

**The Confucian-Christian Dialogue:
A Comparative Theology From the Yi Dynasty in Korea**

Ignatius Suh

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Preface

In this study, I will argue that Confucianism is a religion, not just a culture and compare Confucianism and Christianity on several points. The paper will refute the viewpoint that Confucianism is pre-Christian, directed toward Christ or an ordinary way of salvation as compared to an extraordinary way of salvation of Christianity. I do not agree with people who say that Christianity fulfills Confucianism or Confucianists are anonymous Christians. In my opinion, Confucianism and Christianity are two different religions, have their own values and ways of transcendence. We can learn from Confucianism when we study it without prejudices and presuppositions, and come back to our own faith enriched and renewed.

When Catholicism was first introduced to Yi Dynasty Korea (Chosun), there were two contradictory responses to it on the part of the Korean literati. One was welcoming, the other was rejecting. I will discuss both of them very briefly, but focus on two scholars. They are Chong Yag-yong and his nephew Chong Ha-sang Paul. Chong Yag-yong was Confucianist and wrote many Confucian books, even though he was baptized. His Confucianism was formed within the Catholic doctrine, but it was still not Christian.

In contrast to this, his nephew Paul was a Catholic martyr saint, but his apology incorporated Confucian ideas creatively as reflected in his “Letter to the Prime Minister.” I will follow the method of comparative theology which will be explained later. Moreover, comparative theology is a critical reflection on the praxis of interreligious dialogue, so this theology, of necessity, must be highly contextual. Doing Christian theology by means of interreligious dialogue offers Christians an opportunity to build new forms of solidarity with other religious community as James Fredericks says.

In writing this paper, I have relied primarily on books written in English as well as English translations of Chinese Classics. Xinzhong Yao's "An Introduction to Confucianism" was helpful in providing me with a well-balanced and accessible general introduction to Confucianism. Tu Wei-ming's article "Confucianism" in "Our Religions" is also helpful. For a comparison between Confucianism and Christianity, pride of place should be given to Julia Ching's "Confucianism and Christianity" though she places greater emphasis on the compatibility between the two religions.

Paul F. Knitter's "Introducing Theologies of Religions" provided me with a good introduction to comparative religions. James Fredericks's "Faith Among Faiths" and "Buddhists and Christians" were also illuminating on the methodology of comparative theology. I depended on Keum Jang-tae's "Confucianism and Korean Thoughts" along with his other books, which were written in Korean. His "Confucianism and Korean Thoughts" was very useful in understanding the Confucian and Catholic dialogue in Yi Dynasty Korea. I have used the Korean version of Ricci's "The Truth of the Lord of Heaven", and both the Chinese and Korean translations of Chong Ha-sang's "The Letter to the Prime Minister".

For Chinese proper names, I have used mostly Pinyin spelling except for familiar names such as Confucius, Mencius, and Peking, or names which were in direct quotations. With some exceptions, I followed the more familiar style for names of persons and titles of works which are Korean as well as the Korean pronunciations of terms.

In Chapter 1, I will define Confucianism, religion, and Confucianism as a religion and describe the historical evolution of Confucianism. In Chapter 2, I will briefly explain

the four models for the comparison of religions. The four models are exclusivism, pluralism, inclusivism, in addition to the comparative theology model. I will argue that the comparative theology model is a viable option today. In Chapter 3, I compare Confucianism and Christianity in three areas: ethics, God (Heaven), and human beings to conclude that both religions are different. In Chapter 4, mention will be made about the background of Korean Catholicism: Korean Confucianism, the Tangun Myth, Buddhism, Matteo Ricci and his book, “The Truth of the Lord of Heaven.” Chapter 5 covers Chong Yag-yong’s Confucianism. Chapter 6 will discuss Chong Ha-sang’s activity and finally, Chapter 7 treats his apology. I will conclude we are challenged to study, learn from and dialogue with other religions without presupposition and value judgment to enrich our own religion and become renewed.

My interest in the Confucian-Catholic dialogue in Korea came from my own life experiences of conversion from my Confucian upbringing to Catholicism. My father was a devout Confucian who lived a virtuous life, valuing filial piety. He faithfully followed the practices of Confucianism including offering sacrifices before the tablets for our ancestors on the anniversaries of their death. Similarly, my mother also followed Confucianism, but also went to Buddhist temples, especially to offer prayers.

When I converted to Catholicism at twenty three, my father and I did not experience any conflicts. And later, my mother converted to Catholicism after I came to the United States. I have always been curious of the fact that my conversion to Catholicism had been without much conflict between myself and my father, who had been a good Confucian. I thought that there are many elements in common, which led me to this study of these two religions.

1: Confucianism in Brief

I. Confucianism

The origin of the English word “Confucianism” may be traced back to the Jesuits of the sixteenth century:

Until Nicholas Trigault published his version of Ricci’s journals in 1615, there was hardly any knowledge of, not to say debate about, Confucianism... The Jesuits were virtually the first Europeans to discover Confucius and Confucianism, “the sect of the literati” as they inaccurately called it... The Jesuits, representatives of European values and intellectual methods, attempted... to understand Chinese intellectual life in terms of systems, and transmuted the tradition of the Ju or Chinese “scholars” into an “-ism”, Confucianism. (Yao, 2000:16-17)

Since then, “Confucianism” or its equivalents in other European languages has been taken in the West as a proper name for the East Asian tradition with Confucius as its fountainhead. In fact, what is meant by “Confucianism is more a tradition generally rooted in Chinese culture and nurtured by Confucius and Confucians rather than a new religion created on a new value system initiated by Confucius himself alone. (Ibid, 17)

The word “Confucianism” is actually a misnomer; the Chinese themselves have usually preferred Ju-Chia or Ju-Chiao, the school or teachings of the scholars. Etymologically, it has been claimed that the word “ju” is related to the word for “weaklings” or “cowards,” and referred originally to those dispossessed aristocrats of antiquity who were no longer warriors but lived off their knowledge of rituals, history, music, numbers, or archery. Eventually, Ju, as the name of a school or thought, came to refer to the ethical wisdom of the past that Confucius transmitted to later ages, as well as the entire development of the tradition after his name.

Confucius and the school named after him offered a moral or ethical answer to the question regarding life’s meaning and order in society, an answer that would dominate

Chinese philosophical thinking for about two millennia. (Hans Kung and Julia Ching, 1989, 65-66). But is Confucianism just an ethical answer or is it humanism, or is it religion?

II. Religion

To compare Christianity with Confucianism, it is important to understand if Confucianism is a religion. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Jesuit missionaries achieved positions of influence in the Chinese court, and Catholic Christianity won a considerable following in many parts of the country. To what extent must Chinese culture and religious practice be rejected by converts to Christianity, and to what extent could they be assimilated? For example, could Christians participate in Confucian rites honoring the ancestors and especially Confucius himself?

It is interesting to see that this question of whether Confucianism was a “religion” became an important issue during this time. If Confucianism was determined to be a religion, then Christians would have had to refuse participation in Confucian rites. But if the Confucian rites and practices, which were integral to Chinese life, could be viewed as “political” practices, then the Catholic Church would not need to oppose these. The friendly Manchu emperor Kangxi officially supported the Jesuit argument that these practices were political, and it was the refusal by the pope to accept their position that led to the loss of imperial support for the Christian mission. In the present day, the answer to this same question of the religiosity of Confucianism is important because it offers the potential of improving interreligious dialogue.

To define Confucianism as a religion, a brief definition of religion is in order. According to Keith Ward, in recent years, many scholars, both in anthropology and in

social and cultural studies, have queried whether “religion” is an appropriate or even an identifiable subject of study. Wilfred Cantwell Smith, in “The Meaning and End of Religion”, argued that the concept of religion is “recent, Western-and-Islamic, and unstable, and that the term should be dropped” (Smith, 1962: 120). It is recent because in Europe, the word “religion” at first meant the observance of ritual regulations. Later, it most often meant “piety” or “worship.” So to be religious was to be pious, and “true religion” was in Augustine for instance, true piety or devotion.

However, in the seventeenth century, Smith argues, the word “religion” came to have a new meaning, of a system of doctrines, and “true religion” came to mean the true set of doctrines. This, he suggests, makes religion into a matter of having correct beliefs, whereas it should be, and usually was before the seventeenth century, a matter of personal faith and experience. The term “religion” is Western, he goes on to say, because a great many cultures, such as the Chinese or Indian, do not have a word for “religion,” so the word does not quite capture what they do when they are being religious.

Finally, the term “religion” is unstable, because it has meant so many different things, and it deceives people into asking useless questions such as “What is the essence of religion?” When they ask that question, they either came up with something suspiciously like what they themselves believe or, if they are atheists, something that is equally ridiculous. Either way, according to Smith, the question is simply not profitable, and we should stop asking it. What Smith objects to is labeling many aspects of different cultures “religions” so that each religion is seen as a total isolated system, which competes with others, and is a fixed entity whose essence is clear, precise, and exclusive.

In “The Meaning and End of Religion,” Smith tries to advocate that we should not view religions as discrete and fixed sets of competing doctrines, and that we should pay close attention to many faiths, seeing each one as a dynamic, fluid and culturally influenced complex, the heart of which is a living personal quality of faith in a transcendent reality. The irony is that, in saying this, Wilfred Cantwell Smith is precisely advocating a view of what the “essence of religion” is, as distinct from its many cultural forms. He is not at all saying that there is no such thing as religion (Keith Ward, 2004: 11).

So, apparently, Smith does not deny religion itself, but circumscribes its meaning. When it comes to the essence of religion, Harold Netland’s book “Encountering Religious Pluralism” is enlightening:

Most religions presuppose that human beings, and in some case the cosmos at large, are presently in some kind of undesirable predicament. Furthermore, they presuppose that, in contrast to this predicament, an ultimately good and desirable state can be achieved—either through one’s own individual efforts or through the benevolent assistance of one or more high beings or powers. Given this common structure, three questions naturally emerge that can profitably be put to the various religious traditions. What is the nature of the religious ultimate? What is the nature of the human predicament? What is the nature of salvation (or enlightenment or liberation)? The three questions are clearly interrelated, for one’s views on the human predicament and the religious ultimate have profound implications for beliefs about salvation and how it is to be achieved (Netland, 2001: 182, 193).

Netland tried to answer these three questions on the subject of Muslim, Buddhism, Shintoism, etc, but did not discuss Confucianism. This paper will now cover these questions with respect to Confucianism.

III. Confucianism as Religion

If we accept three dimensions of religion described by Netland, we can say the following about Confucianism. First, the nature of the religious ultimate is that “Tian” (Heaven) is the point of transcendence. Second, the nature of the human predicament is that humans are not what they should be as a result of their selfishness and environment (Mencius) or that humans are not born good (Xunzi).

Thus, the nature of salvation is that humans can be sages or perfect themselves through self-cultivation. Even though different from other theistic or non-theistic religions, Confucianism has its own religious dimensions as pointed out by Netland.

Robert Cummings Neville, in the Rodney Taylor’s book “The Religious Dimensions of Confucianism” argues that a religious tradition has at least three essential elements. One element is a mythic, philosophical, or theological cosmology defining the fundamental structures and limits of the world and forming basic ways in which cultures and individuals imagine how things are and what they mean. There is no doubt that Confucianism has such a cosmology. A second essential element of religion is ritual. Rituals are finite set of repeatable and symbolizeable actions that epitomize things a tradition takes to be crucial to defining the normative human place in the cosmos. No doubt rituals involved in filial piety qualify Confucianism as a major religion. The third essential element is that a tradition has some conception and practical procedures for fundamental transformation aimed to relate persons harmoniously to normative cosmological elements, a path of spiritual perfection. In theism it usually means salvation, a right relationship to God. In Buddhism, it means transformative enlightenment about the truth of change and suchness (Neville, 1990: ix-x). For

Confucianism, being a sage through self-cultivation is the answer for the third question. Confucianism has its point of transcendence, its rituals and its ways of salvation even apart from God.

The modern Chinese use a term coined by combining two characters, zong and jiao, which originally meant “ancestral” and “teaching/doctrine.” In the mind of the ancient Confucians, there were two types of teachings. Those transmitted from ancient times by sages are considered to be noble and orthodox, encouraging people to be good and sincere, to be filial to their ancestors and parents. The second kind of teaching happens when these teachings become dysfunctional. When these teachings are corrupted or misused, they become mixed with superstitions, involving beliefs in miracles, strange powers, reincarnations, and so forth. People believe that noble doctrines are those by great sages like Confucius, Lao Zi and Sakyamuni the Buddha while the depraved teachings were evident in popular Daoism, popular Buddhism and folk cults. When “religion” is identified with the theories and practices of the latter, it enjoys the respect of few scholars.

Hans Kung believes that Confucianism is a religion, a religion of wisdom, distinguishable and yet related to two other types of religion in the world. According to him, there exist three Great River Systems of world religions. The first river system is of Semitic origin in the Near East, which is of prophetic character and is composed of “three Abrahamic religions”; Judaism, Christianity and Islam. From the Near East to the Indus Valley, we encounter the second great river system of religion. It is of Indian origin and has a mystical character. It originated in the Indian tradition (Upanishads). As a reformation or adaptation of this, there emerged three further religions; the reform

movement of jahavira, called Jina, the “victor,” founder of Jainism; the reform movement of Gautama Buddha which gave birth to Buddhism; and the more recent Hindu religions, whether monotheistic or polytheistic. The third great river system of religion is of Chinese origin and is associated with the figure of the sage; it is therefore labeled a religion of wisdom, and includes Confucianism, Daoism and part of Chinese Buddhism. In the third system of religion, it is the wisdom of the sages, Confucius, Lao Zi and the Buddha, that leads the peoples to their salvation (Kung & Ching, 1989: xi-xix).

According to the eminent Confucian scholar, Tu Wei-ming, a defining characteristic of Confucian humanism is faith in the creative transformation of our human condition as a communal act and as a dialogic response to Heaven. This involves the integration of four dimensions of humanity; self, community, nature and Heaven. An exploration of Confucian spirituality must take the following into consideration; the self as creative transformation; the community as a necessary vehicle for human flourishing; nature as the proper home for our form of life; Heaven as the source of ultimate self-realization.

Of all these four factors, what is related most to the Confucianism as religion is Heaven as the source of ultimate transformation. Tu Wei-ming says that although radical transcendence, such as conceptualizing God as the “wholly other,” is absent in Confucian symbolism, Heaven as a source for moral creativity, meaning of life, and ultimate self-transformation features prominently throughout the Confucian tradition. In this sense, all major Confucian thinkers are profoundly religious. Their ways of being religious are significantly different from those in organized religions such as Christianity, Buddhism, or Islam, but their reverence for life, commitment to work, and dedication to ultimate

self-transformation are based on a calling comparable in intensity of feeling and seriousness of purpose to any of the great world religions (Tu, 1993b: 142, 143, 144). Tu concludes that Confucianism has a great religious dimension.

According to Confucian scholar John Berthrong, there are four major dimensions, which make Confucianism a unique religious tradition: Jen, T'ien-ming, Hsin, and Hsing. Berthrong explains:

- 1) Jen as the virtue of humanity and cardinal virtue of all other virtues, individual and social;
- 2) T'ien-ming as the universal Mandate of Heaven, the primordial creativity of the cosmos that provides a model for the special human virtues in the context of a living history and civilization;
- 3) Hsin as the heart and mind of humanity, both destined and inclined to lead a moral life, the veritable seat of human intelligence, will and passion, the nexus of the experiential unity of thought, action and meditation;
- 4) Hsing as human nature and the nature of all that is within the cosmic drama of human life, the creative source and goal of the quest for values that informs the life of all seeking to become profound persons (Berthrong, 1994: 73).

So we conclude Confucianism is religion. It has Tian as a transcendental dimension, self-cultivation as a solution of human predicaments and rituals redolent of religious aspects.

IV. Stages of Confucian Evolution

Confucianism is primarily a Chinese, or more precisely East Asian tradition. To understand Confucianism, we have to find out how it came into being and how it was

transformed. A popular method that is used in presenting the Chinese Confucian tradition is to divide its history into as many periods as there are Chinese dynasties. In this way, Confucianism becomes part of a much more complicated history and Confucian progress is mixed up with the general changes in political, social, economic, religious and cultural life. As Wm. Theodore de Bary says, Confucianism was less dependent on the state for survival than the state on it (de Bary, 1988: 110).

Since Confucianism is not simply a shadow of dynastic change, we should have different historical perspectives of it. When discussing the history of Chinese philosophy as a whole, Fung Yu-lan (1895-1990), one of the great Modern New Confucians, divided this history into two ages, the creative and the interpretative. He calls the creative age, from Confucius (551-479 BCE) to the Prince of Huainan (d. 122 BCE), the Period of Philosophers; and names the interpretative age, from Dong Zhongshu (179-104 BCE) to Kang Youwei (1858-1927 CE), the Period of Classical Learning (Fung, 1953: 2). This two part division reveals some essential characteristics of the development of the Confucian tradition. However, if we simply apply this twofold pattern to the history of Confucianism, then our perspective would be seriously simplified.

Mou Zongsan (1908-95), another modern New Confucian master, divided the history of Confucianism into three periods or epochs (Yao, 2000: 5,6). One of his disciples Tu Wei-ming presents a most persuasive argument by developing this theory further. According to this theory, Confucianism thus far has gone through three epochs. The first epoch from Confucius (551-479 BCE), Mencius (371-289 BCE) and Xunzi (310?-211? BCE) to Dong Zhongshu represents the origin of Confucianism and the acceptance of the tradition as the mainstream ideology, which corresponds to the period

from the Spring and Autumn period (770-476 BCE) to the end of the Later Han Dynasty (25-220 CE). The second epoch starts from the renaissance of Neo-Confucianism and its spread to other parts of East Asia and ends with the abolition of the dominance of Confucianism in China and East Asia, corresponding to the era from the Song Dynasty (960-1279) to the beginning of the twentieth century, beginning with the critical reflection on the tradition initiated in the May Fourth Movement (1919) and which is still an ongoing process (Yao, 2000: 6; Tu 1993: 155-183). This study is not intended as a research of Confucian history, so I will summarize Xinzhong Yao's theory. According to him, Confucianism has gone through five stages. In each of these stages or dimensions, Confucian doctrines gained new characteristics, the contents of Confucian practices were enriched and the range of Confucian teaching was widened.

a) Confucianism in Formation

In this first stage, Confucianism acquires a "classical" form. The classic presentation of Confucianism took shape during the so-called Spring and Autumn Period (770-476 BCE). Confucius and his faithful followers made the first efforts to formulate a new philosophy based on the old tradition and propagated it as the path to peace and harmony. Much modification of, elaboration and clarification in classical Confucianism were added by brilliant scholars in the Warring States period (475-221 BCE), among whom Mencius and Xunzi became preeminent in the later Confucian tradition

b) Confucianism in Adaptation

In the second stage, Confucianism is reformed and renewed in the interaction between Confucian schools and the schools of Legalism, Yin-Yang and Five Elements, Moism and Daoism. Following the replacement of the Qin Dynasty (221-206 BCE) by

the Han Dynasty, Confucianism recovered from the setback under the Qin Persecutions and the Legalist challenge. Han Confucians started a long process of adapting their doctrines to the need of empire, in which classical Confucianism was transformed, elaborated and extended. A theological and metaphysical doctrine of interaction between Heaven and humans was established and became the cornerstone of the revived Confucianism. Debates between the New Text and the Old Text Schools resulted in new interpretations of Confucius and the Confucian class.

To counter the stagnation from these debates, scholars of the Wei-Jin Dynasties (220-420) adopted one of two courses. Some introduced Daoist philosophy into Confucianism while others adapted Confucian world-views to Daoist principles. In each way, Daoism and Confucianism came together in what is known as Dark Learning or Mysterious Learning (xuan xue).

c) Confucianism in Transformation

In this stage, Confucianism responds to the challenges from Buddhism and Daoism by “creating” a new form of Confucian Learning. Confucianism of the Song-Ming Dynasties (960-1279, 1368-1644) regained its authority over all aspects of social and religious life. Inspired by Buddhist philosophy and Daoist spirituality, Confucian scholars reformulated the Confucian view of the universe, society and the self and formed a comprehensive system of the new Confucian Learning called Dao Xue (the Learning of the Way) or Li Xue (the Learning of the Principle/Reason), which is normally translated in the West as Neo-Confucianism.

d) Confucianism in Variation

In the fourth period, Chinese Confucianism was being introduced to other East Asian countries, and combined with local culture and tradition to acquire new forms of presentation. From its origin in the north, it spread to the whole of China and then to other countries of East Asia. According to historical records, Confucian doctrines and institutions were introduced to Vietnam, Korea and Japan as early as the former Han Dynasty. In the beginning, scholars in these countries simply replicated the Chinese system, but gradually reinterpreted the Confucian classics and commentaries in the light of their own understanding, experience and culture.

e) Confucianism in Renovation

Confucianism is further transformed during this last period and develops in the light of other world philosophies, especially European philosophical tradition and Christian thoughts in the modern age. Prominent scholars of the twentieth century such as Xiong Shili (1885-1968), Liang Suming (1893-1988), Fung Yu-lan (1885-1990), Qian Mu (1895-1990), Tang Junyi (1909-78) and Mou Zongsan (1909-95), devoted themselves to the revival of Confucian values and the transformation of Confucian doctrines. They have rejuvenated Confucianism and constituted a significant part of “modern new Confucianism” (xiandai xin ruxue) (Yao, 2000: 7-9). It is important to remember that modern new Confucianism is different from Neo-Confucianism of Song-Ming Dynasties.

When Catholicism was introduced into Korea, many Southerners (a faction of Korean aristocrats) who accepted Catholicism were partly critical to Neo-Confucianism. They rejected overdependence on Zhu Xi’s exposition of the Confucian teachings. They emphasize the study of the Six Classics in addition, and sometimes in contrast to the Four Books edited by Zhu Xi.

The great Jesuit missionary Matteo Ricci wrote “Tianzhu Shiyi (The True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven)”, a book of extraordinary importance. It is important because of its widespread impact on all those influenced by Confucian thought, both within and outside of China. Perhaps most striking was its impact on a group of Korean intellectuals which led to the beginning of Catholic Christianity in Korea before the arrival of any missionaries in Korea.

As Ricci’s knowledge of the Confucian Classics deepened, he had come to believe that in the time of the ancient sages the Chinese had known of one Creator God; they had not been polytheists. He thought Neo-Confucianism severely damaged Confucianism, because the leading Confucian thinkers had sought to give Confucianism a metaphysics to help defend it from the intellectual and spiritual threat presented by Buddhism.

So we understand how Ricci and Korean intellectuals influenced by him wanted to resort to original messages of Confucianism untainted by Buddhism and Taoism. To be able to understand Confucianism as compared with Christianity and other world religions, we have to examine the four models as a methodological tool.

2: Four Models

In 1983 and 1986, Alan Race and Gavin D’Costa introduced into the discussions on the Christian theology of religions the three options of exclusivism, inclusivism, and pluralism. Over the years, these terms have become pretty much a standard part of professional discourse. Recently, this way of classifying has become the object of sharp criticism, the strongest coming from one of its first users and former defenders, that is Gavin D’Costa himself, who now rejects the whole typology as an “untenable” and “faulty typology” (Schmidt-Leukel, 2005: 13).

Paul Knitter followed this typology, gave new names to these options, and added another new option: exclusivism became “the replacement model”; inclusivism “the fulfillment model”; pluralism “the mutuality model”; and the new model is named “the acceptance model.” This discussion will use Knitter’s four models but will use the terms exclusivism, inclusivism, pluralism, and comparative theology. Comparative theology is the term used by James Fredericks and Francis Clooney who pioneered this approach. There is criticism of comparative theology itself. Schmidt-Leukel does not see how those who are propagating comparative theology as an alternative to the theology of religions are able to enter genuine theological comparison (as distinct from a purely phenomenological one) without arriving at exactly the types of questions that are treated in the theology of religions (Schmidt-Leukel, 2005: 27; Knitter, 2002: 236-37).

However, this model is useful in this paper’s comparison between Christianity and Confucianism. In the technical sense of these terms, exclusivists held that salvation is available only in Jesus Christ to the extent that those who have never heard the gospel are eternally lost. Exclusivists claim that salvation can be found only through faith in

Christ; a stricter form of exclusivism maintains that salvation is to be found only in the Christian church. In this model, non-Christian religions play no role in the history of salvation. For pluralists, other religions are legitimate means of salvation. Pluralism involves both positive and negative elements. Negatively, pluralism categorically rejects exclusivism (and often also inclusivism). Positively, it affirms that people can find salvation in various religions and in many ways. In the middle, inclusivists, hold that while salvation is ontologically founded upon the person of Christ, its benefits have been made universally available by the revelation of God. This position has the largest group of followers and it cuts across confessional and denominational boundaries. Many theologians from Eastern Orthodox to Roman Catholicism to mainstream Protestantism to Evangelicalism see it as a viable option.

When it comes to comparative theology, James L. Fredericks defines it as follows:

Doing theology comparatively means crossing over into the world of another believers and learning the truth that animate the life of that believer, and it also means coming back to Christianity transformed by these truths, now able to ask new questions about Christian faith and its meaning for today (Fredericks, 2004: xii).

The brief discussion of each model is in order.

