but the motion was defeated in the annual meeting because many missionaries believed that the committee was still important.¹⁸⁵ The purpose of the Legal Committee was “the securing of the best legal advice and devising of some uniform method for the holding of properties to be used by the churches or missions in regular church work; for schools or philanthropical purposes or the endowment of same.”¹⁸⁶ According to the Federal Council’s rules and by-laws, the Legal Committee was made up of six members, two of whom were elected each year for a term of three years. The committee represented not just the Federal Council, but also—if necessary and upon request by the constituent bodies—the federated bodies in dealing with the colonial government.¹⁸⁷ In 1921, the Legal Committee was succeeded by the Committee on Government Relations, which was described by the Federal Council as “a medium of communication” between missionaries and the colonial government.¹⁸⁸ According to rules and by-laws of 1923, the committee was comprised of nine members, one from each of the six

¹⁸² Rhodes, *History of the Korea Mission, Presbyterian Church U.S.A.*, 455.

¹⁸³ It was not until in 1951 that the NCCK established a government relationship committee. See Taekbu Chun, *Hanguk Ekyumenikal Undongsa* (Seoul: Hangukgidokgyo Gyohoejeonhaphoe, 1979), 282.

¹⁸⁴ *AMFC*, 1937, 4, 67.

¹⁸⁵ See *AMFC*, 1928, 11, 14, 22.

¹⁸⁶ *AMGC*, 1911, 42.

¹⁸⁷ *AMFC*, 1914, 35.

¹⁸⁸ *AMFC*, 1921, 36.

federated missions, the YMCA, the British and Foreign Bible Society, and the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society, with three members elected each year to a term of three years.¹⁸⁹ The 1920s was a high point for the committee, but the committee in the 1930s was not as active as in the previous decade. In 1933, the committee reported that it had "an easy year and there was nothing to report."¹⁹⁰ In 1936, Hugh Miller, who served as a chairman of the Federal Council in the year of 1919-20, noted that "we still have a Committee on Government Relations which fortunately is not called upon often to do anything. It is there, however, in case of need."¹⁹¹ However, war time policy in the late 1930s made it impossible for the committee to act as "a medium of communication."

While the Committee on Government Relations played a key role in relations of the Federal Council to the colonial regime, colonialists established a counterpart bureaucratic department in the colonial government. After the March First Movement, the colonial government in 1919 established the Religious Affairs Section in the Educational Bureau.¹⁹² Because the March First Movement was mobilized largely by three religious groups—Protestantism, Choendokyo, and Buddhism—the colonial regime realized that religious policy was crucial to the colonial rule and that the new religious policy was needed. The establishment of the Religious Affairs Section was a key element of this new religious policy. An objective of the Religious Affairs Section was to accommodate the special needs of religious groups and to dexterously regulate and control religious groups.¹⁹³ The main target religion was Christianity, and most importantly, Protestantism. A secretary and several clerks were appointed to the

¹⁸⁹ *AMFC*, 1923, 57.

¹⁹⁰ *AMFC*, 1933, 15.

¹⁹¹ Hugh Miller, "The Future of the Federal Council," *AMFC*, 1936, 20.

¹⁹² *Annual Report*, 1918-1921, 91; 1935-1936, 103.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*

Religious Affairs Section, three of them Christians, and one of the three was a Japanese who could speak English fluently so as to promote “a better understanding” between colonialists and missionaries.¹⁹⁴ Religious Affairs Section was merged into the Social Affairs Section in 1932.¹⁹⁵ The period from 1919 to 1932, when the Religious Affairs Section existed, was a high time for the relationship between colonialists and missionaries.

Since 1919, the year of the March First Movement, the high officials of the colonial government regularly attended the annual meeting of the Federal Council, which was held usually in September.¹⁹⁶ These government officials included the administrative superintendent (which was often called vice governor-general by missionaries), the director of the Educational Bureau, the chief of the Foreign Affairs Section, and the chief of the Religious Affairs Section.¹⁹⁷ In 1921, for the first time, the administrative superintendent—second highest ranking official of the government-general—attended the meeting.¹⁹⁸ In 1935, the representatives of the colonial government who attended the annual meeting of the Federal Council included the administrative superintendent, the private secretary to administrative superintendent, the director of the Educational Bureau, the chief of the Social Affairs Section, and the English Secretary.¹⁹⁹ This attendance was part of colonial efforts to bring about “mutual understanding” between colonialists and missionaries.²⁰⁰ Colonialists explained the policy of the colonial

¹⁹⁴ Nakarai, *Relations between the Government and Christianity in Chosen*, 15-6.

¹⁹⁵ *Annual Report*, 1932-1933, 90.

¹⁹⁶ Before 1919, government officials did attend the annual meeting. However, the officials held lower rank in the government-general and the number of the attendance was fewer. Attendance before 1919 was not as important and weighty as attendance after. See *AMFC*, 1917, 7; 1918, 8.

¹⁹⁷ *AMFC*, 1919, 8; 1921, 13; 1930, 12.

¹⁹⁸ *AMFC*, 1921, 13.

¹⁹⁹ *AMFC*, 1935, 14.

²⁰⁰ *Annual Report*, 1918-1921, 88.

government on religion to missionaries of the Federal Council, listening to the opinions and desires of the missionaries and exchanging their own views and opinions.²⁰¹

The Federal Council was not just a union institution gathering most Protestant forces, but also a pivotal Protestant institution that shaped and expressed a unified response to the colonial regime. Though it had some tension with colonialists especially over Christian schools, the Federal Council generally maintained, as Charles A. Sauer—the secretary of the Federal Council—described, “friendly relations”²⁰² with the colonial power, explaining its mission policies to colonialists and closely cooperating with the colonial regime in promoting colonial policy.²⁰³ However, in the 1930s when colonial totalitarianism emerged, missionaries of the Federal Council collided with the colonial power and these “friendly relations” turned into extreme hostility between missionaries and colonialists.

²⁰¹ See Nakarai, *Relations between the Government and Christianity in Chosen*, 16; “Address of Hon. Rentaro Midzuno,” *AMFC*, 1921, 20; Rhodes, *History of the Korea Mission, Presbyterian Church U.S.A.*, 455.

²⁰² Charles A. Sauer, “The Federal Council of Missions,” *KMYB*, 1932, 101. See also Rhodes, *History of the Korea Mission, Presbyterian Church U.S.A.*, 502-3.

²⁰³ After the March First Movement, Japanese colonialists launched a society called the International Friendly Association to promote friendly relations between Japanese and foreigners, most of whom were missionaries. Welcoming the move, the Federal Council organized the Committee on the Promotion of International Friendship in 1919. The committee was established to promote Christian internationalism, focusing on “friendship” between Japanese and Christians, including missionaries. See Nakarai, *Relations between the Government and Christianity in Chosen*, 16-7; “Report of the Committee on the Promotion of International Friendship,” *AMFC*, 1921, 34-7; “Report of the Committee on the Promotion of International Friendship through Churches,” *AMFC*, 1925, 29-30.

III. Protestant Social Teachings, the Colonial Moral Order, and Korean Modern Morality

1. Modern Education, Protestantism, and the Colonial Moral Order

i) Modern Education and Protestantism

a) Protestantism and Koreans' Longing for Modern Education

Under the national crisis in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, many Koreans regarded modernization as the only solution to revive their country. In particular, modern education was emphasized as the central source for making the nation modernized. As a Federal Council member missionary pointed out, for Koreans modern education was “the magic instrument by which independence would be restored and modern civilization acquired.”¹ Many Koreans were confident that Protestantism and its social and pedagogical institutions would provide channels to access Western modernity through education, and thus a number of leading Koreans converted to Christianity in search of institutional sites that could deliver some form of modern education. E. M. Cable—chairman of the Federal Council in 1930—highlighted Koreans’ “longing for education”² and enthusiasm for the Protestant mission as a provider of modern education in the face of increasing Japanese encroachment on the modern Korean quest for national independence and self-determination at the turn of the twentieth century:

The passing away of Korea’s independence has served somewhat to stimulate the Koreans along the line of education. They are waking up to the fact that he who knows little does little. This hungering after knowledge is the normal symptom of a nation's

¹ Alfred Washington Wasson, *Church Growth in Korea* (Concord, N.H.: Rumford press, 1934), 75.

² E. M. Cable, “The Longing for Education,” *KMF*, June 1906, 144.

awakening into life, power, and usefulness. The past year has witnessed more stir and agitation for an intellectual advancement than has probably ever before been known in the Land of the Morning Calm [Korea]. I have been besieged all year by boys, young men, and old men in regard to schools. From all sides comes the cry for schools, teachers, and western learning.³

The Korean zeal for empowerment through modern Western knowledge and education was a driving force behind the growth of the church and the rapid expansion of Protestant teachings.

After Korea was made a protectorate of Japan in 1905, some Korean nationalists sought independence through armed resistance against Japanese imperialism, a famous example of which was guerrilla warfare fought by “righteous armies.”⁴ However, after the annexation of Korea in 1910, many Koreans accepted Japanese colonial rule as a political reality without violent resistance, although they nonetheless did not accept colonial rule as a legitimate form of authority over Korea. Believing that it was impossible to restore the Korean dynasty by engaging in armed struggle, many Korean nationalists preferred a gradual and reformist approach in seeking national independence. This approach, often called the Self-Nurturing Movement (*Sillyeog Yangseong*, in Korean),⁵ aimed to transform Koreans into empowered, competent, and enlightened agents, drawing primarily upon modern education. This reformist stance was an attempt to reconcile Korean nationalism with colonial rule, stressing gradual social reforms and rejecting revolutionary and violent resistance.

³ Ibid. See also D. L. Gifford, “Education in Capital of Korea,” *The Korean Repository*, June 1896, 281-87; W. A. Noble, “Enthusiasm for Education,” *KMF*, June 1906, 150; Wasson, *Church Growth in Korea*, 55-9.

⁴ Bruce Cumings, *Korea's Place in the Sun: A Modern History*, Updated ed. (New York: W. W. Norton, 2005), 146-47.

⁵ For a study of the Self-Nurturing Movement, see Chanseung Park, *Hanguk Geundae Jeongchisasangsayeongu: Minjokjuuiupaui Sillyeogyangseong Undongron* (Seoul: Yeoksabipyeongsa, 1992).

Korean Protestants were a leading voice in the reformist national movement, and considered the expansion of modern schools to be key to the movement. This commitment to modern education lay primarily in their belief that transformation of the Korean self through modern education would bring social improvements and national regeneration in an incremental way, and in doing so would lay the foundations for Koreans to establish an independent nation in the future. The emphasis on the establishment of modern schools led Korean Protestantism to become a preeminent force in the expansion of modern education in the early twentieth century.⁶

However, educational fever among Koreans did not involve only the aspiration for national revival. This enthusiasm for modern education was also driven by the goal of upward social mobility among ordinary Koreans. A missionary in 1932 made a keen observation regarding the zealous quality of Korean demand for modern education: “The passion for education in Korea amounts to a mania. ... Education became the summum bonum”⁷ among ordinary Koreans. Koreans saw modern education as an essential tool for personal and family success. A modern education was the social ladder by which ordinary Koreans climbed higher in colonial society, where social status was believed to be determined by degrees of education. Koreans’ desire for a successful life in terms of social status and wealth therefore drove them to enthusiastically embrace modern Western education. Protestant educational institutions

⁶ See In-su Son, *Hangukgeundaegyoyuksa* (Seoul: Yeonsedaehakgyo Chulpanbu, 1971), 11-46.

⁷ Victor W. Peters, “What Korean Young People Are Thinking,” *KMF*, May 1932, 92.

effectively appealed to Koreans' vigorous desire to be educated in modern schools,⁸ training a major portion of educated elites who became leaders at every level of Korean society.

b) The Protestant Mission and Modern Education

Protestant missionaries were pioneers of modern education.⁹ They concretely addressed the Korean zeal for modern education by building diverse modern educational institutions including several colleges. They also reinforced the demand by stressing the importance of education for Korean Christians, believing that education created the future leaders and teachers of the Korean Protestant church. Christian schools were established not merely for Korean Protestants but also for the general public. The missionaries offered civilization-oriented Christian teachings to "leaven the whole land"¹⁰ of Korea, presenting themselves as teachers of modern Western civilization to the Korean nation as a whole. Mission schools were a hub of the civilization-oriented Protestant mission, providing a vital link between the civilizing mission and evangelization (the two strands in the double helix of the Christian mission). Christian educational institutions were a mission vehicle not only to inculcate Christian values but also to nurture "civilized" men and women in the modern Western sense. As a result, in Christian schools the boundary between believers and non-believers was blurred as general modern and Western knowledge were taught among Korean

⁸ See James Earnest Fisher, *Democracy and Mission Education in Korea* (New York City: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1928), 50.

⁹ For a general overview of mission education in the early colonial era, see Horace Horton Underwood, *Modern Education in Korea* (New York: International press, 1926); Fisher, *Democracy and Mission Education in Korea*. For a critical perspective from a contemporary Korean leading educator of colonial education including mission education, see Mangyu Lee, *Joseongyoyuksa* (Seoul: Euryumunhwasa, 1949), 2:173-405.

¹⁰ "The State of the Case," *KMF*, May 1910, 122.

students. Missionaries wanted Koreans to be baptized with modern Western knowledge, not just Christian doctrines.

The General Council and the Federal Council played a central role in promoting modern education throughout the Korean peninsula, unifying Christian forces in secondary schools and higher educational institutions run by missionaries. They organized committees on mission education¹¹—the Committee on Educational Interests (1907-1911), the Committee on Educational Bureau (1911-1913) and the Committee on Education (1922-1926)—in order to promote the general interests of Christian schools. The Federal Council also closely cooperated with Protestant organizations concerning mission education, such as Senate of the Educational Federation of Christian Missions in Korea.¹²

Missionaries of the Federal Council blazed new trails in charity work for the poor, the disabled, and the underprivileged, but they also put a tremendous emphasis on the formation of educated elites.¹³ Considerable efforts were devoted to building and managing elite-oriented institutions, and the establishment of college-level institutions was central to the elite-oriented education. In 1917, there were six college-level schools recognized by the colonial government: four government-run institutions, but also two Christian schools. Following the onset of the “cultural” policy in 1919, the colonial regime in 1924 established Keijo Imperial University at Seoul, expanding higher education. By 1932, there were fifteen institutions of higher education in colonial Korea—a university, a university preparatory school, and thirteen colleges. Seven

¹¹ See *AMGC*, 1907, 12; 1911, 44; *AMFC*, 1923, 58.

¹² *AMFC*, 1912, 8, 13. See also Hugh Miller, “The History of Co-Operation and the Federal Council,” *KMF*, December 1934, 256.

¹³ For example, see D. A. MacDonald, “Evangelism among Leaders in Social, Educational, Political and Cultural Fields,” *AMFC*, 1937, 18-22.

were government-run institutions,¹⁴ while four were non-Christian private colleges or professional schools—Posung College, Central Buddhist College, Keijo Dental College, and the Keijo College of Pharmacy.¹⁵ The other four were Protestant institutions—Chosen Christian College, Severance Union Medical College, Union Christian College, and Ewha College for Women (the only women's college in colonial Korea).¹⁶ All Christian colleges were a union institution in which member missions of the Federal Council cooperated, participating in financial support.¹⁷ The schools were predominantly Korean institutions. While Korean students enrolled at Keijo Imperial University accounted for only 33% of all students (with the others being Japanese), at Christian institutions of higher education most students were Korean.¹⁸

This college-level education was aimed at educating Korean students into a national elite so that they could take a leading role in modernizing and Christianizing society.¹⁹ This enterprise was welcomed by Koreans because it well suited to the strong desire for upward social mobility. These college-level institutions created a sizable population of educated

¹⁴ See *Annual Report, 1930-1932*, 73-5; H. H. Underwood, "College Education in Korea," *KMYB*, 1932, 31-7.

¹⁵ Of these four private schools, the Keijo Dental College and The Keijo College of Pharmacy were largely under the government control. See Underwood, "College Education in Korea," 37.

¹⁶ Underwood, "College Education in Korea," 31-2. See also *Annual Report, 1930-1932*, 72-4; 1936-1937, 84-6.

¹⁷ For example, Union Christian College was managed jointly by the Northern Presbyterian Mission, the Southern Presbyterian Mission, the Australian Presbyterian Mission, and the Northern Methodist Mission. Chosen Christian College was a union institution supported by four missions: the Northern Methodist Mission, the Southern Methodist Mission, the Northern Presbyterian Mission and the Canadian Mission. See Underwood, *Modern Education in Korea*, 127, 140.

¹⁸ Underwood, "College Education in Korea," 31, 36. See also H. H. Underwood, "The Chosen College," *KMF*, August 1938, 157.

¹⁹ The elite orientation of Protestant mission schools was witnessed by contemporary German Benedictine Catholic missionaries, who were relatively more concerned with modern education than French Catholic missionaries. A Benedictine missionary noted that many high government official positions were taken by Protestant educated elites, deploring Catholics' lack of enthusiasm for modern education. See Jeonglan Jang, "Oegug Seongyohoeui Hanguk Seongyo: Dogil Benedeogdohoeui Wonsangyogu Sidae (1920 -1949 Nyeon)," in *Hanguk Geun-Hyeondae Baengnyeong Sog Ui Gadollig Gyohoe*, ed. Geunhyeondae Hanguk Katollik Yeongudan (Seoul: Katollik Chulpanbu, 2003), 1:61-114.

Christians who emerged as elite leaders, influencing most of the modern areas in colonial Korea.

ii) Colonial Education and the Colonial Moral Order

a) The Colonial Moral Order

According to Charles Taylor, the “modern moral order” in Western society is established upon the principle of “mutual benefit” between modern autonomous individuals. This modern normative principle guides and regulates a modern society.²⁰ However, in colonial Korea, the colonial form of the modern moral order was established and imposed by the colonial power for the purpose of promoting the interest of the Empire of Japan. This is the colonial moral order. This colonial moral order served as a basis for building colonial society and shaping colonial subjects. The overarching principle of the colonial moral order was that every Korean should be a loyal subject of the empire. It determined the direction and meaning of both personal and social ethics for colonial subjects.

Colonial education on the Korean peninsula was central to the formation of the colonial moral order. The prime purpose of colonial education and schooling was well articulated in the *Chosen Educational Ordinance* enacted in 1911 by Imperial Ordinance. Article II of the ordinance reads that “the essential principle of education in Chosen [Korea] shall be the making of loyal and good subjects.”²¹ Colonial education was devised not only to impart general and

²⁰ For Taylor's view on the “Modern Moral Order,” see Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007), 159-171, quote from 171.

²¹ Gakumukyoku, *The Chosen Educational Ordinance and Various Attendant Regulations* (Keijo: n. p., 1912), 1. See also *Annual Report*, 1914-1915, 5. The fundamental principle of the colonial education—that is, “the making of loyal and good subjects”—was founded upon the Imperial Rescript on Education, issued in 1890 for Japanese citizens. In Japan, the Rescript was part of a national effort to make Japanese loyal imperial subjects. The Rescript was “gracefully granted” to the colonial government and Koreans to extend the “fundamental principles of the national education” to colonial Korea. The colonial education was aimed at transforming ethnic Koreans into “loyal

common knowledge but to enhance colonial virtues like loyalty and obedience, so that Koreans might become “loyal and good subjects” of Imperial Japan. Colonial “moral training”²² was at the core of colonial education. Colonialists saw the educational principle of “the making of loyal and good subjects” not just as a fundamental moral foundation for colonial society but also as a safeguard of colonial political order. When loyalty to the Japanese Empire was taught as the highest moral virtue, colonial law and order were believed to have a firm foundation. The *Chosen Educational Ordinance* was revised several times during the colonial era, but the fundamental principle of colonial education never changed.²³ The principle was both politically and morally the most important yardstick for judging the behavior and even thought of colonial subjects.

The 1930s witnessed an increasing emphasis on Japanese moral and political particularism.²⁴ Although modern Japan had never denied modernization, it increasingly resisted Westernization and emphasized Japanese cultural uniqueness, seeking to construct its own version of the modern moral order. A key concept in this construction was *kokutai* (the national entity of Japan).²⁵ *Kokutai* was a pivotal guiding principle of Japanese totalitarianism

and good subjects” of the Japanese empire in accordance with the Imperial Rescript on Education. Missionaries in Japan viewed the rescript in the following terms: “This is the corner-stone of moral education in Japan, especially in the lower schools. As an instrument for the moral discipline of a whole nation, it holds a place only matched in the West by the Sermon on the Mount and the Decalogue.” See Galen M. Fisher, “Notes on Moral and Religious Influences Surrounding Younger Students in Japan,” *JCYB*, 1909, 58; *Annual Report*, 1911-1912, 202-3. For a brief overview of promulgation and political implications of the Imperial Rescript on Education in the Japanese context, see Teruhisa Horio, *Educational Thought and Ideology in Modern Japan: State Authority and Intellectual Freedom*, trans. Steven Platzer (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1994), 65-72.

²² *Annual Report*, 1914-1915, 5.

²³ See *Annual Report*, 19 1922-1923, 83; 1928-1939, 92.

²⁴ For a study on moral and political particularism in modern Japan, see Richard M. Reitan, *Making a Moral Society: Ethics and the State in Meiji Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2010), 153-65.

²⁵ *Kokutai* referred to Japanese national essence and uniqueness, and eternal aspects of Japaneseness. For a detail and official explanation of *kokutai* by the Japanese government, see Monbushō, *Kokutai No Hongi: Cardinal Principles of the National Entity of Japan*, trans. John Owen (Newton, Mass.: Crofton Publishing Corp., 1974).

marking the fifteen-year wartime period (1931-1945). The principle was extended to colonial Korea to provide a foundation for colonial totalitarianism.

This study considers colonial totalitarianism to be a form of totalitarianism where the colonial regime seeks to dominate every aspect of colonial daily life.²⁶ Characterized by its unlimited expansion of colonial power, the colonial form of totalitarianism demanded total commitment from colonial subjects to the regime. The colonial form of the totalitarian regime constantly strove to establish what Hannah Arendt calls “total domination,”²⁷ providing a total vision of colonial life and society. It was a novel form of colonialism with Japanese characteristics.

Under colonial totalitarianism, colonial education was guided and defined by the principle of *kokutai*. In the 1910s, the colonial power saw modern education as the “path of civilization,”²⁸ describing its rule as “civilized.” However, colonial totalitarianism replaced the civilization-based educational system of the 1910s and 1920s with a *kokutai*-oriented system, emphasizing Japanese distinctiveness. Thus, Governor-General Jirō Minami in 1937 claimed that “education is the moving force toward [Japanese] national culture. ...the most important of all is the development of our [Japanese] national spirit through education.”²⁹ Although the emphasis on Japanese values in the colonial educational system was also sought in the 1910s

²⁶ Gregory Henderson used the term “colonial totalitarianism” to describe the Japanese colonial rule (1910-1945) as a whole without giving a clear definition of it. However, in this study, colonial totalitarianism refers to the totalitarian policy of the wartime period (1931-45). See Gregory Henderson, *Korea, the Politics of the Vortex* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968), Chapter 4 “Colonial Totalitarianism,” 72-112.

²⁷ For Arendt’s view of “total domination” in Nazi totalitarianism, see Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (San Diego: A Harvest Book, 1979), 437-59.

²⁸ *Annual Report*, 1910-1911, 244.

²⁹ Jirō Minami, “Governor-General’s Message to the Governors of the Provinces,” *Annual Report*, 1937-1938, 227.

and 1920s,³⁰ it was in the 1930s with the beginning of the wartime period that Japanese moral values and “spirit” were emphatically asserted.

Immediately after the outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War in 1937, all Koreans were forced to memorize the “Oath of Imperial Subjects”: 1) “We are Imperial Subjects, We pledge our allegiance to the Empire,” 2) “We, the Imperial Subjects, by mutual faith, love and cooperation, will strengthen our union,” and 3) “We, the Imperial Subjects, by perseverance and training, will cultivate strength to exalt the Imperial Way.”³¹ The oath was an essential part of the “social education”³² of all Korean people, a nationwide campaign launched by the totalitarian government in order to inculcate the spirit of *kokutai*. Koreans were required to recite it in “schools, government offices, banks, companies, factories, shops, and all social bodies on every ceremonial occasion.”³³ The totalitarian regime used the oath to push for total assimilation, in which the colonial government sought to establish the “good and loyal subject” of the Japanese Empire as a definite identity for Koreans. Under colonial totalitarianism, colonial education including “social education” was an ideological apparatus of the totalitarian regime, imbuing colonial subjects with colonial moral imperatives like unconditional loyalty, sacrifice for the Empire, and obedience to the Japanese emperor and colonizers.

b) Confucian Ethic and the Colonial Moral Order

The colonial power invoked Confucian ethical teachings as a major source of the colonial moral order. Pre-colonial Korean morality was grounded largely in Confucian values, especially Confucian teaching of the five relations—king and subjects, father and son, husband and wife,

³⁰ For example, *Annual Report*, 1914, 159.

³¹ *Annual Report*, 1938-1939, 116-7.

³² *Ibid.*, 116.

³³ *Ibid.*

senior and junior, and friend and friend.³⁴ In colonial Korea, Confucian virtues still remained powerful at every level of life, although Confucianism as a political ideology already collapsed. Colonialists therefore appealed to Confucian role ethics³⁵ and moral ideals to lay a moral foundation for the colonial normative system. However, Confucianism in colonial Korea was reshaped and reconstructed for the purposes of legitimizing colonial rule.³⁶ To support this, in 1911 the colonial government established the *Keigakuin* (Confucian Classical Literary Institution, *Kyonghakwon* in Korean), whose aim was to “engage in promoting good morals among [colonial subjects], to observe faithfully the Imperial Will.”³⁷ In 1930, the colonial government also established the *Meiringakuin* (Confucian Institute, *Myeongnyun Hagwon* in Korean) in the *Keigakuin* with the purpose of “the cultivation of characteristic Oriental morals,”³⁸ as opposed to Western morality.

Colonial education placed a high emphasis on a regular ethics course called *Shūshin* (self-cultivation).³⁹ The ethics textbooks were authored and published by the colonial government itself. In colonial Korea, *Shūshin*, along with Japanese language, were taught as a

³⁴ See Jang-tae Keum, *Confucianism and Korean Thoughts* (Seoul: Jimoondang Pub. Co., 2000), 15, 22-3.

³⁵ For a study of Confucian role ethics, see Roger T. Ames, *Confucian Role Ethics: A Vocabulary* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2011).

³⁶ For a brief overview of Korean Confucianism in colonial Korea, see Warren W. Smith, *Confucianism in Modern Japan: A Study of Conservatism in Japanese Intellectual History* (Tokyo: Hokuseido Press, 1959), 166-84.

³⁷ *Annual Report, 1911-1912*, 210-1. See also *Annual Report, 1918-1921*, 84; Government-General of Chosen, *Results of Three Years' Administration of Chosen since Annexation* (Keijo: Office of the Government-General of Chosen, 1914), 55. For a study of the colonial control of Keigakuin see Mina Ryu, “Ilbon 'Gukmindodeokron' Ui Yuipgwa Jaesaengsan: 1910nyeondae—20nyeondae Gyeonghagwon Hwaldonggeul Jungsimeuro,” *Inmunyeongu* 52 (2007): 63-85.

³⁸ *Annual Report, 1938-1939*, 85. For an overview of Myeongnyunhagwon, see “Sikminjigi Joseonui Myeongnyunhagwon: Joseonchongdokbuui Yugyojisigin Jeongchaekgwa Joseoninui Daeung,” *Gyoyuksahagyeongu* 17, no. 1 (2007): 53-77.

³⁹ For an overview of Shūshin in the contemporary Japanese context, see Wilbur M. Fridell, “Government Ethics Textbooks in Late Meiji Japan,” *The Journal of Asian Studies* 29, no. 4 (1970): 823-33; Harry Wray, “The Fall of Moral Education and the Rise and Decline of Civics Education and Social Studies in Occupied and Independent Japan,” *Japan Forum* 12, no. 1 (2000): 15-41.

compulsory subject at all schools, including private schools.⁴⁰ The ethics course taught the basic moral values required for being loyal colonial subjects, providing an ethical basis for the colonial political order. Confucian themes and values were dominant in the ethics textbooks, and were appropriated for colony-building and making “good” colonial subjects. The Confucian ethic was reinterpreted in order to suit the needs of colonial rule, a reinterpretation marked by the arbitrary selection of Confucian moral teachings and the exclusion of fundamental Confucian principles like the innate goodness of humanity.⁴¹ Core Confucian values were instrumentalized to justify and legitimize Japanese colonial rule.

