

BELEAGUERED SUCCESS:  
HOW KOREAN EVANGELICALISM FARED IN THE 1990s

Timothy S. Lee  
Assistant Professor of History of Christianity  
Brite Divinity School, Texas Christian University

**Evangelicalism as South Korea's Most Successful Religion**

South Korea is a religiously pluralistic society in which no single religion absolutely dominates. Still, if success is defined as “the attainment of wealth, position, honors, or the like,” there is no denying that some religions succeed more than others.<sup>1</sup> In 1990s South Korea, Evangelicalism was that religion. An initial case for this claim can be made on the basis of a finding by the 1997 Gallup Korea survey: that 53.2 percent of the nonbelievers surveyed stated that the Protestant church's influence in the society was on the increase, whereas similar figures for the Buddhist church and the Catholic church were 40.6 percent and 43.0 percent, respectively.<sup>2</sup> Of course, such a finding alone is not persuasive enough. Nevertheless, a much stronger, even indisputable, case can be made for this claim if we examine how much influence the Protestant church or Evangelicalism wielded in some key areas of Korean society during that decade—namely, civil society, politics, and economy—especially in comparison with other religions.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Christians constituted less than 1 percent of the Korean population.<sup>3</sup> By the end of the century, they were the largest religious group in the nation. In 1995, according to the National Statistics Office of the Republic of Korea, 50.7 percent of the population self-identified as having a religion.

Christians constituted 26.3 percent of the South Korean population, surpassing Buddhists, the next largest religious group, at 23.3 percent. Various new religious groups comprised the remaining 1.1 percent. In 1997, according to another major study, Christianity's numerical edge over Buddhism was even larger—27.4 percent versus 18.3 percent. In both these studies, Protestants constitute the vast majority of Korean Christians: 75 percent of the Christian population in the 1995 survey and 73 percent of the Christian population in the 1997 survey.<sup>4</sup> What these statistics obscure, however, is that within Korean Protestantism itself there exist two main sub-groups—Evangelicals and, for lack of a better term, non-Evangelicals—and that between them, Evangelicals predominate by a margin even larger than that between Protestants and Catholics.

Throughout Korean Christian history, non-Evangelical Protestants have played vital roles. This was the case especially during the 1970s and 1980s when liberal Protestants created the Minjung theology and took the lead in opposing political dictatorships.<sup>5</sup> Even so, in terms of numbers and church influence, Evangelicals overshadow their non-Evangelical counterparts. In fact, Evangelicalism so predominates the Korean church, and its success or growth so influences Korean Protestantism as a whole, that Evangelicalism and Protestantism are more or less synonymous in Korea.

That Evangelicalism grew phenomenally in (South) Korea from the early 1960s to the end of the 1980s is well known. Causes for such growth are complex, including urbanization of the nation in the 1960s and 70s, which undermined traditional mores; coalescence between the faith and Korean nationalism, which occurred in the earlier period, 1905-1945, when Koreans were under Japanese colonial rule; and effective missionary work.<sup>6</sup> And in the face of statistics like the above, one might suppose that such a success persisted all the way through the end of the century—that the 1990s, no less than the

previous decades, was an unqualifiedly triumphant one for Korean Evangelicalism. Such a hypothesis, however, would scarcely be supported by the actual history of the period. For in the 1990s, Korean Evangelicalism underwent a much more ambiguous and troubling development. Indeed, in this last decade of the twentieth century, Korean Evangelicalism—in spite of significant successes it enjoyed in areas such as civil society, politics, and economy—was a beleaguered religion, beleaguered by a stalemated growth, scandals involving its prominent members, and challenges posed by other religions of Korea.

### **Evangelical Predominance In Korean Protestantism**

Evangelicalism is broadly defined here to include movements more specifically known as Fundamentalism and Pentecostalism—as a species of Protestantism characterized by a literalist bent in biblical interpretation, a soteriology that values the individual over society, fervent advocacy of evangelism, and a piety that emphasizes conversion experience and personal relationship between God and believer, relegating rituals such as baptism and Communion to a secondary place. In Evangelicalism, salvation is typically achieved through conversion, wherein one accepts Jesus Christ as personal savior and resolves to live in accordance with the Gospel.<sup>7</sup>

It is well known among students of Korean Christianity that Evangelicalism predominates in Korean Protestantism, so much so that it is often simply taken as axiomatic, with very little discussion as to why that is the case. However, a brief overview of recent data on Korean religion and of the history of Protestantism in Korea will illuminate this claim.

Numerous authors—such as L. George Paik, Min Kyoung-bae, and Everett N. Hunt, Jr.—have examined the piety of the first Protestant missionaries to Korea. They

found that in theology and practice, the missionaries were decidedly Evangelical.<sup>8</sup> The following oft-quoted remark by Arthur J. Brown, who frequented Korea at the turn of the twentieth century as secretary of the Foreign Mission Board of the Northern Presbyterian Church, encapsulates this point of view:

The typical missionary of the first quarter century after the opening of the country was a man of the Puritan type. He kept the Sabbath as our New England forefathers did a century ago. He looked upon dancing, smoking, and card-playing as sins in which no true follower of Christ should indulge. In theology and biblical criticism he was strongly conservative, and he held as a vital truth the premillennarian view of the Second Coming of Christ. The higher criticism and liberal theology were deemed dangerous heresies.<sup>9</sup>

Moreover, ever since Korea's Great Revival in 1907, revival meetings have thrived and characterized Korean Protestantism, leading some historians to mistake them as a unique trait of the Korean church.<sup>10</sup> But this characteristic can also be tied to the early missionaries, themselves from revivalist traditions, who sought to replicate that tradition in Korea. Eventually a distinct tradition of Korean revivalism emerged, with the likes of Kil Sônju, Yi Yongdo, and Kim Iktu paralleling American evangelists Charles Finney, Dwight Moody, and Billy Sunday in the ways they set the tone for the church. Moreover, since the 1960s, the Korean church has ceased to be an epigone of American Evangelicalism and has become a leader of international revivalism in its own right, holding some of the largest revival gatherings ever held in Christian history—including the mammoth World Evangelization Crusade of 1980, which reportedly attracted over seventeen million in attendance.<sup>11</sup> The prominence of revivalism—a hallmark of Evangelical faith everywhere—serves as further evidence that Evangelicalism has predominated in Korean Protestant history.

