

**THE IMPACT OF CONCEPTS OF MINJUNG ON THOUGHT AND
CULTURE IN KOREA DURING THE PERIOD OF
AUTHORITARIAN POLITICS (1948-1987)**

by

Kim Hyung-a, Van Leest

Submitted to the Department of
Asian Studies of the
Australian National University in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts

Canberra, Australia

September 1992

Contents	ii
Note on Romanisation and Italics	v
Acknowledgements	vi
Statement	vii
Abbreviations	viii
Introduction	1

PART I

BACKGROUND TO THE MINJUNG MOVEMENT

Chapter 1. Minjung Theory: Etymological And Nationalist Origins

Introduction	5
1. Etymology And History Of 'Minjung'	
Etymology And Meanings Of <i>Minjung</i>	7
Socio-Political Perceptions	8
Perceptions Based In History	11
<i>Minjung</i> As The Oppressed	13
2. People's Consciousness	15
<i>Paeksong</i> Consciousness (<i>Paeksong Uisik</i>)	17
Commoners' Consciousness (<i>P'yongmin Uisik</i>)	18
Masses' Consciousness (<i>Minjung Uisik</i>)	20
Basis Of <i>Minjung</i> Consciousness	23
3. Theories Of Nationalism	
Nationalism - The National Disposition	24
Nationalism Based On Ethnocentrism	29
Nationalism Based On Revivalism	31
Nationalism Based On Resistance	36
Nationalism Based On Intellectualism	37
4. Overview Of Korean Nationalism	39

Chapter 2. Minjung Historiography

Introduction	45
--------------	----

1. The Role Of History	iii
The Yi Dynasty : "The Womb Of The People's Han"	48
Class Structure Under The Yi Dynasty	49
Three Key Sources Of Social Control	52
The Yi Dynasty In <i>Minjung</i> Historiography	57
2. The Nationalist Reaction To Japanese Interference And Late Control, 1876-1945	
Overview	59
The First Phase: Early Nationalist Ideals, 1876-1919	
Eastern Learning (<i>Tonghak</i> Movement)	61
The Independence Club (<i>Tongip Hyophoe</i>)	63
The Second Phase: Nationalist Developments During Colonial Period, 1920-1945	
The March First Movement	65
Factional Divisions And The Emergence Of Communist/Socialist Movements	67
The New Stem Association (<i>Sin'ganhoe</i>)	68
3. Anti-Japanese Nationalism As A Source For <i>Minjung</i> Historiography	72
4. Conclusion	74

**Chapter 3. *Minjung* Background To Political Opposition
 Movement And Radicalism**

1. The Opposition Movement During Authoritarian Politics, 1948-1987	78
The Syngman Rhee Regime	79
The Pak Chong-hui Regime	83
The Chon Tu-hwan Regime	90
2. <i>Minjung</i> Radicalism	
The Role Of Radicalism In Democratization	95
The Decline Of Radicalism	98
Factional Divisions Amongst Radicals	101
3. Conclusion	104

PART II

ASPECTS OF THE MINJUNG SCHOOL OF THOUGHT

Chapter 4. Minjung Thought: Socio-Economic Aspects

Introduction	107
Korean <i>Minjung</i> Theory: A Social Class Approach	108
Relevance Of Class Approach	113
Korean <i>Minjung</i> Theory: An Alienation Approach	118
Relevance Of Alienation Approach	125
Participatory Democracy : Response Of Opposition	128
The Changing Socio-Economic Environment	131
Conclusion	133

Chapter 5. Minjung As A Cultural Concept

Usage Of Traditional Symbolism	136
Origin Of Korean Mask Drama	137
Origins Of <i>Madang-guk</i>	140
Cultural Impact Of Mask Drama	143
Cultural Impact Of <i>Madang-guk</i>	147
<i>Minjung</i> : Kim Chi-ha's Perception	153
Kim Chi-ha's Influence	158
Conclusion	160

Chapter 6. Minjung Theology

Historical Overview	165
Essence Of <i>Minjung</i> Theology: <i>Minjung</i>	175
<i>Han</i> : Its Theological Dimension	180
<i>Minjung</i> Messianism	186
Conclusion	189

Chapter 7. Conclusion

	192
Notes	204
Glossary	225
Bibliography	227

Note On Romanization And Italics

I have used the McCune-Reischauer system of Romanization of Korean *han'gul* except for certain well known Romanized words such as Syngman Rhee, Yushin, and Seoul. In addition, where the names of Korean authors of English language publications referred to in this thesis have been Romanized, the preferred Romanization of the author concerned has been followed in the reference notes and the bibliography. Korean words are normally italicised unless they are proper nouns. For this purpose, 'Minjung Movement' of the 1980s is treated as a proper noun.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I wish to express my gratitude to my supervisor, Dr James Cotton, who has been most patient, tireless and supportive of this study. Without his guidance and encouragement this thesis would not have been completed.

I am also greatly indebted to Professor Bill Jenner who helped me to continue my further studies. I thank Professor C. Andrew Gerstle and Dr Virginia Hooker whose support has been most valuable and inspiring. Special thanks are due to Professor Cameron Hazlehurst whose encouragement and trust in me was the initial spark to the rekindling of my academic pursuits.

I humbly bow to my brother, Ik-sang, and his family in Seoul, especially, his wife, Su-jong who never complained about sending me books for over three years. Finally, I thank two dearest friends, my husband Adrian and my son Eugene. I hope you all hear me saying, "Aju Komawayo" (Thank you very much).

Statement

I hereby state that this thesis, "The Impact Of Concepts of *Minjung* On Thought And Culture In Korea During The Period Of Authoritarian Politics (1948-1987)", has been researched and written solely by me, Kim Hyung-a, Van Leest.

Signed by

Hyung-a Van Leest

Date

28-9-1992.

Abbreviations

CELAM	The General Conference of the Latin American Episcopacy
CPKI	Committee for the Preparation of Korean Independence (Choson Konguk Chunbi Wiwonhoe)
KCIA	Korean Central Intelligence agency
KDP	Korean Democratic Party
KPR	Korean People's Republic (Choson Inmin Konghwaguk)
KSCF	Korean Student Christian Federation (Hanguk Kidok Haksaeng Ch'ong-yonmaeng)
NSL	National Security Law
PEM	Presidential Emergency Measure
PRP	People's Revolutionary Party
ROK	Republic of Korea
UIM	Urban Industrial Mission
YCW	the Young Christian Workers

INTRODUCTION

"*Minjung* (民衆) n. the masses of people; the masses; the people; people in general; the populace."1

"*Minjung* are the masses, the humanity and the ordinary peopleThey are also the poor people of the ruled and low classes, who struggle against poverty."2

"*Minjung* is no more than a 'false image' created by two factions of some Korean intellectuals and writers. The one faction, advocating elitism, clings to right wing ideology and the other, vigorously advocating '*minjung* consciousness', is obsessed by left wing ideology."3

This thesis is a study of concepts of the Korean masses. The identity of the Korean masses is multi-faceted. They have been referred to as the '*minjung*' and characterised in the 1970s as 'the subject of history' (*yoksa-ui chuch'e*) and as the 'oppressed people' who struggle against the political, economic and cultural oppression of the ruling power. This *minjung* struggle ultimately created a new opportunity for democracy in 1987.

My examination of the Korean *minjung* is thus necessarily a complex one, for it concerns that element in Korean society which is not easy to define, which is constantly in transition, which has been subject to various forms of internal and external domination throughout history, and which reached its greatest status and influence in the late 1980s (though now in decline). Indeed, *minjung* discourse became the most significant element in political and cultural critique of the authoritarian politics of the 1970s and 1980s.

However, despite the level of public and intellectual discourse, concepts of *minjung* do not lend themselves to scientific definition or to reduction into a single well integrated ideological concept. I will show that they are fluid notions which vary as the condition of the people varies, and are substantially influenced by those with a vested interest in their exploitation, especially by intellectuals who in reality are far removed from the common people and yet purport to interpret their situation. I will thus demonstrate that the theoretical bases for concepts of *minjung* are vague, inconsistent and self-contradictory.

The aim of this work is also to examine the complexity of the historical and cultural factors shaping popular aspirations and populist theories (although mainly shaped by intellectuals); to analyse prevailing theories and perceptions of the *minjung*, particularly of the Yushin period (1972-1979); and to examine the validity of those theories which led to a new *minjung* historiography.

To analyse the *minjung* phenomenon systematically and in its full context, this work will concentrate initially on the development of populist ideals and on populist struggles throughout history, with reference to the interpretations of those ideals and struggles in *minjung* historiography. When the context of *minjung* thinking has been explored, I will examine the theoretical basis underlying the Minjung Movement. To this end, the framework of the first two parts will be historical, distinguishing theory and historiography. This will be followed by a detailed examination of the thought of the *minjung* school of the 1970s and 1980s. Although this approach may be considered arbitrary, an analysis of the *minjung* phenomenon in a historical and cultural context, and of the nationalism which has been the dominant theme of that phenomenon, requires particular

attention if the *minjung* phenomenon and related popular thinking is to be understood.

The sources for my analysis reflect the wide range of disciplines and socio-economic interests that have impacted on the notion of *minjung*. These sources include renowned *minjung* proponents such as Yi Ki-baek (historian), Han Wan-sang (sociologist), Pak Hyon-ch'ae (economist), Kim Chi-ha (intellectual writer and dramatist), So Nam-dong (theologian), as well as numerous other commentators, critics, politicians, intellectuals, nationalists, and so on. Moreover, I will trace the threads of *minjung* thinking and *minjung* consciousness through history and this century to present the existential context out of which modern concepts of *minjung* developed. Due to the complex nature of these concepts, however, I do not claim to give exhaustive treatment to their analysis, but to convey a sound overview from which some conclusions may be drawn regarding the validity of *minjung* theories.

Chapter one, therefore, will be devoted to an examination of *minjung* 'theory' viewed from a historical perspective. This examination will begin by discussing the concepts and etymology of *minjung*, before turning to the question of the relationship between the people's consciousness and their socio-economic condition. It will then examine modern Korean nationalism and the people's reactions towards nationalism, and focus on those elements which demonstrate that nationalism is perceived by *minjung* proponents in terms of a class struggle against the influence of foreign powers.

Chapter two will provide an outline of *minjung* historiography which interprets Korean history from a socio-economic perspective and concludes that the people are the subject of history. Although my outline will offer a general picture of the most distinct

characteristics of *minjung* historiography, particular attention will be paid to the development of populist notions (as nationalist ideals) of history and culture which brought about a national vision for people solidarity and their common objectives, and especially the awakening of their socio-political consciousness.

Chapter three will outline the *minjung* background of authoritarian politics, particularly the interplay of forces between the opposition movement and the various regimes. It will focus on the major conflicts between these two forces, which culminated in the Kwangju Incident of 1980 and subsequently the class struggle ideology known as the '*minjung minju-juui*' (people's democracy). Chapter three will conclude with an examination of the role of radicalism in generating both ideological and physical resources for Korea's democracy movement.

Part two (Chapters from four to six) will focus on an analysis of concepts, thought and approaches emanating from the *minjung* school. It will include an examination of three dominant theories: socio-economic aspects of *minjung* theory; cultural theories based on traditional symbolism as employed by mask drama and court-yard play (*nori*); and *Minjung* Theology. In particular, it will concentrate on the impact of each theory in terms of the extent to which it influenced the overall perceptions and response of the people, especially those of the opposition movement.

In conclusion, I will attempt to assess the legitimacy of the theories of *minjung* and of the political claims of the *Minjung* Movement. My analysis will look for any inherent contradictions in *minjung* thought and ideology, the capacity of the movement to form a cohesive force with relevance to modern Korea, and factors which may have overtaken *minjung* aspirations.

Chapter One

Minjung Theory: Etymological And Nationalist Origins**Introduction**

According to Alaine Touraine, "the destruction of any permanent social structure for the sake of permanent change provokes behaviour aimed at defending identity."¹ He adds that this struggle is "the search for self in a fragmented experience that depends not only on the intermittent initiatives of the players but on community identity."² The movements behind this struggle often attach themselves to the fringes of established organisations, but at the same time exhibit "both an opposition to the existing power structure and a rejection of the old ideological and political forms of struggle."³ Touraine also maintains that the nature of opposition generated by these movements represents a denial of the social order as a whole, rather than hostility towards a specific adversary. He thus argues that society which aims at permanent change "causes an appeal to identity that is as void of content as the change, which becomes an end in itself."⁴

Korea's historical heritage, especially the specific characteristics relevant to the condition of the ordinary Korean people, has played a major role in the formation of this people in imparting to them a consciousness of their identity and socio-political condition. A key factor in this formation was the social condition associated with class structure, specifically, the relationship between the ruling class and commoners, and the

role of various sub-groups.

As the Korean people have progressively achieved greater economic and political independence and freedom over the past thirty years, they have become increasingly conscious of their own role in society and in the world community. Consequently, the word *minjung* arises wherever reference is made to 'the people's will', or general 'consensus' or any other aspect of 'the people'. There are now established phrases such as the Minjung Movement, Minjung Religion, Minjung Arts, Minjung Culture, Minjung Economy, Minjung Democracy and so on, as well as commercial propaganda with titles such as 'This is a *minjung* program'.

Despite the public acceptance of this terminology, concepts of *minjung* as 'the [oppressed] people', and their ideology as 'people oriented democracy' (*minjung minju-juui*), are extremely complex. This complexity arises from the broad spectrum of beliefs on which concepts of *minjung* are based. These beliefs variously demand economic, political, social and cultural change, with the leading force of revolution being that of the masses exclusively, not the rulers or the bureaucracy. The power of this exclusionary position has given *minjung* theory its particular attractiveness. It encapsulated a putative historical unity and identity which embodied all that was best in Korean national history. It is presented as a single struggle, seen from the perspective of a single and conscious class, the working people (*somin*).

This chapter will examine the theoretical notions and etymology associated with the various aspects of *minjung*. It will also

consider that popular consciousness which has been alleged to reflect the people's (*minjung*) socio-economic condition as well as their role in political struggle. Particular attention is also paid to the development of nationalism and its relevance to *minjung* objectives, particularly in terms of the struggle against Korea's subservience to foreign powers.

1. Etymology And History Of *Minjung*

Etymology and Meanings of *Minjung*

The social class structure of the Yi dynasty and its background discussed in Chapter two is essential to understanding the notions of 'majority of people' or 'the masses' indicated by such terminology as *minjung*, *paeksong*, *p'yongmin*, *somin*, *inmin*, *kongjung*, *taejung*, *simin*, *kung'min* and other similar words. Whilst a wide range of words apply in some sense to the 'majority', their individual usage has varied as a result of either social and political change, or the circumstances of each place requiring a different word to express a local difference in meaning. In addition, as each word is expressed in Chinese characters, the constituent ideas can to large extent be derived from the classical Chinese meaning.

Etymologically, *min* (民) refers to 'people', and *jung* (衆) refers to 'crowd'. In combination the term indicates "masses of people, the masses, the people".⁵ The equivalent term used in reference to the socialist bloc as in 'The People's Republic of Korea' is *inmin* which, according to Professor Kim Po-gyun, lacks the meaning of 'the ruled'.⁶ In order to grasp the concept of '*minjung*' as a word and as an entity, scholars and commentators

have attempted to examine its meaning in its historical, social, economic, political, and religious contexts, as well as to define differences between *minjung* and *inmin*, *minjung* and *taejung*, and other synonyms. The issue is, when do people choose to use the word '*minjung*' rather than any other word to represent or to express 'the masses' and, when '*minjung*' is used, what conditions and factors qualify individuals who constitute the *minjung*? Who makes up these masses?

Socio-Political Perceptions

In examining the various concepts of *minjung* and their actual substance, I refer to a round-table discussion on 'Concept and Reality of the Masses (*Minjung ui Kaenyom kwa ku Silch'e*)' involving Song Kon-ho, An Pyong-jik and Han Wan-sang⁷, published in the magazine, '*Wolgan Taehwa*', in November 1976. The significance of this discussion is not only that it is recognized as "the most noteworthy discussion on the theme of *minjung* in the 1970s..."⁸ but, more notably, that the theories of the three intellectuals involved were adopted by those seeking a philosophical basis for *minjung* ideology.

The first of these, Song Kon-ho, prominent journalist and former chief editor of '*Tonga Ilbo*' and now of '*Han'gyore Sinmun*', develops the notion of *minjung* as an "oriental concept"⁹, differentiating 'the masses in the East' from 'the masses in the West'. He argues that concept of *minjung* has grown out of the long political, social and economic conditions of feudal systems of the East where people struggled and resisted with '*han*' to be free from their feudal lords. Unlike the West, which established a democratic process as a tool for political, economic and social

democratic process as a tool for political, economic and social management, and where people succeeded in forming a real power base for the masses, the people in the East remained as a people with only resistance towards, or a consciousness about, their condition, but without succeeding in establishing a process through which they could also develop their own independent power. Therefore, the masses of the East (*minjung*) are different to the masses of the West (*kongjung*), even though in their own unique way the former still constitute "the 'majority' (*tajung* or *taejung*) and thus possess a genuine political significance."¹⁰ Song stresses the fact that the:

"*Minjung* is a powerful political resistance force which struggles, on the one hand, against the oppression and the colonial and semi-colonial control of nations in Asia and Africa, and strives to develop a new history in those countries on the other."¹¹

In addition, Song takes the view that the word *minjung* is largely based on a sociological concept which takes into account the social, political, economic and cultural conditions of society. However, the recent response to the word *minjung*, according to Song, has been more affected by a change in literary fashion and literary criticism, than changes in social theory. For example, he argues that, in examining and analysing how individual writers shaped characters in their literary works, critics consciously used the word *minjung* to identify and to distinguish characters who had 'a different standpoint', namely, a 'viewpoint of the masses or crowd', consistent with the way the term is generally used in sociology. According to his view, the words *kongjung* and

taejung, in contrast, were particularly associated with the interpretation and translation of Western literature and culture. He comments, "The concepts of *kongjung* and *taejung* ...were largely formed in the context of the development of democratic societies in the West...."12 Song continues:

"The English word 'people' may refer to *konjung*, *kung'min*, *taejung*, *inmim*, and *minjung*. In Korean, however, *kongjung*, *taejung*, and *minjung* are defined differently. For instance, the word *kongjung*, in my observation, seems to indicate the foundation of society or the structural human element which supports national/democratic systems whilst modern unified democratic nations are emerging and whilst these nations or democratic systems are in the historical limelight....

[The word] *taejung*, on the other hand, came into vogue when the Nazis opposed the communists in the 1930s (after the phenomenon of conflict, which followed the growth of capitalism in the 19th century, became noticeable). At that time, in comparison, [the masses who were described as] the *kongjung* appeared to maintain and to develop democratic systems, whilst on the other hand, [the masses who were described as] the *taejung* under the Nazis, appeared uncertain whether to accept or reject this system."13

In addition to any subtleties of meaning outlined by Song, each of these words is also unique in its daily usage. *Kongjung*, for instance, has the connotation of 'a public crowd' or the 'public', whereas *taejung* has the connotation of 'crowd' in the sense of 'an audience' or 'popular gathering' or 'masses of people' who have a common interest such as a recreational theme.

Taejung may thus indicate a crowd involved in a certain style of literature, the performing arts, sport and so on. The word *taejung* certainly has no connotation of masses whose motivation is based on politics or social issues of any kind.

Perceptions Based in History

In contrast to Song's view, An Pyong-jik, economic historian, argues that the "concept of *minjung* cannot be grasped in class terms"¹⁴, because *minjung* is too complex to grasp or conceptualise merely as a sociological term. He considers that the word *minjung* largely suggests the nuance of majority versus minority. In this regard, the other synonyms such as *paeksong*, *simin*, *taejung*, *kongjung* and *somin* suggest the same nuance, the majority. However, *minjung* as a concept implies also the 'non privileged'. This is so, according to An, because political power has traditionally been held by the minority, and the majority, having always been the ruled classes and thus antagonistic towards the privileged, were identified as the *minjung*.¹⁵ Moreover, even if one accepts that *minjung* implies the notions of '*taejung* - the masses' and 'the ruled classes', these notions alone do not fully clarify the nature of *minjung* because the *minjung* as 'the ruled classes' did not only exist in a particular phase of history, but have continually existed throughout history and pre-history. Therefore, in An's view, a distinction must be made between the terms *paeksong* and *minjung* to illustrate the historical development of the notion of *minjung* in its full sense. An states :

"The words, *paeksong* and *minjung*, incorporate the concepts of both 'the majority' and 'the ruled classes'. Nevertheless,

in my view, *paeksong* are the masses without a self-consciousness, whereas the *minjung* do have a self-consciousness.... In other words, *minjung* were the people who understood themselves not only as subject to the rulers in history, but also acknowledged themselves as the masses who stand in that phase of history in which they can claim to be one of the principal actors who in fact make history."¹⁶

An further argues that a distinction should also be made between *minjung* and *simin* (bourgeoisie/citizens). Whilst '*simin*' as a word denoted the concept of 'the masses' in the West, the use of the word *minjung* has its own particular socio-political nuances in most countries of the East, particularly in colonised or semi-colonised countries. The word *simin*, he asserts, is rather a bourgeois concept, because historically citizens (*simin*) in the West were able to build a nation on the foundations of a bourgeois economy. In contrast, the masses (*minjung*) in the under-developed nations of the East, in the early twentieth century, had no strong craft tradition as a basis for establishing modern capitalism and, therefore, had no ideological and structural resources which could deal with such a system. The *minjung* could not thus be understood as part of the bourgeoisie. The *minjung* as they have existed in Korea must therefore, according to An, be understood in light of the fact that the nation had been colonised and had no experience of any process through which to build the role of the common people in dealing with the development of a modern capitalist society. In this sense, *minjung* as a social group bears a distinct meaning. An summarises the major characteristics of *minjung* as follows:

"*Minjung* were not the privileged but the ruled class. They were the majority, but not citizens, that is *simin*. They were, nevertheless, the principal actors of the national independence movement....In that sense, the word *minjung*, in my view, may be understood as a historical concept."¹⁷

Minjung as the Oppressed

Paek Nak-ch'ong, literary critic, argues that, "As long as the concept of *minjung* is to be interpreted as the masses of the majority, who are not leaders or the minority rulers, there is no further need to define it."¹⁸ This is because, "All the synonyms of *minjung* such as *minso*, *somin*, *paeksong*, *inmin*, or *kung'min taejung* originally have the same meaning. Therefore, there seems to be no reason why one should be particularly concerned about the meaning of each word."¹⁹ However, he comments:

"If anyone only looks at the real picture of *minjung* in history, how they lived, one would spontaneously understand why the word *minjung*...is accompanied by an image of 'the ruled' or even 'the oppressed' people."²⁰

Similarly, the background to the words *paeksong*, *p'yongmin* and *somin* is also best examined in a socio-historical context because these terms reflect distinct characteristics (identity, social status, and rights and obligations) of the Korean masses in different eras.

For example, the term *paeksong* was used to describe the ruled people who lived under a despotic Confucian feudal society. They were the masses of the peasant class under the *yangban*

bureaucratic state of the Yi dynasty. The term *p'yongmin*, on the other hand, was used not only to describe the common people who lived in the transition period (late 18th century to early 20th century), when the dynasty underwent a transformation of its social structure from feudalism towards modernity, but was also used more specifically to describe the emerging class structure shaped by the people's new economic and political aspirations. Furthermore, *p'yongmin* were the particular people who were confronted with the national trauma of annexation by Japan early in the nineteenth century which, ironically, generated in them a new level of consciousness as individuals and as a nation. Therefore, their aspirations consisted not merely of seeking liberation from oppression, but a broader pursuit of human equality and liberty. They were the first generation of the Korean 'plain' class people (*minjung*) who succeeded in establishing for themselves the perception that while they were the plain people, they were not necessarily destined to be always the subjects of the 'ruling' class, the *yangban*.

The analyses by both Song and An of the words that represent 'people' or 'classes of people' whether literally or socially or politically, focus on those characteristics of nationalism (particularly Afro-Asian nationalism) which, according to Peter Worsley, serve specific historical needs in the anti-colonial era. These needs are:

"the real needs of the mass of the population: sometimes separate though parallel needs, sometimes needs common to all. The needs satisfied by contemporary Afro-Asian nationalism can be simply stated. They are:

1. Independence
2. Decolonization
3. Development "21

This analysis introduces notions of nationalism as viewed by Song and An, and represents the most commonly agreed approach not only amongst *minjung* commentators, but also the majority of people. This analysis is strengthened when these words are examined in view of the people's consciousness of social and political conditions: the needs of people and how they react to these needs.

2. People's Consciousness

Most exponents of *minjung* theory identify the characteristics of the people, at various times and places, according to the level of their consciousness, as evident in recorded history or as currently observed. The essay by Chong Ch'ang-yol, Professor of Sociology at Hanyang University, on '*Paeksong Uisik, P'yongmin Uisik, Minjung Uisik* (Consciousness of *paeksong*, the Commoners and the Masses) is a noteworthy example of this form of analysis.

Throughout modern history the Korean masses, according to this view, have appreciated the fact that they were ethnically homogeneous, and that as such they aspired to build 'one nation'. This notion of the *minjung* was a most appropriate basis and rallying point for national independence, for people's liberation and for the transformation of the class structure. The people (*minjung*) were the natural force opposed to the feudal system, the colonised semi-feudal system and Japanese imperialism.

Evidence of this opposition role of the *minjung* is seen, according to Chong, in such historical events as the Tonghak Peasant's Movement and the March First Movement. When we look at these developments, however, we recognize the fact that, although people existed as the 'majority of people (*minjung*)' over many millennia, their socio-political consciousness has changed and progressed with time and place. In the case of Korea, the characteristics of the people as expressed historically in terms of *paeksong*, *p'yongmin*, and *minjung*, were quite distinct. In arguing his theory of people's consciousness in the context of the socio-political history of Korea, Chong Ch'ang-yol asserts that the "*minjung* are the masses who do not merely obey the authority of the ruling class as their subjects, but also fight against the ruling class in order to obtain their own rights as human beings."²² Based on this premise, he distinguishes *minjung* consciousness into three phases:

"Firstly, people and their self-consciousness as *minjung*, began from 1876 after the opening of the ports to the present time; secondly, masses as *paeksong* with *paeksong* consciousness were formed in the period from the end of the 14th century to the middle of the 18th century; and thirdly, masses as *p'yongmin* with a *p'yongmin* consciousness were formed from the middle of the 18th century to 1876. During this last period, the masses were the *minjung* (as the majority of society), but their consciousness did not yet match *minjung* critical self-consciousness. Rather, it matched *p'yongmin* passive consciousness...."²³

Paeksong Consciousness (Paeksong Uisik)

"Paeksong, who were mainly farmers, existed as the cultivators of the land either as slaves or as tenant-farmers And at the same time, yangban landlords monopolised the control of politics, the creation of culture and its enjoyment. Therefore, paeksong became the type of people who were required to behave as subjects and to obey unconditionally the yangban class and the King. The King was the figure head who was also the controller of the alliance of public political power, which functioned as a kind of mutual insurance for the yangban class."²⁴

This concept of paeksong, expressed by Chong Ch'ang-yol, was clearly based on the despotism of the Yi dynasty in which the fundamentalist Confucianism of Korea was unchallenged and developed into a monopoly ideology dominating the entire spectrum of Korean cultural and political life. Paeksong were, therefore, mainly the farmers who had become subjugated to the nobility and the authorities from the beginning of the Yi dynasty to the middle of the 18th century when the dynasty went through massive social, political and economic change.

During the Koryo kingdom period, prior to the Yi dynasty, the word "...paeksong did not represent the ordinary ruled peasants, but the ruling class in villages and therefore meant a special class, namely the privileged."²⁵ However, "paeksong as a special class became extinct when the Kingdom was taken over by the Yi dynasty and the peasants, or the farmers, came to be called paeksong."²⁶ Such a fundamental change of the social

structure from the Koryo kingdom to the Yi dynasty was, according to Chong, due to the political intention of the Yi dynasty which initially relied on the peasants, mainly the farmers, for its social development, and aimed to use that development in a structured way to strengthen the foundations of the dynasty.²⁷ Due to the distinction between their earlier and later status of *paeksong*, I have chosen to use the term *paeksong* rather than an English translation.

Consequently, society as a whole was quickly divided into 'inferiors' and 'superiors'. Under this social system, the people with no rights had no other way of containing their frustration than by building up their emotions internally. This internal frustration and heart-break expressed as 'han', is according to most *minjung* theorists the fundamental core of *minjung* consciousness.

Commoners' Consciousness (*P'yongmin Uisik*)

The development of commoners' consciousness, according to Chong, was the direct outcome of the substantial social change that occurred in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In his view, two social factors were the main cause of this change : first, the emergence of landlords from among the commoner-class; second, the extension of the market system and improved agricultural technology which enabled farmers to grow large-scale crops for sale rather than consumption, and at the same time, to become either agricultural entrepreneurs or owners of sizeable land holdings. This new phenomenon of 'large scale farming (*kwangjak*)', resulted in a polarization of a newly emerging rich commoner-class (*p'yongmin kyegup*) and peasants

unable to hold on to their land, while at the same time 'freeing' most farmers from their immobility and bondage to land.

Liberation of farmers from their land brought economic unrest into society and, as a consequence, there emerged a transformation of class structure based on new economic strength. Chong analyses the essence and consciousness of the *p'yongmin* as follows:

"These people (*p'yongmin*) were a wide ranging combination which were largely the peasant farmers and the slave farmers, together with the fallen-*yangban*, merchants and artisans and craftsmen....Because they were not a social class or classes as such in society, they did not have a centripetal organisation nor did they have their own status in the view of the world. Therefore, their struggle against their social conditions was neither continuous nor consistent, and inevitably always ended as a temporary revolt."28

The word *p'yongmin* (平民) itself literally means 'plain person', a person of no importance, in contrast to a person of the 'nobility - *kwijok* (貴族 - the term *kwijok* was coined earlier this century to refer to aristocracy in Western literature). This word is thus structured on the basis of class-consciousness and is used in a comparative sense. The *p'yongmin* (or *somin* - a term more commonly used today), in general, were a mixed group of commoners, as described by Chong. In combination these groups were redirected and reeducated by the 'fallen' *yangban* to build a collective consciousness of their own identity, and were thus very different to the peasants of the early Choson period. Intellectually, they were more self-conscious, more liberated

and had higher expectations of themselves as well as of society.

Physically, they generally had improved living standards, better social opportunity and greater mobility. Furthermore, as a whole, this group introduced commercial activity and challenged the existing social and economic order, as well as the degenerate political system. A succession of uprisings marked the beginning of this new characteristic displayed by commoners, as *p'yongmin* (or *somin*). Their political and social struggle in the cause of justice and equality, as Chong asserts, later became the spiritual foundation of the Peasants' Revolt (*Tonghang'nan*) in 1894-1895, of the *Yonghakdang* Movement in 1898-1899, and of the *Hwalbindang* Movement in 1898-1904.²⁹ Although their mobilization was fragmentary, and lacked cohesion, these characteristics were largely determined by the oppressive political and social environment in which they found themselves. Chong concludes that the majority of society therefore did not have *minjung* critical self-consciousness even though they had some elements of it.³⁰

Masses' Consciousness (*Minjung Uisik*)

According to Chong Ch'ang-yol, the first phase of *minjung* consciousness is evident in the ideology of *Tonghak* (Eastern Learning), the *pokuk anmin sasang* (ideology of sustaining the nation and maintaining peace for the people) of the Peasants' Movement in 1894, which was a practical response to the peasants' demands for political, social and ideological change. Three elements of *Tonghak* are particularly important to an understanding of the majority's social expectations and their humanitarian aspirations : firstly, the ideal of the liberation of mankind; secondly, the rejection of the entire existing social

order and foreign invasion; and thirdly, the establishment of a system of thought in which people were able to learn respect and appreciation for human dignity and moral goodness.³¹ Chong summarises the ideology of *Tonghak* as follows:

"The ideology of *Tonghak* (*poguk anmin sasang*) is a structure of consciousness in which the peasants, as the leading force, struggled to establish people's liberation and the liberation of peasants (farmers) from their social oppression. It is also a structure of consciousness which struggled to achieve a unity of people as a nation which would be founded on their liberation. Therefore, the ideology of the *Tonghak* Peasant's Movement, especially the doctrine of *pokuk anmin* was...the origin of *minjung* consciousness."³²

However, Chong adds that the *Tonghak* doctrine as national liberation ideology specifically for a nationalist movement, contained a number of deficiencies inconsistent with *minjung* ideology: firstly, this doctrine lacked not only an understanding of human rights based on natural law, but also an intellectual awareness of individual rights; secondly, it lacked understanding of the class structure; and thirdly, it lacked scientific knowledge to fully understand imperialist structures and the characteristics of Korea's colonization.