The emperor of Japan, called the *tenno* in Japanese, was a central figure and pivotal institution of the Empire of Japan.⁴² Modern Japan used the Confucian value system to present the emperor as a Confucian father figure who possessed a fullness of a patriarchal power and hierarchical authority. In Japan proper, Confucian ethics and the Japanese emperor system (the *tennosei*, in Japanese) combined to contribute to the formation of the “family state”(*kazoku kokka*, in Japanese).⁴³ The Japanese “family state” equated loyalty to the emperor with filial piety and social cohesion with family solidarity. This idea of the “family state” was also applied to colonial Korea. Colonialists drew upon Confucian teachings on loyalty and filial piety to solidify the Japanese rule in Korea. These Confucian virtues were highly valued when Confucian-

⁴⁰ *Annual Report*, 1922-1923, 80; 1938-1939, 92. For a study on *Shūshin* in colonial Korea, see Sunjeon Kim et al., eds., *Jeguguisikminjisusin: Joseonchongdokbu Pyeonchan <Susinseo> Yeongu* (Seoul: Jeienssi, 2008).

⁴¹ See Mina Ryu, “Jeonsichejegi Joseonchongdokbuui Yurimjeongchaek,” *Yeoksawahyeonsil* 63 (2007): 309-41; Ukjae Chung, “Joseonyudoyeonhaphoeui Gyeolseonggwa 'Hwangdoyuhak',” *Hanguk Dokribundongsa Yeongu* (2009): 227-64. See also Samuel Hideo Yamashita, “Confucianism and the Japanese State, 1904-1945,” in *Confucian Traditions in East Asian Modernity: Moral Education and Economic Culture in Japan and the Four Mini-Dragons*, ed. Wei-ming Tu (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1996), 132-54.

⁴² For a study of the imperial house and the emperor in modern Japan, see Takashi Fujitani, *Splendid Monarchy: Power and Pageantry in Modern Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996).

⁴³ Masao Maruyama, “Japanese Thought,” in *Modern Japan: An Interpretive Anthology*, ed. Irwin Scheiner (New York: Macmillan, 1974), 212. See also Fridell, “Government Ethics Textbooks in Late Meiji Japan,” 828-33; Monbushō, *Kokutai No Hongi*, 89-90, 143.

influenced Koreans expressed their loyalty to the Japanese emperor as their national father, and when they accepted colonial society as an extension of their family. Colonial subjects were pressured to be reborn as children of the Japanese emperor as the pivotal father figure who occupied the apex of all social relationship.

In sum, Confucian values and ideals were increasingly incorporated into colonial ruling ideology and propaganda. Reinterpreted Confucian morality formed the ideological underpinning of Japanese colonial rule as a major element of the colonial moral order.⁴⁴

c) Shinto and the Colonial Moral Order

Besides Confucian values, Shinto was another source of the colonial moral order, especially in the final fifteen years of the colonial era. Shinto as a politico-religious institution of modern Japan provided ethical-political order to Japanese society, offering a cosmological sanction to the Japanese modern moral order.⁴⁵ Shinto asserted that Japan was a divine country and its emperor a divine son, a direct descendant of the sun-goddess Amaterasu.⁴⁶ The emperor therefore held the central position in Shinto beliefs and practices. He was accepted as the “sole source of sovereignty”⁴⁷ for the Empire of Japan. As a result, the Meiji Constitution,

⁴⁴ Japanized Korean Confucianism in colonial Korea is called Imperial Confucianism (*Hwangdoyuhak*, in Korean). Imperial Confucianism interpreted Confucian teachings to legitimize Japanese colonial rule, teaching that the Japanese emperor was Confucian father-emperor figure of Koreans. On an introduction of Imperial Confucianism in colonial Korea, see Chung, “Joseonyudoyeonhaphoeui Gyeolseonggwa ‘Hwangdoyuhak’,” 227-64.

⁴⁵ See Monbushō, *Kokutai No Hongi*, 142.

⁴⁶ See *Ibid.*, 59-68.

⁴⁷ Horio, *Educational Thought and Ideology in Modern Japan*, 68. In the post-war constitution of Japan promulgated in 1947, popular sovereignty is proclaimed. In the Preamble, the new constitution proclaims that “sovereign power resides with the people.” However, the Meiji Constitution asserted imperial sovereignty, as article 4 stipulated that “The Emperor is the head of the Empire, combining in Himself the rights of sovereignty, and exercises them, according to the provisions of the present Constitution.” For Japan’s two modern constitutional texts in English (the Meiji Constitution, 1889; the Constitution of Japan, 1947), see Glenn D. Hook and Gavan McCormack, *Japan’s Contested Constitution: Documents and Analysis* (London: Routledge, 2001), 175-200.

the supreme law of modern Japan, was not authorized by the Japanese people but “granted”⁴⁸ by the emperor. The emperor was also the “center of national morality”⁴⁹ in Japan proper. In early twentieth century Japan, the Japanese people could not imagine a moral framework without reference to a divine authority. The Japanese emperor with his divine authority provided a foundation for the Japanese modern moral order. The religio-political fabric of the Japanese modern society thus generated a culturally distinctive concept of power, morality, and authority.

Shinto as the crux of the Japanese value system was promoted by colonialists to form a foundation of the colonial moral order. Shinto teachings were encouraged in order to inculcate an ethical-political set of colonial imperatives and virtues, such as loyalty to the emperor, into colonial subjects. With the beginning of the fifteen-year war by the Empire of Japan in the early 1930s, Japanese colonizers enforced Korean participation in Shinto worship, calling it “essentials of [colonial] moral virtue.”⁵⁰ Enforced Shinto worship was a colonial site in which colonial ideology was disseminated and colonial morality instilled; it was used to justify colonial moral ideals like loyalty and obedience, and to make colonial teachings morally imperative. To put it simply, Shinto worship became a form of outgroup coding or shibboleth for loyal colonial subjects.

Shinto teachings were instrumental in shaping a hierarchical colonial order because they were based on a cosmological hierarchy in which the emperor occupied the top spot. While the Western modern moral framework—whether based on natural law, the Kantian ethic, or the

⁴⁸ Monbushō, *Kokutai No Hongi*, 161.

⁴⁹ Horio, *Educational Thought and Ideology in Modern Japan*, 68-9.

⁵⁰ *Annual Report*, 1937-1938, 100.

utilitarian principle—is established without reference to divinity,⁵¹ colonialists in the totalitarian period sought to establish the moral order of colonial totalitarianism by drawing largely upon Shinto values. Colonial totalitarianism, like Fascism and Nazism, constituted what Taylor calls the “vertical ideal of order.”⁵² However, while Nazism and Fascism established this “vertical ideal of order” based upon “unbelief,”⁵³ colonial totalitarianism was built upon the modernized indigenous religious beliefs of Japan: Shinto. In the totalitarian period, Shinto worship was essential to the establishment of the colonial hierarchy, providing a foundation of colonial moral order. Shinto teachings also were central to hierarchical reconfiguration of Korean society under colonial totalitarianism.⁵⁴

iii) The Colonial Moral Order and Christian Morality

a) Protestant Teaching and the Modern Moral Order

When Protestantism was accepted as a site of entry into modern civilization in the first half of the twentieth century, Protestant moral and social teachings became critical to the formation of the modern moral order for many Koreans. Protestant teachings were inextricably linked to the Western modern moral system, which was itself defined largely by the Kantian ethic, the utilitarian ethic, and natural rights theory. Deeply embedded in Anglo-American Protestant values, Protestant missionary teachings taught Koreans Western civic virtues, capitalist economic ethics, the central role of voluntary associations based upon autonomous individuals, and individualistic virtues like personal autonomy.

⁵¹ Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 290.

⁵² Ibid., 418.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ This is discussed in more detail in Chapter IV.

Protestant social and moral teachings did not exclusively influence Korean Christians, they also had an impact on the general population in Korea. Missionaries were eager to propagate Protestant social teachings to non-Christian Koreans, regarding their perspectives as “the embodiment of ... highest Western ideals of life.”⁵⁵ This was illustrated by the mission enterprise initiated by the Federal Council. One of objectives of the Federal Council, according to its constitution, was moral and social teaching to the whole Korean community, not just Korean Christians.⁵⁶ Missionaries of the Federal Council sought to transform the entire “Korean community, Christian and non-Christian” through the “social principles of Christianity.”⁵⁷ Working as a civilizational leaven, missionary educational institutions associated with the Federal Council played a central role in diffusing and inculcating Christian moral values to the general public in Korea.

Furthermore, Protestant missionaries trained and taught Korean Christians so that “the Christian community [could be] leavening the thought and customs of the whole nation.”⁵⁸ As a result, the KNCC, following the footstep of the Federal Council, proclaimed that one of its goals was “promoting the public morals”⁵⁹ to all Koreans. This Korean Christian union organization sought to spread Christian morality, seeing it as a major project of the Protestant movement, which led to the wide penetration of Christian morality and values among Koreans.

⁵⁵ Fisher, *Democracy and Mission Education in Korea*, 62.

⁵⁶ *AMFC*, 1913, 34.

⁵⁷ *AMFC*, 1924, 33.

⁵⁸ H. T. Owen, “Korea—the ‘Permit’ Nation: Impressions of My First Year in Korea,” *KMF*, September 1919, 185.

⁵⁹ *AMFC*, 1928, 6.

b) The Colonial Moral Order and Protestant Missionaries

The Christian moral order often collided with the colonial moral order. The colonial moral outlook was distinctively at odds with Christian morality because colonial morality was deeply embedded in Japanized Confucian values and Shinto beliefs. When Shinto and Japanized Confucian values were inculcated to promote the colonial hierarchy, Protestant morality moved in a different direction to emphasize (though not in the absolute sense) personal and institutional autonomy. As a result, the colonial regime considered Christian social and moral teachings to be detrimental to the colonial system, believing that Christian morality—inextricably linked to Western modern morality—would undermine the colonial hierarchy.

In colonial Korea, education was a recurrent source of tension between colonialists and missionaries because both saw modern education as crucial to the moral formation of Koreans. The beginning of Japanese colonial rule ended what a Federal Council missionary called the “mission monopoly of modern education”⁶⁰ in Korea, but Christian schools still constituted a significant part of the colonial educational system during most of the colonial era. Protestant educational institutions counterbalanced the growing influence of colonial education, diffusing Christian social and moral values. To neutralize the Christian influence on colonial education, Japanese colonizers sought to separate morality from religion.⁶¹ Colonialists attempted to make morality independent of religious teachings by removing Christian teachings like Bible class from the regular curriculum (as discussed in Chapter III), an effort aimed at incapacitating a rival

⁶⁰ Fisher, *Democracy and Mission Education in Korea*, 65.

⁶¹ In Japan proper, some Meiji leaders like Inoue Tetsujirō attempted to sharply separate religion and morality, attacking Christianity and its morality as incompatible with Japanese spirit and values. For a discussion of Inoue Tetsujirō, see Jun'ichi Isomae, *Religious Discourse in Modern Japan: Religion, State, and Shintō* (Leiden: Brill, 2014), Ch. 2. “Inoue Tetsujirō and the Debates on Religion and Philosophy,” 68-97; Yushi Ito, “Conflicting Views of Japan's Mission in the World and National Moral Education: Yamaji Aizan and His Opponent Inoue Tetsujirō,” *Japan Forum* 22, no. 3-4 (2010): 307-30.

moral system.⁶² Furthermore, colonialists sought to turn Christian schools into a colonial state apparatus where colonial virtues were taught and inculcated, seeing the full control of education including Christian schools as an underpinning of colonial rule. This colonial education policy brought missionaries and Korean Protestantism into conflicts with the colonial power. Missionaries opposed the colonial policy, seeing Christian social and moral teachings in Christian schools as an essential element of religious freedom. They considered Christian social morality to be inseparable from Christian teachings.⁶³

However, this is not to say that missionaries always collided with colonialists over the formation of the colonial moral order. In fact, Protestant missionaries were cooperative in many ways in shaping colonial morality and supporting the colonial regime. In response to colonialist efforts to undermine the influence of Christian schools, missionaries claimed that Protestant teachings were not incompatible with colonial public morality, that good Christians would be good colonial subjects, and that Christian morality would solidify the colonial political order, boosting colonial morality.

In colonial Korea, Protestant moral and social teachings had significant affinities with the colonial normative system in two ways. First, Protestant morality in the economic sphere was a contributing factor to the formation of colonial morality. As colonial society was transformed within the modern frame, capitalistic industrialization increasingly dominated the daily lives of Koreans. This economic transformation required new economic morality. In the

⁶² The colonial government created the Religious Affairs Section within the department of Education in the colonial government, showing a clear administrative connection between religion and education. The obvious reason of the administrative arrangement was that the colonial regime controlled religion as it controlled education, separating religion from education.

⁶³ For example, see Horace H. Underwood, "Washington," *KMF*, February 1934, 39.

new economic environment, missionaries inculcated economic ethics like self-help, significantly contributing to the shaping of the colonial moral order in the economic sphere.⁶⁴

Second, colonial political virtues like loyalty were significantly emphasized in the social teachings of Protestant missionaries. Upon the annexation, the relationship between missionaries and colonialists was strained largely due to jurisdiction over mission schools and different views on religious freedom; however missionaries nonetheless endorsed Japanese colonial rule as legitimate, calling it as “ordained by God.”⁶⁵ This political and theological stance of missionaries matched what the colonial regime deemed to be “a good religion.”⁶⁶ When official colonial rule was initiated, Resident-General Terauchi prescribed what constituted a “good religion” in these terms: “A good religion, be it either Buddhism, or Confucianism, or Christianity has as its aim the improvement, spiritual as well as material, of mankind at large, and in this not only does it not conflict with administration but really helps it in attaining the purpose it has in view.”⁶⁷ In colonial Korea, the most important element of a “good religion” was cooperation with the colonial government in attaining the goals of colonial policy, educating and disciplining Koreans to become “loyal and good subjects.”⁶⁸

Under Japanese rule, missionaries put a lot of effort into positioning Korean Protestantism as a “good religion,” stressing the law-abidingness of Korean Protestants. In the *Communication* of 1919 calling for reform of colonial policy, missionaries of the Federal Council noted that if teaching the Bible (which was excluded from the curricula of mission schools in

⁶⁴ This is discussed in more detail in the second section here.

⁶⁵ *AMFC*, 1915, 31.

⁶⁶ Masakata Terauchi, “Proclamation of Annexation by Resident-General,” *Annual Report*, 1910-1911, 244.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ For example, see “Address of Mr. Z. Shibata in behalf of the Governor-General,” *AMFC*, 1919, 36.

1915) was allowed, mission schools would become “the best means of training law-abiding”⁶⁹ colonial subjects. In 1931, a decade after the inclusion of Bible teaching into the curricula at the mission schools, missionaries of the Federal Council concluded that the teaching of the Bible in Christian schools was “of very considerable assistance to [the colonial government] in building up the moral character of their peoples,” and that Christian private schools now “constitute one of the most effective agencies for the development of a law-abiding people.”⁷⁰ Guided by the missionary emphasis on abiding by the law, Christian schools increasingly became agencies collaborating with broad governmental aims, where the preservation of the colonial political order was taught as the highest moral duty of colonial subjects.

2. Protestant Social Teachings, Social Reform, and Moralism in Colonial Korea

i) The Self-help Economic Ethic in Colonial Korea

a) Protestant Missionaries of the Federal Council and the Capitalist Ethic

Under colonial rule Korea underwent significant industrialization, though many parts of the country still remained in an agrarian economy. As colonial society was increasingly industrialized and modernized, a self-help ethic emerged as a major part of the colonial normative system. Protestant missionaries were instrumental in introducing and teaching the self-help ethic to many Koreans, believing that this ethic was central to modern civilization.

Protestant missionaries of the Federal Council were critical of the agrarian-oriented economic system and its work ethic in Chosun Korea. In the pre-modern, non-capitalistic society ruled by Confucian political ideology, social class was hierarchically divided into

⁶⁹ The Federal Council of Protestant Evangelical Missions in Korea, *A Communication to His Excellency, Baron Saito, Governor-General of Chosen from the Federal Council of Protestant Evangelical Missions in Korea* (n. p., 1919), 4.

⁷⁰ *AMFC*, 1931, 20.

Confucian scholar-officials, farmers, artisans, and merchants (the hierarchical division is widely called *Sanonggongsang* in Korean) with scholar-officials at the top, farmers in the middle, and artisans and merchants at the lowest level. Missionaries noted that Confucianism hindered modern industrial development because Koreans educated by Confucian teachings “dislike what is regarded as industrial or manual labour” and commercial activity.⁷¹ The pre-modern economic system and its social hierarchy, missionaries concluded, was responsible for “backwardness”⁷² and the collapse of the Chosun dynasty. They therefore urged inculcation of a capitalist economic ethic and offered industrial training to Koreans. Stressing that Koreans should be taught “the sin of indolence,”⁷³ “the value of time,”⁷⁴ and “accuracy and efficiency,”⁷⁵ missionaries played an important role in spreading capitalist values and ethics to Koreans.⁷⁶

Protestant missionaries of the Federal Council considered self-help to be central to this economic ethic, suggesting that the “proper method of giving” to a Korean was “to help him

⁷¹ See J. S. Gale, “A History of the Korean People: Chapter IV,” *KMF*, October 1924, 202. This view was similar to a critique of Chinese Confucianism by contemporary sociologist Max Weber. See Max Weber, *The Religion of China: Confucianism and Taoism*, trans. Hans H. Gerth (New York: Free Press, 1951), 226-49.

⁷² Edwards Adams, “Present Day Economic Problems,” in *The Fiftieth Anniversary Celebration of the Korea Mission of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., June 30-July 3, 1934*, ed. Harry A. Rhodes and Richard H. Baird (Seoul, Korea: Post Chapel, John D. Wells School, 1934), 194.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 198.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁵ C. H. Deal, “A Self-Supporting Industrial Department,” *KMF*, October 1918, 223. See also E. W. Koons, “The Need of Lay Leadership,” *AMFC*, 1937, 43.

⁷⁶ The hard working economic ethic in East Asia has its roots not just in the Christian economic ethic but also the Confucian economic ethic, which many scholars viewed as the main source of the East Asian economic development. However, the Christian-inspired economic ethic had a unique element—the emphasis on self-help. This aspect was new to East Asians. For a study of the Confucian impact on Korean economic development, see Seok-Choon Lew, Woo-Young Choi, and Hye Suk Wang, “Confucian Ethics and the Spirit of Capitalism in Korea: The Significance of Filial Piety,” *Journal of East Asian Studies* 11, no. 2 (2011): 171-96; Chang Chan Sup, “The Confucian Capitalism: Impact of Culture and the Management System on Economic Growth in South Korea,” *Journal of Third World Studies* 15, no. 2 (1998): 53.

help himself.”⁷⁷ Accordingly, they established a “self-help department” in many mission schools, with various names such as the “Industrial Department,” “Industrial Self-Help Department,” or “Industrial School.”⁷⁸ This department, they believed, “serves directly as an efficient aid in inculcating in the student ... principles and ideals that make for right and noble living”⁷⁹ in the capitalist economy. Among the “principles and ideals” were “self-reliant, self-confident, self-respecting, and independent.”⁸⁰ Some mission schools had additional divisions in their industrial work department. For example, the Self Help Department in The Hugh O'Neill Jr. Academy of Syen Chun had a number of subdivisions: “Carpentry and Metal Shops, Dairy, Piggery, Mill, Farming, Gardening, Orchard, Meat Curing, Sericulture, Cannery, Barber Shop, Candy and Molasses Making.”⁸¹ Many missionaries hoped that the industrial education taught in the self-help department would “result in breaking down prejudice against the labor which helps to make industrious men and women.”⁸² Thus, missionaries taught the self-help ethic to Koreans to change the “attitude of the Korean mind toward work of any sort”⁸³ and to train them to be industrious and responsible workers in an increasingly industrialized society.⁸⁴

Protestant missionaries not only promoted commercial and industrial activity among Koreans, teaching the self-help economic ethic, but also involved themselves in business

⁷⁷ Lillian E. Nichols, “The Value of the Self-Help Department,” *KMF*, October 1918, 216.

⁷⁸ G. S. McCune, “Industrial Education and Self-Help Departments,” *JCYB*, 1918, 384-89. See also *AMFC*, 1919, 34.

⁷⁹ Nichols “The Value of the Self-help Department,” 216.

⁸⁰ C. H. Deal, “Self-Help for Students in Mission Schools,” *KMF*, October 1914, 314.

⁸¹ McCune “Industrial Education and Self-Help Departments,” 388.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 389.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 384.

⁸⁴ See Nichols “The Value of the Self-help Department,” 216; Earnest Fisher, “Missions and the Economic Development of Korea,” *KMF*, October 1928, 199-205.

activity.⁸⁵ As Fred Harvey Harrington in his book *God, Mammon, and the Japanese: Dr. Horace N. Allen and Korean-American Relations* argues, many leading missionaries—such as Horace Allen, C. C. Vinton, Samuel A. Moffett, Graham Lee, and Horace G. Underwood—were deeply involved with commercial enterprise. Calling them “the trading missionaries,”⁸⁶ Harrington claims that in Korea “the strands of trade were woven well into the rope of Protestant evangelism.”⁸⁷ He uses the term “mammon,” as the title of the book shows, to describe the commercial and business desires of the missionaries. However, the economic significance of the mission enterprise cannot be properly explained as simply avaricious activity in the materialistic pursuit of profit and wealth. Rather, the market-oriented and business-minded attitude of missionaries was a product of the symbiotic relationship between the economy and the Protestant form of Christianity in the Anglo-American nations.⁸⁸ The self-help ethic was a central component of this symbiosis. Guided by the self-help economic ethic, Protestant missionaries took on commercial and industrial interests as well as missionary interests, reflecting the increasingly market-oriented Anglo-American society. The self-help ethic

⁸⁵ For a study of the deep relationship between missionaries in Korea and capitalism, see Daeyoung Ryu, *Chogi Miguk Seongyosa Yeongu, 1884-1910: Seongyosadeurui Jungsancheungjeok Seonggyeogeuljungsimeuro* (Seoul: Hangukgidokg Yoyeoksayeonguso, 2001), 210-63.

⁸⁶ Fred Harvey Harrington, *God, Mammon, and the Japanese: Dr. Horace N. Allen and Korean-American Relations, 1884-1905* (Madison, Wis.: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1944), 106.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 103. See also A. Hamilton, *Korea* (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1904), 263.

⁸⁸ The self-help ethic illustrates Anglo-American symbiosis of economy and religion. In the Anglo-American Protestant tradition, quest for religious liberty had been deeply linked to quest for wealth and business opportunity, and capitalism and evangelism have been deeply connected. The deep connection is consolidated by the modern secular condition. Anglo-American missionaries, especially American missionaries, were marked by their market-oriented mentality. The American version of separation of church and state, in which there are no government subsidies or support, together with American denominationalism combined to promote market-oriented religious practice and morality, prompting competition in the religious market. For a study of a deep connection between American Protestantism and the free market economy, see R. Laurence Moore, *Selling God: American Religion in the Marketplace of Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994).

therefore was inextricably connected to the missionaries' view of economic life as well as a crucial part of their Christian social teachings to Koreans.

b) Colonialist Emphasis on Self-Help

Like the missionaries, Japanese colonizers also blamed Confucian values for the perceived backwardness of the Korean economy and the contemptuous attitude of Koreans toward industrial labor, claiming that "erroneous methods of [Confucian] education" misled young Koreans into "disliking [manual labor] and indulging in useless and empty talk."⁸⁹ The colonial regime thus promoted technical, vocational, and industrial training for Koreans,⁹⁰ paying special attention to "instilling into the minds of [Korean] young men the detestation of idleness and the love of real work, thrift and diligence."⁹¹ This vocation-oriented colonial education was emphasized to train Koreans to become manufacturing and industrial workers. This policy was part of colonial efforts to modernize the Korean economy, but it basically aimed to, as a contemporary Korean educator noted, perpetuate colonial rule by confining Koreans as colonial subjects to only a low-level industrial and technical education and, at the same time, discouraging and preventing humanities-oriented higher education among Koreans.⁹² Liberal education in higher education was taken as the preserve of the ruling Japanese colonizers.

As colonial Korea was increasingly modernized in the economic sphere, the self-help ethic was highly appreciated by both Koreans and Japanese colonizers. In the modern Western

⁸⁹ Terauchi, "Proclamation of Annexation by Resident-General," *Annual Report*, 1910-1911, 244.

⁹⁰ See *Annual Report*, 1912-1913, 207-8; "Address of Mr. S. Ushijima, Director of Internal Affairs and Director of Educational Bureau, Government-General of Chosen," *AMFC*, 1931, 37; "Address of Mr. Watanabe of Educational Department of the Government-General," *AMFC*, 1933, 38.

⁹¹ Terauchi, "Proclamation of Annexation by Resident-General," *Annual Report*, 1910-1911, 244. See also "Address of Count Kodama, Vice-Governor-General of Chosen," *AMFC*, 1930, 31-3, *Annual Report*, 1938-1939, 84.

⁹² Lee, *Joseongyoyuksa*, 2: 173-9, 426-9.

context, the self-help ethic was a modern economic ethic with Christian inspiration. This is well illustrated by Samuel Smiles, whose book *Self-Help* extolled the virtues of self-reliance, hard-working, and godly and industrious work, combining the Christian and capitalist ethics. His self-help ethic had a great impact on the Japanese⁹³ and then the Koreans.⁹⁴ In Meiji Japan, self-help was promoted to accelerate the development of modern capitalism. This self-help ethic was also attractive to many Koreans who sought for social success and favored gradual improvement in colonial society. A leading group of them was Korean Protestant Christians, who were very enthusiastic to embrace capitalism, promoting the self-help ethic and industrial education.⁹⁵

In colonial Korea, the economic ethic was a central colonial virtue of “loyal and good subjects.” For example, the *Annual Report* of 1916 wrote that “the cultivation in [Koreans] of habits of industry” was an essential element of being “good subjects of the Empire.”⁹⁶ Colonialists praised the self-help ethic as an essential part of the economic ethic in colonial Korea. In the 1920s, the economic ethic was stressed by colonialists,⁹⁷ but it was not until 1930s that the ethic was a dominant theme of colonial economic policy. In the 1930s, self-help was

⁹³ Smiles's book was translated into Japanese in 1871 by a Japanese Christian, Nakamura Masanao. See Akiko Ohta, “Nakamura Masanao (Keiu), 1832-91: Translator into Japanese of Samuel Smiles' *Self-Help*,” in *Britain & Japan: Biographical Portraits*, ed. Hugh Cortazzi (London: Japan Library, 2002), 4:215-23. For a study of a great impact of Smile's *Self-Help* on Meiji Japan, see Earl H. Kinmonth, *The Self-Made Man in Meiji Japanese Thought: From Samurai to Salary Man* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), 9-43.

⁹⁴ Namseon Choi, a leading literature figure, in 1918 translated Smile's *Self-Help* into Korean. For a study of Choi's translation, see Si-hyun Ryu, *Choenamseon Yeongu* (Seoul: Yeoksabipyongsa, 2009), 86-106; “Multiply-Translated Modernity in Korea: Samuel Smiles' *Self-Help* and Its Japanese and Korean Translations,” *International Journal of Korean History* (2011): 153-80.

⁹⁵ For example, see T. H. Yun [Chiho Yun], *Yunchihoilgi, 1916-1943: Han Jisiginui Naemyeonseggyereul Tonghaebon Sikminji Sigi*, trans. Sangtae Kim (Seoul: Yeoksabipyongsa, 2001), 150, 173, 508; Chunghui Ryu, “1910nyeondae Yunchihoui Sikminji Joseon Insikgwa Jajoronui Jeongchijeok Sangsangryeok: Choenamseonui Jajorongwaui Bigyoreul Tonghayeo,” *Dongbanghakji* 175 (2016): 195.

⁹⁶ *Annual Report*, 1916-1917, 170. See also “Address of Count Kodama, Vice-Governor-General of Chosen,” *AMFC*, 1930, 32.