Survey data with respect to key Evangelical beliefs also supports the primacy of Evangelical Protestantism within Korean Christianity. We are fortunate to have two

major studies in this area: *Han'guk kyohoe 100nyôn chonghap chosa yôn'gu* (Centennial Comprehensive Study of the Korean [Protestant] Church) (CCSKC hereafter), by the Christian Institute for the Study of Justice and Development; and *Hyôndaek kyohoe sôngjang kwa sinang yangt'ae e kwanhan chosa yôn'gu* (An Investigation into the Growth and Religiosity of the Korean [Protestant] Church) (IGRKC), by the Institute for the Study of Modern Society.<sup>12</sup> Both surveys, published in 1982, directed questions to two sample populations—the South Korean clergy and the laity. Their results indicate that an Evangelical ethos suffused the Korean Protestant church.

When asked whether they had felt the certainty of salvation (often the desired result of a definitive conversion experience emphasized in Evangelical theology), participants in the CCSKC survey responded overwhelming in the affirmative: 98.2 percent of the clergy and 93.1 percent of the laity.<sup>13</sup> The IGRKC addressed the issue of salvation from another perspective, asking if the experience of the Holy Spirit was essential for salvation (a belief more typical of Pentecostal branches of Evangelicalism): again, the response was overwhelmingly affirmative: 73 percent of clergy and 58.5 percent of laypeople affirmed its absolute necessity, while only 1 percent of ministers and 5.5 percent of laity deemed it superfluous to salvation.

Another essential doctrine in Evangelicalism pertains to the inerrancy of the Bible. Missionaries and Korean church leaders alike have held fast to, and vigorously disseminated, this doctrine. In 1914, for example, a missionary wrote the following:

The missionary body of Korea has as a whole been characterized by an unreserved acceptance of the Bible as the truth of God, believing the poetical parts are divinely inspired songs; the historical parts are accurate account of what happened to actual persons, not relegating Adam to the myths and Abraham to the shades, nor putting Job and Jonah in a class with Jack and Jill . . . In spite of the strong tide of destructive criticism there has been little wavering in the teaching of

the Word in Korea. The Korea missions consider that the Bible is to be accepted as a whole, and is not like a moth-eaten bolt of cloth, from which may be cut, according to human will and judgment, here and there, a usable remnant.<sup>14</sup>

Largely due to the influence of missionaries like this author and the Korean church leaders who shared his sentiments, biblical inerrancy has reigned supreme in Korean Protestantism.<sup>15</sup> This was reflected in the CCSKC survey, where 84.9 percent of the clergy and 92.3 percent of the laity affirmed that they believed every word of the Bible to be God-inspired and, hence, unerring. A belief in the inerrancy of the Bible also means believing in the corollaries that accompany that principle: thus well over 90% of both clergy and laity believe in the veracity of the virgin birth of Christ and the miracles of the Bible. The same was true of the existence of the afterlife, the resurrection of Jesus, and the imminent return of Christ. Respondents also gave high marks on the exclusivity of the Christian religion: about two-thirds believed that only Christianity's truth is valid (as opposed to superior to, or just as valid as, that of other religions).

Unfortunately, the CCSKC and the IGRKC did not conduct similar surveys during the 1990s. There is, however, another major study on Korean Protestant religiosity that was conducted in 1997 by Gallup Korea: *Han'guk kaesingyoin ūi kyohoe hwaltong kwa sinang ūisik* (Korean Protestants' Churchly Activities and Religious Consciousness). This survey, concerned with broader issues than those of the CCSKC and the IGRKC, did not ask some of the significant questions posed in the earlier studies, such as those concerning the inerrancy of the Bible, or the essentiality of the Holy Spirit (born-again) experience. Still, some of its questions were revealing: such as whether the respondents had accepted Jesus Christ as their personal savior (73.2 percent said yes); had experienced the Holy Spirit (52 percent, yes); were certain of their salvation (67.9

percent, yes); believed in the end of the world (68.9 percent, yes); the return of Jesus (80.7 percent, yes); and the possibility of salvation in other religions (24.5 percent, yes).<sup>16</sup>

These findings, when compared with those of the 1980s studies, suggest that Korean Evangelicalism had lost some ground in the 1990s. Granted, one should not read too much into some of these figures, such as those relating to the Holy Spirit experience and the certainty of salvation, since even a respondent who had not experienced them may nonetheless consider them essential, in which case she (methodologically speaking) would still qualify as an Evangelical. Overall, it is clear that even while Evangelical religiosity diminished somewhat in the 1990s, for the most part, the Evangelical ethos continued to predominate in the Korean Protestant church.

So exactly what percentage of Korean Protestants and their churches is Evangelical? Since, to my knowledge, there is no survey that directly addresses this issue, the answer must be estimated.<sup>17</sup> Extrapolating from the results of the IGRKC and the CCSKC surveys, one can estimate that in the early 1980s, well over 90 percent of Korean Protestants were solidly Evangelical; the Gallup Korea survey would indicate that near the end of the 1990s, at least 75 percent of all Korean Protestants were solidly Evangelical.<sup>18</sup>

The religious orientation of various congregations can be more difficult to determine than that of individuals, but the religious orientation of the denominations most of them belong to is well known, making it possible to estimate the number of Evangelical churches. In South Korea, there are three non-Evangelical Protestant denominations—the Episcopal Church, the Lutheran Church, and the openly liberal Presbyterian denomination known as *Taehan Kijang Changno Kyohoe* (the Presbyterian

Church in the Republic of Korea). It is more or less safe to say that all the other Protestant denominations are Evangelical. According to *The Christian Yearbook of Korea: 1991*, these three non-Evangelical denominations encompassed 1,359 churches in 1990—about 4 percent of the total.<sup>19</sup> This figure roughly concurs with the 90 percent estimate for Evangelicals based on the findings of the IGRKC and the CCSKC in the 1980s.

*The Christian Yearbook* ceased publication after the 1991 edition, but according to the Gallup Korea survey, there were 1,565 churches from these three denominations in 1997, or about 5 percent of all the Protestant churches.<sup>20</sup> Conversely, this indicates that toward the end of the 1990s, 95 percent of all Korean Protestant churches were Evangelical. This figure appears to conflict with the estimate based on the Gallup Korea survey that suggests as low as 75 percent for the proportion of Evangelicals in the Korean Protestant church in the 1990s. In actuality, however, there is no conflict here since a church as an institution may hold to a certain orientation even if some of its members do not. Either way, the point that clearly emerges from this estimation is that institutionally, as well as individually, Korean Protestantism in the 1990s was predominantly Evangelical. For this reason, I will use “Evangelical” and “Protestant” interchangeably in the rest of this essay.