I. Exclusivism

Exclusivism is the view that salvation or liberation can only be found either inside a particular institutional structure—for example, the traditional Roman Catholic dogma, *extra ecclesiam nulla salus*—or on the basis of a specified tradition of religious beliefs, symbols, and rituals. Exclusivism can have at least three related meanings. First, in its

simplest form, exclusivism is a logical claim based on the law of noncontradiction; where two religions make logically incompatible claims, they cannot both be true. For example, monotheism (Islam, Judaism, and Christianity) and polytheism (Shintoism and Hinduism) cannot both be true.

Secondly, exclusivism refers to a religion's claim that it is the only true way to God. Christianity is a good example. Thirdly, it would be proper to say that all of the religions, even those like Hinduism that acknowledge many ways to God, are exclusivist in the third sense that they espouse as uniquely true a particular world view that is certainly very different from other world views.

Christians are not the only exclusivists. The Bagdad Gita reads that God accepts people whatever path they may choose to approach him (4.11), but it also insists that those who worship other gods in reality worship Krishna alone, albeit "improperly" (9.23 or "unknowingly" (9.24) (Clendenin, 1995: 65). It sounds like inclusivism but is in reality soft exclusivism.

In other words, every world religion has been exclusivist in its own way. But unqualified exclusivism seems more and more untenable in the face of global interaction and the problem of religious plurality. Moreover for exclusivists there is no need to study other religions unless it is meant to prove the superiority of their own religion, and no need to dialogue with other religions unless it is to teach and pontificate on theirs.

II. Pluralism

Pluralistic views share an idealist epistemology that the world we experience and understand is not a world independent of our perceiving but a world at least in part

structured by our minds. Pluralist religious responses are based on the view that one's perception of religious truth is in some sense relative to one's world view.

The important representative of religious pluralism is John Hick. John Hick who puts forth a systematic and powerful religious pluralism offers this concise description of Pluralism as the view that "There is not merely one way but a plurality of ways of salvation or liberation... taking place in different ways within the contexts of all the great religious traditions" (Hick, 1985: 34). John Hick's own religious pluralism holds that there is only one Ultimate Reality, but the World Religions offer different enculturated images of that one Ultimate Reality (Hick, 1982: 96).

To support this theory, Hick developed a Kantian-type distinction between the noumenal, which exists independently and outside of human perception, and the phenomenal world, which is that world as it appears to our human consciousness. The varying phenomenal responses within the different religious traditions, both theistic and non-theistic, are to be viewed as authentic but different responses to the noumenal Real. Hence, according to Hick, we cannot say that the Real in itself has the characteristics displayed by its manifestations, such as love and justice or consciousness and bliss (Hick, 1989: 246ff). Hick proposes that religion definitely concerns "the transformation of human existence from self-centeredness to Reality-centeredness" (Hick, 1985: 29), and that the apparently conflicting truth-claims of the world's religions are, in the final analysis, irrelevant given the fundamental goal of moving from self to Reality-centeredness.

So the "Real" he mentions is too speculative and thus is no criteria to support truth. Paul Knitter's position avoids these problems of the "Real" but he does not avoid

the problem of relativism much like Hick. By focusing on interreligious cooperation on justice issues, questions about “truth” are left behind. This leads us to a discussion of inclusivism.

III. Inclusivism

Religious inclusivists fully retain the doctrinal content of their traditions but hold two additional theses: (1) other religions convey part of the truth about the Transcendent and the relation of humanity to the Transcendent, and (2) only one’s own tradition most fully provides an understanding of the Transcendent, and the most adequate path to salvation or liberation (Runzo, 2001: 38).

Inclusivism has become the official view within Roman Catholicism since Vatican II. Where previous official statements of the Roman Catholic Church were tentative, the Second Vatican Council is clear and unambiguous about the possibility that those who follow other religious paths can be saved in Christ by the grace of the Holy Spirit. However, the council documents leave unresolved the role, if any that the religious paths themselves might play in God’s plan of salvation. For example, is a Buddhist saved by Christ despite his or her religious life or by means of it? The Council’s document remains ambiguous and restrained. This ambiguity is not unrelated to pre-conciliar developments within the Roman Catholic thinking about other religions. The work of Jean Danielou, SJ, and Karl Rahner is important.

Jean Danielou may be regarded as the first exponent of the “fulfillment theory.” His approach to the question is governed by his understanding of God’s revelation in history. He thought all of history is the progressive revelation of God to humankind. Salvation history properly speaking is limited to the Judeo-Christian tradition; it starts

with God's personal revelation to Israel through Abraham and Moses, runs through the whole history of the chosen people, and culminates in Jesus Christ, whose message of salvation has been entrusted to the church. Danielou draws a sharp distinction between nature and the supernatural, or equivalently, between religion and revelation. "Non-Christian" religion belongs to the order of natural reason, Judeo-Christian revelation to that of supernatural faith. However, God has ordained that these religions find their ultimate fulfillment in Christ, the apex of history and in Christianity, the supernatural religion of Christ (Fredericks, 2004: 3, Dupuis, 2002: 48).

The influence of Danielou's theology of religions can be seen in the Council documents. For example, *Ad Gentes* (AG) speaks of the other religious paths as endeavors in which people "search for God, groping for Him that they may by chance find Him" and as human initiatives that "need to be enlightened and purified" by the gospel. Even so, the other religious paths can "sometimes serve as pedagogy toward the true God or as a preparation for the Gospel" and thus find their fulfillment there (AG, no.3; *Lumen Gentium*, no. 23).

Karl Rahner was also greatly influential at the Second Vatican Council. Along with Danielou, Rahner interprets religious diversity as a progressive unfolding of revelation within history in which Christ forms the summit. So we can say Rahner's theology of religions, like Danielou's is also a fulfillment theology. Rahner does not make so strict a distinction between natural and supernatural religions. God's grace is always at work in all human beings. As such, other religions do not merely prepare human beings to hear the gospel, they are the supernatural act of God that makes saving grace available to human beings. It is the hidden and unknown operative presence of the

mystery of Christ in other religious traditions that Karl Rahner has designated by the controversial terms “anonymous Christianity.” Rahner suggested that the persons who live righteously are “anonymous Christians.” The real problem with this concept is that the real differences between other religions and Christianity are downplayed in this view.

Rahner’s theology of religions can be seen in the Council documents as well. According to *Ad Gentes*, “The universal design of God for the salvation of the human race is not carried out exclusively in people’s souls, with a kind of secrecy” (No. 3). Rahner argues that grace always takes visible and tangible social forms.

The Council documents do not go as far as Rahner would in recognizing the other religious paths themselves as mediations of Christ’s salvation (Fredericks, 2004: 4). Our discussions of inclusivism in the Catholic Church would not be complete without looking at John Paul II’s theology. John Paul II is not only the first pope in history to visit a synagogue, he is also the first pope to stand at the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem and pray. Since the first year of this papacy, he has responded to the reality of religious diversity by turning to a theology of the Holy Spirit.

This pope’s interest in the Holy Spirit can be seen in his first encyclical letter, *Redemptor Hominis* (RH), written in 1979. He has continued to pursue a greater understanding of those who follow other religious paths and their religions. In section six of the encyclical, the pope recognizes in the beliefs of others an “effect of the Spirit of truth operating outside the visible confines of the Mystical Body.”

Believing the presence of the Holy Spirit in all authentic prayer, he held the famous meeting of religious leaders with himself at Assisi.

In another encyclical letter, *Dominum et Vivicantem* (1986), John Paul II teaches that the action of the Holy Spirit cannot be limited to the church (Section 53). Section 28 of this encyclical notes the Spirit's presence "at the very source of the human person's existential and religious questioning."

This pope does not suggest that other religious paths are salvific in their own right, but argues that through the working of the Holy Spirit in the religions, salvation in Christ is available to all. In fact, John Paul II speaks of "participated forms of mediation," that is, the participation of the other religions in the saving mystery of Christ, which is fully present in the church. The phrase "participated forms of mediation" can be traced back to *Lumen Gentium*; "The unique mediation of the Redeemer does not exclude, but rather gives rise to a manifold cooperation which is but a participation in this one source. In *Redemptoris Missio*, John Paul II makes use of this principle in asserting the centrality of Christ in the salvation of all; "Although participated forms of mediation of different kinds and degrees are not excluded, they acquire meaning and value only from Christ's own mediation, and they cannot be understood as parallel or complementary to his" (No. 5) (Fredericks, 2004: 5).

For pluralism and inclusivism, Joseph Ratzinger (now pope) comments as follows:

Mere pluralism of religions, as blocks standing forever side by side, cannot be the last word in the historical situation today. Perhaps we will have to replace "inclusivism" which, by the way, until just recently was used in the history of religions with quite a different meaning—with some better concepts. It is certainly not the absorption of religions by one single one that is meant; but an encounter, in a unity that transforms pluralism into plurality, is something necessary (Ratzinger, 2004: 83).

Nevertheless comparativists fundamentally challenge both pluralism and inclusivism in terms of their position, methodology, and impact in dialogue. To this we turn now.

IV. Comparative Theology

According to James L. Fredericks, generally speaking, any theology of religion must deal with two traditional Christian affirmations. First, Christians have claimed that Jesus is the incarnation of God within human history, the unique savior of the world. But in addition to this, Christians have also held that God will save all human beings. Every theology of religion must somehow make sense of two Christian truths : the uniqueness of Jesus and the universality of God's will to save (Fredericks, 199: 13). Any adequate theology of religion must be responsible to the faith of Christians as mentioned above, but at the same time must assist Christian believers in dealing creatively with religious diversity (Fredericks, 2004:11).

Fredericks argues that neither inclusivist nor exclusivist models can measure up to the conditions given by him. Exclusivist (replacement) theologies fail to do justice to the many voices of the New Testament in regard to the meaning and status of other religious paths. Even though the Christian scriptures proclaim that there is no other name save that of Jesus Christ by which we are saved, they also testify to the universality of God's grace outside the confines of the Christian community. For this reason exclusivism cannot be said to measure up to the first of the two criteria.

For pluralist (mutuality) theologies we must consider the works of John Hick. In his philosophy of religion, Hick argues that all religions are roughly equal attempts to interpret a transcendent absolute, "the Real" that is ultimately beyond our ability to express in language. Salvation is a matter of moving from ego-centeredness to Reality-

centeredness. There are no differences in religions. This model is not faithful to the first of the two criteria.

Unlike exclusivist theologies and pluralist theologies, inclusivist theologies succeed best in meeting the two requirements of the Christian tradition. But it is not helpful to Christianity today as they seek to understand other religions and to have new forms of social and religious solidarity with other believers. Inclusivists have their own questions and answers on the basis of their theology, distort other religions for Christian purpose and domesticate differences.

Even though we cannot call him inclusivist, Matteo Ricci treated Confucianism in a manner which looked like what is called inclusivism today. Trained under the Thomistic philosophy, Ricci was quick to find in Confucianism an original purity of nature religion in the most perfect form. To him this “pure natural religion” seemed to be based on the “voice of Reason,” and therefore in an ideal harmony with the religion of Revelation in the Thomistic hierarchical relationship. Therefore, He created Confucianism as an important preparatory beginning toward the true religion, and Christianity as the fulfillment of the ideals of Confucianism (Chung, 2001: 65).

We already assume the questions and answers for other religions when we call people of other faiths anonymous Christians. Fredericks defines comparative theology as follows. It is “the attempt to understand the meaning of Christian faith by exploring it in the light of the teachings of other religious traditions.” Even more clearly, the real goal of the exercise is to gain a better understanding of the meaning of Christianity.” Notice, a better understanding of self comes through a better understanding of others (Knittter, 2002: 205).

Comparativists study certain limited subjects of other religions without prejudices and presuppositions, and come back to their own religion transformed, and renewed. Both Clooney and Fredericks give startling witness to what can happen to Christian theologians when they take up this comparative or conventional way of doing theology. Clooney confesses that he was unable to read anything as he read it before having encountered the text of India. He's suggesting that the Bible has become a new book after he began reading it alongside the books of Hinduism (Ibid: 206).

Fredericks concurs when he admits how much this conversation and comparison with others have sparked changes in himself (whatever the changes that might take place in the Buddhist or Hindu conversation partners).

3: Three Areas of Comparison

In the scholarly study of Confucianism, Western investigators have sought similarities and differences between Confucian principles and these principles embedded in their own Western conceptual framework. According to Henry Rosemont, Jr., originally the framework was Christianity, and beginning with Matteo Ricci, running through Leibniz, and even extending in some circles to the present, many scholars have declared Confucianism, in either its classical or Sung formations or both, to be compatible with basic Christian principles and beliefs (Rosemont, 2004: 52). Other scholars, beginning with Ricci's successor Nicolo Longobardi, running through Malebranche, and even extending to the present, found Confucian principles and beliefs sufficiently unchristian to necessitate their rejection as a precondition for conversion (Ibid, 53).

Whatever their positions and evaluations, their common presuppositions are that the fundamental principles and beliefs of Christianity were universal, and therefore, binding on all peoples. In this study, I will part with both positions, and bracket prejudices and presuppositions of Christianity as much as possible and examine Confucianism and Christianity on three subjects: Heaven (God), Ethics, and Human being.

I. Confucian Ethics and Christian Ethics

a) Ethics and God

There is a tendency to use the terms "morality" and "ethics" interchangeably, but when used more precisely, they are not, in fact, interchangeable terms. While morality is a set of norms about what is right and wrong, good and bad, ethics is reasoning about

morality. We use ethics when we want to determine what is right and wrong so as to guide our behavior accordingly. In his book “Oneself as Another” Paul Ricoeur says that it is by convention that he reserves the term “ethics” for the aim of an accomplished life and the term “morality” for the articulation of this aim in norms characterized at once by the claim to universality and by an effect of constraint (Ricoeur, 1992: 190).

To compare Confucian and Christian ethics, a brief survey of the ethics of the World Religions is in order. In the first place, the World Religions do have a largely shared morality: murder, lying, stealing, sexual impropriety, and so on are universally prohibited. Moreover, even more general principles are often shared among the World Religions. For instance, in the Chinese, Hindu, Buddhist, Zoroastrian, Christian and Islamic traditions among others, we find a remarkably similar conception of how to treat others:

Do not impose on others what you yourself do not desire (The Analects, xv24).

One should never do that to another which one regards as injurious to one’s own self. This, in brief, is the rule of dharma. Yielding to desire and acting differently, one becomes guilty of adharma (Mahabharata, xiii113,8).

He who for the sake of happiness hurts others who also want happiness shall not hereafter find happiness. He who for the sake of happiness does not hurt others, who also want happiness, shall hereafter find happiness (The Dhammapada 113-2)

That nature only is good when it shall not do unto another whatever is not good for its own self (Dadistan-i-dinik 94:5).

Love your neighbor as yourself (Gospel of Mark 13:33(RSV)).

No man is a true believer unless he desires for his brother that which he desires for himself (Muhammad, from the Hadith).

All these explain we have faith in the Transcendent? While being moral is not sufficient for being religious, it is universally held that to be religious is in part to be moral (Runzo: 2001, 187).

For Confucian morality, belief in the Transcendent is presupposed. Robert B. Loudon says that the fundamental message he found after reading all the Heaven (Tian) passages in the Analects is that Tian is the most important moral force in the universe and human beings who wish to be morally good must therefore seek to discern and follow it. He goes on to say this faith in a more-than-human power that is believed to give moral values and obligations a deep grounding entitles us to call Confucius “religious” in a general, noncontroversial sense. He also says that he does not see any evidence that Confucius’ Tian is anything like the “personal God” of Western religion. I agree with him when he says Confucius is thus religious but not theistic (Van Norden: 2002, 79). So we can say Confucian morality is predicated on the religious concept of Tian. If we understand theism as belief in a personal and tri-une God, Confucian belief is not theistic.

On the contrary, as Buddhism does not presuppose and believe in God, its ethics is autonomous. Regarding the Buddhist sense of moral responsibility, Buddhism claims that belief in God leads to moral and spiritual degradation. If I believe that God takes care of everything, it is easy for me either to regard my actions as determined by fate or predestination (“God made me do it”) or else to declare that no matter what I do, right or wrong, God will forgive me and make everything turn out all right. Either way, I am not taking responsibility for my actions.

But according to the law of Karma, I inherit the fruit of my past deeds. In Buddhism, only I can be responsible for what I do or for what happens to me (Corless, 1989: 116). In brief, in Buddhism, there is no God, so morality stands alone.

Bernard Haring argues that Christian moral teaching should be more commensurate with the Confucian moral doctrine than the doctrine of Aristotle because Confucian morality places love first among the four basic virtues. It is true of the virtue of justice that in the Christian system of virtue it is more exalted than in the pagan systems. As a Christian virtue it is altogether dedicated to the service of the theological virtues, particularly love and must be studied in the light of love.

He also says that precisely in the concept of justice and the position it occupies in the moral system as a whole do we find one of the gravest deficiencies in the ethics of the ancients of the Western world. They could not perceive that the first and fundamental natural virtue of the will can only be love. On the contrary, the moral teaching of Confucius places first among the four basic virtues, “benevolence” or “wishing well,” the right attitude of “soul” toward one’s fellow human being and the community. All these clearly indicate an ethics of interiority with which the preaching of the Christian moral teaching especially in the Far East, should be able to establish rapport much more effectively than with the doctrine of Aristotle (Haring: 1961, 513, 514).

b) Five Relationships and Three Bonds

Basically Christianity and Confucianism have something in common, especially on their emphasis on love, but their intentionality and contents are different. In what follows, I will compare the Mencian Idea of the Five Relationships and “The Three Bonds” with the Judeo-Christian Ten Commandments. These Five Relationship and the

Three Bonds don't play the same roles in Confucianism as the Ten Commandments do in Christianity, but they are the most important in their moral teachings.

The reference to the "Five Relationships" in the Book of Mencius occurs in the context of a debate with a radical physiocrat who advocated that "to earn his keep a good and wise ruler shares the work of tilling the land with his people" (Mencius, IIIA:4). Mencius, in arguing against the proposition that ruling the empire must be combined with the work of tilling the land, invokes the principle of the division of labor. The Sage-King Yao did not have the leisure to plough fields, for he was obliged to make the security of the empire and the livelihood of the people his primary concerns. His success in restoring the human community after the Flood was due to his ability to appoint the right officers to share responsibility for bringing order to the empire and food to the people. Yet, although order and food provided the minimum condition for human survival, they were not enough for human flourishing.

Human flourishing beyond the basic needs for physical comfort was the reason that the virtue of the "Five Relationship" was introduced, thus Mencius continues. This gave the sage King further cause for concern, and so he appointed Hsieh as the Minister of Education whose duty was to teach the people human relationships, love between father and son, duty between ruler and subject, distinction between husband and wife, precedence of the old over the young, and faith between friends (Mencius IIIA: 4).

The context in which Mencius introduced "Five Relationships" suggests that the purpose of education is to combat idleness after a measure of economic affluence is secured. So we have the well-known "Five Relationships." Three of these are family relationship, while the other two are usually conceived in terms of the family models.

For example, the ruler-subject relationship resembles the father-son, while friendship resembles brotherliness. For this reason, the Confucian society regards itself as a large family. Within the four seas all are brothers and sisters (Analects 12:5). The responsibilities ensuing from these relationships are mutual and reciprocal. A minister owes royalty to his ruler, and a child filial respect to the parent. But the ruler must also care for the child. All the same, the Five Relationships emphasize the vertical sense of hierarchy.

The only truly horizontal relationship is that between friends, and even here, seniority of age demands a certain respect, as also with siblings. The husband-wife relationship bears more natural resemblance to that between elder and younger brothers, but is more usually compared to the ruler-subject relationship. The duty of filial piety, the need of procuring progeny for the sake of assuring the continuance of the ancestral cult has been for centuries the ethical justification for polygamy. The family has always been the center of Confucian ethics, and family life itself has demonstrated the nature of Confucianism itself.

In many Chinese houses in Hong Kong, Taiwan and Southeast Asia--as well as in Korea and Japan—the ancestral altar is still maintained. Here a number of tablets are kept, each representing a dead ancestor. They are traditionally made of wood, but paper tablets have replaced wooden ones in certain Hong Kong families today, those who have left behind their older tablets on the mainland. In front of these tablets burns a dim lamp, near which are placed incense and candles. The first two Korean martyrs for their faith were Yun Chi-chung Paul and Kwon Sang-yeon James. They died because they did not keep tablets and refused to offer sacrifices to Yun's mother in 1791.

The hierarchical orientation in Confucianism has been strengthened in later developments, with its state philosophy in the Han Dynasty, the incorporation of Yin-yang metaphysics and of legalist notions of authority and obedience into this state orthodoxy. In the words of the Han thinker, Dong Zhongshu:

In all things, there must be correlates. Thus if there is the upper, there must be the lower... The Yin is the correlate of the Yang, the wife of the husband, the subject of the sovereign (quoted in Fung, 1962: 196).

From the Five Relationships, Dong selects the three ruler-subject, husband-wife and father-son. He calls them the “Three Bonds.” According to his reinterpretation, the sovereign is the master of the subject, the husband of the wife, the father of the son. The relationships continue to require reciprocal duties and responsibilities. But the superior partners have more rights, and the inferior more duties. The value of obedience, specifically practiced by the son, the minister, and the wife looms large in the ideology of the three bonds. Tu Wei-ming says this politicization of Confucian ethics fundamentally restructured the Five relationships, making them the “legalist mechanism of symbolic control rather than the interpersonal base for the realization of the Mencian idea of fiduciary community. Needless to say, the ethics of the three bonds as an integral part of this politicized Confucian mechanism of symbolic control is a far cry from the Mencian idea of the Five Relationship (Tu Wei-ming, 1993, 194).

c) Confucian Virtues

Confucius’ main legacy is the teaching in jen/ren. Etymologically, it is written with the radical “human” and the word for “two” or if one wishes, for a sign that might also be interpreted as “above.” It is pronounced the same as the word for human being.

Understandably, jen is always concerned with human relationship, with relating to others. It may also be explained as the virtue of the “superior man” the gentleman. It is associated with loyalty (Chung/Zhong), referring basically to loyalty to one’s own heart and conscience, rather than to a narrower political loyalty and reciprocity (Shu), respect of, and consideration for others (Analects 4:15).

Jen offers certain parallels to the Christian virtue of linear charity (Greek: agape). But it does not offer explicitly Heaven’s love for human beings as a reason and model for imitation. It is rather based on human nature itself, and is rooted in human sentiments as well as in a fundamental orientation of life (Ching, 1993: 58, 59). Along with jen (humanity), another concept important for Confucian philosophy is li (propriety). Herbert Fingarette’s book, “Confucius: The Secular as Sacred” points out the importance of li. Fingarette’s thesis was that Confucius’ philosophy elaborated two essential principles, humanity (jen) and propriety (li). The lever of his interpretative argument was the concept of performance in symbolic action, as contrasted with the mere meaning of the symbols. He showed that those things that constitute the human qualities of life—for instance, filial rather than biological connection, community rather than power relations, friendship rather than pragmatic cooperation—all consist in the performance of symbolic acts. The acts do not symbolize something else, as a sign means an object but in their performance indeed are the humanizing elements of life. Friendship is not described or signified by friendly behavior but consists in it (Neville, 2000: 89, Fingarette, 1972).

Perhaps the most important insight of Confucius and Xunzi, with almost no parallel in the West, is that the higher institutions of culture consist in the exercise of ritual propriety.

Considering the importance of concepts, humanity, propriety, reciprocity and loyalty, we can conclude that Confucianism views human beings not in themselves, or vis-à-vis God, but in relationship with others. Confucianism views humans not as individuals but as members of a community. Richard E Nisbett says as follows:

As philosopher Hu Shih writes, “In the Confucian human-centered philosophy man cannot exist alone; all action must be in the form of interaction between man and man.” The person always exists within settings—in particular situations where there are particular people with whom one has relationships of a particular kind—and the notion that there can be attributes or actions that are not conditioned on social circumstances is foreign to the Asian mentality (Nisbett, 2003:50).

So far we have observed that jen, the highest human excellence, must be given expression in interpersonal endeavors, propriety (li), necessary for self-cultivation and the ordering of society, in communal activities. In order to exercise Xiao (filial piety), I must have parents, or at least their memory.

William Theodore de Bary defines filial piety as the generic source of all virtue. He also says it maintains the spiritual continuity between the living and the dead, and links together the creative powers of Heaven, Earth and the Human Order (Oh, 2005: 122).

Tu Wei-ming argues that one of the fundamental Confucian values that ensure the integrity of ritual performance is filial piety. Confucius sees filial piety as the first step toward moral excellence. The way to enhance personal dignity and identity is not to alienate ourselves from the family but to cultivate our genuine feelings for our parents and siblings. The first test for our self-cultivation is our ability to cultivate meaningful relationships with our family members, the first of these are parents (Tu, 1985: 113-128).

Now we turn to the Christian morality which is based on the commandments of God, not on filial piety.

d) The Ten Commandments

The Ten Commandments appear in the Old Testament in two somewhat different formulae. That Ten words or commandments were given by God to Moses on Mount Sinai is incorporated into ancient Hebrew tradition (Ex 34:28; Dt 4:13, 10:4). The numeration of the Ten Commandments, however, has taken different forms throughout the ages.