⁹⁷ Huijeong Choi, “1930nyeondae 'Jaryeokgaengsaeng'ronui Yeonwongwa Sikminji Jibae Ideollogihwa,” *Hanguk Geunhyeondaesayeongu* (2012): 152-56.

promoted by the colonial regime as part of efforts to overcome an economic crisis triggered by the Great Depression in 1929 and exacerbated by the Manchurian Incident in 1931. Governor-General Kazushige Ugaki in 1932 claimed that the economic crisis could be best overcome by inculcating “thrift and diligence” and “instilling in the farmers a spirit of self-dependence.”⁹⁸ The resulting rural economic movement was called the “Rural Self-help Movement,”⁹⁹ and was aimed at boosting “mental awakening” and “moral encouragement”¹⁰⁰ among the Korean farmers who constituted a majority of the labor force in colonial Korea. Colonialists claimed that the self-help movement would help Korean farmers to “work out their own [economic] salvation” if they were instilled with self-help mentality.¹⁰¹ As a result of this emphasis, the self-help movement widely penetrated colonial Korea. In 1933, colonialists expressed their satisfaction with the nationwide expansion of the self-help ethic, saying that “a spirit of self-help is developing among the people in all corners of the country.”¹⁰²

When the self-help ethic became a central tenet of the colonial work ethic, it served to strengthen the friendly relationship between missionaries and colonialists. For instance, missionaries of the Federal Council favorably responded to the “Rural Self-help Movement,”¹⁰³ and in 1935 the Rural Life Committee of the Federal Council reported that member missionaries should “encourage the Christians to not only follow [the self-help movement] but to go even a

⁹⁸ Kazushige Ugaki, “Governor-General’s Instruction to the Governors of the Provinces,” *Annual Report*, 1932-1933, 197.

⁹⁹ See Kazushige Ugaki, *The Bright Future for Chosen* (Keijo, Chosen: Foreign Affairs Section, 1934), 9-14; *Annual Report*, 1934-1935, 216-22.

¹⁰⁰ *Annual Report*, 1934-1935, 217.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰² “Address of Mr. Watanabe of Educational Department of the Government-General,” *AMFC*, 1933, 38.

¹⁰³ For a missionary favorable description on “Rural Self-help Movement,” see Adams, “Present Day Economic Problems,” 197.

step or two further than required.”¹⁰⁴ The Federal Council urged Korean Christians to be good workers embodying the self-help ethic. In response, colonialists showed their appreciation for missionary efforts to cooperate with the rural movement when they attended the annual meeting of the Federal Council.¹⁰⁵

By the 1930s, self-help was a foundational economic ethic of colonial economy, constituting part of the colonial moral order in the economic sphere. In the modern Western context, the self-help ethic is embedded in a free, autonomous modern self who pursues enlightened self-interest through mutual benefit. Thus, self-help is central to what Taylor calls “an ethic of freedom and mutual benefit.”¹⁰⁶ However, the self-help ethic in colonial Korea was not just a modern economic ethic but also a colonial ruling ideology. The ethic was promoted to overcome a crisis in the capitalistic economy. The colonial version of the self-help ethic was used to blame Koreans themselves for their poverty and their backward living standard, and to conceal the structural cause of economic depression.

The colonial self-ethic promoted the economization of colonial life. Colonialists defined and confined Koreans as an economic being, depriving Koreans of political rights and voices. Colonial economization did not mean the promotion of self-interested economic beings, but rather the creation of economic beings who were responsible for their own livelihood and accountable for their own poverty, and who should prioritize their own interests below the total interest that the colonial regime defined. Colonial economic beings were required to concern themselves primarily with their own economic needs without raising any opposition to

¹⁰⁴ “Rural Life Committee Report,” *AMFC*, 1935, 31.

¹⁰⁵ See “Address of Mr. Imaida, Vice Governor General of Chosen,” *AMFC*, 1934, 40.

¹⁰⁶ Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 171.

colonial economic policy. To put it simply, colonial economization was one side of a politically castrated colonial life.

Self-help as a crux of economic ethic was a distinctive feature of capitalist modernity, constituting a moral foundation of the modern capitalist system. The self-help ethic was a fundamentally new concept and a new morality for Koreans because in pre-modern agricultural society like Chosun Korea a community-based ethic like communal responsibility was dominant.¹⁰⁷ As economy of colonial Korea was modernized and industrialized, Koreans increasingly accepted the principle as a central economic ethic. The missionary and colonialist emphasis on self-help accelerated this trend. In colonial Korea, Japanese colonizers, missionaries, and Korean Christians all stressed the importance of self-help, though with different emphasis, and this new ethic was a contributing factor to economic modernization in colonial Korea, promoting the modern capitalistic economic behavior.

ii) Social Reform, Missionary Welfare Work, and Colonial Welfare Policy

a) Protestant Social Reform and the Social Service Committee of the Federal Council

The 1920s was a period of rapid social change in colonial Korea, marked by increasing modernization and industrialization and the rise of Korean communism as a revolutionary class and national movement. The rapid change created many socioeconomic problems, including poverty, inhumane labor conditions, and economic uncertainty and instability.¹⁰⁸ These

¹⁰⁷ Economic ethic is historically dependent upon economic system. In agrarian society, Korean farmers were diligent and working hard. However, the attitude does not guarantee that Korean workers working in capitalistic economy were accustomed to the capitalist work ethic. In capitalism, individuals are responsible for their own choice, but in agrarian society, community-based ethical norms were dominant and collective responsibility in the economic domain was prevalent.

¹⁰⁸ For missionaries' view on socioeconomic issues in colonial Korea, see C. I. McLaren, "Social Survey," *JCYB*, 1924, 405-14; E. W. Koons, "Present Day Social Problems," *KMF*, December 1934, 251-4; E. W. Koons, "Present Day Social Problems," *KMF*, January 1935, 9-12; Edmund Brunner, "Rural Korea: A Preliminary Survey of Economic,

developments posed new challenges to Korean Christianity. J. S. Ryang, a Methodist Korean leader, said that the Korean church was “confronting a crisis hour. The general attitude of the people toward Christianity is quite different from what it was in former days. It is now critical rather than admiring.”¹⁰⁹ The “crisis” was not civilizational or national, unlike the crisis that Koreans at the turn of the twentieth century experienced. Rather, this “crisis” was fundamentally socioeconomic, prompting Koreans to closely consider the socioeconomic dimensions of a capitalism-led modern way of life and find a way to solve socioeconomic problems that the economic system caused.

Korean Protestantism was quick to respond to the problems by providing social welfare programs. Many church and missionary institutions functioned as social welfare and charity centers. Much of the Protestant social service work was carried out by mission stations and missionary-run institutions.¹¹⁰ The missionary social work included leper asylums,¹¹¹ Christmas seals for tuberculosis patient,¹¹² schools for the blind,¹¹³ orphanages, beggar's homes, and homes for the elderly.¹¹⁴ These were pioneering efforts for modern social welfare in Korea.

The radical and rapid change of socioeconomic conditions prompted the Federal Council to establish the Social Service Committee in 1919, which operated until the final year of the missionary institution.¹¹⁵ The Social Service Committee played an important role in providing

Social, and Religious Conditions,” in *The Jerusalem Meeting of the International Missionary Council, March 24-April 8, 1928: Volume 6. The Christian Mission in Relation to Rural Problems*, ed. International Missionary Council (London: International Missionary Council, 1928), 84-172.

¹⁰⁹ J. S. Ryang, “The Aims of Methodist Union in Korea,” *KMF*, July 1927, 152.

¹¹⁰ See *AMFC*, 1921, 22; Laura Edwards, “Seoul Social Evangelistic Center,” *KMF*, August 1924, 160-1.

¹¹¹ See A. G. Fletcher, “The Treatment of Leprosy,” *KMYB*, 1932, 56.

¹¹² See S. H. Martin, “The Tubercular Problem in Korea,” *KMYB*, 1932, 50-51.

¹¹³ See Rosetta Sherwood Hall, “The Clocke Class For Blind Girls” *KMF*, July 1906, 175-6.

¹¹⁴ See *AMFC*, 1919, 34; 1921, 22; 1924, 32-4. See also E. T. Rosenberger, “Social Service” *JCYB*, 1925, 637-42.

¹¹⁵ See C. I. McLaren, “The Work of the Social Service Committee,” *KMF*, May 1925, 108-111.

Protestant social welfare to Koreans, coordinating social welfare programs and charity services established by member missions. In 1924 the committee presented its social vision of the “reconstruction of society” and the building of a “new social and economic order,” emphasizing improvements in working conditions, “a living wage,” and “economic justice.”¹¹⁶ Although few of these progressive ideas materialized in the mission enterprise, this vision shows how much the committee was influenced by the contemporary Anglo-American social gospel movement. The social teaching of the committee was particularly influenced by “The Social Creed of the Churches,” adapted by the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America.¹¹⁷ The committee made a significant impact on forming the social teachings of the Korean Protestant church, helping the KNCC to adopt its own version of the social creed in 1932. The Korean social creed reads, “We believe that the love, justice and peace of God as revealed in Christ should be the basic ideal of society. ... We believe that all wealth is entrusted into the keeping of man by God for the service of God and man.”¹¹⁸ The creed was part of Korean Christian efforts to deal with ever-increasing socioeconomic problems.¹¹⁹

Many missionaries of the Federal Council basically agreed that in the Protestant missionary enterprise in colonial Korea evangelism-oriented work and social gospel-oriented work like social welfare or medical missions were “inseparably linked.”¹²⁰ For instance, B. W. Billings, secretary of the Federal Council, argued that “the individual Gospel and the social Gospel are both included in the Gospel of love and that they need each other. Without the social gospel the individual gospel is mystical, otherworldly, hopeless of human conditions;

¹¹⁶ AMFC, 1924, 32-3.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 33.

¹¹⁸ *Proceedings of the Ninth Annual Meeting of the Korean National Christian Council*, 31.

¹¹⁹ AMFC, 1927, 37.

¹²⁰ Maud J. MacKinnon, “Heartening Words From Song Chin,” *KMF*, September 1916, 248.

without an individual gospel the social gospel is narrowly humanitarian and ultimately aimless.”¹²¹ This view was epitomized as “social evangelism.”¹²² Quoting Adolf von Harnack’s social gospel, M. J. MacKinnon—a Canadian missionary and a member of the Social Service Committee—exclaimed that “social evangelism” was “the most urgent challenge facing the missionary of the present day.”¹²³ Although some missionaries opposed the social gospel-oriented social reform movement, believing that evangelism was the main goal of the mission enterprise,¹²⁴ nevertheless the 1920s were marked by a general consensus of missionaries over “social evangelism.” The establishment of the Social Service Committee indicates that “social evangelism” was widely accepted among the missionaries of the Federal Council.

The Social Service Committee was a product of “pragmatic ecumenism,”¹²⁵ a distinctive feature of the Protestant mission enterprise in colonial Korea. Protestant missionaries of the Federal Council had a diverse understanding of evangelism, including “personal evangelism,” “practical evangelism,” and “tent evangelism,”¹²⁶ however they nonetheless took pragmatic steps over Christian missions in colonial Korea, forming a flexible, pragmatic coalition among missionaries with diverse views of missions. Their mission pragmatism was oriented toward maximization of the Christian mission, a guiding principle of Christian work and the mission

¹²¹ B. W. Billings, “The Korean Pastor: Ten Years Hence,” *KMF*, April 1919, 84.

¹²² M. J. MacKinnon, “Social Evangelism,” *KMYB*, 1932, 118. In contemporary United States, “social evangelism” was developed by Harry F. Ward, For Harry F. Ward and his social evangelism, see Gary J. Dorrien, *Social Ethics in the Making: Interpreting an American Tradition* (Chichester, U.K.: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 109-20.

¹²³ MacKinnon, “Social Evangelism,” 118. For Harnack’s view on social gospel, see Harnack, Adolf von, and Wilhelm Herrmann, *Essays on the Social Gospel*, trans. G. M. Craik and edit. by Maurice A. Canney (London: Williams & Norgate, 1907); Adolf von Harnack, *What Is Christianity?*, trans. Thomas Bailey Saunders (New York: Harper, 1957).

¹²⁴ See *AMFC*, 1923, 28-9.

¹²⁵ James Alan Patterson, “The Loss of a Protestant Missionary Consensus: Foreign Missions and the Fundamentalist-Modernist Conflict,” in *Earthen Vessels: American Evangelicals and Foreign Missions, 1880-1980*, ed. Joel A. Carpenter and Wilbert R. Shenk (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1990), 76.

¹²⁶ *AMFC*, 1930, 24; 1932, 13, 28; 1936, 35-6; 1937, 37. See also L. T. Newland, “Effective Evangelism” *KMF*, December 1926, 247-8; Roscoe C. Coen, “Essentials of Effective Evangelism,” *KMF*, September 1935, 193-6.

enterprise. This maximization meant not only the numerical maximization of Christian converts but also maximization of Christian influence over society in general. In the 1920s, conservative missionaries considered the work of the Social Service Committee to be a good tool for evangelical maximization. The committee was therefore active in the 1920s Protestant mission.

However, a conservative critique of social gospel-influenced mission policy of the Federal Council emerged in the late 1920s. At its annual meeting in 1928, the Federal Council discussed a recommendation that the Social Service Committee be dropped from the list of Federal Council committees, but the motion was defeated.¹²⁷ This conservative critique grew stronger in the 1930s. Conservative missionaries saw social gospel teachings as “a dangerous tendency in the Church.”¹²⁸ This was well expressed by M. B. Stokes, former vice chairman of the Federal Council: “Along with the Church in other lands, the Church in Korea has become worldly-minded. More thought and attention are given to temporal and material things than to the concerns of God's Kingdom.”¹²⁹ The Report of the Social Service Committee of 1932 shows that the committee stood in a serious predicament, not only because of a financial shortfall caused by the Great Depression but because of the “dividing” views among missionaries of the social service enterprise.¹³⁰ Unlike in the 1920s, the committee in the 1930s became a battleground where conservative and social gospel missionaries argued over the nature and direction of the “evangelical missions” in colonial Korea.

¹²⁷ *AMFC*, 1928, 14, 36-7. See also *AMFC*, 1932, 26.

¹²⁸ M. B. Stokes, “Personal Evangelism and the Korean Church,” *KMF*, December 1932, 245.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 246. See also Edward D. Grant, “Those Terrible Missionaries!,” *KMF*, February 1933, 40; K. T. Paul, “Summary of the Council's Discussion,” in *The Jerusalem Meeting of the International Missionary Council, March 24-April 8, 1928: Volume 6. The Christian Mission in Relation to Rural Problems*, ed. International Missionary Council (London: International Missionary Council, 1928), 238. For a liberal critique of conservatives, see Charles I. McLaren, “The Church and Social Service,” *KMF*, March 1939, 45-7; “Editor's Note,” *KMF*, February 1939, 44.

¹³⁰ *AMFC*, 1932, 26.

b) The Colonial Welfare Policy and Missionary Welfare Work

The changing socio-economic conditions of colonial Korea required Japanese colonizers to carry out a colonial version of welfare policy. In 1921 the colonial regime organized the Social Works Section in the government-general,¹³¹ which launched several social welfare works including charity and relief efforts. Imperial Donation Fund was a major source of colonial charity and social work.¹³² It was funded by contributions from the Imperial House of Japan to celebrate the Coronation of Emperor Taishō in 1915 and of Emperor Shōwa in 1928, and to commemorate the death of Emperor Taishō in 1927.¹³³ The fund was used for relief effort, charitable works, and education for orphans, the blind, and the deaf.¹³⁴

Colonial welfare work was a main component of benevolent colonialism. When the Japanese emperor declared his rule over Korea in 1910, Japanese colonizers praised his rule as the “merciful reign,”¹³⁵ and they used social welfare to prove their assertion. Thus, the main focus of colonial social work was evoking a public image of the Japanese emperor as a “benevolent” ruler.¹³⁶ For example, the *Annual Report* of 1911 wrote that “the grace and virtue of His Imperial Majesty produced a specially profound influence upon the mind of the general public in the newly-annexed territory, when it was seen how wisely and appropriately the Imperial grants or donations were being distributed.”¹³⁷ The colonial welfare policy in Korea

¹³¹ *Annual Report*, 1922-1923, 104. For an introduction of colonial welfare in Korea, see Sanghun Ahn, Seongeun Jo, and Hyeonjong Gil, *Hangukgeundaeui Sahoe Bokji* (Seoul: Seouldaehakgyo Chulpanbu, 2005), 75-146.

¹³² *Annual Report*, 1911-1912, 2.

¹³³ *Annual Report*, 1938-1939, 107.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 108.

¹³⁵ Terauchi, “Proclamation of Annexation by Resident-General,” *Annual Report*, 1910-1911, 242.

¹³⁶ *Annual Report*, 1918-1921, 93.

¹³⁷ *Annual Report*, 1911-1912, 2. See also *Annual Report*, 1910-1911, 62; 1938-1939, 107; “Address of Mr. Hayashi, Director of Education, Government General of Chosen,” *AMFC*, 1932, 37.

was devised primarily to promote the rule of the Japanese emperor as “merciful” and “benevolent.”¹³⁸

The welfare policy of the colonial government was stimulated partly by missionary social welfare works that had already made a wide impact on Korean society before the annexation. For instance, when Korea was annexed by Japan, most modern hospitals were run by missionaries, and medical treatment for the poor in the mission hospitals was noteworthy. Thus, Governor-General Terauchi reluctantly acknowledged that “a large number of people have since [the arrival of missionaries] received the blessing of advanced medical science” from charity hospitals run by missionaries.¹³⁹ Assessing that colonial Korea still needed many modern hospitals, he pledged that the colonial government would establish a charity hospital in every province.¹⁴⁰ Subsequently, the regime established charity hospitals like Saiseikwai, providing medical care for the poor.¹⁴¹ The established missionary social welfare effort partially prompted the colonial regime to function as a social service provider for Koreans.

Despite competition between Japanese colonizers and missionaries, social welfare work was a domain in which the cooperation of colonialists and missionaries was conspicuous. According to the *Annual Report*, the colonial government divided social welfare work into two parts: “government undertakings” and “private undertakings.”¹⁴² The majority of “private

¹³⁸ The instrumental nature of this welfare program was prevalent not only in colonial social welfare but also, though to a lesser degree, in missionary social work. While colonial welfare was used to justify Japanese rule, missionary welfare was frequently used to promote evangelical maximization, serving as an effective means of the mission goal. Missionary charity and philanthropic work was often deeply connected with the numerical growth of Christians.

¹³⁹ Terauchi, “Proclamation of Annexation by Resident-General,” 244. See also *Annual Report*, 1922-1923, 104; 1938-1939, 111.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ See *Annual Report*, 1922-1923, 103-4.

¹⁴² For example, see *Annual Report*, 1929-1930, 88-91; 1934-1935, 106-10.

undertakings” was charity and philanthropic institutions run by Protestant missionaries. Impressed by missionary social work, the colonial regime sought to incorporate Protestant social welfare programs into the colonial welfare system, legally recognizing and subsidizing missionary social welfare institutions.¹⁴³ The policy promoted cooperation in social welfare between colonialists and missionaries. Leper houses were an example of this “harmonious cooperation”¹⁴⁴ between colonialists and missionaries in charity work. In colonial Korea, there were four leper houses, three maintained by missionaries and one by the colonial government. A substantial government subsidy was granted to the three mission institutions, and this aid promoted friendly relationships between the two parties.

Protestant missionary welfare work played an active role in the formation of the modern welfare system in colonial Korea, stimulating colonial welfare policy.¹⁴⁵ It also had a significant social effect on colonial society. Two points are worth mentioning in this regard. First, missionary charity work in colonial Korea promoted the self-help ethic. Missionaries associated with the Federal Council did not want social welfare to inhibit personal responsibility and self-reliance, worrying that it might create a population that would remain dependent on almsgiving.¹⁴⁶ Self-help was seen as antidote for reliance on welfare benefits. Second, missionary welfare work promoted gradual and incremental social reform as a way to solve socioeconomic problems. Missionary welfare institutions favored voluntaristic social reforms

¹⁴³ *Annual Report*, 1918-1921, 96-7.

¹⁴⁴ *Annual Report*, 1938-1939, 114.

¹⁴⁵ It is often argued that the colonial welfare was not modern but pre-modern because it was maintained by the Imperial Donation Fund and characterized by a form of traditional paternalism, which means that rulers as a paternalistic figure were responsible for the welfare of their subjects, seeing them as their children. However, colonial social welfare was not just colonial but also modern. On a view of colonial welfare as pre-modern, see Ahn et al, *Hangukgeundaeui Sahoe Bokji*, 144-6.

¹⁴⁶ For example, see Deal, “A Self-Supporting Industrial Department,” 223; B. W. Billings, “Temperance Work in Korea,” *KMF*, October 1928, 207.

through the aid of charity and philanthropic works rather than a structural change of the socioeconomic system. “Social betterment” was a fundamental principle for Protestant social works, as shown by the Federal Council¹⁴⁷ and KNCC.¹⁴⁸ Although many missionaries of the Federal Council were influenced by the social gospel, they did not follow trajectories of social gospel that would argue for the need to meaningfully address the structural dimensions of socioeconomic issues in colonial Korea. Instead, they focused on “social betterment,” which was welcomed by the colonial regime.¹⁴⁹ Colonialists encouraged the Christian social reform movement, seeing it as a preventive measure to counter any revolutionary movement. Social welfare was believed by both colonialists and missionaries to help shift the attention of ordinary Koreans away from the communist movement, which called for revolutionary and radical social and economic change rather than gradual “social betterment.”

iii) Korean Protestant Moralism, Missionary Moralism, and Colonial Moralism

a) The Colonial Moral Order and Colonial Moralism

A major trend in Korea in the 1920s was a moralization of the national discourse—this is, viewing “nation” as an ethical category rather than a political entity. This moralizing discourse saw improving morality as a necessary condition for the revival of Korean culture and nationhood, and the immoral Korean national character as a primary cause of colonization.¹⁵⁰ Korean moralism dominated Korean discourse after the March First Movement, but this was

¹⁴⁷ AMFC, 1920, 18.

¹⁴⁸ *Minutes of the Fourteenth Annual Meeting of the Korean National Christian Council*, 13. See also George S. McCune, “The Korean National Christian Council,” *KMYB*, 1932, 94.

¹⁴⁹ See “Address of Hon. Rentaro Midzuno,” *AMFC*, 1921, 17.

¹⁵⁰ For an elaborated writing for Korean moralism in the colonial era, see Kwang Su Yi, *Minjokgaejoron* (Seoul: Usinsa, 1993).

not an isolated colonial phenomenon.¹⁵¹ Korean moralism was deeply connected with colonial moralism and missionary moralism. The moralization of colonial daily life was a distinctive feature of Japanese colonialism in Korea. Colonial moralism made Korean moralism inevitable in colonial society. In addition, missionary moralism accelerated the moralizing process of Koreans, especially Korean Christians, making Korean moralism all the more desirable.

Colonial moralism was a necessary process in the colonial moral order because Japanese colonizers used the moral order to determine whether colonial conduct was right or wrong. Political emasculation was a fundamental condition of this colonial moralism. With the onset of colonial rule, the colonial power politically emasculated Koreans, depriving them of political rights and suppressing any voice for human dignity or demand for political independence. Any political movement or association with these goals was brutally crushed, and Koreans were stripped of modern political rights such as freedom and equality. They were defined not as democratic citizens but as “loyal and good subjects” in the political domain, and all that Koreans as colonial subjects retained in the political domain was a political obligation to be “loyal and good.”

Loyal subjecthood was the highest political ideal in the Japanese colony. However, the ideal was not just a political obligation but also a fundamental moral principle. Koreans as colonial subjects had a moral duty to be loyal to the Japanese emperor and to the colonial

¹⁵¹ Some scholars in Korean studies put their focus solely on Korean moralism. For example, Kenneth M. Wells calls Protestant commitment to Korean nationalism as “Protestant self-reconstruction nationalism” and argues that the nationalism is “ethical nationalism,” “a nationalism which would align the people with the values of the Kingdom of God.” Many Koreans, he insisted, turned to morally armed “ethical nationalism,” discarding armed struggle against colonialism. However, he hardly discusses missionary moralism and colonial moralism. See Kenneth M. Wells, *New God, New Nation: Protestants and Self-Reconstruction Nationalism in Korea 1896-1937* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1990), quotes from 10, 19. See also Chijun Noh, *Iljeha Hanguk Gidokgyo Minjok Undong Yeongu* (Seoul: Hanguk Gidokgyo Yeoksa Yeonguso, 1993), 191-213.

regime. Being a loyal colonial subject was a moral compass in colonial Korea, and this principle largely defined the colonial normative system. The normative principle regulated the daily life of colonial subjects, determining proper behaviors in various modern spheres—economy, the public, politics, and religion. Colonialists employed this moral yardstick to edify and enforce what Koreans as loyal colonial subjects should do or not do, and how they ought to live together in colonial society. Actions of colonial subjects were seen as morally permissible only when those actions embodied the colonial imperative and promoted colonial virtues like obedience, docility, and submissiveness.

Colonial “public morality”¹⁵² constituted a major part of colonial moralism. As a state-sanctioned and state-imposed morality, it regulated the behavior of colonial subjects in the public domain. Many social and cultural activities were prohibited on the ground that they might be detrimental to “public morality.”¹⁵³ Colonial “public morality” was even used to limit religion. For example, Japanese colonizers stressed that religious freedom would be respected only when it would not “go contrary to public morality.”¹⁵⁴

In sum, unlike a modern democratic society where different and competing conceptions of a good life are allowed, the colonial power sought to monopolistically determine who was a good person, what constituted human goodness, and what was morally acceptable in the colonial society, considering loyalty of colonial subjects to be the highest moral ideal.

¹⁵² *Annual Report*, 1914-1915, 55.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁴ Kiyoshi Nakarai, *Relations between the Government and Christianity in Chosen* (n. p., 1921), 7.

b) Korean Protestant Moralism and Missionary Moralism in Colonial Korea

In the 1920s and 1930s, Korean Protestant moralism became a defining characteristic of the Christian movement, constituting a major part of Korean moralism. When the nation was colonized and colonial rule was increasingly solidified, many Korean Christians became concerned with transforming the nation into a moral community, drawing upon the Christian moral vision.

The revival movement in the first decade of the twentieth century was a contributing factor to Christian moralism in colonial Korea. This was not only a spiritually enlightening movement of Korean Protestants but also a movement for moral awakening.¹⁵⁵ It facilitated a moral internalization of Christian values and norms largely developed in Western, mostly Anglo-American, Protestant tradition. Korean Protestant moralism was strengthened by missionary moralism. On the eve of the colonization of the Confucian kingdom by the imperial Japan, member missionaries of the General Council taught and preached the notion of a spiritualized “kingdom” to Koreans.¹⁵⁶ Immediately after the beginning of official colonial rule under the first governor-general, a biblical passage from Psalms, which was uniquely added to the cover of the *KMF* underneath the title for three issues starting October 1910, encapsulated missionaries’ view of spiritualized kingdom: “For the Kingdom is the Lord’s: and He is the Governor among the nations. PSL. 22: 28.”¹⁵⁷ In the spiritualized kingdom, political voices for independence or freedom had no place, but instead the spiritualized and moralized discourse was encouraged. Nevertheless, Protestant moralism did not emerge in strength until the early 1920s because

¹⁵⁵ J. Z. Moore, “The Great Revival Year,” *KMF*, August 1907, 118.

¹⁵⁶ L. H. Underwood, “What We Saw in the Country,” *KMF*, March 1910, 64-5.

¹⁵⁷ *KMF*, October 1910, 241.

before that the civilization discourse had a commanding influence on Protestant missions and Koreans still saw the Protestant movement from a civilizational perspective.

Protestant moralism in the 1920s began largely with the introduction of the temperance movement, which the Federal Council played an important role in introducing and spreading. The temperance movement was high on the agenda list of the Social Service Committee of the Federal Council even before the official establishment of the movement in colonial Korea.¹⁵⁸ The Korea Women's Christian Temperance Union (KWCTU) was established in 1923, and by 1928 it had fifty two societies throughout the Korean peninsula.¹⁵⁹ The Federal Council and KWCTU put a concerted effort behind this Christian moral campaign.¹⁶⁰ As a result, the Woman's Christian Temperance Committee was established in 1925 as a committee of the Federal Council, and functioned until the final year of the council.¹⁶¹ Many missionaries of the Federal Council considered temperance to be a crucial element of Christian social teachings, and a moral crusade for "social purity"¹⁶² to be essential to Christian identity.

Driven by the temperance movement, many missionaries associated with the Federal Council extensively promoted Christian moralism, stressing Sabbatarianism¹⁶³ and "the advancement of sex morality"¹⁶⁴ such as the abolition of licensed prostitution. Furthermore, recognizing the importance of legislating Christian morality, the missionaries filed a petition

¹⁵⁸ *AMFC*, 1919, 34; 1920, 17-8.

¹⁵⁹ For an overview of KWCTU, see "Korea Women's Christian Temperance Union," *KMYB*, 1928, 220-2; "Miss Tinling's Work in Korea," *KMF*, January 1924, 12-13. See also Chong-ju Kim, ed. *Hanguk Jeoljeundong 70nyeonsa (1923-1993)* (Seoul: Taehan Kidokkyo Yoja Cholgehoe, 1993).

¹⁶⁰ *AMFC*, 1924, 32-4.

¹⁶¹ *AMFC*, 1925, 6.

¹⁶² *AMFC*, 1923, 30.