### **Evangelical Influence in South Korean Society**

Civil society as a historical category has been used to mean a series of societal developments that occurred in the West, accompanying the rise of capitalism and the bourgeoisie. As a substantive category, the term has little applicability outside of the West; however, the term has also been used analytically to mean, for instance, “realms of

organized social life that [are] voluntary, self-generating, (largely) self-supporting, autonomous from the state, and bound by a legal order or set of shared rules.”<sup>21</sup> In this sense, the concept is very much applicable to South Korea—and to Evangelicalism—and admits of the claim that a significant portion of the South Korean civil society of the 1990s consisted of Evangelicalism, and that of all the religions, Evangelicalism had the most impact on this realm.

This claim can be attested in part by the sheer size and extent of the Evangelical church, which undeniably is “organized social life that is voluntary, self-generating, (largely) self-supporting, and autonomous from the state.” As already noted, according to the Gallup Korea study, by 1997 the percentage of Korean Protestants in proportion to the general population surpassed that of both Buddhists and Catholics. In 1990, Protestants had nearly four times the number of churches as the Buddhists, and over twenty times that of the Catholics. Protestant clergy outnumbered Buddhist clergy by more than two to one and nearly eight to one over Catholics.<sup>22</sup> Six years later, the gap widened, with five times the number of Buddhist churches and over fifty times the number of Catholic churches. Protestant clergy now outnumbered Buddhist clergy by a nearly four to one margin, and nearly ten to one over Catholic priests.<sup>23</sup>

Protestant predominance was noticeable in less churchly institutions as well. In 1995, the Protestants counted 174 incorporated foundations and associations, to the Buddhists’ 75 and the Catholics’ 70.<sup>24</sup> In 1996, sixty-nine higher educational institutions belonged to the Protestants, as opposed to a mere two for the Buddhists, and twelve for the Catholics. In the same year, the Protestants published 111 periodicals, to the Buddhists’ 27 and the Catholics’ 71.<sup>25</sup> A study finds that in 1985, 391 (61 percent) of 637

faith-based welfare agencies—elderly homes, orphanages, medical centers, vocational centers, and the like—were Protestant; another study finds that in 2001, 225 out of 440 such agencies (66 percent) were Protestant.<sup>26</sup>

Protestants also rallied around individual social causes. A movement to donate organs began in South Korea in 1991. Ten years and 570 transplants later, it was reported that 65.4 percent of the donors were Protestants, compared with 7.8 percent for the Buddhists and 7.3 percent for the Catholics.<sup>27</sup> When the North Korean famine began in the 1990s, Protestants constituted the first South Korean civilian group to initiate relief efforts, sending aid worth over US \$59,199,000 between 1997 and 2003.<sup>28</sup>

For better or for worse, South Korean Evangelicals also exerted a disproportionately large share of influence over politics during the 1990s. The 1990s saw a rise in the political influence of the entire Korean Christian community, for Catholics also garnered considerable political clout during that decade, attested by the presidency of Kim Dae Jung (1998-2003), a devout Catholic. Even so, the lion's share of political influence lay with the Protestants. This was due in part to their strong presence in South Korean government in the 1990s, most notably Kim Young Sam, a Presbyterian elder who served as president of South Korea from 1993 to 1998. Protestants also dominated his administration: out of 175 ministers and vice-ministers 76 (43 percent) were Protestants. By comparison, the number of Buddhists in the administration was twenty-seven (15 percent); of Catholics, forty-seven (29 percent); and of nonbelievers, forty-seven (29 percent).<sup>29</sup> The same situation prevailed in the National Assembly, where Protestants constituted about half the members.<sup>30</sup>

In the first half of Kim Dae Jung's administration, too, Protestants were well represented. Although Kim himself is Catholic, his influential wife, the First Lady Lee Hee Ho, is Methodist. Moreover, according to a Buddhist study conducted in 2000, of the top 100 governmental positions that year, Protestants occupied 42; Buddhists, 9; Catholics, 20; members of other religions, 3; and nonbelievers, 26.<sup>31</sup> Another study found a similar breakdown in representation among members of the National Assembly.<sup>32</sup> A 1998 nation-wide election of regional officials—governors, mayors, and similar offices—countered the trend of a Protestant ascendance in politics, as more Buddhists (35 percent) were elected than Protestants (25 percent), Catholics (12 percent), or nonbelievers (26 percent).<sup>33</sup> This result qualifies overall Evangelical influence in South Korean politics, but not enough to undermine their preponderance.

Figures alone are sufficient to demonstrate that Evangelicals were the most influential religious group in 1990s South Korean politics. But that point becomes even more apparent when we examine the influence they displayed in the presidential elections of 1992 and 1997. In the 1992 election, none of the three top candidates—Kim Young Sam, Kim Dae Jung, and Chung Ju Yung (the founder of Hyundai)—received a majority of the votes.<sup>34</sup> As in all elections in South Korea, regionalism played a role. Kim Young Sam's home base, Kyôngsang province, is one of the least Christianized provinces in the country. As a result, there is little doubt that his position as an elder of Ch'unghyôn Presbyterian Church, the flagship church of the largest Presbyterian denomination (Hapdong) in Korea, was a decisive factor in attracting Evangelical votes from all over the country and winning the election.<sup>35</sup>

Indeed, during this election, Evangelicals quite consciously mobilized on behalf of their favorite son. Ch'unghyôn Presbyterian Church, for example, formed a group of elders specifically to canvass for Kim, and Evangelical churches all over the country held gatherings to pray for the election of an Elder President.<sup>36</sup> In response, Kim promised that if elected, he would see to it that “hymns would continuously ring out from the Blue House.”<sup>37</sup> Consequently according to *K'ûrisch'an sinmun*, South Korea's leading Protestant weekly, over 90 percent of Evangelicals voted for Kim Young Sam in that election.<sup>38</sup>

The Evangelical prowess displayed in the 1992 election was not lost on candidates running in the 1997 presidential election. Among the contenders was Kim Jong Pil, archconservative and Methodist deacon. In his case, though, religious affiliation was of little help: his infamous political opportunism and sordid ties with past dictators repulsed even Evangelicals. The two main contenders were Kim Dae Jung and Yi Hwoe-ch'ang, both Catholics. Given these choices, Evangelicals, unlike in the previous election, did not heap special attention on any particular candidate.<sup>39</sup>