Chong maintains that, by contrast, *minjung* ideology came to possess all those features necessary to deal with the crisis of the Korean nation. As he expresses it:

"...in my view, *minjung* consciousness and the *minjung*

culture were the incorporated consciousness of the liberation of mankind, the liberation of the classes, and the liberation of the nation. These three forms of consciousness became incorporated into an integral perception as they formed a single organic relationship."³³

He interprets these three forms of consciousness as follows:

"Consciousness of the liberation of the people is based on the realisation that human rights are basic rights by nature, and that freedom is fundamental in that context. Such consciousness also inspires people to establish the aim that the labour force be liberated from capitalism.

"Consciousness of liberation of the classes is based on: firstly, the consciousness that labourers and farmers, as a class, must be liberated from colonial capitalism and from the landlord system of semi-feudalism; and secondly, the consciousness that the nation must build a democratic republic based on the people (*minjung*), where the *minjung* themselves are the political sovereign.

"Consciousness of liberation of the nation was established in response to the reality of invasions by imperialism and its ruling structure."³⁴

People's consciousness, as the basis for nationalist revolution against colonial power, however, was professed much earlier. Sin Ch'ae-ho (1880-1936), a leading historian, ideologist and revolutionist in the 1920s declared :

"In order to maintain the life of the Choson nation, one must get rid of the Japanese, the robbers. In order to get rid of the Japanese, revolution is the only answer...[and] the first step of our revolution is to call for the awakening of the people (*minjung*)."³⁵

In particular, Sin called for the awakening of the nation and the opening of the minds of the *minjung* to recognise the fundamental importance of having 'the nation-state' not only as the ideal form of political organization, but also as the only way for the nation's long term survival. His call was addressed to the ordinary people whom he denoted as the majority, characterised by spiritual unity under oppression, whose strength lay in their solidarity and self-reliance. What Sin called for then, and what Chong argues in his theory of people's consciousness, sixty years later, is a nationalism broadly 'anti-colonial' in nature or, in the words of K.R.Minogue, "a collective grievance against foreigners".³⁶

The Basis of *Minjung* Consciousness

Minjung consciousness is largely based in theories of capitalist imperialism and 'anti-colonialism'. It reflects the people's aspirations to humanity, freedom, self-reliance and especially national sovereignty. *Minjung* consciousness has thus been inspired by nationalist ideals, and is seen by *minjung* proponents to be capable of struggling against foreign invasion and occupation, as well as against internal oppression. *Minjung* consciousness, as the spiritual means for the national struggle, therefore, has not only been idealized, but also actively promoted by many Koreans, especially nationalist activists

(including *minjung* proponents). More fundamentally, elements of neo-Marxism have become powerful factors in *minjung* thinking, such as that of leftist intellectuals, Christian activists and university students, especially in the opposition movement of the 1980s.

However, we should not be distracted from the fact that theories of people's consciousness, such those focussed on the *paeksong*, *p'yongmin* and *minjung*, are mainly the interpretations and articulations by the *minjung* school of the 1970s and 1980s. *Minjung* consciousness, particularly as the psychological basis for defending political independence and democracy, and in terms of its role in determining the "historical view of *minjung*-nationalism"³⁷, needs to be studied in the context of Korea's modern nationalism, through which the nature of that consciousness was developed and expressed. The following examination of the characteristics of Korean nationalism aims to undertake this analysis.

3. Theories Of Nationalism

Nationalism - The National Disposition

Pak Il-song, former Director of the Institute for North Korean Affairs, notes that, historically, external threats to Korea's self identity acted to form the people's spirit of nationalism.

"Nationalism is a view of history that the master of a society is its people and the subject of national history is also its people.... While we were invaded by external forces 936 times, we were transmitting generation to

generation the glorious spirit of our ancestors, which can be categorized as 'self-reliance', 'unity' and 'peace'. These ancestors had defended themselves with the foundation ideologies of Tang'un the Great, which are *Hongik in'gan chongsin* (benevolence), pride of the Choson, and fraternity (oneness)...."38

This interpretation of nationalism reveals one of the most consistent and popular features of Korean nationalism which has inspired the Korean people. It is closely related to the argument put forward by *minjung* proponents that the masses are the subject of history which is realised through their "human struggle for historical and political liberation...."39

In his highly acclaimed essay, 'Makings of Perceptions of Nationalism by Korean Intellectuals and Students (*Han'guk Chisikin' kwa Taehaksaeng ui Minjok-uisik Kujo*)', Professor Kim Tong-song summarises the core features of Korean nationalism prevalent since liberation to the present time. The recurrent features he cites are familiar themes associated with *minjung* ideology, namely:

- "1. recognition of national fraternity and accentuation of national independence;
- 2.the emergence of people's democracy opposed to imperialism and feudalism;
3. the political mobilization of people's consciousness in respect of their rights;
4. determination to achieve independence, self-reliance and political influence; and

5. determination to achieve modernization."40

Kim's essay comprehensively covers post-liberation Korean nationalism and is the foundation on which the team of scholars headed by Professor Sin Chong-hyon argue that Korean nationalism is largely linked to nationalistic ideals derived ultimately from Western theory. These ideals include notions of 1) ethnocentrism; 2) patriotism; 3) group consciousness; and 4) ideology/ideological orientation.⁴¹ Any theory which explicitly seeks to fit Korean nationalism into this type of theoretical framework, according to Professor Sin and his team, is inevitably problematic.⁴²

An Pyong-jun, Professor of Political Science at Yonsei University, distinguished the recurrent features of nationalism into four categories: ethnonationalism; cultural nationalism; resistance nationalism; and integral nationalism. On this basis, An also distinguished the characteristics of Korean nationalism into four categories: 1) ethnocentrism; 2) revivalism; 3) nationalistic resistance ; and 4) intellectualism.⁴³ An takes a position consistent with Hans Kohn who defined nationalism as "a state of mind, permeating the large majority of a people, and claiming to permeate all its members."⁴⁴ At the same time, An borrows from Anthony D Smith's perspective which defines nationalism as:

"... an ideological movement, for the attainment and maintenance of self-government and independence on behalf of a group, some of whose members conceive it to constitute an actual or potential 'nation' like others."⁴⁵

However, the most distinctive characteristic of Korean nationalism, which An identifies (along with most other Korean commentators) is that of 'resistance'. The word 'resistance' has been so intoxicating that it has had not only "...the power of stopping [the] thought"⁴⁶ of Korean nationalists, but also the power of manoeuvring their thought into self-righteous illusion. This 'resistance' orientation of Korean nationalism has been regarded until recent times as "the national disposition of the Korean people."⁴⁷ It is a characteristic, which along with the other aspects of Korean nationalism, was intrinsic to the motivation and rhetoric of the Minjung Movement.

The problematic nature of Korean nationalism, resulting from the national disposition towards resistance, is evident in a number of respects : firstly, it confused the people's values, aspirations and their perspective of nationalism, in particular, their understanding of the objectives of the nationalist movement. Any doctrine which advocated collective resistance to foreigners or their domination was deemed to be justifiable as a nationalist ideology, resulting in a multiplicity of ideologies ranging from the far left to the far right. Song Kon-ho and Kan Man-gil, the co-editors of 'A Theory Of Korean Nationalism (*Han'guk Minjokjuui-ron*)' alert their readers that this distinct characteristic of Korean nationalism has resulted in ideological discrepancies and limitations.⁴⁸ According to both commentators, the emergence of many misleading descriptions of nationalism in the late Korean dynastic period (*kaehwa sidae*) were typical outcomes of "the interpretation of nationalism as mainly the 'ideology to struggle against foreign invasions (*chohang-juui*)' ".⁴⁹

Secondly, the xenophobic nature of Korean nationalism prior to liberation not only lacked capacity to accommodate any social or political change beyond the prevailing colonial environment, but also contradicted the broader needs and objectives of the nationalist movement. Ironically, the rejection of things external generated multiple theories of nationalism, based on foreign ideologies. Thus, communism, based on the theories of Marx and Lenin, gave substantial impetus to the nationalist movement itself, but at the same time, became the major factor which divided nationalist groups against each other beyond reconciliation both during and after liberation. This particular characteristic of Korean nationalism, however, lost much of its impetus after the Korean war, when the aspirations and objectives of the nationalist movement became more closely focussed on the accomplishment of 'national unification'. In this context, the core and cause of Korean nationalism were often misused, particularly by both nationalist and *minjung* leaders, using the argument that the enemies of the nation cannot be anyone but 'foreigners or others', and therefore, must be rejected at all cost, even through revolution. This theme was again evident in the anti-Americanism of the Minjung Movement of the 1980s, especially that of radicalism.

In analysing xenophobia and the underlying nationalistic rhetoric, K. R. Minogue perhaps provides a clearer approach to understanding Korean nationalism and its distinctive features: ethnocentrism and anti-foreign authoritarian elitism.

"Nationalists present their political struggle as one carried on by one homogeneous society against outside oppressors; but

they then have to admit that these outside oppressors have internal allies - stooges, traitors, tribal and traditional habits of thought- in short, all that resists the national leadership itself. This nationalist self-characterisation is simply a misleading description of the fact that the nationalist process is a condition of civil war and often, as we have seen, a civil war in which little notice is actually taken of the outside oppressor."50

Nationalism Based On Ethnocentrism

The origin of ethnocentrism in Korean society, according to Professor An, arose mainly from the existence of two cultural factors: firstly, the social practice, from the very beginning of Korean history, of the people being taught to value the homogeneity of their ethnicity as the prime essence of national fraternity; and secondly, the historical and cultural continuity of their homogeneous ethnicity and common language. As An comments, the homogeneity of ethnicity and language has not only been the source of unity among the Korean people, but also "the strength of blood kinship."51 Furthermore, the Korean people hold a strong conviction that "the historical consciousness of "us" and "others" was developed from the early 13th century when the Koryo Kingdom was placed under Mongol rule (1231-1270)".52 Claims concerning the homogeneity of ethnicity, language, culture and history of the Korean people go back more than a millennium to the period when the Silla Kingdom achieved the first unification of the three Kingdoms (Kingdoms of Paekche, Silla and Kokuryo) in 676 AD. In fact, their claims regarding the origin of their ethnicity stretch back to around the third millennium BC.53.

Historically, the rise of nationalist ideologies, such as the *poguk anmin sasang* (ideology of sustaining the nation and providing peace for the people) advanced by *Tonghak* peasants (1894), *Ch'oksa wijongnon* (ideology of rejecting heterodoxy, i.e., Christianity) professed by extreme Confucianists since 1895 and the *Tongdo sogiron* (ideology to maintain the Oriental Way and to adopt Western technologies) advanced by the ruling elite in the Taehan Cheguk (1897-1910) period immediately prior to Japanese annexation, were, with the exception of aspects of the latter, classical examples of Korean ethnocentrism based on xenophobia.

Professor Yi Chong-su argues that the maintenance of 5,000 years of Korean history itself, despite the numerous intrusions and attacks by foreigners, is creditable to the strength of ethnocentrism. He states further:

"The Korean people have repelled foreign invasions, never submitting to them. The Korean people, proud of 5,000 years of their great history, will develop as they learn from their experiences....The history of the Korean people is distinctive from all others because the Korean people took form and developed in a way different from others. The Korean people learned from foreign threats and conflicts with aggressors that national solidarity and cooperation were highly valuable. The Korean people have developed their cultural tradition despite the confusion caused by conflicts with foreign powers."⁵⁴

Regardless of its accuracy, this statement is noteworthy in terms

of understanding the collective perception of the Korean people. It reveals the foundation of Korean nationalism which, to a large extent, is based on xenophobia and on perceived persecution, and is especially relevant to the *minjung* ideology of the 1980s.

Whilst Korean ethnocentrism oscillates between the ideal and practical, it especially encourages systemic racism. As Professor An Pyong-jun points out, ethnocentrism in Korean society may not be explicit in form or structure 55, but racism rooted in homogeneous ethnicity is systemic and culturalized as a form of patriotism and thus nationalism. No outsiders, whether Chinese residents living for generations in the Korean community 56, or Korean people from different regions, are treated as one of "us".57 In this context, the essence of Korean homogeneous ethnicity contributes nothing more than a contradiction towards Korea's aspirations of national equilibrium and fraternity. Nicholas Eberstadt goes so far as to say that, "Korean nationalism - the sentiment and theory of racial rule - is subversive of democracy, and is inimical even unto democracy's basic principles."58 It runs counter, therefore, to the objectives of the Minjung Movement despite being most forcefully promoted by that Movement.

Nationalism Based on Revivalism

The ideals of cultural revivalism, which emphasized the preservation of Korean culture, language, tradition and spiritual values, were embraced by the Korean people in three forms: namely, 1) traditional customs known as *p'ungsok*; 2) an awakening of national consciousness; and 3) a reassessment of national history from the people's viewpoint. These three aspects of

cultural revivalism are detailed separately below.

The Korean people considered their *p'ungsok*, as one of the most important features of the Korean way of life, which enriched the nation, provided energy for the revitalization of individuals, and spread harmony amongst the people. Rooted largely in the teachings of Chu Hsi, particularly on the need to "clarify genealogy, group members of the clan together, and institute a system of heads of descent"⁵⁹, *p'ungsok* has, indeed, been the ultimate barometer for the maintenance of the moral and political code in Korea.

This attachment by the people, especially the common people, to *p'ungsok*, however, was often abused by nationalists, such as for the revival of monarchical absolutism. The ruling elite in the Great Han Empire (1897-1905), for example, propagated the overall nationalist ideology known as the '*Puguk kangbyong-juui* (ideology to enlighten and strengthen the nation)'. At the same time they were divided into the Conservatives and the Progressives, of whom the Conservatives followed the doctrine known as *Tongdo sogiron* (see below) which posited that cultural revivalism relied essentially upon the people's emotional and social attachment to their traditional *p'ungsok*.

Tongdo sogiron, developed in the early 1880s, advocated two political measures: that Korea should adopt a policy which accepted only Western technology, so that Korea could establish a modernized economic structure as well as modern military equipment; but that at the same time Korea should maintain exclusively its Confucian feudal structure (expressed as "The

Oriental Way"-Tongdo), and oppose the entry of any Western liberal ideologies. In regard to these measures, Yun Son-hak, in his memorial to the King (Kojong) on December 1882, wrote:

"Things such as ships, wagons, military equipment, which serve the convenience of people and benefit the nation, are all from external sources. Hence what I humbly beg to change is not the mode of ethics or morality, but the mode of technology which produces these instruments."60

The introduction of a national ideology to maintain the Oriental Way and to adopt Western technology, was a political measure aimed not only at preventing foreign domination, but also and more importantly, at securing the existing structure of feudal monarchical absolutism under the guise of traditional values. Similar conflicting policies, as political measures for modernization, were also adopted by China and Japan: the former was known as the '*zhong ti xi yong*'; and the latter the '*wa kon yo sai*'.

In the process of economic and technological modernization, however, the ruling elite faced the predicament that there could not be any modernization either economically or militarily, unless the population's perceptions were modernized and government was supportive of that modernization. Hence, in reality, the implementation of this ideology, based on the approach of the oriental Confucian ruling structure with the adoption of Western technologies, failed to save Korea either from foreign domination or from the dismantling of Confucian feudalism.

Cultural revivalism also called for an awakening of the Korean people's spirit, that is, of the Korean people's nationalist consciousness in preparedness for revolution or social renovation. Sin Ch'ae-ho (1880-1936), a revolutionary nationalist during Japanese colonization, pronounced that the most effective way to combat the Japanese colonial empire in the cause of national independence, would be through a 'direct revolution of the people' (*minjung chikjob hyongmyong*). In his article, "Declaration of Korean Revolution (*Choson Hyongmyong Sonon*)" of 1923, Sin wrote:

"... if our revolution of the 'people in the East (Korea) does not develop rapidly, they will all lose their own identity.. .."61

The solution to overcoming the danger of losing national identity, he continued, was to awaken the minds and hearts of the people, which would be "the first step of our [Korean people's] revolution."62 It was clear that a people's militant revolution, in Sin's view, would be the only option "to discover the uniqueness of Korea".63 Hence the people's revolution aiming "to destroy the alien ruling structure of the nation"64 was seen as a necessary process to maintaining the nationhood of Korea. Sin's argument, which focussed solely on the criterion of national independence, was inspirational to the awakening of the Korean people. Sin's tunnel-vision approach to nationalism, however, reflected a distinct tendency amongst Korean intellectuals (when he defined as, 'the people who are already awakened'), particularly in regard to their attitude towards internal issues such as the Confucian feudal structure.

Cultural revivalism, involved a reassessment of national history from the people's (*minjung*) viewpoint and was brought into effect at two different times: 1) during the era of Japanese occupation through the work of Ch'oe Nam-son (1890-1957), a leading Korean intellectual and nationalist; and 2) during the Minjung Movement in the 1980s. Ch'oe, however, has been perceived as personally inconsistent, having accepted a collaborative role with the Japanese. Despite his literary achievements and his leadership of the nationalist movement, his role as a nationalist ultimately became a source of controversy amongst Korean historians even to the present-day. Nevertheless, his analysis of the Tan'gun myth in his essay, 'Treatise of Tan'gun (*Tan'gunnon*) [1926]', has provided the most conclusive and revolutionary vision of national identity to the Korean people to date. His view of the Tan'gun as "a Shaman ruler, a religio-political leader of ancient Korea"⁶⁵ has not only been cited by Yi Ki-baek, a leading present-day historian, but also affirmed by the government, as the foundation of the nation. In analysing Ch'oe's view of history, Chisuko T. Allen draws the following conclusion:

"Thus Ch'oe's "*Tan'gunnon*" not only prompted other scholars to study the myth seriously but helped popularize the notion of Tan'gun. This, in turn, offered indirect reassurance to the popular movements, such as *Taejonggyo*, that revered Tan'gun as the ancient symbol of Korean nationalism."⁶⁶

The *minjung* cultural movement of the 1970s, which was propagated largely by poet Kim Chi-ha and other intellectuals (including university students and Christian groups), called for a revival of the mask dance (*t'alch'um*) and court-yard play (*madang-guk*)

that closely linked the *Tan'gun* myth and Korean culture to the lives of the *minjung*. And at the same time, the movement also called for a reassessment of national history from the people's perspective. Irrespective of the changed directions and objectives of the Minjung Movement during the late 1980s (when it moved towards extreme radicalism), the impact of this Movement on the process of democratisation cannot be overstated in Korean history.

Nationalism Based on Resistance

As I have already indicated, Korean nationalism had been substantially motivated by 'resistance'. The consequent ideological inadequacies and contradictions of Korean nationalism were thus continuously exposed in the struggle to achieve national aspirations and objectives. As early as the Koryo kingdom, according to Professor Yi Yong-hui, resistance had been fundamental to the nationalist tradition.⁶⁷ It is, of course, a natural reaction to resist foreign forces, and in this respect, Korean nationalism based on such an elemental reaction is not unusual. The proliferation of nationalist ideologies from the late 1920s, from communist, socialist, gradualist, and liberal variants to terrorism, however, exhibited the fundamental inadequacies of Korean nationalism, particularly in terms of a lack of political pluralism and tolerance, a weak ideological base (founded on sentiment and resistance) and obscurity of purpose and direction.

Obsessed with the ideals of a single and thus exclusionary political and moral standpoint, the activities of most nationalists confused and misled the people's aspirations and

nationalistic perspectives. Moreover, the overrated criterion of resistance was readily abused by the leaders of government for their own political legitimacy and power. President Syngman Rhee's (Yi Sung-man) national slogan of "*Myolgong Chongsin* (Anti-Communist Spirit)", or the "*Pan'gong* (Anti-Communism)" of Presidents Pak Chong-hui (Park Chung Hee) and Chon Tu-hwan (Chun Doo Hwan), were very cleverly manipulated forms of nationalistic rhetoric which served them well in the elimination of their personal enemies and political obstacles.

Nationalism Based on Intellectualism

Historically, the Korean people had long been taught that intellectual achievement was a privilege which not only provided qualification for entry to officialdom, but also provided the means for joining the ruling class (*yangban kyegub*). To most Koreans, education was a compulsory requirement for linking one's own opportunities closely to those offered by both public and private authorities. Korean society, as a result of the civil examination system, had predominantly been ruled by the intellectual class, and shaped by their thoughts, ideals and politics. In this cultural environment, nationalism has been "the drive of a relatively thin stratum of intellectuals who absorbed the skills and values of advanced countries, towards rapid modernization in opposition to the aristocracy and independently of the colonial industrial powers."⁶⁸

This is because, according to A.D. Smith, "... they [intellectuals] are now under-employed and culturally displaced in their traditional societies."⁶⁹ Smith's description is very relevant to Korean intellectuals since the late 1800s, and

continues to be relevant to writers, students, officials and ultimately also the educated workers of modern times.

Intellectuals as the vanguard of Korean nationalism, however, had always separated themselves from the mainstream of the people not only in terms of the origin of their intellectual and social identities, but also in terms of their beliefs and approaches which were often contradictory to those of the people.

An example of this dichotomy between intellectuals and commoners was the coexistence of the *Tonghak* peasant movement and the elite of the Independence Club in the late 1800s. Ch'oe Che-u, the founder of the *Tonghak* religion, proclaimed that "My doctrine is similar to Confucianism, ...[and] is based on the incarnation of God in man.⁷⁰ On the basis of this doctrine, Chon Pong-jun, one of the leaders of the *Tonghak* Rebellion in 1894, termed the masses as "the root of the nation"⁷¹ and declared:

"*Minjung* who are oppressed by the *yangban* and the wealthy people, and who are menial workers in offices, subject to humiliation by the 'provincial governors and 'local mayors', just as we peasants and farmers, have deep rooted grudges (*han*) against oppressors. Therefore, *minjung*, don't hesitate and stand up against them now!"⁷²

In regard to this belief and the notions held by peasants, the elite of the Independence Club (*Tongnip hyophoe*) were genuinely convinced that these ideas of Eastern Learning (*Tonghak*) were the main cause of the nation's fall from grace.⁷³ Yi Chong-sik, author of "The Politics of Korean Nationalism" strongly argues that if only the intellectuals of the Independence Club sought

alliance with the *Tonghaks* who were, by then, well established and numerous, "...a revolution or at least a stronger pressure group could have been produced."⁷⁴

Ideological friction in Korea has certainly generated intellectual debate on the nature of nationalism, but the arguments, as elsewhere, have lacked academic rigour. In addition, nationalistic intellectualism, as in other spheres, lacked unity in Korea and therefore was an additional source for division rather than national solidarity.

Overview Of Korean Nationalism

I have reviewed the various strands of Korean nationalism because their characteristics are closely intertwined with *minjung* thought. As has been demonstrated, a *minjung* approach to the formation and character of nationalism is common amongst writers on Korea's past.

My approach has been to examine Korean nationalism in terms of its historical and cultural links with the common people, and its impact on the *Minjung* Movement of the 1980s, outlining what is peculiar to the nationalist experience. I have not, therefore, dealt with Korean nationalism as a theoretical entity, for Korean nationalism is not a single thing capable of a single definition. History has simply provided the context upon which local circumstances have been brought to bear to generate elements of nationalism, which different groups have attempted to rationalise into disparate sets of ideas. I would argue, however, that in Korea such ideas were often a convenient mechanism in the political agendas of these different groups, including radical

groups and the Minjung Movement.

Early this century, much of Korea's nationalism, in so far as it went, was based on an awakening consciousness on the part of the people, that the Korean nation was a homogeneous people living within its own natural boundaries. Japanese colonisation consequently represented the rape of the motherland and aroused severe resentment in the nature of a political grievance, contributing significantly to the psychology of early Korean nationalism. As in nearly all cases of nationalism, Korea found itself in a relationship of being the weaker to the much stronger Japan. The consequent feeling of resistance was further cultivated in combination with the sense of grievance (*han*). This combination, generated externally, provided a ready explanation to Koreans why they had failed to attain nationhood, but to some extent it was also a convenient distortion of the real cause of failure, which was as much to be found within, in internal factionalism, parochialism, poor political infra-structure, and a lack of strong leadership.

These political and sociological foundations, however, should be seen as inevitable in the path to nationhood. Modern society, according to Ernest Gellner 75, is characterized by developed industry which effects social modernisation through the creation of factors such as increased communication, education and economic wealth, thus forcing society to come to terms with its internal and external ideological boundaries, leading ultimately to a more pluralistic democratic environment internally, and a more non-xenophobic approach internationally.

Korea's rapid industrial development, especially after 1962, provided the common people with increasing opportunities for relocation and changing occupations with the hope of improved personal income. An awakening of national consciousness occurred progressively from this point with the emergence of the Korean Minjung Movement. A greater awareness of Korean culture also emerged, incorporating a mode for communication, a genuine Korean identity and a new focus on the Korean Language.

The axiom that 'exile is the nursery of nationalism' was demonstrated in many respects in Korea, for when many workers became 'exiles' from their traditional communities in major industrial centres such as Seoul and Pusan, their 'exile' led to nationalism in Gellner's terms of forging a modern nation where its members had to communicate and be technically competent. In particular, the Korean system of education was substantially expanded under the regime of Pak Chong-hui and became a major factor in the modernisation and democratisation of Korea.

In a sense, Korea had been a 'nation' for thousands of years, and its entrance to the modern world represented the awakening of Korea to its identity in the modern era. In another sense, however, Korea had not existed as a nation for 39 years and its re-emergence created complex social circumstances through which the Korean brand of nationalism is intelligible. The necessity to fight for nationhood was, in part, driven by a range of circumstances which made social and political life, unmodified, intolerable to those who lived it.

The problem inherent in Korean nationalism, however, has been that the foundations of group consciousness have been variously

regional, traditional, religious, and political. Such groups have found the rhetoric of nationalism useful but at the same time have remained very factional in their approach towards the achievement of nationhood. Korean political figures, in particular over the past 40 years or so, have found it very convenient to exploit nationalist sentiment in order to protect their own position and to justify extreme measures of political control. Throughout these processes, however, a consistent pervading nationalist ideology as such has not been formed, not even as a set of ideas which might be said to comprise, not a theory, but a rhetoric by which a unified political sentiment can be communicated from the ruling elite to the masses. The elements for such a rhetoric are all there, such as homogeneity, cultural unity, xenophobia, reunification etc, but have not been combined to form a set of national ideals.

In this context, one is compelled to conclude that paradox is at the core of Korean nationalism and thus, given the nationalist content of the Minjung Movement, of *minjung* theory as well. Korea's political and historical consciousness of its own identity as a nation was both stimulated by an external power (Japan) and put into effect by an external power (the USA). This left the peninsula with a totally inadequate internal basis for nationhood in 1945, ultimately leading to civil war in 1950, and the establishment of a partitioned national entity. The Korean nationalist process is seen, therefore, as a condition of civil war which, on the one hand, represents the people's revolution towards social, political and economic reform, namely a single class society; but on the other, sets the stage where foreigners, especially the USA, are depicted as major obstacles to national

independence and unification. This depiction, linking national humiliation and grievances with foreign influences such as Japanese colonialism and American capitalism, ultimately convinced the Korean people to view nationalism in terms of class struggle. As George E. Ogle stated:

"Korea is tired of being subservient in a world of big nations like the U.S.A., Japan, and the Soviet Union. It is now time to exert its independence by cutting loose from its old dependencies -- which primarily means the U.S.A. Likewise, it is time for the people to exert themselves against a ruling class that has too long kept them as second class citizens, and in the case of workers, even as serfs."⁷⁶

Today, however, little account is given by Koreans to outside nations as the main source for the solution to internal conflict and division. Outside nations are seen as having a crucial role in Korea's economic development through investment and trade, and more importantly, in international cross-recognition of the two Koreas.⁷⁷ This perception has required sophisticated international cooperation and diplomacy both in the world of commerce and that of politics. Nationalistic rhetoric, nevertheless, continues to be a strong stimulus for movements such as the Minjung Movement aimed at the achievement of national determination and unification, but at the same time, Koreans are being brought from out of their parochial traditional outlook to recognize the global issues confronting all of Korea. Even the unification of Korea clearly depends upon international factors, at least in so far as international capital will be required to finance important elements of that unification. To this extent,

the national exclusivism of the *minjung* ideology appears no longer to accord with Korea's circumstances.

Chapter Two

MINJUNG HISTORIOGRAPHY

Introduction

Nothing has influenced the mind of the Korean people more during the last thirty years of struggle for democracy than the role of history and its interpretation.

To understand modern *minjung* consciousness as it has developed in recent decades, and its mode of expression in the philosophy and activities of the Minjung Movement, it is important to examine Korea's history, particularly in terms of its historiographical interpretation. The formation of a Korean mass consciousness took many centuries to emerge. The nature of this consciousness, as construed by the Minjung Movement, is based on the character of the Korean people, their unique 'Koreanness', which can only be understood in terms of their history and culture.

While the role of the *minjung* as a political force did not emerge until the 1960s, when viewed more broadly as 'the ruled common people', it is arguable that the *minjung* have not been without political impact throughout history. Yi Ki-baek, a prominent historian, writes:

"Throughout the long history of Korea, the *minjung* have been regarded as only the subjects of the ruling force.

Consequently, the *minjung* have not been recorded in the front pages of history, and for this reason it has become nearly impossible to trace their past through historical records.

However, *minjung* as subjects can not be disregarded entirely

in the history of Korea because no one will be able to understand Korea's history without understanding the role of the *minjung*."1

Recorded history in its traditional form pays little attention to the *minjung* as such, but tends to focus on politics, the court, the military, colonial exploits and various other events without regard to the common people. This view of history was first challenged in Korea when the nation was forced to accept colonial submission to Japan, and a national movement arose which confronted the colonialist view of history. A greater consciousness subsequently developed concerning the role of the *minjung* in history and how this role has been operative in shaping the socio-political framework.

This chapter examines the historiography of "*minjung* history". According to *minjung* proponents the development of this historical view, "has been accomplished largely through the method of socio-economic history"2, the understanding of which was essential if the general public were to grasp the "reality of the *minjung* and their corporate spirit".3 This new historiography of the 1970s emphasized important elements of populist socio-political consciousness, not only stimulating a 'historical view of *minjung*-nationalism' (people oriented nationalism), but also inspiring the people to rise up against oppression and ultimately sparking the phenomenon of the Minjung Movement in the 1980s. It also provided a basis for the people to identify the common factors underlying their existence and struggle, thereby giving their solidarity a purpose. So Nam-dong, leading *minjung* theologian (died 1984), argued as follows:

"*Minjung* history and theology testify to the fact that the *minjung* overcome with their own power the external conditions which determine and confine them, and become the subjects who determine their own social situation and destiny....[Through] Korean history from a *minjung* perspective, we will now trace the genealogy of the Minjung Movement in which the *minjung* define themselves and struggle for their own liberation. The *minjung* movement originated in Korean history only with the establishment of Ancient Choson [Korea]."4

It is noteworthy, however, that the overall tendency of *minjung* proponents in regard to their historical claims, is to rely on the 1970's interpretation of the prominent historian, Yi Ki-baek. In doing so they generally draw on popular perceptions of already well publicised historical themes, such as social oppression under Ancient Choson and the homogeneity of nationalist sentiments particularly under Japanese occupation.

The two major themes of the interpretation of Korean history by *minjung* proponents which I will examine in this chapter are: 1) the Yi dynasty: "the womb of the people's *han*" ; and 2) the nationalist reaction to Japanese interference and late control (1876-1945). I will concentrate on the nature of *minjung* history with a focus on social and political conditions, and the people's reaction to and resistance against those conditions.

1. The Role of History

The Yi Dynasty: "The Womb Of The People's Han"

In 1392, General Yi Song-gye became the first ruler of the Yi dynasty (as King T'aejo, 1392-1398) after a successful coup against the rulers of the Koryo kingdom. He named the new kingdom 'Choson'. The founding of the Yi dynasty was entirely dependent upon the collaboration of Confucian literati who designated themselves as the lords of the "Yangban (literati) Bureaucratic State".⁵ The literati established their personal wealth by backing Yi Song-gye's land reforms (*Kwajonbob*), which enabled them, as the 'Dynastic Foundation Merit Subjects', to receive land according to their rank. The land law in its implementation, however, generated an extremely oppressive social system which entrapped the peasants into a vicious cycle of poverty.