¹⁶³ *AMFC*, 1937, 27.

¹⁶⁴ *AMFC*, 1925, 33.

with the colonial power demanding drastic reform of laws concerning Christian moral values.¹⁶⁵

The Social Service Committee, which was established to address socioeconomic issues, was also deeply affected by this move towards moralization. It sought to provide concrete programs to address economic issues, but at the same time emphasized moral regeneration as an indispensable element in the “radical cure”¹⁶⁶ for social and economic issues.

Missionary moralism significantly influenced Protestant social teachings during the 1920s and 1930s. Many Korean Christians decried drinking, smoking, and prostitution as sinful, stressing human corruptibility and moral regeneration. The Social Creed of the KNCC epitomized this trend—the document stressed the importance of Christian moral values like the “sacredness of marriage and single standard in purity,” the “abolition of prostitution and hastening of the prohibition,” and the “enactment of a Sunday law.”¹⁶⁷ Korean Protestants externalized the internalized Christian values through a moralistic social movement by projecting Christian ethics onto the colonial world.

Revival and temperance movements were contributing factors to the formation of Protestant moralism in colonial Korea. However, the political environment of the 1920s helped to create the conditions that led to the emergence of Protestant moralism. The failure of the March First Movement, a shift of colonial policy from military rule to “cultural” rule, and the consolidation of colonial rule all combined to invite the moralization of the Protestant movement. Political incapacitation engineered by colonialists furthered this moralization. When Korean Christians were denied political participation and the ability to build a political

¹⁶⁵ See The Federal Council of Protestant Evangelical Missions in Korea, *A Communication*, 9-10. See also *AMFC*, 1923, 29; 1930, 17; 1931, 20; 1934, 23; 1935, 29; 1936, 37.

¹⁶⁶ *AMFC*, 1924, 32.

¹⁶⁷ *Proceedings of the Ninth Annual Meeting of the Korean National Christian Council*, 32.

community for Koreans, they turned instead to building a moral community. This moralism in turn accelerated a retreat of Korean Protestantism from political involvement, such as the independence or freedom movements, and instead promoted personal holy and pious living as the supreme goal of Christian life.

The Protestant moral movement had economic significance, promoting the economic ethic and industrial work discipline. For example, the temperance moral crusade of the Federal Council emphasized the link between prohibition from drinking liquor and economic success, saying that drinking was “economically wasteful” and harmful as well as “physically injurious” and “morally destructive.”¹⁶⁸ Catchphrases of the movement written in wall posters included “Drink wine and you will be sick, poor and a renter” and “Don't drink, and you will have health, wealth and a house.”¹⁶⁹ The temperance movement was not just an expression of Christian morality but also a part of Protestant efforts to train Koreans to fit into capitalistic socioeconomic arrangements.

Protestant moralism also made a deep impact on the Korean Protestant feminist movement in colonial Korea. Challenging deep-rooted gender inequalities in Korean society, the Korean Protestant women's movement provided an unprecedented opportunity for Korean women to learn modern knowledge, exercise leadership in “women's work,”¹⁷⁰ and play an active role in “women's societies” like the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA).¹⁷¹ However, Protestant moralism imposed a fundamental limit on the women's movement, preventing it from becoming an emancipation movement. While the contemporary Western

¹⁶⁸ *AMFC*, 1931, 20.

¹⁶⁹ Billings, “Temperance Work in Korea,” 207. See also *AMFC*, 1935, 30-1.

¹⁷⁰ L. H. Underwood, “Women's Work in Korea,” *KMF*, April 1913, 94-6. See also Charles Allen Clark, *The Nevius Plan for Mission Work, Illustrated in Korea*, 2nd ed. (Seoul: Christian Literature Society, 1937), 251-52.

¹⁷¹ Pil Ley Choi, “The Development of Korean Women during the Past Ten Years,” *KMF*, November 1923, 223.

liberal feminist movement campaigned for women's suffrage, many prominent female Korean leaders were instead committed to the temperance movement, campaigning for nationwide moral reform. For instance, YWCA Korea—a center for the Korean feminist movement—was a leading voice in the temperance movement, ranking it as a top priority of the larger women's movement and stressing the moral purity of temperance, abolition of prostitution, and prohibition from intoxicating liquors and tobacco.¹⁷²

The moralization of the Korean women's movement partly reflected the missionary emphasis on “domesticity and womanly virtue.”¹⁷³ As Hyaeweol Choi points out, modern discourse and practice among the female missionaries responsible for teaching Korean women reconstituted Confucian patriarchal gender roles, drawing upon Victorian morality.¹⁷⁴ These missionaries emphasized maintaining hygiene, keeping the house clean and ordered, leading thrifty economic life, and building up the Christian home as a domestic spiritual space. In colonial Korea, the Victorian ideal of womanhood was replaced with the Wise Mother and Good Wife (*Hyeonmo Yangcheo*, in Korean), a famous slogan for the women's movement with strong Confucian connotations.¹⁷⁵

The predominance of “womanly virtue” in the women's movement was further reinforced by the aims of colonial female education in elementary and secondary school. Colonial education emphasized “fostering in girl students feminine virtues such as constancy

¹⁷² Kak Kyung Lee, “A Brief History of the Korean YWCA,” *KMF*, November 1923, 231.

¹⁷³ Hyaeweol Choi, *Gender and Mission Encounters in Korea: New Women, Old Ways* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 179.

¹⁷⁴ For a brief overview of the premises and problems embedded in the notion of gender equality in missionary and Christian discourse, see Choi, *Gender and Mission Encounters in Korea*; Hyaeweol Choi, “A New Moral Order: Gender Equality in Korean Christianity,” in *Religions of Korea in Practice*, ed. Robert E. Buswell (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2007), 409-20.

¹⁷⁵ See Choi, *Gender and Mission Encounters in Korea*, 101-2.

and domesticity.”¹⁷⁶ Educating and training Korean girls to be “good housekeepers” and a Wise Mother and Good Wife were key educational objectives.¹⁷⁷ This moralized female education was part of gendered colonial moralism.

When the Protestant movement was increasingly moralized in the 1920s and 1930s, Korean Protestants paid proportionately less attention to colonial subjugation at the national level and to real socioeconomic problems, from which ordinary Koreans suffered. Korean Protestantism tended to offer moralistic solutions to socioeconomic issues, viewing social and economic evils as issues of personal morality, just as many missionaries affiliated with the Federal Council did.¹⁷⁸ However, a growing number of ordinary Koreans thought that colonialism and state capitalism managed by the colonial power produced many of these social evils. As a result, Korean moralism, both Christian and non-Christian, provoked a backlash from the younger Korean generation, many of whom were inspired by communism. Sectors of the Korean population drawn to this Marxist strand of Korean modernity opposed moralistic explanations and remedies for socioeconomic issues. As many Korean leaders were moving in the direction of moralization, an anti-moralizing and revolutionary socio-political movement was emerging.

¹⁷⁶ *Annual Report, 1911-1912*, 201. See also; see also The Government-General of Chosen Bureau of Education, *Manual of Education in Chosen* (Keijo: Government-General of Chosen, 1920), 3.

¹⁷⁷ *Annual Report, 1911-1912*, 205.

¹⁷⁸ See *AMFC*, 1921, 24; 1923, 29; 1931, 20, 25-7; 1936, 29.

iv) Industrialization, Protestantism, and Korean Communism

a) Industrialization and Protestant Missionaries

Throughout the colonial period, most of Korean society was economically agrarian but a significant number of Korean people were in the process of rapid industrialization,¹⁷⁹ the penetration and expansion of which had a negative impact on Korean workers and society. Unlike the rosy picture that colonial capitalists painted of the Korean economy as involved in “economic progress,”¹⁸⁰ many Korean workers suffered from the dire consequences of capitalism. As a result, colonial industrialization led to the rise of class antagonism, replacing the traditional hierarchy based upon social status with new class distinctions based upon modern capitalism.

In responding to growing social anxiety caused by industrialization and modernization, the Social Service Committee of the Federal Council mounted a critique of “acquisitive and competitive”¹⁸¹ capitalist society, deploring the poor working conditions produced in the course of industrialization. Thus, missionaries of the committee called for improvement in working conditions and reform measures in labor relations.¹⁸² However, their solution was not based on structural reform of the economic system itself. Instead, they advocated for a new social and economic order through moral reform, calling for “repent[ance] of ... sins of greed, self-seeking

¹⁷⁹ For an overview of industrialization in colonial Korea, see Carter J. Eckert, *Offspring of Empire: The Koch'ang Kims and the Colonial Origins of Korean Capitalism, 1876-1945* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1991), chapters 3, 4, 5, 6; Cumings, *Korea's Place in the Sun*, 162-74. For a missionary observation of the industrialization of colonial Korea, see Brunner, “Rural Korea,” 95-125; Robert Grierson, “Korean Industrial Characteristics,” *KMF*, August 1918, 5-7; T. J. Carter, “Industrial Korea,” *JCYB*, 1921, 413-6; F. O. Clark, “First Impressions Of Korea's Economic Conditions,” *KMF*, August 1929, 163-5.

¹⁸⁰ *Annual Report*, 1938-1939, 70.

¹⁸¹ *AMFC*, 1924, 33.

¹⁸² See *AMFC*, 1923, 28-31; 1924, 32-4.

materialism, and lack of practical faith in the providing goodness of God.”¹⁸³ Christians, missionaries argued, were morally obliged to restrain from the greed of the capitalist economy and the excesses of the capitalistic mode of life.

Many civilization-oriented missionaries of the Federal Council were much influenced by the contemporary North American social gospel movement, whose leading figures were deeply committed to the labor movement and economic justice; social gospel leaders such as Walter Rauschenbusch called for a radical change of socioeconomic structure. However, Protestant missionaries preferred to “remedy social evils”¹⁸⁴ and “mitigate the social ills”¹⁸⁵ rather than address what Rauschenbusch called “the super-personal forces of evil.”¹⁸⁶ So they were committed to moral reform rather than Rauschenbusch’s political vision of a good and just society with emphasis on “economic democracy,”¹⁸⁷ believing that moral improvement was central in finding solutions to socioeconomic problems. For instance, some missionaries of the Federal Council taught and advocated for a missionary version of the “moral economy,”¹⁸⁸ in which Korean Christian landlords should be “kind”¹⁸⁹ to their tenants and provide a fair rental price.

The relatively rapid progress of capitalism in 1920s colonial Korea produced a sizable number of industrial proletariats, which led to the formation of Korean communism. Korean

¹⁸³ *AMFC*, 1924, 32.

¹⁸⁴ A. C. Bunce, “Some Rural Observation,” *KMF*, May 1931, 93.

¹⁸⁵ Wasson, *Church Growth in Korea*, 159.

¹⁸⁶ See Walter Rauschenbusch, *A Theology for the Social Gospel* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1960), 69-76, quote from 69.

¹⁸⁷ See Walter Rauschenbusch, *Christianizing the Social Order* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1912), 352-64, quote from 352.

¹⁸⁸ The term “moral economy” is borrowed from E. P. Thompson, “The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century,” *Past and Present* 50, no. 1 (1971): 76-136.

¹⁸⁹ E. W. Koons, “The Need of Lay Leadership,” *AMFC*, 1937, 42.

communists saw the dismal effect of capitalism not as a technical or moral problem but as a fundamental and structural one. Believing that capitalism would eventually collapse because of internal contradictions in the system such as business cycles of booms and busts, they called for a revolutionary change of the capitalist economy into communism. However, many missionaries associated with the Federal Council were advocates of incremental social reform, and insisted that socioeconomic reform should be carried out only “by peaceful method.”¹⁹⁰ Their different view of socioeconomic issues was linked directly to a different approach to addressing poverty. While Korean communists viewed poverty as a result of the structural failure of capitalism, many missionaries and their Korean pupils (and the colonialists as well) took poverty as a personal matter. Although missionaries acknowledged that poverty would have social impact, they insisted that it should be remedied by personal transformation and self-reliant moral regeneration, ascribing poverty and economic failure to moral weakness and a lack of personal responsibility.¹⁹¹

b) The Rise of Korean Communism and the Anti-Communist Alliance of Protestants and Colonialists

The Korean Marxism that emerged in the 1920s was a new, modern sociopolitical movement, and made a tremendous impact on modern Korean history, including both the colonial and post-colonial periods. Many young Koreans in the 1920s were attracted to communism’s commitment to the liberation of workers and of the nation itself. As a missionary pointed out, they took the Russian Revolution as “their spiritual guide”¹⁹²—much as many young Koreans had accepted the Protestant movement two or three decades earlier, seeing it

¹⁹⁰ Bunce, “Some Rural Observation,” 93.

¹⁹¹ For example, see Bunce, “Some Rural Observation,” 93-5.

¹⁹² Brunner, “Rural Korea,” 130. See also Peters, “What Korean Young People are Thinking,” 93.

as their civilizational guide. The failure of the March First Independence Movement inspired by Wilsonian self-determination partially contributed to the rise of Korean Marxism. After the frustration of the failed independence movement, many younger Koreans increasingly became radicalized, accepting the Lenin-Marxist vision of self, society and state. The Communist Party of Korea was officially established in 1925.¹⁹³ Richard H. Baird, a Protestant missionary, described the nationwide influence of Korean communism and its erosion of the missionary influence on Koreans by noting that: Korean communists “are very conspicuous on the landscape; they are very vociferous; they control the National Press; they are especially strong in the centers where most of the missionaries live.”¹⁹⁴ In colonial Korea, Marx and Lenin, as a missionary made a keen observation, became a greater focus of attention for young Koreans than Washington and Wilson.¹⁹⁵

The Korean communist movement was a leading voice for Korean workers and peasants. However, the Marxist movement was not just a class movement; it was also an anti-Japanese national movement fighting against Japanese imperialism, calling for the liberation of Koreans as an ethnic group from oppressive Japanese rule.¹⁹⁶ By the late 1920s, the Korean communist movement had become a leading national movement, combining national liberation and class liberation.

¹⁹³ For a study of Korean communism, see Robert A. Scalapino and Chong-Sik Lee, *Communism in Korea*, 2 vols. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972); Chong-Sik Lee, *The Korean Workers' Party: A Short History* (Stanford, Calif.: Hoover Institution Press, 1978); Dae-Sook Suh, *The Korean Communist Movement, 1918-1948* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1967).

¹⁹⁴ Richard H. Baird, “Present Day Religious Problems,” in *The Fiftieth Anniversary Celebration of the Korea Mission of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., June 30-July 3, 1934*, ed. Harry A. Rhodes and Richard H. Baird (Seoul, Korea: Post Chapel, John D. Wells School, 1934), 138. On a brief description by the colonial government of Korean communist movement, see *Annual Report, 1938-1939*, 178-80; Joseonchongdokbu Gyeongmuguk, *Iljesikmintongchibisa: Iljeha Joseonui Chian Sanghwang*, trans. Pong-U Kim (Seoul: Cheongachulpansa, 1989), 21-30.

¹⁹⁵ Peters, “What Korean Young People are Thinking,” 93; McLaren “Social Survey,” 405.

¹⁹⁶ See Suh, *The Korean Communist Movement*, 3-211.

Korean Christians were not necessarily antagonistic to Korean communists. Under the banner of anti-Japanese nationalism, the communist camp and the nationalist camp—of whom a significant part was Protestant—cooperated for a brief period, forming a united front against Japanese colonialism. This effort culminated in establishing *Singanhoe*, a nationalistic united organization, in 1927.¹⁹⁷ However, the shaky ad hoc coalition did not hold together for long, and dissolved in 1931. The coalition failed partly because of political sabotage by the colonial regime and partly because of internal dissension between the two camps. The failure only proved that the Marxist movement was incompatible with the Protestant movement. Korean Marxists and Protestants were deeply divided, regarding one another with suspicion and hostility. Most, though not all, Korean Christians were at the vanguard of anti-communism,¹⁹⁸ while Korean communists vehemently opposed Korean Protestantism. As a result, Christians abandoned the anti-Japanese united front and rushed toward anti-communism, making alliance with colonialists.

The rise of Korean communism created an environment that led Korean Christians, Western missionaries, and Japanese colonizers to form an anti-communist alliance. Protestant missionaries affiliated with the Federal Council anxiously observed the rise of the Korean

¹⁹⁷ For a study of *Singanho*, see Yong-ha Shin, *Singanhoeui Minjogundong* (Cheonansi: Dokripginyeomgwang Hanguk Dokribundongsa Yeonguso, 2007). For the colonial view of *Singanhoe*, see *Annual Report*, 1938-1939, 178-9.

¹⁹⁸ Anti-communism in the colonial era had a very polarizing effect on Korean society. The ideological division did not leave room for a third way (such as democratic socialists who would go beyond communism and liberalism), laying a foundation for the post-war division of the Korean peninsula. In the colonial era, those who were widely called as communists spanned a wide spectrum including Christian socialists, secular socialists, and Leninists. However, after the liberation of Korea in 1945, they had no other way but to choose only one of the binary option: anti-communist liberalism of South Korea or anti-American communism of North Korea. The ideological dualism led some radical Christian socialists to join North Korean communism. One of them was Kim Changjun, who was a prominent Protestant leader of the March First Movement. For writings of Kim Changjun and an overview of his life, see Sungsildaehakgyo Buseol Hangukgidokgyo Bakmulgwan Hagyege, ed. *Gidokgyo Minjok Sahoejuuija Kim Changjun Yugo* (Seoul: Sungsildaehakgyo Hangukgidokgyo Bakmulgwan, 2011). For a study of Korean Christian socialists in the colonial era, see Heungsu Kim, ed. *Iljeha Hangukgidokgyowa Sahoejuui* (Seoul: Hanguk Gidokgyo Yeoksayeonguso, 1992).

communist movement throughout the Korean peninsula. They were concerned that the new movement would subvert the “capitalistic social order”¹⁹⁹ that they cherished. Thus, the missionaries made every effort to counteract the rising tide of the revolutionary movement, calling it a “false and dangerous idea”²⁰⁰ and a “purely materialistic”²⁰¹ ideology. The strong anti-communism stance of missionaries was welcomed by colonialists—when missionaries and colonialists shared a common enemy, it further solidified a cordial relationship that had strengthened since the launch of the “cultural” policy. Denouncing the communist movement as a “subversive idea”²⁰² to the colonial political order, Japanese colonizers called for cooperation from the missionaries of the Federal Council so that Christian schools could teach Korean students “sound thoughts”²⁰³ to counter the “dangerous thought”²⁰⁴ of communism. Responding favorably to the request by the colonial government, the Federal Council’s Committee on Government Relations emphasized that Christian schools were “important factors in educating [Koreans] to reject the fallacious theories which lead to communism.”²⁰⁵ Protestant missionaries also did not forget to show their appreciation for the efforts of colonialists to suppress the burgeoning communist movement and maintain the colonial

¹⁹⁹ E. H. Miller, “General Survey of the Christian Movement,” *KMYB*, 1932, 7.

²⁰⁰ *AMFC*, 1924, 34. See also, Frederic T. Shipp, “The Young Men’s Christian Association in China, Japan and Korea,” *KMF*, November 1925, 245-47; J. S. Gale, “A History of the Korean People: Chapter XXXVIII,” *KMF*, September 1927, 197; Brunner, “Rural Korea,” 129-30; Wasson, *Church Growth in Korea*, 140; L. H. Snyder, “Evangelism among Leaders in Korea in Social, Political and Cultural Fields,” *AMFC*, 1937, 25.

²⁰¹ Baird, “Present Day Religious Problems,” 138.

²⁰² *Annual Report*, 1937-1938, 202.

²⁰³ “Address of Mr. S. Ushijima, Director of Internal Affairs and Director of Educational Bureau, Government-General of Chosen,” *AMFC*, 1931, 38. See also “Address of Deputy-Governor General K. Yuasa,” *AMFC*, 1926, 16-7.

²⁰⁴ The Imperial Japan called communism as a “dangerous thought.” For a study of “dangerous thought” in the Japanese context, see Richard H. Mitchell, *Thought Control in Prewar Japan* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1976), 30-3. See also Elise K. Tipton, *The Japanese Police State: The Tokkô in Interwar Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1990), 17-34.

²⁰⁵ *AMFC*, 1931, 20.

political order.²⁰⁶ Following missionary opposition to communism, Korean Protestants made their anti-communist stance clear. For example, the KNCC Social Creed claimed that “we are opposed to reactionary oppression and social reconstruction through materialistic education and thoughts, class struggle and revolutionary methods.”²⁰⁷ Protestant Christians condemned the communist movement as anathema to Christian teaching, believing that moderate reformist campaigns like self-nurturing or moral reform would be a corrective to the malaise of capitalism.

In sum, opposition to communism provided a powerful link between Japanese colonialists, Korean Christians, and missionaries. As the colonial regime provided police power to protect the colonial political order from the imminent and rising threat of Korean communists, missionaries and Korean Protestants served as a moral and social bulwark preventing the spread of communism in Korean society. This anti-communist alliance was facilitated by shared modern values of society and economy, an emphasis on “capitalistic social order,” an optimistic view of social betterment through social reform, and vehement opposition to materialistic and anti-religious revolutionary political ideology.

c) Christian Modernity and Marxist Modernity

In the colonial era, the active role of Protestantism as a modern force increasingly gave way in the face of colonial modernization. Colonial rule as a modernizing force put Protestantism as a modern movement on the defensive. In particular, colonial education significantly weakened the Protestant modernizing role. Although colonial education was still beyond the reach of most Koreans, the expansion of colonial education nonetheless

²⁰⁶ Miller, “General Survey of the Christian Movement,” 7.

²⁰⁷ *Proceedings of the Ninth Annual Meeting of the Korean National Christian Council*, 31.

undermined the prestige and status of mission schools as uniquely modern educational institutions, which had been widely recognized as the preeminent modernizing force in the pre-colonial period.²⁰⁸

Christian modernity during the colonial period was increasingly challenged not just by colonial modernity but also by the emergence of two additional forms of modernity among Koreans: liberal modernity and Marxist modernity. As Korean society became increasingly modernized, many Koreans became proportionately disillusioned and dissatisfied with the Christian form of modernity. Modern-educated Korean elites, many of whom studied in Imperial Japan or in Western countries (mostly the United States) posed a serious challenge to Christian modernity. From the late 1910s onward, many Korean leading intellectuals, liberal-minded in the contemporary Korean standard, began to criticize both missionaries and Korean Christians for their narrow view of the relationship between church and society, and for intellectual backwardness.²⁰⁹ For example, leading Korean intellectual Kwang Su Yi, who was not Christian but still an enthusiastic supporter of Protestantism as a form of modern civilization, argued in 1918 that one of “defects” of Korean Protestantism was viewing secular and scientific knowledge “with the greatest contempt.”²¹⁰ The liberal critique was directly linked to increasing discontent at the modern education taught in mission schools. Since the launch of colonial rule, the Protestant church had failed to keep pace with the growing demand among Korean students for modern secular education.²¹¹ As a result, dissatisfaction with

²⁰⁸ See Wasson, *Church Growth in Korea*, 96-7.

²⁰⁹ See Fisher, *Democracy and Mission Education in Korea*, 165-66.

²¹⁰ Kwang Su Yi, “Defects of the Korean Church Today,” *KMF*, December 1918, 254.

²¹¹ See Brunner, “Rural Korea,” 147-48.

Christian education led to school strikes,²¹² in which Korean students demanded more secularized education and better equipment.

Nevertheless, liberal-minded Korean intellectuals were not ideologically anti-Christian, and in fact were largely sympathetic and friendly to Korean Christians and missionaries. They shared with civilization-oriented and liberal-minded missionaries and Korean Christians a number of views on modern society and self, such as capitalist economic development, the self-help economic ethic, and liberal values like institutional and personal autonomy. Furthermore, a significant number of modern educated elites were themselves Christian, and their criticism was directed primarily at forms of the conservative Protestantism that emerged in the 1920s, and not so much at Protestantism itself. To put it simply, liberal-minded Korean elites took an ambivalent attitude toward Christianity as a whole, cooperating with more progressive Christian groups but attacking conservative ones.

However, a full-scale scathing and hostile ideological criticism was leveled at Christianity by Korean communists, including socialists. They were extremely hostile to Christianity,²¹³ criticizing it and other traditional forms of Korean religions as superstition. The communist attacks on Protestant Christians in the 1920s, which significantly demonstrated liberal ideas and practices, signaled an ideological shift among many leading Koreans away from Protestant-influenced liberalism to communist and socialist stances. This shift reflected the changed sociopolitical climate in both a national and international context. The communist militant

²¹² See AMFC, 1923, 45; Wasson, *Church Growth in Korea*, 130, 134.

²¹³ Suh, *The Korean Communist Movement*, 132.

attack against Christianity was carried out not just as a critique of religion itself,²¹⁴ but also as an anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist revolutionary movement.²¹⁵ Many, predominantly young, Korean communists—who stood on Marx’s critique of religion and Lenin’s interpretation of state capitalism—saw missionaries as agents of capitalist imperialism, Christians as collaborators with the oppressor of the working class, and churches as tools of imperialists.²¹⁶

Korean Marxism was a major factor in shaping Korean modernity in the colonial era, redefining and reshaping modern conceptions of freedom, equality, liberation, self, society and state. As Richard H. Baird, a Protestant missionary associated with the Federal Council, observed that Korean Marxists and communists were “modern Koreans.”²¹⁷ The revolutionary movement provided an alternative way of seeing the modern world and envisioning a different—but very modern—political system and economic structure,²¹⁸ introducing a crack into the formerly impenetrable civilization-based modern discourse of colonialists and Christians.

Protestantism’s loss of its leading role in modernization, which began with Japanese rule, was hastened by the rise of communism as a new modern form of social movement. This new modern movement undermined public support for Christianity among Koreans. Communists gained firm ground among many Korean intellectuals, youths, and ordinary people

²¹⁴ For example, on a study of the communist critique of Cheondogyo, see Hyejeong Jeong, “Iljeha Cheondogyo 'Suunijeum' Gwa Sahoejuuiui Sasangnonjaeng,” *Donghagyeongu* (2002): 161-87.

²¹⁵ See Shipp, “The Young Men’s Christian Association in China, Japan and Korea,” 245-7; *Annual Report of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, 151.

²¹⁶ For example, see Heonyeong Park, “The Inner Side of Christianity from the Historical Perspective,” in *Ijeong Bakheonyeong Jeonjip*, ed. Ijeong Bakheonyeong Jeonjip Pyeonjibwiwonhoe (Seoul: Yeoksabipyongsas, 2004), 1:90-6.

²¹⁷ Baird, “Present Day Religious Problems,” 138.

²¹⁸ For a discussion of Marxist modernity in the Ethiopian context, see Donald L. Donham, *Marxist Modern: An Ethnographic History of the Ethiopian Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999).

at the huge expense of Christianity. This led Protestantism as a modern civilizational teaching to adopt a stance of bitter rivalry with Korean communism, another modern social and political teaching.

Protestantism and Marxism presented rival modern visions of Korean society and the nation-state. Like civilization-oriented Protestantism, Korean Marxism as a modern thought totally rejected traditional and indigenous ideas. However, these two visions represented two fundamentally different perspectives on what are the supreme values in society, how the world should be understood, and how society should be constructed. The rise of the Marxist modern and its rivalry with the Christian modern in colonial Korea thus had a decisive impact on post-colonial Korea, eventually shaping the ideological and geographical divisions of the entire Korean peninsula. Marxist modernity formed a major part of the ruling ideology in North Korea after liberation from colonial rule, while Christian modernity constituted a significant part of South Korean political ideology, contributing to the formation of Korean liberalism.

IV. Protestant Korean Institutions, Missionaries of the Federal Council, and Colonial Totalitarianism

1. Institutional Autonomy of Korean Protestantism, Protestant Missions, and Colonial Public Sphere

i) Protestant Institutions and Institutional Autonomy

a) Protestant Institutions as Purely Korean Institutions

Protestant church and social institutions in colonial Korea were Koreanized and Korean-centered institutions in terms of both leadership and membership, and were one of the few Korean institutions that did not turn toward Japan for leadership. Many Korean organizations were dissolved or absorbed into their Japanese counterparts after Korea was made a protectorate in 1905. The establishment and merger of the Korean Red Cross Society illustrates this point. The Korean government of Daehan Jeguk joined the Geneva Convention in 1903 and established the Red Cross Society in 1905. However, after Japan assumed the entire control of the foreign affairs of Korea in 1905, the Korean Red Cross Society was abolished and all its matters transferred to the Red Cross Society of Japan.¹ Under Japanese rule, many social, religious, and economic institutions were, like the Red Cross Society, controlled by the colonial government or Japanese colonialists.² However, Korean Protestant institutions generally retained institutional autonomy throughout most of the colonial era.