The reverse, however, was not the case: Yi, both Kims, and other candidates made a point of courting Evangelicals by canvassing churches and visiting with pastors. They paid special attention to so-called king-makers like Cho “David” Yonggi, minister of Yôido Full Gospel Church, the world's largest single church, and Kim “Billy” Changhwan, president of Kûkdong Pangsong, an influential Evangelical broadcast network.<sup>40</sup> At their interviews on the Kûkdong Pangsong, for example, the candidates took care to make apropos comments about their faith. Kim Jong Pil, in his interview, opined that, “There aren't many countries that are more earnest than ours in believing in God and

seeking to share the Gospel. I hope we will live out this spirit and faith in all our lives”;

Yi Hwoe Ch’ang recited his favorite biblical verses, Isaiah 43:1-3, from memory, and stated that whenever faced with difficulties, he had depended on God; Kim Dae Jung trumped them both by saying that in his life thus far he had experienced five near death incidents, six years of imprisonment, and ten years of exile, and in the midst of it all he had personally experienced and seen God twice.<sup>41</sup>

In the end, it is more likely that the Asian currency crisis had more to do with Kim Dae Jung’s election than his ability to play to Protestant sensibilities. Nevertheless, that Kim continued to hold the Protestants in high regard was displayed at a prayer gathering he attended before he left for the Blue House, with three hundred or so Protestant leaders in attendance, in which he asked for Christians to pray for the nation, and to “display the Puritan spirit in particular so as to overcome the collapsed economy.”<sup>42</sup>

Evangelicalism’s influence on the economy in the 1990s appears to have been less pronounced than in other areas; nevertheless, it was still strong enough to surpass that of the other religions. South Korea is an urban society, with most of the wealth concentrated in the cities. In 1995, Protestants constituted over 25 percent of the population in the Seoul metropolitan region. Moreover, they constituted over 30 percent of the population in the wealthiest districts of Seoul, Kangnam-gu and Sôch’o-gu.<sup>43</sup> Thus, it is plausible to assume that in the 1990s, Protestants possessed more wealth and wielded more influence in economy than any other religionists in Korea.

Moreover, a 1995 study by a research affiliate of the leading daily *Joong Ang Ilbo* analyzed the religions of 4,903 chief executive officers of 4,076 private enterprises in

South Korea and found that 34 percent professed a religion. Of these religious CEOs, 42.8 percent were Protestant; 38.3 percent, Buddhists; 5.7 percent, Catholic; and the remaining 0.76 percent, believers of other religions.<sup>44</sup> This study also reported that of the top ten *chaebôls*, presidents of conglomerates, in 1995, three were Protestants (one of them an Episcopalian), another three Buddhists, one Confucian, and three nonbelievers.<sup>45</sup> Another study found that of the presidents of the top 100 Korean businesses in 1999, 31 were Protestants, 23 Buddhists, 11 Catholics, and 29 nonbelievers.<sup>46</sup>

### **A Beleaguered Evangelicalism**

The picture should now be clear: Evangelicalism was South Korea's most successful religion in the 1990s, not only in sheer numbers but also in social, political, and economic influence. This picture, however, tells only half the story, and the other half is not very pretty—at least for Evangelicals. For if the 1990s were a decade of preponderant (though not quite hegemonic) sway for Evangelicals, it was also a decade of beleaguerment for them: the decade when the growth of their churches slowed, scandals involving some of their high-profile members shocked the public, and open conflict arose between them and other religious groups.

Analyzing census figures collected by National Statistics Office, sociologist of religion Lee Won Gue observed that between 1991 and 1995, membership in the Korean Protestant church increased from 8,037,464 to 8,760,336—a gain of 9 percent.<sup>47</sup> No Ch'ichun, another leading sociologist of religion, estimates a 4 percent growth rate between 1990 and 1995.<sup>48</sup> He also notes that growth rates in 1994 and 1995 for the two largest denominations, Yejang Hapdong and Yejang T'onghap, whose combined

memberships constitute about half of the total Protestant membership, was less than 1 percent.

Had this kind of development been noted with regard to the Protestant churches in Europe or the United States, where church memberships have been sliding for decades, not much alarm would have been sounded. However, it did arouse concern in South Korea—home to twenty-three of the fifty largest churches in the world, including five out of the top ten largest churches.<sup>49</sup> The slowdown represented a departure from earlier trends: between 1960 and 1970, the membership in Evangelical churches grew by 412.4 percent (from 623,072 to 3,192,621); by 56.7 percent between 1970 and 1977; by 29.7 percent between 1977 and 1985; and by 23.9 percent between 1985 and 1991.<sup>50</sup> By 2005, it has become clear that the slowdown had become a drop, as the national census found that the Protestant numbers had declined by 1.6 percent (150,000), to 18.3 percent (8,616,000) of the entire population—a fact that has caused considerable consternation among the Protestant leaders.<sup>51</sup>

This decline has exacerbated some longstanding problems in Korean Evangelicalism. One such problem has been the diminishment of respect for Evangelical ministers, especially new seminary graduates in search of pastorates. This diminishment of respect has been due, in part, to the seminaries producing too many graduates, many of whom were ill prepared for the role of church leader—many of whom in any case could not be absorbed by either existing congregations or newly established churches. Even well-established seminaries, like those belonging to the two largest Presbyterian denominations, tended to recruit more students than actually needed by their

congregations—partly for financial reasons, since student tuition was their main source of revenue.

But the more serious reason lay with the overabundance of non-accredited and poorly equipped theological institutions that annually produced a slew of poorly trained graduates. In 1995, for example, there were more than 310 theological institutions in Korea, of which the Ministry of Education accredited only 38.<sup>52</sup> In total, these theological institutions produced about 8,000 graduates every year in the 1990s, and since only about 1,000 of them graduated seminaries of the six well-established denominations, the majority were the products of accredited but poorly equipped seminaries, or, worse, of unaccredited institutions—in either case, ill-equipped to minister to a highly educated society.