- I. Philo, Josephus, Greek fathers, modern Greek and Reformed Churches: (1) Prohibition of false or foreign gods. (2) Prohibition of images. (3) Vain use of the divine name. (4) Sabbath. (5) Parents. (6) Murder. (7) Adultery. (8) Theft. (9) False Witness. (10) Covetousness.
- II. This division first appears in Origen and is used by Clement of Alexandria and Augustine, the modern Latin church and the Lutheran Church: (1) Prohibition of false Gods, the prohibition of images is either included in this commandment or suppressed in the enumeration. (2) Vain use of the divine name. (3) Sabbath. (4) Parents. (5) Murder. (6) Adultery. (7) Theft. (8) False Witness. (9) Coveting of Wife. (10) Coveting of goods.
- III. Modern Jews: (1) Introduction, "I am the Lord your God" etc. (2) Prohibition of false goods and images. (3) Vain use of the divine name. (4) Sabbath. (5) Parents. (6) Murder. (7) Adultery. (8) Theft. (9) False Witness. (10) Covetousness.

According to John L. McKenzie, the first of those three divisions is best according to sense and is probably the most original (McKenzie, 1965: 186). The first four commandments state duties toward God; the final six list duties toward human beings. Parents, the source of life, are representatives of God. But in this paper I will use the second division as the traditional one in the Catholic Church.

The covenant reflected in the spirit of the Ten Commandments is a major, formative image of the moral life. It expresses God's action of reaching out to us with faithful and steadfast love in the covenant, fulfilled in Jesus.

In this light we can appreciate the place of the Ten Commandments in the moral life. The commandments express in a kind of shorthand, the meaning of being a people covenanted to God and to one another. These are no mere code of laws placing arbitrary restrictions on the life of the people; rather, these are laws which make life in the community possible. The Decalogue considers first the nature of a covenanted people with God before it treats those responsibilities which pertain to living with one another as a covenanted people. In this way, the commandments proclaim that respect for others is entailed in a grateful and faithful response to God.

The context of the Commandments gives a clue to their meaning. The context is God, through Moses, making Israel a people not on the basis of their prior virtue or obedience, but simply on the basis of the divine gracious act of liberating them from Egyptian bondage.

Scholars tell us that in the Ten Commandments the more concrete ones were, indeed, minimalist and that the texts have meaning quite different from what we easily

presume. For example the Fourth Commandment only forbade cursing one's parents for to do so would, by implication, be to curse the source of one's own life, therefore oneself, and therefore the Lord who is the Lord of life. The Fifth Commandment prohibited killing within the community of covenanted people. Nothing was said about respecting the lives of foreigners. The Sixth Commandment really supported the "property rights" of a husband by forbidding sexual involvement with a married woman. The Seventh prohibited the kidnapping of Israelites freemen, the Eighth Commandment opposed only perjury in the court of law, and the Ninth and Tenth gave some protection to the man's dependents (wives, children, slaves) and property (O'Connel, 1990, p. 143).

While Confucian "Five Relationships" and "Three Bonds are about the human relationships for the prosperity and peace of society and the world through human self-cultivation, the Judeo-Christian commandments are about God and His Covenant people. To better understand the Christian ethics and its main emphasis, we need to examine how Jesus interpreted the Ten Commandments and what he stressed in regards to the commandments.

e) Jesus' Two Commandments

We begin with Jesus' teaching of the two "New" Commandments (Mt 22: 34-49; Mk 12:28-34; Lk 10:25-28) because these are so often contrasted with the Ten Commandments of the Old Law. The contrast is mistaken. For one thing, that posture of love which was summarized in the New Commandments was also a clearly central reality for the life of Israel. For the people of Israel, the love intimacy of the covenant was the only thing that gave meaning to their moral and religious lives.

It is also mistaken for another reason. And that is the fact that the New Law was part of the Old: “You shall love the Lord, Your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.” (Dt 6:5). And “you shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Lev 19:18). What is more, the existence of these two commandments, and their preeminence as a summary of “the whole law and prophets” was well known in the time of Jesus. We can presume that Jesus himself was well aware of them. For example, we can look at the text in Mark (12: 28-34). A scribe questions Jesus about the heart of the law. Jesus answers with the two commandments. The scribe responds: “You are right, Teacher.” These passages lead us to believe that Jesus is not really introducing some radically new concept.

So the proclamation of the New Commandments does not introduce any radically new ideas. But to say this is not to say that Jesus made no contribution whatever in his teaching. Rudolf Schnackenburg makes clear that this is not the case.

Jesus’ action was threefold; he revealed the indissoluble interior bond between the two commandments; he showed clearly that the whole law could be reduced to these and only these two chief commandments, and he reinterpreted “neighborly love” as “love of the nearest person,” that is he interpreted it in an absolutely universal sense. This last point was distilled from the Lukan version of the Good Samaritan (Schnackenburg, 1965: 95).

So we can conclude that Jesus did not introduce an altogether new concept in his preaching of the dual commandments of love. He took the materials of his own heritage, he shaped them according to his own vision, and in so doing he produced a special focus and thrust for his own moral teaching. He produced a moral ideal that St. Augustine

could summarize quite accurately in his famous dictum: “Love and do what you will.” (O’Connell, 1990: 145).

f) Jesus’ View of Family

Now we move to Jesus view of family which forms a striking contrast with the Confucian teaching about the family. We begin by reviewing his relationships with his own family and with his mother in particular. The Gospels leave us in no doubt that Jesus’ relationship with most of his relatives was strained and tense. Mark tells us that they thought he was out of his mind and felt compelled, as the solidarity of the family required, to take him in hand (3:21 Compare Jn 7:5). Perhaps his mother was among those relatives--we are not told. But we are told that she was among those who came to fetch him from the house in which he was “sitting around with the crowds.” (Mk 3:32-32 Parr). Perhaps she did not understand at the time what exactly he had in mind, just as Luke presents her as not understanding what he had in mind when at the age of twelve he told his parents that he remained in the Temple because he must be in his Father’s house (2:41-50). Later, she did come to understand (Jn 19:25-27).

Jesus was very seriously concerned that his love for his mother (or any other relative) should not be thought of as merely biological or family solidarity: “A woman in the crowd said: “Blessed is the womb that bore you and the breasts that nursed you!” But he said, “Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and obey it.” (Lk 11:27-28). Any particularly close and mutual solidarity between Jesus and his mother would have to be based upon the living out of God’s will. Jesus himself abandoned the usual solidarity of the family in order to make those around him into his brothers, sisters and mothers (Mk 3:31-35 Parr), so that whoever welcomed one of them welcomed him (Mt

10:40: Compare Mk 9:31 ff), and whatever was done to the least of them was done to him (Mt 2:40, 45) (Nolan, 1992: 77-78).

Neville refers to the story recorded in John 19:27 that, as he was hanging on the cross, Jesus told his mother to accept John as her son, and he told John to take Mary as his mother, reconstituting family caretaking responsibilities with an artificial, nonkinship family, when Jesus had living brothers (Neville recognizes the problem with the claim that Jesus had brothers). Jesus' point was not to do away with the symbolic power of family relations for the defining of love but rather to transfer them from the kinship family to a universal community now constituted under God as parent (Neville, 2000: 197).

So the choice is not either family or God, but both. The Second Vatican Council proclaims that from the wedlock of Christians there comes the family, in which new citizens of human society are born. The family is, so to speak, the domestic church (LgII, CCC1656). We can conclude that the Christians, the Church as the People of God, never reject family, but accept family in the Church and the Kingdom of God. In contrast, Confucianism puts utmost value on family relationship and filial piety.

II. Heaven (Tian) and God

a) Five Meanings of Heaven

The passages in the Analects that are most relevant to the religious question are those in which the term Tien (Romanized as Tian and normally translated as "Heaven") plays a prominent role. Benjamin Schwartz, in his discussion of the religious dimension in Confucius' thought, says, "If there is any central religious term in the Analects, it is the term "Heaven" (Schwartz, 1985: 122).

The Tian topic is also an extremely old one, and has plagued Western interpretations of Confucian texts since the time of Matteo Ricci (1552-1610), founder of the first Jesuit mission in China. Cook and Rosemont wrote:

Theologically there were two burning questions which divided the missionaries to China and the divisions quickly spread back to Europe. The first of these was whether the Chinese language did or did not contain a close lexical equivalent for the Christian “God.” If not, it must follow that the Chinese were all atheists. The Jesuit founder of the mission in China, Matteo Ricci, allowed two terms from the Chinese: Shang Di –“Superman Ancestor”—and Tian “Heaven” as equivalents for “God” (Van Norden, 2002: 77).

According to Fung Yu-lan, the word Tian has five meanings. Tian as the physical sky, as Ruler or God, as Fate, as Nature, as Ethical Principle (Fung, 1952, 31, Eno, 1990:4). Eno supports Fung’s divisions by saying as follows:

What is striking in the Confucian texts is the apparent promiscuity with which the various images are employed. In so terse a work as the Analects, which refers to Tian only a handful times, we can find exemplified the five dimensions in Fung’s analysis.

As the Sky:

The insurmountable height of Confucius’ achievements is comparable to the sky, to which no staircase can ascent (A:15, 25).

As Ruler:

At the age of fifty, I knew Tian’s command (A:2.4).

As Fate:

Wealth and status are up to Tian (A:12.5).

As Nature:

Tian does not speak, yet the four seasons turn, the myriad things are born (C:17.17).

As Ethical Principle:

Only Tian is great, only the Emperor Yao emulated it (A: 8:19).

Even the Xunzi which devotes an entire chapter to a discussion of Tian, proves to employ the term in most of these senses (Eno, 1990: 5, 132). But I contend that all three dimensions, except for the first one, the sky, and the fourth one, nature, can be applied to God from the Western point of view.

Tian in all its five meanings has had a great influence on the development of Chinese philosophy and especially in moral and political thought. These various facets of Tian have suggested an evolutionary process through which an increasingly sophisticated intellectual tradition gradually moved from a highly anthropomorphic religious cosmology toward a more rational philosophical view.

It is important to understand “Ming” in this connection. Like Tian, it has different meanings in Chinese philosophy. However, only the following two are significant. First it is what, as natural phenomena, is beyond human control. In that sense, Ming is the same as Tian in the third of the above five meanings. Mencius says, “That which is done when no one does it is due to Ming” (Mencius, 5A6). Second, Ming refers to the providence of Heaven, or the mandate of Heaven. In that sense, it is sometimes called Tian-ming or Tian-dao; and it corresponds to Tian in its last, that is, the fifth meaning

alone. As the superhuman power (the divine legislation) of all things, Tian has human beings carry out its will through giving them orders, which are Ming in the second sense.

b) Changes in Meaning of Heaven

But Tian is humanized and naturalized in Taoism. For Taoism, everything has its own Tao. Tao can be understood as the highest principle or law or the way things are. It certainly included the laws of nature. Tian has its own Tao, and so do human beings, in a different way. And the Tao of Tian and the Tao of human beings unite under the Tao itself, which is a completely naturalistic concept (Xiusheng Liu, 2003: 261-262).

Zeng Zi (around 360-280 BC) emphasizes that Tian is nature and that Tao of Tian means to let nature take its own course. He agrees with Lao Zi in making the distinction between Tian and human.

Mencius occasionally speaks of Tian as the master of all things (Mencius, 5A5: 6B15). But more often and more importantly, he considers Tian as the universal objectivity of moral and political laws. In that regard, following Confucius, he associates Tian with human nature (xing). “One who exerts his heart (mind, feelings, mental constitution, etc.) knows one’s nature. One who knows one’s nature, knows Tian. To preserve one’s mind and to nourish one’s nature is the way to serve Tian” (Mencius, 7A1).

The idea of the unity of Tian and human nature, a major theme of Chinese philosophy is held by key philosophers. Chief among them include Dong Zhongshu (169-104 BC), Zhang Zai (1020-77), Cheng Hao (1032-85), and Cheng Yi (1033-1107), Zhu Xi (1130-1200), Wang Shouren (1472-1529), and Wang Fuzhi (1619-92). Neo-Confucianism goes so far as to identify Tian with li (logos, the principles of morals), as

well as Tian with human nature. Tian as a superhuman power now entirely drops out of the picture. Its place is taken by human beings who are by nature capable of moral perfectibility.

Xunzi agreed with Taoism on the division between Tian and human, but criticized it for allowing human beings to do nothing but follow nature. He agrees with Mencius on the perfectibility of human beings but criticized him for claiming that Tian establishes Jen Hsing (human nature) as goodness.

While all major philosophers by his time had turned to a humanized and naturalized notion of Tian, Mo Zi, the founder of Moism, remodeled Tian and posed a notion of the will of Tian to serve as the basis of moral and political principle. According to him, Tian has its own will, and it dictates the principles for human life (Xiusheng Liu, 2003: 204).

“Those who obey the will of Tian love universally and benefit each other and will surely obtain rewards. Those who oppose the will of Tian set themselves apart from each other, hate each other, and injure each other, and will surely incur punishment” (ibid., 264).

c) Other Names Related to Heaven

We have reviewed how the concepts of Tian have changed in connection with the development of Chinese philosophy. We now turn to another word Di or Shandi. It is assumed that Heaven as a natural deity (Sky God) of the Zhou tribe was transformed into the supreme ruler of the Zhou Dynasty, partly in its association with the anthropomorphic character, Di, or Shangdi, the Supreme Lord of the Shang Dynasty, which is now believed to have derived its corporate or generic dimension from an early conception of

the “fathers” of a lineage. Di or Shangdi was continually revered as the Supreme Lord during the first years of the Zhou Dynasty until it was realized that belief in the Lord would be a dangerous antagonist and potential rallying point for the Shang opposition. Political needs accelerated the process of promoting Heaven to the highest rank in the spiritual world and merging Heaven and the Lord in the manner most acceptable to the people (Yao, 2000: 143).

Other than Shang-Di and Tian, the Chinese language included names like Shen (Spirit) or T'ai-Chi (the Ultimate). For the Christian missionaries, how to use these words for God was rendered all the more complex as the usage of some of these terms in the early Confucian Classics tended to signify a greater degree of transcendence and personhood while the later Neo-Confucian commentaries interpreted the same words in a much more metaphysical sense, emphasizing the mutual near-identity of the Absolute and the Universe, in an integrated “organismic” philosophy of immanence. Besides, the usage of the selfsame terms on the popular level, through the influence of Buddhism and Taoist religions, was even more diverse, bringing in strands of what appeared to be animist and polytheist beliefs. The Jesuit missionaries followed the example of Matteo Ricci in an effort of cultural accommodation. After examining the Chinese Classics, they argued between Shang-di and Tian, and settled publicly for Tien-zhu (Lord of Heaven), Lord also of whatever Heaven may represent to the Chinese, while continuing occasionally to refer to the Lord of Heaven as Lord-on-High or Heaven. In Korea, the God-language presented less of a problem than in China, in part because Christianity was introduced through the medium of Chinese books and Chinese language, for the first time, probably in the early seventeenth century. Besides, the Korean language always

had its own term for a supreme being endowed with personality attributes; Hananim, or Hanunim, the God of their indigenous beliefs, originally associated with their mythical ancestor, Tangun (Ching, 1978:21, Chung, 2001: 169). Since we have looked at Chinese and Korean words for their supreme being, a study of Judeo-Christian God is in order.

d) The Old Testament God

We have found that the two names Shang Di and Tian are joined together during the Zhou Dynasty to designate the one supreme being, the all embracing power.

Similarly, in early Israelite religion, there were also two different names for God which, as we know, were what initially made possible a distinction in the Five books of Moses (the Pentateuch) between Yahwist and Eloist sources.

1. On the one hand, there was Yahweh (the Hebrew word YHWH). The name was explained to Moses in the burning bush scene with “ehjeh aser ehjeh”, rendered as “I am who I am” by the Greek translators, the Church Fathers, and the scholastics.

It is our task to read out of the text what the people of old heard in the text. According to John Courtney Murray, there are three major possibilities for interpretation. In summary, the first is the most familiar to readers of classical English version of the Bible, Protestant and Catholic: “I am who I am.” God affirms himself to be the Absolutely Existent One to whose being there is no limit or restriction. His very Name is Being, as false gods and idols are nullities, nothingness, and therefore nameless. This sense is valid and true; it is in the text. But it could be understood only later when the Hebrew ear had become attuned to metaphysical resonances through contact with Hellenistic

culture. Then it appeared in the Septuagint (Greek) version; “I am he who is.” Murray, like many exegetes, put aside this exegesis.

The second interpretation takes the verb in a causative sense; “I make to be whatever comes to be.” This sense has good philological warrant and would not be historically anachronistic. The belief that God is the Maker of All was present among the Israelites from the beginning. But it may be doubted that the original hearers of the divine Name understood this cosmological implication. To them, Yahweh was in the first instance the God of their Fathers, who created the people, who was the Lord of the People, the Power behind their history. So Murray again does not favor this exegesis.

There is a third interpretation which he, like many other exegetes, considers more satisfactory because it yields a more adequate exegetical understanding. It asserts that, in the enigmatic play on words and in the Name Yahweh that embodies its sense, Moses and his people heard not the affirmation that God is or that he is Creator but the promise that he would be. God’s utterance of his Name is to be understood in the light of the promise to Moses that precedes it (“I will be with you”) and which in another form follows it. “I will help you to speak and will tell you what you have to say” (4:12). The sense of the verb “to be” is relational, or intersubjective. Murray completes this exegesis by saying that the text contains a threefold revelation of God’s immanence in history, of his transcendence to history, and of his transience through history. God first asserts the fact of his presence in the history of his people: “I shall be there.” Second, he asserts the mystery of his own being: “I shall

be there as who I am.” His mystery is a mode of his absence. Third, he asserts that, despite his absence in mystery, he will make himself known to his people: “As who I am shall I be there.” The mode of his transference is through his action, through the saving events of the sacred history of Israel (Murray, 1963: 8,9,10).

2. On the other hand, there was the term Elohim (originally plural from El, meaning God), designating a plurality of gods but used in the Old Testament (with the singular verb) for one god—indeed, most often for the one true God. The concept of God was then extended; “As abstract plural this word corresponds to our idea of Godhead and tends to signify the notion of divine might in a personal unity” (Eichrodt, 1961: 185, Kung 1989: 100).
3. Both words were also fused, later on in the Old Testament: “that you might know the Lord (Yahweh) is God (Elohim); there is no other besides him” (Dt, 4:35) expresses such a process, although in contrast to Tian and especially Tao, even “Elohim” retains a thoroughly personal character.

e) The Triune God

Unlike Confucian Tian, the Christian God is personal God. The person implies relation which is expressed as triune.

According to Karl Barth, the doctrine of the Trinity served as a criterion for distinguishing the God of the Bible from other gods. This is the question of criteria. Christian Trinitarian theology, anchoring itself within the biblical and classical

theological parameters, maintains that the talk about Father, Son and Spirit is the only possible way of identifying the God of the Bible. That the only way to talk about God is to refer to the Father, Son and Spirit naturally resists the temptation of mythologizing the concept of God and changing it into generic talk about the “Ultimate Reality” as in Hick. Furthermore, it presupposes and establishes both Christological and pneumatological structures. Christ’s divinity as well as his incarnation is to be posited, unless Trinitarian faith is to be divorced from “real” history. Any kind of mythologization or “generalization” of the incarnation that divorces the man Jesus of Nazareth from the incarnation resists Trinitarian understanding. As Karl Rahner says, Christ is the definitive revelation of God. Trinitarian doctrine also integrally links the talk about the Spirit to the Father and Son and refutes those kinds of pneumatological theologies of religions in which the Spirit is made an itinerant, independent deputy, or excessively important person.

The “Catechism of the Catholic Church” emphasizes: The mystery of the Most Holy Trinity is the central mystery of the Christian faith and of Christian life. God alone can make it known to us by revealing himself as Father, Son and Holy Spirit (CCC 62, 1994: 261). The Christian God is triune God definitively revealed by the Jesus Christ who took flesh in history. The Confucian God (or Heaven) is an anthropomorphic image of the human being. Julia Ching says we have the same God. But she goes on to say, there are some differences. The word “Yahweh” implies a notion of self-subsistence, but cannot be directly expressed in the Chinese language which lacks the verb “to be”. While both Yahweh and Lord-on-High (God’s other names in Chinese) are presented as giver of

life and lord of history, the Confucian tradition has never developed a theory of creation ex nihilo (Ching, 1977: 43).

We maintain that the Christian God is different from Chinese Heaven or Lord-on-High in their respective perceptions and historical manifestations. Neville argues that Confucian symbols have only faint reminiscence of divine intentionality, little stronger than “the mandate of heaven,” for instance. By contrast, Christian symbols of the ultimate are redolent with intentionality even when the underlying metaphysical conception puts that aside apophatically (as in Thomas Aquinas, or Tillich) (Neville, 2000: 208). All these lead us to believe that Confucius and Christians mean two different realities when they talk about God.

III. The Confucian Person and the Christian Person

Karl Rahner’s vision of the whole of theology opened with the human person, who is the “hearer” of the Christian message. Thus he begins not with God, not with Scripture, nor with the teaching of the Church, but with the person who is presupposed by Christianity as the hearer of its Gospel. He addresses the person as a whole, both as human—in our everyday experience of ourselves, other, the world—and a Christian familiar with and already influenced by the Christian message. This focus on the meaning of the whole of human life, so distinctive in Rahner’s thought, is signaled in the term “anthropology.”

a) The Confucian Person

Like Rahner’s “anthropology,” Confucianism as a science is about human being. It is no exaggeration to say that Confucianism is all about the human person to be perfected through self-discipline. But rather than elaborate on a greater part of the

Confucian human being, I will focus on a few aspects which could throw light on its comparison with the Christian person. Thereafter I will briefly review the Christian concept of personhood in light of these comparisons.

People sometimes describe Confucianism as a kind of secular humanism on the grounds that it does not pay sufficient attention to the spiritual dimension. It is indeed true that Confucianism is first concerned with life rather than death and with humans rather than spirits. However it does not follow that the Confucian understanding of self is totally preoccupied with secularity and temporality. Many Confucians believe that the self is endowed with a transcendental “spirit,” which if fully developed would enable one to be a coordinator of the world, a guardian of natural and social processes, and a partner in the creative transformation of Heaven and Earth. The close relationship between the metaphysical or transcendental way and secular human life is demonstrated in the first paragraph of the Doctrine of the Mean; “What Heaven imparts to human is called human nature. To follow our nature is called the Way. Cultivating the Way is called education. The Way cannot be separated from us for a moment. What can be separated is not the Way” (Chan, 1963: 98).

The Confucian Classics do not deny one’s creatureship or kinship in relation to Heaven. In fact, there are several explicit references (Ching, 1978, 71). According to Ching, they are Book of Documents, Part 4, Book 2; Book of Odes, Part 3, Book 3. The Confucian Classics make the affirmation not by appeal to creation myths, but by emphasizing the common human nature which all have received from Heaven. This is inherent in the very term for “human nature,” the Chinese word *hsing*, a compound including the terms for mind or heart (*hsin*), and life or offspring (*sheng*). Scholars of

philology demonstrate the association between its etymology and early religious worship. The human being is the one who has received the gift of life and all the innate endowments of human nature from Heaven (Munro, 1969: 65-67).

Humans acquire self-knowledge by differentiating themselves from other animals, and by identifying themselves with other humans. Like all animals, it is the nature of humans that when they are hungry they will desire satisfaction, when cold they will desire warmth, and when weary they will desire rest (Xunzi: Basic Writings, Ching, 1978: 72). These are the words of Xunzi (fl. 298-238 BC) who adds that humans are born evil, but are able to act against their natural inclinations. To be “human,” after all, is to be able to acquire the perfect virtue of benevolence of “humanity” (jen). As the Doctrine of the Mean puts it, “The meaning of jen (virtue) is humanity.”

The Confucian focus on a common human nature has led to another realization; the natural equality of all persons. For Christians, this doctrine would come more directly from humankind’s common origin as creatures and children of God. For Confucians, the importance is placed on a common moral nature, and an ability to discern good from evil, which is rooted in a common mind or heart. Indeed, this natural equality exists in spite of social hierarchy, and even in spite of any distinction between the civilized—the Chinese and the “barbarians,” argues Donald J Munro (Munro, 2001: Chap 1). Munro contrasts this Chinese descriptive concept of equality to the Western evaluative equality of persons. This leads us to the problem of evil and sagehood.

b) The Problem of Evil in Confucianism

Most Confucians take the view that evil is not a metaphysical or ontological concept because “what is called evil is not original evil” (Chan, 1963: 529). That is to

say, the Confucian concept of evil does not denote a metaphysical or ontological reality. It is simply a moral concept, designating a kind of moral situation in which human activities are conducted in a wrong way.

As all the individuals are believed to become good, according to Confucianism, a natural question that follows is whether they can be good because they already have all the potentialities within or they can become good because they are guided by the rules of propriety and by the instructions and models of the sage. The Confucian debate about those two options was inaugurated by Xunzi in his argument against Mencius, and these two options lead to two different theories concerning human nature. Believing that good is fundamental and evil is the deviation from good, Mencius insists that human beings are born with goodness, in goodness, and for goodness, and that this is as clear as the natural tendency of water to flow downwards and of a tree to grow upwards.

Since Mencius presumes that humans are originally good, then where does evil come from? Mencius answered this question by giving three explanations. First of all, the nature (hsing) with which we are born has only provided the beginning or potentiality for us to do good, but not all individuals will develop from the beginning or can fully realize their potentiality. Secondly, the innate goodness is fragile and, being subject to erosion by external influence, needs to be preserved and cultivated. He argued that the nature of all human beings contained innate goodness, and that some of them became bad or evil because they had been deprived of their “natural growth” (Mencius, 6A: 8).

Thirdly, Mencius argues that we are responsible for most of our failure to become fully good. Subject to the same influence, some people become good and even became sages, while others degenerate, depending upon whether they retain their good

hearts/minds or let these go. He concludes that evil is none other than underdevelopment, deprivation, degradation and non-completion of our original good nature. One's original goodness cannot be totally eradicated by whatever erosion or corruption one may suffer. Learning and education would be sufficient to help one seek the lost heart and by natural growth and conscious cultivation its original goodness could be restored.