In the first decade of colonial rule Japanese Protestants did attempt to influence the Korean Protestant church, launching Japanese Protestant missions. For example, The Kumiai

¹ Daehanjeoksipjasa, *Hanguk Jeoksipja Undong 100nyeon, 1905-2005* (Seoul: Daehanjeoksipjasa 2006), 108-14. See also *Annual Report*, 1908-1909, 166-68.

² For example, in the 1910s purely Korean corporations accounted for only 10.5 percent of companies, while Japanese owned 70 percent of the total corporations and Japanese-Korean firms constituted 10.5 percent. See Bruce Cumings, *Korea's Place in the Sun: A Modern History* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2005), 162.

Church in Japan (*Nihon Kumiai Kyokai*, in Japanese), a Japanese Congregational church, undertook active missionary work among Koreans in the 1910s.³ However, after the March First Movement its membership rapidly declined.⁴ Anti-Japanese sentiment among Korean Christians toward the imperialistic motives of the Japanese mission contributed to the failure of the Japanese mission in colonial Korea.⁵

In the colonial era, many Protestant educational and social institutions were largely foreign in terms of leadership, as was the case with the Christian Literature Society of Korea⁶—one of constituent bodies of the Federal Council—which was managed primarily by missionary leadership. However, from the mid-1920s ecclesiastical institutions were increasingly dominated by Korean leadership, with expanded autonomous territory in ecclesiastical matters.

The first three decades of the twentieth century saw the institutional establishment of the Korean Protestant churches, marked by two major “intra-confessional”⁷ church unions. The Korean Presbyterian Church was officially established in 1907, unifying most Presbyterian churches under the jurisdiction and auspices of the four Presbyterian missions—the Northern Presbyterian Mission, the Southern Presbyterian Mission, the Canadian Mission, and the

³ See *Annual Report*, 1918-1921, 89; Kiyoshi Nakarai, *Relations between the Government and Christianity in Chosen* (n.p., 1921), 22.

⁴ In 1918, Korean members of the Kumiai Church in Japan numbered 13,541, but by 1922 the number had sharply dropped to just 3. See *GSRS*, 1926, 55. See also H. B. Newell, “The Kumiai (Congregational) Church in Korea,” *KMYB*, 1928, 150-54; *GSRS*, 1926, 54-5; Chinil Banminjok Haengwi Jinsang Gyumyeong Wiwonhoe, *Chinil Banminjokhaengwi Jinsanggyumyeong Bogoseo: III-3. Chinil Banminjok Haengwi Yeongu* (Seoul: Chinil Banminjok Haengwi Jinsang Gyumyeongwiwonhoe, 2009), 346-51.

⁵ See Jeongmin Seo, *Hanil Gidokgyo Gwangyesa Yeongu* (Seoul: Daehangidokgyoseohoe, 2002), 169-96; Emily Anderson, *Christianity and Imperialism in Modern Japan: Empire for God* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014), 123-58; Takayoshi Matsuo, “The Japanese Protestants in Korea, Part Two: The 1st March Movement and the Japanese Protestants,” *Modern Asian Studies* 13, no. 4 (1979): 581-615.

⁶ *AMFC*, 1927, 30. See also Charles Allen Clark, *The Nevius Plan for Mission Work, Illustrated in Korea*, 2nd ed. (Seoul: Christian Literature Society, 1937), 218.

⁷ For an “intra-confessional” union movement in the first half of twentieth century, see Stephen Charles Neill, “Plans of Union and Reunion, 1910-1948,” in *A History of the Ecumenical Movement, 1517-1948*, ed. Ruth Rouse and Stephen Neill (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1993), 449-54.

Australian Presbyterian Mission.⁸ Two Methodist Korean denominations were also established: the Korea Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church was organized in 1908, and the Korea Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South in 1918. The two Methodist churches were united in 1930 with the establishment of the Korean Methodist Church.⁹

The early period of the colonial era also saw the rise of Korean leadership among Korean churches after a significant number of Korean students began graduating from Presbyterian and Methodist theological seminaries.¹⁰ In 1928, for the first time, the number of ordained Korean pastors of both the Presbyterian and Methodist churches exceeded that of “total missionaries” affiliated with the Federal Council.¹¹ As Korean leadership increasingly solidified, Korean church leaders sought a unified national church. However, their leadership was not strong enough to take initiative in establishing an independent national church.

Meanwhile, missionaries established their own union organizations—the General Council in 1905 and the Federal Council in 1912. The establishment of an institutionalized leadership led to the strengthening of missionary leadership at the national level. In the first

⁸ H. Namkung “Presbyterian Church of Chosen” *KMYB*, 1932, 8-11. For an overview of the early history of the Korean Presbyterian Church, see Harry A. Rhodes, ed. *History of the Korea Mission, Presbyterian Church U.S.A.: 1884-1934* (Seoul: Chosen Mission Presbyterian Church U.S.A., 1934), 384-406.

⁹ J. S. Ryang, “Korean Methodist Church,” *KMYB*, 1932, 12-3. For an overview of the early history of the Korean Methodist Church, see Charles David Stokes, “History of Methodist Missions in Korea, 1885-1930” (PhD Diss., Yale University, 1947).

¹⁰ The four Presbyterian missions were united in establishing the Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Pyongyang in 1902. Two Methodist Missions founded the Union Methodist Theological Seminary in Seoul in 1907. See A. F. Robb, “The Presbyterian Theological Seminary,” *KMYB*, 1932, 38-40; J. L. Gerdine, “Methodist Theological Education,” *KMYB*, 1932, 41-3.

¹¹ “Total missionaries” included male missionaries as well as “married” and “unmarried” female missionaries. The missionaries were subdivided into “evangelistic,” “educational,” “medical,” and “others.” See “Appendix: Statistics of Federal Council for 1921,” *AMFC*, 1921, 51. The number of “total missionaries” and ordained Korean pastors were respectively 395 and 128 in 1914, 472 and 313 in 1921, 455 and 509 in 1928, and 423 and 574 in 1936. See “Appendix: Statistics,” *AMFC*, 1914, n. p. ; “Appendix: Statistics of Federal Council for 1921,” *AMFC*, 1921, 51; “Appendix: Statistics of Federal Council for 1927 and 1928,” *AMFC*, 1928, 1; “Appendix: Federal Council Statistics—Year Ending May 31, 1936,” *AMFC*, 1937, n. p.

decade of the twentieth century, two modern union movements inspired the Korean Protestant union movement: a “trans-confessional”¹² union in Canada, and a federal union in the United States.¹³ Most Korean Christians hoped for the establishment of one Korean national church, favoring the Canadian “trans-confessional” union model. However, theological and institutional divisions among missionaries of the General Council and uncooperative mission boards in their home countries undermined the quest for a single national church in Korea.¹⁴ Instead, inspired by the American federal union of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, the Korean Federal Council was organized in 1918.¹⁵ The council functioned until 1924, when it was reorganized as the Korea National Christian Council (KNCC), modelled on the Federal Council in terms of the content of its constitution, federalism as the organizing principle, and an emphasis on the institutional autonomy of constituting bodies.¹⁶ However, although six member missions of the Federal Council—the four Presbyterian missions and the two Methodist missions—were also member bodies of the KNCC, the Federal Council was not abolished and remained strong in union effort and mission enterprise. In response, some Korean Christians criticized missionaries for their uncooperative manner and arrogance, calling for the abolishment of the Federal

¹² For an overview of the formation of the United Church of Canada as an example of a “trans-confessional” union, see Neill, “Plans of Union and Reunion, 1910-1948,” 454-58, quote from 454.

¹³ See “Minutes of the First Meeting of the Executive Committee of the General Council of the General Council of Evangelical Missions,” *KMF*, April 1906, 111; Hugh Miller, “The History of Co-operation and the Federal Council,” *KMF*, December 1934, 256; J. S. Ryang, “The Aim of Methodist Union in Korea,” *KMF*, July 1927, 153. For a study of the Protestant federal union movement in the United States, see Samuel McCrea Cavert, *The American Churches in the Ecumenical Movement, 1900-1968*. (New York: Association Press, 1968), 34-87.

¹⁴ C. D. Morris “Report of Committee of Harmony of Polity,” *AMGC*, 1910, 21.

¹⁵ W. N. Blair, “The Korean Church Federal Council,” *KMF*, June 1918, 131. For an overview of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, see Charles S. Macfarland, *The Churches of the Federal Council: Their History, Organization and Distinctive Characteristics, and a Statement of the Federal Council* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1916).

¹⁶ See *Minutes of the Fifth Annual Meeting of the Korean National Christian Council*, 1928, 6-7; *AMFC*, 1926, 28-9. See also George S. McCune, “The Korean National Christian Council,” *KMYB*, 1932, 92.

Council.¹⁷ Nevertheless, many Korean Protestants accepted the reality because they still needed missionary support, in particularly in the area of funding and financing.

b) Korean Protestant Institutions and Their Institutional Autonomy in Colonial Korea

In the colony, modernization and colonization combined to break up traditional forms of communal organizations and promote the establishment of modern institutions and associations. However, this modern colonial process did not lead to the creation of a civil society, in which autonomous and voluntary institutions would prosper, because the strong colonial bureaucracy significantly hindered the growth and activity of non-governmental modern associations. The Japanese colonial bureaucracy was the most well-organized modern institution in the colonial period, combining colonial hierarchy, Weberian rationalized bureaucracy,¹⁸ and traditional Confucian bureaucracy.¹⁹ The colonial bureaucracy transformed many old communal organizations into hierarchically reconfigured government-controlled colonial institutions—such as Buddhist and Confucian institutions—or created new government-manufactured pro-Japanese modern organizations—such as business, industrial, agricultural, educational, charitable, and mutual aid associations. For example, “the Chosen Athletic Association” (*Chosen Taiiku Kyokai*, in Japanese), which coordinated and arranged all

¹⁷ See Kyong-Bae Min, *Hanguk Gidok Gyohoesa: Hanguk Minjok Gyohoe Hyeongseong Gwajeongsu* (Seoulsi: Yeonse Daehakgyo Chulpanbu, 2007), 454-60.

¹⁸ For Max Weber’s view on modern bureaucracy, see Max Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretative Sociology*, eds. Guenther Roth, and Claus Wittich (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), 2: 956-1005.

¹⁹ For a study of Confucian bureaucracy in Chosun Korea, see James B. Palais, *Confucian Statecraft and Korean Institutions: Yu Hyöngwön and the Late Chosön Dynasty* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1996).

sporting events in colonial Korea, was supervised by the colonial regime and called “a semi-government enterprise” by the colonial government itself.²⁰

In addition to the colonial bureaucracy and government-sponsored institutions, Protestant ecclesiastical, social, and educational institutions constituted a significant part of the most well-organized modern institutions in colonial Korea.²¹ Korean Protestants developed an extensive nationwide network of churches, schools, hospitals, and other social institutions, which served as a connecting thread between Korean Protestants and Koreans in general and made an impact throughout the Korean peninsula. Unlike government-sponsored or government-controlled institutions, Korean Protestant institutions had a significant degree of institutional autonomy, despite never being fully independent from the colonial power.

This institutional autonomy had huge socio-political consequences. In the early colonial period, Protestant churches and their social and educational institutions provided institutional space and resources for anti-Japanese national movements. Under oppressive colonial rule that aimed to politically emasculate Koreans, Korean Christians attempted to take a political detour by building ecclesiastical and social organizations, which were predominantly Korean institutions. The institutional autonomy of Protestants provided a crucial organizational basis for the March First Movement, as the thick nationwide network of Protestantism served as a pre-existing organizational network at the national level. Throughout the colonial period, the institutional autonomy of Protestantism helped Protestant Christians to develop recalcitrant

²⁰ Government-General of Chosen, *Thriving Chosen: A Survey of Twenty-Five Years' Administration* (Keijo: Taishō Shashin Kogeisho, 1935), 20.

²¹ Communist labor and social organizations were also well-organized modern institutions. However, they did not emerge until at least the mid-1920s. In the latter half of the 1920s, they were actively involved with cultural, social, and labor movements but were severely suppressed in the early 1930s. See Dae-Sook Suh, *The Korean Communist Movement, 1918-1948* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1967), 53-141.

and dissident voices under the colonial rule. As much as they were autonomous, they were resistant.

One of the important factors helping to solidify the institutional autonomy of Protestant institutions lay in the fact that, as discussed above, Protestant institutions were predominantly Korean institutions with strong Korean leadership and membership. However, this was not the only factor promoting the institutional autonomy of Protestant institutions. Three other factors also contributed to the exceptional institutional autonomy that Protestant groups enjoyed in colonial Korea.

First, and most importantly, Anglo-American hegemony and the presence of missionaries—who were protected by the presence of the Western power—were a crucial factor enhancing the autonomy of Protestant institutions. Unlike other Korean institutions and associations, Protestant organizations and missionary-run institutions were effectively protected from colonial oppression by external international power politics. In the pre-colonial era, extraterritorial rights provided tremendous legal privileges and protection for missionaries and their institutions, which in fact was a motive for many Koreans converting to Christianity.²² However, under the colonial regime missionaries were no longer granted extraterritorial rights.²³ Nevertheless, Anglo-American hegemony helped the churches to retain a wide range of privileges and protections, providing extra-legal protection to missionaries and their affiliated institutions through diplomatic leverage at a time when many other Korean organizations were brutally suppressed by the colonial regime. When Protestant missionaries

²² See C. E. Sharp, "Motives for Seeking Christ," *KMF*, August 1906, 182-3; *Annual Report*, 1911, 38. See also Dae Young Ryu, "Treaties, Extraterritorial Rights, and American Protestant Missions in Late Joseon Korea," *Korea Journal* 43, no. 1 (2003): 174-203.

²³ *Annual Report*, 1910-1911, 75-7.

were appointed as head of Protestant educational and social institutions, the appointment reduced the pressure or intervention of the Japanese colonial government.²⁴ The colonial power was very cautious in dealing with these institutions, because mistreatment of Anglo-American citizens might cause trouble with their home nations. Furthermore, the financial power of missionaries helped Korean churches and institutions to remain financially independent from Japanese colonialists. Financial aid in the mission field boosted the self-government of Christian institutions and facilitated active social and educational Christian enterprise throughout the Korean peninsula.

Second, Christian institutional autonomy was strengthened by the exclusive forms of membership that characterized Christian ecclesial life. Christians were an exclusive religious community in the sense of membership qualification. In 1910 the General Council decided on standardization of terms to designate the steps in the reception of church members, and church membership in Protestant churches now required three stages: seekers (*wonip*, in Korean), probationers or catechumens (*hakseup*), and full members (*ipgyoin*).²⁵ This membership requirement was a totally new approach regarding religious belonging in the Korean context. Korean traditional religions such as Buddhism, Confucianism, and Shamanism had never demanded such a membership requirement. This exclusive membership procedure boosted the institutional integrity and autonomy of Christian group by motivating members to be actively involved the decision process of their institutions and by making religious institutional boundaries sharply defined and conspicuous.

²⁴ See Mangyu Lee, *Joseongyoyuksa* (Seoul: Euryumunhwasa, 1949), 2:404-5.

²⁵ Morris "Report of Committee of Harmony of Polity," 22.

Third, the colonial legal frame that was enacted in the 1920s, along with the launch of the “cultural” policy, promoted the institutional autonomy of Protestant groups. One of the benefits that this policy brought to Korean Protestantism was the legal recognition of Christian bodies as Juridical Foundations, starting in 1920.²⁶ In the first decade of the colonial era, the legal position of churches had remained highly uncertain, but the policy change in the 1920s provided secure legal protection to Christian institutions. However, it should be noted that this legal recognition was not a gift from the colonial regime; rather, the power and will that Koreans expressed in the March First Movement spurred the colonial regime to put forward the policy.

This legal recognition was disproportionately favorable to Protestant groups. Protestantism enjoyed legal privileges and protection more than any other religious groups, including Catholics. For example, in 1931 there were 29 religious Juridical Foundations in colonial Korea: 24 Protestant, only 3 Catholic, and 2 Buddhist.²⁷ The recognition of the Christian bodies as a legal entity also provided a number of legal privileges. For instance, Protestant institutions as legally recognized bodies enjoyed legal protection of church and mission properties, which missionaries had anxiously sought for some time.²⁸ Similarly, the privilege of exemption from taxation on mission and Christian properties was offered to Christian institutions.²⁹ Furthermore, the legal recognition was extended to Christian schools—mission schools that met the requirements of the colonial government were legally “designated” as the

²⁶ “Address of Hon. Rentaro Midzuno,” *AMFC*, 1921, 17-8.

²⁷ Seonja Yun, *Iljeui Jonggyojeongchaekgwa Cheonjugyohoe* (Seoulteukbyeolsi: Gyeonginmunhwasa, 2002), 234.

²⁸ *Annual Report*, 1918-1921, 91; Nakarai, *Relations between the Government and Christianity in Chosen*, 19-20; Frank Herron Smith, “The Transfer of Mission Property,” *KMF*, July 1923, 147-48.

²⁹ See “Address of M. S. Ariyoshi, Administrative Superintendent of the Government General,” *AMFC*, 1923, 25; *AMFC*, 1924, 26.

equivalent of government-run schools.³⁰ Overall, the legalization of Christian institutions supported and improved the institutional autonomy and self-government of institutions.³¹

When Korean Protestants' efforts to build purely Korean institutions was combined with Anglo-American protections, with the membership formation of the Protestant church, and with the legal recognition of Protestant institutions, it significantly strengthened the institutional autonomy of Protestant ecclesiastical and social institutions. However, the institutional autonomy of Korean Protestant institutions was always challenged by both colonialists and missionaries. Colonialists, keenly aware of the hegemonic power of Anglo-American nations and of the political weight of autonomous Christian organizations, sought to find ways to legally or extra-legally tame and manage Christian institutions. Although the authoritarian colonial power did legally recognize Protestant institutions beginning in the 1920s, this recognition was a double-edged sword for Protestant institutions as a legal entity. Protestants had to remain law-abiding colonial subjects to keep their institutions legally legitimate, even when colonial laws were used to impede the autonomous decisions of Christians. Furthermore, under the growing colonial totalitarianism of the final period of colonial rule, the colonial legal system became an effective vehicle for arbitrary intervention into and reorganization of Protestant institutions. On the other hand, missionaries themselves also hindered the formation of the institutional autonomy of Korean Protestantism, even though their financial and diplomatic support was a contributing factor to support it. Their

³⁰ "Address of M. S. Ariyoshi, Administrative Superintendent of the Government General," *AMFC*, 1923, 25. See also *AMFC*, 1924, 26; E. W. Koons, "Effect of Designation on A Mission School," *JCYB*, 1925, 525-27.

³¹ See "Report of Committee on Government Relations," *AMFC*, 1923, 27.

leadership and financial paternalism significantly hampered the growth of Korean leadership and autonomy in ecclesiastical and social Protestant institutions.

ii) The Colonial Public Sphere and Protestantism

A defining feature of the 1920s was the emergence of the colonial public sphere.³² The colonial public sphere was a terrain in which colonial policy was informed and taught and colonial ideology propagated, and at the same time public opinion was expressed and communicated to the colonial power.

Pre-colonial Korean society in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries exhibited a relatively vibrant public sphere, in which many civil and political associations emerged along with the civilization-enlightenment movement.³³ However, the public space was suppressed by the colonial power following annexation. As soon as it established colonial rule, the colonial regime forcibly dissolved most civil associations, including many Korean religious or political associations, seeing “control of meetings and associations” as necessary for maintaining peace and order in colonial Korea.³⁴ However, an appeasement policy in the 1920s significantly relaxed regulations on non-government organizations and civil associations. It facilitated the establishment of many social, cultural, or religious institutions, leaving significant room for the emergence of the colonial public sphere.

³² For a general overview of the colonial public sphere in the 1920s, see Yong-Jick Kim, “Politics of Communication and the Colonial Public Sphere in 1920s Korea,” in *Colonial Rule and Social Change in Korea, 1910-1945*, ed. Hong Yung Lee, Yong-chool Ha, and Clark W. Sorensen (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2013), 76-113.

³³ Kim, “Politics of Communication and the Colonial Public Sphere in 1920s Korea,” 79-84.

³⁴ *Annual Report*, 1911-1912, 51-5, quote from 53. See also *Annual Report*, 1910-1911, 85-6. The colonial regime also controlled business and commercial associations. Company Regulations of Chosen, enacted in 1911, was a key colonial regulation to control companies owned or run by Koreans until it was abolished in 1920 with the launch of the “cultural” policy. See *Annual Report*, 1912-1913, 163; 1916, 81; 1918-1921, 120.

At least three domains promoted the formation of the colonial public sphere in the 1920s. First, the “local autonomy”³⁵ policies introduced in 1920 contributed to the formation of the colonial public sphere.³⁶ The colonial power established the “local council”³⁷ as part of colonial efforts to reflect the general opinion of Koreans at the local level. Through this policy of “local autonomy,” Koreans had new, though limited, opportunities to express their public opinion to the colonial regime. Second, as Yong-Jick Kim argues, the burgeoning array of vernacular newspapers and magazines were pivotal to the formation of the colonial public sphere.³⁸ Widespread print media helped Koreans to shape public opinion and influence the political decisions of the colonial government. Finally, religious groups constituted a major part of the colonial public sphere. In particular, Protestant social and ecclesiastical institutions played a crucial role in the formation of the colonial public sphere. Jürgen Habermas argues that the role of religion was very limited in the formation of the classical “bourgeois public sphere” that emerged in modern Western Europe.³⁹ However, in colonial Korea religious groups were very active in the public sphere. Protestant educational and social institutions took center stage in this sphere, promoting educational movements such as a crusade against illiteracy, moral reform movements including the criminalization of prostitution, and economic

³⁵ See *Annual Report*, 1921, 222-8; 1938, 206-16, quote from 209.

³⁶ For a study of the relationship between “local autonomy” and the public colonial sphere, see Hae-dong Yun, *Jibaewa Jachi* (Seoul: Yeoksabipyongsas, 2006).

³⁷ See *Annual Report*, 1920, 225-8.

³⁸ Kim, “Politics of Communication and the Colonial Public Sphere in 1920s Korea,” 78.

³⁹ Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. Thomas Burger (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1991). For a critique of Habermas from the perspective that religion has played an important public role in the Western context, see Craig J. Calhoun, “Introduction: Habermas and the Public Sphere,” in *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, ed. Craig J. Calhoun (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1992), 35-6. See also José Casanova, *Public Religions in the Modern World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

movements such as the Promotion of Korean Products.⁴⁰ Protestantism's civilization-oriented social teachings enabled Protestants to become involved in many social areas, which contributed to shaping the Korean features of the public sphere in colonial Korea.

Colonial rule and the public sphere were not necessarily irreconcilable, but colonial rule put a fundamental limit on the nature and direction of the public sphere. As long as the colonial public sphere emerged within the limitations placed by colonial rule, the sphere could not be a democratic civil space. As Charles Taylor argues, the public sphere—a central feature of democratic society—exists independently of political society.⁴¹ However, the colonial public sphere was never truly independent from political control by the colonial regime: the liberal distinction between political society and civil society was impossible in the colonial public sphere. The public opinion in the colonial sphere was monitored and approved by the colonial power and incorporated into the colonial policy in a limited way only when Koreans did not assert themselves as a sovereign people, seek independence and self-determination, or challenge the legitimacy of the colonial rule. When public discourse was seen as a threat to the regime, it was suppressed. Nationalistic or communist discourse therefore was prevented from participating in the public discourse during the colonial era. Instead, only law-abiding and loyal colonial subjects could access the public sphere. The coloniality of the colonial public sphere was obvious. Though it contributed to shaping public opinion among Koreans and

⁴⁰ For a study of a campaign for the Promotion of Korean Products, see Gyusik Chang, *Iljeha Hanguk Gidokgyo Minjokjuui Yeongu* (Seoul: Hyeon, 2001), 245-47; Sangsuk Jeon, "1920nyeondae Jeonbangi Minjogundonggwa Mulsanjangryeo Nonjaeng: Mulsanjangryeo Nonjaengeul Tonghaeseo Bon Minjokjuuiseryeogui Inyeomjeok Pyeoncha," *Yeoksawahyeonsil* 47 (2003): 37-65; Gijung Pang, "1930nyeondae Mulsanjangryeo undonggwa Minjok, Jabonjuui Gyeongjesasang," *Dongbanghakji* 115 (2002): 47.

⁴¹ For Taylor's view on the public sphere, see Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007), 185-96.

communicating it to Japanese colonizers, the colonial public sphere was essentially an ideological space in which colonial policy was informed and propagated.

The final fifteen years of the colonial era saw the decline and demise of the colonial public sphere. Under colonial totalitarianism, the regime left little room for the incorporation of public opinion into colonial policy, and it viewed voluntary civil associations with suspicion. A totalitarian mode of association, which saw society as an organic whole and sought to hierarchically restructure colonial society, collided with a modern mode of voluntary association that promoted the emergence of a public sphere. Not surprisingly, Protestant institutions that cherished institutional autonomy were a primary target for totalitarian top-down restructuring.

iii) Missionary Paternalism and the Institutional Autonomy of Korean Protestantism

The presence of Western missionaries backed by Anglo-American hegemony was a primary factor in supporting the relatively high degree of institutional autonomy that Protestant institutions attained and enjoyed under colonial rule. However, the missionary influence in Protestant institutions was not only benign support, but also harmful.

The financial dependence of Korean churches on mission bodies was a key factor in making them largely dependent on missionary leadership. This financial power—which stemmed from mission funds from rich Anglo-American nations—not only provided missionaries themselves with a relatively comfortable and affluent life in the poverty-stricken mission field.⁴² But it also offered financial leverage to missionaries, which allowed them to exert enormous power over Korean churches, although Korean Protestants continued to

⁴² See Dae Young Ryu, *Chogi Miguk Seongyosayeongu, 1884-1910: Seongyosadeurui Jungsancheungjeok Seonggyeogeul Jungsimeuro* (Seoul: Hanguk Gidokgyo Yeoksa Yeonguso, 2001).

expand local leadership. A contemporary missionary in Japan wrote that “most Japanese seemed to think that the missions had inexhaustible sources of money,” calling the relationship between missionaries and finance as one of “the most intimate problems of the missions and missionaries.”⁴³ This was also true in the attitude among Koreans toward the financial power of missionaries.⁴⁴ Though they did not have “inexhaustible sources of money,” Protestant missionaries and the mission boards in colonial Korea nonetheless did have considerable financial power, enough to exert influence on most matters relating to Korean Protestantism. Throughout the colonial era, the proportion of financial self-support in Korean churches steadily increased partly because of church growth and partly from the spread of the self-supporting principle of the Nevius mission method,⁴⁵ which Presbyterian missionaries emphasized. Nevertheless, most Korean churches retained a low degree of financial autonomy and thus required mission subsidies.⁴⁶ For example, as N. C. Whittemore—chairman of the General Council in the year of 1911-12—pointed out in 1934, the KNCC, a leading force of Korean Protestantism, was still a “foreign subsidized organization, rather than an indigenous one built up on Korean funds.”⁴⁷ The financial dependence of the Korean church strengthened

⁴³ William P. Woodard, “The Foreign Missionary In Japan: A Study in Mission, Missionary and Church Relationships,” *JCYB*, 1940, 102.

⁴⁴ Ryang, “The Aim of Methodist Union in Korea,” 152. See also World Missionary Conference, *Report of Commission II: The Church in the Mission Field* (Edinburgh: F.H. Revell Company, 1910), 358-59.

⁴⁵ It is argued that the Nevius method—a mission approach whose three principles were self-support, self-governance, and self-propagation—was a main contributing factor to the growth of Korean Protestantism, particularly the Korean Presbyterian church, in boosting church finances. For a study of the impact of the Nevius method on the growth of the Korean Presbyterian church, see Clark, *The Nevius Plan for Mission Work*. For a critical evaluation of the Nevius Method, see Sung-Chun Chun, *Schism and Unity in the Protestant Churches of Korea* (Seoul: Christian Literature Society of Korea, 1979), 75-96.

⁴⁶ For example, see Ryang, “The Aim of Methodist Union in Korea,” 152. See also Kwang-u Kim, *Hanguk Gamrigyohoe Baeknyeong: Jedobyeoncheongi* (Seoul: Jeonmangsa, 1990), 202-3.

⁴⁷ N. C. Whittemore, “Fifty Years of Comity and Co-Operation in Korea,” in *The Fiftieth Anniversary Celebration of the Korea Mission of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., June 30-July 3, 1934*, ed. Harry A. Rhodes and Richard H. Baird (Seoul, Korea: Post Chapel, John D. Wells School, 1934), 98.

missionary leadership and solidified missionary paternalism, which in turn hampered the autonomy of Korean Protestants and their institutions.