Much of the church growth in South Korea before 1990 was due to new seminary graduates striking out on their own and founding new congregations in unevangelized areas. By the 1990s, however, churches saturated the country, and it became increasingly difficult for new ministers to found pastorates. Many seminarians, as a result, opted for overseas work as missionaries, swelling the number of their ranks to over 10,000 at the end of the decade, putting the Korean church second only to its United States counterpart in the number of missionaries it sent abroad.<sup>53</sup> Those seminarians that did not go overseas had no choice but to compete in the domestic religious marketplace, jostling with those already ensconced in churches for members.<sup>54</sup> The behavior the clergy displayed in such competitions was often unedifying, and was a likely reason that the 1997 Gallop Korea study found that of all its respondents, 71.1 percent thought the Protestant church to be more interested in increasing its size and influence than in seeking truth, as opposed to

33.8 percent for the Buddhists and 32.1 percent for the Catholics. It may also be the reason that in a 1995 Gallup Korea poll on the “honesty and professional ethics of Korean professionals,” ministers were in fifth place, behind Catholic priests, university professors, Buddhist monks, and television reporters/announcers. In a similar survey conducted in 1993, the minister was not even in the top five.<sup>55</sup>

The ministers’ lack of proper theological education and their preoccupation with membership numbers were not the only problems to face the Evangelical church in the 1990s. It was also bedeviled by a series of scandals involving some of its high-profile members. The first of these involved a millenarian, or rapture, controversy that reached a boiling point in late 1992. At the center of it was the Reverend Yi Changnim, who since the 1980s had been predicting an end to the world on October 28, 1992, and that only those who adhered to his teachings would be saved, lifted up to heaven, and met by a returning Christ. To the utter bewilderment of most Koreans, including Evangelicals, 1,500 or so of his followers prepared to abandon the world, selling their property and severing ties with unbelieving families. Most Evangelical leaders promptly dissociated themselves from Yi and branded him a heretic, but it is questionable whether the public was as quick to dissociate them from Yi, since between the two, theologically speaking, much more was alike than different. The rapture, of course, never came, and Yi was arrested for committing fraud. The police discovered that he had been collecting money from his followers—resorting to extortion in some cases—and investing some of it in a bond that would not mature until well after October 28, 1992.<sup>56</sup>

Other scandals followed. On June 29, 1995, the upscale, five-story Sampoong Department store located in Seoul’s posh Kangnam district collapsed, killing 502 and

injuring over 937. Seoul residents had witnessed the collapse of shoddily constructed buildings before, but never one of this magnitude.<sup>57</sup> Residents later became angry upon learning that the building's owner—a deacon at Younknak Presbyterian Church, Korea's most prestigious Presbyterian church—had allowed it to stand despite obvious signs of imminent collapse.

In another instance, after Hanbo Steel filed for bankruptcy in January 1997, it became known that the company had been bribing numerous public officials in an attempt to remain solvent. In the course of the subsequent investigation, President Kim Young Sam's son Hyônch'ôl was implicated. Soon after, it came to light that even though he had no official authority, the son had been deeply involved in policy decisions at the Blue House and in peddling influence. This abuse of power at the highest level of government enraged the public, which supported the judge who sentenced the president's Evangelical son to two years of imprisonment.<sup>58</sup> The "Hanbo Incident" proved to be a nightmare for Kim Young Sam in other ways as well, for it was followed by a series of developments that ultimately resulted in what Koreans call the IMF crisis. And the president's inability to handle this economic crisis completely undermined his reputation, such that in the last year of his term, even his own church did not welcome him.<sup>59</sup>

Then there was the "Northern Wind Operation" or "Amalek Strategy." This refers to a scheme concocted by Kwôn Yônghae, Kim Young Sam's appointed director of the Agency for National Security Planning (NSP) (formerly the Korean Central Intelligence Agency). He loathed Kim Dae Jung's politics and, during the 1997 election, sought to taint Kim by portraying him as being under the influence of the North.<sup>60</sup> When the scheme was found out, Kwôn attempted to commit hara-kiri. Although the Korean public

general knows of this conspiracy as the “Northern Wind Operation” (*pukp’ung chakchôn*), Kwôn himself preferred to call it the “Amalek Strategy,” seeing himself as the Moses who would vanquish the evil Amalekites that stood in the way of God’s people. It was not surprising that he would pick such a Hebrew Bible reference: he, like the president, was an Evangelical elder and avid Bible reader.<sup>61</sup>

Finally came the “Dress Lobby” (*ot lobi*), a bribery scandal involving three self-avowed Evangelical women who attended Bible study at the same church, and their clothier. Two of the women were wives of high government officials; a third was the wife of a *chaebôl*—known as a devout Evangelical himself—in trouble with the law for illegally hoarding wealth outside the country. The controversy swirled around mutual accusations between the women as to who was guilty in initiating a bribe in the form of expensive dress purchased from the clothier’s shop. Although the court eventually found the wife of the *chaebôl* guilty, in the course of the investigation the case evolved into something much more complicated and weighty—provoking accusations of a prosecutorial cover-up, exposing problems in the judiciary system, and compelling the government to introduce, for the first time in South Korean history, the office of special prosecutor. The case deeply embarrassed the government and Evangelicals, but especially the latter, as the women came across as pious hypocrites, mouthing pieties and lies in the same breath—directly contradicting each other in public hearings, even as they swore on the Bible.

These scandals were disconcerting and conflictive enough, but in the 1990s, Evangelicals experienced another kind of conflict—between them and other religionists. While Evangelicals themselves provoked most of the friction, especially vis-à-vis the

Buddhists, by the end of the decade, they found themselves at the other end of the provocation as well.

There is no question that much of this conflict stemmed from Evangelicalism's exclusivist soteriology and the way it demonizes the traditional religions of Korea. The Korean churchman who most starkly expressed such antagonism was perhaps Pak Hyôngnyong, an influential fundamentalist theologian who studied under J. Gresham Machen, paragon of American Fundamentalism. Pak had once asserted, "Christianity's most appropriate relation to other religions is not compromise but conquest. . . . The attitude of the religion that bears the name of Jesus Christ [to other religions] is not compromise but clash and conquest."<sup>62</sup>

Apparently, some Evangelicals took Pak's message literally. In June 1998, an Evangelical man broke into a Zen center in Cheju Island, decapitated 750 granite Buddha statues, and destroyed other religious objects. When under arrest, he confessed to attempting to convert the temple into a church. Disturbing as it was, this was not an isolated incident, nor was it the most heinous: on several occasions antagonistic Evangelicals burnt entire Buddhist temples to the ground.<sup>63</sup>

It is to the Buddhists' credit that none of them have been reported to have retaliated in kind, at least not yet. However, incivility breeds incivility; and if not Buddhists, then other religious or semi-religious groups were quick to learn from Evangelicals' unilateral, uncivil tactics. A prime example is the conduct of the Korean Cultural Campaigns Association (*Hanmunhwa undonghoe*) (KCCA), a coalition of religious and semi-religious organizations that erected a statue of Tan'gun, Korea's mythical founder, in 369 Korean public schools in 1998 and 1999 and declared its

determination to erect one in every other public school in Korea.<sup>64</sup> The KCCA's rationale is that since all Koreans recognize—or should recognize—Tan'gun as their national founder, if children grew up paying honor to his statues in the schools, national unity would be enhanced.