Xunzi challenged Mencius by his theory of human nature. "The nature of man is evil; his goodness is the result of his activity" (Chan, 1963: 128). The difference in their doctrines of human nature comes from their different understandings of the nature of Heaven. Following the thesis that Heaven is the source of virtue and moral sanction of behavior, Mencius reasoned that humans are innately oriented towards the good. But based on the naturalistic doctrine that Heaven is Nature or Natural Law, Xunzi argues that human beings are born with natural instincts which, if not guided and controlled, will bring about bad behavior and jeopardize social justice and communal interests.

Thus, Xunzi believes that we are born with bad tendencies rather than an inclination to morality. For Xunzi our so-called "inborn nature" is something that is not acquired by learning and practice, while moral qualities are what we have to pursue and practice. Propriety and righteousness are not innate in us. Rather they are created by sages to restrict human nature; humans naturally desire to eat when hungry, while propriety requires them to serve their elders first; humans naturally desire to rest when exhausted, while righteousness requires them to relieve others first: "If one follows his natural feeling, he will have no deference or compliance. Deference and compliance are opposed to his natural feelings. From this point of view, it is clear that one's nature is evil and that this goodness is the result of one's activity" (Chan, 1963: 129-30).

The two doctrines of human nature propagated by Mencius and Xunzi were subsequently combined or adapted by later Confucians. Prominent among them are Dong Zhongshu, Wang Chong, Yang Xiong, Han Yu and Li Ao. Some upheld that human nature contains both good and bad elements, while others maintain that human nature is good in some people and bad in others, and others again insisted that human nature is good while the emotions are bad. Regardless of their different positions, their primary task was to reduce evil and to increase goodness. They argued that this could be done through internal cultivation at the personal level and through external instruction at the social level. At the social level, Confucianism emphasizes the importance of education. Dong Zhongshu, for instance, argues that Heaven has provided human beings with good material but humans are unable to become wholly good. Thus Heaven establishes kingship to make us good by way of education.

Neo-Confucianism established Mencius as the orthodox transmitter of the Confucian way and his understanding of the goodness of human nature as the authentic Confucian doctrine. Wang Yang-ming argued that there is no distinction between good and evil in the original substance of the mind and such distinction only appears when the will becomes active. Therefore, “The highest good is the original substance of the mind. When one deviates from this original substance, there is evil. It is not that there is a good and there is an evil to oppose it. Therefore good and evil are one thing” (Ibid: 684). Although emphasizing the unity of good and evil, those Neo-Confucians did not mean that good and evil are both desirable. For them, it is important to know what good and evil are, and it is more important “to do good and to remove evil” (Yao, 2000: 165).

c) Sagehood in Confucianism

The problem of evil is all the more important on account of the problem of self-transcendence. Recognition of moral evil and human fallibility is a prerequisite to any desire and resolution to transcend oneself. Human nature is both given and the yet to become—that which we can shape within the limitations of our historical situation (Ching, 1978: 79).

For Confucians, the ultimate good of the learning is to be a sage, an ideal whose intelligence and virtue has been manifest to the utmost. One of the fundamental beliefs in the Confucian tradition is that everybody is capable of becoming a sage (Mencius, 6B:2, Xunzi, 23:5). All the programs in the Confucian learning and practice are designed to help the learner to attain sagehood. However, prior to Neo-Confucianism the only people who were called sages were the sage-kings of antiquity and Confucius. However, most Neo-Confucians see sagehood as a realistic outcome of moral transformation and the ultimate sign of spiritual cultivation: “The sage aspires to become Heaven, the worthy aspires to become a sage and the gentleman aspires to become worthy (in Jinsi Lu, quoted from Yao, 2002: 216).

Confucianism considers spiritual cultivation to be a personal experience that needs “carefulness when alone” (Shendu) and “sincerity” (Cheng). Cheng “means not only sincerity in the narrow sense, but also honesty, absence of fault, seriousness, being true to one’s true self, being true to the nature of being, actuality, realness” (Chan, 1963: 465, fn. 28). Believing Heaven and humans to be the same in essence, the Book of Mencius and the Doctrine of the Mean see sincerity as central to the Unity of Heaven and humanity because sincerity is the Way of Heaven while to think how to be sincere is the

way of humans. Thus sincerity is taken as the foundation of the Five Relations and guarantee of achievement in moral cultivation: without sincerity, one cannot please one's parents and cannot understand what is good (Mencius, 4A: 12). One who possesses complete sincerity can transform oneself as well as others, and one who cannot transform oneself and others has not yet been full of sincerity. Neo-Confucians inherited this tradition and considered sincerity as the root of spiritual growth.

Tu Wei-ming maintains that each person can move away from being self-centered and become a sage through the cultivation of his or her will. This thesis is predicated upon the Mencian concept of human perfectibility and Wang Yang-ming's emphasis on the human will. Establishing of will (li-chih) as an inner decision is the first step of Wang's four principle of self-cultivation. Tu insists, "one's greatest task in life is to become a sage. How to become a sage, however, never begins with an external method but with an inner decision." It demands not only a complete commitment of one's whole body and mind, but also continuous assurance (Oh, 2005: 76).

d) The Christian Person

Now we examine the Christian concept of being human. The Christian or biblical human being never stands alone. The Christian human being is in relation to God who is the Creator, the Ruler and the Judge.

The opening chapters of Genesis, the first book of the Old Testament, tell a story of the divine creation of the whole world, including human beings. The question immediately arises whether we should read these passages literally narrating historical events or see them as a set of myths that may express important truths about the human condition, but not at the level of history of science. Two large problems hinder any

attempt to see literal truth here. One is that the text itself displays internal inconsistencies, for there are two different creation stories in Genesis, at 1:1-2:4 and at 2:5-25, which give incompatible accounts at several points (especially on the creation of woman). Old Testament scholars have concluded that the book of Genesis must have been put together by ancient editors from two sources (usually labeled P and J). The other difficulty for a literal reading is, of course, the inconsistency of such an interpretation with the results of modern cosmology, geology and biology.

I think that the symbolic readings of the creation stories can make more sense if it is ultimately inspired by God. This story is widely interpreted as a myth expressing deep religious truth about the human condition rather than history or science. I will ask what the text says symbolically about human nature, and will endeavor to examine what it says with an open-minded spirit.

The Hebrew conception of humanity sees us as existing primarily in relation to God, who has created us to occupy a special position in the universe. We have a certain degree of power over nature; we domesticate animals and grow most of our food for agriculture. As Genesis 1:26 puts it, humankind is made in the image of God, to have dominion over the rest of creation. Human beings uniquely have something of the rationality and personhood of God. We are rational beings, but we are also persons, we have self-consciousness, freedom of choice, and the capacity for personal relationships and love, especially for fellowship with God.

But although human beings are thus seen as having a special role compared to the rest of Creation, we are at the same time continuous with nature. We are made of “dust from the ground “(Genesis 2:7), that is, of the same matter that composes the rest of the

world. It is a common and recurrent misinterpretation of the biblical doctrine of human nature that there exists a dualism between the material body and an immaterial soul or spirit. But a dualism is a Greek idea (as in Plato), but not a biblical idea.

The human is not merely a body (that is materialism). Nor is the human merely a soul (that is spiritualism). Nor is the human person two beings, like a ghost in a machine (that would be dualism). The human is one being in two dimensions, bodily and spiritual (Kreeft, 2001:59).

The relation of women to men in the Hebrew scheme of creation is somewhat ambiguous from the start. One creation story represents the whole human race as created together (Genesis 1:27); the other tells us of Eve being made out of Adam's rib (Genesis 2:21-23). One account suggests equality, where as the other suggests dependence of woman on man.

e) The Sinful Person

Probably the most crucial point in the biblical understanding of human nature is the notion of freedom, conceived of as the choice between obedience to God's will, faith in Him, and love for Him—or disobedience, faithlessness, and pride. “The necessity for choice between obedience and disobedience, good and evil, is presented early on in Genesis 2:16-17.

Given this doctrine of humanity as made by God, the diagnosis of what is basically wrong with human kind follows. We are infected with sin, we misuse our God given free will, we choose evil rather than good, and we therefore disrupt our relationship to God (Isaiah 59:2). There are people who believe that the Fall is not a particular historical event: the story of the temptation of Adam and Eve to eat the forbidden fruit of

the tree of knowledge (Genesis 3:1-24) should be also read as a parable rather than history. But the “Catechism of the Catholic Church” says,

The account of the fall in Genesis 3 uses figurative language, but affirms a primeval event, a deed that took place at the beginning of the history of man. Revelation gives us the certainty of faith that the whole of human history is marked by the original fault freely committed by our first parents (CCC: 390).

If God has made us for fellowship with Himself, and if we have turned away and broken our relationship to Him, then we need God to forgive us and restore the relationship.

Hence we have the idea of salvation, a regeneration of humanity made possible by the mercy, forgiveness, and love of God. In the Old Testament we find the recurring theme of a “covenant,” a quasi-legal agreement like that between a powerful conqueror and a subject state, made between God and His chosen people. But none of these covenants seems to be totally effective in fulfilling God’s will; sin does not disappear from the face of the earth. So hope begins to be expressed for some new divine initiative of salvation, the idea of the coming of a Messiah, whom Christians identify in the figure of Jesus.

The doctrine of “original sin” does not imply that we are totally and utterly depraved. It does imply that nothing we can do can be perfect by God’s standards. All have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23) (Stevenson, 1998: 80). We find ourselves conflicted when we often recognize what we ought to do, but somehow we do not do it. Regarding this, John Macquarrie says “Indeed, as Reinhold Niebuhr has cryptically said, sin, if not necessary, seems to have been at any rate inevitable. For how could humans live in the tensions we have described—animality and rationality, individualism and collectivism, finitude and freedom—without falling on the one side or the other?” (Macquarrie, 1972:62).

St Paul says in Romans, “I do not understand my own action. I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate” (Romans 7:15). The fall of humanity somehow involves the whole creation in evil (Romans 8:22); everything is in some way “short of the glory of God.” It is in the New Testament, in the life, ministry, and death of Jesus, and in the writings of his followers (especially St. Paul) that we find the distinctively Christian idea of salvation. The central point is that God was uniquely present in one particular human person, Jesus, and that God uses the life, death and resurrection of Jesus to restore us to a right relationship with Himself.

f) The Incarnation and Atonement

The most central Christian claim is surely a unique act of God in one particular person in one episode of human history. This is the doctrine of incarnation. And equally important is the idea of atonement, that the particular historical events of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus are the means by which God reconciles His creation to Himself. Now let us move on to the important concept of atonement. Broadly speaking, the term atonement refers to a reconciled state of “at-one-ness” between parties that were alienated in some manner (Beilby and Eddy, 2006: 9).

Some theologians tracing their roots to the twelfth century theologian Peter Abelard (1079-1142), have pictured God as sending his Son to die for the world as a demonstration of God’s love, which was meant to evoke a response of faith and love among people who were alienated from the love of God. Abelard, like Pelagius, opposed original sin.

Others, both Catholics and Protestants, following the tradition of Abelard’s older contemporary St. Anselm (1033-1109), have argued that sin infringed on God’s honor or

law and that the balance had to be redressed. The cross thus became a way of restoring the balance, a method designed to satisfy God's honor, his justice or his law.

Again other theologians, in particular a number of early Church fathers, interpreted the death of Jesus as the climactic battle between God and Satan—a battle won by God, either by means of a transaction or by means of deception. Various versions of this early Christ Victor view of the atonement are gaining in popularity today (Boersma, 2004: 39-40).

By way of comparison between Confucianism and Christianity Tu Wei-ming's theory is to the point. He says there is a fundamental difference between the Confucian way to sagehood and the Christian approach to salvation. Tu insists that "the qualitative change in Confucianism, unlike its counterpart in Christianity, is not an either-or leap of faith, but a both-and return to the self" (Tu, 1978: 89,90). He further explains that fundamental difference: since Confucianism is not a revealed religion the establishment of the will is not so much a mystic experience of the transcendent absolute as it is an enlightening experience of the immanent self. Therefore the never-ending process it entails does not take the form of a dialogical relationship with the "wholly other," but rather it takes the form of a dialectical development of the self (Tu, 1978: 89, 90). Tu Wei-ming wants to answer the question about selfhood as a transcendent reference point regarding how we are to understand its linkages with ultimate ideas such as Heaven and Way. It deserves full quotation.

The answer lies in the Confucian conception of the self not only as a center of relationships but also as a dynamic process of spiritual development. Ontologically, selfhood, our original nature, is endowed by Heaven. It is therefore divine in its all-embracing fullness. Selfhood, in this sense, is both immanent and transcendent. It is intrinsic to us; at the same time, it belongs to

Heaven. So far, this conception may appear to be identical to the Christian idea of humanity as divinely circumscribed. By analogy, Confucian selfhood, original human nature, can be seen as God's image in man. However, the transcendence of Heaven is significantly different from the transcendence of God. The Mencian thesis that a full realization of our minds can lead us to a comprehension of our nature and eventually to an understanding of Heaven is predicated on the belief that our selfhood is a necessary and sufficient condition for us to appreciate in total the subtle meanings of the mandate of Heaven. To translate this into Christian terms, it means that humanity itself, without God's grace, can fully realize its circumscribed divinity to such an extent that the historical Jesus as God incarnated symbolizes no more than a witness of what people ought to be able to attain on their own. After all, Christ is also called the Great Exemplar. However, this claim exhibits a family resemblance to the notorious Confucian pelagianism; the denial of original sin, the assertion that we are endowed with the freedom of will not to sin, and the avowal that we as human beings have the unassisted initiating power to appropriate the necessary grace for salvation. Indeed, the Confucian position does not even consider grace relevant to self-realization (Tu, 1985: 125).

According to Tu, Confucian selfhood is not only a center of relationships but also a dynamic process of spiritual development. By analogy, Confucian selfhood can be seen as God's image in humans. But the self knows how to realize and perfect oneself without God's grace. This self does not know "original sin." So the incarnation of Christ is not only not necessary but also not understandable unless he is seen as the Great Exemplar.

The Confucian "idea" of incarnation, if it ever happens, seems to be compatible with the Abelardian concept to some extent. Abelard, as is well known, argued in his commentary on the letter to the Romans that the cross is the ultimate demonstration of the love of God and as such makes an appeal to us to respond in kind. Speaking about the death of Christ, Abelard commented that "It is evident that all this was done in order that he (i.e., Christ) might show how great a love he had for men and so inflame them to greater love in return" (Boersma, 2004: 115).

To be much more compatible with the Confucian idea of incarnation expressed in Tu's theory, Abelardian theory of atonement needs to be adapted. But there is commonality between them because both take Christ as a teacher or an exemplar especially in his life, and both oppose original sin.

According to Robert Cumings Neville, many have assumed that Confucians must find the Christian doctrine of Jesus as the incarnation of God to be deeply mistaken because it supposes, on the one hand, too much transcendence in God, and on the other hand, too much immanence of divinity in Jesus (Neville, 2000: 194).

One of Korea's leading Confucian scholars, Yi Ik rejected the incarnation along with revelation and miracles of Tienzhu (God) as absurd.

They say that there were many who followed desire and few who followed the truth, so Tienzhu had sympathy for them and came down to Israel to save us by being born of a virgin. His name is Jesus—it is good for them to reject Buddhism, but they do not realize that they have fallen into absurdity along with Buddhism. If Tienzhu has such sympathy for man that he might appear as an apparition or give advice, how can he bear the pain of going all around the world where there are so many miserable people? (Keum, 2000: 159).

It seems to be too simple a dispute. In the Confucian view, Tian can exist in every human universally, but his incarnation into a specific form is irrational and self-contradictory (Ibid, 159). So they could not accept the theory that immanence, supposed to be in every person, is uniquely and densely embodied in Jesus. This rejection looks different from Tu's perspective, but reasonable from Confucians' point of view. The central Christian claim is that the fullness of God's self-gift is given once for all and forever in the life, death and destiny of Jesus. In him the full self-revelation of God is

present in a unique and unsurpassable fashion. In him we have not simply words about God, but the Word who is God.

Confucianists seem to have difficulty understanding God enfleshed in the particular person Jesus, in other words the scandal of particularity. However, Michael J Himes and Kenneth R. Himes argue: Maintaining the incarnation in its fullness is the foundation of the sacramental principle: what is true always and everywhere must be expressed sometime somewhere. A sacrament is any person or thing, action or event, which occasions the realization and grateful acceptance of that which is always true but not always acknowledged. Thus the omnipresence of grace both allows and requires the manifestation of grace in particular acts and words (Himes, 1993: 130).

IV. Considering the Comparative Theology Model

In order for a theology of religion to be adequate to the needs of Christians today, it must equip us to deal responsibly and creatively with diversified religions. Christians must also be faithful to the demands of the Christian tradition regarding the uniqueness of Jesus Christ in the salvation of the world as well as the universal will of God to save.

Concerning morality, the Ten Commandments are the revealed will of God. They have two tablets. The first one expresses the fundamental requirement that our relationship with God must be concrete. The commandments of the second tablet treat the realization of the essential components of the human person in conformity with what God designs for him or her.

Confucians base their ethics on the Five Relationships and the Three Bonds, which means they situate human beings in existential relationship with families and other

people. This relational aspect of human beings are very helpful for Christians. According to Robert Bellah this is especially true for Americans who are overly individualistic.

With regard to God, the Christian God is a triune and personal God. Person means relationship. The confession of faith in God as a person necessarily includes the acknowledgement of God as one who relates, one who communicates, one who is fruitful (Ratzinger, 1969:128).

Christianity is unique in that it offers a personal revelation of God not offered in other religions. In an effort to lessen or alleviate the uniqueness of Christianity and to enhance its compatibility with other religions, the uniqueness of Jesus is sometimes not emphasized. John Hick even argues that we don't take the image of the Son of God literally as a fact but rather take it to mean more about ourselves than about Jesus. He also maintains that divine incarnation is a metaphor, so the incarnation of Jesus means we can encounter God through Jesus (Hick, 1993: 99-110). So Jesus was consciously relativized, reduced to one religious genius among others.

In pristine Confucianism we meet a more humanized Tian. As long as it is not tainted by Buddhism, Taoism, or naturalism, the Confucian god image can be communicable.

Regarding human beings, Christians maintain that we cannot save ourselves without grace; Confucians argue that we can be sages through self cultivation.

These themes lead us to the doctrine of grace. Historically the doctrine of grace revolved around two main controversies; the Pelagian crisis in the fifth century and that initiated by the reformers in the sixteenth century. Until the fifth century the doctrine of the human's divinization through Christ in the Spirit had been quietly possessed by the

Church, though never articulated in official documents. Pelagius questioned its very essence. He so stressed human freedom and the role of the human's moral effort as to underestimate the need for God's grace and lead to the belief that humans are made self-sufficient.

Against this tendency toward complete self-reliance the necessity of grace in everyone's life had to be affirmed by the Church. The crisis of the Reformation came from the opposite direction. The Reformers considered human nature as so damaged by original sin that it is intrinsically incapable of any good action. Against this pessimism, the Council of Trent asserted the intrinsic nature of one's justification in Christ.

Karl Rahner says "we can and must hold the doctrine 'by grace alone' with an ardor which is both Christian and Catholic. And much of what provoked the protest of Evangelical Christianity at the time of the Reformation, for example, the doctrine of freedom, the doctrine of merit, and the doctrine of so-called infused grace, could perhaps at the time, and certainly can now be recognized as a mutual misunderstanding and can be laid to rest" (Rahner, 1978: 360). No wonder, on October 31, 1999, exactly 482 years after Martin Luther nailed his ninety-five theses for debate on a Wittenberg church door, Cardinal Edward Cassidy of the Vatican and German Lutheran bishop Christian Krause, in the meeting in Augsburg, signed "The Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification." Leaving the polemics of the past centuries aside, the declaration expresses agreement that forgiveness and salvation arise from God's grace, while good works flow from that newly acquired condition in people (Bliss, 1999: 118).

When Christians follow a "grace alone theology" it leaves us too passive in our own redemption. Confucianism offers a good counterpoint to this perspective, especially

the Confucian idea of self-cultivation and Xunzi's thoughts. Xunzi thought that rituals and other conventional behaviors need to be taught for heaven-given nature to find a properly human expression, that is, the way of being human.

4: The Background of the Korean Catholicism

German philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer (1900-2002) is renowned for his work on the theory of interpretation, and for exploring what has come to be known as “reader-response theory”. According to this theory, the meaning of a text is never a function of pure facts about the author and his original public; it is equally a function of the historical situation of the interpreter. The leading metaphor is that of a “fusion of horizon” created when the historically situated author and the equally historically situated reader manage to create a shared meaning. He states:

In fact the horizon of the present is continually in the process of being formed because we are continually having to test all our prejudices. An important part of this testing occurs in encountering the past and in understanding the tradition from which we come. Hence the horizon of the present cannot be formed without the past. There is no more an isolated horizon of the present than there are historical horizons which have to be acquired. Rather, understanding is always the fusion of these horizons supposedly existing by themselves (Gadamer, 1989: 306).

When we discuss Korean Catholicism, we encounter fusion of two horizons in Gadamer’s terms: Confucianism and Christianity. We think it proper to examine Confucianism in its introduction, development and modification in the Korean context along with other factors.

I. A Brief History of Korean Confucianism

In the seventeenth century the tide that brought the Western powers surging into the East reached Chosun (Yi Dynasty Korea). Chosun was faced with this new era in history and came into contact with the so-called Sohak or Western thought, which included Western culture and Christianity. Chosun had established Confucianism as the

national ideology at the founding of the dynasty. It had established its legitimacy through study of nature and principle (Neo-Confucianism), ethics and ritual.

In the past, Confucianism was one of the three pillars of Korea's religious tradition, the other two being Buddhism and Shamanism/Animism. It still remains important today while Shamanism/Animism has been replaced by Christianity. Confucianism is an age-old religion deeply entrenched in the political institutions and social ethics of the East Asia. Its values and ethics have continued to influence and guide Koreans over many centuries. Their close family ties, code of human relations, view of the state, and their careers were all influenced by Confucian teachings. The abundance of honorifics and respectful expressions in the Korean language also came from the Confucian virtues of respecting others and humbling oneself. In what follows, I will briefly describe a history of Korean Confucianism based on Keun Jang-tae's "Confucianism and Korean thoughts."

a) Three Kingdom Era

China imparted Confucianism in Korea which, sharing a border with mainland China, had long been strongly influenced by China politically and culturally. There is no school of Confucian thought that emerged in China that left Korea untouched. No exact date can be given for the introduction of Chinese Confucianism into Korea. Korean Confucian scholar Keum Jang-Tae argues that evidence shows that Confucian rites came prior to the advent of the Three Kingdoms when large tribal states flourished on the Korean peninsula. According to Keum, we may safely assume that Chinese culture with its Confucian elements was introduced to Korea sometime during the Period of Warring States in China (BC 403-221) (Keum, 2000, 34). Major events which took place in the

latter half of the fourth century bear witness to the acceptance of Confucian culture. Confucian writings were made required reading at the official academy that was first established in Koguryo in AD 372. In Paekche to the South, a pundit by the name of Kohung compiled a Korean historical chronicle (Sogi); it was written in classical Chinese in the year 375.

During the Paekche era, two people, Ajikki and Wangin, took the Analects and the One Thousand Character Classic to Japan during the reign of King Kunchogo. Loyalty, filial piety, and courage were among the chief virtues to which members of the Shilla's Hwarang Youth Corps (Flower of Youth Corps), distinguished in both learning and martial arts, were devoted. These virtues were also reflective of the Confucian values widely held by their contemporaries.

The foremost scholar monk of Shilla Buddhism, Wonhyo, had a son named Solchong who later became an eminent Confucian scholar and was later enshrined at the Royal Ancestral Shrine, sacred to Confucians. Thus Confucianism was an important element in the social life of the Three Kingdoms era, a time which also saw the blossoming of Buddhism. In this period, Buddhism and Confucianism existed side by side in harmony. All academies or colleges in the Three Kingdoms taught Confucian classics. The images of Confucius and his 72 disciples were also brought from Tang China and enshrined in academies in Shilla. And so developed the custom of worshipping at Munmyo. A thorough knowledge of both the Analects and the Book of Filial Piety (Hyogyong) was essential for passing the government civil service examination.

b) Koryo Period

Buddhism reached its height during the Koryo period, the medieval age of Korean history. During this period, Confucianism and Buddhism were credited with fulfilling two complementary functions. Buddhism served the people's spiritual needs, while Confucianism provided the fundamentals of statesmanship. Article 10 of Hunyo (instructions Koryo's founder King Taejo gave to his future successors) called on kings to abide by the Confucian classics in governing the nation.

The civil service examination, introduced in 938 early in the Koryo dynasty was based on Confucian literature. King Taejo established a state college, and in 987 King Songjong ordered many institutes for the study of Confucian classics set up in the provinces. During the reign of King Munjong, a group of twelve Confucian scholars, including Choe Chung (984-1068) who was later known as the Confucius of Korea, established private institutes to promote education in Confucianism. During the reign of King Songjong, the ceremonial functions of worship at the altar dedicated to the Heaven, Chongmyo and Sajik were systematized.