Although the power of the *yangban* fluctuated from time to time, mainly due to their own factionalism, their authority as the rulers of the *yangban* bureaucratic state was unchallenged, as was the social system which the *yangban* literati modelled on the Confucian distinction between 'the rulers and the ruled.' This philosophical position was universally accepted as proper and necessary to maintain the social order. Mencius justified this philosophy as follows, "Some labour with their minds, and some labour with their strength. Those who labour with their minds govern others; those who labour with their strength are governed by others. Those who are governed by others support them; those who govern others are supported by them."⁶

Neo-Confucianism, of the school of Chu Hsi (1130-1200), had thus been given official government endorsement from the beginning of

the Yi dynasty as a counter-culture against the former social power of Buddhism, with the objective of strengthening state protection and patronage. However, its influence progressively broadened over time to dominate political and intellectual education, social culture and ethical behaviour.

Class Structures Under The Yi Dynasty

Chu Hsi's 'doctrine of the mean' taught that opposites required balance to form the perfect circle, as expressed in the notion of the *yin* (*um*) and *yang* (*yang*). Social philosophy thus saw reality in terms of the positive and negative, light and dark, male and female, good and evil, ruler and ruled, not just as opposites, but in terms of their harmonious relationship to form the perfect whole. Apart from the king, whose authority was absolute and hereditary on the grounds that he brought about harmony between divine and human activities, there were four major social strata, *yangban*, *chungin*, *sangmin* and *ch'onmin*, which played key roles in the ruler-ruled relationship.

The *yangban* originally were officers of the *tongban* (East Division), civil officers of high rank, and the *soban* (West Division), military officers. However, 'yangban' soon denoted nobility in general. "Economically *yangban* were landlords, politically they were government officials or reserve forces for the officials, and socially they were the rulers of the local community."⁷ "They [the *yangban*] do not plough fields themselves, nor do they engage in trade to earn a living....The *hongp'ae* [red board], gained through the civil examination, is merely two measures long, but is worth a wealth of goods....No one could openly bear a grudge against a *yangban*, even if the *yangban* poured ash into one's nose and pulled one's beard while

holding down one's head by the hair."8

The *yangban* factions, as a matter of course, fought over the limited available positions in the central administration. Power shifts mainly occurred as a result of alliances with the dominant claimants to the throne, and factions were often the result of arguments over issues related to the throne. Those factions that were unable to access political dominance, were forced to retreat to the countryside, often downgrading their status to "fallen *yangban*"9 because of financial and social ruin. Many became farmers or tenant-farmers of the peasant class (*sangmin*).

Yangban acknowledged only their own faction, clan, academy and so on, according to their own interpretation of Confucian kinship ethics, and subsequently the entire state was turned into a multitude of lineages and factions plotting against each other. In this social and political climate, a 'zero-sum' game became the most viable tactic of Korean political life.

Next to the *yangban*, the *chungin* (中人) were the second stratum of society, a small group mainly comprised of professionals and clerks, and the illegitimate offspring of *yangban*. The *chungin* were trained in medicine, foreign languages, accounting, law, meteorology, calligraphy, and other sciences. Although the *chungin* class was not specified as hereditary by law, in practice, most professional and clerical positions were inherited by their descendants, for the secrets of each profession could only be taught on a one to one basis. Most *chungin*, as the term indicates, were 'middle people' and lived in the middle area of Seoul. According to Yi Chong-sik (Chong-sik, Lee), the *chungin*, especially official clerks and military officers were, just as

corrupt as the *yangban*, tyrannizing the common people through their role in public services.¹⁰

The third stratum, the *sangmin*, were the greater majority of the population and were largely farmers (either free-landholders or tenant farmers), merchants including artisans, craftsmen and traders, who together bore the entire burden of taxation and military service. Whilst the *sangmin* carried out the major role of providing the resources for the state, the farmers, the largest and most important group within the commoner class, were particularly exploited and oppressed. Merchants and artisans in the *sangmin* class had an insignificant role in the early years of the Yi dynasty and were a relatively small group. Artisans were attached to public agencies, producing whatever goods they were assigned. Yi Ki-baek notes :

"In many instances these artisans were government slaves and their social status was that of the low-born...."¹¹

Trading was considered an immoral and undignified way of making a living, as it was seen as extracting profit from others.

Nevertheless, the role of wholesale merchants, known as *kongin*, developed over time and their commercial activities became organized and more prominent, particularly after the promulgation of the Uniform Land Tax Law (*taedongbob*) in 1708.

The *ch'onmin* were made up of government and family slaves whose social status was strictly hereditary and who were readily bought and sold at an officially set price. Of these, slaves who were 'out-resident' and public slaves managed their own households and lived separately within designated districts. The recorded number

of the government slaves in the fifteenth century was between 350,000 to 400,000.¹² In addition to slaves, the *ch'onmin* included performing artists (*kwangdae* and *sadang*), shaman priests (*mudang*), certain categories of peasant farm labourers as well as slaughterers and butchers (*paekjong*: "... the term originally used to designate peasant farmers in general"¹³). The social status of these groups was also hereditary. On the political level, the formal ruler-ruled relationship was broadly that between the *yangban-chungin* alliance, and the other two levels.

Three Key Sources Of Social Control

Prominent *minjung* historian Y Ki-baek, in discussing the social and economic structure of the 'Yangban Bureaucratic State of the Yi Dynasty'¹⁴, refers three key features which oppressed the peasantry and entrenched their social immobility. Firstly, 'hop'ae' legislation (a tag identification system) fixed peasants permanently within the land of their residential area. Those of the *sangmin* class were required to carry the 'hop'ae' at all times, and could not abandon their land or migrate to another province. After several rebellions¹⁵ the social immobility of the *sangmin* was further tightened through the 'Oga-jakt'ongbob', a law which organised the *sangmin* into groups of five households with collective responsibility for the behaviour, debts, and taxes of their group.

This 'watchdog-system' of mutual espionage secured the total control of the peasantry. Its intention was to establish and fix a reliable labour force in every area of the nation regardless of social change. In that sense, the *sangmin* who were officially freeborn peasants, were in reality not very different to the

ch'onmin of the lowest social stratum.

The second key feature was the land-tax system, which had developed from the *kwajonbob* land reforms (the Rank Land Law) promulgated in 1391 by Yi Song-gye and his Confucian literati as a socio-political reform. In principle, this system acknowledged no private land ownership, for the State officially owned all the nation's land. Therefore, the 'tenant system' was the only viable method of farming, and only farmers (most likely peasants, but never *yangban*) were the tenants of either 'public land (*kongjon*)' or 'private land (*sajon*)'. The State collected rent directly from tenants of 'public land'. 'Private land', on the other hand, was allocated to officials according to their rank with the right to collect rent from tenants, but without ownership rights. 'Rank' land was inherited and in effect converted over time into outright ownership. Thus, from the beginning of the Yi dynasty, *yangban* landlords established the trend of building up their private estates, termed agricultural estates (*nongjang*), despite the formal principle of state ownership.

The *yangban* bureaucrats not only possessed 'rank land' as well as large amounts of 'merit subject land', both allocated by government, but also expanded their landholdings by using their political and financial power through methods such as purchase, outright seizure, and reclamation. Thus they progressively acquired every available land holding, particularly "the abundant state owned lands in the three provinces (Ch'ungch'ong, Cholla, and Kyongsang) of the fertile southern third of the country"16 Han U-kun, Professor of History at Seoul National University, comments on the social impact of this phenomenon as follows :

"Perhaps the most ominous trend in the expansion of the *nongjang* was the removal from the tax rolls of the tenant farmers on them. Just as during the Koryo dynasty, government revenues shrank as the *nongjang* grew, and *nongjang* tenants were also withdrawn from corvee labor and military service. This led many farmers to enter the service of the landlords to escape taxes and corvee."¹⁷

The Rank Land Law was revised through the introduction of the Tribute Tax Law (*kongbob*) in 1444, when the formerly one tenth state rent rate was lowered to one-twentieth of the harvest supposedly to ease the burden of the peasantry. Tenant-farmers, however, continued to be obliged to share their crops on a 50-50 basis with their landowners under a practice called 'crop sharing', and the state rent was now payed only by the landowners. This heavy burden on tenant farmers led to their massive dispossession and impoverishment, and the expansion of *nongjang* by the *yangban* landlords inevitably resulted in a reduction of government tax revenue.

The tribute tax, also known as 'local tribute' (*t'okong*), was even more detrimental to farmers, for levies placed on specialised local products and craft goods were more expensive to provide than the land tax. An 'indirect payment' (*pangnab*) system, introduced by *yangban* bureaucrats, through which they delivered tribute goods to the State and collected the cost of the goods from peasant farmers, led to farmers paying increased tribute tax, and further exploitation by the *yangban*. By the end of the 16th century, the abuse of the tribute tax forced farmers to opt out of their tenancies, passing their debt to those who remained. This merely exacerbated the problem, forcing even more

farmers to flee the land.

The social epidemic of 'runaway-farmers' was one of the contributing factors to the government introducing the 'Uniform Land Tax Law' (*taedongbob*) in 1708. The *taedongbob*, also referred to as the 'rice payment law', was a mandatory payment system under which farmers were liable to pay directly to a newly established government agency, *Sonhyech'ong*. Payment of the new tax could be also made from the harvest, or with coins (*taedongjon*) or cotton cloth (*taedongp'o*). This system was aimed at protecting peasant farmers from the abuses of the landlords.

The government revenue agency, being in receipt mainly of farm produce, money and cotton cloth, appointed special purchasing officers from merchants (or the *kongin* group) of the *sangmin* (commoner) class to purchase government requirements. The appointment of these officers, called 'tribute men' (*kongin*), was a key factor in the creation of an entirely new class of merchants, and ironically progressively eroded the feudalism that had necessitated their appointment. The *taedongbob* was also a desperate government measure to raise State funds. After the Japanese Invasion in 1592, the dynasty, known as 'the agricultural State', was devastated and was facing a financial crisis. The State had not only wasted farm land while engaged in war, but had also lost land registers. Three other critical factors which had led the State into the fiscal crisis were: factional strife amongst the *yangban* class; the continuing increase of the *yangban* population as a result of the deregulation of State examinations both in terms of their frequency and the number of successful candidates selected 18; and most crucially, the increase of tax-free land owned by royal

in-law families.¹⁷

The third key feature of the feudal social system which oppressed with peasantry was the military and its corvee system, which was structured to provide governments (central and local) with military personnel and corvee labour. Every male was subject to conscription into national service as long as he was assessed as being in sound physical condition. In theory, military duty was required on a rotational basis, and corvee labour could be required for a fixed limited period, but no more than six days in a single year. In practice, however, the corvee labour system had no restrictions on either the period or frequency of call up. Furthermore, changes in the military duty system led many peasants to become landless tenants on *nongjang* owned by *yangban* (in some cases peasants preferred to become slaves of *yangban* in order to avoid both military and corvee labour duties), or simply wanderers.

Originally the military service and corvee labour obligations were quite distinct. The military roster system, however, was expanded when the 'paired provisioner system' was introduced, which required conscripted soldiers not only to keep standard duty, but also to support 'paired duty'. This expansion of military rosters drew on local manpower resources and led to severe difficulties in filling corvee labour quotas. As a result, soldiers were required to provide corvee duty themselves. The soldiers, in turn, hired stand-in-labourers with the resources at their disposal from their 'provisioners' (*poin*) and thus substituted their corvee obligation. This unofficial expense for substitute corvee labourers, however, became a social issue when the soldiers began to be forced to make payment directly to

government officials. The payment was excessively burdensome and, as a consequence, there arose a mass exodus of soldiers. Not only were the military ranks deserted by soldiers, but villages were also left without working males.

The military service duty system was changed again during the Japanese invasion of 1592, after which the government began to establish the Five Army Garrisons (*Oyongch'ong*). Their formation was completed during the reign of King Sukjong (1674-1720), and constituted the foundation of the Yi army. 'The system of paid recruits' which developed over time was, in fact, a natural outcome of the Five Army Garrisons' disorganisation, and lack of policy and consistency. The duty system was adopted, in the beginning, by peasant-soldiers who, desperate to avoid going to Seoul for their rotational garrison duty, paid levies to others to take their place. The system soon became standard practice when all peasant farmers were obliged to pay two bolts (*p'il* : about 30 square metres) of cotton cloth annually instead of being conscripted for military duty. Generally, particularly during the late Yi dynasty, the law endorsed the notion that all privileges belonged to the *yangban* class, and all duties had to be carried out by the practical slaves of society, the majority of whom were of the *sangmin* and *ch'onmin* class.

The Yi Dynasty in *Minjung* Historiography

According to *minjung* historians, under these social, political and economic conditions, the enmity of the people towards the State which patronized the tyranny of the *yangban* class, was fundamental, as was their misery (*han*) derived from its despotic system. The State, including its officials, was regarded as the core of social-evil. Thus the people frequently fought against it

to achieve their own ends. For example, the Hong Kyong-nae Rebellion (P'yongan Province in the north west) in 1811, which inspired many small-scale outbreaks that "...continued almost uninterrupted throughout the whole country"²⁰, was a typical illustration of the people's struggle against the corrupt system. The Chinju Uprising (in the south east) in 1862 was also similar in nature and "the most serious of these."²¹

Minjung historians also argue that the evil of the system extended beyond the characteristics of Korean social structure to the minds of the Korean people because it dictated social and cultural ethics as well as the aspirations of society. Built entirely on the moral principles of the Confucian Five Relationships, the system monitored the interpersonal relationships of the people according to the "symbols of the patriarchal hierarchy that were used to define relationships within the kinship villages or within society as a whole...."²² Hence, the relationship between the people were arbitrarily structured, and bound to result in many forms of interpersonal *han*, such as that of son towards father, wife towards husband, sisters towards brothers, youth towards elders and friends towards friends. Under these circumstances, it was only natural to perceive the images of the dynasty as the 'womb of the people's *han* ' and of Korea's *han*-culture.

So Nam-dong interpretes the nature of *han* as follows:

"1. Koreans have suffered numerous invasions by surrounding powerful nations so that the very existence of the Korean nation has come to be understood as *han*. 2. Koreans have continually suffered the tyranny of the rulers so that they

think of their existence as *paeksong*. 3. Also, under Confucianism's strict imposition of laws and customs discriminating against women, the existence of women was *han* itself. 4. At a certain point in Korean history, about half of the population was registered as hereditary slaves, and were treated as property rather than as people of the nation. These thought of their lives as *han*. These four may be called the 'fourfold *han* of Korean people'. Indeed, as the poet Ko Eun exclaims, "We Koreans were born from the womb of *han* and brought up in the womb of *han*."23

2. The Nationalist Reaction To Japanese Interference And Late Control, 1876-1945

Overview

From the *minjung* perspective, Korean nationalism and the people's consciousness of themselves as possessing a distinct socio-political identity were not only born out of their *han* against the oppression imposed on them by the Confucian feudal system, but also out of opposition to the role of foreign powers (and particularly Japan) in Korea. Nationalism in this context may be defined as "a consciousness, on the part of individuals or groups, of membership in a nation, or a desire to forward the strength, liberty, or prosperity of a nation...."24

In 1876, Korea failed to control Japanese violation of its territorial waters, and was compelled to open her ports to Japan by concluding the 'Treaty of Kanghwa'. The opening of ports had conflicting significance in Korean history: on the one hand, Korea officially entered into the international political system and its intellectual, technological and cultural milieu; on the

other hand, she was left wide open to external influence and to intervention from Japan and the West.

Similarly, spreading social discontent motivated the Korean people to turn to religion. The creed of egalitarian ethics in Catholicism, most of all, attracted many people, especially the Southerner bureaucratic faction (*Namin*), which had been excluded from the political domain for many decades by the royal in-law families and which had followed the teachings of *Sirhak* (Practical Learning) since the seventeenth century. According to Ch'on Kwan-u, Korea had already developed a national consciousness or self-realization as a nation during the latter phases of the *Sirhak* movement under the reigns of Kings Yongjo (1724-1776) and Chongjo (1776-1800).²⁵ However, Yi Chong-sik, points out that "Modern nationalism in Korea was to begin as a movement against the regime rather than in defense of it"²⁶, because elitism amongst Korean royalty and nobility persisted to provide a source of national division.

Han Pae-ho, Professor of Political Science at Koryo University, argued that the development of a Korean nationalist movement, or nationalist ideals, consisted of three distinct phases: the first, the Period of Enlightenment" (*kaehwa sidae*) from when the West and Japan demanded the opening of the ports to the March First Movement (1876- 1919); the second, the colonial period from the March First Movement to liberation (1919-1945); and the third, the 'divided period' of Korea from the partition of the Korean peninsula to the present (which will be examined, in this work, under the separate heading of the 'Opposition Movement During the Authoritarian Politics, 1948-1987'.)²⁷ The characteristics of these respective phases have been "to guard

the nation's sovereignty in the Great Han Empire [*kaehwa sidae*], to recover sovereignty in the colonial period, and to establish one unified nation following the partition of the Korean peninsula."²⁸

The First Phase : Early Nationalist Ideals, 1876-1919.

The characteristics of the people during the reform period were best represented by two distinct social groups. The first of these social groups comprised the instigators of the Peasant Tonghak Rebellion of 1894-1895 (*Tonghang'nan*), which started as a xenophobic movement and focused on rejecting foreign powers, emphasising 'Eastern Learning (*Tonghak*)' to guard national sovereignty. The second group was the Independence Club (*Tongnip Hyophoe*) of the elite, "the only progressive movement in Korea under the old regime...(and) the first of the reformist nationalist type"²⁹, inspired by foreign ideas or Western Learning (*Sohak*) which in turn had been inspired by Catholicism. Western liberalism was the dominant ideology of the Independence Club and its leaders.

Eastern Learning (*Tonghak*)

Tonghak (Eastern Learning) was initially a religious movement which opposed the decadence of the mismanaged Choson kingdom, and the increasing influence of foreign powers. Founded by Ch'oe Che-u in 1860, *Tonghak* contained, from the beginning, an element of political dynamism which gradually generated a nation-wide rebellion of the peasants (1894) and became a real threat to the long surviving Yi dynasty (1392-1910). The main doctrine of the *Tonghak* religion was human equality, based on a fundamental belief that man and God are one being (*In nae ch'on*).³⁰ *Tonghak* sought to distinguish and separate Korean religion from all forms

of Western influence, and to establish an independent national spiritual identity, based on Korea's cultural tradition. Hence, the name *Tonghak* referred to the teaching of 'the heavenly way' (*Ch'on-dogyo*) and was essentially different to Western Learning (*Sohak*), mainly Catholicism. The *Tonghak* formula appealed immensely to low class Korean peasants, mainly farmers, because it was seen in magical terms, promising *ch'on'guk* (heaven on earth, or utopia) and freedom from all suffering and oppression for all its followers. *Tonghak* was perceived as the only road to salvation and provided immediate hope and a vision for a new social system.

The *Tonghak* movement reached its climax in the Rebellion of 1894. Led by Chon Pong-jun in Kobu, Cholla Province, the rebels demanded that the King rectify the national situation by destroying the *yangban* class, the centre of official corruption. The Revolt, with enormous support and response from the rank and file, grew too strong for the government to control with its own army. Eventually, the government saw it necessary to invite a force from Japan with which the revolt was eventually overcome in November 1894.

Despite the revolt's failure in military terms, and the elimination of its leaders who were all captured and executed, the government's decision to seek foreign intervention trapped it in an untenable position. The entry of Chinese and Japanese troops into the peninsula, at the request of the Choson government, provided the pretext for Japan's ambition over Choson and, as Japan triumphed in the Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895) this ambition was confirmed. Finally, it led Japan to establish a protectorate (1905) under the Japanese Resident-General

(t'ong'gam) before formally annexing Korea as a colony in 1910. No doubt, Japan's strategy (military and diplomatic), by strengthening and expanding its power in stages, worked brilliantly.

The Reform of 1894 (*Kabo Kyongjang*) which followed the Rebellion brought revolutionary structural change to Choson society, particularly to oppressed and helpless people. It established a cabinet system headed by a premier; officially recognised no social class status system, so that all officialdom was open to all persons with talent; abolished slavery; prohibited the practice of early marriage and allowed the remarriage of widows. However, cabinet members chosen under the provisions of the Reform were sympathetic to Japan, thus securing a greater level of Japanese influence. Japan also enjoyed enhanced international status, including the diplomatic success of obtaining the acquiescence of Britain for an increased role in Choson's affairs. Therefore, Japan readily secured international recognition for its domination over Choson when she won the war with Russia in 1904, thus displacing her chief competitor for hegemony in Korea.

The Independence Club (*Tongnip Hyophoe*)

The *Tongnip Hyophoe* was founded in 1896 by American educated Dr So Chae-p'il (Philip Jason), with initial membership drawn from the *Kongyang Club* organised by Yu Kil-jun and other leading figures from the 1894 reforms, and from the *Chongdong Club* led by Yun Ch'i-ho and Yi Sang-jae who were actively engaged in the nation's diplomatic affairs. The Club was a political organisation with progressive ideas and thinking through which they sought to reconstruct Choson society into a new social and

political order. Its aim was to achieve national independence because "...the restoration of a nation which had fallen from grace depended on the ethical and spiritual renewal of individuals."³¹ *Tongnip Hyophoe* was an elite organization which embraced the ideology of Western Liberalism based on egalitarianism, and provided a new intellectual channel for political and educational development. In addition, the *Tongnip Hyophoe* provided, with the help of American missionaries, a sanctuary for nationalists and intellectuals who were in need of help either physically or spiritually. In this regard, the role of Christian churches, particularly protestant (the first missionary arrived in 1884), was as eminent as the role of Yun Ch'i-ho.

The influence of the Independence Club was largely exercised through its publication, the *Tongnip Sinmun* (The Independent), and a series of public debates (*Manmin Kondonghoe*), both of which substantially advanced public awareness and understanding of Western liberal ideas. Moreover, it produced the first vernacular script (*han'gul*) newspaper and, for the first time in Korean history, provided a medium for delivering opposition views. The Club made strong calls for a constitutional government with a parliamentary system, and the rule of law. These calls, however, were symptomatic of the dilemma experienced by its members, as they had no structure or strategy, based on experience of liberalism in a Korean context, with which to pursue their objectives.

When the government perceived that the Club's intentions were to establish a republic with an elected president, it ordered the Club's dissolution and the arrest of its key members. However,

its influence had been inspirational and exemplary to the modernisation movement, particularly to the growth in consciousness of building a 'nation-state'. Many former members of the *Tongnip Hyophoe* became prominent leaders of the First Republic of Korea, such as, Syngman Rhee, and other leaders of the nationalist movement during the last phases of Japanese colonial rule.

The Second Phase : Nationalist Developments During Colonial Period, 1920-1945

March First Movement

The foremost objective of the nationalist elite during the Japanese colonial period, more specifically from 1920 to 1945, was to recover the nation's sovereignty from Japan and to establish a liberated nation-state. This collective purpose, was initiated by the public proclamation of the Korean 'Declaration of Independence' at Pagoda Park in Seoul on 1 March, 1919, known as the March First Movement. Inspired by the principle established by the President of the United States of America, Woodrow Wilson, the principle of national self-determination, the March First Movement led a nationwide protest and independence movement against Japanese military rule, known as the 'gendarmerie police rule' (*mudan chongch'i*). The Movement involved over two million people within a two month period following the proclamation of the 'Declaration of Independence'. Organized by religious leaders and educational bodies, largely Christian and those belonging to *Ch'ondo-gyo* (Religion of the Heavenly Way- the renamed *Tonghak* religion), the Movement demonstrated unprecedented solidarity among all Koreans. The Movement was entirely non-violent. The thirty-three signatories

to the Declaration of Independence voluntarily informed the authorities of their action soon after their proclamation and were all arrested. The impact of the March First Movement was profound on the fundamentals of socio-political development in the emergent Korean society, and on the national consciousness of the Korean *minjung*.

Internally, the Movement ignited a self-realisation among the Korean people of their homogeneous ethnicity. In addition, the Movement forced the Japanese government to change its colonial policy from gendarmerie police rule (*mudan chongch'i*) to a so-called 'enlightened administration (*munhwa chongch'i*)', allowing less stringent controls on nationalist activities including the press and other expressions of freedom. It also expanded the educational provisions for Koreans. The March First Movement also drew out the egalitarian spirit of the Christian churches and their commitment to people in need by providing leadership for the Movement and providing shelter to political and social-intellectual fugitives.³³

Externally, the Movement provided the impetus for many expatriate Korean nationalist associations to amalgamate, with the formation of 'provisional' governments in Manchuria, Shanghai and Seoul, which were later incorporated into the Provisional Government of the Republic of Korea (*Taehan Min'guk Imsi Chongbu*) located in Shanghai under the leadership of Syngman Rhee. In addition, the Movement also served as a propaganda initiative, promoting internationally the Korean people's determination and solidarity in their desire for independence, and drawing world attention to the cruelty of the Japanese colonial ruler. This message was further promulgated by special envoys despatched by the Movement

as its representatives to a number of world organisations. These developments were actively publicised in the Independence News (*Tongnip Sinmun*), also a product of the March First Movement.

Factional Divisions And The Emergence Of

Communist/Socialist Movements

Ideological and factional divisions, however, continued to be the most detrimental feature of nationalist movements after the March First Movement, particularly after the 1930's. Internally and externally various groups sought alternative strategies to fight the Japanese. They soon realised, however, that the West, and specifically America's Wilsonian theory of self-determination, was not exactly "...Good News from Heaven"³⁴ or of any practical use for the Korean independence movement. Their excessively ideological approach to the need to combat the Japanese, led to disillusionment and division. Some, such as Yi Tong-hwi, became convinced of the need to militarize and rely on socialism or Marxism, some followed Syngman Rhee's belief that greater emphasis had to be placed on diplomacy, whilst others turned to An Ch'ang-ho's gradualism. The disintegration of Korean nationalists was one of the most distinct outcomes of Japanese colonisation, dividing not only the people but the entire nation into irreconcilable divisions. Both right-wing nationalists, and the left-wing communists or socialists were seen by many as focal points for opposition to Japan and as potential founders of a new Korean society.

The Japanese 'enlightened administration policy', which appeared to relax political repression, had effectively set up 'a splitting manoeuvre', ruthlessly and deliberately pitting one Korean against the other, particularly nationalist against

communist or socialist. And although the 'gendarmierie police force policy' was abolished, local police numbers increased substantially. Factions proliferated amongst both the communists and the nationalists. The notable Communist groups were the Korean Communist Party (*Koryo Kongsandang*) and the Choson Communist Party.

The New Stem Association (*Sin'ganhoe*)

Despite their differences the nationalists and Communists in late 1926 succeeded in negotiating a common view and, in February 1927, formed a united nationalist organisation, The New Stem Association (*Sin'ganhoe*) under the presidency of Yi Sang-jae who was known as a 'moderate nationalist of the left'. The *Sin'ganhoe* obtained legal approval for its formation relatively smoothly because the so-called 'enlightened administration policy' was still operative. Its members engaged themselves actively, as a nationalist organisation, in the various issues confronting Korean people at that time, such as education, Korean language teaching in schools, exploitation of Korean workers by Japanese agencies such as the Oriental Development Company, and industry policies which had forced many Koreans to emigrate to Manchuria and Japan.

This alliance of Communists with nationalists in 1927 had been largely influenced by developments in Japan where the Comintern position was that Communism should work towards a broad coalition of progressive multi-class forces as well as to struggle to gain power. Korean Marxists, returning from Japan in 1926, had urged that a broad united front of Korean people be established. The move towards unity continued with the establishment of the People's Prosperity Society (*Minhunhoe*) and a nationalist party

preparation committee in Vladivostok. The impact of the *Sin'ganhoe* was exemplary and inspirational to all Koreans, particularly to those who fought against the Japanese. Membership of the organisation increased to nearly 30,000 throughout the country.

The Communists had been happy to combine with the moderates and non-Communist radicals, as they had been subject to close police attention and found it more convenient to work through the alliance. Moreover, in contrast with nationalists abroad, leaders of *Sin'ganhoe* in Korea were conscious of potential police reprisals on their members and thus had to work within legitimate organisations and activities to achieve their ends, but without a unified ideological base their unity failed to develop sustainable philosophical content. The constant Japanese crackdown on Korean Communists weakened the left wing of the *Sin'ganhoe*, whose elected officers became increasingly right wing, concerned about its future as a legal organisation. Consequently, many Communists began to argue for the dissolution of the *Sin'ganhoe* and were further encouraged in their position by the Comintern which in December 1929 stated:

"...the Communists of Korea must strictly preserve the full independence of the revolutionary labour movement which must be definitely dissociated from all the revolutionary struggle demands, temporary collaboration, and under some conditions even a temporary alliance of the Communist Party and national-revolutionary movement."³⁵

By the time the Kwangju student demonstration broke out in 1929, however, the *Shin'ganhoe* had reached its limits. It failed to

overcome the obstacles that had arisen internally and externally, including factional strife within the Communist wing, pressure from the Japanese authorities, and the organisation's own disintegration. It appeared to the Communists that the revolutionary labour movement was about to be absorbed into the bourgeois nationalist movement. A national conference of the *Sin'ganhoe* in May 1931 formally dissolved 'the national coalition of the Korean people'.

After 1931, the ascendancy of the military in Japanese politics altered the relative tolerance that the Japanese Government had displayed in the 1920s. The Japanese demanded that the Koreans support their cause in Manchuria and elsewhere. Japan's obvious international might influenced Koreans to compromise their situation rather than challenge this world power. Communists and traditional nationalists had therefore little room to manoeuvre after 1933. Many leading Japanese Communists abandoned Communism and swore allegiance to the Emperor and many Korean Communists followed suit. They saw the Japanese military as liberating Asia. But not all went in this direction, for some recognised signs of weakness in the Japanese Empire, especially its withdrawal from the League of Nations and internal political conflict.

The victory in the marathon at the Berlin Olympics in 1936 by Son Ki-jong (participating as a member of the Japanese national team) certainly revived nationalist spirit. The event was well exploited by the press to boost Korean pride and the superiority of the Korean people. However, even this event brought police reprisals as the *Tonga Ilbo* and *Choson Chungang Ilbo* had deleted the Japanese emblem from Son's uniform in the photograph promoting a newsreel film of the race.

Continued economic exploitation sustained the hatred of Koreans for the Japanese, but the nationalist movement, under the stringent assimilation policy of General Minami after 1936, came to a virtual halt. The Japanese cleverly pressured many nationalists into becoming collaborators, but others believed in the need to strengthen the nation in terms of economy, education and politics if a hope for independence was to be sustained. This theme had its forerunners in the Independence Club and the New People's Association (*Sinminhoe*). Nationalist Yi Kwang-su wrote, "The only way to cultivate the strength of the nation was through strengthening individuals and organising them ...a revolutionary movement in a sovereign nation is easier abroad, but a similar movement for a people without sovereignty is easier within the country."³⁶ He called for greater morality, acquisition of modern knowledge, improved personal and social life, and the accumulation of wealth.

With this nationalistic objective, many native industries were established. Slogans promoting Korean products (*Mulsan Changryo Undong*) were popularised and Japanese products were boycotted as much as possible. Marxists, however, considered that such a gradualist 'strengthening Korea' policy was designed to enrich the rich and exploit the poor. Being more directly relevant in their aims to the aspirations of common workers, Marxist groups were more influential in farmer and labour organisations.

When the Sino-Japanese war commenced in 1937, Korea became a military depot with drastic implications for Korea. Everything had to be dedicated to the war effort. To suppress increased popular discontent the police force was augmented, newspapers were shut down, and The Korean Federation of the Japanese 'Movement

for the general Mobilization of the National Spirit' was established (September 1937 in Japan, July 1938 in Korea) with an elaborate network of *han* (squads), *kimi* (teams) and *cho* (streets) in each administrative unit. As food rationing was controlled through this network, it was very effective.