In reality, however, the Tan'gun statues have engendered divisiveness. The statues infuriated Evangelicals, who condemned them as idols, pointing correctly to the fact that a number of indigenous religions worship Tan'gun as a deity.<sup>65</sup> They also questioned the constitutionality of the KCCA's action, since they believed that requiring students to pay obeisance to the statues amounted to infringing on their religious freedom. To the Tan'gunist contention that since the statues were set in place with the principals' permission, due process was observed, Evangelicals retorted that an endeavor as grave as the KCCA's should not have been left to the discretion of the principals. Evangelicals called on the government immediately to remove the statues. Not getting satisfaction, some of them took matters into their own hands, assaulting and damaging many of the statues, thereby provoking an accusation from the Tan'gunists that they were less than true patriots.<sup>66</sup>

Although they denounced the Tan'gunists, in the end, Evangelicals oddly mirrored them. Like Evangelicals, Tan'gunists were on a quest, although theirs was carried out in the name of Korean Nationalism, and aimed at solidifying a national identity that they alleged had become diluted due to alien influences like Evangelicalism. Moreover, Tan'gunists were similarly convinced of the rightness of their quest, and were unwilling to relent. Hence, Evangelical beleaguerment in this regard persists.

## Afterword

Conflict with other religionists, scandals that besmirched the church, apparent stagnation in membership growth—these problems as well as the successes of the 1990s—such as being the numerically largest religious institution, wielding preponderant influence in the civil society, politics, and economy of the land—indicate that Korean Evangelicalism started the twenty-first century in a very different mode than it started the twentieth century. Then, Korean society was in shambles and the church was barely in it. A great many Koreans expected that the church would be leavening for the common good. Over a hundred years later, as the first decade of the twenty-first century nears an end, Korean Evangelicals have to decide whether that expectation has been met. However they decide, this much is clear: now Evangelicalism is not only in Korean society but also of it, with its success and beleaguerment persisting.

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<sup>1</sup> *Random House Webster's Unabridged Dictionary*, s.v. "success."

<sup>2</sup> 1997 Gallup Korea Survey (Seoul: Durano, 1999), 462.

<sup>3</sup> David B. Barrett et al., *World Christian Encyclopedia*, vol. 1, 2d ed., (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 682.

<sup>4</sup> Gallup Korea, *Han 'guginû i chonggyo wa chonggyo ûisik* (Koreans' Religion and Religious Consciousness), 1998. According to this study, in 1997, 20.3 percent of Koreans professed to be Protestant, 18.3 percent Buddhist, and 7.4 percent Roman Catholic. On the other hand, a 1995 census report by South Korean National Statistics Office finds 23.2 percent of South Korean to be Buddhists, 19.7 percent Protestant, and 6.6 percent Roman Catholic (1995 *Ingu chut'aek ch'ongjosa: ch'oejong chnsujipkye kyôlgwa*). There are also two to three thousand who belong to the Korean Orthodox church, but the numbers were apparently too few to be detected by the census.

<sup>5</sup> See Andrew Sung Park, "Minjung and Pungryu Theologies in Contemporary Korea: A Critical and Comparative Examination" (Ph.D. dissertation, Graduate Theological Union, 1985).

<sup>6</sup> On the political dimension of this issue, see Timothy S. Lee, "A Political Factor in the Rise of Protestantism in Korea: Protestantism and the 1919 March First Movement," *Church History* 69:1 (March 2000): 116-142.

<sup>7</sup> On the general characteristics of Evangelicalism, see George Marsden, *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, ed. Mircea Eliade (New York: Macmillan, 1985), s.v. "Evangelicalism."

<sup>8</sup> L. George Paik, *The History of Protestant Missions in Korea, 1832-1910* (1927. Reprint, Seoul: Yonsei University Press, 1971); Everett N. Hunt, Jr., *Protestant Pioneers in Korea* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1980). Min Kyoung Bae, *Han'guk kidokkyo kyohoesa* (A History of the Korean Christian Church), revised ed. (Seoul: Yonsei University Press, 1993). Also Timothy S. Lee, "Born-Again in Korea: The Rise and Character of Revivalism in (South) Korea, 1885-1988," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1996).

<sup>9</sup> Arthur Judson Brown, *The Mastery of the Far East* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1919), 540.

<sup>10</sup> Ryu [Yu] Tong-shik [sik], *Han'guk sinhak ûi kwangmaek* (Veins in Korean Theology) (Seoul: Chõnmangsa, 1982), 56.

<sup>11</sup> "Two Aspects of an Evangelical Quest to Christianize Korea: Mammoth Crusades and Sectarian Incivility," *Acta Koreana* (July 2002); Kim Chinhwan, *Han'guk kyohoe puhung undongsa* [A History of Revival Movements in the Korean Church], revised ed. (Seoul: Seoul Sõjõk, 1993).

<sup>12</sup> Han'guk Kidokkyo Sahoe Munje Yõn'guwõn (Christian Institute for the Study of Justice and Development), eds., *Han'guk kyohoe 100-nyõn chonghap chosa yõn'gu* (Centennial Comprehensive Study of the Korean [Protestant] Church) (Seoul: Han'guk Kidokkyo Sahoe Munje Yõn'guwõn, 1982); Hyõndae Sahoe Yõn'guso (The Institute for the Study of Modern Society), eds., *Han'guk kyohoe sõngjang kwa sinang yang'ae e kwan han chosa yõn'gu* (Investigation into the Growth and Religiosity of the Korean [Protestant] Church) (Seoul: Hyõndae Sahoe Yõn'guso, 1982).

<sup>13</sup> CCSKC, 63. As to what constitutes salvation, 74.6 percent of the ministers accepted the definition of it as each individual going to heaven after death, 17.5 percent as the establishment of the kingdom of God on earth, while 7.9 percent failed to respond; the break down on the same question for the laymen is as follows, in the same order: 66.9 percent, 29.4 percent, 3.8 percent (CCSKC, 64).

<sup>14</sup> J. U. Selwyn Toms, *The Korea Mission Field* (February 1914).