During the reign of King Chungyol late in the Koryo period (1290), An Hyang brought some writings of the famous Song Confucian, Zhu Xi, from Yuan China to Korea in 1305. Paek I-chong also brought works of Zhu Xi and Cheng brothers from Yuan. These works gave rise to a new wave of Neo-Confucianism in Korea.

c) Early Chosun Period

The school of Neo-Confucianism called Tohak, which began to thrive late in the Koryo Kingdom, was an orthodox school which would not coexist with Buddhism. As in

China it was highly critical of the latter. Thus a movement against Buddhism was started by a number of Confucians who played a leading role in founding the Yi Dynasty and who later put forth great efforts to establish Confucianism as the official ideology of the new state.

In the early years of the Kingdom, the land owned by many Buddhist temples was expropriated by the state, and many monks were defrocked and expelled from their monasteries. In his work “Against Mr. Buddha (1398),” Chong To-Chon criticized the teachings of Buddha from the standpoint of Neo-Confucianism (Tohak), and prescribed Confucianism as the basic principle of statecraft. From the beginning of the Kingdom, a number of measures were taken to inculcate Confucian ideas on people. The government undertook to study and prescribe a code of civil rituals and bureaucratic structures along Confucian lines.

It was during King Sejong’s reign that Korea’s native script, Han’gul or Hunmin Jongun, was invented and Yongbi ochon’ga (Songs of Flying Dragons), written using the new script, was made in order to prove the legitimacy of the newly founded Chosun Kingdom in terms of Confucian values, even though its themes were tied to Buddhism. In the meantime, a school for Confucian literati emerged which stressed the practical morality of Tohak as the standard of social ethics and conduct. Known as Sarim, the school was very critical of bureaucrats who they saw pursued personal advancement. Hardline critics belonging to Sarim group advocated the thorough practical application of Confucian ideals, thus coming into conflict with the Hun’gu conservative faction comprised of more practical, careerist students of Confucianism. The resulting rivalry led to the four successive literati purges in 1498, 1504, 1519 and 1545. Following these

purges, the Sarim school continued to champion the cause of Confucian orthodoxy.

Confucianism served to check state authority, many scholars taking sacrifices to uphold Confucianism as the guiding principles of the state.

Neo-Confucianism in China turned Confucian Learning from the pedantic exegetical study of the classics (jing xue) prominent in the Han and Tang Dynasties to the study of principle and philosophy (li xue). Korean Confucian scholarship also focused on songnihak, the study of (human) nature and principle, or tohak (the learning of the way).

Young-chan Ro has this to say:

The well known Neo-Confucian dual concepts of “principle” (li) and “material force” (ch’i), for example, were developed as cosmological and ontological concepts but also became anthropological concepts. The concept of “principle” (li) was not only a cosmological notion but was also an important anthropological and moral concept in relation to “human nature” (hsing). Neo-Confucianism was thus often referred to as the school of “human nature and principle” (hsing-li-hsueh).

The idea of “material force” (ch’i) was also developed around the relationship of the universe, nature, and human beings. Neo-Confucian scholars, such as Chou Tun-I (Zhou Dunyi) and Chang Tsai (Zheng Zai), and some Korean Neo-Confucian thinkers, including So Kyongdok, or Hwadam (1489-1546), and Yi Yulgok, developed a Neo-Confucian cosmology with the concept of ch’i... in relation to the dimension of human feelings and activities. (Ro, 1998: 173).

He also says that it would be a mistake to think of ch’i and li in terms of dualism of the Western philosophical tradition, as seen in such conceptual dualities as form and matter in Greek philosophy or mind and body in Cartesian thought (Ro, 1989: 21).

One of the first great Confucian scholars of the sixteenth century, So Kyong-dok (1489-1546), elaborated a monistic theory based on the conception of ki (material force), which can be said to be a Korean version of Zhang Zai’s theory of material force and primordial harmony. So Kyong-dok argued that the universe was composed of nothing but material force and that material force alone was the source of all things. For him,

principle could not reside outside material force and principle was the commanding power of material force.

Korean Neo-Confucian learning reached a peak in the hands of great scholar Yi Hwang (better known by his penname, T'oegye 1501-70) and Yi I (Yulgok 1536-84), “two of the most famous names in Korean history,” and “national symbols, figures that inspire pride and confidence” (quoted in Yao, 2000: 116). Having accepted Cheng-Zhu’s interpretations of Confucian teachings, these scholars found some disparities and problems in Zhu Xi’s theories, especially with regard to the relation between principle and material force. Thus, different understandings led to intensive debates, one of which focused on the metaphysical and psychological complexity of human nature and emotions in the form of the relationship between the Four Beginnings (“the four sprouts of virtues” or “the four innate good disposition,” Mencius 2A:6) and the Seven Emotions (joy, anger, grief, fear, love, hate and desire, Liji Jijie, 1989: 606 from Yao, 2000: 118). This so-called “Four-Seven Debate,” unique to Korean Neo-Confucianism, was first started by T'oegye and one of his disciples, Ki Taesung (Kobong, 1527-72), and attempted to define the proper relation between “original nature” and the “physical nature.” The debates was carried on then by Yulgok and Song Hon (Ugye, 1535-98), who reexamined the interdependence of the “heart/mind of the Way” and the “heart/mind of humans.”

As for the human nature, T'oegye is clearly in line with Zhang Zai and Zhu Xi and upholds the view that there are two forms of human nature, the Nature of Heaven and Earth (tiandi zhi xing), the original nature (benran zhi xing), which is the manifestation of

principle, and the nature of physical force (qizhi zhi xing), the derived nature, which is the manifestation of material force.

T'oegye applies the two aspects of human nature to his understanding of the relationships between (human) nature and emotion. He believes that the original and Heaven-bestowed nature manifests itself as the Four Beginnings (humanity, righteousness, propriety and wisdom) and that being purely good, the original nature contains no evil elements. He also says that the sensual nature reveals material force as seven human emotions and that being indeterminate, the physical nature makes no distinction between good and evil (Yao, 2000: 119).

This dualistic theory aroused strong reactions, especially from one of his disciples, Kobong, who believed that the Four Beginnings and the Seven Emotions could not be regarded as two distinct entities and could not be independent of each other because the Four Beginning were merely the best part of the world of the Seven Emotions. Soon after the deaths of T'oegye and Kobong, their views on the Four-Seven issues became the subject of a debate between Ugye and his good friend Yulgok. Yulgok demonstrated his brilliance as a Neo-Confucian scholar at the early age of twenty three. His paper for the Civil Service Examination, Chondochaek ("Treatise on the Way of Heaven") established him as an original and independent thinker. He said the differentiation between the heart/mind of the Way and the human heart/mind is merely differences between terms.

Yulgok's monistic view of principle and material force was a rational continuation of Kobong's argument against dualism, and clearly targeted T'oegye. Yulgok insisted that there was no separation of principle and material force, and argued

that principle and material force were two in substance but one in function. For Yulgok, principle is the power that enables things to move and to cease to move, while material force moves or ceases to move because of principle (Ibid, 120-21). He rejected any preconceived idea of principle without the concrete shape and form of material force. He also said that whenever and wherever the concrete form or shape of material force occurs, principle is there.

How relevant are the Korean thinkers' Four-Seven debates to us? According to Edward Y.J. Chung: "The whole thrust of the Korean Four-Seven theses points to the way of moral self-cultivation and emotional integration; that is to say, it still addresses the important issue of how to be 'human' in a genuine sense of its meaning... The way of pursuing it is to affirm and experience the authentic goodness of human nature inherent in every person's mind--and heart." (Chung, 1995: 183). In addition to this, we cannot ignore its socio-political implications for the Yi Dynasty Korea.

Chong Yag-yong later compared their theories and argued that the theory of nature and principle of Yi Hwang is based on human morality, while that of Yi I is cosmological. Keum Jang-tae argues that if we are to understand both theories as a continuum in historical context, we are better off understanding "Yi Hwang's dualism as reality restraining, with Yi I's monism as reality-reforming" (Keum, 2000: 101). Keum also argues that Yi I's philosophy was not a theoretical philosophy unrelated to the times; rather "just as his idea of li (principle) was a stabilizing and ordering principle for an otherwise turbulent ki (material force) (as primal force or energy), his philosophy provided a moral compass with which he could navigate through a turbulent social climate" (Ibid). In other words, emphasizing li's functions within ki rather than the

difference between li and ki, his schools were less inclined to see ki as the root of all evil and more inclined to play an active role in the ki-filled world of politics and government (Don Baker, paper). The debate divided the whole of Korean Confucian scholarship roughly into two camps, the School of Principle (Yongnam School) and the School of Material Force (Kiho school). However this debate led Korean scholars to explore new dimensions of Confucianism and enrich Confucian Learning.

d) Late Chosun Period

Due to the seven year war started by the Japanese invasion of Korea and its aftermath at the end of the sixteenth century, Korean society and academic world witnessed many changes. The Sarim faction emerged as the leading party and its ideas became the mainstream ideology, thus strengthening orthodox Neo-Confucianism. As time went on, the relevance of Neo-Confucianism was called into question, leading to the rise of new academic approaches. While the Neo-Confucianism school following Zhu Xi's ideas remained in control, the Wang Yang-ming school of learning, Western Learning (Catholicism and scientific knowledge introduced from the West via China) and the Practical Learning (shilhak) school all emerged during this time. Thus Confucianism in the late Chosun period split into various factions just as it faced new challenge from the outside world.

Since the beginning of the seventeenth century, Neo-Confucianism developed with special emphasis on the study of ritual propriety. The strictly orthodox understanding of the Cheng-Zhu teaching was responsible for debates and argument typical of Korean Neo-Confucian scholarship, which on the one hand clarified the meanings of Confucian terms, but on the other hand turned the energetic search for truth

into trivial quarrels. A good example is the Rites Disputes of 1659 (Kihae Yesong), which revolved around the period of mourning to be observed for the King by his stepmother, Queen Dowager Cho.

The humiliation inflicted by the Manchus who invaded Korea in the seventeenth century fed Koreans' animosity toward and resistance to Qing China which was then ruled by the Manchus. It prompted Koreans to revere the older and orthodox culture of traditional China, adding a nationalistic flavor to the Neo-Confucianist tradition of Korea.

The Wang Yang-ming school of learning flourished during the ming Dynasty in China. Upon reaching Korea, however, it was rejected by the orthodox tradition of Neo-Confucianism. But Chong Chae-tu (pen name; Hagok, 1649-1736) was quick to subscribe to the Wang Yang-ming school and insisted on subjective viewpoint that emphasized human mind as a manifestation of principle. But the Wang Yang-ming school for learning failed to spread, and it had a limited influence on Korean thought in the latter part of Chosun period, mainly through the students of Practical Learning. The early shilhak or Practical Learning scholars were receptive to new ideas coming from China.

In recognition of the broad spectrum of interests and ideological inclinations shown by shilhak as Practical Learning proponents, continual efforts have been made to classify their diverse approaches into subcategories. One of the most famous analyses subdivided shilhak thought into three schools: The School of Administration and Practical Usage (Kyongse Ch'iyongp'a), which was founded by Yi Ik (1681-1763), concentrated on institutional reform with particular emphasis on government administration and the land system; the School of Profitable Usage and Popular Benefit

(Iyong Husaengp'a) centering on Pak Chiwon (1737-1805), which focused on technological reform, advocated the expansion of commercial activities and improvements of the means of production and the School of Verification Based on Actual Facts (Silsa Kusip'a), which became a fully fledged movement through the influence of Kim Chonghui's (1786-1856) scholarships, used Qing evidential methodology in epigraphy and the study of the classics.

As Mark Setton indicated in his "Chong Yagyong," a principal flaw of the above schema is that the first two categories are based on fields of study, whereas the third is based on a methodology, and it is precisely their philological methodology, derived from the K'ao-cheng hsueh or Evidential Learning movement of Qing dynasty China, that thinkers in all three categories relied upon in varying extents in their studies. The weakness of this categorization becomes evident when we apply it to the case of Tasan, who was strongly influenced both by Yi Ik's work on institutional reform and the critical approach of Qing Evidential Learning (Setton, 1997: 10-11).

The scholars of the Practical Learning attacked the scholastic debates in Confucian learning as trivial and irrelevant to the needs of the people, and insisted that the major cause of the country's problems was the separation of morality from industry, and that of Confucian Learning from the people's needs.

One of the most important Practical Learning scholars, Yi Ik advocated adoption of Western science including Catholicism. Yi Ik's attitude of open acceptance of Western Learning greatly shocked his followers and, as a result, two factions formed. On the one hand, were those identifying themselves with the orthodox Neo-Confucian position which rejected Western thought. On the other hand, there were those who

adopted a positive attitude towards Western ideas and the Catholic faith. Some of those scholars even advocated increased research on the Catholic doctrines and starting a faith movement. The former can be called the Kongsopa (Anti-Western faction) and the latter the Shinsopa (Pro-Western faction). Two of Yi Ik's followers, Shin Hu-tam (1702-1761) and An Chong-pok (1712-1791), were instrumental in establishing the former faction by spreading theories critical of Catholic doctrines.

However in the Shinso faction are such good scholars as Kwon Chol-shin, Kwon Il-shin, Yi Ka-hwan, Yi Pyok, Yi Sung-hun, Chong Yak-chon, Chong Yak-chong, Chong Yak-yong. So far, we have examined a brief history of Korean Confucianism, but to better understand acceptance and rejection of Catholicism in Korea, we turn to other factors and cultural backgrounds which influenced positive or negative attitudes of the Korean literati during the Yi Dynasty.

II. The Tangun Myth

Korea has its own creation mythology. The earliest and most fundamental form of creation mythology is the myth of Tangun, found in the Samguk Yusa (Residual Events of the Three Kingdoms), which reveals the paradigmatic structure of a people's world view.

Tangun was the son of Hwanung, a son of Hwanin, the heavenly lord and Wungnyo (which literally means a "bear-woman"). Hwanin had a bold, wise son called Hwanung (literally meaning "heavenly male"). Hwanung was interested in ruling the human world and his father granted his wish. As he looked down upon the earth, the young prince's gaze fell upon the green hills of a beautiful peninsular between two great seas. He chose it. His father allowed him to descend to earth with three thousand servants to help him rule the land, and with three powerful ministers: Pung-Beg, U-Sa, and Un-Sa—Lord Wind, Lord Rain and Lord Cloud. They were to govern health and sickness, harvest and season, good and evil.

One day, a bear and a tiger anxious to become human asked Hwanung to fulfill their wish. He ordered them to stay in a cave without sunlight and to eat garlic bulbs and mugwort plants for a hundred days. The tiger failed but the bear fulfilled his command and became a woman. Then Hwanung married the bear-woman and begat Tangun. When Tangun died he became a Sansin (mountain god). He is never forgotten by the grateful people of Korea (Choi, 2005: 19).

Korean history has always emphasized the importance of the Tangun myth to the origin of the Korean nation. After the Paleolithic Age and Neolithic Age, Kochosun (2333? BCE-107? BCE), the ancient tribal community, opened the Bronze Age in Southern Manchuria. The title of Tangun was actually Tangun Wanggum, which meant that he combined political and religious functions in a single personage. This myth revealed the religious dimensions of the Kochosun government and established its legitimacy. Tangun, having descended from the heavenly lord, had divine origin. He was not the human chosen by God, but the human who became God after he died, the God who protected Korea (Ibid, 20).

I believe that attention should also be paid to the word Hwanin. David Chung argues that Hwanin should be read as “Hanunim,” because, first of all, it is probable that the penult “nun” may have been neglected or dropped by the alleged Buddhist or Taoist writer of the legend when he masterminded the unification of “Hanunim” with Hwanin, or the Hindu-Buddhist Indra, or King of Taoli Heaven. The phonetic similarity between Hanunim and Hwanin may have led him to this syncretism.

Chung also argues that the semantic similarity of Hanunim as the sovereign Sky-God to Indra, the King of the Taoli Heaven, may have led these simpleminded men to carry out their mission. “Hanunim” as the Sky-God must have been originally “Hanulnim,” Hanul” being sky and “nim” being an honorific personal suffix of social

distinction. Phonetically “l” of Hanul becomes silent before the “n” of nim. Therefore, the original form of Hanunim may well have been “Hanul-nim” (Chung, 2001: 169).

Chung concludes that the Hanunim belief, vividly alive in the Korean mind, exists in pre-Confucian, pre-Buddhist, pre-Taoist Korea (Ibid, 169). I argue that this original belief in God was a fertile ground for the seeds of Christian faith, along with the Confucian idea of Tian and the Amitabha of the Pure Land Buddhism.

III. Buddhism

The “national religion” of Korea puzzled the early visitors who tried to find some counterpart of the organized Western religions in that peninsula. A Korean personally takes his own education from Confucius; he sends his wife to Buddha to pray for an offspring and in the ills of life he willingly pays toll to Shamanist “Mootang” (sorceress). David Chung, in his “Syncretism” says “As a general thing, we may say that the all-round Korean will be a Confucianist when in society, a Buddhist when he philosophizes and a spirit worshipper when he is in trouble (Chung, 2001: 91).

Julia Ching also maintains that many Chinese have found it possible to follow all three teachings at the same time. For example, a man could be a Confucian in his active life, responding to multiple social responsibilities, a philosophical Taoist in his leisure hours—and both he and his wife—or at least, she would frequent the Buddhist temple to offer prayers for special intentions. Ching concludes that the coexistence of all three religious traditions, and the possibility for the same people to be involved in all of them, testifies to a certain pluralism within the Chinese—and East Asian civilization, a pluralism that was hardly known by Europe and the Middle East (Ching, 2004: 223). Therefore, our study of cultural and religious background for acceptance of Catholicism

in Korea would not be complete without examining Buddhism in Korea. I will briefly explain the Buddhist history of Korea relying on Choi Hee An's book "Korean Women and God."

Buddhism has had a great impact upon the culture and mind of the Korean people. It was introduced by China in the fourth century along with colonial power during the period of the Three Kingdoms; Koguryo (37 BCE-668 CE), Paekche (18 BCE-660 CE), Silla (57 BCE-668 CE).

Among the Three Kingdoms, Koguryo was the first to receive Buddhism. As described in the "Samguk Sagi", the history of the Three Kingdoms, Fu Chien, a Chinese ruler, sent a monk named Sundo with images of the Buddha and copies of several texts from the canon (372). In 385, two Buddhist monasteries were founded. Furthering its growth in 392, King Kogugyang ordered that his people practice Buddhism.

The Kingdom of Paekche admitted Buddhism in 384, twelve years later than Koguryo. According to "the Samguk Yusa", in the first year of King Chimnyu's reign (382), Marananta, from eastern China, brought Buddhism. In 395, ten Buddhist monasteries were built in the new capital of Hansan. In the first year of King Asin's reign (392), Asin instructed that the people believe in Buddhism and seek happiness. Silla was the last Kingdom of the Three Kingdoms to accept Buddhism. During the reign of King Nulchi (417-57), a Koguryo monk, Mukhoja, went to Silla and secretly propagated Buddhism. Later, during the reign of King Soji (479-99), another Koguryo monk, Ado, also went to Silla. Silla Buddhism grew quickly under King Chinhung (540-75). In his fifth year, the King completed the Hungnyun Monastery and allowed men and women to be ordained.

In the sixth and seventh centuries, Korean monks studying in China brought back most of the schools of Chinese Buddhism. Buddhism became the religion of the elite, with its Pure Land form having some success among the common people. During the Silla period, Son (Ch. Chan) became a major school from the ninth century.

In the Koryo period (918-1312), Buddhism was very influential, being a popular as well as aristocratic religion from the twelfth century. The entire Chinese Canon was printed in the twelfth century and a new edition, which is still in existence, was printed in the thirteenth century using 81,258 wooden blocks. In the fourteenth century, Buddhism dominated cultural life.

The government helped the Buddhist monks build monasteries. The monks had to do service and pray for the national protection, and during the war they served in the military as soldiers to protect both their monasteries and country (Choi, 2005:24). Buddhism embraced both local cultic beliefs and Shamanism not only to collaborate in legitimating the ruling class but also to attract common people. In order to be implanted as a Korean religion, Buddhism had to adapt to the Korean cultural and religious milieu and appear as a form of indigenous belief. Once “Koreanized,” Buddhism became not just an abstract Eastern philosophy and religious doctrine but another type of folk religion. The Buddhist monasteries came to resemble shamanistic shrine, so that whenever people needed help, they went to pray and consult with the monks. Monks were considered to be shamans with thaumaturgic skills who were able to subdue demonic spirits through the use of spells and cure people with magic medicine (Ibid, 26). Buddhism was also used as a means to conquer natural disasters such as famine and

flood. Sometimes, Buddhism took the place of Shamanism, at other times, Buddhism fused with Shamanism.

Buddhism suffered a reversal in the Yi Dynasty (Chosun Period) (1392-1910), when Neo-Confucianism from China came to be adopted as the state ideology. In the early fifteenth century, monastery lands were confiscated, monasteries were reduced to 242, then 88, and schools were reduced to several, then to two umbrella organizations. Government Anti-Buddhist measures were at their height in the early sixteenth century; monks were banned from entering the capital (1623), and aristocrats' children forbidden from being ordained.

In surveying the historical developments of Buddhism in Korea, we need to pay attention to how Buddhism contributed to building divine images in Korean people. According to Choi Hee An, two factors clearly shaped divine images held by woman. Even though Buddhism itself does not have a concept of God, Korean Buddhism inspired divine images. Korean Buddhists believe in Buddha and bodhisattvas (Buddhas to be) in the same way that other Korean people believe in their gods. She also argues that in the process of accommodating Buddhism to Korean culture, the images of Buddha and bodhisattva often overlap with images of shamanistic gods. The mountain gods serve as one example. These were originally shamanistic gods, but in Buddhist stories, often both mountain gods and Buddha appear at the top of mountain. Sometimes mountain gods even replace the image of Buddha, or their image overlap. At other times the mountain gods overlapped with the bodhisattva and people often treated the two as identical (Ibid, 29). What she says might be true, but I argue that people honored the Bodhisattva as their god, not only as their mountain god or shamanistic image of god.

I already mentioned that in the Three Kingdoms period, Pure Land Buddhism had some success among the common people. In the second half of the first millennium AD, China witnessed the emergence of Pure Land or Amitabha Buddhism as well as Chan(son) Buddhism. Where did this idea arise of the Buddha Amitabha, who promises to remove all the obstacles on the way to salvation through rebirth in a Pure Land? What is this Pure Land, where even the ordinary person be prepared for enlightenment? What is the source of this religion?

We know from India of the legend of a king, and later monk, who took the name Dharmakara and made a vow in the face of human suffering, to become a Buddha. However he would not assume this title and enter nirvana until he had the power to call into being a supernatural Pure Land, a Buddhaland of peace and happiness without suffering and passion, where believers, unhindered and unburdened by any karma, could ripen toward enlightenment and nirvana. And so it allegedly happened. The monk reached the highest level of enlightenment, worked as a bodhisattva in boundless compassion and collected an infinite supply of merit to make good on his promise

In this way, the bodhisattva finally became one of the buddhas of the four compass points, who now presides over the Pure Land, that Western paradise of bliss a million billion Buddha-lands away, and who bears the name Amitabha (Sanskrit) or Amida (Japanese), which means a cosmic Buddha of “immeasurable light,” or Amitayus, which means the Buddha of “eternal life.” In Mahayana, a cult grew up around this Buddha, with an infinite number of statues and pictures (Kung, 1986: 426-7).

What concerns us here is that Amida Buddhism, or Amidism, because of its amazing spiritual similarity to Christianity has often been the subject of conjecture concerning a direct Christian influence. Dr. Jeong Eui Lim, in his doctoral dissertation, “Godae dongbanggidokyosa,” (A History of Ancient Eastern Christianity) quotes Nakayoshi as saying Korean Pure Land Buddhism which had been deeply influenced by Christianity (Nestorianism), became a driving force for the spread of the truth of Christianity in Korea (Lim, 1994: 167).

IV. Matteo Ricci's Mission

Matteo Ricci is one of the most influential figures for Korean Catholicism. Perhaps most striking was his impacts on a group of Korean literati which led to the beginning of the Catholic Christianity in Korea before the arrival of any missionaries. The first Christians to come to China were the Nestorians in the seventh and ninth centuries. These were followers of the bishop Nestorius, at one time Patriarch of Constantinople (428), who was declared a heretic in 431 by the Council of Ephesus for not accepting Mary as Theotokos (Greek for "God-bearer") and preferring the term Christotokos ("Christ-bearer"). Deposed, he was exiled to Egypt. Although Nestorius never started a sect or a church, the "Assyrian" or Ancient Church of the East, which refused to accept Ephesus on the grounds that the emphasis of Christ's unity with God jeopardized the integrity of his human nature, has been identified with his name. Nestorian Christianity is the only kind that so early pushed eastward, to India, Indochina, Tibet, Java, Central Asia, China and Korea.

Where China is concerned, historical remains include a stone tablet unearthed in the early seventeenth century recounting the arrival in T'ang China of the monk Alopen probably from Persia in 635. The Nestorian Church had its own liturgy and symbols. Instead of the humiliating crucifix, they preferred the "Cross of Victory" which, in China, sometimes emerged from the lotus, a Buddhist symbol. For this kind of acculturation and syncretism, and collaboration with Buddhists in the mid-eighth century on textual translations, it has been criticized by other Christians. Nestorianism enjoyed a brief

prosperity in China as their name, Ching-chiao/Jingjiao (“the Brilliant Religion”) indicates.