It is often argued that Protestant missionaries contributed to the formation of liberal democracy in Korea by promoting the institutional autonomy and ecclesiastical democracy of Protestant churches. Celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the Northern Presbyterian Mission, Herbert E. Blair—who would serve as chairman of the Federal Council in the year of 1937-38—claimed that Presbyterian missionaries helped shape “common democracy in the village life” and build “democratic institutions” in colonial Korea.⁴⁸ He called the Korean church operating on the Presbyterian polity model “a great training school” for democracy, and concluded that “strong men and women are here trained not only for the service of the church life but also for intelligent citizenship and for leadership in the advancing life of the nation.”⁴⁹ Horace H. Underwood, who was president of Chosen Christian College and a leading figure in the Federal Council, wrote that Korean Protestant churches were “operated on democratic principles.” He continued:

Local churches [of the Korean Presbyterian Church] discussed and voted on various questions, then sent delegates to a local conference or presbytery, which in turn sent its delegates on up the general conference or general assembly, where again action was taken by majority vote after debate under parliamentary procedure. Thus several hundred thousand Koreans in the churches and many Korean organizations outside the churches learned something of democratic processes and majority rule.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Herbert E. Blair, “Fifty Years of Development of the Korean Church,” *ibid.*, 129.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ Horace H. Underwood, *Tragedy and Faith in Korea* (New York: Friendship Press, 1951), 18.

However, both Blair and Underwood exaggerated the “democratic” role of the Korean Protestant churches, holding a narrow view of modern democracy. They reduced “democratic principles” to voting, majority rule, or democratic procedure, ignoring more foundational democratic values such as equal dignity, freedom, human rights, and resistance to tyranny, which the American and French revolutions cherished.⁵¹

Furthermore, the seemingly “democratic” Protestant institutions were not autonomous vis-à-vis missionaries. Regarding important decisions in the institutions, Korean Protestants were very dependent upon missionaries. This dependence made Korean Protestant institutions heteronomous in relation to missionaries, hampering the democratic spirit of Korean Protestantism.

In sum, the missionary influence had a paradoxical impact on Korean Protestantism. Missionary financial aid and diplomatic protection helped nurture indigenous leadership of Korean Christians and enhance the institutional autonomy of Protestant institutions in colonial Korea. However, the institutional autonomy of Korean Protestant institutions was not firmly established, because the institutions were heavily dependent upon missionary leadership and on the financial power of missionary institutions. This pattern of paternalistic leadership and the financial paternalism of Protestant missionaries had an adverse effect on the development of institutional autonomy in the Korean church, undermining the independent leadership and spirit of Korean Christians.

⁵¹ In the same vein, James Earnest Fisher—a missionary associated with the Federal Council and a professor at Chosen Christian College—argued that missionary education could enhance democracy in colonial Korea. In his 1928 book *Democracy and Mission Education in Korea*, Fisher noted that “respect for the personality of the learner” and “respect for all the natural powers of the learner” were the basic principles of “a democratic education” in colonial Korea. Narrowly interpreting John Dewey’s philosophy of education, he attempted to reconcile colonialism to democracy, although the two are irreconcilable. See James Earnest Fisher, *Democracy and Mission Education in Korea* (New York City: Teachers College, Columbia university, 1928), 23-32, quotes from 23, 24, 26.

2. Colonial Totalitarianism, Protestant Missionaries of the Federal Council, and Korean Protestantism

i) Colonial Totalitarianism and the Kokutai Colonial Order

By the late 1920s, the colonial power was confident that Japanese rule of Korea was stable and secure. When Government-General Administrative Superintendent S. Ikegami made a speech in 1928 to the missionaries of the Federal Council, he claimed that “it is quite evident that today peace reigns supreme in every part of Chosen (Korea).”⁵² However, from the early 1930s onward, imperial “peace” in colonial Korea was abruptly challenged by the dark economic and military shadow that fell across East Asia, Europe, and North America. During this period Western nations faced a series of catastrophic events such as the recurrent economic crisis caused by the Great Depression in 1929, the rise of Adolf Hitler and his Nazi Party in Germany in 1933, and the outbreak of World War II in 1939. The 1930s in East Asia witnessed the collapse of fragile so-called Taishō democracy in Japan proper and the rise of totalitarian militarism in the Empire of Japan. Japan’s invasion of Manchuria in China in 1931 signaled the beginning of the wartime period (1931-1945), fundamentally changing domestic and international politics in East Asia. This invasion was followed by two large-scale wars: the Second Sino-Japanese War in 1937, and the Pacific War in 1941. Japan’s aspiration to move from a significant regional power to become a world power led it to wage war with both China and the United States.⁵³

The Manchurian crisis in 1931 was not only the starting point of the fifteen-year war of Japan but also a distinct moment determining the direction and nature of new colonial policy in

⁵² “Address of the Vice-Governor General,” *AMFC*, 1928, 20. See also *AMFC*, 1926, 16-7.

⁵³ For a historical overview of wartime Japan, see Andrew Gordon, *A Modern History of Japan: From Tokugawa Times to the Present*, Third ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 181-223.

Korea. After the Manchurian invasion, Governor-General Kazushige Ugaki in colonial Korea said in his *Governor-General's Instruction to the Governors of the Provinces* in 1932 that "our beloved country now faces a most critical time in politics, economics, thoughts and other affairs."⁵⁴ This "most critical time" led colonial policy to fundamentally change from the "cultural" policy of the 1920s to a colonial form of totalitarian rule. Under colonial totalitarianism, colonial Korea was transformed into a military supply base for ultranationalistic Japanese militarism. During the wartime period, various forms of mobilization—forced and drafted labor, conscription, and sexual enslavement—had a devastating impact on Korean society.⁵⁵

A key term under colonial totalitarian rule was *kokutai*, signifying the shift of the colonial policy from the civilization-oriented policy of the first two decades of colonial rule to a totalitarian policy emphasizing Japanese uniqueness. Governor-General Jirō Minami, in his *Governor-General's Message to the Governors of the Provinces* in 1937, stressed that the highest goal of the colonial regime was "clarification" of *kokutai*.⁵⁶ A guiding principle necessary for attaining the goal, he claimed, was "Japan and Korea as One Body" (*Naisenittai*, in Japanese). He continued, "Now is the time when we ninety million brethren should be completely united into one body and overcome our common difficulties. But to be united into one body, mind, and so magnify the achievements of our Emperor and extol His Way, it is of the

⁵⁴ Kazushige Ugaki, "Governor-General's Instruction to the Governors of the Provinces," *Annual Report*, 1932-1933, 199.

⁵⁵ For an overview of wartime mobilization in colonial Korea, see Cumings, *Korea's Place in the Sun*, 174-83.

⁵⁶ Jirō Minami, "Governor-General's Message to the Governors of the Provinces," *Annual Report*, 1936-1937, 220. See also *Annual Report*, 1937-1938, 7-8

utmost importance that we make clear our ideas of our national polity.”⁵⁷ The colonial policy of “Japan and Korea as One Body” was a totalitarian ideology aimed at boosting kokutai.

The totalitarian propaganda of “Japan and Korea as One Body” was a colonial effort to deepen and intensify a fundamental principle of the “cultural” rule of the 1920s—the principle of “universal brotherhood”⁵⁸ (*Isshidojin*, in Japanese). The principle, introduced by Governor-General Makoto Saitō in 1919 as a pillar of the “cultural” policy, meant equality before the emperor, no discrimination between Japanese and Koreans, and equal imperial grace for all.⁵⁹ Following the March First Movement, Saitō promised that the colonial power would treat Koreans “socially and politically on the same footing as the Japanese.”⁶⁰ However, his assimilation policy was full of contradictions and inconsistency. For example, throughout most of the colonial period the colonial regime maintained “the dual system of education—Korean schools for Korean children and Japanese schools for Japanese children.”⁶¹ The educational authorities of the colonial power recognized that it was impossible to educate Koreans and Japanese in the same school because of “the difference in the language, manners, customs, and ideas of Koreans and Japanese.”⁶² However, the dual educational system was not devised to respect each cultural tradition, but rather as an effective colonial apparatus for discriminating against Koreans and disguising ethnic-based discrimination.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Makoto Saitō, “Governor-General’s Instruction to High Officials Concerning Administrative Reforms,” *Annual Report*, 1918-1921, 205.

⁵⁹ *Annual Report*, 1922-1923, 23. See also “Address of Hon. Rentaro Midzuno,” *AMFC*, 1921, 18; “Address of Mr. Z. Shibata, Director of the Educational Bureau of the Chosen Government-General,” *AMFC*, 1922, 19.

⁶⁰ Saitō, “Governor-General’s Instruction to High Officials Concerning Administrative Reforms,” 206.

⁶¹ See *Annual Report*, 1910-1911, 222, quote from 222; *Annual Report*, 1918-1921, 183; 1922-1923, 78; 1938-1939, 84, 206.

⁶² “Address of Mr. Z. Shibata, Director of the Educational Bureau of the Chosen Government-General,” *AMFC*, 1922-1923, 19.

The “cultural” policy of the 1920s was marked by an inherent tension between multi-ethnic imperialism of the Empire of Japan and Japanese ethnic nationalism. The Japanese colonial policy, on the one hand, focused on building a multi-ethnic empire, including Koreans, Manchus, and Han Chinese. However, on the other hand, Japanese imperialism had put an enormous emphasis on Japanese uniqueness in the empire, which necessarily led to discrimination against and oppression of different ethnic groups, making ethnically discriminatory structure in the Japanese colony.

The totalitarian colonial regime in the 1930s sought to resolve the inherent tension of Japanese colonialism in Korea, drawing upon a totalitarian principle of “Japan and Korea as One Body.” The principle aimed at promoting the unity between Japanese and Koreans by wiping out ethnic distinction of Koreans and assimilating them into Japanese society. For example, the linguistic identity of Korean people was threatened by the totalitarian policy. The Korean language was a prime and unifying denominator of Koreans and a determining factor in defining the nationality of Koreans, who were ethnically and linguistically homogeneous.⁶³

⁶³ During the period when the Japanese assimilation policy aimed at annihilating Korean linguistic and cultural identity, Korean Protestantism significantly contributed to the modern emergence of Hangul (Korean vernacular alphabet) by translating the Bible and publishing many print media in the Korean alphabet. The nationwide use of Hangul was a modern, nationalistic phenomenon in Korea because writing in pre-modern Korea was monopolized by the Chinese written system. In the colonial era, Korean translations and literature initiated by Korean Protestants significantly promoted the Korean modern identity as a distinctive nation with its own written language, and contributed to Korea’s struggle to preserve its distinctiveness from colonial encroachment. See Hyeonbae Choi, “Gidokgyowa Hangeul,” *Sinhaknondan* (1962): 51-76. Western missionaries were also very enthusiastic in translating the Bible into Hangul, although the translation was primarily motivated by evangelical maximization. See Wm. H. Baird, “The Future of Unmoon (Hangul),” *KMF*, August 1910, 204-6; S. Cram, “Christian Newspapers in the Vernacular,” *KMF*, October 1911, 285-6; The Federal Council of Protestant Evangelical Missions in Korea, *A Communication to His Excellency, Baron Saito, Governor-General of Chosen from the Federal Council of Protestant Evangelical Missions in Korea* (n.p., 1919), 4.

However, Koreans were prohibited from speaking Korean in school, and were instead required to speak Japanese.⁶⁴

Japanese colonizers sought to eradicate and exterminate Korean culture and language in order to Japanize Koreans, considering the cultural and linguistic genocide of Koreans to be necessary for total assimilation. This Japanization policy was carried out under the slogan of “Japan and Korea as One Body,” but it aimed to effect the “total domination”⁶⁵ of Japanese colonialists over Koreans. When the extermination of cultural and linguistic identity became a precondition for colonial inclusion, the privileges of Japanese colonialists were all the more strengthened. Total assimilation was a distinct and key element of kokutai colonial order.

ii) Shinto, Korean Protestants, and Protestant Missionaries

a) Shinto and Japanese Totalitarianism

A unique and peculiar side of Japanese totalitarianism in the wartime period was to put Shinto at the center of the totalizing process. Shrine Shinto—often retrospectively referred to as “state Shinto”⁶⁶—was the functional equivalent of a state church, like the Anglican Church in the United Kingdom or civil religion in the United States, providing a social glue that brought all Japanese people together. However, Shinto in Japan promoted not only national unity and social cohesion but also sanctification of Japanese politics. Modernized Shinto was not what Emilio Gentile calls a “political religion,” but it shared with a “political religion” an important

⁶⁴ See *Annual Report, 1938-1939*, 92. See also In-Su Son, *Hangukgeundaegyoyuksa* (Seoul: Yeonsedaehakgyo Chulpanbu, 1971), 246-47.

⁶⁵ Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (San Diego: A Harvest Book, 1979), 437.

⁶⁶ See Shigeyoshi Murakami, *Japanese Religion in the Modern Century* (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1980), 41-6; William P. Woodard, *The Allied Occupation of Japan 1945-1952 and Japanese Religions* (Leiden: Brill, 1972), 10-1. See also Nobuhiro Kasseurajima, “Jonggyo Gaenyeomgwa Gukgasindoron: ‘Jeguk=Sikminji’ Reul Jungsimeuro,” in *Jonggyowa Sikminji Geundae*, ed. Hae-dong Yun and Jun’ichi Isomae (Seoul: Chaekgwahamkke, 2013), 150-51.

feature: “sacralization of politics.”⁶⁷ This sacralization was based on the Shinto belief that Japan was, as the Japanese government officially described it, “a divine country governed by an Emperor who is a deity incarnate.”⁶⁸ Shinto offered sacred legitimation to modern Japan. When the center of modern political legitimacy shifted from the divine rights of kings to the sacred rights of people, modern Japan turned toward Shinto beliefs to emphasize the sacredness of the nation. In the fifteen-year wartime period Shinto played a central role in the mobilization and totalization of Japanese society, as Japanese people and leaders believed that Shinto underpinned the Japanese way of life. Under Shinto-based totalitarianism, Japanese society was completely reconfigured through the Shinto value system.

The place of the emperor in Shinto is central. The emperor substantially reigned and governed the Empire of Japan as the retainer of imperial sovereignty; according to the Meiji Constitution, he was the head of state, held “the supreme command of the Army and Navy,” and also had “legislative power.”⁶⁹ He took on a priestly role as much as a political role, undertaking the performance of national rituals and ceremonies as “Shinto forms.”⁷⁰ While in the United Kingdom contemporary queens or kings were relegated to a purely ceremonial function, the Japanese emperor was divinized as a sacred ruler who had political power both nominally and symbolically. The Meiji Constitution declared the emperor of Japan to be “sacred

⁶⁷ Emilio Gentile, *Politics as Religion* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 22.

⁶⁸ Monbushō, *Kokutai No Hongi: Cardinal Principles of the National Entity of Japan*, trans. John Owen (Newton, Mass.: Crofton Publishing Corp., 1974), 138.

⁶⁹ Hirobumi Itō, *Commentaries on the Constitution of the Empire of Japan*, trans. Miyoji Itō (Tokio: Chu-o Daigaku, 1906), 10, 26.

⁷⁰ Ceremonies of the imperial family such as marriages and imperial funeral rites were performed in the Shinto style. See Takashi Fujitani, *Splendid Monarchy: Power and Pageantry in Modern Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 150.

and inviolable,”⁷¹ in sharp contrast with the modern democratic belief that the human dignity, freedom, and equality of citizens are inviolable and sacred.

Nevertheless, the power of the emperor was not absolutized until the rise of Japanese totalitarianism in the 1930s. The Meiji Constitution was inherently contradictory in emphasizing both the absolute status of the emperor and his limited power as the leader of a constitutional monarchy. This contradiction was a necessary product of the Japanese effort to reconcile preservation of Japanese national uniqueness with modernization. In the growing totalitarian environment of the 1930s, however, the contradiction was resolved: the sacred authority of the emperor was absolutized. As a result, any liberal interpretation of the political role of the emperor, such as a description of the emperor as “the highest organ of the state,” was attacked and suppressed by ultranationalists.⁷² Many Japanese ultranationalists saw the emperor system not as a state function but as the divinely sanctioned core of Japan itself, and the physical manifestation of the nation’s sacredness. This view was an overarching theme of Japanese totalitarianism,⁷³ under which an organic relationship of emperor and people was asserted.⁷⁴

b) Korean and Missionary Responses to Colonial Shinto Totalitarianism

Shinto worship was a core of colonial policy. In the 1910s and 20s, the colonial policy on Shinto was carried out as part of the regime’s assimilation policy, but it was not effective because many Koreans held an unfavorable view of the Japanese religion, seeing it as foreign to Korean culture. In particular, most Korean Christians (including Catholics) opposed Shinto

⁷¹ Itō, *Commentaries on the Constitution of the Empire of Japan*, 6.

⁷² Richard H. Mitchell, *Thought Control in Prewar Japan* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1976), 66.

⁷³ It is no accident that following the surrender of Japan in the Pacific War in 1945, Emperor Showa under the command of the Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers declared that he is not a living god. See Woodard, *The Allied Occupation of Japan*, 250-68, 315-6.

⁷⁴ See Monbushō, *Kokutai No Hongi*, 99.

worship and resisted the religious elements of colonial policy.⁷⁵ This resistance was not only religious, but took the form of national resistance against Japanese colonialism because Korean Christians believed that Shinto was an ethnically defined Japanese religion promoting Japanese uniqueness and playing a central role in Japanese imperialism. When Shinto worship was promoted by the colonial regime as part of efforts to make Koreans loyal colonial subjects, Korean Christians were a conspicuously vocal group who did not easily cooperate with this policy. Opposition to Japanese Shinto as a foreign religion helped Korean Christianity to be Koreanized and nationalized, solidifying the deep relationship between Protestantism and Korean nationalism.

However, the rise of totalitarianism in the 1930s radically changed the politico-religious landscape on the Korean peninsula. During the 1930s, the colonial power vigorously enforced attendance at Shinto ceremonies, promoting it as part of the continued effort to reorganize colonial Korea into a genuine part of the Empire of Japan and to Japanize all Koreans. Japanese colonizers wanted to use the spiritual and ethical power of Shinto to entirely restructure colonial society and transform the minds of colonial subjects. Under totalitarian policy, all Koreans—including Korean Christians—were required to attend Shinto ceremonies. Refusal to attend was seen as indicative of disloyalty to the colonial regime and the Japanese empire, a grave crime. Most religious groups therefore complied with colonial Shinto policy, claiming that participation in the Shinto rites was not incompatible with their religious teachings. In 1936,

⁷⁵ For an introduction to the Shinto controversy in the 1910s and 1920s, see Seungtae Kim, “Ilbonsindoui Chintuwa 1910, 1920nyeondaeui Sinsamunje,” in *Hanguk Gidokgyowa Sinsachambae Munje*, ed. Seungtae Kim (Seoul: Hanguk Gidokgyo Yeoksa Yeonguso, 1991), 189-246.

Catholicism officially recognized Shinto ceremonies as an act of patriotism.⁷⁶ However, a minority of Korean Protestants and a majority of Protestant missionaries nonetheless resisted attendance.

Throughout the colonial period, Protestant missionaries experienced a number of difficulties in their missionary enterprise. The first decade of colonial rule was marked by the tension between Western missionaries and Japanese colonialists over school education. In the 1920s, missionaries saw the rise of communism as one of the biggest threats to their mission. However, the Shinto controversy in the 1930s was the most difficult challenge that missionaries faced⁷⁷; in 1934, a missionary affiliated with the Federal Council described that “of all the problems which are demanding solution at present there is none which has one tenth of the importance nor presents one tenth of the difficulties of that of the Patriotic Ceremonies at the Jinja, or National Shrines.”⁷⁸ The relationship between colonialists and missionaries, which had remained cordial throughout the 1920s, reached a crucial juncture when the Shrine question arose as a critical feature of colonial Shinto totalitarianism.

The Shinto controversy was deeply connected to mission schools. One of the most significant incident occurred in 1935. George McCune—a leading Presbyterian missionary in Pyongyang and former chairman of the Federal Council—collided with the colonial government over whether Christian students should attend Shinto shrine worship, and in 1935 he left Korea after resigning in protest from his position as president of Pyongyang Union Christian College, a

⁷⁶ See Seonja Yun, *Iljeui Jonggyojeongchaekgwa Cheonjugyohoe* (Seoul: Gyeonginmunhwasa, 2002), 265-70..

⁷⁷ For an overview of the Shinto controversy in the 1930s, see Jai-Keun Choi, *The Korean Church under Japanese Colonialism* (Seoul: Jimmundang, 2007), 97-144.

⁷⁸ Richard H. Baird, “Present Day Religious Problems,” in *The Fiftieth Anniversary Celebration of the Korea Mission of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., June 30-July 3, 1934*, ed. Harry A. Rhodes and Richard H. Baird (Seoul, Korea: Post Chapel, John D. Wells School, 1934), 139.

union institution affiliated with the Federal Council.⁷⁹ The opposition to attendance of Korean Christian students at the Shinto ceremonies brought Protestant missionaries to a state of high tension with colonial authorities, which eventually led to the withdrawal of many American Presbyterian missionaries from educational work and to the closure of mission schools.⁸⁰

The Shinto controversy of the 1930s was the most controversial and divisive issue among missionaries themselves in the colonial period,⁸¹ and, along with the fundamentalist-modernist debate, it significantly damaged the once-dominant missionary consensus. When the colonial power insisted on participation in Shinto worship as a sincere expression of loyalty for all students at mission schools, it accelerated a split between civilization-oriented, liberal-minded missionaries and conservative missionaries, whose stronghold was American Presbyterians in Pyongyang. Civilization-oriented missionaries and mission bodies sought to compromise with the colonial power, seeing the educational mission as a crucial part of their own Christian mission. Thus, they accommodated the colonialist view that Shinto worship was a non-religious patriotic act.⁸² On the other hand, conservative missionaries, who were increasingly affected by fundamentalism and took the lead in transforming Korean Protestantism into a faith-oriented religion, contended that Shinto worship was apostasy and Christian schools, which they primarily considered to be an effective vehicle for evangelization,

⁷⁹ Harry A. Rhodes and Arch Campbell, *History of the Korea Mission, Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.: Volume II, 1935-1959* (New York: Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations, United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., 1964), 7-8.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 7-16.

⁸¹ For a brief overview of the Shinto controversy among missionaries, see Allen D. Clark, *History of the Korean Church* (Seoul: Christian Literature Society of Korea, 1961), 193-204; Harvie M. Conn, "Studies in the Theology of the Korean Presbyterian Church: Part II, Liberal Theology in the Korean Church—to 1945, an Historical Outline," *Westminster Theological Journal* 29, no. 2 (1967): 159-67.

⁸² This view was well-represented by Horace H. Underwood. See Horace H. Underwood, "Render Unto Caesar the Things That Are Caesar's," *World Christianity: A Digest*, Second Quarter (1938): 73-6.

should be shut down to protect the purity of Christian faith.⁸³ The former position was adopted by most missionaries of the Canadian Mission and two American Methodist missions and by a minority of the Northern Presbyterian Mission missionaries, and the latter stance by most missionaries of the Australian Presbyterian Mission and the Southern Presbyterian Mission and by a majority of the Northern Presbyterian Mission missionaries. The Shinto controversy brought member missions and missionaries of the Federal Council to the internal schism, along modernists-fundamentalist line.⁸⁴ Nevertheless, it did not lead to the institutional division of the Federal Council. In the midst of the Shinto controversy, the Federal Council was very cautious regarding the issue despite encountering hostility from the colonial power. The leadership of the Federal Council, which was still dominated by liberal-minded missionaries, sought to avoid exacerbation of the Shinto controversy rather than to undertake any official opposition to the colonial regime. For example, leaders of the Federal Council advised fellow missionaries not to “discuss” the Shrine question or to take “any action against participating in Shrine ceremonies.”⁸⁵

Colonial Shinto totalitarianism also set civilization-oriented Korean Christians at odds with conservative Korean Christians, who were increasingly taking personal faith as a fundamental guidance of the Christian religion. A significant number of Korean Christians refused to attend Shinto ceremonies, seeing it as a serious violation of their faith. However, a

⁸³ This view was well summarized by George S. McCune. See George S. McCune, “Thou Shalt Have No Other Gods before Me,” *ibid.*: 70-3.

⁸⁴ The Shinto controversy did not involve just the split within missionaries themselves, but also caused high tensions between American missionaries and American diplomats, who put the American national interest over the mission enterprise. For a study of a diplomatic dimension of the Shinto controversy among the American missionaries, see Dae Young Ryu, “Missionaries and Imperial Cult: Politics of the Shinto Shrine Rites Controversy in Colonial Korea,” *Diplomatic History* 40, no. 4 (2016): 606-34.

⁸⁵ *AMFC*, 1937, 18.

majority of Korean Christians nonetheless complied with the colonial Shinto policy, and accepted the colonialist view that attendance at Shinto rites was a religiously neutral patriotic ceremony. Eventually, in the late 1930s Korean leaders in both Presbyterian and Methodist churches made an official decision to participate in Shrine ceremonies, describing it as a loyal obligation of good colonial subjects.⁸⁶

The Shinto question also caused a conflict between Korean Protestants and missionaries. When missionaries themselves made the decision to withdraw from school education, a majority of Korean Christians opposed this, demanding that Christian schools be kept open and run so that their children could be educated in a Christian and modern way.⁸⁷ Thus, Koreans called for transferring the management of Christian schools when missionaries were deciding to close schools over the Shrine question.⁸⁸

Under the totalitarian rule of the wartime period, some Japanese Christians in Japan were victimized and arrested on charges of lèse-majesté and violation of the Peace Preservation Law,⁸⁹ but in general the attendance at Shinto worship was not as serious a problem there as in colonial Korea. Japanese Christians smoothly acceded to Shrine Shinto worship as an obligation of loyal Japanese citizens, accepting it as a practice connected to

⁸⁶ Seokhui Han, "Sinsachambaeui Gangyowa Jeohang," in *Hanguk Gidokgyowa Sinsachambae Munje*, ed. Seungtae Kim (Seoul: Hanguk Gidokgyo Yeoksa Yeonguso, 1991), 72-9.

⁸⁷ See "Confidential Report of the Board's Second Commission to Chosen regarding the Educational Situation in Chosen relative to the Shrine Problem by Charles T. Leber and J. L. Dodds, April 12, 1937," in *Sinsachambae Munje Yeongmun Jaryojip II: Miguk Bukjangrohoe Haeoseongyobu Munseo Pyeon*, ed. Manyeol Lee (Seoul: Hanguk Gidokgyo Yeoksa Yeonguso, 2003), 232; Underwood, "Render unto Caesar the Things That Are Caesar's," 75.

⁸⁸ For example, see "Petition to the Executive Committee of the Korea Mission and to the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in U. S. A, March 5, 1937," in *Sinsachambae Munje Yeongmun Jaryojip II: Miguk Bukjangrohoe Haeoseongyobu Munseo Pyeon*, ed. Manyeol Lee (Seoul: Hanguk Gidokgyo Yeoksa Yeonguso, 2003), 168-70. For an overview of Koreans' response to missionary decision over withdrawal from school education, see Jongcheol An, *Miguk Seongyosawa Hanmigwangye, 1931-1948: Gyoyukcheolsu, Jeonshyeopryeok Geurigo Migunjeong* (Seoul: Hanguk Gidokgyoyeoksa Yeonguso, 2010), 113-132, 157-164.

⁸⁹ Murakami, *Japanese Religion in the Modern Century*, 102-3.

Japanese heritage.⁹⁰ However, a significant minority of Korean Protestant Christians, who were theologically conservative, mostly Presbyterians, fiercely resisted participation in the forced worship, seeing it as an idolatrous act. Many who refuse to comply with the colonial Shinto policy were arrested, tortured, and persecuted by the colonial regime. This bitter struggle with the colonial power even resulted in the martyrdom of some brave Christians, who resisted any attempt by human authorities to violate individual religious conscience.

In post-colonial Korea, the resistance of anti-Shinto dissenters is often interpreted in terms of the national resistance discourse, and the dissenters praised as national heroes fighting against Japanese colonialism.⁹¹ In colonial Korea, the colonial power also saw such resistance not as a religious struggle but as political opposition against the regime, although protesters themselves repudiated this interpretation.⁹² However, nationalistic concerns were not the primary motivation of Protestant dissidents, even though their resistance did have implications for the Korean national movement against Japanese colonialism. Rather, they resisted forced Shrine worship primarily out of their religious conscience in a modern individualistic sense, prioritizing personal faith and conscience over any social or state-level cause.⁹³ In terms of motivation, arguably this resistance was different from that of the Korean Protestants of the March First Movement, who resisted Japanese colonialism because they

⁹⁰ For an explanation of Japanese Christians' response to the Shinto question, see A. Hamish Ion, *The Cross in the Dark Valley: The Canadian Protestant Missionary Movement in the Japanese Empire, 1931-1945* (Waterloo, Ont.: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1999), 81-92.