<sup>15</sup> This, of course, is not to say that no Korean Protestants disputed the doctrine. The most famous disputer in this regard was Rev. Kim Chae Choon, who in 1953 founded a new denomination, the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea, on liberal principles.

<sup>16</sup> The Gallup Korea survey was commissioned by Hanmijun, an organization of Korean Protestant ministers (Seoul: Durano, 1999), 57.

<sup>17</sup> That this question is not addressed may be puzzling to an American scholar of religion, since it seems so basic to understanding Protestantism in the United States. But it may also say something about the nature of Protestantism (or for that matter, Christianity), in (South) Korea: due to the prevalence of an Evangelical ethos and the lack of a strong "mainline" tradition, there is little occasion for such a question to rise as a serious issue. Furthermore, given Evangelicals' numerical superiority over Catholics and non-Evangelicals, and given their exclusionist theology, there is a much stronger distinction between Evangelicals and non-Evangelicals in Korea than in the West. A telling example of this is that due to Evangelical use of the standard Korean translation for Christianity, "*kidokkyo*," Catholics generally do not use the term to refer to themselves, preferring instead *Chõnjugyo*. Moreover, although the word *kaesin'gyo* specifically means Protestantism, Evangelicals do not use it as commonly as *kidokkyo* when referring to themselves.

<sup>18</sup> This may mean that in the late 1990s, there were more non-Evangelicals in the church than in the 1980s; it could also mean that a greater percentage of Koreans attended Evangelical churches primarily for social, rather than religious reasons, or both.

<sup>19</sup> These denominations had 347,977 members, about three percent of the total Korean Protestant population for that year. Han Yongje, ed., *The Christian Yearbook of Korea: 1991*, vol. 6 (Seoul: Christian Literature Press, 1991), 215-16. In 2001, an informal internet survey by Korean Computer Missions supports the contention that Evangelicals constituted at least seventy-five percent of Korean Protestants in the 1990s [*Kookmin ilbo* (2 August 2001)].

<sup>20</sup> 1997 Gallup Korea Survey, 147.

<sup>21</sup> Larry Diamond, "Rethinking Civil Society: Toward Democratic Consolidation," in *Journal of Democracy* 5 (3) (1994), 6: quoted by Sunhyuk Kim, "Civil Society in South Korea: From Grand Democracy Movements to Petty Interest Groups?" *Journal of Northeast Asian Studies* (Summer 1996), 82-83.

<sup>22</sup> Munhwabu (Ministry of Culture), *Han'guk ûi chonggyo hyõnhwang* [The State of Korean Religions], 1990. Cited in *Han'guk chonggyo yõn'gam, 1993* (A Yearbook of Korean Religions, 1993), 208.

<sup>23</sup> These comparisons are based on figures reported by these religions' denomination as of December 31, 1996. Cited by *Hangukin ûi chonggyowa chonggyo ûisik* (Koreans' Religion and Religious Consciousness), 198.

- <sup>24</sup> Munhwa Kwan'gwangbu, Chongmusil (Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Religious Affairs), *Han'guk ûi chonggyo hyônhwang*, 1999 (State of Korean Religions, 1999).
- <sup>25</sup> Figures from *Han'guk chonggyo hyônhwang*, quoted in *Kûrisch'an sinmun* (30 November 1996).
- <sup>26</sup> Buddhists had 9; Wôn Buddhists, 57; and Catholics, 180. Kwôn O'hyôn, "Han'guk chonggyo hyônhwang pogo" (A Report on the State of Korean Religion), in *Midûm kwa silch'ôn—onul ûi chwap'yo* (Faith and Practice—Coordinates for Today) (Seoul: Taewonjônssa, 1985), cited by No Ch'i Chun, *Han'guk ûi kyohoe chojik* (The Organization of Korean Churches) (Seoul: Minyôngsa, 1995), 124. *Kookmin ilbo* (25 July 2001).
- <sup>27</sup> *Kookmin ilbo* (25 July 2001).
- <sup>28</sup> Han'guk kidokkyo pukhan tongp'o huwôn yônaphoe, see their web page, where they are simply called *Nambuk nanum* (North-South Sharing): <http://www.sharing.net/>; the exact amount of the aid is 59,199,030,138 won, which is roughly \$59,199,000, assuming \$1 equals 1,000 won.
- <sup>29</sup> *Pulgyo sinmun*, 21 March 2000.
- <sup>30</sup> *Kûrisch'an sinmun*, 11 January 1997.
- <sup>31</sup> *Pulgyo sinmun*, 21 March 2000.
- <sup>32</sup> *Joong ang ilbo*, 4 August 2000 (U.S. Edition).
- <sup>33</sup> *Pulgyo sinmun*, 16 June 1998.
- <sup>34</sup> In that election, 81.9 percent of the 29,422,658 registered voters their ballots. Of these, 9,977,332 (41 percent) voted for Kim Young Sam; 8,041,285 (33 percent), for Kim Dae Jung; and 3,880,067 (16 percent), for Chung Chu Yung, who professed no religion [Andrew C. Nahm, *Introduction to Korean History and Culture* (Hollym: Seoul and Elizabeth, NJ, 1993), 318].
- <sup>35</sup> This should not be taken to mean that Evangelicals were narrow-minded politically, that they voted for Kim Young Sam simply because he was an Evangelical himself. Given his records as a pro-democracy leader in the 1970s and 1980s, he would have been a strong candidate regardless; but then, Kim Dae Jung was just ass—if not more—well known for his pro-democracy leadership during those decades, and had an even tighter lock on his region, the Chôlla provinces, than Kim Young Sam had on his. That one was Catholic and the other Evangelical must have been a decisive factor among Evangelical voters outside of the Chôlla provinces.
- <sup>36</sup> *K'ûrisch'an sinmun*, 2 February 1998.
- <sup>37</sup> By saying this, Kim meant that if elected, he would make the presidential residence available for regular Evangelical services. When elected, he attempted to live up to this promise, only to encounter a fierce Buddhist protest, which caused him to backpedal; this waffling, in turn, soured his relationship with many of his Evangelical supporters.
- <sup>38</sup> *K'ûrisch'an sinmun*, 2 February 1998.
- <sup>39</sup> In contrast, non-Evangelical Protestants came out in full support of Kim Dae Jung, and some of them ended up in high positions in Kim's administration. Consequently, from 1998 onwards, it would be more accurate to say Protestants, rather than Evangelicals, stood out in South Korean politics. It is difficult to tell how many of the Protestants in Kim's administration were Evangelical or non-Evangelical. Even so, if the full spectrum of South Korean politics is considered (including the national assemblymen and women), there is no question that Evangelicals predominated.
- <sup>40</sup> *K'ûrisch'an sinmun*, 31 May 1997 and 4 August 1997. *Joong ang Ilbo*, 8 December 1997.
- <sup>41</sup> *K'ûrisch'an sinmun*, 25 August 1997; 1 September 1997.
- <sup>42</sup> *K'ûrisch'an sinmun*, 2 March 1998.
- <sup>43</sup> By 1990, nearly 75 percent of South Koreans were urban dwellers. National Statistics Office (T'onggye-ch'ông) (Republic of Korea), *Chiyôkgan ingu pulgyunhyông punp'o ûi wônin kwa kyôlgwa* (Causes and Effects of Uneven Distribution of Population in Regions), vol. 4-2 of *1990 Ingu chut'aek ch'ong chosa chonghap punsôk* (Comprehensive Analysis of 1990 Population Census), 5. The 1995 census study result can be found in *Kookmin ilbo*, 27 May 1997; also see *K'ûrisch'an sinmun*, 4 March 1995.
- <sup>44</sup> These were adherents of Confucianism (17), Wôn Buddhism (15), the Unification Church (2), Ch'ôlligyo (1), and Ch'ôgogyo (1).
- <sup>45</sup> *Weekly Econcomist* (Seoul), 29 March 1995, 17.
- <sup>46</sup> *Pulgyo sinmun*, 9 May 2000.
- <sup>47</sup> Lee Won Gue, "A Sociological Study on the Factors of Church Growth and Decline in Korea," *Korea Journal* (Winter 1999), 238.
- <sup>48</sup> *K'ûrisch'an sinmun*, 1 March 1997.