The second Christians who set foot on China were the Franciscan friars. The Order of Friars Minor, the official name of the Catholic religious order of itinerant preachers from which come the Franciscan Friars, was founded by St. Francis of Assisi (1181-1226). In the thirteenth century, the Franciscan Friars were fearless travelers and missionaries at Mongol Courts, both in Karakorum, Central Asia and later beyond. It was a time when the papacy was hoping to win the Mongols over as allies against the Muslim Turks. These missionaries eventually came to Mongol China, and still found Nestorians there, though they were no longer actively missionary. The Franciscans gave China its first Catholic archbishop John of Montecorvino (1307), who resided in the city of Cambaluc (Peking) and baptized six thousand people before his death. But the Franciscan Mission proved even more short-lived than the Nestorians and neither group appear to have paid much attention to Chinese religions. Now we turn to Jesuit missions and Matteo Ricci.

The Jesuits went to China at the time of the high Renaissance in Europe, when the Counter Reformation had also energized the Catholic Church, mobilizing their best resources of culture in its service, the Society of Jesus (founded in 1540 by the Spaniard, Ignatius of Loyola) was eager to spread its wings to Asia—to both India and China. They were aided by the interests of Portuguese travelers and traders, who were already in Japan in 1543.

Unlike in Japan, the Chinese mission made slow progress and the breakthrough was due to the accomplishment of a single exceptional man—the Jesuit Matteo Ricci

(1552-1610). The young missionary arrived in China with shaved head, dressed as a Buddhist monk, residing in a humble house in a provincial town. By the time he died in Peking, Ricci had long discarded monkish garb for the robes of a revered Confucian scholar, and the tomb of the deceased sage was honored by an imperial tablet and visited by the leading officials and scholars of the capital.

To win converts, therefore, European missionaries had to adapt to Chinese ways and Christianity had to become a part of Chinese culture; above all, the Confucian scholars and officials, who constituted the intellectual and ruling elites of the country, had to be won over by the demonstration of the concordance between Confucianism and Christianity. The long years of immersion in the Chinese classics gave Ricci the conviction of that concordance. A good linguist, Ricci spent the first ten years of his mission mastering Confucian texts and contents of scholarly culture. His first literary endeavor was not a translation of Christian catechism into Chinese, but a rendering of the Four Books (the basic canon of Confucianism) into Latin. “Li Madou,” as Ricci was known to his scholarly friends and acquaintances, achieved fame when a world map he had annotated in Chinese was published by an acquaintance.

Through Ricci’s literary reputation, the ensemble of European civilization (astronomy, mathematics, music, and religion) became attractive to the Confucian elites. Many flocked to converse with him; some studied European science; and a few converted to Christianity. The missionary effort in these early years represented Christianity as a system of social ethics and individual morality profoundly consonant with Confucianism. Christianity, in fact, would perfect the original Confucianism of ancient China, by removing the encrustations of the Song dynasty metaphysics and Buddhist corruption,

and by restoring the pristine monotheism of Chinese philosophy. The very word used to represent their missionary enterprise suggested this compatibility; “Christianity aimed to supplement Confucianism and replace Buddhism (bu Ru yi Fo); and Jesuits were called Confucians from Western Countries (Xiguo Ru) or Western scholars (Xi shi)” (Hsia, 2005: 211).

As Ricci’s knowledge of the Confucian classics deepened, he came to believe that in the time of the ancient sages, the Chinese had known of one Creator God; they had not been polytheists with a pantheon of deities such as had the Greeks, Romans, Teutons, and the Hinduism and Mahayana Buddhism which Ricci had encountered. He thought this was very important for it would seem to indicate that the ancient culture of China retained traces of the primal revelation of God to His creation in a way untainted by polytheism and idolatry. This fact, along with the compatibility of the basic ethics of Confucianism with Christianity led him to present Christianity something that completed what was ancient and true within China’s own history and culture.

Ricci found that the apparent unique monotheism of “original” Chinese culture had been badly distorted by the thinkers who created Neo-Confucianism in Sung times as a result of Buddhist influence. This understanding is an important reason why he chose “Tianzhu” for the name for the Christian God. This was a genuinely Chinese word and had its root in both Confucian and Daoist traditions, but it was not common and had no universally accepted meaning. It was therefore comparatively easy to fill it with a Christian meaning. Through a deep understanding of the Confucian classics, he argued that the classical divinity, “Tian” (Heaven) or “Shangdi” (Lord-on-High) to whom sacrifices and worship had been offered in the days of Confucius, referred to the

transcendent Creator God of the Bible. But he found that this was not how most of his contemporaries among the literati understood these terms. This was because of what had happened in the Tang and Sung dynasties. Then the leading Confucian scholars had sought to give Confucianism a metaphysic to help defend it from the intellectual and spiritual threat presented by Buddhism. Ricci asserted, in doing so, they severely damaged Confucianism.

In Neo-Confucianism “Tian” and “Shangdi” were interpreted unambiguously in an impersonal sense; more than that, they were treated as being the equivalent of “taiji,” which was the “Supreme Ultimate,” the immanent universal order of reality. Ricci emphasized that in the Classics there was no indication that “taiji” was ever worshipped or revered so that in what he called “original” Confucianism, “taiji”, the impersonal nature of things, was not the same as the worshipped and sacrificed to “Tian” and “Shangdi.”

V. The Truth of the Lord of Heaven

Now we turn to the gospel in Chinese as found in Ricci’s “Tianzhu Shiyi.” This book was not meant to be a summa, or a catechism, but an apologetic, so not all of doctrines were covered. In what follows, I will briefly go over the contents of the book as they are related to our topics. We will discuss some parts again when we examine Chong Yag-yong and Chong Ha-sang Paul. The form of this treatise is a dialogue between a Chinese Confucian and a Western scholar seeking to understand one another. The first emphasis seen in Ricci’s work is that reason, possessed by all persons everywhere, gives them the potential to know God. In his initial section he delineate six arguments that will naturally lead the human mind to believe in God’s existence. First

Ricci notably says, one's liang neng innate abilities (sometimes mistranslated as conscience) seeking mercy or fearing judgment, cause one to place hope in or respect a being in the universe above oneself. The concept "innate abilities" (liang neng) is from Mencius, and the concept was developed by Wang Yang-ming.

Mencius said, "Those things which people do not study yet are able to do are "innate abilities" (liang neng). Those things which they do not ponder yet know are "innate knowledge" (liang zhi). Young infants all know to love their parents. When they are older, they all know to respect their elder brothers. Loving one's parents is benevolence. Respecting one's elder brothers is righteousness. All that remains is to extend (their feelings) to everyone in the world (Mencius, 7A15, Ivanhoe, 2002:48).

Confucian scholars translate "liang neng" in different ways, but I follow Phillip Ivanhoe's. In the next five sections, Ricci follows Thomas Aquinas' five ways to God. In the remainder of this first chapter on God's creation and providence, Ricci introduces several related topics: God is eternal; is one; is unfathomable and limitless; is great beyond anything in the created universe. No mention is made in this section or in the entire book of God as a triune God. The translator's preface to chapter one points out that in the latter Ming and early Sung dynasties most Chinese scholars were materialists and either would not be able to comprehend anything about the Trinity, or would reject it as foolish. Obviously without the benefit or any reference to revelation, Ricci had to restrict himself to what was humanly knowable (Covell, 2004: 49).

If human nature can recognize God, why have so many Chinese not done so? The fault lies in the way the religions of China have led them astray and hindered them from recognizing the true "heavenly Lord." He notes that the "emptiness" of Buddhism and

the “nothingness” of Daoism are not to be equated with the true God. The most evident reason for this being true is the philosopher’s dictum that “that which one does not have he cannot give to another as if he had it” (Ricci, 1999:76).

Ricci directs his next argument to the literati, and asserts that the Confucian idea of the absolute (taiji) and principle (li) have kept the Chinese people from knowing God. To the Confucian claim that the taiji is just another term for the supreme being who rules heaven and earth, Ricci observes that he has found no indication in the classics that it was ever worshiped or revered. Nor is taiji to be equated with li (principle), which is then to be considered God.

In the third section of *Tianzhu Shiyi*, Ricci treats of the nature of the human soul—its essential difference from the soul of insects and animal, and its immortality. Following Thomas Aquinas, he describes three levels of soul: the soul of grass and trees that produces life and growth, the soul of insects and animals that enables them to be conscious of the environment about them, and the human soul that, in addition to the soul-like qualities found in plant and animal life, enables human beings to reason and to differentiate truth and error.

He gives several arguments to show that a person’s soul is a spiritual substance without shape or form and thus different from the soul of insects and animals. First the human soul is able to discipline and control the body in view of higher values and is not completely directed by a whim of physical passions and desires. Human beings can apply reason and logic to deal with the contradictory tensions toward good and evil that they find within themselves, a capability that animals do not have.

Secondly, human beings can love or hate nonmaterial values, which indicates that, in contrast with insects or animals, they have a nonmaterial aspect to their nature that is concerned with moral issues. Thirdly, the human mind has the ability to develop abstract concepts, a possibility deriving from the spiritual nature of the soul. Finally, Ricci observes that all persons are able to transcend themselves and view themselves critically.

Ricci next moves to the eternal existence of the individual soul, a doctrine that he calls the foundations for anyone who truly wishes to cultivate a moral life. He advances several arguments to prove that the souls will never perish or die, but I will omit them.

In the fourth major section of *Tianzhu Shiyi*, Ricci distinguishes between demons and the human soul, and refutes the doctrine of pantheistic monism that confuses God with the created world. In the course of this effort to distinguish between demons and the human soul, he develops both subjects in more detail. He uses several pages to prove that demons do exist, even though their presence may not be tested by sight and other ordinary sensory means. He appeals to ancient texts, traditional rites, and the experience of daily living as evidence.

He continues to discuss in a general way what happens to the soul after death. Ricci refers to the statement in the Chinese classics that the “superior man” does not fear death; death is merely a return to the “old home.” God has ordained that all things in the universe have their proper place—stars and planets in their orbits, grass in the fields, fish in the water, birds in the air. And so, after death the place for the soul is to be with “Heaven,” who has given the soul to the person. He rejects the possibility, raised by the Chinese disputant, that the soul is really nothing more than the “two material forces—the yin and yang,” and that at death dispersion occurs.

Ricci elaborates at some length his contention that the human soul is an integral part of the very being of a person, something that is not true with demons. Although they exist and have an influence upon human life, demons do not belong by nature to any object. And in no way is it possible that the human soul and a demon (or evil spirit) are the same, or that the nature of a person and of objects in the universe, such as wood, gold, stone and grass are the same.

From Ricci's viewpoint, the attempt to blur distinction between the human soul and evil spirits, as well as between the unique nature of humankind and of the nonhuman world, is but the symptom of a larger problem—confusing the creator and the created universe. He traces this error to Lucifer, one of the spiritual beings, created by God before the creation of the physical universe, who led a rebellion against God and was, with his cohorts, cast into hell. Ricci affirms that to identify God with creation is as presumptuous as for Chinese commoners to equate themselves with the emperor in Peking. He points out, moreover, that pantheism is not to be found in the Chinese classics.

As he criticizes the type of pantheism espoused by Buddhist scholars, Ricci affirms several key points. God created all things out of nothing—*ex nihilo*; God can no more be identified with all things than a human being can be identified with God; God cannot be a part of the created universe, for then God would be smaller than something that God created; God is omnipresent, but a personal being not to be identified with creation; God is both inside and outside the universe. His idea of God sounds like panentheism in today's theological terms.

Section five of Tianzhu Shiyi is entitled “Refutation of the Six Ways of the Metempsychotic Wheel and Prohibition against killing animals, together with a True Explanation of Fasting.” Here Ricci points out that the doctrine of transmigration or metempsychosis did not originate in India with Sakyamoni and Buddhism, but with the ancient philosopher Pythagoras, who speculated that a proper punishment for the wicked would be that in a future life they would be changed into a form corresponding to their particular sin. He gives several reasons why this doctrine cannot be true, and he also explained why we can eat animals.

In section six of Tianzhu Shiyi, Ricci summarizes his presentation. He has appealed to the Chinese classics and natural reason to argue for the existence of a Supreme Being and for the immortality of the human soul. Now the question is, “If the human soul is immortal, what happens to the soul after death?” A related question is, “If there is a place of rewards called heaven and a place of punishment called hell, on what basis does the human soul go to either place?”

In dealing with those eschatological themes, Ricci stresses several issues. First he clarifies that human beings, unlike other creation, have freedom to do good and to avoid evil. This happens only by the use of reason. A person’s desire to do good, he says, comes from three levels of motivation; to go to heaven and escape hell; to “pay back” God for the gift of grace; and most commendably, to desire to do the will of God.

He offers proofs for the existence of heaven and hell. Only a place of complete blessing and happiness can satisfy human longing. Notably, Ricci does not mention purgatory at all. It is especially noteworthy that one of the thorny issues separating

Protestants from Catholics was indulgence and purgatory. Did he intentionally keep silent on this issue for fear of confusion with Buddhist doctrines?

In the seventh section of his work Ricci discusses human nature, a topic of perennial interest to Chinese philosophers. First of all, he reviews what various sages since the time of Mencius have contributed to this discussion. For Ricci, a person's nature at the moment of birth is like a piece of white paper on which either good or evil may be written. God has given all persons liang shan, innate goodness (also translated as conscience), a type of rudimentary morality for which they receive no credit or merit. Innate goodness is the feeling of fear that a child may have if he sees he is about to fall into a ditch. Animals and evil persons also possess innate goodness. We have to distinguish this from "dexin," the morality that persons learn to practice when, by using reason, they refuse to follow their sensuous desires. When human beings contact their environment their five senses first process data into their inner beings where memory and reason sift it, and then it becomes their free option to follow or refuse good and evil.

The highest good that human beings achieve is to love the heavenly Lord above all else and their neighbors as themselves. Although not intrinsically evil, contrary to Xunzi's theory, human nature is very weak and easily swayed, which explains why so many Chinese scholars are unable to attain their ideals. Buddhism and Daoism cannot solve the dilemma of the human race, nor can any combination of the three religions of China. Only trust in God and God's gracious providence can provide help for this problem.

Ricci goes into a bit more detail about the Catholic Church. He deals particularly with the matter of priestly celibacy, in direct conflict with the Chinese tenet of filial piety

that to have no offspring is the worst violation of morality. After justifying celibacy, he concludes that the worst offenses against filial piety are to disobey the heavenly Lord, the great father of humankind, and to disobey the emperor and the head of the home.

Discussing upon the heavenly Lord's universal fatherhood, Ricci, for the first time, goes into more detail on creation. He indicated that although the human race was created perfect, it disobeyed God's command, causing all of creation to rebel against it. As a result, the root of human nature has been corrupted and now has "shortcomings." Though this corruption has become habitual, a person may recover by turning from evil and pursuing good. He paraphrased the meaning of "original sin" without using the word perhaps for fear of creating a negative impression of Christianity.

In a few short lines he mentions the Holy Spirit and goes on to explain that God, in great love, sent Jesus to be the Savior. Ricci gives a short outline of his life. But most notable is the fact that no account is given of the crucifixion and resurrection, two doctrines that would probably have been as difficult to understand and accept as the triune nature of God. He describes some of Jesus' many miracles proving that he was the heavenly Lord come to earth. In this work we could find Ricci's attempt to find wisdom and God in the culture of Chinese people and in the hearts and lives of non-Christian Confucians. This reminds us of Ignatian spirituality which finds God at work in all things. The following is an outline of Ricci's book "True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven":

- 1) It examines and argues for three fundamental Principles of Natural Law that Ricci saw as common to Christianity and original Confucianism: The existence of a personal God, immortality of the soul, and eternal reward or punishment. Throughout the

book one sees the influence of Thomas Aquinas as Ricci appeals to reason to dispute Buddhist doctrines like nirvana and reincarnation.

- 2) He shows that the humanistic perspective of even traditional Confucianism needs to be balanced, supplemented and corrected by the transcendental dimension. With this done, the original Confucianism could have universal relevance (Covell, 2004:55).
- 3) His effort at inculturation recognizes that the “natural theology” of Chinese was a vehicle for God’s truth. But this is not rooted in present day Catholic fulfillment model that sees Christ already working in a given culture by the Holy Spirit (Ibid, 55).

In 1982, addressing participants of an international Congress on the life and thought of the Jesuit missionary Matteo Ricci, John Paul II praised the work of Ricci as equal to the work of Justin Martyr, Clement of Alexandria, and Origen “in their effort to translate the message of faith in terms understandable to the culture of their times.” Ricci’s task in China, as one of his companions explained in a letter to a friend, was to become Chinese, “ut Christo Sinas lucrifaciamus”—to win China for Christ. (Bevans, 2004:52)

The pope does not say explicitly, but he seems to point to Ricci’s fidelity to the universality of the Christian message as the crucial factor in his success as an agent of inculturation. What counts is to discover the resources within a culture that can be used to make the gospel relevant. Pope said this of Ricci:

In speaking of the Gospel, he knew how to find the cultural means appropriate for whoever was listening to him. He began with the discussion of subjects dear to the Chinese people, namely, morality and the rules for social living, according to

the Confucian tradition whose great human and ethical values he recognized with sensitivity. Then he introduced, in a discreet and indirect way, the Christian point of view of the various problems and so, without imposing himself, he ended up by bringing many listeners to the explicit knowledge and authentic worship of God, the Highest Good.

This message, so concrete and full of hope but at the same time respectful of all positive values of classical Chinese thought, was understood by his disciples and sensed by numerous friends and visitors (Ibid, 52).

5: Chong Yag-yong's Confucianism

I. Chong Yag-yong's Life

So Ricci developed his catechism in creative dialogue with pristine Confucian idea and in confrontation with Neo-Confucianism, Buddhism and Daoism. We can encounter a similar phenomenon to Ricci's doctrine, in Chong Ha-sang Paul's "The Letter to the Prime Minister," in which he incorporated some idea and thought of Confucianism for his Christian apology. But before we turn to Chong Ha-sang Paul, we examine Chong Yag-yong, his uncle. He is said to have written about his meditation, various books for teaching new believers about the Catholic faith, and a memoir about the entrance of the Gospel to Chosun, according to CH. Dallet. The memoir was called "History of Good News Mission in Korea." But none survived. We can find in his several books about Confucianism Catholic doctrines creatively applied and reinterpreted. Chong Ha-sang Paul must have been influenced by his uncle's Confucian teaching as well as Ricci's books and his father's catechism. In what follows, I will review his life and his Confucian books related to our subject.

Chong Yag-yong, or Tasan, as he later came to be known, was born in 1762, the 38th year of King Yongjo's reign. He was the fourth son of Chong Chaewon (1730-92), who had served a lengthy stint as magistrate of Chinju County. At the time of his birth, Tasan's family lived by the upper reaches of the Han River in Kwanju County, Kyonggi Province. Earlier that year the country had been thrown into turmoil by the tragic death of Crown Prince Sado on the orders of his father, King Yongjo. Tasan's father, badly shaken by the event and its repercussions, had decided to leave politics. When he was born, Tasan was thus given the courtesy name "Kwinong" or "Returning to the Land."

Tasan moved to Seoul after he married at the age of fifteen. In 1779, when he was sixteen years old, he read Yi Ik's works and, following Yi Ka-hwan (1746-1801) and Yi Sung-hun (1756-1801), became interested in the Songho school. At this time Yi Ka-hwan, the grandson of Yi Ik inherited the leadership of the Songho school. Tasan and Yi Sung-hun, who was Yi Ka-hwan's nephew, and Tasan's brother-in-law, were both young Confucian scholars. Tasan wrote that between 1777-1779, Yi Sung-hun, Yi Pyok and Chong Yak-chon held study meetings at Chonjin and Chuo temples led by Kwon Chol-shin (1736-1801), Yi Ik's disciple. It is not certain whether or not Tasan attended these meetings. However, his second brother, Chong Yak-chon did attend. Because Yi Pyok (1754-1786) was the brother-in-law of Chong Yag-chon, Tasan and Yi Pyok developed a close relationship despite an eight-year age difference.

Tasan said that he learned about Catholicism from Yi Pyok in 1784.

“On the 15th day of the fourth month of the year of the dragon (1784) after my eldest brother's wife's memorial service, my brothers and I got in the same boat as Yi Pyok and came down the river. In the boat, on hearing about the origin of creation, the body and spirit, and the reason for life and death, I was surprised and I doubted. It all just seemed as infinite as the Milky Way. Arriving in Seoul, I followed Yi Pyok and looked through Tianzhu Shiyi, Qike and a few other books, and, for the first time, I was joyful and my mind was stimulated.” (Chong Yag-yong, “The Epitaph of the Second Elder Brother,” Yoyudangchonso, bk. 1, 15. Quoted from Keum, 2000: 189).

These are Tasan's own words explaining how he came to know Catholicism. As a young Confucian, at the age of twenty three, he was moved and impressed by the Catholic doctrines of the human person and the universe, which shook his Neo-Confucian idea of the universe. These doctrines provided a key to a new understanding of the universe and keys to reinterpreting and enriching his Neo-Confucianism and “pristine” Confucianism.

Tasan's writings, including the above epitaph, show that the Catholic faith was imparted to him and his brother by Yi Pyok. Yi Pyok also introduced the Catholic faith to the brothers Kwon Chol-shin and Kwon Il-shin, Yi Ka-hwan, and Yi Sung-hun, which means that Yi Pyok was a forerunner and motivating force behind the introduction of Catholicism into the Songho school.

In the summer of 1784, King Chongjo presented S'onggyungwan, the National Confucian Academy with eighty questions on the Doctrine of the Mean. In order to find answers to these questions, Tasan found Yi Pyok at the Seoul Supyogyo bridge. After discussing the questions with Yi Pyok, Tasan wrote "Countermeasures to the Doctrine of the Mean" and "Lectures on the Doctrine of the Mean." Over the course of the year, he and Yi Pyok saw each other frequently.

One year before this, in 1783, Yi Sung-hun accompanied the Korean envoy to Peking and was baptized there. In the March of the following year, he returned. Before Yi Sung-hun was baptized, he had received much information about Catholic doctrine and rituals. It was after Yi's return from Peking that a concerted movement to evangelize began. Yi Pyok continued to spread the Gospel. These efforts developed into an organized gathering of the faithful who met regularly. In the spring of 1785, the authorities found out that these meetings were being held in Myongye-dong, in the home of Kim Pom-u and took the icon they were using. The day they were discovered Yi Pyok was leading a meeting with Yi Sung-hun, the three brothers, Chong Yak-chon, Chong Yag-Chong, Tasan, Kwon Il-shin and his son all in attendance. As soon as this became known, these young scholars, all of noble birth were severely reprimanded by their families. Moreover, Yi Sung-hun renounced his faith and wrote Choksamun, a writing

which rejected the Catholic faith. Things reached such a state that the National Confucian Academy students handed out leaflets, demanding that the leaders of Shinso (Pro-West) faction be cast out as barbarians. Despite this crisis, the Catholic faith did not completely disappear.

The Catholic movement was stopped after its exposure in 1785, but it started again in the spring of the following year, this time as an underground movement. In the winter of 1787, Yi Sung-hun, Tasan, and Kang I-won were discovered studying Catholic doctrine in a private house near the National Confucian Academy and publicly denounced by two fellow students. In 1790 the Peking Church sent a directive to the leaders of the underground Catholic Church saying that they were not to offer sacrifices to and worship ancestors. In 1791 in Chinsan in Cholla-do province Yun Chi-chung and Kwon Sang-yon failed to prepare a tablet for their parents as required by traditions of Confucianism. This event caused a great stir, and news of the event reached all the way up to the central government. At this time Tasan held the position of government records supervisor (Yemun-gwan), but according to one of his letters, he left the life of faith completely after this event.

After 1785 there was increasing oppression of the Catholic faith by the government. In spite of this, the early faith movement in Korea spread beyond fellow intellectuals of the Shinso faction to the people. At that time, not only did Tasan openly reject his faith, but also kept his brother, Chong Yag-chong at a distance because he still remained a staunch believer. By doing so, he managed to escape being accused of being a Catholic.

But the activities of the Qing Chinese priests, Zhou Wen-mo, who entered Korea secretly in 1795, brought about a great increase in new converts. This led to the banishment of Yi Sung-hun to Yesan. Yi Ka-hwan was demoted from the position of Magistrate of Chongju and Tasan was demoted from the royal right secretary to the inspector of Kumjong'yok. The town of Kumjong'yok is an area where the Catholic faith had penetrated deeply. Tasan had the responsibility of converting those of Catholic faith back to Confucianism. He faithfully carried out his duties and formed "the Choksagye", a mutual aid association which helped people perform ancestral sacrifices properly and directed them away from the Catholic faith.

When King Chongjo died and Sunjo became King, a bloody persecution of the Church immediately arose. This is known as the Catholic Persecution of 1801. During this time Tasan reaffirmed his rejection of the faith. Nevertheless, he just barely escaped death and was banished to Changgi, a small village on the Kyongsang-do province. The Chinese priest Zhou Wen-mo was also executed in 1801. Moreover, Hwang Sa-yong who secretly attempted to send his famous "Silk Letter" to the Bishop in Peking was found and executed. This letter explained the current situation and persecution of the church and asked Western nations to dispatch naval and ground forces to compel the Korean government to grant religious freedom. After this Tasan was again interrogated and banished to Kangjin on the very southern tip of the peninsula, on the coast of Cholla province. He remained there for eighteen years, between the age of 40 and 57, during which time, he devoted himself to the study of the Chinese Classics, the Book of Changes, the Book of Odes, the Spring and Autumn Annals, and the Four Books. He

wrote literature and many works in which he analyzed and criticized the condition of government and society on the basis of his personal experience and investigations.