Koreans also, for the first time, were now conscripted into the Japanese military. This action was the final step in an accelerated assimilation policy. Korean language teaching in schools was replaced with Japanese and students were forbidden even to converse in Korean. Totalitarian rule after 1937 left little scope for nationalist activity. Some nationalists were in fact so impressed by Japanese strength that they collaborated with the Regime, hoping Korea would share in Japanese expansion. Students, however, retained a "national revolutionary consciousness...they promote opposition between Japanese and Koreans...and lately the students have been resorting to the most cunning and skillful methods."³⁷ Their degree of nationalism was surprising considering their intensive indoctrination through Japanese education. Many developed their national consciousness by reading Yi Kwang-su's works and those of other nationalist leaders. Many became underground communists when they became convinced that only massive class warfare could achieve results.

3. Anti-Japanese Nationalism as a Source for

***Minjung* Historiography**

The people's positive attitude towards the nationalist movement during the Japanese colonial period is abundantly evident, if only because it was maintained for over forty years. However, the Korean nationalist movement, as a socio-political anti-colonial movement seeking the liberation of an oppressed people, lacked

any coherence or rationale to effectively accommodate the aspirations of the nation and the people. Korean nationalism, in this regard, was fragmentary and without sound foundation (See Chapter 2 for further discussion on nationalism). Furthermore, most leaders (as well as most intellectuals) were basically frustrated individuals who, on the one hand, aspired to ideals of liberation but, on the other, supported only uncompromising authoritarian factionalism and parochialism based on Confucian traditions.

Examples of factionalism were numerous and all too consistent: viewed chronologically they were manifest in the divisions between Confucians and the Westernisers; *Tonghaks* and the 'Independence Club'; the pro-and anti-Japanese groups; post 1919 divisions (gradualists, socialists, nationalists and the divisions within the 'Provisional Government'); the brief history of the '*Sin'ganhoe*', a (particularly telling illustration); and factions in the Korean Communist Party.

The *minjung* historiography of the 1970s interpreted the tactics of Communism of the colonial period, in particular, as the "tactics of liberation of the oppressed people...."³⁸ This interpretation has attracted many intellectuals and students and has provided a new philosophical and ideological base for nationalist (viewed by some as communist) rhetoric, such as 'people's democracy' (*minjung minju-juui*), 'people's nationalism' (*minjung minjok-juui*), and 'national liberation' (*minjok haebang*). Prominent examples of this new approach to history were the two university factions, "Committee for Struggles against Imperialism and Fascism and for the People and Democracy" (*Minmint'u*) and "Committee for Anti-US and Anti-Fascist

Struggles, Independence and Democratisation" (*Chamint'u*) of the late 1980s. Their members were convinced that Korea's contemporary leftist movements, as those of the colonial period, genuinely aimed to achieve the liberation of the Korean people. Kang Man-gil, former Professor of Sociology at Koryo University, argued this point, reiterating a statement by historian, Cho Chi-h'un, as follows:

"The socialist movement under the colonial period was also part of the resistance movement, independence movement and nation-building movement. And depending on circumstances it often also followed the same direction as the rightist nationalist movement...the "Communist movement until liberation, can not be excluded from the history of the nationalist movement because of its tendency, from its early stages, towards nationalist-socialism or socialist-nationalism, and because these approaches mutually affected one another." "39

4. Conclusion

Despite the logical flaws prevalent in concepts of *minjung*, the historiographical interpretation of history reinstated national aspirations to transform Korea's political system into a 'participatory democracy' and to achieve national reunification through a revival and expansion of *minjung* culture. To this end, nationalist sentiment, hinged on culture and history, became the most significant impetus of *minjung* historiography and set a new direction for Korea's identity, both as a nation and as a people. In this sense, *minjung* historiography was a restatement of the Korean people's aspirations.

My assessment of the impact of historiography led to a complex question: to what extent was *minjung* historiography a restatement of the Korean people's aspirations; what were the key elements of these aspirations; and how did these aspirations relate to the aspirations of the state? In order to answer these questions, it was vital to delineate the historiographical characteristics that aroused the aspirations of the Korean people, reinstated their corporate spirit and ultimately forged them into an opposition force.

Three main aspects of Korea and her people were manifest in this historiography: historical continuity, a single nationality, and a corporate spirit. In regard to the first, *minjung* proponents held that Korea had continued as a unified country since the seventh century A.D. until partition in 1945, an event seen by the *minjung* proponents as the outcome of inevitably malign foreign influence. Secondly, the Korean nation as a homogeneous race, according to *minjung* historians, has been indestructible. The *minjung* view was that the ethnic tradition of the Korean people has been sustained for over a millennium, despite numerous foreign invasions and occupations. On this basis, the Korean people identify themselves as the "*Han minjok*", which indicates both "Korean nation" and "Korean race"⁴⁰ Thirdly, the corporate spirit of the Korean people, according to *minjung* historians, is two-fold: on the one hand, it is rooted in socio-political oppression, especially the 'tyranny of the rulers' under the Yi dynasty (thus the spirit of grievances, or *han*); on the other, it has historically been the source of energy which has enabled the "*minjung* to overcome with their own power the external conditions which determine and confine them, and become the subjects who determine their own social situation and destiny."⁴¹ This

corporate spirit of the Korean people, according to the *minjung* proponents, has also been root of the Korean '*minjung*-nationalism', the people's historical struggle for defending the nation, and can be traced through historical records such as *Samguk Yusa* (a collection of historical stories edited by Il-yon in A. D. 1281) of the Koryo Kingdom.⁴²

The development of Korean history, according to the *minjung* view, was therefore maintained due to the historical continuity of the people's struggle and aspirations for liberation. So Nam-dong, who professed *minjung* history as the means to express and relieve "the reality of the *minjung* and their corporate spirit"⁴³, summarises the characteristics of *minjung* history as interpreted by Yi Ki-baek, as follows:

"To summarise this [Korea's] historical development: first, for a long time, the *minjung* were the objects of the ruling power. Second, the *minjung* did not attempt to become the ruling power through a revolutionary process, but prepared the way to bring about a historical transformation. Third, step by step, the *minjung* prepared the ground to become the ruling power.

This is a meaningful paradigm for *minjung* theology which shows that the *minjung* gradually liberate themselves from the position of being a historical object and become a historical subject. *Minjung* history and theology testify to the fact that the *minjung* overcome with their own power the external conditions which determine and confine them, and become the subjects who determine their own social situation and destiny."⁴⁴

It is evident that *minjung* history, centring upon the people's aspiration, has been the history of whatever popular social base has existed for political power. At the same time, the voice of the *minjung* has historically been the barometer for political stability. These characteristics of *minjung* historiography were pivotal to the Minjung Movement of the 1970s and 1980s when an extremely authoritarian social order, the Yushin system, was imposed upon the people. Moreover, the timing of the Movement's new interpretation of history coincided with economic development which when combined with the popular impact of *minjung* historiography enhanced both the consciousness and the power of the people. Kim Chong-p'il, Prime Minister at the time of the introduction of the Yushin system in 1972, postulated economic growth as the precondition of democracy. Kim said, "When per capita GNP becomes one thousand dollars, the spectrum of the people's freedom will accordingly be widened."⁴⁵ On the other hand, the breathtaking transformation of Korea's economic status from "a per capita GNP of about \$100 in 1963 ... [to] nearly \$5,000 as the year 1990 began...." was widely regarded, especially by *minjung* proponents, to be nothing but "the miracle of the [people's] *han*."⁴⁶

Chapter Three

MINJUNG BACKGROUND TO POLITICAL OPPOSITION MOVEMENT AND RADICALISM

1. Opposition Movement During the Authoritarian Politics, 1948-1987

The development of Korea's political system from 1948 provided impetus to the development of the Minjung Movement. The doubtful legitimacy of the Syngman Rhee regime, the seizure of power by the military, and the heightened authoritarianism of the 1970s and 1980s, all encouraged an atmosphere of total rejection of official regime politics. This atmosphere was further stimulated by the perceived connection of foreigners, and especially the US, in these episodes. Amongst critics of the government, and indeed most citizens interested in political affairs, an attitude of utter resistance became common. Opposition to the government thus emerged almost as an end in itself. In this atmosphere, the *minjung* idea readily took on a political form. Informed by a comprehensive and non-compromising moral view, and seeking to mobilize the common people into an upsurge of social and political renewal, *minjung* proponents became leading actors in the resistance to the government, and opposition figures adopted *minjung* rhetoric to justify their manoeuvres. Kim Tae-jung (Kim Dae Jung), opposition leader of the Party for Peace and Democracy (PPD) wrote:

"From a political and social standpoint, the twentieth century might be deemed the beginning of the era of the masses. If we are to overcome the greatest crises in our history, that is, the division of our fatherland and the

threat of communism, and attain genuine security, economic growth, and unification, the masses must be seen as the major force of destiny and must be treated as the master. They must rise to the challenge of controlling their own destiny."¹

These words closely reflected those of the most militant opposition group, the student anti-government movement, which as early as October 1973, stated:

"We stood up today because we could not bear to be idle spectators to the realities which threaten the right to survival of masses of our people. Corruption, injustice, oppression and poverty have driven the whole of the populace into terrible despair. Those who exploit the *Minjung* [people] arrogantly perpetuate injustice."²

'*Minjung*' and '*han*', the pivotal rhetoric of 'social injustice', thus became the most influential and popular themes of the opposition movement.

The Syngman Rhee Regime

The partitioning of Korea in 1945, according to most Koreans, was both a mistake and a tragedy. It reflected the national interests of the great powers but failed in any way to consider the consequences for the Korean people. The Cairo Communique of 1943 stated, "mindful of the enslavement of the people of Korea, (the US, Great Britain and China) are determined that in due course Korea shall become free and independent."³ Naively, it was thought that the partition would be "purely a temporary one to facilitate the surrender of Japanese troops in that country."⁴ Its motivation had little to do with Korea or its people, but was

rather founded on US and Soviet political objectives. Whilst the Korean people at all levels had developed a strong national consciousness focussed for more than thirty years of colonial rule on independence, they were totally unprepared for independence and the state building that was urgently required when it came. Many Koreans returned from Japan, China and elsewhere to participate in the Committee for the Preparation of Korean Independence (CPKI). One particular branch of this Committee, the 'people's committees' (*inmin wiwonhoe*) was especially popular in parts of the countryside and had expanded to a total of 145 committees by September 1945. The Korean People's Republic (KPR), which was totally ignored by the American occupation forces led by General John R. Hodge, was, in fact, the body of representatives of the 'people's committees.'

Although the history of the post war period is very complex, the revisionist account of these years offered by Bruce Cumings has gained enormous popularity in Korea. Those of *minjung* sympathies often quote his work in order to reject the legitimacy of the South Korean political order established in 1948. The decisions made by the US forces during its occupation, according to Bruce Cumings, "determined the fundamental political structure of postwar South Korea."⁵ Moreover, political dependency on the United States led to "critical choices...that shaped the conditions in which rightist autocracy could emerge triumphant..."⁶ not only in the confusing years of the postwar period (1945-1948), but also throughout Korean politics since. The US forces chose "the classical instruments of rule: army, police, bureaucracy, judiciary"⁷ of Korean authoritarian politics, and eradicated any organization, such as the KPR which existed "with its allied people's committees, labor unions, and

peasant organizations throughout the peninsula...."8 The task of the US forces after their entry into Korea in 1945, according to Cumings, was:

"...seeking a separate force to displace, or to provide a counterforce to, the organizations of the Left. Their goal was to build a bulwark to stem the tide of Soviet-inspired and domestic revolution."9

The people's loyalties, however, were divided between the nationalists and communists with many being members of both groupings. Their loyalties pre-dated independence and partition, but after 1945 the conservative wing of the nationalists created the political system of South Korea, and the communists and some nationalists created the North Korean system. Whilst in the North Kim Il-song's (Kim Il Sung) faction gradually eliminated all rivals, in the South there was bitter rivalry between left and right nationalists. The right conservative leaders returning from exile and those who had gained status and administrative skills under the Japanese, won the support of US forces.

In this political climate, Syngman Rhee, the President of the First Republic, found his power-base as well as his political legitimacy in the cause of anti-Communism. Furthermore, the National security Law (NSL), which Rhee introduced in November 1948, became the greatest weapon in Rhee's consolidation of his one-man rule. The Law was quite legal, for the 1948 constitution prohibited "any restrictions on freedom of speech, press, assembly, and association 'except as specified by law.'"10 Rhee's rule was characterised by ad hoc resolutions, corruption and favoritism, and represented a marked antithesis to his claim

to be creating a democratic political order along American lines. His style was arbitrary and authoritarian, even amending the Constitution (twice, in 1952 and 1954) to allow himself to be reelected. In this regard, the Liberal Party, which had been established by Rhee in late 1951, was his perfect tool because its members were largely an "assortment of opportunists...

[driven] by a desire for power and loyalty to Rhee..."¹¹ and, therefore, provided unlimited support to Rhee's personal wishes.

By late 1950, especially after the Korean war (1950-1953), Korea had no leadership that could maintain an opposition movement, let alone contest Rhee's authority. Most of the potential competitors of Rhee were either 'eliminated' or assassinated, or had moved to the North as a result of the partition. Rhee also eliminated by execution the popular socialist candidate for presidency in 1952 and 1956, Cho Pong-am, for violating the NSL. In this regard, America's self-interest in preserving a "bulwark against communism"¹² in the Korean peninsula helped Rhee to establish his legitimacy and to justify stifling his opponents through the NSL.

The Rhee regime abruptly came to an end after rigging the elections of March 15 1960. The people, especially students, poured out into the streets of Masan (a port city in Kyongsang province) on April 11, when they discovered that a seventeen-year old youth, who had been killed during a street demonstration against the rigging, had been dumped in a bay near Masan by the police. The April Student Revolution, at its peak on April 19 1960, ended Syngman Rhee's First Republic and led to the acceptance of the new President, Chang Myon and his Democratic Party which succeeded the interim government of Ho Chong. The fact that Rhee's rule was only made possible by foreign

intervention, and was ultimately brought down by mass action, is often used by *minjung* proponents to argue that the political foundation laid for the republic by his rule should be wholly rejected. Song Kon-ho, prominent *minjung* author, for example, wrote as follows:

"On examination, the twelve years of the political history of the Syngman Rhee regime....[show that he was] a terrifying destroyer of democracy....In order to extend his power, he never hesitated to commit crime, ignoring law, order, principle and integrity, and perpetuated his rule by being re-elected as president.... The twelve years of the Rhee regime became increasingly chaotic because it became obsessed with maintaining the regime and wasted time destroying freedom and democracy. As the saying goes, any political system which distrusts or is hostile towards its own people will inevitably depend on foreign powers. The regime led by the Korean Democratic Party (KDP) was a typical example of this. Syngman Rhee who had earlier stressed 'reduction of foreign aid', including in his inaugural address, had in fact depended on American aid from the beginning of his rule to the time he was dismissed from the Presidency in 1960."13

The Pak Chong-hui Regime

On May 16 1961, however, the Chang government was subject to a military coup led by Major General Pak Chong-hui. The Second Republic had survived less than a year whilst the nation was embroiled in factional conflict, not only within the ruling Democratic Party, but also within almost every political and social institution, including the military. In this respect, the

emergence of the Pak regime was the outcome of social and political chaos which had resulted from factional conflict and the failure to clean up the corruption bequeathed by the Rhee era. The cleaning-up of corruption, particularly of politicians and bureaucrats was, therefore, the initial justification for the coup. Again the process of democratisation was interrupted. Political parties were suspended, elections prohibited, civil rights suspended and 'old' politicians banned from activity. More than 4,000 former politicians were banned from political activity for a period of six years under the 'purification law.'

Authoritarian rule by the military thus began in Korea and from then on Pak's virtual one-man show took various forms (until his assassination in 1979): his military regime led by the Supreme Council for National Reconstruction (SCNR) (1961-1963); a quasi-competitive political system (1963-1972); and his dictatorial system (1972-1979). Of these, the dictatorial system (also known as the Yushin system) became the focus of the people's opposition movement throughout the 1970s.

The most distinct characteristic of the Pak regime was its determination to build national wealth and power. Pak was aware that, in the longer term, his political power was based on his ability to achieve economic development and modernization. As much as Pak was driven by this determination, he concentrated on eliminating potential political threats, gathering domestic intelligence through his creation of the Korean Central

Intelligence Agency (KCIA) (established in June 1961), and developing both national wealth and his personal power-base. By 1971, Korea was economically wealthier than it had ever been

(annual exports reached one billion dollars) and Pak's power-base also looked solid. However, Pak experienced a personal ordeal in the Presidential election of April 1971, which he barely won with a narrow margin: only 946,928 votes ahead of Kim Tae-jung. Moreover, changes in international politics irked Pak, for he felt threatened by such regional developments as the US-China rapprochements of 1971-72, the normalization of relations between Japan and China (PRC), and the relaxation of tension between the US and Soviet Union. Pak reacted with avid use of martial law and 'Emergency Measures.'

On 17 October 1972, Pak Chong-hui declared martial law, suspending the constitution, dissolving the National Assembly and restricting freedom of speech. He then announced a new political order termed the 'Yushin' system (or 'revitalizing reform') which, according to Pak, was a 'Korean-style democracy.' He argued that the Korean people must accept this 'Korean-style democracy' because, without it, Korea could not achieve the national aspirations of unification and prosperity. Pak argued that the declaration of the Yushin system was:

"in response to the ardent aspirations of the Korean people for peace, unification and prosperity of our fatherland... (and to) readjust...political institutions in order that the difficult but invaluable North-South dialogue can most effectively be backed up by these elements of vigour and vitality."14

The introduction of the Yushin system, however, rocked the nation, and subsequently there emerged an instant coalition of opposition groups comprised of students, politicians,

intellectuals, as well as Christian groups. They argued that the Yushin system amounted to nothing more than dictatorship, and that the government's gestures in regard to inter-Korean dialogue about unification were "...merely a pretext for prolonging authoritarian power."¹⁵ The opposition argued:

"Democracy is the national aim of the Republic of Korea. Hence the legitimacy of the ROK lies in democracy. Therefore, democracy cannot be restricted for any reason.... [Democracy is] is the attitude and belief that aims at promoting the interests, rights and happiness of every member of society, creating and continuously improving the best in society in accordance with the will of those who constitute the society as its members."¹⁶

The Yushin Constitution (promulgated on 27 December 1972) empowered the President as "constitutionally the national leader" positioned "above the three branches of executive, legislative and judiciary"¹⁷, to suspend basic civil and political rights, to be exempt from judicial review and to control internal, foreign, defence, economic, financial and judicial affairs. The Yushin Constitution, therefore, was not only the "attempt to vest most government power in the president..."¹⁸, but also the political machinery for changing Korea's structure into the authoritarian regime of Pak's government.

Furthermore, 'Emergency Measures' were designed to repress any dissent. Emergency Measure No.4 (April 3, 1974) focussed on the student activist movement, the National Democratic Youth and Student Federation. The proclamation of the Presidential Emergency Measure (PEM) No.9 in May 13, 1975, outlawed political

action, all forms of criticism, student political activities, and spreading 'false rumours', all in the so-called interest of national unity and in defence against North Korea. Under the 'Emergency Measures', 203 individuals were tried and 8 sentenced to death and executed in April 1975. The opposition movement, particularly the Korean Christian movement for human rights, emerged as a force challenging the ruling hegemony, in order to fight for democratic processes and the rights of citizens. The movement demanded: firstly, a restoration of the constitution which guaranteed the power of the three arms of government, namely, the legislature, the judiciary, and the administration; and secondly, the preservation of citizens' rights, individual persons' rights, and the rights of workers.

The 'March First Declaration for the Salvation of the Nation', in 1976, was the most significant political protest against the Yushin system, articulating the theoretical basis for the opposition, especially the anti-government movement and thus the Minjung Movement. It argued that a democratic state must be founded on "the principles of the separation of powers and provision for [the people's] political participation."¹⁹ It also demanded that the democratic concept of people power denoted by the phrase, 'from the people', should take priority over concepts of the public good 'for the people' in a democracy. This *minjung* logic provided students with the rationale for their denunciation of Yushin policy which they saw as "degrading all state apparatus into mere embellishments of fascist rule by making the legislative and judicial branches handmaids of the executive branch."²⁰ It is noteworthy that this 'from the people' notion was progressively developed into the radical *minjung* ideology (*minjung minju-ju*) of the 1980s.

The Declaration, signed by twelve prominent civil rights leaders, including Kim Tae-jung, Mun Ik-hwan and Yun Po-son, demonstrated most forcefully their concerns about issues of freedom, equality, human rights and the future of democratic institutions of government. The opposition rejected the legitimacy of the Yushin system on the basis that the system had been "accepted in a national referendum under martial law."²¹ Moreover, the opposition, through Kim Tae-jung and other human rights leaders, argued that Pak's claims of firstly linking Yushin with unification, and subsequently with national security, were false, as Yushin was simply a means of perpetuating his power. Kim Tae-jung claimed:

"The government said that the Yushin Constitution was essential for unification instituting the National Conference for Unification as supreme organ of the state [namely, the depository of national sovereignty]. President Park [Pak] then threatened the people that if they did not support this Constitution, he would consider that they also did not want unification....Within less than a year, the rationale has been changed so that the Yushin system is now necessary for national security. Nobody says it is required for unification any more....In other words, its object lay in perpetuating power, not in unification."²²

Henceforth, the opposition movement was no longer restricted to students and church groups, but also included intellectuals, journalists, professors, workers, farmers and labourers.

Kim Chi-ha, one of the most active member of the Christian movement for human rights in the 1970s, condemned the regime

through his poem, 'Cry of the People' (1974). Kim wrote :

"Hear our cry! Hear our cry! Crying out of aching hunger.
Patience quickly running out! Can we long believe this ruler?

"Bodies weary from low wages now are dying of high prices.
Will we see "Abundant Eighties", or first be downed by
gnawing hunger?

"Modernization! Nation-building! Nicknames of foreign power's
yoke.

Korea's treaty with Japan swung wide the door of treason.
Foreign capital seduced us; our economy was raped.

"A privileged few acquire wealth, corruption surpassing that
of old.

"Ceaseless progress! The law is scrapped for a dynasty's
perpetuation.

Development's main purpose: to rationalize dictatorship;

"Abundant Seventies" never found except in propaganda's
prattle.

Profiteering by foreign industry cannot go without
restriction!

"To improve the investment environment, compradors appear;
Tax exemptions, transfer rights, offered like ancestral
gifts;

But rights of labor brutally suppressed, special laws are
written;

"Industrial zones, export centers, create only regional gaps; The logic of capital growth favors only big business; Small businesses go bankrupt; monopoly is rampant."23

The publication of this poem, which was intended to stimulate and express the people's rage over foreign domination, political repression, corruption and the exploitation of labour, led Kim to his second imprisonment (April 1974) and to a death sentence (never executed) in the same year in July. Kim's literary works, including 'Five Thieves', 'Groundless Rumours', 'Malttuk', 'Sacred Place' and 'Chang Il-dam" (which will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Six), had a powerful impact on the human rights movement of the 1970s, and ultimately sparked the phenomenon of the Minjung Movement of the 1980s.

The Chon Tu-hwan Regime

Chon Tu-hwan emerged as the leader of the new military junta established after President Pak's assassination on October 26, 1979. As military coup leader, Chon seized power ruthlessly by eliminating his enemies and opposition (both politically and militarily) with the help of two key conspirators, No T'ae-u (Roh Tae Woo) and Chong Ho-yong. Although President Ch'oe Kyu-ha, who took over the acting Presidency immediately after Pak's assassination, remained in this chair until his resignation on August 16 1980, the real power was entirely with the Military Civilian Standing Committee headed by General Chon.

Chon and his clique arrested numerous opposition leaders while, at the same time, restricting civil liberties. All these actions were carried out under the Emergency Measures which had been introduced by the struggling interim government through Martial

Law Decree No. 10 on 17 May 1980. As with Pak before him, Chon ruled through "coercive instruments and by monopolizing the state apparatus."²⁴ The Korean people reacted with a passion. In particular, Kim Tae-jung's arrest led to the Kwangju riots, where the people of that region actually forced the military to abandon the city, but were ultimately put down in a bloody battle in the streets of Kwangju (*Kwangju Hangjaeng*).²⁵ Within ten months, Chon not only took total control of the army, but also acceded to the Presidency. Chon was elected president by the National Council for Unification (NCU) on 30 August 1980, only two weeks after President Ch'ae's resignation. Although Korea was now rated as one of the 'newly industrialised countries (NICs)' and an 'advanced developing country (ADC)', socio-economic modernisation had failed to produce political democracy.

The opposition political parties in the 1980s, however, became fragmented and lacking the right leadership, showed no inclination to form a coalition. The Chon government rather feared an alliance between students and labour, or between labour and Christian groups. New Labour Laws in 1980-81 attempted to prevent Christian groups from organising and mobilizing unions. Public reaction to Chon was negative. He was seen as aligned to and dependent upon the US, so much so that an anti-Chon stance was also seen as anti-US. Anti-US sentiment found expression in the burning of the US Cultural Centre in Pusan (March 1982), followed by the burning of another US Cultural Centre in Taegu in 1983.

Many groups and intellectuals continued to criticize Chon, and the popular base for this criticism became better organised, better informed and more effectively mobilised. Many college

professors, journalists, civic leaders and Protestant and Catholic Church leaders associated themselves with the inequities and injustices suffered by the masses, and became more vocal and persistent in their criticism. Anti-American sentiment which had increased rapidly among students and intellectuals, had hit its peak when the Korean people became familiar with the details of the Kwangju Incident which involved the 20th Division of the military, indirectly under the command of the US/Korean Combined Forces Command (CFC) located in Seoul.²⁶ "The suppression of Kwangju city was part of a coup... which had started in December 1979 and continued to August the following year when Chon Tu-hwan became President."²⁷ The public was convinced that the Incident had been entirely orchestrated by Chon and his military clique.

Most Koreans, particularly middle class intellectuals and students, believed that the Kwangju Incident would never have been possible if the US had not played such an 'active role' in supporting General Chon.²⁸ They were convinced that the US deliberately supported the 'puppet government' of Chon's regime, which had not only been deceitful in establishing its legitimacy, but was also seen as a perpetuation of the Yushin dictatorship. The people's hatred towards Chon and his regime deepened the more their animosity towards the US grew. America's perceived involvement in the Kwangju Incident, therefore, drove many Koreans to turn against the US and also inclined them to accept radical ideologies of national liberalization, unification and democratization. Stronger than ever before, the opposition movement, now equipped with a new set of "people-oriented" ideologies (*minjung minju-juui*), spread throughout the nation via the Minjung Movement.

Although most Koreans regarded students as radical extremists before 1987, they nevertheless had some sympathy for the student activists and their leading role in the Minjung Movement, because they, particularly the middle class, were determined to end Chun's military dictatorship. The 'June Democratic Struggle' (*Yuwol Hangjaeng*) in 1987 was, in fact, the most vivid evidence of this public support. At this time Chon, having reneged on his promise to oversee a democratic revision of the constitution, was forced after weeks of mass protest to accept the transition to democratic elections. However, students as the leading agents of the opposition movement reached something of an impasse when, following the democratic victory achieved in that struggle, their factional conflicts deepened, radical ideologies intensified and unity as a political force finally disintegrated. Their disintegration was particularly evident during the presidential election of December 1987. At the same time as the two main opposition leaders, Kim Tae-jung and Kim Yong-sam, failed to combine their forces to run against No T'ae-u, the ruling Democratic Justice Party (DJP) candidate, students were themselves divided into the following three groups:

1. Leaders of the *Chondaehyop* [who] were willing to give qualified ("critical *bipanchok*") support to Kim Dae-jung, as they were impressed with his record of anti-dictatorial struggle;

2. *Sodaehyop* leaders [who] were in favor of the single candidacy of Kim Young-sam [Kim Yong-sam], as he was considered more winnable; and

3. The radical activists of the *Minmintu* and the Constituent

Assembly (CA) [who] at first demanded a boycott of the election, but later supported an independent Minjung (*minjung*) candidate such as Paek Ki-wan, who attempted to talk one of the two Kims [Kim Tae-jung or Kim Yong-sam] into dropping out of the race."²⁹

The disintegration of the Minjung Movement (which had become the generic title for all opposition movements in the 1980s), was at its worst during this presidential election, so much so that the opposition as a "solidified force for democratic reform"³⁰ no longer had the coherence or strength or, most of all, the influence to impact decisively on any of the activities of the democracy movement, let alone the crucial election at hand. Some 15,000 students, according to the October 13 issue of the *Chungang Ilbo*, were recruited by the DJP for the prevention of any unwanted disruptions which could spoil the No T'ae-u campaign.³¹ No T'ae'-u won the election with only about 37 percent of the total vote, which was far less than that of the two Kims combined, 55 percent (28 percent for Kim Yong-sam and 27 percent for Kim Tae-jung). By then, the role of the opposition movement, especially that of the students, was in question, for there was a general perception that Korea was already on the right track towards democratic reform and that no further social disorder such as student unrest was warranted.

It was ironic, however, that No T'ae-u, the man who finally rose to the Presidency in the name of democracy was the same man who was responsible for both the rise of the Chon Tu-hwan military regime and the tragedy of the Kwangju Incident. It was also ironic that the opposition movement, which had played such a strong role during authoritarian politics and seemed certain to

lead Korea's democracy movement, was disregarded by the majority at the pinnacle of its greatest achievement. The public had changed its view on the radical opposition movement to one that saw it as extreme and unwarranted.

2 *Minjung* Radicalism

The Role of Radicalism in Democratisation

The turning point in the democratisation of Korean politics was clearly the Declaration of June 29, 1987. This political change was largely achieved through people power, fostered by "the student centered [radical] activist sphere (*undongkwon*) and the middle class people who were united with it."³² The role of radical activists, especially students, in the course of Korea's democracy movement, has been distinct in two respects: in their role as the vanguard of mass mobilization; and as the advocates of national ideology. In both respects the *minjung* idea has been crucial.

In late 1985, a group of university students who named themselves the 'Sammint'u' (Committee for People's Democracy and National Autonomy Struggles) adopted a 'people' based national ideology known as '*minjung* ideology' or '*sammin* (三民) ideology' founded on the three-*min* (*sam-min*) principles. They claimed that the prime focus of this ideology was the *minjung* themselves, that is, "those who are politically, economically, socially and culturally oppressed and alienated by the existing system of society"³³, and it was founded on the three-*min* principles, namely people, nation and democracy (*minjung*, *minjok* and *minju*).

The *Sammint'u* also claimed that their ideology represented the

main flow of modern Korean history, which essentially was a history of *minjung* self-emancipation. As an ideology it was proclaimed, in the typical Korean mould of monolithic self-rectitude, to be the only way to save Korea from ruin. Many Christians adopted this ideology as a basis for social ethics and political action, especially on behalf of farmers, workers and the poor. This ideology argued that since the 1950s Korea had become increasingly dependent on foreign capital (from grant-type aid capital to American monopoly capital) leading to a corresponding increase in the exploitation of the *minjung* based on low wages and subsistence living conditions. The capitalism thus generated was perceived as internally weak and externally subordinate. It was not founded on the base of the nation, the *minjung*, but on foreign powers. Moreover, it was extremely authoritarian in order to effectively exclude the collective power of the *minjung*, especially the collective bargaining power of workers.

Such anti-*minjung* fascism was considered by the *Sammint'u* (including the Minjung Movement) as contradictory to the democratic will of the people. *Minjung* ideology squarely put the blame for fascism on the United States, which, in their view, had again divided the nation in 1953 and effectively made South Korea an American dependency in both a military and economic sense. Subsequent contamination by American culture was inevitable. The thoroughly contradictory nature of Korean society today was perceived by *minjung* ideology as incapable of being healed merely by greater liberal democracy. The proponents of *minjung* ideology interpreted events such as the April revolution of 1960, the anti-Yushin struggle, the Pusan-Masan protests of 1979 (which provided the context for the assassination of President Pak), the

Kwangju Incident in 1980, and so on, as symbols of the *minjung* struggle to realise the three-*min* principles. In particular, the Kwangju Incident had special significance, for the potential of a people-based uprising was seen as suppressed by an extremist right-wing military group, which existed on the basis of military and monopolistic conglomerates with US support.