⁹¹ For example, see Namsik Kim, "Sinsachambaewa Hangukgyohoe li," *Sinhakjinam*, no. 216 (1988): 193-99.

⁹² See Yeonghwan Nahm, ed. *Ilje Sunan Seongdoui Baljachwi: Ilbon Geomsaui Giso Naeyong* (Seoul: Yeongmun, 1991), 21-8.

⁹³ For example, Gi-cheol Ju—a Presbyterian pastor famous for his martyrdom in opposition to forced Shinto worship—claimed that bowing to Shinto shrines amounted to idol worship, violating his faith and conscience. Pastor Ju was not so much a radical nationalist or revolutionary as a puritan-like non-conformist or a conscientious objector. His resistance to Shinto worship stemmed not from his devotion or loyalty to Korean nationalism but from his devotion to pure faith and conscience. For a study of his life, theology, and death, see Kyong-bae Min, *Sungyoja Jugicheol Moksa* (Seoul: Daehan Gidokgyo Seohoe, 1998)

believed that colonial rule violated the general will of Koreans and the sovereignty of Korea. This earlier movement exemplified Korean Protestant nationalism in which the Protestant movement was directly combined with Korean nationalism. However, the resistance against Shinto attendance during the final period of colonial rule stemmed not from commitment to Korean nationalism but from devotion to freedom of faith and conscience, which constituted a crucial part of modern individual freedom. In this sense, such dissenters were very modern beings who stressed the inviolability of individual conscience and faith, appealing to the religious freedom proclaimed in the Meiji Constitution to defend their position and stressing the importance of conscience as an internal autonomous guide to moral conduct.⁹⁴

The Shinto controversy was one of major sources of the ecclesiastical schism, primarily of the Presbyterian Church, in post-colonial Korea.⁹⁵ Those who accepted Shrine worship as compatible with the Christian faith were criticized as pro-Japanese collaborators in the post-colonial era, but they defended their position by saying that they had no choice but to cooperate with the regime in order to protect the church and mission schools. They held a civilization-oriented view of the Christian religion, seeing modern education as an essential part of the Protestant movement. On the other hand, dissident Christians largely held the faith-centered view of Protestantism, taking individual confession of Christian faith as a cornerstone of their religious life. Both positions exemplified the bifurcation in the 1930s of the Korean Protestant movement, and the Shinto controversy signified a shift in the nature of Korean Protestantism from a civilizational form of religion to faith-centered Protestantism.

⁹⁴ See Inseo Kim, *Kim Inseo Jeojakjeonjip* (Seoul: Sinmangaesa, 1973), 5:163. See also Sang-Gyoo Lee, "Introduction," in *Ju Gi-Cheol: Essential Writings*, ed. Korea Institute for Advanced Theological Studies (Seoul: The KIATS Press, 2008), 15.

⁹⁵ See Min, *Hanguk Gidok Gyohoesa*, 563-68; Choi, *The Korean Church under Japanese Colonialism*, 163-98.

iii) Colonial Totalitarianism, Protestant Institutional Autonomy, and the Federal Council

As it evolved in the 1930s, Japanese totalitarianism was marked by the hierarchical reformulation of Japanese society—a process in which modern spheres like politics, economy, civil society, and religion were hierarchically integrated and reformulated. This vertical reconfiguration was orchestrated by the Japanese totalitarian state, which saw the Japanese society as an organic whole. Guided by Japanese totalitarianism and modifying its totalitarian policy in the colonial way, the colonial regime in the 1930s sought to reconfigure major spheres of modern life in colonial Korea—education, religion, and economy—so that every aspect of colonial life could be fit into the totalitarian frame. Under colonial totalitarianism, social relationships were reconstructed in such a way that all colonial subjects were organically related to the Japanese emperor through forced Shinto worship, a form of totalitarian propaganda. And the colonial life was hierarchically reconfigured to prioritize public over private and collective over individual.

a) Spiritual Mobilization and Protestantism

A key feature of colonial totalitarianism was a hierarchical arrangement of the spiritual and the material. The discourse of the totalitarian regime was spiritualized, reconfiguring materiality and spirituality and stressing the primacy of the spiritual. For instance, in the wake of the economic crisis caused by the Great Depression, Japanese colonizers saw “an excessively materialistic form of civilization” as having been a main cause of the worldwide economic crisis by dividing a modern civilization into a “materialistic form of civilization” and a “spiritual” form

of civilization.⁹⁶ The colonial regime ascribed the miserable condition of Korean farmers in the 1930s to the “rush of material civilization,” claiming that people in colonial Korea economically suffered because they were “joining the ill-advised pursuit of money economy, deluded by the current ideas of capitalism, worship of all powerful cash, and the supremacy of city life.”⁹⁷ To overcome the economic crisis, colonialists called for the cooperation of religious leaders and school teachers.⁹⁸ In particular, colonialists considered the cooperation of missionaries to be necessary for the “spiritual cultivation” of Korean Christians, as Administrative Superintendent G. Imaida explained to missionaries of the Federal Council in 1935.⁹⁹

The spiritualized discourse was also emphasized in wartime mobilization, of which a crucial part was “spiritual mobilization.” Launching a nationwide campaign called Promotion of the National Spirit¹⁰⁰ in 1938 (a year after the outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War), the colonial regime saw “spiritual mobilization” as “the basis of all social education.”¹⁰¹ The objective was to educate and discipline all colonial subjects such that they could be loyal and good subjects in wartime. The mobilization was devised to clarify the idea of kokutai, promote the motto that “Japan and Korea are One Body,” arouse the “spirit of Loyalty and Patriotism,” inculcate Bushido (the Japanese traditional samurai warrior ethic), stress cooperation between

⁹⁶ Ugaki, “Governor-General’s Instruction to the Governors of the Provinces,” 196-97. See also “Address of Mr. Imaida, Vice Governor General of Chosen,” *AMFC*, 1934, 41.

⁹⁷ *Annual Report*, 1934-1935, 217.

⁹⁸ See Ugaki, “Governor-General’s Instruction to the Governors of the Provinces,” 197.

⁹⁹ “Address by Mr. Imaida, Vice Governor-General,” 20. See also Sakao Moriya, *Development of Chosen and Necessity of Spiritual Enlightenment* (Keijo: Government-General of Chosen, 1924).

¹⁰⁰ *Annual Report*, 1938-1939, 116.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

government officials and ordinary Koreans, and enhance harmony between “labor and capital.”¹⁰²

In order to effect the wartime campaign, in 1938 the totalitarian regime established the Korean League for National Spiritual Mobilization.¹⁰³ A primary objective of the organization was to mobilize all religious people including Shintoists, Buddhists, and Christians to rally “under the Rising Sun Flag and with one voice pray” for victory in the Sino-Japanese War.¹⁰⁴ Under the pressure of the colonial power, most religious groups including Protestants joined the spiritual mobilization movement. In 1939 the Presbyterian Church organized the League of the Korean Presbyterian Church for National Spiritual Mobilization,¹⁰⁵ and in 1940 the Korean Methodist Church created its own organization called the League of the Korean Methodist Church for National Spiritual Mobilization.¹⁰⁶ The totalitarian control of the colonial power deeply penetrated Christian institutions and members through this mobilization, compelling the total allegiance of colonial subjects to the Empire of Japan and its emperor. The “spiritual mobilization” campaign was a colonial strategy to transform religious groups, especially Christianity, into a Japanized form of religion.

b) The Totalitarian Reorganization of Korean Protestantism

After the outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War in 1937 and the Second World War in Europe in 1939, Japan accelerated a totalization of all political and social elements. The

¹⁰² Ibid., 116-7.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 8, 117.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 118.

¹⁰⁵ Chinirinmyeongsajeon Pyeonchanwiwonhoe, *Iljehyeopryeok Danchesajeon: Guknae Jungangpyeon* (Seoul: Minjok Munje Yeonguso, 2004), 607-14.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 618-20. Leaders of Choendokyo and Korean Confucianism also organized similar organizations. See *ibid.*, 593-606, 614-6.

culmination of this effort was the formation of the Imperial Rule Assistance Association (*Taisei Yokusankai*, in Japanese), which was established in 1940 after dissolution of all political parties. The Empire of Japan became a totalitarian single-party state like Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy. When political parties were totalized into a single party, it was inevitable that social and religious organizations would be forced to be restructured into state-controlled entities. In order to legally enforce this in the religious domain, the Religious Bodies Law¹⁰⁷ was enacted in 1940, after which the various schools of Sect Shinto, Buddhism and Christianity in Japan were forced into more streamlined organizational structure.¹⁰⁸

Similarly, the colonial totalitarian regime in Korea fundamentally changed its policy on religion, particularly Protestantism, to emphasize a direct and total control of Protestant ecclesiastical and social institutions. The totalitarian regime was suspicious of the double loyalty of Korean Protestants and considered their social and educational institutions to be an obvious threat to the colonial political order,¹⁰⁹ fearing that Protestant churches might constitute a state within a state by drawing upon their nationwide, autonomous institutions. In response, the totalitarian regime set out to reorganize the decentralized (although still connected through federal institutions such as the Federal Council and the KNCC) structure of Protestantism into a centralized and streamlined state apparatus so that the church might be transformed into a kokutai-centered religion and an organic part of the totalitarian system. As a result, many Korean Protestant institutions were dissolved or absorbed into their Japanese counterparts. For

¹⁰⁷ For a brief explanation of the enactment of the Religious Bodies Law, see Murakami, *Japanese Religion in the Modern Century*, 101-2.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 102.

¹⁰⁹ For the colonial evaluation of Protestantism in terms of public security in the late 1930s, see Joseonchongdokbu Gyeongmuguk, *Iljesikmintongchibisa: Iljeha Joseonui Chian Sanghwang*, trans. Pong-U Kim (Seoul: Cheongachulpansa, 1989), 309-38.

example, the KNCC was dissolved in 1938.¹¹⁰ YMCA Korea was amalgamated with the same organization in Japan in 1938, becoming a member of the National YMCA Committee of Japan.¹¹¹ Korean churches were increasingly subordinated to Japanese churches in the name of church “union.”¹¹² Many churches and mission schools were shut down, and some denominations were disbanded.¹¹³ Finally, the totalitarian regime exerted tremendous pressure on denomination-based Korean Protestantism to be merged into a single unified organization, efforts that eventually culminated in the formation of the Chosen Church of Japanese Christianity (*Ilbon Gidokgyo Joseon Gyodan*, in Korean), which was established immediately before the end of the Pacific War.¹¹⁴

The formation of a unified Protestant church in colonial Korea was engineered by the colonial power, which took the Church of Christ in Japan (*Nihon Kirisuto Kyodan*, in Japanese) in Japan as a model. A united Protestant church in Japan, the Church of Christ in Japan, was established in 1941 under pressure from the Japanese government incorporating most major denominations.¹¹⁵ The church had an imperialistic dimension in that it had twelve regional

¹¹⁰ “The Protestant Church in Chosen,” *KMF*, September 1939, 199.

¹¹¹ E. W. Koons, “The Christian Movement in Chosen,” *JCYB*, 1941, 109.

¹¹² For example, the Federal Union of the Japanese and Korean Churches in Seoul was formed in 1938, and Japanese leadership dominated in the union. See S. Niwa, “The Federated Union of Japanese and Korean Churches in the Peninsula,” *KMF*, August 1940, 130-132, quote from 131. See also “The Protestant Church in Chosen,” *KMF*, September 1939, 199.

¹¹³ Under totalitarian rule, the Holiness Church and the Seventh Day Adventists (both unaffiliated with the Federal Council) were disbanded. See Richard Terrill Baker, *Darkness of the Sun: The Story of Christianity in the Japanese Empire* (Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1947), 187; Seoulsinhakdaehak Seonggyeolgyohoeeyeoksayeonguso, *Hanguk Seonggyeol Gyohoe 100nyeonsa* (Seoul: Gidokgyo Daehan Seonggyeolgyohoe Chonghoe Chulpanbu, 2007), 383.

¹¹⁴ For a study of the formation of the Chosen Church of Japanese Christianity, see Seo, *Hanil Gidokgyo Gwangyesa Yeongu*, 309-39. See also Chinirinyeongsajeon Pyeonchan Wiwonhoe ed, *Iljehyeopryeok Danchesajeon: Guknaejungangpyeon*, 659-60.

¹¹⁵ For a brief explanation of the church union in Japan, see A. Hamish Ion, “The Cross under an Imperial Sun: Imperialism, Nationalism, and Japanese Christianity, 1895–1945,” in *Handbook of Christianity in Japan*, ed. Mark Mullins (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 88-92. The Japanese union church was a prominent product of the Religious Bodies Law. However, the legal effect of the Religious Bodies Law did not cover colonial Korea. In colonial Korea,

conferences in the Empire of Japan, one of which was colonial Korea.¹¹⁶ While Japanese totalitarianism was a primary driving factor, the formation of a national church of Japan could be viewed, to some extent, as “a Japanized expression of Christianity”¹¹⁷ in so far as many Japanese Christians wanted the union. However, for Koreans the establishment of the Chosen Church of Japanese Christianity, a unified Korean church, was entirely a product of colonial oppression. The merger was made not through the voluntary will of members of the church but by the imperial will of the colonial power.

Under colonial totalitarianism, Korean churches were vertically reorganized and centralized to effect total integration and control. This streamlined organizational structure was necessary for convenient bureaucratic control by the totalitarian regime. However, the totalitarian restructuring was made not just for administrative convenience but also to Japanize Korean Protestantism. The reorganization of the Korean Protestant church made the previously autonomous church dependent on the Japanese church in terms of church leadership and its ecclesiastical decisions, which naturally led to the Japanization of Korean churches that were once predominantly Korean institutions. Put simply, with the rise of colonial totalitarianism, colonial Korea became subservient to Japan not just politically and economically but also religiously, as colonial totalitarianism took full control of Korean religious life.

totalitarian control of religious groups (and especially Protestant ones) was underway even before the enactment of the Religious Bodies Law in Japan. When the law was enacted in Japan, the colonial power applied the purpose of the law to colonial Korea through a broad interpretation of the Regulations for Religious Propagation. See Yurim An, “Iljeha Gidokgyo Tongjebeopryeonggwa Joseongidokgyo” (PhD Diss., Ewha Womans University, 2013), 162-65, 271.

¹¹⁶ Ion, “The Cross under an Imperial Sun,” 92.

¹¹⁷ Mark Mullins, *Christianity Made in Japan: A Study of Indigenous Movements* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1998), 21. After the end of the Pacific War, the unionized Japanese church was not disbanded and continues to exist today, while the Korean union church was disbanded immediately after the war.

c) Devolution, the Federal Council, and Protestant Institutional Autonomy

A series of unfavorable domestic and international environments in the late 1930s and early 1940s—such as the Shinto controversy, Korean churches' reorganization as engineered by colonial totalitarianism, the outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War, and finally the outbreak of the Pacific War—combined to force the missionaries of the Federal Council into a defensive posture and eventually led to the end of their mission journey. Under the stringent political circumstances, the activities of the Federal Council shrank significantly. In an annual meeting held two months after the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War in 1937, leaders of the Federal Council made a request for the attention of member missionaries:

1. No secret—meaning unannounced—sessions of the [Federal] Council or of any committees shall be held.
2. No meetings shall be held at any other places than those specified in the printed program.
3. The present international situation shall not be discussed.
4. The 'Shrine question' shall not be discussed, nor any action against participating in Shrine Ceremonies taken.
5. All actions of the [Federal] Council shall be reported to the police.
6. Two copies of each committee report shall be handed to the West Gate police one day in advance of presentation, if possible.¹¹⁸

The meeting in 1937 turned out to be the final annual meeting of the Federal Council, although some committees remained in operation at least until 1939¹¹⁹ and the *KMF*, the monthly organ of the Federal Council, continued to be published until November 1941, one month before the Pearl Harbor attack. Under the increasing hostility of the totalitarian regime toward Protestant

¹¹⁸ *AMFC*, 1937, 18.

¹¹⁹ See "Federal Council's Social Service Report," *KMF*, March 1939, 59; "Among the Contributors," *KMF*, October 1939, 222; "Reform the Line and Advance," *KMF*, January 1940, 1.

missions, Western missionaries had no choice but to withdraw from the Korea mission field, with most forced to leave colonial Korea immediately before and after the outbreak of the Pacific War. Because few Protestant missionaries remained in colonial Korea after 1942, Protestant missionaries called the final four years of colonial rule from 1942 to 1945—a period of suffering for all Koreans including Korean Christians— “the Silent Years of the War Itself.”¹²⁰

The mass withdrawal of missionaries was connected to the devolution process between missionaries and Koreans. Devolution in the modern mission enterprise refers to the transfer of power and authority from mission to church. Devolution was a necessary product of a modern Protestant mission method in which mission and church were distinguished, and missionaries lived a dual life in both their home countries and a mission field.¹²¹ The transfer process was deeply connected with missionary paternalism, because devolution presupposed that the relationship between mission and church was, as William P. Woodard, a contemporary missionary to Japan, noted, basically “paternal” but not “fraternal.”¹²² The process of devolution began only when “the proud parent could see the infant church walk—however falteringly.”¹²³

The process of devolution was a longstanding point of dispute between missionaries and Koreans, as the issue of devolution involved ecclesiastical leadership, institutional control of Protestant institutions, and financial power. When Korean leadership in local churches came to

¹²⁰ Rhodes and Campbell, *History of the Korea Mission, Volume II*, 1.

¹²¹ As Roland Allen, a missionary working in the first half of the twentieth century, noted, “In the New Testament there is no devolution in that sense, because no New Testament Apostle or evangelist was ever in charge, as these [modern] missionaries were in charge.” He concluded that the modern mission method on devolution was “far” from Apostolic principles. Roland Allen, “The ‘Nevius Method’ in Korea,” in *The “Nevius Method” in Korea*, ed. Thomas Cochrane (London: World Dominion Press, 1930), 15.

¹²² William P. Woodard, “The Foreign Missionary in Japan: A Study in Mission, Missionary and Church Relationship,” *JCYB*, 1940, 103.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 70.

the fore in the 1910s, a minority of missionaries of the Federal Council began to talk about devolution, but the proposal was voted down several times up to late 1930s because a majority of missionaries wanted to continue to wield ecclesiastical authority over all church affairs.¹²⁴ However, as Korean churches in the 1920s and 1930s increasingly grew in both leadership and membership, the official ecclesiastical powers that missionaries exercised decreased proportionately. When Koreans continually called for a transfer of power, Herbert E. Blair—chairman of the Federal Council in 1937—defended the position of Protestant missionaries by saying that the “missionary has been more of an honorary official adviser, and not a dictator.”¹²⁵ However, although the missionaries were not a “dictator,” neither were they an “honorary official adviser.” Sponsored by the financial power of their mission boards and the diplomatic power of their home nations, and solidifying institutionalized leadership in mission institutions like the Federal Council, Protestant missionaries retained a high degree of control over Protestant ecclesiastical and social institutions until the mid-1930s.

By the mid-1920s Korean leadership dominated local churches but Korean ecclesiastical leadership at the national level was very weak. The KNCC was formed with the help of missionaries, but was not strong enough to take initiative in ecclesiastical matters. Instead, the Federal Council played a leading role until the mid-1930s, while as its pupil organization the KNCC took a supporting role.¹²⁶ This relationship was well summarized by Charles Allen Clark—a member missionary of the Federal Council—who noted in 1937 that the powers of the KNCC “as yet...are limited, but [the KNCC] looks forward to becoming the central body of the Christian

¹²⁴ See Clark, *The Nevius Plan for Mission Work, Illustrated in Korea*, 196-97.

¹²⁵ Blair, “Fifty Years of Development of the Korean Church,” 128.

¹²⁶ See *AMFC*, 1922, 29-30.

movement in Korea, and perhaps in time will assume all of the powers and duties of the Federal Council.”¹²⁷

In a debate titled “The Future of the Federal Council” held at the 1936 annual meeting, M. B. Stokes—former vice chairman of the Federal Council—argued that Protestant missionaries of the Federal Council “are facing three possibilities about the role of the Federal Council: First, the Federal Council may be dissolved, and given its honorable discharge as a body that has served well in its day, but is now no longer needed. Second, it may be continued as it is. And third, it may be continued and carried on with perhaps a somewhat different organization and new objectives.” He claimed that the first option was “unthinkable” because the Korean church and the KNCC were not strong enough, and the second was “impracticable”¹²⁸; he then opted for the third. His view summarized a majority opinion of missionaries of the Federal Council working in the mid-1930s, who believed that the Federal Council should still play a leading role in the mission field. Missionaries would never lose the initiative in the Christian enterprise, deferring devolution as long as possible. However, the rise of colonial totalitarianism soon made missionary efforts obsolete.

The transfer of power from mission to church in the late 1930s was not the kind of devolution that missionaries were expecting, a peaceful process through mutual, voluntary agreement between Koreans and missionaries. Rather, it was enforced by the colonial totalitarian regime. Japanese colonizers forced Korean Protestantism to reorganize itself in accord with the kokutai colonial order. This colonial goal was realized by the reorganization

¹²⁷ Clark, *The Nevius Plan for Mission Work, Illustrated in Korea*, 217-8. See also Charles A. Sauer, “The Federal Council of Missions,” *KMYB*, 1932, 100.

¹²⁸ See M. B. Stokes, “The Future of the Federal Council,” *AMFC*, 1936, 21-2, quote from 21. See also Herbert E. Blair, “The Future of the Federal Council,” *AMFC*, 1936, 23-4.

plans adopted and follow-up measures carried out in 1940 by two major Protestant denominations—the Korean Presbyterian Church and the Korean Methodist Church.¹²⁹ In order to comply the demands of the totalitarian regime, Korean Presbyterian and Methodist church leaders announced “radical reforms in the constitution, rituals, evangelization, and all other structures.”¹³⁰ “Reform” of the churches, they claimed, was made so as to harmonize the “spirit of loyalty and patriotism” and “Christ’s principle of self-sacrifice.”¹³¹ Korean Protestant leaders in the “reform” plans also noted that a “close relation” with Japanese Protestant churches was an essential element in the formation of “a purely Japanese Christianity,” and that a major obstacle to the Japanization of Korean Protestantism was a missionary leadership widely influencing Korean Protestantism.¹³² In order to excise missionary influences in Korean Protestantism, these churches resolved to sever ties with missionaries, calling the relationships between Korean Protestants and Western missionaries a form of “past misguided reliance.”¹³³ Proposing “financial independence”¹³⁴ as a necessary step for eliminating this reliance, Korean churches set out to refuse missionary financial support and create a “self-supporting institution.”¹³⁵

¹²⁹ “Appendix A: Reform Plan for the Korean Methodist Church, October 2, 1940,” *Methodists in Korea, 1930-1960*, ed. Charles A. Sauer (Seoul: Christian Literature Society, 1973), 247-9; “Appendix B: Declaration by The Standing Committee of the Chosen Presbyterian Church, November 10, 1940,” *Methodists in Korea, 1930-1960*, ed. Charles A. Sauer (Seoul: Christian Literature Society, 1973), 250-3. See also Koons, “The Christian Movement in Chosen,” 96-7.

¹³⁰ “Appendix B: Declaration by The Standing Committee of the Chosen Presbyterian Church, November 10, 1940,” 251. See also “Appendix A: Reform Plan for the Korean Methodist Church, October 2, 1940,” 247.

¹³¹ “Appendix A: Reform Plan for the Korean Methodist Church, October 2, 1940,” 247.

¹³² “Appendix B: Declaration by The Standing Committee of the Chosen Presbyterian Church, November 10, 1940,” 251, 253. See also “Appendix A: Reform Plan for the Korean Methodist Church, October 2, 1940,” 249.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 250.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 253. See also “Appendix A: Reform Plan for the Korean Methodist Church, October 2, 1940,” 249.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 251.

The wartime totalitarian system fundamentally changed the power relationship between missionaries and Korean Christians. Under colonial totalitarianism, Western missionaries were removed from their positions in Protestant institutions¹³⁶—Korean leadership replaced missionary leadership, assuming control of Christian schools, medical facilities, and ecclesiastical institutions. For instance, Koreans for the first time took leadership in higher educational institutions, which were union institutions affiliated to the Federal Council and run by missionaries. Helen K. Kim, a prominent female leader of the Korean Methodist Church, became president of Ewha College for Women after Alice R. Appenzeller resigned in 1939.¹³⁷ T. H. Yun, a leading figure in the Korean Methodist Church, became president of the Chosen Christian College after Horace H. Underwood (son of the schools' founder) resigned in 1941.¹³⁸ Korean medical doctors also took over many mission hospitals¹³⁹ and the Korean Bible Society was established in 1941 to take leadership from the British and Foreign Bible Society, a constituent mission body of the Federal Council.¹⁴⁰

This transfer of Protestant leadership to Koreans was reinforced by racial antagonism that emerged in the 1930s. The 1920s saw the rise of anti-missionary sentiment among Koreans, caused partly by the patronizing attitude of Western missionaries—many of whom believed in white supremacy¹⁴¹—and partly by the emergence of the anti-Christian movement

¹³⁶ See "Appendix A: Reform Plan for the Korean Methodist Church, October 2, 1940," 249.

¹³⁷ Marion L. Conrow, "A New President for Ewha College for Women: A Resolution," *KMF*, June 1939, 118.

¹³⁸ H. H. Underwood, "Changes at the Chosen Christian College," *KMF*, June 1941, 88.

¹³⁹ For example, see P. K. Koh, "Korean Doctor Takes over Mission Hospital," *KMF*, May 1941, 80.

¹⁴⁰ Thomas Hobbs, "British & Foreign Bible Society," *KMF*, March 1941, 44-5. For an explanation of the establishment of the Korean Bible Society, see Dae Young Ryu, Manyeol Lee, and Sung-Deuk Oak, *Daehanseongseogonghoesa* Seoul: Daehan Seongseo Gonghoe, 1993), 1:421-40.

¹⁴¹ See Sang Chai Yi, "What I Would Do If I Were A Young Missionary," *KMF*, December 1923, 258.

led by Korean communism.¹⁴² Nevertheless, the anti-missionary sentiment was not a dominant trend among Korean Protestants in the 1920s. However, the rise of kokutai-centered colonial totalitarianism played a significant role in feeding anti-Western sentiment. A typical propagandistic motto under totalitarianism was “One Root and One Forefather,” which meant that Japanese and Koreans had deep “blood” relations.¹⁴³ Although the two nations were distinguished by their own ethnic, linguistic, and cultural uniqueness, Japanese colonialists stressed the biological similarity between Japanese and Koreans, and the totalitarian propaganda was used to incite racial antagonism between the white and yellow races. Stressing the racial and cultural differences between East Asia and the Anglo-American West, the totalitarian regime employed the racial paradigm to pit Korean Christians against Western missionaries, and at the same time exploited race-based colonial essentialism to promote the bond between Koreans and Japanese as a common race. When the totalitarian racial discourse was linked to the transfer of power in the church that Korean Christians had long desired, the racial paradigm against Anglo-American missionaries was very effective. Korean Christians called for the expulsion of Western missionaries from the Korean church, calling the missionaries “foreigners,”¹⁴⁴ an element alien to Japanized Korean Protestantism. This racial framing was effectively utilized to expel missionaries from the Korean peninsula and to Japanize Korean Christianity.

Contrary to missionary wishful thinking, in colonial Korea devolution was far from a smooth, friendly, or orderly transfer of power. On the eve of Japan’s entry into the Pacific War

¹⁴² See Myeongsuk Kang, “1920nyeondae Minjokhyeopdongjeonseongwa Bangidokgyoundong—’Heosimosageon’eul Jungsimeuro,” *Hangukgeunhyeondaesayeongu* (2015): 113-46; Bomin Choi, “1920nyeondae Jungban Bangidokgyoundong Yeongu,” *Inmungwahak* 53 (2014): 57.

¹⁴³ *Annual Report*, 1938-1939, 116.