From the age of 57 (1818) until his death at age 75, in 1836, Tasan lived in his hometown, Majae. There, he devoted himself to writing. With regard to the question of his faith, we cannot say clearly, but it is difficult to find any evident trace of it in his surviving scholarships. Now, we turn to his thoughts which seemed to have been impacted by Western learning.

II. Chong Yag-yong's Confucianism

In his preface to “Chungyong Kanguibo” (Lectures on the Doctrine of the Mean) he criticized the Neo-Confucian concept of yin and yang. He said yin and yang, like light and shade, have reciprocal form but do not have physical substance or property. Here Tasan is in agreement with Matteo Ricci regarding the Great Ultimate: that it adopts the form of odd and even, it does not have real existence as the yin and yang in Taiji (the Great Ultimate); rather, it is just a form.

Tasan challenged the cosmic role of the Five Elements. He held that the Five Elements were just like anything else and that it was not reasonable to think they produce a myriad of other things. He also said that the Five Elements were not the basic elements in the universe. Instead, he spoke about the “Four Main Hexagrams” in the Book of Changes (Heaven, Earth, Water, Fire) as being the basic entities. Kun (Heaven, Ki), Kon (Earth, to), Kam (Water, su), Ni (Fire, hwa), all indicate matter. This is the same as Western natural philosophy's explanation of the “Four Sources.” The pro-Western faction used the explanation of the “Four Sources”, to displace the Neo-Confucian

doctrine of the “Five Elements.” All the above thoughts about nature are not unrelated to his idea of Heaven (Tian/Chon).

When it came to the concept of Heaven (Chon), Tazan drew a distinction between its transcendental and natural characteristics. The transcendental Heaven is spiritual, bright and governs creation, but the sky above is blue and has vast spherical dimensions. If we compare Tazan’s Heaven with Fung Yu-lan’s Heaven, Tazan’s transcendental Heaven corresponds to Fung’s (2) A ruling or presiding Tian (3) A fatalistic Tian (5) an ethical Tian, and Tazan’s natural Heaven to Fung’s (1) a material or physical Tian or sky (4) a naturalistic Tian, one equivalent to English word Nature (Fung, 1983: 31).

The existence of Heaven as a spiritual and intelligent being means that a being exists which transcends form and has perception. Tazan also emphasized that Heaven was the governing power. His concept of Chon (Heaven) is similar to the one Ricci described in his *Tianzhu Shiyi*. This understanding of Heaven is not same as the Neo-Confucian concept of Heaven, which sees Heaven as dwelling within the human’s original nature, being one with it, having no power of perception.

Mark Setton argues that Tazan’s depiction of the supreme ruler Shang-di (or Tian) as an object of reverence has generally been ascribed to the influence of “Western Learning,” to which he and many other members of the Southerner faction in the eighteenth century were attracted. But he also says, one cannot discount the possibility that the writings of Jinsai and Sorai (Japanese Kogaku scholars) also played a significant part in the formulation of his monotheistic version of Confucianism. He maintains that at the very least, the work of these two Tokugawa scholars must have encouraged him to look back to the *Classic of Documents* and *Classic of Odes* for canonical justification in

his rejection of the orthodox Neo-Confucian conception of Heaven as principle (Setton, 1997: 133,134). To Setton's theory, we can respond: monotheistic belief was in the Korean people's mind ever since the Tangun myth even before the introduction of Confucianism and Daoism to Korea.

Tasan rejected the Neo-Confucian theories that the mind, nature, and Heaven are manifestations of one "principle" that penetrated them all. A classical locus of Confucian perceptions on the relationship between human nature and Heaven can be found in the seventh chapter of the Mencius, where it is stated,

Those who fathom their minds know their nature. Those who know their nature know Heaven. To preserve one's mind and nourish one's nature is the way to serve Heaven (Mencius, 7A1).

Ch'eng I had spoken of the Mind, Nature, and Heaven as manifestations of the "one principle" that penetrated them all. Taking up Ch'eng I's theme of a universal principle shared by human beings and Heaven, Zhu Xi had interpreted Mencius' words to mean that one should thoroughly comprehend the principle embodied by the mind in order to attain a broad understanding of all things, including Heaven. Confronting Zhu Xi head on, Tasan maintained that the association of all-embracing principle with Heaven and human nature, one of the theoretical pillars of the Ch'eng-chu School, was originally derived from Buddhism (Setton, 1997: 72).

Saying that Neo-Confucian philosophy of principle was not based on the Confucian Classics, Tasan insisted that there was a fundamental difference between creation and humans. Plants, birds, and beasts just follow natural principle of infinite production. They live to maintain the species. But humans have a spirit and are endowed

with illustrious virtue. Tasan interpreted the meaning of “illustrious virtue,” a key concept of the classic, to be “filial piety, fraternal respect, and parental love (Ibid, 57).

Tasan understood that the humans and creation were not equal and that they were in the position of lord and servant. But introducing the idea that the basic character of the human was spiritual and luminous, he explained that the human and Heaven, which also had these qualities, had a point of contact. According to Keum Jung-tae, it is necessary to pay attention to the connection between the Catholic concept of the human’s inherent soul and Tasan’s concept of the human as having a luminous spiritual nature (Keum, 2000: 198).

Even though he did not use the word soul, he used a “luminous spiritual nature” (yongmyong), which includes the concept of soul. In explaining virtue, Tasan concludes that virtue in its classical sense is nothing but the practice of social norms such as filial piety and fraternal respect. Heaven only endowed humans with “the virtuous nature” (te-hsing/toksung) not virtue itself. There was also a philosophical reason why Tasan rejected the concept of innate virtue. On the assumption that virtue was by definition good, Zhu Xi’s conception of virtue implied that goodness could exist in the mind prior to moral action, a position unacceptable to someone whose fundamental premise was that distinction between good and evil could only be made in the context of human relationships (Setton, 1997: 106, 107).

Nowhere is Tasan’s idea of God more conspicuous than in his ethical vision. He believed that belief in God was necessary to inspire human beings to overcome their natural selfish tendencies and do good and avoid evil. He noted that humans are unable to reach perfection, no matter how wise or diligent they are, since they are not just a

disembodied mind but also possess passion and carnal urges. Even the sages of ancient China were not perfect. Tasan's recognition of one's's inherent weakness, of guilt as an inescapable yet useful feature of the human condition, contradicts one of the fundamental assumptions of Confucian ethics, namely that humans are inherently perfectible.

In Tasan's view, living virtuously required more effort than Zhu Xi and other Neo-Confucians, with their theory of inherent virtue, had realized. Therefore regarding a sentence in the first chapter of the Doctrine of the Mean, "The superior man is cautious about what he does not see and apprehensive about what he does not hear," Tasan differed from the customary interpretation, which claimed that what humans did not see and did not hear was the condition before conscious action arose (Keum, 2000: 198). According to Zhu Xi's remark, Tzussu's hope was that students should hereby return to search within themselves to find these truths, so that they might remove their selfish desires aroused by external temptations, and realize in full measures the goodness which is natural to them (Chan, 1963: 98). For Tasan the original "being cautious and apprehensive" was not connected with one's internal mind but with God coming down and surveying the activities of human beings.

In other words, Tasan reasoned that only if people felt that the God (the Sangje/Shangdi) watched their every move and knew their every thought would they be able to maintain the constant watchfulness and self-discipline essential to adherence to the demands of morality (Don Baker, paper). So Tasan creatively reinterpreted the beginning part of the Doctrine of the Mean to suit his vision of morality based on the concept of God. We can understand this interpretation is diametrically opposed to the

Buddhist view of morality discussed in Chapter 3, Section I: Confucian Ethics and Christian Ethics.

Unlike T'oegye, Tasan was opposed to the dualistic overtones of Zhu Xi's conception of "original nature" (benran zhi xing) and "physical nature" (qizhi zhi xing) on both philosophical and textual grounds. Ontologically speaking, he felt that they denigrated the human's status as a unique being with capacities unparalleled in the animal and plant kingdoms. On the subject of human uniqueness, Mencius observed rather cryptically, that whereby people differ only a little from the lower animals ,common people ignore their uniqueness, while superior people attend to it (Mencius 413: 19).

When Zhu Xi interprets that the advantage of human beings over animals is their capacity to fully realize their nature, he implies that principle, that is, original nature is, what they have in common, and material force is the source of differentiation. Tasan was very much opposed to the implication that human beings and animals were endowed with the same nature, and that the difference between them was the extent to which nature was obscured by impurities in the material force. According to Tasan, in the respect that they have desire for food and sex, people are not different from the animals. What makes them unique is their moral nature, which is transcendent of form. It is on account of this that the concepts of the "human mind" (jen-hsin/insim) and the "mind of the way" (tao-hsin/tosim) have existed from ancient times.

In criticizing Zhu Xi's depiction of a principle shared by human beings and animals and a material force that differentiated them, Tasan insisted that it was their

physical nature that human beings shared with animals and their moral nature that set them apart.

Tasan used the concept of discernment (Kwonhyong) with reference to the dignity of humans as being with moral autonomy. According to Tasan, it was not simply their moral nature per se that distinguished people from the animals, it was their capacity to make moral choices;

As for the way human beings relate to good and evil, they can do anything. They act autonomously through their ability to direct themselves. As for animal's relationship to good and evil, they cannot act autonomously because they cannot do other than they do (Quote from Setton, 1997: 83).

It was on the basis of the "faculty of deliberation" that one could decide to follow the essential deeds in spite of difficulty involved or alternatively succumb to one's baser instincts. The concept of Ch'uan/Kwon (to weigh/consider) was perhaps used by Confucius and Mencius, but has developed since (Kim, 2005: 322-341).

For Tasan, the way of Mean is based on the Way of Heaven. Those who become sincere after completing discernment process resemble Heaven. In Confucian tradition the human's forming one body with Heaven is considered the sublime state, the sage is seldom described as "man resembling Heaven." Here in this image of the sage is found the natural and beautiful encounter between Confucianism and Christianity (Kim, 2005: 338).

Mark Setton says Tasan transferred human nature from the metaphysical to a more dynamic, psychological sphere (Setton, 1977: 77). For Tasan, the Confucian view of purpose and Western moral judgment are combined together, especially with regard to his idea of discernment. Tasan valued choice more than anything else, and the

importance of will. For Tasan, knowing Heaven is the beginning of self-cultivation. All those factors prove that Tasan creatively incorporated and adopted Catholic doctrines of God, human beings and creation to reinterpret, criticize and enrich Confucianism.

So far we have examined seven aspects of Tasan's thoughts which could resonate with Catholic doctrines in terms of the transcendence of God and the unique status and dignity of human being. There is no way of saying that all these were directly impacted by the Christian world view and anthropology, because Tasan could have been influenced by Qing China scholars, Tokugawa Ancient Learning scholars, and other Korean Neo-Confucianists to say nothing of orthodox Confucians.

But we still can say that Tasan's basic position is a reinterpretation of the Confucian concepts that has been influenced by Catholic doctrine. Even though Neo-Confucianism was greatly influenced by Buddhism, it did not seem Buddhist. In the same way, even though Tasan's Confucianism was ripened within the arms of Catholic doctrine, it was not Christian. As Keum says, in some way we can say that the incorporation of Catholic doctrines into Tasan's Confucian thought opened up a new domain for Confucian thought in general (Keum, 2000:202).

6: Chong Ha-sang's Activity

Regarding the importance of priests, Yves Congar states:

An Indian race in South America kept the faith without priests for more than eighty years; so did the Japanese Christians from the beginning of the seventeenth century to 1864, when the first missionary was able to return to Nagasaki. The story of the Japanese Christians, its positive and even stirring aspect that I... mentioned, has also a negative aspect: A whole section of them lapsed into a regrettable form of syncretism, and their descendents continue to perpetuate their error. We are familiar with the sorrowful judgment of the Cure d' Ars: "Leave a village without a priest for twenty years and they will worship animals!" (Congar, 2004: 73,75).

As far as we know, Korea is the only country in the world throughout the centuries, where the Catholic Church was founded, not by foreign missionaries, but spontaneously by the native lay people themselves. The Church had survived despite all the persecutions and hardships for ten years until a Chinese prophet, Chu Mun-mo (Zhou Wen-mo) Vellazo entered Korea. Chong Ha-sang Paul was a martyr saint, very active in bringing priests to Korea. We will briefly look at his life before we review his apologetic letter, Sangjesangso ("The Letter to the Prime Minister"). Chong Ha-sang Paul was born in 1795 in Mahyon, Yanggungun in Kyonggi Province. He came from a traditional noble family belonging to the Southerners (Namin). His father, Chong Yag-jong Augustine, was martyred on April 8, 1801, and his mother, Yu So-sa Cecilia, was martyred on November 23, 1839. His sister Chong Chong-hye Elizabeth gave up her life for the faith in the same year. His elder brother, Chong Ch'ol-sang Charles, was martyred in 1801 with his father. Chong Yag-yong, one of the greatest scholars of Korea whom we have discussed above, and Chong Yag-chon are his uncles.

After his father, who had written a catechism book, “Essentials of the Lord’s Teachings,” was martyred in 1801, all their properties were confiscated, and the family wandered about, reduced to extreme poverty. At the time, Paul was only seven years old. At the age of twenty, he left his mother and sister at home and went to Seoul. He decided to bring missionaries into the country which was struggling without a priest. Paul went to Cho Tong-som Justin, a great scholar who had gone to Hamgyong Province for Chinese studies. Although Paul was from yangban (scholar-bureaucrat) family, he humbled himself to become a servant of an interpreter, who used to frequent Peking. In 1816, he went to Peking and asked the bishop of Peking to send missionaries to Korea.

On his visit to Peking in 1817, Paul obtained a promise from the bishop of Peking to send a missionary to Korea. But the missionary died before he could enter Korea. Paul’s efforts to bring missionaries did not stop. Paul and several others sent a letter to the Pope in Rome, appealing to him to assign priests to Korea. They also kept writing to the bishop of Peking for priests. Their unceasing requests were finally granted in Rome. On September 9, 1831, the Vicariate Apostolic was formally established and the Paris Foreign Mission Society was asked to be in charge of the Church of Korea.

Paul traveled to Peking nine times and to the Korean-Manchurian border three times. Whenever missionaries came into Korea, Paul met them at the border in Uiju. He welcomed Bishop Laurent Imbert into Korea, had him stay in his home and helped him with his ministry. Bishop Imbert highly valued his faith, and decided to send him to the seminary. He taught him Latin and theology. However, a new persecution arose which led the bishop to escape to Suwon.

While Paul was waiting for martyrdom, he wrote Sangjesangso (“The Letter to the Prime Minister”) to be submitted to government officials in case he was arrested. This is the first apologetic letter to defend the Catholic faith in Korea. Paul was finally arrested in 1839 with his mother and sister. He and Yu Chin-gil were considered the leaders of the Church, who introduced foreign missionaries into Korea. Therefore, the tortures and punishment he underwent were far more severe than others. Paul endured all these tortures and finally was beheaded outside the Small West Gate of Seoul in September 22, 1938, at the age of 45.

Paul is considered a leading layman in the Korean Church. He helped to rehabilitate the Church which was in danger of devastation due to persecution, and made the establishment of Vicariate Apostolic of Korea possible. He was canonized with other 102 people in Korea by Pope John Paul II in 1984.

7: Sangjesangso (“The Letter to the Prime Minister”)

I. Background

To better understand “Sangjesangso” as an apologetic letter, now we turn to the definition of “apologetics.” I will quote two definitions from two dictionaries:

“Apology” is a formal written or oral defense of some idea, viewpoint, religion, philosophy. Apologetics refers to that discipline of theology that is concerned with the defense of or proofs for Christianity. Whereas apologies for Christianity have existed as long as Christianity itself, apologetics as an independent theological discipline has come into existence only in modern times.” (Francis Schussler Fiorenza, *The New Dictionary of Theology*, 1987: 183).

Fundamental theology arose from the conflict of Christianity from its earliest days, with its non-Christian “intellectual environment” and from the responsible thrust of Christian belief (1 Pet 3:15). Its earliest form, the “apology,” directed against paganism (Judaism, Gnosis, Manichaeism), developed into a more and more systematic apologetics (St Thomas Aquinas: *Summa Contra Gentiles*) no longer, as such, necessarily directed against those who denied Christian Revelation, but designed to clarify “fundamental” problems so that Christian theology might better understand itself (Karl Rahner/Herbert Vorgrimler, *Dictionary of Theology*, 1981: 193).

If we understand Paul’s Letter to the Prime Minister in accordance with the above definitions, his letter as an apology is a formal written defense of the Catholic Christianity. It arose from the conflict of Christianity with its Confucian intellectual environment.

We have observed that even in Yi Ik’s followers, there were two factions. One was the Kongsopa (Anti-Western faction) and the other the Shinsopa (Pro-Western faction). The Kongsopa’s criticism of Christianity centered around incarnation, immortality of soul, heaven and hell. Yi understood Western astronomy, the calendar system, and the map of the world, and admired Western scientific knowledge. It was this

that spurred his interest in the Catholic faith. He studied Ricci's "True Principles of the Lord of Heaven", Pantoja's "Qike" (The Overcoming of the Seven Capital Sins), Ricci's "Doctrine of Friendship", and Adam Schall's "Zhuzai Qunzheng." He said that the concept of the Lord of Heaven corresponded with the Confucian "Ultimate Being," thus accepting the Christian idea of the existence of an Absolute Being. However, he differentiated between the fear, hope and faith shown to the Lord of Heaven in the Catholic faith and the reverence shown to the Ultimate Being in Confucianism, and compared the former to the attitude shown toward the Buddha in Buddhism. In other words, while admitting Western superiority in the field of astronomy and calendrical science and finding areas of similarity between Catholicism and Confucianism on matters of ethics, Yi Ik rejected the idea of Heaven and Hell, choosing to keep the Confucian position.

Two of Yi Ik's followers, Shin Hu-tam (1702-1761) and An Chong-pok (1712-1791) were leading the Kongsopa, propagating a theory critical of Catholic doctrines. At the age of 23, Shin Hu-tam wrote a book titled "Comments on Western Learning" in which he proposed a systematic criticism of Catholic faith. In this book, he accuses Catholics of being bloodthirsty and of having an egoistic view of their own death, i.e., their concern for their own salvation. He first criticized Sambiaso's "Linhyan Lixi," saying that the concept of the soul is the basic problem of Catholic doctrine. His basis of criticism was the Neo-Confucian understanding of the mind/heart, nature, and feeling.

An Chong-pok also criticized the Catholic doctrine of heaven and hell and the concept of the soul in a letter to Yi Ik in 1757. He affirmed Ricci's so-called three levels of soul (hun); living soul (hun), sentient soul (hun), and human soul (ling hun),

corresponding to what Xunzi called sheng (living), zhi (intelligence) and yi (righteousness). However, An denied the immortality of ling hun (Keum, 2000: 165). He found a contradiction in the doctrine of the immortality of ling hun in that there was not enough space between heaven and hell to hold innumerable souls. His criticism was based on the Confucian belief. Early Confucians believed that the life of human being came from the combination of two parts, the hun, the spirit from Heaven, and the po, the soul from the earth. When a person was born, these two parts combined and life began. And when a person died they departed, with the hun ascending to Heaven and the po descending to the earth. In ancestral sacrifice individual ancestors were symbolized by spiritual tablets that were installed on an altar located either in a special room or in a temple. When sacrifice was made before the tablets, the descendent would recall the deceased: the spirit from Heaven by music and the soul from the earth with wine. It was believed that when the music and fragrance of the offerings ascended to the palace of heaven and the smell of wine descended to the Yellow Spring of earth, the spirit and soul of the ancestors would return to their “home” and reside in the tablets.

If we did not consider the Government Anti-Heresy Declaration (Honjong Kihae Ch’oksa yunum), our examination of non-Christian intellectual environment for the apology in Korea would not be complete. Let me quote part of the Declaration:

Alas. According to the Chung-yung (Doctrine of the Mean), what Heaven imparted to man is called (human) nature. According to Shang-shu, the Emperor on High who is merciful to the people below, has given them moral sense called the “unchanging nature” of mankind.

What is said in these discourses on nature is the monistic state of the ultimate being at the moment of creation. The words “Heaven” or the “Emperor on High” used here are terms to denote figuratively the Supremacy of the Being and rulership and authority of the Supreme Being.

What is it that Heaven has imparted? What is mercy? These words do not explicitly explain anything. But they imply an unmistakable truism.

Once the principle (li) began to move, it generated the two material forces (chi). And when the four orders (or seasons) began to move, as the result of the two material forces, everything was created and governed.

When man was allowed to partake in the nature, he also was given the virtues consisting of the four elements; humanity, righteousness, propriety, and wisdom. At the same time, he is placed in ethical relations consisting of the five orders: father-son, king-subject, husband-wife, elder-young, friend-friend... The prospects concerning Heaven worship and serving Shang-di are the essence of the four virtues and five ethical relations. Why should one look elsewhere to find out this truism?...

Throughout the ages from the time when Confucius, succeeding the sages of the ancient, systematized their doctrines for the prosperity until the age of the Sung philosophers who clarified the heavenly ways and purified human hearts, the only principle that guided all men was Heaven be worshipped and Shang-di be served.

Even the slightest mistake in applying this principle has been heresy. But now we have encountered the shady and fantastic lies that came from foreign religion... Those who call themselves Catholics say that their doctrines are no other than the way of worshipping and serving Heaven. But we do not need to wait for them to teach us that. Because, fundamentally speaking, Heaven is to be worshipped and served. There is no need to tell it. The ways they propagate are no more than folksy ways of acquiring remissions of sins and receiving Heavenly Grace. In fact, this is nothing but blasphemous self-glorification and presumptuous foolishness of man before Heaven.

What we believe to be the correct way of worshipping and serving Heaven and Shang-di is to understand correctly the commandment of Heaven, obeying faithfully the merciful providence from above as is set forth in the teachings of the four virtues and five ethical relations (Chung 2001: 118-120).

(In this citation I have corrected several words from the original translation.)

In this document, we find reflected the li and ch'i debates which was carried on bitterly among Korean Neo-Confucianists more than a century. It seems that this document tries to harmonize the Li school and Ch'i school in order to unite their efforts to combat their common enemy, Christianity.

Zhu Xi's influence is found in its argument to identify Tian and Shang-di with li (principle). They also vehemently opposed the doctrine of incarnation as follows:

The man whom they call Jesus is neither man nor God. No one knows for sure whether the story about him is true or false. The adherents of this faith propagate that he had come to the world from the Lord-on-High and returned to the Lord-

on-High after his death and became one with God, the father of all men. How can there be more perplexed and perverse heresy than this one? “Heaven has neither voice nor smell.” “Man has body and shell.” The possibility of mixing these two spheres was absolutely ruled out from our belief. What a ridiculous thing to say that Heaven comes down to become man and man ascends to heaven to become Heaven (Ibid, 122).

This document denounced Catholics for the destruction of the ancestor’s tablets and abolition of sacrifices. It also accused them of having properties in common, celibate life among some, and promiscuity among general public. The celibate life will lead to the extinction of human being, the promiscuity to the destruction of human relations.

All of these elements of criticism are mirrored in Paul’s apology “Sangjesangso” remarkably with the exception of incarnation.

It is important that we should be clear about the concept of orthodoxy and heterodoxy to understand Chong Ha-sang’s apologetic letter.

Confucius had warned that, “The study of strange doctrines is harmful indeed” (Book VI, 16). The word Confucius used in denouncing strange doctrines is idan (i-tuan) literally “a different thread.” It was the term Tasan and other Koreans 2,300 years later borrowed from Chinese Confucian tradition to label ideas and practices such as Buddhism, which did not follow the way laid down by the sages of ancient China and thus threatened to unravel the common thread of Confucian morality from which the moral order was woven (Baker, paper).

Confucius spoke in vague generalities when he condemned threats to his teachings in the sixth century BCE. Mencius in the fourth century BCE had taught them to reject the Yang Zhu and Mo Tzu. Zhu Xi in the twelfth century had condemned

Buddhism as Taoism. In Korea, many of T'oegye's followers in the eighteenth century wanted to treat Catholicism as one of heterodox schools of thought.

According to Don Baker, Chosun dynasty Neo-Confucians had four measuring sticks when they encountered previously unknown ideas and practices which needed to be evaluated for acceptability (Baker, paper). First of all, they asked where those ideas and practices came from. If they came from China, and had already won the approval of China's Confucian scholars, then they had already passed the first test. Ideas and practices which had their roots in the Han dynasty or earlier were much more likely to be accepted than were ideas and practices which originated in more recent times, particularly if they represented a challenge to the Sung dynasty Neo-Confucianism of Zhu Xi which constituted orthodoxy in Korea.

Chinese origin and the patina of old age were not the most important criteria. Korea's Neo-Confucians were more concerned about the ethical implications of ideas than they were about their place of origin or their seniority. Orthopraxis was an essential component of orthodoxy. Only those ideas which encouraged adherence to Confucian moral principles, and only those practices which were in accord with those moral principles, were deemed orthodox.

Korea's Neo-Confucians were aware that there were non-Confucian elements in Chinese tradition. So they demanded that new ideas and practices show that they were consistent with the language and the message of the ancient Confucian classics. Old ideas and practices, even if they had been part of Chinese tradition for a long time, were unacceptable unless it could be shown that they were integral components of China's Confucian tradition. In other words, these four criteria--a Chinese pedigree, the patina of

old age, adherence to Confucian moral principles (orthopraxis), and consistency with Chinese classics are important for anyone who wants to argue for the orthodoxy or legitimacy of his theory (Ibid).