A declaration issued by the students on 18 May 1982, at the time of the arson of the American Cultural Centre in Pusan, read:

"When we examine our past history, we realise that America's foreign policy in regard to Korea, since Liberation (1945) to the present time, has consistently had the sole purpose of economic exploitation. Under the name of so-called alliance, they have coerced us to abide by their principles of control whilst they established a comprador culture (on our soil) in collaboration with monopolistic capitalists in Korea. They tied up the peninsula's partition by supporting fascist military regimes which have denied, in reality, our people's prolonged desire for democratisation, social reform and unification. With a belief that we are solely responsible for our own future, we must now unfold our ceaseless fight against Americanism in order to remove it completely from our nation which is now dominated by its power. As a first step, we appeal to the national consciousness of the masses of Pusan city as we raise a torch for anti-Americanism by burning the American Cultural Centre which symbolises its culture."³⁴

Sammint'u thus characterised Korean society as a "dependency of the monopoly capitalists of the US and Japan"³⁵ and, at the same

time, considered the Korean government to be a "dependent fascist government reliant on the US and Japan for providing a strong base in opposition to the Soviet Union."³⁶ *Sammint'u*, therefore, argued that "national movements of the *minjung* in South Korea after 1953 must be characterised as leading the revolution of the anti-imperialists and anti-monopoly capitalists, to achieve people's democracy."³⁷ The *Sammint'u* attempted also to expose the fundamental contradiction of the role of the government and US policy, particularly by focussing on the ring leaders of the Kwangju massacre and the US role vis-a-vis the will of the people. In terms of nation building, *sammin* ideology proposed that the *minjung* should be the main agent of history, with *sammin* ideology as the main basis for a new society. They argued:

"Overcoming contradictions in societies at particular points in time generally depends for resolution on that social stratum that has been most affected. Because Korean society has been structurally dependent on monopoly capitalists (who exploit the workers), the workers must be the leading force in resolving their contradictory position in Korean society."³⁸

The influence of radicalism such as that inspired by *sam-min* ideology, however, has substantially declined since 1987, not only due to disputation between the radicals themselves, but also due to the disintegration of world Communism in recent years.

The Decline of Radicalism

Son Hak-gyu, Professor at Sogang University, argues that the collapse of radicalism, and thus the *Minjung* Movement (to the extent that it clung to radical ideologies) was due to the impact

of democratization on Korean political perceptions. Son posits that democratization requires two preconditions:

"(1) the right of citizens to protect themselves from arbitrary and illegal actions of the ruling power and (2) the extension of the right of citizenship to all without discrimination."³⁹

Democratization may then be said to proceed in two phases:

"(1) liberalisation of attitude to criticism of the political system and (2) a change of power structures so that every citizen is treated equally."⁴⁰

While Korea was in transition between these two phases, radicalism "encouraged the former kind of reformation to develop into the latter kind of phase."⁴¹ Korean radicals were quite content to place themselves under the protection of the moderates to foster phase (1), but it is the radical extent and speed with which they wished to proceed towards phase (2) which was their undoing.

In an emerging democracy, the influence of opposition forces is determined, according to Son, by three main factors: the dominant ideology of society; the social and economic conditions; and international circumstances. The main opposition party, rather than the radicals, was seen by the majority of Koreans as the main opposition force. As this party provided momentum to the dissident movement in effecting political change, especially the institutionalisation of democratic systems, political opposition hegemony remained with the moderates of the opposition party,

effectively emasculating the radicals in the process of democratization after 1987. The radicals, in contrast, sought fundamental change to existing power structures, despite the fact that this change did not have popular public acceptance, did not value prevailing socio-economic development, and was associated with an outdated ideology.

For many years after liberation and partition, concerns for democracy and social justice had generally been considered bourgeois liberal ideology, and it was not till the Kwangju Incident (1980) that concepts of class conflict and the anti-imperialist struggle usually expressed in *minjung* form, had developed to an unequivocal standpoint amongst the radicals. Under the earlier Yushin policy, the opposition movement, which even then had been categorized as the 'leftist radical movement', initially focussed quite moderately on the restoration of a democratic constitution guaranteeing the separation of the three powers of government. The focus had subsequently shifted to the issue of the reservation of the basic democratic rights of citizens. Inevitably, this change of focus led to concern about the rights of those most oppressed in the community, workers and farmers, including concern regarding the three basic rights of labour, and about the dignity of the life of workers.

The opposition movement was thus progressively radicalised, although it did not fully mature until the Fifth Republic (1980-1988). A significantly more radical element entered the opposition movement after the Kwangju Incident. Aspirations to liberal democracy changed into a desire for an 'anti-imperialist' and 'anti-fascist' revolution. The Korean state was seen as 'military fascism', run by the military, supported by a

bureaucratic state apparatus, in unholy alliance with monopoly capitalists. The revolution was conceived in terms of a fundamental structural change of society aimed at two objectives: firstly, the destruction of the state; and secondly, the construction of a proletarian socialist society. These objectives were quite consistent with Son's second phase of democratization (and evidently consistent with Kim Il-song style of 'democracy'), but exceeded the boundaries of change acceptable to the Korean people who were only too conscious of the emerging new role for Korea in the modern world of commerce. They saw change as needing to be consistent with the maintenance of their economic position. Having provided a focus for popular opposition to the government up to 1987, the *minjung* idea seems now to have lost its appeal as it has become perceived as inconsistent with the rising national standard of living.

Factional Divisions Amongst Radicals

This rejection of the *minjung* idea had its reflection in the politics of the radical movement. The radical trend initiated by the *Sammint'u* led to the development of separate radical ideologies. The *Chamint'u* and *Minmint'u*, split mainly from the student opposition movement during the Fifth Republic in the Spring of 1986. They both referred to themselves as national democratic movements which incorporated anti-imperialism, national unification, anti-fascism and the construction of a socialist state. From an outside standpoint, there seems very little difference in theory between these two factions, because they both advocated a 'people's democratic revolution' based on ideals of Marxism, neo-Marxism, Leninism, and Kim Il-songism (the *chuch'e* (*juch'e*) ideology). Their division, however, seems largely to have occurred from the conflicts which arose from the

priority they gave to revolutionary theory, and to the sort of revolution that would suit Korean society best. This division ultimately resulted in their disintegration.

Chamint'u (Committee for Anti-US and Anti-Fascist Struggles, Independence and Democratisation) focused on the issue of America's control over Korean society. According to its members, Korean society was "a colony of the US dominated by fascists subordinate to the US."⁴² *Chamint'u* incorporated the earlier faction known as the 'chuch'e ideology faction' (*Chusap'a*) and dominated the 'National Association of the Representatives of University Students' (*Chondaehyop*). *Chamint'u*, also known as the 'NL', openly professed that, "Our only enemy is American Imperialism."⁴³ The major protest events organized by *Chamint'u* were the 'Pusan American Cultural Centre Seizure Incident' in May 1986 and the 'Kon'guk University Seizure Incident' in October 1986. Another major incident which received wide publicity was the imprisonment of university student Im Su-kyong, a member of the *Chamint'u*, who made an unauthorised and illegal visit to North Korea in June 1989.

Minmint'u (Committee for Struggles against Imperialism and Fasciam and for the People and Democracy) "...believed that the major conflict in Korean society was due to the power struggle between the conservatives and the capitalists. Therefore, to resolve this conflict, the student movement must concentrate all its energy on strengthening the power of the *minjung* by fighting to support them, rather than waste its energy on fighting reckless open-politics."⁴⁴ *Minmint'u* incorporated the earlier faction, 'people's democracy faction' (*Minjung minju-p'a*) or 'ML faction' (Marxist and Leninist Faction). *Minmint'u*, also known

as 'PD' consolidated its strength by adopting the initial ideas of the 'Constitutional Assembly Group' (*Chehon uihoe-p'a*) and is therefore often called the CA Group.⁴⁵ The major event organised by *Minmint'u* was the 'Inchon (city) Incident' in May 1986, in which anti-government demonstrators rioted in Seoul's port city.

By 1987, the disintegration of the radical student movement was so great that, according to government authorities, there were as many as "...186 known leftist student organizations and ... [it was] assumed that there [were] many more."⁴⁶ Despite the government's severe restrictions on student activities, such as the 'Provision for Campus Stabilisation' (1985), radical movements, especially the student centred movement, had been well organized, individually dedicated and powerful enough for a time to forge public perceptions of national goals and objectives according to their own ideologies. Because of the energy generated by their radical standpoint, this movement provided a strong impetus to the *Minjung* Movement and the 1987 'June Democratic Revolution'.

Nevertheless, radicalism which adopted the people's revolution as the ultimate solution for Korea's future, was utterly rejected by the majority in the process of democratization. The public not only rejected radical *minjung* ideology, but also denounced those who continued to support this ideology. For example, when the demands by radical groups, especially in the area of labour rights, unification and anti-Americanism, resulted in chaotic social disorder after 1987, it was the public, particularly the fast growing middle class, who denounced these radical activities. The prime concern of the public was not to bring about a fundamental structural change to society, but to preserve

and promote democratic institutions. Moreover, the collapse of Communism destroyed any vestiges of a vision for an alternative social model.

In these circumstances, internal splits multiplied in the radical movement. These internal conflicts together with growing mass conservatism reflected the international trend amongst socialist states to question their capacity to remain viable and competitive in the modern world. As a consequence, the radical activists (especially the students) not only had their political influence reduced significantly, but also faced irreparable conflict among themselves and with the general public.

Radicalism led by students, in the eyes of the majority, had become far too extreme, exclusionary and unrealistic, losing touch with mainstream thinking at the grassroots. The changing world perception of Communism, especially in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, and a concomitant shift to the right, had isolated the Marxist elements and forged a refocussing on reform through social-democratic solutions.

3. Conclusion

Despite its failure after 1987 to maintain itself as the vanguard of Korea's democracy movement and as the leading agent representing the people's aspirations, the opposition movement's achievements against the state during the period of Korea's authoritarian politics were remarkable. Its strength and solidarity, with the support of the new middle class during the crucial months of the spring of 1987, had been effective in ending dictatorship, and will not be easily reproduced.

To determine the cause of the disintegration of the Minjung Movement, especially from mid 1987, single-factor analyses are insufficient. This disintegration illustrates the fundamental attitude of the Korean people to the delicate socio-economic balance of their society, involving political power, economic growth, national security, democracy, and individual civil rights, all of which continue to be interpreted by the public to a large extent in the Confucian mode. By 1987, Korea was no longer polarized into two dominant classes, the ruling and the ruled. The rise of the new middle class through industrialization, was akin to a social revolution and led to the acquisition of the power of the majority by the middle class. The aspirations of the middle class thus became the most decisive factor in determining the conditions of Korean society in the transition from military control to a democratic system. After the presidential election of 1987, political protest and disorder, especially that motivated by ideological radicalism, came to be regarded as having no value but only a cause of public and industrial disruption which had the potential to interfere with the maintenance of national security.

Radicalism, however, has given substantial impetus to the opposition movement, and became inextricably linked to the Minjung Movement. While it had emerged partly as a defensive mechanism against the despotism of the state, it increasingly awoke Korean society to the seriousness of social issues and also provided progressive social policies. The government's anti-Communist ideology, often directed against the radicals, thus became less credible. Anti-Communism had played a key role "not only in maintaining the regime but also in shaping the political horizons within which both government and opposition parties

operated."47

The greatest failure of the opposition movement as a whole has been its lack of any structured rationale or strategy other than that of resistance. In this it reflects something of the deficiencies of the *minjung* idea. The opposition movement, in this regard, mainly relied on the incitation, initiative and communication channels of students and Christian churches, especially in terms of articulating and putting into action the movement's ideological aspirations. The end of military authoritarian politics, in this context, ironically brought about the end of the opposition movement, including the Minjung Movement, because the opening of the Sixth Republic opened new political horizons which had been chosen by the majority. The opposition movement, which had not yet comprehended the full impact of the new political climate, therefore, had no principle to pursue in line with its old rhetoric based on nationalist radical sentiment.

The future of the opposition movement, as a whole, therefore, now depends entirely on the reassessment of its rationale, attitude and strategy in the new Korean political environment. At present, elements of democracy co-exist with remnants of feudalistic ethics, and the public evidence of the former military domination of politics is not quite so transparent. The lesson of *minjung* historiography, at the same time, is not necessarily diminished. From the *minjung* point of view, as democracy is progressively implemented, the changing condition of the majority will be reflected in the manner of their impact on history, but this will not change the fact that the people remain the subjects of history (as in So Nam-dong's argument, presented above).

PART II ASPECTS OF THE MINJUNG SCHOOL OF THOUGHT

Chapter Four

Minjung Thought: Socio-Economic Aspects

Introduction

One of the most controversial and yet influential issues for the Minjung Movement during the 1980s was that of self identification: providing a definition of the key concepts of *minjung*. Who are the *minjung* and under what conditions (social, political, economic, religious and cultural) is an individual person or group categorised as *minjung*? In this ongoing debate, two prominent academics, Pak Hyon-ch'ae and Han Wan-sang, were regarded as the most eminent expositors of the "two types of concepts in regard to the *minjung*."¹ The former, by Pak Hyon-ch'ae, regards the *minjung* as the social classes of labourers, farmers and urban poor who are the end-products of the capitalist system; and the latter, by Han Wan-sang, regards the *minjung* as the various social groups who are largely excluded from the political, economic and cultural means of power in society. While neither theory satisfactorily characterises the *minjung* nor explains their specific motivation and their background, both have been prevalent in shaping general perceptions of the *minjung* in ideal terms. They have therefore had both an academic and a practical political impact. This chapter will examine each of these approaches in more detail and, in particular, will consider how they relate to *minjung* ideals as a whole, and their applicability to the Minjung Movement in practice.

Korean *Minjung* Theory: A Social Class Approach

In his essay, "Examination of the Characteristics of *Minjung* in Terms of Social Class" (*Minjung ui Kyegubjok Songgyok Kyumyong*), Pak Hyon-ch'ae, economic analyst, generally defines the components of *minjung* in terms of four classes: labourers (as the basic component); farmers (as small scale producers); small scale commercial groups and the urban poor; and certain progressive intellectuals.² Pak stresses, however, that the labourer class makes up the basic constituent of the *minjung*, and refers to farmers and the urban poor as also being essential constituents. These three key groups are each the outcome of their own product which, while physically produced by them, is not owned by them, confronts them and forces them into submission.

This argument draws heavily (though generally without specific acknowledgement) on Karl Marx's theory of the alienation of labour in capitalist society. Pak argues, "the *minjung* are in effect composed of a single entity as they transmute into their various categories within a circulatory system through which they correlate to one another."³ He refers to this process involving the disintegration and specialisation of farmers (which occurred with the rise of capitalism); their alienation from their subsistence life style as a result of new production and distribution mechanisms; and their subsequent transformation from owners of capital (albeit poor) into either urban poor or labourers for wages. Through this circulatory process, farmers, labourers and the urban poor emerge together as the victims of capitalism. According to Pak, therefore, the notion of *minjung* is essentially dependent on economic variables, and the analysis of this notion in terms of its reality requires an examination of that social class which, in the process of the development of capitalism, is the poorest.

Of the three groups, Pak firstly defines 'farmers', who are generally known as the 'agricultural producers (*nongob saengsan-ja*)' of various farming products, as an 'entity in a transitional stage (*kwadogi-jok chonjae*)' in capitalist society. The theoretical basis for Pak's concept relies on two factors: firstly, farmers who self-manage their own means of production are initially encouraged and inspired by capitalist principles; and secondly, as small producers, whose means of production depends entirely on the strength of their capital, they are bound to react and respond to the demands of market conditions. Hence, farmers are forced either to specialize (and become petty capitalists) or to disintegrate into wage-labourers. Pak's theory is clearly identical with the Marxian notion of the position of peasants and handicraftsmen in capitalist society. Karl Marx stated:

"For it is also a law that economic development distributes functions among different persons; and the handicraftsman or peasant who produces with his own means of production will either gradually be transformed into a small capitalist who also exploits the labour of others, or he will suffer the loss of his means of production ... and be transformed into a wage-labourer. This is the tendency in the form of society in which the capitalist mode of production predominates...."⁴

Demands of the market condition and the strength of capital, therefore, change not only the basic production mode, but also the scale of production as well as the nature of products. These changes, resulting from the capitalist transformation of agriculture and the restructuring of productivity, however, gradually transform farmers into a different stratum or social

class. Such a transformation is inevitable because farmers are forced either to abandon their calling or to specialize due to the comprehensive penetration of commercial agricultural development, mechanized farming and the monetary economy. This emerging production process is significant to the composition of *minjung*, according to Pak, because through this process farmers, who suffer the loss of their means of production and thus abandon their livelihood, will be transformed either into the class of urban poor or labourers.

In brief, Pak's attempts to illustrate the conditions of petty farmers and their gradual disintegration in the process of capitalism also clearly reflects the Marxist view which states:

"The lower strata of the middle class - the small trades people, shop-keepers, and retired tradesmen generally, the handicraftsmen and peasants - all these sink gradually into the proletariat, partly because their diminutive capital does not suffice for the scale on which Modern Industry is carried on, and is swamped in competition with the large capitalists, partly because their specialized skill is rendered worthless by new methods of production. Thus the proletariat is recruited from all classes of the population."⁵

Secondly, Pak defines the 'labourer' class as the 'basic component of *minjung*' (*kibonjok-in minjung kusong*). He also sees them as the basic class of capitalist society, which possesses the capacity of self reproduction, for they provide the key to the relationship between capital and wage-labour. Pak argues that, "labourers are the propertyless, [thus the proletariat] because... they don't own the means of income unless they sell their labour as a commodity."⁶ Pak sees labourers as an

oppressed and exploited group, noting that labourers are mostly the labourers are mostly the ruined craftsmen and farmers who, in the relationship between wages and capital, are reduced to the class of wage-labourers either in capitalist farming or manufacturing industries. Furthermore, wage-labourers will gradually fall into the class of urban poor as they lose their labour power because of ill-health or of old age. This gradual degradation, however, does not merely depend on ill-health and old age, but rather on the structural contradictions of modern capitalist society. In regard to these structural contradictions, Pak points to two dominating social factors: 1) that modern capitalist society circulates around the production of commodities, and the relationship between capital and wage-labour in this context is entirely aimed at profit-making based on free-labour; and 2) that the control of reproduction [of labour power] in capitalist society is determined by the changing phases of the industrial cycle. It will therefore not only sustain the industrial 'reserve army' during the period of average prosperity, but also will result in masses of unemployment during the period of stagnation.⁷

Under this social structure, Pak argues, labourers become exploited and victimized both physically and psychologically: in the former, labourers are obliged to compromise their working hours or conditions inevitably leading to various barriers to employment (consequent upon accidents, illness, early retirement, etc.); and in the latter, they are under permanent uncertainty because of the precarious nature of their means of subsistence. Furthermore, Pak points out that, "their [labourers'] wage is valorized politically so that it does not exceed that of the reproduction cost of social labour power. Furthermore, this wage is determined extremely flexibly in order to satisfy the demand

which arises from the circulatory process of capitalist reproduction. Labourers are, overall, left in the condition of a casual work force or in a state of unemployment rather than in a usual state of employment."8 Nevertheless, labourers constitute the basis of capitalism and of the *minjung* as the alienated class in capitalist society, making up the majority of its population. Moreover, in Pak's view, *minjung* are the most progressive social stratum of today's society because they are the propertyless class who lead the struggle against modern capitalism.

Thirdly, Pak defines the class of urban poor as the lowest stratum (*ch'imjonch'ung*) in society, which is comprised of a variety of classes and consists of three categories: first, urban handicraftsmen (independent petty producers) and petty tradesmen; second, industrial wage-workers (labourers) and temporary casual workers with low-wages and precarious positions in small businesses; and third, the unemployed. Of the three categories, the unemployed, according to Pak, should be characterized into two groups, one able and willing to work and the other neither able or willing to work. The oppressed conditions of the urban poor, therefore, are designed to continue and be revived unjustly, and a relative surplus population of unemployed as an army of 'informal' labour is an inevitable outcome. In relating the capitalist production mode to the economic degradation of the components of the *minjung*, especially labourers, Pak writes:

"In a capitalist society, where the purpose of production does not depend on the satisfaction of demand as determined by the requirements of society, but on profit, capitalism of its very nature...seeks unpaid labour without any justification. Labourers are, therefore, expected to be paid

a low wage, to endure hard labour and to work extended hours; farmers are forced to apply low labour costs and to charge low prices for agricultural products so as to satisfy the requirement of cheap raw materials for industry; and the urban poor face the imposition of a huge burden, especially when the demand for (virtually) unpaid labour becomes excessive, even though their situation may be cyclical. This major separate antagonistic relationship between each *minjung* component and capitalism is the principal foundation which leads the *minjung* components to have uniformity of economic interest. And this common basis for economic interest also supports the historical fact that *minjung* components have represented different elements of the social system of circulation, which correlate to each other in the process of existence."⁹

Of course, Pak's socio-economic perspective is, in reality, a very crude form of Marxism applied to an economy driven by a unique Korean style of bureaucratic authoritarianism.

Relevance Of Class Approach

Much of Pak's thought is based on his analysis of proletarianization defined "as an increase in the number of people who lack control over the means of production and survive by selling their labour power."¹⁰ Although much sociological understanding of industrialisation is based on the European experience, in recent times this has been countered by dependency, world-systems and bureaucratic authoritarianism theories. Pak's analysis attempts to focus on the causes and effects of proletarianisation expressed in industrialisation theory in the Korean context.

While proletarianization is regarded as "the single most far-reaching social change that has occurred in the Western world over the past few hundred years"¹¹, nowhere has this occurred more dramatically than in Korea where comprehensive proletarianization commenced only in the early 1960's and changed Korea from a predominantly peasant society to a dynamic industrial nation in less than thirty years.¹² The rapid economic pace of Korea has, in fact, not only brought the 'curtailment of history' in terms of national productivity and industrialization, but also the reshuffling of social structures regarding social stratification and the dynamics of the ruling elite.

In Europe there had been a strong articulate artisan culture and, through industrialization, artisans and their culture had fallen victim to capitalists, leaving major resentment. The main cause of resentment by workers in newly industrialized countries, however, has been the inability of the economy to absorb the rapidly growing labour force into full-time employment at adequate wage levels over much shorter time frames, leaving many workers in casual employment without contracts or government labour protection. In world-systems theory, it is argued that this informal sector of the economy subsidizes formal capitalist enterprises by generating low cost materials and services for their workers to enable them to subsist on low wages. Pak and others refer to "semi-proletarianization" which posits that the expansion of world capitalism was essentially a search for a low-cost labour force and that, therefore, a capitalist would "prefer to have his wage-workers located in semi-proletarian rather than proletarian households."¹³

The Korean experience, however, contradicts the semi-proletarianization thesis put forward by world-systems theorists.

It is also very different to the European experience of proletarianization, especially in terms of its rapid development, its political-economic form, and its socio-cultural dynamics. While Korea experienced quite significant proletarianization during Japanese colonization, the end of World War II abruptly ended that process, with Korean industry virtually coming to a complete halt from 1945 to 1953. Import-substitution policies, reliant on US aid, achieved little by way of industrialisation during the next 8 or 9 years (till 1961). Pak Chong-hui's decision to pursue export-oriented industrialisation after 1962, particularly through his Yushin program of heavy industrialization after 1972, however, led to a phenomenal increase in production for both domestic and overseas markets. Production which initially focussed on light manufacturing goods, shifted gradually to higher value-added items, and the labour force changed its structure accordingly. By the late 1980s the majority of industrial workers were employed in heavy and chemical industries such as automobile, steel, ship building, machinery and petrochemicals.¹⁴ In one generation a sophisticated dynamic industrial society was created, but ironically such society also fell into a "crisis of unbalanced development"¹⁵ which forced a reshuffling not only the scale of Korean proletarianization but also of the characteristics of social conditions.

Korean proletarianization, for example, generated massive migration from the rural sector and, despite the largely unsophisticated background of these immigrants, rapidly created a workforce of manual production workers and white-collar salaried workers, with a substantial increase in female participation, especially in clerical fields. "Because of this compressed industrial transformation, the Korean population has greater

heterogeneity and internal status differentiation than its European counterparts - a numerically significant white-collar stratum exists alongside a large industrial proletariat."16 As elsewhere, Korean capitalists have pursued a strategy for ensuring a cheap and flexible workforce, but due to the absence of protective labour laws and government support for the maintenance of both low wages and low cost raw materials, have not had any disincentive to operate within a formal wage system. In this environment labour unions have not been able (at least until 1987) to exert any real influence on wage fixing. Wages, in Korea, are thus largely a product of supply and demand in a labour market where the repression of labour action has not only given the capitalist the upper hand, but "has facilitated the uninhibited absorption of labour into formal, capitalist enterprises." 17

It should be noted that Pak's comments on the circulatory nature of the economic role of the three key components of the proletariat, labourers, small-scale producers (including farmers) and the urban poor, incorporate the capitalists' need for both cheap raw material and cheap labour. Government pricing policies, to illustrate this point, have not only forced millions of Koreans to migrate to urban centres in search of more secure incomes, but have also stabilized urban consumer prices, allowing urban workers to survive on low wages and thus reducing the pressure on capitalists for wage increases. The lack of capacity in the rural sector to provide economic support to those who have migrated to urban centres and the full (not casual) commitment to urban industrial work, greatly facilitated the massive proletarianization that is evident. This phenomenon has been further reinforced by the establishment of industrial towns such Ulsan, Ch'angwon, Okpo, Kuro and Kumi, which now have

sophisticated working-class communities and *minjung* solidarity.

How is it that Korean workers have so readily adapted to industrialisation? Hagan Koo (Ku Hae-gun) identifies a number of key factors: a high level of urbanization and formal education; a large volume of geographic and social mobility, which has occurred continuously since the colonial period; and compulsory military service for men, which taught them time orientation and subjugation to formal authority.¹⁸ Perhaps an even greater factor was the absence of any cultural inhibitions to proletarianization. The absence of any significant artisan culture, and the low ranking afforded by the Korean Confucian system to artisans and merchants, and accepted by them readily, meant that workers experienced proletarianization "without any proud working-class cultural heritage."¹⁹

Historically, the position of the labour movement had been weakened by the fact that, after liberation from Japan, the movement had been embroiled in extreme political conflict between the left and right, and that subsequently the mobilization of labour had been equated with Communism.²⁰ This factor was all too easily exploited by both the government and capitalist enterprises. Workers, therefore, responded and adapted to their new role as individuals, basically putting up with long hours, hazardous conditions, low wages and authoritarian management. The extremist interventionist authoritarianism of Korean governments suppressed the formation of any effective labour movement, kept labour unorganized and prevented it from linking up with other sectors from the time of the Syngman Rhee government (except during the Chang Myon administration of 1960-1961). During the 1980s, however, Korean workers attracted substantial support from religious and intellectual communities which struggled for human

rights and democratization.

In summary, industrialization in Korea is characterized by proletarianization, not semi-proletarianization, and has placed the prototypical industrial proletariat and modern white-collar workers side by side. The government's role has probably been the single most important determinant in this process, and its agricultural pricing policies have ensured it developed as an urban phenomenon which, by drawing on rural workers of the lowest class, facilitated a smooth adaptation of the industrial work pattern and authority structure. The lack of an effective counter-ideology in the early phases of proletarianization led to extremely low levels of industrial conflict, but during the 1980s, with a reduced capacity to supply additional labour commensurate with continued industrial growth, a strong union movement developed. This development reflects in part "the density of proletarian experiences among Korean workers"²¹, which in the late 1980s combined with other *minjung* elements to force democratic reforms and has progressively obtained improved salaries and conditions for workers.

Korean *Minjung* Theory: An Alienation Approach

Han Wan-sang, Professor of Sociology at Seoul National University, conceives the notion of *minjung* in terms of the relationship between 'rulers' and 'subordinates' or the 'ruling' and the 'ruled' in modern Korean society.²² He reiterates an argument from "The Politics of Mass Society" by William Kornhauser suggesting that Korea is a "naked society" where two social groups, the 'ruling elite' and the masses, stand against one another. This is so because "there isn't any particular (intermediate) pressure group which struggles for the development of democratic institutions while, at the same time, representing

the masses (*minjung*) who are subject to the ruling elite".²³ The existence of the *minjung*, in Han's view, therefore, is based on the premise that possession of power which determines social stratification or groupings not only characterises social order, but also creates inequality in that order. Furthermore, the people with no power within this order become excluded from the essential three means of power, namely political, economic and social means.

On this basis, Han defines the notion of *minjung* as "the people who are in the 'ruled' position even though they make up the majority. They co-exist as an united group who are never from one single stratum, but from many groups and strata. *Minjung* are the resistance force who boldly struggle against the unjust political power."²⁴ Han categorises *minjung*, however, into three types. Firstly, he identifies the 'politically ruled people' (*chongch'i-jok minjung*) who are excluded from the means of ruling power consisting of the power to command, mobilize, and also to suppress. Hence, those with ruling power are identified as the 'political ruling group' in contrast to those without power who are identified either as the 'politically ruled group' or the 'political *minjung*'. Han regards the 'political *minjung*' as the central dynamic of the *minjung* component of modern society. Han's view is very similar to the Weberian notion that, "...bureaucratic organization is technically the most highly developed means of power in the hands of the man who controls it".²⁵ He argues that this has been particularly so under the authoritarian ruling structure of Korea.

Secondly, Han refers to the 'economically ruled people' (*kyongje-jok minjung*) who are excluded from the means of production which controls the entire array of activities and functions related to

production, consumption and distribution. Hence, those who are excluded from the means of production become the *minjung* of the economic dimension and are identified as 'economic *minjung*'. The economic *minjung*, who are exploited and controlled by the ruling groups (in this case, capitalists), are of necessity taken more seriously in modern society because their population share is growing rapidly.

Thirdly, Han identifies the 'culturally ruled people' (*munhwa-jok minjung*) who are excluded from the means of public recognition in the form of honour and prestige. Honour and prestige, which enable certain individual persons or groups to enjoy public recognition and the privileges of status in society while they influence social values, are monopolized by these 'culturally ruling groups'. In general, they are the receivers of a high education which provides them with the necessary requirements for a privileged life style, including opportunities to obtain knowledge, social contact, skills, qualifications, and so on. They are also the engineers of 'high culture' which reveals certain typical features of cultural sophistication, and thus they become not only the trend-setters of the privileged life style, but also a separate group which, in the words of Weber, "rests upon distance and exclusiveness"²⁶ from, what Han terms, the "popular culture" (*taejung munhwa*)²⁷ of the masses. This perception is particularly important to understanding Han's concept of *minjung*, which rests basically on the antithesis of the Weberian theory of the 'status stratum' or 'status groups' which Max Weber defined as follows:

"In contrast to classes, *status groups* are normally communities. They are, however, often of an amorphous kind. In contrast to the purely economically determined 'class

situation' we wish to designate as 'status situation' every typical component of the life fate of men that is determined by a specific, positive or negative, social estimation of honour. This honour may be connected with any quality shared by a plurality, and, of course, it can knit to a class situation: class distinctions are linked in the most varied ways with status distinctions."²⁸

In his discussion of the concept of the *minjung* and the classes, Han himself refers to the Weberian theory on social stratification based on the multi-dimensional 'status situation' of society.²⁹ In Han's view, the 'cultural *minjung*', in contrast to the 'culturally ruling groups' and thus the 'status groups', are the victims of deprived opportunities for honour and prestige. Conflict between the ruling and the ruled groups within the society is, therefore, serious, particularly when the opportunities for a higher education are concentrated predominantly in the ruling groups [of the status stratum]. What Han focusses on here is the bureaucracy as a social phenomenon which, according to Weber, created a new channel of power and rose as a social stratum based predominantly on the educational certificate:

"Differences of education, in contrast to the class-forming elements of property and economic function, are nowadays undoubtedly the most important factor in the creation of status difference. It is essentially the social prestige of education...that the modern official owes his position to in society. Whether one likes it or not, education is one of the strongest social barriers...."³⁰

Access to education was not only available exclusively for the

ruling class [*yangban kyegup*] throughout the Yi dynasty, but also "...the civil examination system (restricted in any case to candidates of *yangban* status) gave the authorities the machinery with which to control entry to the ruling class"³¹ Therefore, polarization of the 'status groups' and the ordinary people (*minjung*) based on educational qualification created a fundamental barrier in Korean society.