<sup>49</sup> This was the finding for 1992. *Christian World*, cited in *Choson ilbo*, 8 February 1993. The five churches were: Yôido Full Gospel Church (Seoul), the largest with 600,000; Nambu Full Gospel Church (Anyang), the second largest with 105,000; Kumnan Methodist Church (Seoul), the seventh largest with 56,000; Sungûi Methodist Church (Inch'ôn), the ninth largest with 48,000; and Chuan Presbyterian Church (Inch'ôn), the tenth largest with 42,000.

<sup>50</sup> Lee, "Born-Again in Korea," 238.

<sup>51</sup> See "Chôsôngjang sidae, mokhoe chônryak ûi saeroun paerôdaim yoch'ông" (Low Growth Period, a New Paradigm for Ministerial Strategy Requested), *K'ûrisch'an sinmun*, 2 March 1998; "Han'guk kidokkyoin 1300 mani anin 862 man," *News N Joy* 25 March 2006.

<sup>52</sup> WEF-Theological News (Seoul) (January-March 1995), 6.

<sup>53</sup> See *Operation World, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Edition*, ed. Patrick Johnstone and Jason Mandryk (Harrisonburg, Virginia: Paternoster Publishing, 2001), 388. According to *Han'guk sekye sôn'gyo hyôphoe* (The Korean World Missions Association), by the end of 2006, the number of Korean missionaries has increased to 16,616, spread out in 173 countries. See the online newspaper *k'ûrisch'antudei* (*Christiantoday.co.kr*: <http://www.chtoday.co.kr/view.htm?code=mw&id=182408>), 19 January 2007.

<sup>54</sup> See No Ch'ichun's incisive article "Mokhoeja Kwa'ing Paech'ul" (Overproduction of Ministers), in *K'ûrisch'an sinmun*, 1 March 1997. Also see "Mokhoejadul ûi kyôngjaeng sidaega watta" (The Age of Competition Has Come for the Ministers), *K'ûrisch'an sinmun*, 9 February 1998.

<sup>55</sup> Cited by Korea Computer Missions: <http://kcm.co.kr/statistics/5/s013.html>; accessed 7 September 2007.

<sup>56</sup> *Han'guk ilbo*, 25 September 1992.

<sup>57</sup> "Sampung paekhwajôm punggye sago pihaeopangi mamuri tan'gye e chöbö türötta" (Compensation Related to the Collapse of the Sampoong Department Nearing Its End), *Kyunghyang shinmun*, 24 May 2006.

<sup>58</sup> "Kim hyöneh'öl ssi 8.15 pokkwön kömt'o" (Considering the Restoration of Kim Hyöngch'öl's Civil Rights on 8.15 [August 15, the Korean Independence Day]), in *Han'guk ilbo*, 10 May 2000 (cited by News Naver at:

[http://news.naver.com/news/read.php?mode=LSD&office\\_id=038&article\\_id=0000002104&section\\_id=0&menu\\_id=0](http://news.naver.com/news/read.php?mode=LSD&office_id=038&article_id=0000002104&section_id=0&menu_id=0), accessed 8 September 2007).

<sup>59</sup> *K'ûrisch'an sinmun*, 2 February 1998.

<sup>60</sup> [http://www.donga.com/fbin/news\\_plus?d=news127&f=np127aa020.html](http://www.donga.com/fbin/news_plus?d=news127&f=np127aa020.html); accessed 7 September 2007.

<sup>61</sup> *K'ûrisch'an sinmun*, 6 April 1998.

<sup>62</sup> Park Hyôngnyong, "Igyo e taehan t'ahyôp munje (The Problem of Compromising with Other Religions)," in *Sinhak chinam*, quoted in *Han'guk chonggyo sasangsa* (A History of Korean Religious Thought), Kim Ch'angt'ae and Ryu Tong Shik (Seoul: Yonsei University Press, 1986), 247.

<sup>63</sup> "Buddhism under Siege in Korea," <http://www.buddhapia.com/eng/tedesco/3.html>; accessed 7 September 2007.

<sup>64</sup> "Nuga tan'gun ûi mok ûl paenun ka?" (Who is decapitating Tan'gun?), *Sunday Seoul*, 29 April 2000, E-26.

<sup>65</sup> An excellent work on this issue is "Tan'gun'gyodo wa Han'guk kidokkyoin sai ûi kaltûng munje" (Issues in Conflict between Tan'gunists and Korean Christians), by Yi Mahn-yol (UCLA Henry Luce colloquium paper, delivered 8 February 2002).

<sup>66</sup> By April 2000, thirty-seven more Tan'gun statues were either removed or damaged, with some of the culprits being identified as Evangelicals. "Nuga Tan'gunui Mogul Paenun'ga?"; *Kidoksinmun* (Christian Newspaper), 12 April 2000.