II. The Letter to the Prime Minister

Those who criticized Catholicism used the four criteria as those who defended the faith like Chong Ha-sang relied on these criteria too. But Paul disregarded the first criteria on Chinese pedigree to defend the Catholic faith, saying truth is truth regardless of its origin. In a little under 3,700 Chinese characters, Paul argues that the Chosun Dynasty is laboring under a misapprehension when it condemns Western religion as heretical, immoral and subversive. Paul's Letter consists of the following ten parts. Part two to part nine constitute the main body. The contents are as follows:

1. The introduction: The statement that before a doctrine could be condemned, the doctrine first must be tested against the dual standards of righteousness and principle. The legitimacy of Catholicism and the foolishness of the persecution of the faith.
2. The proof of God: the cosmos, liangzhi (pure knowing), and the Bible
3. The Ten Commandments: The meaning and self-cultivation
4. Apology for soul: Three levels of the soul
5. Justification of heaven and hell: Reward for the good and punishment for the evil
6. Six marks of the Catholic Church
7. Defense against alleged immoral life: no king no father, circulation of property and money, and exchange of spouses.
8. The legitimacy and moral sense of the Catholic Church

9. Appeal for revocation of persecution and prohibition

10. The Postscript: The absurdity of the ancestor memorial service

In what follows, I will briefly discuss those items that are deemed important to our theses. In quoting Paul's Letter I will follow "the Korean Martyr Saints, founders of a church", but I have changed some translations and added a few new translations.

Ha-sang began his defense to the Prime Minister, saying that before a doctrine could be condemned, that doctrine first must be tested against the dual standards of righteousness and principle. Only if it was ascertained that the doctrine was contrary to righteousness and principle, could it be condemned. On these grounds, Catholicism should not be condemned. First of all, it did not offend against righteousness. It could do no harm to Confucianism and could not threaten the social order. And he also argued that Catholicism was much more rational and much less of a threat to society and morality than those superstitious practices and those who practiced them.

Previously, when sages and gentlemen established laws and made decrees forbidding something, they investigated the righteousness and principles of the law, as well as the harm of what they were forbidding. What reason then does the country have to forbid the sacred religion of God?

Without any prior inquiry into the righteousness and principle of the Catholic Church, they regrettably declared it to be false. Even during the persecution of 1801 when many people lost their lives, not a single government official bothered to inquire into the origins or traditions of the Catholic Church.

Was it because learning Catholic doctrine would harm Confucianism? Or because it would confuse people? Since the tenets of this religion must be obeyed by everyone, from King to commoner, it cannot bring harm or confusion to anyone (The Korean Martyr Saints, 116-117).

Now we turn to Paul's three proofs of God's existence. God exists as ruler over this world and I will quote Paul's three proofs of this. The first of these is from the universe, the second from pure knowing, and the third from the Scripture.

What does the universe show us? Let us take a building as an example. It has pillars and foundations, beams and rafters, doors and windows, fences and walls, all in correct proportion; the square and the round each in its proper place. If anyone suggested that this all happened quite by accident, that person would be declared insane. If you stop and think, heaven and earth are a great house. How could the things that fly and crawl, the animals and plants in their marvelous variety, have spontaneously appeared?

Paul followed Ricci for this cosmological proof, who in turn drew upon Thomas Aquinas.

Paul now move to “pure knowing” (liang zhi).

What does pure knowing show us? If a bright day becomes dark, with thunder and lightning, little children shake with fear, not knowing where to hide. So in the heart of all is the idea of a great Ruler and the people of a village, when faced with some sudden disturbing or saddening event, call on God and pray. This is because people are originally born with that kind of mind. They know without being taught or learning. People are fearful because they know through pure knowing that God exists.

Paul now explains about Scripture:

What does Scripture show us? It is because the Classics and histories were written that the stories about King Yao, Shun, Yu, Tang, Wen, Wu, Duke Zhou and Confucius have been handed down through the centuries. The Catholic Church has its own Scripture handed down. The history of what God has done from the creation of the world is written in the Old and New Testaments, and to this day is recounted in words and sung in song. It cannot be wrong to fill our houses with such books.

The Chinese Classics agree with this. “The Book of Changes” says, “We offer to God.” “The Book of Songs” says “We serve God.” “The Book of History” says, “We pray to God.” The Confucius in Analects says, “When you have offended against Heaven, there is nowhere you can turn to in your prayers.”

Now Paul discusses the mysterious providence of God in the Christian mission to East Asia.

During the Oh Dynasty an icon crucifix was discovered. During the T'ang Dynasty the Western religion called Kyong-Kyo (Jingjiao) was prosperous. Everybody from the highest official to the lowest commoner believed and the Nestorian Monument was built. During the Myong Dynasty also we are told the Western religion was introduced and many books were printed. In this way, God has mysteriously helped the East also and for the last fifty years has offered blessings and luck to our country. In this way, from the Scripture, we can know that God exists.

Paul speaks of the Ten Commandments, but he also discusses God's grace and says we have to repay it by obeying the commandments.

God created heaven to cover us and earth to put us on. God created the sun and moon and stars to give us light. God created the animals and plants and minerals for us to make use of. We cannot use these things God has given us and not acknowledge God's gift. To give an analogy, if a father built a house and gave it to his son along with a livelihood and the son thought only of himself and gave no thought to his parents, could this be called filial piety?

Everything we experience in this world, even the smallest exists by God's power. Even if we do not speak of the rewards to be received after death, the grace we are receiving now is so great that we must ask how we can repay it by being faithful to God. Not by exposing others' secrets or by doing strange deeds but by repenting past sins, renewing oneself and obeying God's commandments.

God has revealed the Ten Commandments. First to adore the one God above all; second not to take the name of the Lord your God in vain; third to keep holy the Lord's Day; Fourth to honor your father and mother; Fifth not to kill; Sixth not to commit adultery; Seventh not to steal; Eighth not to bear false witness; Ninth not to covet your neighbor's wife; Tenth not to covet your neighbor's goods.

These Ten Commandments will condense into the two commandments; Love God above all and love neighbors as yourself. The first three commandments are about loving God, the next seven commandments are for self-cultivation. By observing these the family will be well regulated, the country well governed and the whole world will become peaceful.

Paul also writes about about rewards and punishments. He says there are three levels of soul in accord with Ricci. The three are the living soul, the sentient soul and the human soul. Among these three, the human soul is immortal.

In our country there are rewards and punishments. Those worthy are called to honorable positions and receive honor and riches. Criminals are sent to prison and executed. The King has the power to reward and punish. So will the Great King of the Universe not also have the same power? God's reward is not comparable to earthly honor but is eternal happiness. God's punishment, likewise, cannot compare with imprisonment and execution, but is eternal torment.

Paul argues that if we obey the Ten Commandments, we will receive eternal happiness, if not, eternal punishment. He also mentions the marks of the Church.

Having lived in this world with such a cloudy understanding, it is too late to repent after death. Therefore, even when there is a sword before him to cut off his hand and a big cauldron behind him to boil his body, the one who remains cool and unbowed is the one who lives forever. This is one more proof that the Catholic Church is the true religion.

Paul says, the Catholic Church is most holy, most catholic, most right, most true, most perfect and one. He defends circulation of properties and money as natural, but strongly refutes the calumny about exchange of spouses as preposterous on the basis of the sixth and the ninth commandments. He argues that there is no ground for denying the Catholic faith only because it originated from other countries:

Alas! What are we to make of those who point to gold and precious jewels and call them mud and gravel, or those who possess what is good to eat and claim it is inedible. They seem to regard the truth or falsehood of a doctrine to be quite irrelevant, and so they write off Catholic doctrine for no other reason than that it is foreign. But gold does not receive its value from the place where it is found, if it is truly gold, then it is precious. Religion is the same. If it is true whatever its region of origin, how can there be national boundaries in proclaiming it?

Finally Paul appeals to remove the prohibition and stop the persecution of the Church.

Catholic believers are dying, worn out in prison. They are daily being beheaded outside the prison walls. Their blood and tears create a river and the sound of

their laments rises to heaven. Fathers call to their children and brothers call to brothers as they vainly seek those who have been chased far away. In a truly clear and bright world, how can things like this happen? I beg you, Prime Minister, to look clearly at the facts, to make a careful judgment about the truth or falsehood of the Catholic doctrine and to have all, from the highest down to the ordinary citizen, turn afresh to the faith. Ease the prohibition against the Catholic Church, withdraw the order to arrest Catholic believers, release those in prison so that they may live safely at home and experience the joy of life with all the people. Allow all the people to experience peace. For this I pray a thousand times, ten thousand times.

In the postscript, Paul continues:

The Catholic Church prohibits ancestral cult at which wine and food are offered with silent prostration in front of the tablets. If people cannot eat while they sleep, how much more foolish it is to offer wine and food to our parents when they are dead. Food is the nourishment of the body, morality is the food of the soul. Even a really filial son wouldn't give food to sleeping parents. Sleeping hours are not for food. If we cannot receive food when sleeping, how much less when we are dead? The Catholic Church also bans ancestors' tablets. How can we dare to treat pieces of wood with no blood vessel as though they were actually my mother and father?

“The Letter to the Prime Minister” by Chong Ha-sang Paul was published as a book in Hong Kong in 1887 and later was translated into Japanese and used as a catechism text.

III. Critique of Paul's Letter

Now we will critique this letter as an apology in light of Catholic theology and point out the influence of Confucian doctrine on it. As already mentioned, the Letter is not a summa or a regular catechism, so we cannot expect it to cover all the subjects of Catholic faith. Unlike his father's book, the “Chugyo Yoji (Essentials of the Lord's Teachings)”, Paul's Letter omitted Christology; the incarnation, the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus. It is remarkable that he failed to say anything about the incarnation

especially because the government, through the Declaration, vehemently criticized the doctrine. It follows that the Letter did not cover the Trinity, sacraments and purgatory as “Tianzhu Shiyi”. Did he avoid the topic of Trinity not to confuse people? Did he avoid the topic of purgatory to differentiate Catholicism from Buddhism?

Paul began his defense by reminding the Prime Minister that before a doctrine could be condemned, that doctrine first must be tested against the standards of righteousness and principle.

According to Baker, his argument is based on his Catholic usage of the term *li* (principle). He uses that term more in the Riccian sense of rational principle than in the mainstream Neo-Confucian sense of moral pattern. Baker continues that Ha-sang played on the ambiguity of the term. But I think Paul might have followed the meaning of the word interpreted by his uncle Chong Yag-yong. Chong Yag-yong claimed that the references to *li* in the classics all referred to either “pattern,” “order” or “natural law,” and that there was nothing in the classical sources that bore out the Ch’eng-Chu teaching that “human nature is principle” (Setton, 1997: 23).

Paul used the multivalent and important term of Confucianism to prove that Catholic faith was consistent with Confucianism. When it comes to proofs of God, the first one is a cosmological and teleological proof. Cosmological arguments are, as the name implies, attempts to infer the existence of God from the existence of the cosmos or universe. Such arguments may take as their starting point the existence of the universe as a whole, of particular objects, or of even one individual object.

In a broad sense, a teleological argument is also a cosmological argument: it too begins with the existence of the cosmos. It begins however not merely with its existence

but with its character as a cosmos, an orderly universe. It is often referred to as “the argument from design.”

If we follow these definitions, Paul’s arguments are cosmological and teleological.

For the second proof, Paul used Confucian concept “liang-zhi” (pure knowing) to prove the existence of God. According to Philip J. Ivanhoe, the translation “pure knowing” was first suggested by David S. Nivison. Unlike the more common “innate knowledge,” this rendering captures the crucial and characteristic aspects of the concepts (Ivanhoe, 2002: 180). Now a brief discussion of “pure knowing” is in order.

Confucius meaningfully speaks of human nature in the Analects only once. There he says, “By nature humans are alike. Through practice they become far apart.” (Analects, 17:2). That saying may have not had much influence on Mencius. In the Doctrine of the Mean, a passage reads, “What Tian (Heaven) imparts to (humans) is called (human) nature.” That statement captures the spirit of Mencius’s view of human nature. There are different interpretations of his notion of human nature. Some claim that humanity (jen), righteousness (yi), propriety (li) and wisdom (zhi) are human nature. Others claim that the beginnings (duans) of jen, yi, li, and zhi are human nature. The feeling of sympathy is the beginning of jen. The feeling of shame and dislike is the beginning of yi. The feeling of deference and compliance is the beginning of li. And the feeling of approbation and disapprobation is the beginning of zhi. Both interpretations are problematic.

Mencius says that human nature is “that which gives rise to the difference between human beings and other animals” (Mencius, 4B19:7A16). The mere

phenomenological difference between human beings and other animals are not human nature. They are simply the manifestations and effects of human nature. In other words, jen, yi, li and zhi and beginning of them are mere phenomenological differences, not human nature. What is “that which gives rise to” these differences? “The capacity possessed by human beings without having been acquired by learning is liang neng, and the knowledge possessed by them without deliberation is liang zhi” (7A15). “Liang” means “original,” “innate,” and “good.” “Neng” means “capacity.” To use the modern term, “liang neng” is something similar to “moral sense” (Liu, 2003: 270). “Zhi” in this context has been commonly translated as knowledge, but “zhi” can also mean (moral) consciousness and especially in this context, “the capacity to know or be conscious of.” So “liang zhi” characteristically means the capacity to have moral knowledge or moral consciousness. In short, “liang neng” and “liang zhi” are part of human nature which gives rise to the difference between human beings and other animals (Ibid, 270).

Wang Yang-ming developed this concept. For Wang, liang zhi is much more like a faculty than a body of knowledge. It is a mode or capacity of the mind in itself which spontaneously responds to stimuli with the appropriate perception, judgment, intention and action (Ivanhoe, 2002: 180).

Chong Yag-yong accepted Wang’s idea of pure knowing, and came to his practical conclusion that one could not possess true knowledge unless one had already acted. The way Paul used the concept liang zhi seems to go beyond moral consciousness and enables us to conclude he was more strongly influenced by Wang and his uncle Chong Yag-yong. So Paul might have used liang zhi, not liang neng as Ricci used to prove the existence of God in his Tianzhu Shiyi.

Julia Ching seems to treat both pure knowing and conscience without discrimination. She argues that the difference between the Confucian teaching of conscience and the Christian one lies especially in the Christian's emphasis on God, the giver of moral law and the judgment of human conscience (Ching, 1978: 99). She continues to say that Confucian philosophy does not dwell on God's role as a supreme lawgiver and judge. It prefers to analyze the meaning of conscience itself. She also notes the greater resemblance between Confucian teaching and the tradition of Catholic doctrine of natural moral law—that which is based on human nature itself, the law written in the hearts of humans (Ibid, 90). I believe that Paul's use of liang zhi (pure knowing) to prove the existence of God is an important application of the Confucian thought to his Western study.

In the third proof, he says Scripture is the proof of God. He explained through the Two Testaments God's creation, preservation and completion of the universe. He also quotes passages of Chinese Classics and Books where Shangdi or Tian is mentioned.

The Confucian texts are divided into two categories known as the "Jing" (Classics), and the "Shu" (Books). The texts of the "Jing," which stand first in importance are commonly reckoned as five, but sometimes as six. These are: Book of History, Book of Songs, Book of Changes, Book of Rites, and Spring and Autumn Annals. The four Books are Analects, Book of Mencius, Great Learning and the Doctrine of the Mean. Paul seems to assume that these Books and Classics are scripture. According to Rodney L Taylor, the works studied by Confucians are, no doubt, classics in the full sense in which we use that word, a cross-generational statement that remains basic to the entire cultural milieu. But it is a very different question to impose upon these

works the category of scripture. He continues to say that the primary difference between classics and scripture lies in the locus of religious authority ascribed to the latter (Taylor, 1990: 31). Admitting that these books and classics have religious authority, we are far from sure that they are inspired by the Holy Spirit. Aside from that question, this argument has a problem. The statement that scripture is inspired presupposes conviction as to the truth of the revelation of God in the person and history of Jesus, the deity of Jesus, and the action of the triune God in the death and resurrection of Jesus and the apostolic ministry of reconciliation. In other words, as Schleiermacher says, regard for holy scripture cannot be the basis of faith in Christ (God); rather faith in Christ (God) must be presupposed to allow for special regard for holy scripture (Parnenberg, 1991, 464, Schleiermacher, 1976: 128). So we can say the scripture already assumed the reality of God and its canonization was based on the faith of the Church. Hence to prove the existence of God by scripture is circular. For Paul, Chinese books and classics were important to justify his proof because these meet the criteria of orthodoxy. Paul argues that Shang-di or Tian in Chinese classics refers to the Christian God.

Herbert Fingarette and others hold that although Confucius did speak of Heaven, its role is not too clear and is unelaborated in the Analects (Fingarette, 1972: 62). Nevertheless we believe what Robert B. Loudon argues in “Confucius and the Analects” make sense. He says we do not see any evidence that Confucius’ Tian is anything like the “personal God” of the Western religions, but it is religious one. We may say Confucius is religious but not theistic (Louden, 2002: 79).

In discussing the Ten Commandments, Paul said the first three are about loving God, the other seven are about self-cultivation and study. He argued that Yen Yuan’s

“four don’ts” and Daeregyi’s “nine thoughts” cannot compare with these commandments, and in the Ten Commandments are loyalty, reciprocity, filial piety, fraternity, humanity, righteousness, ritual piety and wisdom. The “four don’ts” is found in the Analects Book XII.

The Master said, “Do not look unless it is in accordance with the rites; do not listen unless it is in accordance with the rites; do not speak unless it is in accordance with the rites; do not move unless it is in accordance with the rites” (Lau, 1979: 112).

The nine thoughts are in the Analects Book XVI. Paul quoted the nine thoughts from “Daeregyi,” a book which is not extant. (Paul may be wrong)

Confucius said,” There are nine things the gentleman turns his thought to; to seeing clearly when he uses his eyes, to hearing acutely when he uses his ears, to looking cordial when it comes to his countenance, to appearing respectful when it comes to his demeanor, to being conscientious when he speaks, to being reverent when he performs his duties, to seeking advice when he is in doubt, to the consequences when he is enraged, and to what is right at the sight of gain (Lau, 1979, 140-141).

Ha-sang did consider the Ten Commandments important enough to discuss in his explanation of the foundations of his faith. He lists them all and then points out that only the first three deal directly with one’s relationship with God while the other seven enjoin man to interact properly with his fellow man. While the latter seven can compare with Neo-Confucian morality, the first three add a dimension, Ha-sang argues, which makes Catholicism even more supportive of righteousness and principle, than Neo-Confucianism is.

According to Don Baker, his argument is based on his usage of the term li (rationality, principle):

The term principle (li) has ambiguity, which allows him to put forth logical arguments for the existence of God which then lead him to conclude that, since God exists as the creator and sustainer of all in the universe, including mankind, men should display piety toward their Father in heaven, just as li requires that they display filial piety toward their parents on earth (Baker, paper).

Paul uses the word li creatively to prove the existence of God and orthopraxis of Catholic doctrine. As was pointed out, Paul's Letter does not contain subjects of Christology, Trinity and sacrament. This fact may not be unrelated to his argument that we will be saved by our works and merits, and keeping commandments, which is consistent with the Confucian theory of sagehood.

So we can affirm that Paul's theory about salvation has room for clarification and correction in light of the ecumenical theology. This has been discussed above, in chapter three, with regard to Pelagianism and the Reformation.

Ultimately Paul argues, whether Catholicism is orthodox and worthy of support or heterodox and deserving of suppression is resolved by one basic question: Do Catholic teachings run counter to morality and encourage people to act in unacceptable ways? Do Catholics act properly or not? Paul gives a definitive yes for the acceptability and orthodoxy of his religious beliefs. He says Catholicism is the most holy, most catholic, most right, most true, most perfect and one. Marks of the Church are the four "notes" that the Creed of Constantinople (more popularly known as the Nicene Creed) attributes to the Church, describing it as one, holy, catholic and apostolic. The marks of the Church have had a very uneven history in theology. They have varied in number (from two to one hundred), designation and purpose. Robert Schreiter says:

That reflection on the marks of the Church is usually at its keenest in times of change, conflict and transition. In other words, over the course of history, the marks of the Church have been invoked and emphasized at moments of conflicts about the self-understanding of the Church. Optatus and Augustine invoked the marks of unity and holiness in their disparities with the Donatists. The Cathari and other medieval movements questioned the holiness of the Church as well. The controversies of the reformation questioned the medieval Church's apostolicity: had it lost its connection to the Church of Apostles? (Schreiter, 2004: 119).

Paul mentioned six marks. His father and Matteo Ricci never mentioned marks of the Church in their books. Paul points out the oneness, holiness, and catholicity of the four marks, but not apostolicity. Instead he says the Church is most right (orthodox), most true and most perfect. He might have mentioned these three to convince people of the Church's legitimacy and orthodoxy in place of apostolicity which could exacerbate anti-Catholicism even more for the foreign pedigree.

Paul's apologetic letter is an earnest and genuine attempt to prove the orthodoxy and the truth of the Catholic Church and her consistency with Confucianism.

Conclusion

We defined Confucianism as a religion. To approach world religions we discussed four models. They are exclusivism, pluralism, inclusivism and comparative theology. Exclusivism is not realistic and tenable in the plural modern world. Pluralism begins by sharply repudiating the idea that any one religion is superior or normative. Positively pluralism affirms the equal validity, truthfulness and salvific quality of all religions. Inclusivism has been widely accepted and popular, especially in the Roman Catholic Church since Vatican II. In contrast to the pluralist and exclusivist approaches a fulfillment (inclusivist) theology of religions succeeds best in meeting the demands of Christian belief. But the inclusivist model is still not adequate to the needs of Christian believers today, especially when they have inter-faith dialogues. Hence the need for comparative theology.

Comparative theology demands that we study other religions, dialogue with them with as little prejudice as possible, and come to our own religion renewed and enriched. We compared Confucianism with Christianity especially in three areas which are not exhaustive: ethics, God and the human, and came to the conclusion that those two religions are different even though not incompatible. On the topic of ethics, Confucianism stresses filial piety as the center of all morality, while Christian ethics revolves around the love of God and human persons in their covenant with God. On the concept of Heaven (God), Confucianism recognizes Tian as the Supreme Being, but it is not same as the personal, triune God of Christianity. It is very possible we are not talking to the same God. On the topic of the human person, Confucianism believes humans can perfect themselves through self-cultivation and education without grace, but Christians

argue we are corrupt, cannot save ourselves without God's grace. Then came the incarnation which Confucians could not accept. My argument is as follows. Since we are different from each other, we need to study and dialogue with each other without presuppositions or value judgment. So some remarks were made about these comparisons using comparative theology. Korean people have their own Tangun myth, Pure Land Buddhism, and Shamanistic tradition which sowed the seeds of this idea of the God in their consciousness. They could easily receive the Catholic faith.

In order to comparatively study Korean Confuciansim, we have given special attention to two people. Chong Yag-yong creatively incorporated Catholic doctrines such as God, human dignity, human moral sense in his Confucianism; and his nephew Chong Ha-sang borrowed Confucian concepts such as li, liangzhi, and Confucian morality to enrich his views on Christianity. The cases of these two scholars are not in the category of syncretism in usual sense. Ultimately, inter-religious dialogue is good not only for mutual enrichment, but also for world peace.

In her book, Suchocki uses an old tale which illustrates the potential treasures that inter-religious dialogue offers for Christian spirituality:

An impoverished, devout rabbi named Jacob ben Josef lived in a Krakow ghetto in a dwelling that was little more than a roof over dirt, a stove, and a mat. One night the rabbi had a strange dream: The Lord told him to travel to Prague, where he would find a bridge over the river. He was to dig under the northwest corner of the bridge, and there he would find a treasure that would allow him to build a house of prayer and to give many alms. Clearly the message was but a dream, so the rabbi ignored it. A second night the same dream came, and again the rabbi ignored it. But when it came the third night as well, the good man packed up a few belongings and began the long and arduous journey to Prague. After many days of hardship he arrived, only to discover that the Lord had failed to mention the great burly guard whose guardhouse was built precisely at the northwest corner of the bridge! The rabbi hardly knew what to do, so for several days he paced back and forth trying to figure it out. The guard noticed the poor fellow,

and challenged him: “What is your business?” The honest man told him about the perplexing thrice-repeated dream, at which the guard roared in laughter, “Why you foolish man,” said he, “you have journeyed all this way for a mere dream? Hah! If I believe in dreams I would have traveled all the way to some nondescript ghetto in the city of Krakow and inquired where a Jew named Jacob ben Josef lived. Can you imagine! To a ghetto, where half the Jews are named Jacob and the other half are named Josef! And then I should have gone to the miserable dwelling of this Jew, dug under his stove, and found myself a great treasure! But am I so stupid as to believe in such a wild goose of a dream? Not me! Go home, you old fool, begone with you!” And so Rabbi Jacob ben Josef bowed, thanked the man most humbly, journeyed home, moved his stove and began to dig. And the treasure was so great that he built a fine house of prayer, and provided food for many years for the poor (Suchocki, 2003: 85).

Suchocki concludes with the moral of this story:

Sometimes, one must travel to a far country to find the riches that exist in one’s own home, under one’s own hearth, in the warmth of one’s own fires. Traveling into the ways of another religion can allow us to see our own ways with a new perspective, revealing riches to us that we’d forgotten we had (Ibid, 85,86).

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