In examining the history of societies, argues Han, the structural inequality emerging from power structures is a universal phenomenon regardless of system, time or place. The characteristics of both groups (the ruling and the ruled) are, therefore, entirely determined according to each social order, such as feudal or capitalist or Communist, or means of power such as the 'three means' discussed above and other means such as religion or ethnicity, etc. The question is, which of these orders or means will dominate society as the most powerful? The nature of society thus changes automatically once the characteristics of the two juxtaposed social groups are changed. In this regard, Han emphasizes the Weberian view of the "structure of power" which consists of various strata resulting from "all those having vested interests in the political structure...."³²

With reference to the consciousness of the *minjung*, particularly their self-awareness and acceptance of their life fate, Han distinguishes the *minjung* into two types: 1) the sleeping *minjung* (*chukja-jok minjung*); and 2) the awakened *minjung* (*taeja-jok minjung*). Here Han applies to Korean society the Marxist distinction between a class "for itself" and a class "in itself"; the latter is a social and economic unity which lacks self-consciousness, the former is such a unity the members of which

share a common viewpoint and act together. According to this view, the sleeping *minjung* are a single identity in terms of their role in the economy and society, but do not recognize their unitary identity. The awakened *minjung*, however, understand themselves as such, and are moved to political and social action to further their common interests.³³ The sleeping *minjung* are those who are not aware precisely of their social stratum as the excluded 'ruled people', despite the fact that they are politically excluded, economically alienated and culturally ignored by both intellectuals and the ruling elite.

In general, the sleeping *minjung* are "not capable of observing themselves and their social conditions critically from an objective perspective".³⁴ They are a people with a passive character who are 'uneducated' and "do not attempt to resist [the dictates of the ruling groups] but rather obey them like a herd of sheep."³⁵ Therefore, in Han's view, the sleeping *minjung* are "most obedient and convenient servants" of the ruling groups, "helplessly manipulated" by the ruling elite's pretensions, "just like morphine addicts are intoxicated by morphine."³⁶ The sleeping *minjung* tend to be "deceived by the ruling elite's false propaganda and are deceived as if they might accomplish something", argues Han, "because the ruling elite exercise a special leverage decorated in appealing rhetoric designed especially for their effective control."³⁷ Nevertheless, Han concludes that blame should not be laid on the sleeping *minjung* for their passiveness and lack of self-awareness, because "they are not voluntarily sleeping, but are conditioned to be so indefinitely."³⁸

The awakened *minjung*, on the other hand, understand their existence in the context of prevailing social structures,

particularly power structures, as the 'ruled people'. They are the intelligentsia who are fully aware of the social imposition under which they suffer not only social and political injustice and economic disadvantage, but also alienation from the means of ruling power. Nevertheless, in Han's view, intellectuals have the social and moral responsibility to educate the sleeping *minjung* to develop their self-consciousness, so that they "...can also be the independent variables who determine [the factors of] history and the structure [of society]."39 Conscientization, says Han, is a "thought process of the *minjung* whereby they transform themselves from the historical object to the historical subject."40

In regard to these people's self-awareness of their life fate as the *minjung*, however, Han distinguishes three phases: in the first phase, the awakened *minjung* possess a 'structural thought' (*kujojok sago*) which Han refers to as the concept of "sociological political imagination" quoting A. Fasola-Bologna who refers to C. Wright Mills.41 Han argues that this notion differentiates 'personal trouble' and 'public issues', and provides evidence for his theory that structural thought by the awakened *minjung* is possible through 'sociological imagination'. Furthermore, through this structural thought, the *minjung* in the first phase build their self-consciousness in response to social injustice.

In the second phase, the awakened *minjung* become critical of their ruling structure, they are the 'critical people'. They understand fully the falsehood of the ruling groups and willingly criticise them. The nature of their criticism, however, does not seek a kind of 'touch up' of the existing system, but stands for a "fundamental exposure of the ulterior motives of the ruling

dynamics, and of the ideology of the ruling groups."⁴²

In the third phase, the awakened *minjung* transform themselves into a people of action, into (anti-government) activists. They do not merely think structurally and expose the falsehood of the ruling groups, but take more direct action which aims to promote fundamental change of the existing social order, especially of structural inequality. Therefore, the action employed by these *minjung*, according to Han, represents a concrete development of an 'anti-government movement'. The most ideal and radical type of *minjung* engage themselves in this movement because they genuinely believe in their cause as a struggle for justice and humanity. Therefore, they are prepared to sacrifice themselves in a spirit of martyrdom based on religious belief and hope, and challenge the ruling order for their cause.⁴³

Relevance of Alienation Approach

To understand Han's theory of *minjung*, it is important to note his views on who exactly were the members of the ruling groups while Korea went through industrialization from the early 1960s to the mid-1980s. One should also note the changes in political, social and cultural environments in Korean society, particularly since the promulgation of the dictatorial Yushin constitution in 1972, because through this constitution the ruling regime transformed two main structures of the ruling order: firstly, it consolidated the industrialization strategy from one of import substitution (of the 1950s) to an export-oriented one commencing in the 1960s; secondly, it established the dictatorial bureaucratic authoritarian state, thus showing that it "is clear that intrinsic to the development process itself is the creation of groups and strata with an interest in industrialization".⁴⁴ James Cotton, in his study of "Understanding The State In South

Korea", writes:

"Throughout this period [from the early 1960s to the mid-1980s], bureaucratic direction was one of the most significant features of state policy and capability. Though the character and membership of those who commanded the upper reaches of the state varied from a military clique to bureaucratic-security-business coalition, the mechanisms of the state remained insulated from wider popular forces for more than two decades. Business remained subordinated, labor was corporatized, and political forms were manipulated (on occasions, forcibly) to prevent effective institutional challenges to the prevailing order."⁴⁵

The creation of this bureaucratic authoritarian state, as described above, brought two major social changes: firstly, a resuffling of social stratification, and secondly, new social and cultural values. There arose a newly created 'status stratum' known as the 'newly-rising ruling group' (*sinhung yangban*). They consisted of three groups, namely, technocrats, a coalition group from the military and bureaucrats, and newly established conglomerates. In addition, the prevailing social trend in values reflected the overall beliefs and values of the *sinhung yangban*, which predominantly focussed on educational qualifications, efficiency and quick thinking salesmanship.

Such a tendency, according to Han Wan-sang, is an outcome of the "overheated competition" ⁴⁶ experienced in everyday life, which not only drives society to seek a 'short cut method' (based on expediency and effectiveness), but also confuses society's moral standpoint. Han argues:

"[The people's] sense of value, developed after the birth of the Third Republic of Korea, May 1961, mainly focused on 'short cut method policy' (*p'yonbob-juui*). This method is also the system which underlies all kinds of criminal activities and, thus, fundamentally destroys human quality, humanity, as well as the roots of social order."47

As already mentioned, Han's approach was based on the Weberian theory of social stratification. Han, particularly, focused on the social collision of the 'status stratum' and the rest of the social strata. However, in the Korean context, due to the historical role of the state in a rigid Confucianist culture (with its tradition of bureaucratic order) and the extreme authoritarianism since liberation, the political dimension has had a greater impact on one's 'status-situation' than in the European context to which Weber refers. Han is eager to point this out, for otherwise the tendency might be to associate class with status without reference to the dominant influence of political power on both, when such power has traditionally been a stepping stone to the acquisition of wealth (class) and social honour and prestige (status).

In contrast to Pak, Han does not focus on class only, but broadens his analysis to 'bases for communal action' rather than to physical 'communities', and is thus able to identify a broader range of factors affecting social conflict in Korea. Economic class and status stratum are separate determinants to the extent to which a people will seek radical ideals as a strategy to combat the ruling structure for access to power and thus to status, as long as the strategy is perceived to be serving a specific purpose, such as socialism, Marxism or the *Chuch'e* ideology of Kim Il-song. Exponents of the Minjung Movement in the

1980s, in fact, made significant headway through such radical ideals until the collapse of the military dictatorship of Chon Tu-hwan. They had proved that such an ideological strategy, applied strictly to an illegitimate and undemocratic political system, not only generated a powerful energy for the mobilization of the masses (*minjung*), but also created an opportunity for a major shake-up of the socio-political perspectives of the ruling elite, whether in power or in opposition. In this regard, the theories of Han, as well as Pak, were particularly fundamental to the formation of *minjung* thought in the 1980s.

Participatory Democracy : Response of Opposition

Although making no claims to be an intellectual in his own right, Kim Tae-jung (Kim Dae Jung) has been pre-eminent amongst politicians prepared to use *minjung* rhetoric in appealing for support. It is therefore useful to consider Kim's employment of the term '*minjung*' as an example of attempts to link *minjung* theory with political practice before analysing the likely fate of the *minjung* political movement.

In their co-authorship of "Kim Dae Jung Conscience In Action" Kim's spokesman, Ch'oe Won-sang, and his co-author, Han Hwa-gap, focus on the extent to which *minjung* energy had been generated and the national potential this power represented. They outline the basic standpoint of Kim and his Party, the Democratic Party (DP) in regard to the masses as follows:

"...the power of the masses (*minjung*) will be a great factor in Korean society as well... the masses will become, with their firmly established values, the engine of national progress in politics, the economy, society and culture; no national leader will be able to ignore their role and expect

to preserve internal political and social stability. In the process of building up and further developing their power, it may seem that the masses have followed the existing national leadership. However, as their power consolidates, they might even brush-aside the leadership that is now in position. Therefore, the present leaders must humbly accept the advice that they faithfully serve the masses as they would serve 'Heaven.'"48

Kim Tae-jung, recognized as the "leader of the democratic opposition to a whole sequence of authoritarian regimes..."49 since the early 1960s, and who narrowly avoided the death sentence during the regimes of both Pak and Chon, writes:

"...the masses have consistently been the motivating force in History. We have survived because of their vision, their yearning for what is right and just which, though flickering, is not yet extinguished. When we consider the rise and fall of the Silla, Koryo, and Yi dynasties, no matter who played the clown, only those who had the support of the masses, who were squirming in the gutters of society and seemingly powerless and ignorant, were the ones to prosper. Those who did not have the support of the masses fell. From a long-range perspective, the mind of the masses was the mind of heaven."50

Therefore, it is no surprise how Kim in common with other *minjung* proponents, advanced their concept of *minjung*. What is more notable about his political stance is that he not only criticised the conduct of the United States "...in most Third World nations"51 including Korea, but also alerted the US to improving its understanding and attitudes toward these countries'

political, social and economic conditions. In the case of Korea, Kim argued, an alternative economic program was the only way to rectify the evils of the social system and to achieve an industrial democracy which had been systematically abused by the government in the process of industrialization. According to Kim, his program known as the "Mass-Participatory Economy" provided an alternative for Korea, and a necessary condition for democracy.

Kim stated:

"The goal of my program [Mass-Participatory Economy] was, and still remains, a proper balance among three major objectives: growth (efficiency), equitable distribution of income, and price stability. These three objectives often conflict with one another. Because a unilateral imposition of one leader's preference can only result in public discontent, the three objectives must be balanced by full participation of the masses. That is the goal of my program for Mass Participatory Economy."⁵²

The full operation of pluralism in all aspects of political, social and economic decision making is what Kim promulgated to his constituents, the nation and to neighbouring countries, including the United States. People power was passionately pursued by Kim:

"Today, in advanced countries, where there is industrial democracy, the masses have freed themselves by their own power from the traditional exploited status and have acquired a solid position of equality with the capitalists in such fields as politics, economy, and culture. A clear example of this popular phenomenon is seen in the fact that labor parties and social democratic parties in many countries are

now in power."⁵³

However, what will happen to such a strategy if it is applied to a political order which is legitimate and democratic? How will the masses respond to the collective struggles of the Minjung Movement, if their economic position and lifestyle are improved and they are thus no longer identified as the 'propertyless class' or the 'alienated people' in a politically oppressed society? Will the masses continue their fight against the ruling groups as they have done for nearly two decades under dictatorship, and will they continue their support for the Minjung Movement in the 1990s, which ultimately aimed, according to Han, to transform Korean society into a "World of Love" (*sarang ui segye*)⁵⁴ as per Christian doctrine? These issues are perhaps self-explanatory in indicating the theoretical limitations of Han's alienation approach.

The Changing Socio-Economic Environment

Firstly, dramatic changes in the political environment followed by the collapse of Chon's dictatorship changed the entire outlook of the Minjung Movement: the political system, on the one hand, has now acknowledged and reintroduced the principle of democracy, although little has changed as far as the membership of the 'status stratum' and their personal loyalties are concerned; and, on the other hand, the majority of the populace, including exponents of the Minjung Movement, no longer seek the support of the Movement or its ideology in regard to conflicts arising from political, economic and cultural alienation. They are content with the new regime which, in principle, has adhered to the procedures prescribed by democracy. This turnabout in *minjung* attitudes, however, came about despite whatever level of *minjung* consciousness was prevalent at the time. Han's distinction

between the sleeping *minjung* and the awakened *minjung* is therefore quite irrelevant. The overwhelming majority of the masses, contrary to Han's argument, have come to share the same position on the fundamental principles of democracy in recent years, regardless of their intellectual and educational differences.

Secondly, the vast improvement in the economic circumstances of Korean workers has resulted in a wide spread upgrading of their status. This has been accompanied by a change in the market situation of many workers, the adoption of a non-proletarian lifestyle, and the development of relationships with the established middle class, leading to what Weber calls 'anticipatory socialization' and the emergence of a self-conscious middle group with bourgeois status.

Factors identified by Han and other *minjung* activists in this dynamic process included not only the work situation, but also the location of one's domicile, one's rise in the hierarchy of the community or enterprise, marriage, education and aspirations. I would suggest that given the role of each of these factors in contemporary Korea, the continued rise of workers by way of wealth acquisition to the status of the middle class will ensure that the rampant socialist ideals of earlier decades, especially of the mid 1980s, will become more and more remote. Furthermore, it would seem that those who were most active as *minjung* in the 1980s, namely students and intellectuals, have discovered that their radical strategy of the 1980s can not provide either energy or purpose for the mobilization of the masses, as long as the state observes the democratic process. *Minjung*, on the other hand, are left without the leadership of students and intellectuals, as a minority with no class, status or power, but

perhaps with a socio-economic system that can lift them closer to their aspirations.

Conclusion

Despite each having distinct criteria and premises, the two theories by Pak and Han, bear similarities in their conclusions, namely, that the components of the *minjung* are the end-products of exclusion from society. The *minjung*, according to Pak, are the economically alienated proletariat class. Han, on the other hand, identifies the *minjung* as those people 'excluded' from that ruling power which controls various opportunities in society. Hence, the *minjung*, whether the 'alienated people' or the 'excluded people' are the victims of the social and economic structure.

Similarly, the thinking of both Pak and Han is based on the polarization of Korean society into the ruling group and the *minjung*. This polarization is seen as the cause of two major types of social conflict, political conflict and economic conflict. Economic conflict, as analysed by Pak, is exacerbated by the ruling group's tendency to be dependent on foreign capital, a tendency which has continued allegedly since liberation. This dependence is, according to Pak, strongly opposed by the nationalistic consciousness of the *minjung*. He argues that internal class conflict is the outcome of social conditions which, in a broader context, are linked to national conflict, national partition and national dependence. Each of these forms of national disintegration he sees as the result of dependent politics, a dependent economy and a dependent culture. Therefore, according to Pak, the labourers, farmers and urban poor of the *minjung*, who actively struggle against these conflicts, in effect not only lead the people's movement towards

social reform, but also the nationalist movement and the movement for national unification. These movements, in his view, all have an interdependence based essentially on class conflict resulting from differences in socio-economic status.

I would argue, however, that Pak's theory of *minjung* has a number of major flaws. In the first place, it contradicts the Korean national ideal of fraternity, for by defining the *minjung* as the proletariat he leaves no room for reconciliation with capitalists and intrinsically rejects the possibility of national unity, creating merely an exclusionary proletarianism. Moreover, the notion of *minjung* which represented a mixture of social strata and classes during and since the 1970s, and which emerged largely in response to the authoritarian ruling structure of the Yushin regime and its policies (which excluded the *minjung* from political participation), was much more complex than that outlined in Pak's definition. The development of *minjung* as a conscious and active force was clearly as much based on political conflict as on economic concerns.

In addition, the notion of *minjung* as the proletariat, the propertyless class, who would lead the nationalist movement, including the movement for national unification, is not founded on any sound rationale other than nationalistic sentiment, for as Professor Han Sang-jin argues 55, the cause and effect of class conflict do not necessarily amount to the national and international determinants of partition and political power.

I would suggest that in view of Pak's narrow perspective of the notion of *minjung*, his theory is not applicable in any sense. It would seem that his motivation for applying '*minjung*' to the Korean proletariat is to take advantage of the nationalistic

sentiment associated with the term in the 1980s, but without wishing to look beyond Marxian ideologies.

In the case of Han, although his theory attempts to accommodate a wider range of social strata and groups with an equally broad range of social, political, economic and cultural issues, it should be recognised that *minjung* as a whole can never be grasped as an entity. Furthermore, the basis of its existence is a Utopian dream which captivates man's imagination, thus bringing hope and expectation to those people who feel victimized by power. However, it is hardly achievable without a leadership, just as Christianity is hardly conceivable without Christ.

In summary, theories of *minjung*, whether they refer to the proletariat (Pak's view), or a collection of various social groups and strata, which do not necessarily exclude the once privileged ruling elite (Han's view), do not fully explain or indentify the *minjung* within their specified boundaries. This conclusion is inevitable because "*Minjung* is not a real entity. It is an abstract concept referring to the collection of a variety of classes, mostly underprivileged ones... which constitute the mainstay of Korean society."⁵⁶ It is an ironic, however, that, given the claims that others have made about the unique 'Koreanness' of the *minjung*, theorists of the 1970s should again have relied almost exclusively upon Western social theory for their analyses.

Chapter Five

Minjung As A Cultural Concept

Usage Of Traditional Symbolism.

Minjung theories, based on the tradition, customs and national pride of the Korean people, are largely derived from the belief that only the "spiritual revival" and the "self-awakening"¹ of the people through a cultural revolution, can "...create a unified Korea based on freedom, democracy, self-reliance and peace."² The industrialization and economic miracle of Korea since the early 1970s, according to one commentator sympathetic to the *minjung* school, were solely "built upon a labour policy that violated the human rights of workers..."³ and the principles of democracy. The cultural theories of the *minjung* are therefore linked very closely with two major anti-authoritarian struggles: first, the democracy movement (embracing the Korean Christian movement for human rights in the 1970s and the *Minjung* Movement of the 1980s); and second, the labour movement which had to contend with the corporatist labour policies pursued by successive Korean governments.⁴

Cultural theories of the *minjung* consist of a vast range of views and examples that are all very relevant to prevailing *minjung* theories. There are few aspects of Korean culture that have not been influenced in some respect by *minjung* theory, especially during the last twenty years (1970s-1980s). However, in order to contain this thesis to a sharper focus, this chapter will examine only two specific aspects of culture that have given rise to the Korean people's self-awakening, especially in respect of the ordinary workers. Firstly, an extended discussion will be

devoted to the *minjung* cultural movement (*minjung munhwa undong*), particularly in the performance of mask dance play (*t'alch'um nori*) and court-yard play (*madang-guk*), both of which represent symbols of the solidarity of the ruled people, the *minjung*, and encapsulate the ideals of the people and their nationalistic sentiments. Secondly, the influence of Kim Chi-ha will be considered. Kim may be regarded as the exemplary advocate of democracy and human rights of his time, who not only acted as "the transmitter of *han*..."⁵, but also developed the feelings of *han* "into a revolutionary consciousness..."⁶ of the *minjung*, and ultimately set aflame the phenomenon of the Minjung Movement of the 1980s.

Origin Of Korean Mask Drama.

What is the nature of Korean mask dance drama in terms of Korean history and culture? Historically, mask dance plays (*t'alch'um nori*) had been dismissed as "a collection of banal and unsophisticated folk [dance] plays" ; and culturally, were denigrated as "the product of the lower classes, of mainly illiterate artisans and relatives of *mudang* (shaman witch doctors) [who were] despised by *yangban* (upper class) scholars."⁷ In addition, the symbolism of the plays, as representing the people's *han*, rested on the socio-political objectives of the performance which aimed "to expose, ridicule, curse and attack... those who prey on common folk, and to satirize the social structures which entrap them."⁸

As indicated above, Korean mask dance plays (originally known as *sandaë*) grew out of a historical, political, social and religious environment in which the common people sought to express those feelings suppressed in everyday life. In their earliest forms

(the word '*sandae*' appeared for the first time in the historical record, *Koryosa*, 1451 A.D., in the Koryo dynasty), they consisted of a varied repertoire of song, dance and jest and had their origins in the court rituals and amusements of the Koryo dynasty. Buddhist and Confucian influences had an impact on the form and content of the drama as it developed in subsequent centuries until the late Yi dynasty, but Shamanism remained its dominant ethos.

In recent centuries, mask dance actors (in the case of *Yangju Pyolsandae*) were mainly *mudang* and their relatives, such as butchers and bier-carriers. Moreover, satire and rusticity came to dominate this form of drama when it ceased to be connected with official court rituals, and instead concentrated on the preferences of the common people. Performers of *sandae* had been released from official control after the reign of King Injo (1623 A.D.-1649 A.D) when the dynasty underwent economic crisis, having fought wars against Japan (1592, 1597-8 A.D.) and the Manchus (1636 A.D.).

Unlike the original masks which exclusively depicted spirits, Korean masks in this dance form have come to depict both the images of spirits (although limited to certain characters) as well as characters who symbolize power, authority, honour and wealth, and thus the ruling class. Mask drama has been maintained by oral tradition for centuries until modern times (until documented in the 1930s by scholars) and may have four to eleven scenes (*kwajang*), each of which has a flexible structure.

Mask dance originally had no formal stage. In more recent times, however, the play has been performed in the courtyard (*madang*) (in any environment, such as government buildings, Confucian

schools, village play grounds or even private residences). Performances were usually held on festive occasions and were therefore celebrated with much ceremony and colour, normally through the night till dawn. Sometimes, however, depending on the circumstances or local conditions, the performance was shortened to 4 hours or even less. No special stage props or scenery, other than a few musical instruments (such as the two-headed drum (*changgo*), cymbals and gong) were used for performances, the audience were simply seated in a semi-circle in an open place. This traditional open method has been particularly well adapted by university students who, in the early 1970s, initiated a revival of nationalist feeling (disguised in their presentation of mask plays) not only throughout campuses, but also in communities throughout the nation.

The character that best symbolizes the typical *minjung* spirit in protest drama is Malttugi. He is depicted as being of low birth, an anti-hero, who with pun and satire ridicules authority, hypocrisy, Confucian and Buddhist morality, and the incompetence and ignorance of the ruling class. Taking this character as their symbol, a folk theatre group, called the Malttugi Association, was formed in 1967. This name was chosen as "a political statement... [symbolising] the subordinate people triumphing over the dominant, oppressive class and becoming the masters of society... the culmination of the *minjung* movement."⁹ Cho Tong-il, a former member of this group and, presently, Professor of Folk Arts at Seoul University, considered that, "the aesthetics of *minjung's* humour and satire in mask drama lies in its power to detonate *minjung* energy to confront the dominant and subvert the hierarchical social order."¹⁰

Origins Of *Madang-guk*

Closely related to mask drama is *madang-guk* (court-yard play), which derives its mystery and impact from its link with folk belief, (*madang*)*kut*. *Kut*, literally denotes a form of ancient shaman ritual, the unique form of Korean worship not only of supernatural beings, but also of the spirits of all things in the universe, including rivers, mountains, rocks, wind and even the tiniest creatures. However, according to the traditional notion, *kut* also incorporated all kinds of dance, games, and plays. *Madang*, on the other hand, denotes mainly the court-yard, but, according to the traditional notion, it denoted any available open space where people could gather and enjoy *nori* (performance and plays). Therefore, the symbolism of *madang-guk* bears a dual meaning: in strictly religious terms, it means a ritual ceremony and, in broad traditional terms, it represents joyous productive activities of all kinds. In other words, the terms *nori* and *kut* had much in common.

The term *nori*, derived from 'nol', includes the notions of "... desire and sorrow of mind" and was "...originally aimed at bringing about comfort and pleasure."¹¹ *Nori* formed a necessary part of every element of *minjung* life, whether work, leisure or religious ritual. This intrinsic link reflected the recognition within Korean society of the productive value of *nori*. For example, people, through *nori* activities, developed an open spirit of unity and a team spirit (*tanch'e chongsin*) in their lives, socially and politically. This was so, because, by meeting one another through *nori*, Korean people opened themselves not only to find the true "face"¹² of others, but also to reveal their own true "face" before others. They expressed their aspirations and individual opinions (particularly in regard to the socio-political issues) which did not have any place in a

society where social 'approval' was crucial. Approval for such expression could only be given by rulers to subjects, fathers to sons, elders to youths, men to women, haves to have nots and so on, through the hierarchical relations founded on the 'Five Relationships'¹³ of Confucianism. In other words, through dance *nori*, Korean people found themselves equal to each other, and thus enjoyed a common oneness, regardless of their origin or condition. It also acted as a socio-political pressure valve, giving expression to *minjung* disapproval of their rulers or giving vent to their own political frustrations.

In analysing both the nature of the dance *nori* and the link between the people and dance, Professor Yi He-gu, a prominent traditional musicologist, comments:

"The essential nature of the Korean dance is that it has always been a part of the people's daily lives. As an excellent example to illustrate the point, we can cite our farmers' dances which have, indeed, been an inherent part of the daily life of the Korean farmer....The rural dance offered young men of Korea an opportunity to express their feelings without any restrictions imposed by convention or ethics."¹⁴

The performance of *nori* in the *madang* environment (*madang nori*), is especially significant to most Koreans if *nori* is performed for a ritual purpose. Shaman beliefs pervade the Korean psyche and spirit, especially as Shaman spirits are seen as able to bring about harmony in one's life, bringing prosperity and good health.

These spirits are reached through 'kut', in which a *mudang*

becomes entranced, possessed in mystical but very obvious union with the spirit world. A spirit is received, entertained, communicated, worshipped, consoled, thanked and sent away. Even this particular spirit/god that is received becomes involved in the *nori* which, in this case, has both a vertical and horizontal structure. The point here is, that the lack of harmony in one's life, an imbalance of the *yin* and *yang* (*um* and *yang*), is addressed through play(*nori*) wherein the dead (spirits/gods normally representing deceased people), and the living, act together to restore and/or maintain harmony. Generally, Korean commoners believed in life which involved a threefold process, namely total communication, exorcism, and purification of spirit, providing the harmony of *yin* and *yang*, and revitalising each individual's fundamental energy (*ki*).

Therefore, *madang-gut*, in this sense represents both a communal *nori* through which Korean people communicate with each other, exorcize all evil and revitalize their spirit, and a 'common prayer' for the unity and prosperity of all nature, particularly of the Korean people (including the dead). Kim Chi-ha writes about the meaning of spirit (*kuishin*) of *madang-gut* in his poem, 'The Rainy Cloud In These Drought Times':

"The spirit is precisely me
 Therefore the spirit is life.
 Heaven and earth are the spirit
 And the spirit is heaven and earth.
 All things in heaven and earth, therefore,
 Are the one body of the same life."¹⁵

These elements of *minjung* culture are, according to Kim,

thousands of years old and in the context of today's world must be seen as immutable characteristics of the heart and spirit of Korea. The Korean way of thinking and doing is distinguishable as extremely powerful and sagacious, so much so that industrialisation and Westernisation should only be seen as a transitional phase within the cultural history of the Korean character. It is a culture of the masses which acknowledges that "the human body can do so much, then the heart and spirit must take over."¹⁶

From the viewpoint of *minjung* exponents, therefore, the oppressive socio-political environment of the Yi dynasty, in which mask plays and *madang-gut* were prevalent, should be used as an analogy for contemporary Korean society under military dictatorship. They have declared:

"[We] insist on a total revival of our [traditional] *kut* for it represents the people's organization, recreation and ritual means ; and, at the same time, the means for their struggle to break off the chains of anti-national and anti-democratic oppression."¹⁷

Cultural Impact Of Mask Drama.

In his essay, " A Theological Look at Mask Dance in Korea," Hyon Yong-hak, Professor of Religion and Culture at Ewha Women's University, argues that the performance of Korean mask dance/drama not only provides the *minjung* with a means of self-expression, but also enables them to transcend their thoughts far beyond their immediate reality. Hence the *minjung*, in Hyon's view, become not only physically "conscientized", but also spiritually enlightened and revitalized. Hyon writes:

"In and through mask dance, the Minjung [*minjung*], the ordinary folk, experience and express a critical transcendence over this world and laugh at its absurdity. By satirizing the aristocrats [the ruling elite] they stand over against the aristocrats. By laughing at the old monk [character symbolizing 'authority'] they stand above him. The concern of the younger generation in Korea, who are fond of and participate in the performance of the mask dance, is centered around these two stories."¹⁸

The images of mask drama, which represent the self-expression of the ordinary people, and thus act as their voice, as well as expressing their collective *han*, become metaphysical, as Hyon argues above, and also become heroic, revolutionary, and above all, symbolic. For example, the characters of plays, such as 'Malttuk' and 'Chang Il-dam' (See Ch. 6) of the literary works created by Kim Chi-ha during the early 1970s, are clearly revolutionaries who fight against "injustice and misgovernment" and who in the case of the character Chang Il-dam), "brings...the human rights movement"¹⁹ to Korea when he is resurrected three days after his death. Therefore, these characters are symbols of justice, equality and humanity.

In regard to the role of mask dance in transcending the people's *han* and revitalizing their energy, Ch'ae Hui-wan, Professor of Arts at Pusan University, argues that mask drama has been integral to Korean life for centuries, and that the traditional origins of mask drama emanate from 'ture', the collective social and economic activity unit of each farming community. In this environment, the community together performed ritual and experienced spiritual possession. According to Ch'ae :

"through this collective ecstasy (*chipdan sinmyong*), members of the community achieve not only a sense of communal solidarity but also the energy to combat together the harsh realities imposed by the ruling class."²⁰

The symbolism of mask drama reaches its height when these images are perceived to correlate directly to feelings of *han* and cultural historical roots. So Nam-dong declares:

"In fact, ...heroes Maltuk [Malttuk] and ...Chang Il-dam are incarnations of *han* ." ²¹

The thinking of So, particularly on the imagery of *han* from a theological perspective, which was conclusive in shaping general perceptions of the *minjung* during the 1970s, is linked heavily to the philosophy of Kim Chi-ha and is often a reiteration of Kim's own thought. So, in his essay, "Towards a Theology of Han," states:

"Let us first see how *han* was sublimated dynamically in the sketches of 'Sacred Place' and 'Maltuk', works to which he [Kim] refers as examples of the art of political imaginationThe term "Sacred Place" is more than simply a paradoxical word for prison. Kim Chi-ha believes that prison is a real place with potential for revolution (Exodus) and that true humanity can be found among the prisoners. "A prison is an oppression of oppressions and a contradiction of reality itself. At the same time one finds collective *han* expressing itself spatially in a Sacred Place. This massive *han* shines in a tension of silence like a shadow which is waiting to explode. Its symbolic place of manifestation is the prison."

Maltuk, who is a servant-slave, appears in traditional mask dances as the embodiment of satire, jocularly and humour. These expressions also function as protests against the *yangban*, the ruling class. Therefore, Kim sees them as pervasive phenomena of *han*. Being beaten by the *yangban*, Maltuk finally gets his revenge by beating the *yangban* with his quick wit and brave actions. This leads to an ecstasy of dances and songs where real humanity, i.e. *koinonia*, is realized, which the author calls God's involvement in history.