¹⁴⁴ “Appendix A: Reform Plan for the Korean Methodist Church, October 2, 1940,” 249.

in 1941, the totalitarian colonial regime drove missionaries out of colonial Korea and many Korean Protestants turned their back on them. As a result, the missionary withdrawal in the final stage of devolution was marked by a sense of disappointment, regret, and betrayal.¹⁴⁵

Paradoxically colonial totalitarianism did provide an opportunity that allowed Korean Christians to take over the leadership and administration of Christian institutions such as schools and medical facilities, and to take control of church properties previously belonging to mission bodies. This was often interpreted by Korean scholars as “the strengthening of Korean national elements”¹⁴⁶ in Protestant institutions. However, as soon as Koreans took over the missionary leadership in Protestant institutions, the Korean leadership was easily and swiftly hijacked by the colonial power and Japanese Christians.¹⁴⁷ The leadership of the Protestant church initially appeared to be Koreanized, but shortly after it rapidly was Japanized. When the relations with Anglo-American missionaries were severed, the Korean Protestant church became subservient to Japanese churches as well as the colonial power. Any relationship between the Korean church and other foreign Christian organizations was mediated through Japanese Christian institutions. Korean churches were no longer, as a missionary observed, “officially represented as separate units in any international gathering.”¹⁴⁸ Devolution and the transfer of leadership deprived Korean Christians of missionary protection backed by Anglo-

¹⁴⁵ See E. W. Koons, “The Mariposa Comes to Jinsen,” *KMF*, December 1940, 200; E. W. Koons, “A Survey of Withdrawal,” *KMF*, March 1941, 49-51; Koons, “The Christian Movement in Chosen,” 89 -95.

¹⁴⁶ For example, see Ryu, Lee, and Oak, *Daehanseongseogonghosa*, 1: 422

¹⁴⁷ A similar result occurred in the Korean Catholic church. Korean priests replaced the French leadership, but the church’s hierarchical and centralized leadership was more easily controlled by the colonial power as heads of the church were replaced by Japanese. See Chang-mun Kim and Jae-sun Chung, eds. *Catholic Korea, Yesterday and Today* (Seoul: Catholic Korea Pub. Co., 1964), 324, 693; Seonja Yun, *Iljeui Jonggyojeongchaekgwa Cheonjugyohoe* (Seoulteukbyeolsi: Gyeonginmunhwasa, 2002), 300-14.

¹⁴⁸ “Reform the Line and Advance,” *KMF*, January 1940, 1. See also Koons, “The Christian Movement in Chosen,” 96-7.

American hegemony, and the withdrawal of missionaries led to growing intervention and control by colonial authorities and Japanese Christian leaders. This was a tragic development for Korean churches in colonial Korea.

This tragedy was a necessary product of the tripartite frame, a frame unique to colonial Korea. This tripartite frame was both beneficial and harmful to Korean churches. The Korean church attained a high degree of autonomy from the colonial power because it was dependent upon missionary leadership, which provided protection for the church. Missionary patronage and the presence of Anglo-American hegemonic power were major contributing factors to the active social role of Korean Protestants under the colonial rule. However, Korean Protestants' aspiration for independence from Japanese power and control deepened their dependence on Anglo-American churches and missionaries. When the Korean church grew strong, it found itself forced to choose between keeping Korean Protestant institutions free from the control and intervention of the colonial power and establishing an autonomous, independent church without the intervention of missionary leadership. This choice was cut short by the rise of colonial totalitarianism, which expelled missionaries from the Korean peninsula and forced a transfer of power from missionaries. However, this power transfer eventually made Korean Protestantism entirely subservient to Japanese colonizers.

iv) Organizational Modernity, Protestantism, and Colonial Totalitarianism

Organizational modernity is a defining feature of modernity because the mode of organization is central to formation of the modern. Protestant missionary institutions such as the Federal Council embodied Western organizational modernity, representing the characteristics of modern Western modes of organization—such as voluntary association,

federalism as an organizing principle, and an emphasis on institutional autonomy. Ecclesiastical, social and educational institutions of Korean Protestantism were established and shaped in the direction of the modern Western mode of organization, and these modern institutions significantly contributed to the formation of Korean modernity in the colonial period, constituting a major part of an ecosystem of non-governmental modern institutions.

The mode of organization of Protestant institutions necessarily came into conflict with the organizing principles of Japanese colonialists, who advanced a hierarchical and authoritarian view of society and state. Upon the annexation of Korea, colonialists attempted to take full control of the Protestant church, but it was impossible primarily because of the influence of Anglo-American hegemony, which provided protection for missionaries and their pupil Korean Christians. Moreover, the modern frame within which Japanese colonizers sought to modernize and civilize colonial Korea left room for religious freedom, from which Protestantism benefited the most. The modern frame and Anglo-American hegemony combined to help Korean Protestantism to establish relatively autonomous ecclesiastical and social institutions. When it was impossible to ban the spread of Protestantism or to put the church under full control of the colonial regime, Japanese colonizers in the first two decades of colonial rule instead sought to contain or cripple the Protestant church through means such as strict qualifications and bureaucratic intervention. Nevertheless, Korean Protestant institutions retained a relatively high degree of institutional autonomy as Korean membership and leadership grew stronger, and this helped Protestant institutions to function as rallying points for national or social movements by and for Koreans themselves.

However, colonial totalitarianism in the 1930s shifted the colonial policy on religion. One of the key features of totalitarian policy was the hierarchical reorganization of all social and religious groups through top-down coordination, which led to the creation of an authoritarian and centralized organizational pyramid. The totalitarian regime had a deep distrust of intermediary organizations with institutional autonomy—such as civil associations or religious groups—which were situated between colonial subjects as individuals and the colonial state, seeing the autonomous organizations as enclave institutions, which was entirely incompatible with the unlimited expansion of colonial totalitarianism.

As part of the totalitarian efforts to establish totalitarian organization, Korean Protestant churches were restructured, and eventually forced to be absorbed into a union church. It is a bitter irony that the organic union of all Protestant denominations was fulfilled by Japanese colonizers, because the formation of one national church was an aspiration long held by Korean Protestants themselves. The resulting union was state constructed and controlled, much like the German Evangelical Church (*Deutsche Evangelische Kirche*)—also known as the Reich Church—which was formed in 1933 under Nazi rule. This form of church union was established upon a totalitarian principle that the state, as the Barmen Declaration noted, “become the sole and total order of human life” and the church “assumes functions and dignities of the State, thus itself becoming an organ of the State.”¹⁴⁹ Under colonial totalitarianism the Korean Protestant church became an apparatus of the colonial regime so as to solely serve the total interest that the totalitarian regime defined.

¹⁴⁹ Arthur Frey, *Cross and Swastika*, trans. J. Strathearn McNab, (London: Student Christian Movement, 1938), 156.

In the colonial era, two modes of organization were instrumental in forming organizational modernity in Korea: the colonial mode of organization and the Anglo-American mode of organization. The colonial mode emphasized the vertical integration of social groups, and its culmination was totalitarian organization under colonial totalitarianism, which reoriented all social structures in a totalitarian manner. This mode was an important element of colonial modernity. On the other hand, the Anglo-American mode of organization was embodied by Western missionaries and Korean Protestants as a significant element of Christian modernity. Both modes of organization became an integral part of the formation of Korean modernity in the colonial era, and had a long-lasting impact on the organizational formation of post-colonial Korean society.

Concluding Remarks

The end of the Pacific War brought both hope and anxiety to the Korean peninsula. As soon as Korea was liberated from Japanese colonialism, South Korea was occupied by the United States and North Korea by the Soviet Union. In the post-colonial era, South Korea experienced a series of turbulent political events including the division of the peninsula (1945), the Korean War (1950-3), and military dictatorship (1961-1987). However, the modern nation has now become one of the most modernized, industrialized, and globalized nations in the world, achieving rapid economic growth and building a solid democratic system.

South Korea today is a religiously dynamic society. According to statistics compiled by the colonial government, the Korean religious population in colonial Korea accounted for only 2 to 5% of the total population, although (as discussed in Chapter II) these statistics excluded what the colonial regime defined as “quasi-religious groups.” However, in the post-colonial era, Korean religions experienced the rapid expansion of their membership. Along with the deepening and widening modernization of Korean society, the religions of South Korea—especially Buddhism and Christianity—significantly institutionalized and stabilized. According to a report by Gallup Korea, the religious population in South Korea was 44% of all Koreans in 1984, 47% in 1997, and 50% in 2014.¹ Koreans who identify as religious now steadily constitute half of the population of South Korea.

¹ See Hangukgaeleopjosayeonguso, *Hanguginui Jonggyo: 1984nyeon, 1989nyeon, 1997nyeon, 2004nyeon, 2014nyeonje 5cha Bigyojosa Bogoseo* (Seoul: Hangukgaeleop Josayeonguso, 2015), 17, 192. The statistical figures from Gallup Korea are analyzed for respondents age 19 and over. However, these statistics are problematic because they do not properly reflect the Korean religious landscape. A significant number of respondents to the Gallup poll who believe and practice Confucianism, Shamanism, or new religious movements influenced by folk beliefs do not think that they belong to what many call “religion.” Thus, we can surmise that the real “religious” people of South Korea account for more than the statistics given by Gallup Korea.

In the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, the growth of Korean Christianity has been remarkable. In 1915, Korean Christians constituted only 1.7% of the total population on the Korean peninsula.² However, one century later, Korean Christians make up 28% of the total population of South Korea—according to the 2014 report by Gallup Korea, 21% of the total Korean population professed to be Protestant and 7% Catholic (and the same report says that Buddhists constitute 22%).³ Not only numerically successful, the new religion has also exerted tremendous influence at all levels of Korean society, including politics.

The commanding position of Korean Protestantism began with the onset of American rule in South Korea. Immediately after the end of the Pacific War, American military forces occupied South Korea and established the American military government, which ruled South Korea from September 1945 to August 1948.⁴ Under American rule, many Protestants achieved high rank in the military government. In 1946, of 50 Koreans who were in high official positions in the American military government, 35 were Christians, many of whom were Protestant.⁵ American missionaries helped Korean Christians to work for the military government, serving as a bridge between the two parties, as some of them worked as “advisers” to the government.⁶

Backed and guided by the American military government, the Republic of Korea was established in South Korea in August 15, 1948. Protestants played a disproportionate role not

² See *GSRS*, 1926, 55. This figure is calculated by the author based on the total population and the population of Koreans who identify as religious.

³ See Hangukgaelleopjosayeonguso, *Hanguginui Jonggyo*, 19, 193.

⁴ The military government is officially called the United States Army Military Government in Korea. For a study of the history of the United States Army Military Government in Korea, see USAMGIK. *Juhanmigunsa: Husafik, History of the United States Armed Forces in Korea*. 4 vols. (Seoul: Dolbegae, 1988).

⁵ See Harry A. Rhodes and Arch Campbell, *History of the Korea Mission, Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.: Volume II, 1935-1959* (New York: Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations, United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., 1964), 381; Incheol Kang, *Hanguk Gidokgyohoewa Gukga • Siminsahoe, 1945-1960* (Seoul: Hangukgidokgyo Yeoksayeonguso, 1996), 175-76. See also Richard Terrill Baker, *Darkness of the Sun: The Story of Christianity in the Japanese Empire* (Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1947), 195.

⁶ Rhodes and Campbell, *History of the Korea Mission, Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.*, 379.

only in the American military government but also in the creation and organization of the new republic,⁷ although they accounted for only about 2% of the total population of South Korea at the time of liberation from Japan.⁸ The first president of South Korea was Syngman Rhee, an American-educated Methodist. In total, 38 out of 190 lawmakers of the first National Assembly of South Korea identified as Christians, of whom 13 were ordained Protestant ministers.⁹ The first years of the Republic of Korea thus partially realized the “Christian Korea” that prominent missionary leader Horace G. Underwood had dreamt of half a century before.¹⁰ When he talked to American missionaries, President Rhee said, “We base all our hopes for democratic development in [South] Korea on the Christian movement. Where else can we turn for help? It is our only hope.”¹¹ A Presbyterian missionary praised the Christian influence in South Korea, saying that “by few governments has the Christian movement been recognized as it has been in South Korea.”¹²

The leading role of Korean Protestants in both the American military government and the establishment of South Korea is explained partially by the fact that in the years following liberation, Korean Protestants constituted a significant number of educated elites and social leaders at the national level. In addition, the staunch anti-communism of Korean Christians, a longstanding phenomenon since the 1920s, helped them to become political leaders of the

⁷ For an overview of this, see Kang, *Hanguk Gidokgyohoe Gukga • Siminsahoe, 1945-1960*, 175-85.

⁸ Baker, *Darkness of the Sun*, 195. Due to political turbulence from events such as the liberation, division, and Korean War, exact statistics on Protestantism are not available. According to the last statistics available for reference, which was compiled by the colonial government, in 1940 Korean Protestantism accounted for 1.7% of the total population of colonial Korea. *GSRS*, 1940, 80-3.

⁹ Rhodes and Campbell, *History of the Korea Mission, Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.*, 381.

¹⁰ H. G. Underwood, “Twenty Year's Missionary Work in Korea,” *The Missionary Review of the World* 28, no. 5 (1905): 375

¹¹ Rhodes and Campbell, *History of the Korea Mission, Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.*, 386.

¹² *Ibid.*, 388.

anti-communist southern government at a time when the post-war international geopolitical landscape was reconstituted as the cold war paradigm and the northern government of the Korean peninsula was established as a communist regime that American power saw as an ideological and military threat.¹³

However, the most important reason is that Korean Protestants were modern Koreans baptized and nurtured by the Protestant form of Christian modernity, which was represented and embodied by Anglo-American missionaries (of whom a majority were American). In the first half of the twentieth century, being Christian was a distinctive marker of the modern and at the same time identified a maker of the modern. Korean Protestants experienced an epistemological leap when they became Christian and engaged new modern learning in Christian schools. Under the guidance of Christian modernity, Korean Protestants grew up and constituted a significant part of modernized Koreans. This transformative experience driven by Christian modernity allowed the modern-oriented citizens to play a leading role in building a modern nation state in South Korea.

In colonial Korea, Christian modernity largely reflected American modernity, along with significant Canadian and Australian impact, as Protestant ecclesiastical and social institutions acted as the grand channel through which American values and ideals were conveyed to Koreans. American missionaries epitomized and embodied American modernity as a Christian form. As an American missionary affiliated to the Federal Council said, "To the Korean [an

¹³ On the northern part of the Korean peninsula, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea was established in September 1948. While anti-communism is the overarching ideology in South Korea, that of North Korea is anti-Americanism. Korean communists believed that the end of World War II merely exchanged Japanese rule for the even more aggressive United States. For a study of the establishment of North Korea, see Charles K. Armstrong, *The North Korean Revolution, 1945-1950* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2003).

American missionary] represents the West [and] he represents America.”¹⁴ This missionary role as a living embodiment of American values and norms during colonial rule paved the way for the leading role of Korean Protestantism in the post-colonial era. In the years immediately following liberation from Japanese rule, American influences were maximized because the American military occupied the southern area of the Korean peninsula, because the newly established republic was militarily and ideologically supported as an anti-communist front by the United States, and because American troops were a decisive factor in the Korean War.¹⁵ Given the enormous American ideological and political influence in South Korea, it was natural and necessary that Korean Protestants—pupils of both Christian and American modernity—played a pivotal role in the South Korean society.

Although liberalism in the modern West has often been in deep tension with the Christian tradition, Christian modernity in colonial Korea significantly contributed to the formation of the Korean form of liberalism. The modern normative system considerably embraced and embodied features of Western liberal tradition, highlighting the importance of the self-help capitalist ethic, civic and religious freedom, and the institutional autonomy of voluntary civil associations. In colonial Korea, Anglo-American missionaries were, by the standard of the contemporary Western political spectrum, not entirely free-thinkers or classical liberals, but they served as a conduit to introduce Western liberal ideals and values because their teachings were largely civilization-oriented and the missionaries were modernizers in the mission field.

¹⁴ James Earnest Fisher, *Democracy and Mission Education in Korea* (New York City: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1928), 61.

¹⁵ For an overview of the American influence in South Korea, see Bruce Cumings, *Korea's Place in the Sun: A Modern History*. Updated ed. (New York: W. W. Norton, 2005), 185-236.

Anti-communism is a salient feature of the Korean form of liberalism. While Western liberalism has evolved through fighting tyrannical governments or rulers—such as in the Glorious Revolution of England, the American Revolution, and the French Revolution—and through promoting Enlightenment ideals like the primacy of individual freedom and the autonomous self, South Korean liberalism has been shaped and consolidated primarily through fighting the tyranny of communism, especially the northern communist regime. The ideological and geographical division of the Korean peninsula is a fundamental political condition that presents anti-communism as a top national goal of South Korea, which pursues liberalism as its political ideology. Anti-communism as a dominant ruling ideology has made the “liberal state” of South Korea paternalistic and authoritarian in that the South Korean regime must have all-powerful authority to provide protection from communism for its own people. Thus, South Korea understands liberalism primarily in terms of a state paradigm in which individual freedom is subservient to the interests of the state. The authoritarian governments that ruled South Korea from 1948 to 1987, including military dictatorships, used anti-communism to justify the suppression of not only any left-leaning groups and individuals but also anti-government progressive citizens including social liberals, under the guise of national security.

Korean Protestantism is a cornerstone of anti-communist Korean liberalism, sharing much of its agenda with Korean liberalism. This history dates back to the colonial era, in which Korean Protestantism served as a moral and social bulwark preventing the spread of communism in Korean society. In the post-colonial period, the antagonism of Korean Protestants towards communism during the colonial period helped them to become an

important political force in South Korea. Anti-communism brought Protestantism and Korean liberalism closer together as both saw North Korean communism as an ideological archenemy.

The hostility between Christianity and Korean communism is not just ideological but also epistemological. This antagonism resulted primarily from diametrically opposing understandings of modernity. In colonial Korea, the Marxist form of modernity, another pioneer of modernity, emerged as an alternative way of seeing the modern world, providing a fierce critique of the Christian form of modernity as well as colonial modernity. The materialistic form of modernity envisioned a different, but very modern, political system and economic structure. In the post-colonial era, the communist form of modernity constituted a founding principle of the establishment of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, although the North Korean normative system today is characterized more by the *Juche Idea* (*Juche Sasang*, in Korean), a state ideology that combines socialism, Confucian familism, and Korean nationalism.¹⁶ On the other hand, Christian modernity significantly contributed to the formation of social and political ideologies in South Korea, nurturing the Korean form of liberalism and promoting anti-communism.

In the post-colonial era, anti-communism provided an opportunity for those who were condemned as pro-Japanese collaborators because they fully supported the colonial regime as a legitimate ruler. Most of them highly valued colonial modernity in the colonial era, believing that the colonial government significantly contributed to the modernization of Korea. With the rising hostility between communists and anti-communists on the Korean peninsula, they

¹⁶ For an overview of the *Juche Idea*, see Armstrong, Charles K. "Familism, Socialism and Political Religion in North Korea." *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 6, no. 3 (2005): 383-94; Cumings, *Korea's Place in the Sun*, 412-24.

transformed as a spearhead of anti-communism in South Korea and many became leading figures in the South Korean government. When an anti-communist government was established in South Korea, colonial modernity, besides Christian modernity, became a major part of South Korean socio-political ideology. In South Korea, colonial modernity provided authoritarian governments, including military governments, with a template for authoritarian governance through brutal police power, state-led economic development, and a centralized hierarchical organization of social institutions through top-down coordination.

Like opposition to communism in the colonial era—which provided a powerful link between Japanese colonialists, Korean Christians, and Anglo-American missionaries—anti-communism in the post-colonial period bound together Korean pupils of Christian modernity and those who were nurtured by colonial modernity, as both were diplomatically and financially supported by the American government. This anti-communist alliance was facilitated by shared modern values of society and economy, such as firm beliefs in capitalistic economic development and an emphasis on private property.

Modernity is an epistemological category for formulating a new and coherent way of seeing and understanding self, society, state, and world. Modernity as an epistemological category has never been homogenous or monolithic, but rather is multifaceted, complex, and even contradictory. Western modernity has been shaped through the complex interactions of various forms of modern value systems: Enlightenment, Romanticism, capitalism, Marxism, liberalism, nationalism, and modern Christian teachings. In the first half of the twentieth century, three forms of modernity were crucial to the formation of Korean modernity: Christian modernity, colonial modernity, and Marxist modernity. Each form of modernity

institutionalized its own fundamental definition of ultimate reality, offering different understandings and interpretations of modern values like freedom, equality, democracy, and the nation-state. Conflict, compromise, and synthesis among these forms were essential to the formation of Korean modernity in colonial era, and have had a tremendous impact on post-colonial Korean society.

However, these forms of modernity did not determine the formation of Korean modernity. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Western modernity presented itself as a global condition to non-Western societies so that any non-Western society could not help but reformulate itself as a modern form of society to survive and prosper. In this sense, in colonial Korea, missionaries of the Federal Council proudly noted, “We actually are dowering the modern world with its first history of old Korea.”¹⁷ However, Christian modernity did not dictate the fate of Korean modernity. On the other hand, Hae-dong Yun, an advocate of the colonial modernity position, argues that “all moderns in Korea are the colonial modern,”¹⁸ based on the belief that the modern in colonial Korea was monopolized by colonial modernity. However, the colonial modernity position does not pay enough attention to the roles of Christian modernity and Marxist modernity in the modern formation of Korea. Furthermore, it fails to see that Korean modernity has evolved over the unique history of modern Korea, taking on Korean characteristics.

Western missionaries and Japanese colonialists tried to mold Koreans into the desired shape through Christian modernity and colonial modernity. However, the Christian and colonial

¹⁷ AMFC, 1925, 25-6.

¹⁸ Hae-dong Yun, “1bureul Mukkeumyeo,” In *Geundaereul Dasi Ilkneunda: Hanguk Geundae Insigui Saeroun Paereodaimeurwihayeo*, edited by Hae-dong Yun (Seoul: Yeoksabipyongsa, 2006), 1:31.

forms of modernity could not offer a ready-made template for Koreans to follow because modernity is not historically determined, but rather the path to the modern is an open-ended process (although historically accumulated changes significantly constrain the process). Koreans have constructed Korean modernity in dialectical relation with the colonial and Christian forms of modernity (and also with the Marxist form of modernity) by both emulating and resisting these forms, and at the same time incorporating uniquely Korean elements, experiences, and reflections. To borrow from E. P. Thompson, Koreans were the object of both colonial modernity and Christian modernity, and at the same time the creator of their own modernity. Modern Korea made itself as much as it was made.¹⁹

In East Asia, the great and deep impact of Protestantism on Korean society significantly distinguished Korean modernity from Japanese modernity or Chinese modernity. The historical uniqueness in Korea made the origin and development of Korean Protestantism unique in the mission history. In South Korea today, mainstream Korean Protestantism—whose largest denominations are Presbyterian, Methodist, and Pentecostal—is characterized by church-growth theology, the dominance of megachurches in ecclesiastical leadership, denominationalism, the Pentecostal-Charismatic emphasis, gospel of wealth and health, and political conservatism. It is a direct and loyal descendant of Christian modernity. At the turn of the twentieth century, Protestantism was welcomed as a civilization-oriented Christian teaching by Koreans who believed that the new religion would promote modern power and wealth at both a national and personal level. The civilization-oriented dimension of Christian modernity has had a long-lasting impact on Korean churches today, promoting capitalism-oriented

¹⁹ E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1964), 194.

teachings and this-worldly blessing. In addition, the legacy of Christian modernity and the American influence in South Korea combine to make mainstream Korean Protestantism one of the most Americanized forms of Protestant church in the world.

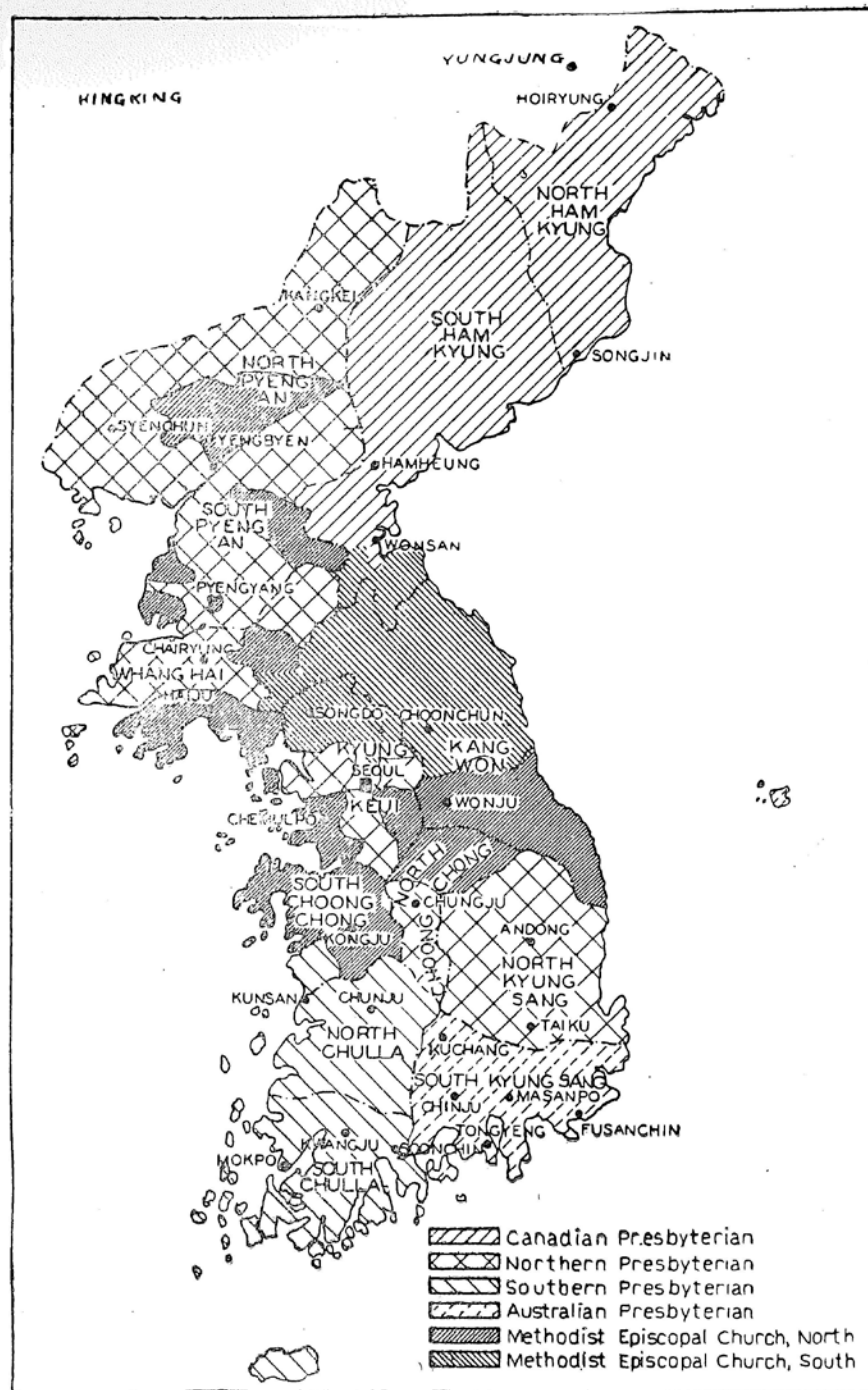
However, a significant minority of Korean Christians, whose advocates are primarily from Methodist, Presbyterian, and Anglican denominations, and the Catholic church, have presented a theological critique of Christian modernity and constructed a Korean theology. This is *minjung* (people) theology emerged in the 1960s and 1970s.²⁰ Minjung theology criticizes Christian modernity for its Western-centered and white-centered dimension, capitalism-oriented teachings, and state theology. Instead, the Korean theology provides a people-centered frame as a theological foundation, placing its focus not on believers as the chosen for salvation but on people as children of God, who are oppressed, marginalized, and alienated by a unjust socio-political-international system. This Korean theology not only promotes political liberation of people but also asserts the cultural identity of Korean Christians.²¹ Unlike Christian modernity, which emphasized a radical break with traditional Korean religions in order to be Christian, minjung theology stresses the importance of the rich Korean religious and cultural heritage in theological thinking, embracing prophetic and liberational elements of Korean traditional and indigenous values influenced by Buddhism, Confucianism, and Shamanism. This Koreanized theological view offers a critical reorientation of understanding of the modern

²⁰ For a study of minjung theology, see, Yong-bok Kim, ed. *Minjung Theology: People as the Subjects of History* (Singapore: Commission on Theological Concerns Christian Conference of Asia, 1981); Jong-Sun Noh, *Liberating God for Minjung* (Seoul, Korea: Hanul, 1994); Kwon, Jin-kwan. "Fundamentalism Versus Minjung Theology." *Journal of Theologies and Cultures in Asia* 4 (2005): 75-90.

²¹ Kyong-jae Kim, *Christianity and the Encounter of Asian Religions: Method of Correlation, Fusion of Horizons, and Paradigm Shifts in the Korean Grafting Process* (Zoetermeer: Uitgeverij Boekencentrum, 1994), 15.

society by presenting a critique of Western-centered elements of modernity and by struggling against the modern maladies produced by modernity itself.

Appendix: Allocation of Territory among Six Missions in Colonial Korea¹



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