Han is an accumulation of suppressed and condensed experiences of oppression. Thus "accumulated *han* is inherited and transmitted, boiling in the blood of the people," which is also defined as the "emotional core of anti-regime action." This is the genesis of *han*; and the author [Kim] goes further to grasp and express the structure, contents, development and explosion of *han*. He ends with a climatic description of *han* as a *people-eating monster*."22

The significance of these theories and approaches, regardless of their credibility (in regard to historical references) or methodological appropriateness, lies in their social impact as well as the social trend which followed. In the case of social impact, they ultimately created a myth among the Korean people, particularly the workers, who were convinced that performance of the mask play was the voice of the people and symbolized worker solidarity. And in the case of social trend, they brought a revival of mask dance (including many other folk arts) throughout the nation and, more importantly, established a new symbolism that a performance of mask dance (and other folk arts) is a ritual for the Minjung Movement. This trend was especially

fashionable around university campuses and towns. In his essay, "Growth And Limitations Of Minjung Christianity In South Korea", Donald N Clark states:

"University students in the *minjung* movement love to act out ethnic themes in music, dance, and drama. No matter what the season at Yonsei [University], for example, there are students in the woods by the amphitheatre practising *nong'ak* rhythms [Korean farmers' folk music] on the *changgo* [two-headed drum] and clanging cymbals and gongs while others practise farmers' dances, often in costume. When there are demonstrations on the campus they are often led by bands of *nong'ak* musicians and dancers carrying banners which paraphrase the banners of the farmers' dance: "Democracy is the root of all!"²³

It is also noteworthy that, because of these approaches, for the first time in the history of Korean Christianity, the church (although a minor group) openly acknowledged the validity of Korean Shamanism as the root of the Korean people and thus the national religion. So Nam-dong writes:

"*Han* is a common dominant feeling of powerless Korean people. It is the feeling of women, despised slaves, common people etc., all of whom commonly resort to shamanistic rites. The shaman thus becomes a kind of national priest."²⁴

Cultural Impact Of *Madang-guk*

Ch'ae Hui-wan, who has been widely acknowledged as one of three leading intellectuals with Kim Chi-ha and Im Chin-t'aek involved in the revival of the *minjung* cultural movement, particularly in the field of *Minjung-guk* (people's drama), proposes a new

definition of *madang* as follows:

"According to the prevailing interpretation, *madang* symbolizes a range of environments: it means an "open space" for work and rest, communication and meeting; it also means an actual current affair that requires urgent attention...; and, at the same time, it means a feast scene. The performance, for example, of song and dance fits into such a feast scene. And this scene especially represents a potential 'spot performance' or a 'stage for the feast' which is spontaneous, inevitable and on-going."²⁵

This interpretation of *madang* as an "on-the-spot performance" or a "stage for the feast" has been particularly significant and influential in respect of the Minjung Movement from the early 1970s. Through this interpretation, university students, as soldiers of democracy and the human rights movement, proliferated *madang-gut* activities. On the same basis, workers also established their organizational system for a nation-wide protest movement. As far as the *minjung* were concerned, any space, whether a factory, garage, or rice field, or even a gambling place, was their *madang* and there their feast [protest] had to take place.

At the same time, church leaders, including Buddhist monks, and their believers, adhered to this interpretation from a religious perspective. In the eyes of the church, *madang-gut* was the Christian *koinonia*, the on-the-spot or field church (*hyonjang* church). This *hyonjang* church, according to most *minjung* theologians, including So Nam-dong, was the "third form of the church, besides the Catholic and the Protestant churches; and it is similar to the people's church referred to by Gutierrez and

Moltmann."²⁶ In summary, *madang-gut*, in the performance of mask dance, became a "ritual disguise"²⁷ not only for the students' and workers' protest movement, but also for members of religious communities and the intelligentsia. *Madang-gut*, in other words, was to become the heart of the Minjung Movement (then referred to as Korean Christian movement for human rights) among the Korean people.

How could *kut* have had this impact? What in *kut* motivates Korean people to generate such an energy ultimately capable of bringing down dictatorship, and of imposing a decisive political blow? According to Ch'ae, mask dance (in the performance of *madang-gut*) and Korean folk music (*nong'ak*) "consist of a certain ideological base comprising a cultural movement."²⁸ They symbolise a movement of "proud self-affirmation, arising from the 'heart and body' in the 'calling of blood (patriotism)' from their ancestors."²⁹ Ch'ae also argued that the intrinsic strength of mask drama lay in its universality, or more specifically, in the socio-political commonality prevailing throughout Third World countries.

Ch'ae writes on the "Ideology of Minjung-guk" as follows:

"The newly adapted Minjung-guk is variously named *madang-guk*, *madang-gut* and *taedong-nori*. *Madang-guk*, which transformed the *madang* [court-yard] to represent actual scenes of the lives of the *minjung*, was adapted by Minjung-guk, and aspires to an artistic victory of the people's collective social consciousness, and also functions as a means of uniting social issues and the arts. In so doing, *madang-guk* aims to establish itself as a feast of contemporary life, by unravelling, in the public interest, major contradictions and troubles that are intrinsic in today's society, as well as

practising the social consciousness that is developed through this unravelling "30

Ch'ae continues:

"[The characteristics of *Minjung-guk* in contemporary societies] have changed their focus from those of a straight theatrical cultural movement to those of the current social movement. This is so because *Minjung-guk* claims to stand for solidarity consciousness in Third World countries [on behalf] of those who are confronted by issues such as race (internal and external); agricultural problems; worker and urban poor problems; social and current topics; and reinterpretation of historical matters."31

Whilst the above argument hinges heavily on the universal nature of socio-political conflict in contemporary society, it is largely motivated by nationalistic aspirations, particularly their ideals of national harmony and unity. Kim Chi-ha, Ch'ae Hui-wan and other theorists of *minjung* culture believed that Shaman ritual incorporated reconciliation (especially where disharmony is evident) and transformation. They also believed that capitalism had brought about disharmony between work and play, between production and consumption, between conscience and behaviour, and between the haves and have nots. The evil of this disharmony had to be exorcised. Ancient Korean religions, as well as the spirits of the *Tonghak* Religion (originating in 1860), had a major influence of these people's, especially Kim's, thinking. Kim prophesized the coming of the second perfect cycle of the world (*huch'on kaebyok* - comparable to the Christian belief in Christ's second coming), and that the underclass people, the *minjung*, would then become the real life force of the world, based on man's enlightenment evolving from the harmony of yin and

yang. Furthermore, these ideals of exorcising disharmony and developing a new life cycle (of re-birth, became the major theme of cultural theories. Kim Chi-ha's epic poem, 'The World of Chang Il-dam', for example, illustrates a typical dramatization of these ideals. (See Ch.6 for detail)

However, the ideals of the people, in terms of achieving national unity and self-reliance, are only possible, according to Kim Chi-ha, if and when the Korean people wake-up and realize the need for and suitability of *kut*, and the importance of achieving 'the second perfect cycle of the world,' which is obtainable only through an understanding of the role of *k'ung-gut* (big performance). *K'ung-gut* or *taedong-gut*, according to Kim, is the path through which work and dance (*nori*) are unified. At the same time, this *k'ung-gut* can provide the necessary means by which the dance of the *kwangdae* (the performer, and thus *minjung* activists such as Kim himself), and the struggle of the *minjung*, are brought together in collective ecstasy, actualizing the original natural shape of the unity of dance and work. Here, the *k'ung-gut* to which Kim refers is clearly a fundamental revolution both in physical and psychological terms. Kim Chi-ha states :

"When an individual frees his ego, not merely by focussing his gaze whilst sitting in an oratory or whilst starving on the peak of a mountain, but by freeing himself in a wider sense, by renouncing his own attachment to himself, the vitality of life as a fundamental force flows within him. One must allow that life, in its wider sense, to flow within oneself. *Kut*, in fact, is that which allows life in its fullest sense to flow in all its vitality."³²

His examples are very illustrative:

"The following examples picture in concrete terms the kind of life-characteristics that are utterly devitalised and are opposed to the *minjung* character: purchasing a packet of ingredients such as 'Miwon' [msg]; approving political dictatorship; giving in to and acquiescing in the partition of the Korean peninsula; yielding to the hegemony of a powerful country; accepting indiscriminate and continuous manipulation indoctrinated by institutionalised education and mass communication; and being brainwashed by industrialisation to believe that 'progress is good', or 'it is wise to follow America', etc.... Only when one denounces one's attachment to such aspects of life, or boycotts them, ... or performs a 'k'ung-gut' - a positive practical accomplishment of the Sabbath - will that certain vitality generated by the fundamental force of life surge within the entire *minjung*."33

Kim is aware of his apparent extremism and qualifies his views, saying,

"I am not suggesting that we should live without food, but I am asking that we work together, share together, and fight together against those who exploit us. I am appealing that we get rid of evil spirits and perform the 'salp'uli (exorcism)' to shake off the illness which is blocking harmony within the whole system, and that we resist that illness by performing the *Okwi-gut* (exorcism)."34

Kim further adds:

"*Madang-gut* would seem to be the most appropriate example of *minjung* in action. The entire process of the relationship between actors and the audience, and their relationship with the place of performance and the court-stage, generate spontaneous interaction in an amorphous body of movement, like an amoeba."³⁵

Overall, cultural theories of the *minjung*, which aimed to raise the people's consciousness against oppressive government, not only restored the people's determination and energy for the revival of tradition, but also, created a trend to inventing new theories of and approaches to Korean culture and tradition. Examples of these developments are numerous, led by reproductions of mask dance, farmers' music and *madang-gut*. The interpretation of *madang-gut* as an 'on-the-spot performance' of 'ritual disguise' for expressing protest was an innovation characteristic of modern Korean society.

***Minjung* : Kim Chi-ha's Perception**

Kim's thinking has always been a complex mixture of Marxism, Tonghak religion, Buddhism, Christianity and plain revolution. His expositions of *minjung* theory in the past 30 years (1960-1990) consist of two distinct phases: the first, mainly in the 1970s, was centred upon the idea of revolution which, according to Kim, represented "the ultimate sanction against misrule that enables the people to defend themselves from oppression and exploitation".³⁶ He argued that revolution, as the means of the *minjung* struggle, was necessary to "create a unified Korea based on freedom, democracy, self-reliance and peace."³⁷ Following Park's assassination, however, (that is, in the early 1980s) his thinking on the *minjung* struggle began to change to a less radical, more philosophical and forgiving approach, as evidenced

in his writings of the early 1980s. The second distinct phase of Kim's thinking emerged after the collapse of dictatorship in 1987, but will not be discussed in this chapter, because it focussed on a sophisticated life philosophy rather than on the concerns of the *minjung* struggle which, to some extent, Kim has now transcended.

In view of his role in the Minjung Movement, Kim's views on who constitute the *minjung* are very relevant. He states:

"So far, when one speaks of the 'main group' (*chuch'e*) or 'the *minjung*', these people were not very evident as such in the feudal period, for they existed as entities alienated from the results of their production and labour; or they existed as skilled forces who fought against all sorts of disaster (war, revolution, national crisis, foreign invasions and natural disaster): they were called the *minjung*. In other words, the people as the carriers of life, who took the major part in producing the necessities for daily living, establishing culture and developing civilisation, were named the *minjung*."38

Kim, however, asserts that it would be too difficult to identify the *minjung* as a whole, without referring to a "certain type" (of *minjung*). If one solely relied on "historical perceptions of the *minjung*, ... [then] the *minjung* are those active lives who are mobile and continually vibrant with life."39 *Minjung*, in Kim's view, are "living entities (*saengmyong-ch'e*)" and must be identified "with a living method (not fixed or stagnant) because the *minjung* are active in the midst of a lively advancing movement."40 Furthermore, Kim stresses the importance of recognizing current needs and issues when identifying the concept

of *minjung*. Kim writes:

"...the phase, which is necessary now for the development of history, is one which demands the coming of the second perfect cycle of the world [*huch'on kaebyok* - cf. Christian belief in Christ's second coming]; and because of this [necessity]... the concept of *minjung*, in regard to the perceptions that have so far prevailed, must be based on comprehensive and universal 'conceptual characteristics' [*chong kaenyom*], including a variety of 'conceptual types' [*ryu kaenyom*]." 41

On this theoretical basis, Kim further expounds his concept of *minjung*:

"*Minjung* are those universal people who are most concretely active in their lives or support others to be active; they, on the one hand, create the system which produces rulers who, with evil tendencies, become the core of obstacles; and, on the other hand, resist against those obstacles even though they are oppressed and ultimately overcome the obstacles. Hence, the *minjung* are those who guarantee taintless activities of life."42

In his essay, 'A World View Of Life- About Problematic Points And Subjects Concerning Kim Chi-ha's Thought', Park In-song argues that the core of Kim Chi-ha's thought lies in his concept of 'life'.43 Pak notes that, "above anything else, he (Kim) interprets *minjung* as life."44 To Kim, the *Minjung* Movement is, therefore, a "movement for life".44 Kim's relentless struggle for life, through the *Minjung* Movement, however, was largely based on "his comprehension of social change" which was "...

embodied in his concept of the 'curse' [*han*]."⁴⁵ *Han*, in Kim's view, not only filled the entire Korean peninsula, but also filled every Korean's heart and life. Therefore, *han* was collective and needed to be dealt within and by a collective strategy in a collective sense.

On this basis, Kim believed that the purpose of his writings, particularly of his poems, was "to be the transmitter of the [collective] *han* and to communicate a sharp awareness of our [Korean people's] historical tragedy."⁴⁶ As the "poet of *han*"⁴⁷ Kim not only translated the concept of *han* into a "metaphor for everyman's struggle against evil forces"⁴⁸, but also convinced the *minjung* to struggle directly against these evil forces. His literary works such as "Five Bandits", "Groundless Rumors", "Chang Il-dam" and "Malttuk", in this sense, are particularly crucial both in terms of understanding his thinking in regard to the *minjung* struggle, and in terms of the means through which the *minjung* sought to achieve their objectives. In his "Declaration of Conscience" (1975), Kim establishes the link between his basic motivation (love for mankind), *minjung* oppression, and this violent struggle:

"I want to identify with the oppressed, the exploited, the troubled, and the despised. I want that love to be dedicated, passionate, and manifested in practical ways. This is the totality of my self-imposed task for humanity, the alpha and the omega of my intellectual search. I hope that my odyssey will be understood as a love for mankind. My desire to love the brotherhood of man makes me hate the oppression and exploitation that dehumanizes him. He who exploits others corrupts himself. Thus I fight against oppression and exploitation; the struggle is my existence."⁴⁹

Kim, through these ideals of the collective struggle, influenced significantly the awakening of the *minjung* to the "violence of resistance" as a necessary means for the betterment of life. He argued that,

"When the violence of authority sustains oppression, the people's will is crushed, their best leaders are killed, and the rest are cowed into submission. The 'silence of law and order' settles grimly across the land. Then an antithetical situation exists where violence must shatter this macabre order. To a degree, I approve of this kind of violence. No, that is not strong enough. I must approve of it. I reject the violence of oppression and accept the violence of resistance. I reject dehumanizing violence and accept the violence that restores human dignity. It could justly be called a 'violence of love.'"50

Kim was fully aware of the consequences and predicament of applying violence and destruction as a means against oppression. He, however, drew the conclusion that only the people who are truly courageous, non-violent and unselfish will commit themselves to violence for the *minjung* struggle, because the consequence of violence may be the ultimate sacrifice as in the case of his heroes. His emotional statement below clarified his unshakeable belief in the application of violence :

"When the people must be awakened and sent resolutely off to battle, violence is unavoidable. Gandhi and Franz Fanon agonized over this dilemma. Father Camilo Torres took a rifle and joined the people. He died with them, the weapon never fired. The fallen priest with his rifle epitomized godliness. I do not know if his beliefs and methods were correct or not,

but the purity of his love always moves me to tears....He was prepared to commit a sin out of love for others. He was not afraid to burn in the depths of eternal hell."51

Kim Chi-ha's Influence

Kim Chi-ha's influence on *minjung* thinking, through both his personal suffering and his writings has been significant. His criticism of injustice, oppression, exploitation and alienation from power, was a thorn in the side of Pak Chong-hui from the mid 1960s, and became more incisive as he developed his metaphors and political imagination through his plays, poems and other writings (especially, "A Declaration of Conscience") during the 1970s and into the early 1980s. His literary works carried an awakening message for the ordinary worker, while his suffering, resistance and faith became a symbol of the people's voice in breaking the "silence of law and order."52

His approach was largely based on the cultural heritage of the people. He recognised that ecstasy (*sinmyong*), spiritual possession and the mystification of shamanism in Korean culture and history was the culmination of the people's struggle to break loose from coerced reality, and a coming to terms with oneself as a human being. *Minjung* theories (from the beginning of Kim's influence), based on the reassertion and reinterpretation of parts of the cultural heritage and national identity, were aimed at a national movement, through cultural symbolism, to awaken the people's consciousness in terms of 'self-reliance'. The strategy of this cultural movement was ingenious in that, on the one hand, it provided a certain minimal legitimacy (for group activities) against the censorship of the authorities, and on the other hand, it created a nationalistic rhetoric and attracted workers under the slogan of solidarity.

Social and political protest was, therefore, frequently staged by students, factory workers, farmers and church groups throughout the nation, either in the form of *t'alch'um* or *madang-guk* (generally referred to as *Minjung-guk*). Protest drama in the form of *t'alch'um* became especially a vital part of the Minjung Movement. *Minjung* exponents, as advocates of the solidarity movement, aimed to arouse nationalism and generate a self-consciousness of 'potential' state autonomy by promoting the greater richness of Korean folk culture over the capitalist culture of the West. Therefore, *minjung* theory, based avowedly on feeling, spirituality and culture, was far more powerful in mobilizing the people and awakening their consciousness than any alternative which appealed to logic. The people's feelings of *han*, and the spiritual-cultural impact of *madang-guk* and *t'alch'um*, were key factors in motivating and energizing the Minjung Movement, at the same time as improving economic circumstances and standards of education in Korea in the 1970s and 1980s built up people's socio-economic expectations.

In particular, *madang-guk*, incorporating the people's *han*, became a symbol of solidarity. A myth was created that *han* lay at the core of the nation and had, in some way, to be avenged and righted. The notion of 'court-yard' (*madang*), which was promoted through *madang-guk*, gave the *minjung* a new freedom, a new dimension for protest and collective expression without restriction. Some of the more radical groups, such as student, labour and farmer movements, sought to promote democratisation and national unification through these activities. Their aim has been to build an "anti-capitalistic, collective 'democratic' community (*ture kongdongch'e*), which should ultimately lead to the construction of a unified national community (*minjok kongdongch'e*) with all the ideological implications of constructing

social democracy."53

Much of the literature in this regard is in the form of narrative, emotive poetry or simply assertion without cohesive theoretical logic. Nevertheless, the impact of *han* and cultural factors in lifting the ordinary Korean from apathetic passivity to an involved, socially conscious participant in a whole range of movements, aggregating into a national *minjung* movement, far outweighed any role that a more rationalised ideology could have had. This impact reached its zenith, its peak of legitimacy, when Minjung Theology adapted the notions of *han*, *madang* and *kut* into a theological framework. Not only were the indigenous roots and sufferings recognised and reinforced, but they were lifted into a revitalised spiritualism and structured ideology supported by significant sectors of the church's infra-structure.

In brief, the *han* of the Korean people, and their cultural roots realised through *kut*, *madang*, and *t'alch'um*, were integrated into a most potent force, Korean nationalism, and ultimately sparked the phenomenon of the Minjung Movement. In the course of these developments, Kim Chi-ha was certainly the "transmitter of *han*" who transformed the meaning of *han* into a revolutionary consciousness.

Conclusion

It is a feature of modern Korea that traditional cultural practices, and especially shared collective action and consciousness, have been used to serve political ends. Modern cultural interpretations of ecstasy (*shinmyong*), spiritual possession, and the mystification of shamanism in Korean history are crucial to understanding this phenomenon, because they seek to symbolize the culmination of the people's struggle to break

loose from a coercive reality. Paek Ki-wan, director of the National Unification Research Institute argues along these lines, adding that ritual ecstasy "is a momentum through which each individual experiences true transformation of self."⁵⁴ This experience becomes socially significant when individual experiences combine into a social force. "Ecstasy in this sense should become the very momentum from which history 'develops'."⁵⁵

On this basis, Shaman ritual, according to cultural *minjung* theorists, encapsulates the accumulated experience of the history of the people's struggle and social reformation. Paek ultimately calls for a national unification ritual through which each participant will be made aware of the people's realities and undergo a transformation of consciousness in the form of a Shaman ecstasy. This mass ecstatic experience is seen as capable of being fused into a collective force which is seen as having the power to achieve the unification of Korea. The *minjung*, formerly marginalised in recorded history, thus become the subject and central force in history. *Minjung* culture, according to the *minjung* theorists, is therefore a mainstream culture, a "methodology of redemption"⁵⁶, an inevitable force moving towards the second perfect cycle of the world (*huch'on kaebyok*).

It should be noted, however, that the search for Korean identity, pride and self-reliance, through the revival of cultural tradition, especially through affirming the 'Koreanness' in the "best of Korean thought"⁵⁷, was not exclusively advocated by the proponents of the *minjung* cultural movement. Although this search stemmed from a populist source, it was ironically propagated by President Pak Chong-hui who, in 1972 after promulgating his Yushin constitution, officially endorsed the Confucian precept, "loyalty to the state and filial piety (*ch'unghyo sasang*), as the

ideological base for the re-establishment of "spiritual armament" against "North Korean communists" and for national security.⁵⁸ This dramatic and epoch-making promulgation of tradition was clearly for the purpose of political manipulation.

Pak and his regime, in the early 1960s, had officially denounced traditional Korean culture, particularly Confucian ideology and ethics, as the "source of nepotism and even despotism."⁵⁹ The New Village Movement (*saemaul undong*), for example, heavily focussed on the modification of Confucian practices and their minimization. The regime considered that "they [Confucian ideology and ethics] irrationally bound people with emotional ties based on familism so that rational behaviour and individualism were almost impossible."⁶⁰ This anti-Confucian stance changed dramatically after the late 1960s, when the Korean-US relationship deteriorated, particularly after the announcement of the Nixon Doctrine which was followed by the promulgation of the Yushin constitution. President Pak declared:

"The best of Korean thought involved loyalty to the state (king) and filial piety, but these have often been forgotten recently. Re-discovery of these thoughts is the rediscovery and redevelopment of the national and spiritual culture."⁶¹

The irony of this rediscovery and redevelopment of national and spiritual culture, which was soon articulated as 'Koreanness' and was at the same time passionately promoted⁶² as the core of the *minjung* cultural movement, was that the essence of Koreanness not only reflected the ideals of the ordinary Korean (*minjung*), but also of the rulers. They consisted of two contradictory ideals, Confucian hierarchical ideology and the Shaman spirit of egalitarianism which idealized the universal equilibrium of

perfect harmony within unity.

The *minjung* cultural movement seemed most structured and potent when supported by the Christian churches. In fact, this intervention by foreign religion, which integrated *minjung* ideology and practice, generated a substantial level of social energy, both in physical and spiritual terms, through national and international networks, for the re-discovery of the Korean people's identity, and national and spiritual culture. An inherent contradiction between the two ideologies, Christianity and anti-foreign *minjung* ideology, was nevertheless evident. Representation of the cultural tradition, such as *madang-guk* and mask-dance, were merely reinterpretations of Korean history by Christian intellectuals and ultimately created a new approach to Korean historiography. In this context, the *minjung* cultural movement in regard to 'Koreanness', on the one hand, was a Christian movement for the universal ideal of egalitarianism and, on the other, provided characterisation for the *minjung* in terms of their own indigenous ideals.

In political terms, the cultural movement generated mainly by Kim Chi-ha and the churches provided distinct and contrasting political rationales to the government and the *minjung* proponents. To the former, the cultural movement provided a rationale for the political re-structuring imposed by the dictatorial Yushin system. Henceforth, the government officially interpreted the concept of "liberal democracy" as the political practice that was possible and realistic only "in long-industrialised societies."⁶³ In the case of Korea, according to President Pak, "Democracy... ought to take a form in which the survival of the state is guaranteed to the maximum extent."⁶⁴ Furthermore, "...individual freedom should be restrained

voluntarily at a time when the survival of the nation and the state is at stake...."65

To the latter, the cultural movement provided the people with a rationale for the right to resist dictatorship. According to *minjung* proponents, "the authority of the state cannot be justified if it does not contribute to a just and humane society."66 They argued:

"The idea that government equals the state comes out of the despotic way of thinking and runs against democracy. Anti-government is not identical to anti-state. Citizens of a democratic state have, for the sake of the state, the right to put forward their demands to the government and to criticise and demand the correction of the wrongdoings of the government, and furthermore, to demand the resignation of the government. This is the point wherein the vitality of democracy lies."67

In summary, the *minjung* cultural movement was akin to a civil war between the government and the people "on the priority of human rights and freedom over state authority."68 It was also a war between the people themselves over the relative value of their political, social and economic consciousness and national aspirations, particularly industrialization and national unification. At this stage, the establishment of *minjung* democracy guaranteeing individual rights and freedoms, still remains an ideal (although some advance has been made since 1987). There is no doubt that 'the second perfect cycle of the world' has not yet arrived.

Chapter Six

Minjung Theology

Historical Overview

'What is the theology of *minjung*?' So Kwang-sun, former Dean of Ehwa Women's University, dismissed for his involvement in the Christian Minjung Movement, writes :

"Minjung Theology is a Korean theology. "*Minjung*" is a term which grew out of Christian experiences in their political struggle for justice over the last ten or more years.

Theology of Minjung or Minjung Theology is an accumulation and articulation of theological reflections on the political experiences of Christian students, laborers, the press, professors, farmers, writers and intellectuals as well as theologians in Korea in the 1970s. It is a theology of the oppressed in the Korean political situation, a theological response to the oppressors, and it is the response of the oppressed to the Korean church and its mission."¹

The concept of Minjung Theology as 'a Korean theology' obviously raises the question of whether or not so-called Korean theology is rather a liberation theology imported from Latin America, or an adopted theory from the writings of Western Europe and North American communities. There is also likely confusion concerning whether Minjung Theology is a Korean version of Latin American revolutionary theory inspired by Marxist ideology. In response to these questions, So Kwang-sun, professedly on behalf of the rest of Korean *minjung* theologians, rejects most vehemently these assumptions or 'suspicions' (the author's term) and asserts that,

"Such a theology would be politically an anathema in South Korea."² His theory and that of other *minjung* theologians who reject these 'assumptions' is based on their interpretation of Minjung Theology as "a political hermeneutics of the Gospel and a political interpretation of Korean Christian experiences."³

What this means, in practical terms, is that, firstly, *minjung* theologians applied theological reflection to the Minjung Movement in Korea and attempted to blend the history of the Korean people with the biblical stories and the stories of the Exodus. From the beginning of Korean Christianity, in the *minjung* theologian's view, the Korean Christians (of the Protestant Church who entered Korea in 1884) took the central role in the national independence movements against Japanese oppression, just as the people of Israel struggled against Egypt.⁴

Secondly, they indentified the characteristics of Korean Christianity as "... the religion of the oppressed "nation" or "race" or "the people"⁵, who have traditionally been nationalistic and political. According to So Kwang-sun, therefore, Minjung Theology along with its struggles was not engineered by, or adopted from, any external source, but is unique in character. So writes :

"It was a rediscovery of a tradition which was there from the beginning of the Christian church in Korea. That is to say that along with its spiritual growth, Korean Christianity has also matured politically and socially. It is this factor that gives Korean Christianity its distinctive character."⁶

The rediscovery of the tradition and the spiritual growth of Korean Christianity, according to So, lies in the historical fact

that, unlike the commitments of the Korean Christians in the national independence movements, Christian missionaries in Korea, who were largely American Protestants, were mainly pro-Japanese. They maintained the view that the spirit of Christianity must be separated from politics and state. In spite of the American missionaries' dogmatic stance, the Korean church developed and expanded its characteristics as a Christian and oppressed people. These characteristics were exemplified in The March First Movement and national movements such as the Evening School Movement (*yahak undong*) and the Rural Enlightenment Movement (*nongch'on kyemong undong*) of the 1920s. According to So, Christian participation in the Minjung Movement from the 1970s was, therefore, a rediscovery of the characteristic tradition of the Korean Church and its people who had long struggled for social and political justice.

So adds a further point which helped Korean Christians to trace and rediscover their Christian roots in the 1970s, namely the meetings and activities organised by Protestants who, in preparation towards the centennial year of the Protestant mission in Korea in 1984, created "almost a theological fad to look back on the traditions of the Korean church."⁷ Active communication between Christians and other religious groups, such as Buddhists and Confucian believers, is the result of these efforts of the 70's, including better understanding by Christians of Korean Shamanism and Buddhism.

It is evident that most *minjung* theologians are greatly "... influenced by modern theological schools of thought such as Liberation Theology, 'Missio dei' Theology, Asian Theology and the Korean "Indigenization of Theology" movement...."⁸ Hence they applied a similar interpretation to theological issues such

as 'liberation' or 'God's mission', linked them closely with the issue of human rights, and at the same time, adopted a new approach to theology in view of their own historical, cultural and political perspective.

Whilst the Minjung Movement is essentially a secular phenomenon, it has gained much of its momentum through Christian elements who have developed a *minjung* ideology theology that professes concern about the poor and calls for the legitimacy of relevant action in the economic and political arena. For Catholics this theological perspective was recognised by the Vatican Council (1962-1964).

The document 'Gaudium et Spes' stated:

"Never before today has man been so keenly aware of freedom, yet at the same time, new forms of social and psychological slavery make their appearance."⁹

"As a result very many persons are quite aggressively demanding those benefits of which with vivid awareness they judge themselves to be deprived either through injustice or unequal distribution."¹⁰

The encyclical goes on to declare that:

"Christians who take an active part in modern socio-economic development and defend justice and charity should be convinced that they can make a great contribution to the prosperity of mankind and the peace of the world."¹¹

This statement removed any possible question about the Catholic Church's positive judgment on direct social action as a logical expression of Christian commitment. This action extended even to

the political sphere. "She [the church] has the right to pass moral judgments, even on matters touching the political order, whenever basic personal rights or the salvation of souls make such judgments necessary."¹²

The General Conference of the Latin American Episcopacy (CELAM) of 1968 built on the more activist approach of Vatican 11.

'Liberation theology' was born and quickly gained wide acceptance, including amongst many Catholics in South Korea. However, its spread needed an issue, and this was provided by the repressive Yushin policy of Pak Chong-hui. Incidents such as the accusation that the Seoul Metropolitan Mission was plotting to overthrow the Government led to trials of a number of Christian Church ministers. However, the prosecution of twenty one members of the People's Revolutionary Party (PRP) in 1974 stimulated a more significant response from a broader spectrum of church leaders. Christians formed support groups for families of the accused and Catholic priests issued declarations of support.¹³

The poet Kim Chi-ha was also active in his defence of the PRP groups, and as a consequence Kim himself was accused of being a Communist, and was subsequently sentenced to life imprisonment. One foreign missionary was deported as a result of his role, but not before he had organised the Urban Industrial Mission ministry (UIM).¹⁴ Nevertheless, eight of the twenty one PRP members accused were executed.

Minjung Theology was seen in action in the manner in which the Christian community handled the PRP case. These features included ecumenism, identification with the dispossessed against the state, and courage in the face of police and Korean Central Intelligence Agency (KCIA) intimidation. In the context of the

PRP case (1973) the National Council of Churches called for a renewal of Christianity "by deepening our theological thinking, by our clear stance and solidarity with the oppressed and the poor...and we should prepare ourselves for martyrdom, if necessary..."¹⁵ This declaration was a charter for Christians to become involved in politics as an act of faith which soon became the foundation for a new theology, 'theology of *Han*' or 'Minjung Theology'. Its primary concern, therefore, lay on the recognition of basic human rights and freedom. Subsequently, the Christian leaders and theologians declared:

"Man is the image of God, and therefore he is a precious being. This means that men cannot be used as instruments. Instruments and laws are permissible only in so far as they serve to guarantee human rights. Institutions and laws exist for men; men do not exist for them."¹⁶

Christian leadership was provided not just by church leaders, but also by laymen such as Kim Tae-jung and Kim Chi-ha, both Catholics, who risked their lives in speaking out. Church support for their *minjung* thought was reaffirmed in March 1976 when the 'Declaration for the democratic salvation of the nation (*Minju Kuguk Sononso*)' was issued at a mass at Myong-dong Cathedral, Seoul. The Declaration was signed by Kim Tae-jung, Yun Po-son (former President), Chong Il-hyong (former Foreign Minister), General Kim Kwan-sok (Secretary, National Council of Churches), Yi U-jong (activist), Ham Sok-hon (Philosopher), and three leading *Minjung* theologians: So Nam-dong, An Pyong-mu and Mun Tong-hwan. As a result of their public stance, all of these, and other signatories were harassed by the KCIA and several were imprisoned.

In the ensuing years the repression of the Christian Minjung Movement did not abate. Under Chon Tu-hwan many opposition leaders were oppressed and often imprisoned. However, while Minjung Theology developed in parallel with the Minjung Movement, it struggled to reconcile theory with reality, for the 'passover' from slavery, the ultimate object of their endeavours, just did not eventuate. In many ways the *minjung* ideology of the 1980s focussed as much on the plight of oppressed *minjung* leaders as on the 'dispossessed' masses. Government intervention in the ministry of the Christian clergy forced several out of their churches into forming '*hyonjang*' church communities - that is 'on the spot', wherever services may be appropriate. Such communities often included dismissed professors, ex-reporters, ex-prisoners and the families of prisoners. Various *Koinonia* groups, through studying issues and providing support, also participated in *minjung* action. These included branches of the Korean Student Christian Federation, the Christian Ecumenical Youth Council, universities and seminaries, the (Catholic) Priests Corps for the Realization of Justice, the Young Christian Workers (YCW), the Catholic Farmers Association and the Justice and Peace Commission.

Minjung Theology defines 'the people' as the 'subjects of history', that is. as those who shape history. It is an activist ideology which posits that God wants the socio-economic-political order to change and that Christians are the instruments of His will. As beliefs are shaped by experience, Minjung Theology is a theology of praxis; and as *minjung* experience has been one mainly of suffering, its theology is energized by *han*. "The four noble truths of Minjung Theology are: (1) that *han* comes from being victimized by oppressors; (2) oppressors oppress because of greed; (3) oppressors must cut (*tan*) their greed; and (4) when

the oppressed finally succeed, they must tan their natural tendency to become greedy oppressors themselves."17

Consistent with Korean folk tradition this theology calls for a Christ, a Messiah, a saviour. Themes, such as the afflicted Israelites and liberation from Egypt, are readily applied to the *minjung* condition. The end purpose is the Promised Land. Jesus was placed in the role of liberator, at a time when the Israelites were ruled by Rome. The resurrection was a victory over death and a passage to the promised eternal life. Minjung Theology is therefore a theology of liberation.

Whilst Christianity, taught by foreign missionaries, exerted an enormous influence on Minjung Theology, some Christian elements in Korea resisted the foreign influence, particularly conservative Presbyterians. Many missionaries attempted to entirely spiritualise theology, to take it entirely out of politics and nationalistic objectives. However, their theology did not fit well with *minjung* thinking, and a Presbyterian group, led by Kim Che-jin, broke away from their conservatism as early as 1940 and established an early form of theological nationalism without a foreign influence. Kim's vision persists through the Han'guk Theological Seminary where Professors Mun Ik-hwan (gaoled most recently in 1989 for an illegal trip to Pyongyang) and Mun Tong-hwan continue the message that the Korean church must face the socio-political issues of today directly as a mature independent church. This element of the Presbyterian church is now a leading exponent of Minjung Theology.

An important aspect of Minjung Theology is the Christian expression of belief in ritual, which represents to many Koreans an extension of shaman ritual. Shaman ritual is widely practised

not just in its traditional form by *mudang* (Shaman priestess), but also by students who conduct ceremonies full of shaman symbolism to exorcise the evil spirits which support the oppression around them. Mixed into these rituals is Christian prayer, thus marrying the *mudang-gut* (shaman ritual) with Christian prayer and liturgy. Korean mask drama which is heavily embellished with shaman ritual, provides a "ritual disguise"¹⁸ for *minjung* self expression, especially of *han*. Such ritual is a theological event in itself and leads to revelation of religious truth, which is not seen as a static dogma taught from a book, but as an interpretation of the cumulative *minjung* experience.

Liberation Theology of the type developed chiefly in Latin America, bears many similarities to Minjung Theology, as both represent activist liberation ideology and identify themselves with the oppressed. However, many Korean theologians claim, as does So Kwang-sun, that liberation theology is irrelevant in Korea, arguing that Minjung Theology must come from the *minjung* themselves, that is, from their growing consciousness of themselves as the subjects of history. As Koreans, their experience is unique and their theology must address that uniqueness. It cannot, therefore originate from external influences. The Bible provides the necessary framework for the interpretation of events and history as a whole, including the role of the will of God, the place of the Messiah in the attainment of liberation, and the collective oneness of the people.

Mainstream churches remain ambivalent about Minjung Theology. While the Catholic Church hierarchy does not officially propound Minjung Theology as such, Catholics, including many clergy, are highly visible in its practice. The roles of leaders such as

Cardinal Stephen Kim Su-hwan, Kim Tae-jung, Bishop Daniel Chi Hak-sun and Fr. Ch'oe Ki-sik have been prominent. Many Catholic organisations and publications have persistently promoted the cause of human rights throughout the 1970s and 1980s. However, in strictly theological terms, the Catholic Church has not accepted the radical Minjung Theology which abrogates a top down infallible doctrine of faith and morals, and looks to theological revelation through *minjung* events, with the *minjung* as the people of God and the subjects of theological history. The larger Protestant churches, other than the liberal wing of the Presbyterian church, while committed to community service and social welfare, have in the main been too conservative to embrace Minjung Theology and have avoided class struggle issues and confrontation with the Government. Many fundamentalists and pentecostal protestants see Minjung Theology as a communist front and as a fundamentally flawed teaching.

What then is Minjung Theology if it is to be more than the ritualisation of *han* and political activism by Christians. In this regard it is useful to examine the theories of Professor So Nam-dong who during his life time was one of the most influential theologians and was acknowledged as the one "who initiated Minjung Theology."¹⁹ According to So, "the most important task of theology is to deal with the relationship between the revelation of God and the social and material infrastructure."²⁰ His position relies on basic Christianity, acting out Jesus' own life to the point of martyrdom and seeing in its enactment the liberating hand of God in action. The parallel between the history of the Jews and the Korean *minjung* is regarded as of the deepest theological significance, linking their struggle for justice and political reform to key Biblical events, as well as to the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. Despite its naivety

in many respects, Minjung Theology has demonstrated its power through the commitment, courage, and capacity for survival that it has generated amongst *minjung* Christians in the face of extraordinary levels of abuse and oppression.

Essence of Minjung Theology : *Minjung*

The essence of Minjung Theology is contained in Kim Chi-ha's perception of the *minjung*.

"The *minjung* are those who have increased and occupied the ends of the earth, revolutionized the world, built societies, and advanced the course of human history. They physically make up the substance of, what we call, humanity. In other words, the *minjung* are those who eat the food produced by their own labor, who till and cultivate the soil, and protect their country and its culture not just with words but with their very lives...."21

In So Nam-dong's view, from the beginning of biblical history (and thus human history) the *minjung* have been "the partners of the covenant with God and the true subjects of human history."22 To strive for their own salvation, they must "retake the power that has been taken from them and used against them and thus restore God's justice."23 In the Korean environment, according to So, the church "should unify God (spiritual renewal) and revolution (structural renewal) concretely..."24 In interpreting God's mission (*missio dei*), he suggests three clear 'references' through which the history of the *minjung* may be interpreted: the Exodus and Crucifixion-Resurrection, the history of the church, and *minjung* history in Korea. He refers to these pivotal theological references as "paradigms"25 which are reactualised or re-incarnated in the present Minjung Movement.

Through examining the socio-economic history of the *minjung*, in the hermeneutical framework of Biblical history, their corporate spirit, especially their consciousness and aspirations, is revealed. So is convinced that "the perspectives or framework of socio-economic history and the sociology of literature will reveal the identity of the *minjung* who will become the subjects of their own history and destiny."²⁶ Political theology, to which Minjung Theology belongs, looks at not only the individual human being but the "social conditions of human existence.... political theology takes the stand that social conditions determine humanity."²⁷ Humanity is thus defined in terms of "the social existence of groups like race groups, classes, sex groups, historical groups... etc."²⁸

With reference to Biblical paradigms, So sees God's self-revelation (God's salvation for human beings) as "a historical event rather than a mysterious religious experience."²⁹ Thus the March First Independence Movement of 1919 and the liberation of 15 August 1945, are interpreted as "events of God's salvation of the nation."³⁰ Paradigms, however, have their own particular significance, for while the Exodus involved a heroic leader who achieved a revolution at a single historical point, the Crucifixion and Resurrection involved an apparent failure whose purpose was a permanent revolution where the *minjung* become the subjects of salvation. "Jesus was the very cry (aspiration) of the people themselves. In this sense, Jesus was truly a part of the *minjung*, not just for the *minjung*. Therefore, Jesus was the personification of the *minjung* and their symbol."³¹

Mark's Gospel in particular is conscious of Jesus' mission to the bottom rung of society, the '*ochlos*' (Mark 3:32,34), the *minjung*. Mark represents Jesus "as one whose existence is

embodied concretely in the *minjung*,"³² so much so that Mark's theology seems focussed on the *minjung* rather than on Jesus. So therefore concludes that "The subject matter of Minjung Theology is not Jesus but the *minjung*... Jesus is the means for understanding the *minjung* correctly."³³ But, in addition, the term '*minjung*' has, according to So, a technical meaning in political theology which should be differentiated from the term '*ochlos*'. '*Minjung*', he argues, "is rather close to the meaning of "the poor" in the Covenant Code (Ex. 20:22-23, 39), in the Prophets, and in the Epistle of James."³⁴ He believes that *minjung* must not be translated but written as '*minjung*', as a special word for a political theological concept.

Jesus himself, as a friend of the *minjung*, criticized the laws of Judaism, challenged the regulations of the priestly rulers, and was ultimately crucified as a political offender. "The crucifixion is the peak in the process of struggle in which the *minjung* become the protagonists of their own history and destiny."³⁵ The Resurrection is interpreted as continuing to live among the oppressed *minung*, effecting their salvation. So argues that although the aspirations of the early Christians took the form of a longing for a millennium, the notion of the Kingdom of God was subsequently adopted, reflecting the symbol of the Utopia. He believes that,

"The symbol of the Millennium which secures social justice must be restored and must run parallel to the symbol of the Kingdom of God which secures the salvation of the individual."³⁶

In interpreting the Bible and the experience of the church, he sees the Holy Spirit as the principle and the power through which

a new possibility for revelation is created. He does not see revelation as being confined to the Bible only. This rather secular approach to theology is "based on hope, revolution, liberation, politics, the *minjung* and the Holy Spirit"³⁷ and, according to So, is the theology of the post-Christian era. In this era, he says, "the *minjung* church and *minjung* theology attempt to deal simultaneously with the purification of the person, which is the realm of freedom, and the humanization of the social structure, which is the realm of necessity."³⁸ This view of theology is similar to that of Kim Chi-ha's perception of the unification of God and revolution.

To understand the process of the humanization of the social structure of the Korean *minjung*, So argues that the method of socio-economic history is significant, especially the fact that the *minjung* must be considered as the subject of Korea's history. The March First Movement brought the reality of the *minjung* to the surface, and has changed Korea's historical perspective to focus on the *minjung* rather than the history of dynasties. The study of Korea's socio-economic history and the sociology of literature certainly helps to identify the reality of the *minjung*, their developing consciousness, and their progress towards social reformation.

As I have shown in earlier chapters, Korea's history shows a progressive development of the social base of the ruling power. For many centuries the *minjung* were the objects of the ruling power. The *minjung* during that time did not attempt revolution but step by step set the pre-conditions for a historical reformation, preparing the way towards a democratic state. When viewed in the light of the hermeneutics of Biblical paradigms, Korea's history can be interpreted as revealing the gradual

liberation of the *minjung*. "Minjung history and theology testify to the fact that the *minjung* overcome with their own power the external conditions which determine and confine them, and become the subjects who determine their own social situation and destiny."³⁹

According to So, the Korean *minjung* today, as members of a movement with consciousness, see their genealogy beginning with the *Tonghak* Movement and continuing through the Independence Club, the March First Movement, and the April 19 Movement. These events and movements he sees as "stepping stones to the onward movement of Korean *minjung* history."⁴⁰ However, the periods in between these events are not to be underestimated as during these periods "there was the progressive formation of the historical consciousness of the *minjung*...."⁴¹

The consciousness and struggle of the *minjung* are, in this view, also very clearly evident in Korean art and drama. Mask drama/dance has a long popular tradition and is filled with *minjung* satirisation of the powerful, criticizing feudal privileges, pretentious ideology and male chauvinism. However, the drama/dance did not offer an effective solution, or suggest revolution.⁴² Moreover, the ruling class often subverted the *minjung* purpose inherent in 'p'ansori' (narrative drama) and t'alch'um (mask dance) by reworking them into the aesthetics and culture of the nobility, "an opium for the *minjung*."⁴³

The task for Korean Minjung Theology, So says, is to "interpret theologically the events which we consider to be God's Intervention in history and the work of the Holy Spirit."⁴⁴ He maintains that this requires not only what he calls "the pneumatological historical interpretation", but also the

"traditional Christological interpretation."⁴⁵ The former asserts that, "I imitate the life of Jesus and repeat in my life the events of the life of Jesus", and the latter that "Jesus of Nazareth has redeemed me from sin."⁴⁶ A key factor in the unique nature of Minjung Theology, according to So, is that it advocates a 'theology of *han*' which he describes in the words of Kim chi-ha as "the unification of God and revolution"⁴⁷ and as:

"the unification of Donghak [*Tonghak*] and Christianity, the unification of the renewal of the human spirit and the revolutionary change for justice in the social structure, the unification of idea and practice, the unification of personal prayer and the corporate Mass, the coincidence of heaven and earth, and the coincidence of worldly food (bread) and heavenly food(freedom)."⁴⁸

So, on the basis of Kim Chi-ha's *minjung* theology, reiterates that the accumulation of the *han* of the oppressed people must be changed and activated into revolutionary energy through the act of 'cutting' (*tan*), "to cut all adherence to the secular world in order that one may be for the revolution of the secular world."⁴⁹ The calling of the *minjung* church is seen as consoling and resolving the *han* of the *minjung*, to convert its destructive energy into a radical revolution where the *minjung* themselves seek their own liberation and salvation.

Han : Its Theological Dimension

It would not be an overstatement to say that every Korean lives with *han*. *Han*, in its unique form of emotion, freezes the minds of Korean people with insoluble grievance and bitterness and, at the same time, paradoxically strengthens them to be typically Korean. In this regard, *han* cannot be separated from the hearts

of Korean people, whether they are wealthy or poor, or powerful or oppressed, young or old, men or women. Poet Kim Chi-ha writes:

"This little peninsula [Korea] is filled with the clamor of aggrieved ghosts. It is filled with the mourning noise of the *han* of those who died from foreign invasions, wars, tyranny, rebellion, malignant diseases and starvation."⁵⁰

On this basis, Minjung Theology seeks a means of salvation and redemption for the aggrieved souls and hearts of Koreans, both living and dead. The etymology of '*han*' is "bitterness, grudge, spite, resentment, hatred, and regret."⁵¹ In the minds of the Korean people, *han* is underpinned by the complex emotion of their sufferings and often requires the power of spirits to provide consolation or to relieve its otherwise permanent pain. In view of history and tradition, So Nam-dong refers to this cultural and hereditary emotion as "the fourfold *han* "⁵², which "is not nature or fate but is human greed and social contradictions."⁵³ Categories of *han* include :

"1. Korea as a suffering nation which struggled through numerous invasions by surrounding powerful nations; 2. Korean people as '*paeksong* ' who suffered the tyranny of their rulers; 3. Women as suffering existence itself under Confucian laws and customs which discriminate against them; 4. The majority of people, near half of the population at certain points in Korean history, who were treated as property because they were registered as hereditary slaves."⁵⁴

In developing a 'theory of *minjung*' along with a 'theology of *han*', So Nam-dong as well as other *minjung* theologians were

greatly inspired and motivated by the Catholic poet Kim Chi-ha and his writings, particularly his memos initially written over the period November 1974 to 15 February 1975 when he was released for a short time from prison. Kim, at that time, was already actively involved in human rights movements and, as a consequence, was arrested and imprisoned by the KCIA. His crime was to write and to speak out for the oppressed people through works such as 'Five Thieves', 'Groundless Rumors', 'Malttuk', 'Sacred Place', and 'Chang Il-dam'. Overall he endured imprisonment over a total of seven and half years until he was finally released on 20 December 1980. An understanding of Kim's writings, particularly his theory of 'Revolutionary Religion' which is illustrated in his ballad "Chang Il-dam" is crucial, especially, to examining the characteristics of Minjung Theology, why and how that is uniquely Korean. A summary of the ballad of 'Chang Il-dam' follows :

"Chang Il-dam was a thief, the son of prostitute and a *paekjong* (butcher). Three generations of his forefathers had each been survived only by sons of prostitutes, and had all been killed; the first (generation) was killed in the *Tonghak* Revolution; the second in the Liberation Movement under the Japanese occupation; and the third in the Korean War being charged as a Communist.

In the tradition of a Korean-style Robin Hood, Im Kkok-jong, Chang Il-dam steals from the rich and gives to the poor. As a result he is imprisoned and, while in jail, he preaches revolution to his fellow prisoners.

He succeeds in escaping from prison and, while hiding in an alley frequented by prostitutes, he witnesses a child being

born to a prostitute. Full of venereal disease, she is close to death. She also has tuberculosis and severe mental illness. On seeing this, he attains the Way and says, "Ah, from this decaying body, new life comes forth! It is God who is born!" He genuflects and kisses her feet, saying "Oh, my mother, God lives in your womb. God is at the very lowest place."

He becomes involved in the liberation movement, and enters into debate with Urban Industrial Mission pastors, Catholic priests, intellectuals, professors, labor union leaders, Buddhist monks, and social workers, and attacks their hypocrisy. In the course of this conflict and dialogue he becomes enlightened in his understanding.

With his disciples he forms a "Community of *Koinonia*" at Mt Kyeryong where he teaches the philosophy of *tan*. *Tan* means self-denial that eradicates the temptation to pursue greed. It demands that one 'cut' the vicious circle of vengeance and, instead, follow the eternal wayfarer's road to heaven.

Chang Il-dam interprets the *Tonghak* doctrine, "Humanity is Heaven (*In nae ch'on*)", as 'rice is heaven' and the lowest place is heaven, so that uplifting the lowest place is to actualise the justice of heaven. He teaches the unification of God and revolution; the unification of deeds and prayer; and the unification of the food of earth and the food of heaven. His philosophy integrates individual spiritual reformation and social reformation. First one must accept God, secondly one must cultivate God, thirdly one must practice God, and fourthly one must live in God.

Chang Il-dam and his disciples finally march to Seoul, proclaiming 'Haedong Kung'nak (Paradise on the Korean peninsula)' where rice is shared by all. As he arrives near Seoul, he is arrested through the betrayal of one of his disciples. He is convicted of breaching the Anti-Communist Law and the National Security Law, and of inciting revolution. He is taken out to be executed, but just before he is beheaded, he breaks his silence and sings the song, 'Rice is heaven.'

Rice is heaven

As you can't have all of heaven to yourself

Rice is to be shared with one another

Rice is heaven

As we see the stars in heaven together

Rice is to be taken by many people together

When we eat the rice

Heaven enters into our body

Rice is heaven

Ah, ah, rice is

To be shared with one another by all together

Chang was executed at the age of thirty-three. But a miracle happens. He resurrects three days after his death. However, his head appears not on his own body, but on the body of the betrayer.⁵⁵

In regard to this peculiar ending, Kim Chi-ha writes: "It is an expression of Chang's conflicting thought that this is revenge but at the same time also the salvation of vicious men."⁵⁶ Kim Chi-ha's theory of Minjung Theology advocates a spiritual revival which he named "The Unity of God and revolution."⁵⁷ Kim argued

that spiritual resurrection in a revolutionary religion could only lead people to transform their personal bondage of emotions into positive energy in eschatological hope. Kim writes:

"... resurrection fashions people in God's image, opens their eyes to their own nobility and turns their frustration and self-hatred into eschatological hope. This kind of resurrection changes a selfish, individualistic, escapist anomie into a fraternal, united, realistic commitment to the common good.... This resurrection prevents the people's bitter resentment and moral indignation from evaporating in self-hatred and converts it into a fierce demand for God's universal justice. If necessary, the people's enormous energy may also be directed to a decisive, organized explosion. This is a revolutionary religion. This miraculous conversion which conceived the mystery of revival may also bring a decisive spiritual revival. This conversion is the philosophy of *tan*, the determination to choose the circumstances of one's death, that my hero Chang Il-dam sings about"⁵⁸

He also argues that:

"The church ought to be the comforter to resolve the *han* of the *minjung* and cut the vicious circle of violence and to change it into a progressive movement. For this purpose, churches ought to accept limited violence and ought to be a sanctuary for radicals and fighters who are progressing out of the dark."⁵⁹

In this context, *han* comes out of the structural contradictions in the Korean economic and political systems. *Han* must be changed and activated into revolutionary energy through the act of

'cutting' (*tan*), "to cut all adherence to the secular world in order that one may be for the revolution of the secular world."⁶⁰

***Minjung* Messianism**

Kim Chi-ha's concept of *han* and its dramatic resolution through the character of Chang Il-dam raises the notion of a messiah, a notion which has clear theological implications. Kim, through his ballad, has transcended the *minjung* experience and come to a religious perspective in which there is a role for both a messiah and the church. Chang Il-dam is, in a real sense, the encapsulation of the *minjung* experience through which the *minjung* and their aspirations may be understood.

According to the prominent *minjung* theologian, Kim Yong-bok, the *minjung* "transcend the power structures which attempt to confine them through the unfolding of their stories.... But power as it expresses itself in political powers does not belong to the *minjung*."⁶¹ Because of this relationship to power, he argues that *minjung* should be defined in political terms. However, like many other commentators, he adds that the identity and reality of the *minjung* cannot be achieved through definition but rather through "their own stories - their social biographies."⁶²

It is through these stories that the transcendent dimension of *minjung* history is achieved. This dimension represents "a 'beyond' history which is often expressed in religious form."⁶³ The *minjung* view history, religion, folklore and culture closely integrated and as playing a transcending function. *Minjung* Theology posits such a transcendent - integrated perspective. Kim writes that "In traditional theological terms we may say that they (*minjung*) are under and in a state of sin."⁶⁴ They are a people in transition, "not yet fully the subjects of history."⁶⁵,

but in the process of having their subjectivity being realised. "History is the process in which the *minjung* realize their own destiny to be free subjects of history and to participate in the Messianic Kingdom."⁶⁶

Kim strongly focusses on *minjung* messianism which has emerged out the ruler-ruled conflict. The *minjung* dream of a Messianic Kingdom, he argues, is the core of history for the *minjung* struggle and implies a messiah who "is of the people and whom the people feel to be theirs."⁶⁷ This messianism he says, "is based on the theodicy, which is the 'victory' of the justice of God over evil in history. The Messiah and the people actualize the justice of God in History."⁶⁸

He sees messianism as the general resurrection of the *minjung* "for historical judgement against Evil and its followers."⁶⁹ Corporate subjectivity of the *minjung* is realized in their participation in the Messianic Kingdom where justice, *koinonia* (creative interaction) and *shalom* (peace) prevail. Theologically, *minjung* messianism is equated to Jesus-messianism and presents "a radical challenge to all forms of political, royal and power messianisms."⁷⁰ Its concern is to save and transform, and to place all powers under the rule of Jesus the Messiah who as the suffering servant died and rose to redeem the *minjung* from death in history.

Kim puts Jesus-messianism in Korea in the context of a number of significant other instances of messianism in Korean history. During the Silla period and in subsequent centuries Korea was influenced by the messianic movement and ideology of Maitreya Buddhism. The traditional tale of Hong Kil-dong (who robs the rich and gives to the poor, and finally establishes his paradise)

is in the messianic tradition. The *Tonghak* movement in the mid 19th century manifested itself as a messianic religion among the common people. Its founder Ch'oe Che-u believed that there would be a second apocalypse when the world would be destroyed and a new era emerge. Christianity also had a messianic impact with the Great Revival of 1907 and the national liberation movement against Japan, including the March First Independence Movement of 1919 which was motivated by the combined messianic traditions of Buddhism, *Tonghak* (later known as *Ch'ondogyo*) and Christianity. Messianism is understood by Kim largely as a political process, but "While political messianism attempts to make the *minjung* a historical nothing or an object of its messianic claims, the messianic politics of Jesus are the politics that will realise for the *minjung* their historical subjectivity, thus making them masters of their own historical destiny."⁷¹

The Bible, he notes, contains many models of messianic politics including King David, the Son of Man in apocalyptic literature, images of the Messiah in the prophetic books and, most importantly, Jesus the Suffering Servant. Jesus both identifies with the suffering people and acts as servant to the people's aspiration for liberation. Like the *minjung*, Jesus carried out his messianic struggle on the centre stage of the political arena. Kim therefore believes that a Christian political perspective must be developed in Korea based on : the general resurrection of the people; *shalom* understood to imply Korean unification; and *koinonia* (creative interaction). A key issue in implementing this perspective is the use of power in a political struggle, including the use of force and violence. Kim suggests that in considering these matters it should be understood that "power... has no ontological status in the framework of the Messianic Kingdom" which in reality "is the powerless status of

Jesus the Messiah and the people."72 Nevertheless, he considers that some "measure of political realism" should be adopted, taking into account the notion of people's power. He concludes, "Jesus the Messiah was resurrected as a foretaste and affirmation of the raising of all dead *minjung* to inaugurate the messianic rule of Justice, *Koinonia* and *Shalom*."73

Conclusion

As outlined above, Minjung Theology manifests many flaws and contradictions in both theory and practice. As a theory, firstly, it lacks coherence with Christian philosophy as a whole. The categorization of the *minjung* as "Christian students, laborers, the press, professors, farmers, writers and intellectuals as well as theologians in Korea..."74 not only contradicts the fundamental principle of Christianity, 'love and peace', but also creates unwarranted conflict, enmity and disunity among the Korean people. By early 1987, more than 60 per cent of respondents to national surveys, carried out by various bodies such as the media and Seoul National University, identified themselves as the middle class, and 5 per cent as upper class.75 To dismiss these so called middle and upper class people from the *minjung* is not based on any theological rationale, but on the intransigence of Minjung Theologians who are misleading the spirit of Christianity as a type of liberation theology which "supports practical involvement for the clergy in social and political reform...."76

Secondly, the claim that the Minjung Theology is "a political hermeneutics of the Gospel and a political interpretation of Korean Christian experiences"77 has little substance other than sentiments based on the people's suffering, depicted through personal stories and experience. Individual suffering, however,

is not necessarily related to the fact of one's Christian religion or to Christian suffering as such, even though many leaders of the nationalist movement against Japanese colonization and authoritarian politics can be identified as Christians. Unlike Europe, Korea never experienced religious war or religious persecution as such, but rather punished and executed foreigners as unwanted intruders (including missionaries), as well as those who gave them refuge. The argument that Minjung Theology, represents a political and social methodology is, therefore, flawed. Furthermore, its theoretical intransigence, insisting on the exclusiveness of *minjung* specifications, created a new body of totalitarian thought misleading Korean Christians to "apotheosizing the masses."⁷⁸

Minjung theology is currently under scrutiny to develop a broader perspective and more universal concepts which will support the true characteristics of Christian doctrine involving "transcendancy."⁷⁹ Without embracing this aspect of Christianity, Minjung Theology has no future for national unity, or peace and fraternal love among the people. Many scholars argue that as a theology, Minjung Theology certainly needs a broader perspective, one that is not just limited to class struggle, but one that listens to the needs and experiences of a wider constituency. What will be its theological base if and when the class struggle is won? And why should there be a unique Korean theology? Minjung Theology, largely built on the struggle against exploitation and dehumanisation by oppressors, is too inward looking if it ignores its interrelationship with *minjung* elsewhere in the world, and with mainstream theology, and will offer little more than a futile process of navel gazing and theological hairsplitting while the rest of the world, including the fast growing Korean middle class, passes them by.

Sin Yu-gil, Professor of Theology at Kyemyong University, criticises the uncompromising and selfrighteous standpoint of the *minjung* as "moral arrogance", and points out that such arrogance is the "cause of political disunity" because it destroys democracy in the name of the *minjung*.⁸⁰ Sin concludes:

"Universality and the transcendental-self ego are essential characteristics of Christian theology. When a message from this theology loses the characteristics of universality and transcendency in a restrictive ideological context, there arises a certain danger that the message itself will fall into that same restrictive ideology. Ideology based on theology is the most dangerous ideology of all, because it makes excuses in the name of God."⁸¹

Conclusion

In May 1970, a young poet, Kim Chi-ha, broke the "silence of law and order" in Korean society. He published a satirical poem entitled "*Ojok* (Five Thieves)", caricaturing the political system and denouncing the ruling elite. He declared that the enemy of the people were the rulers of Korean society because these rulers were, in fact, "malicious beasts who live by sucking the people's blood."¹ The shameless 'five thieves', according to Kim, were the "the Tycoon, the Assemblyman, the High-Ranking Official, the Army General and the Cabinet Minister."²

The validity of this accusation was not as significant as the people's perception of the so called 'Five Thieves'. Nor was the literal meaning of the words, '*minjung*' and '*han*', as potent to the opposition movement during the Yushin period as the sentiment associated with these words.

Modern populist interpretations of the historiography and culture of the Korean people, have claimed to give full articulation to the people's thoughts and aspirations, and to provide some insight into the notion of *minjung*. Moreover, these interpretations, which also claimed to be based upon and to represent Korea's cultural heritage, especially the historical suffering of Korea and its people, predominantly hinged on the sentiment associated with the two words, '*minjung*' and '*han*'. These words, according to *minjung* proponents, can not be separated from one another because the life of the Korean people had historically been tied to *han*, that is, to an accumulated sense of insoluble grievance. The general description of *minjung* as the 'oppressed people with accumulated *han* has, therefore,

been adopted by all *minjung* schools of thought as the national identity of the Korean people.

The *minjung* schools of the 1970s and 1980s argued that a re-examination and re-interpretation of Korean history from the people's perspective, based on tradition, culture and thorough Koreaness (implying an anti-foreign attitude as a vestige of past dependency), would provide the best opportunity to revitalize national energy and strength, and to restore the true identity of Korea and her people. The government also endorsed something of a similar historical approach but with a different agenda, which pursued a rediscovery and redevelopment program of Confucian ideology, '*Ch'unghyo sasang*' (loyalty to the state and filial piety). The *minjung* schools, on the other hand, followed their own *minjung* culture revival movement, arguing that the sovereignty of Korea belonged to the people, for they were the masters of history. This movement was particularly strong among *minjung* theologians and Christian left intellectuals, and was successful in attributing to the indigenous rituals of Korean Shamanism the status of national religion.

Nevertheless, it must be noted that these interpretations mainly emanated from a school of influential radical thinkers, the *minjung* school, and neither their treatment of Korea's history and culture, nor my treatment of this school, has been exhaustive. They represent only one perspective of many of the various interpretations and analyses that abound in regard to history, religion, culture and the socio-economy. Numerous factors have played their part in encouraging, developing and facilitating the populist view of history, especially the call by nationalistic social and political movements to transfer the focus of the people's consciousness from culture to politics.

This call was the consequence of particular political circumstances, especially, the promulgation of the Yushin constitution and the phenomenal changes brought about by national development policy which engineered rapid Korean industrialization. Hence, the Minjung Movement of the 1970s and 1980s was the people's resistance or protest movement against government controlled industrialization and against authoritarian dictatorship which, on the one hand, opposed liberal democracy, but on the other, created a newly developed nation whereby increased economic wealth, the expansion of education, public access to the outside world (through public media, overseas education, tourism, etc), and supportive organizations (which had legitimacy in the community, such as tertiary institutions and Christian churches) encouraged greater public debate and mobility. These factors led to a reinterpretation of history, a re-presentation of culture and the development of a *minjung* ideology (*minjung-juui*) which, though flawed in its inherent contradictions, endeavoured to offer the people hope for a new future, and thus attracted immense popularity among people until the collapse of the Yushin system.

However, *minjung* thought, expressed through the Minjung Movement, has not enjoyed a cohesive, unified and ideologically consistent existence, and its future is not assured if there is no improvement in its internal solidarity and no change in its lack of willingness to address the shifting needs of the general public. Above all, if movements like the Minjung Movement are to be effective populist bodies, the Korean people as a whole must be prepared to change their authoritarian hierarchical attitude, particularly in dealing with issues of politics and culture. This authoritarian mentality not only weakened the political appeal of the Minjung Movement, but also and, more importantly,

"...reinforced the rigid class consciousness and the hierarchical order in the political and social system"³ which inevitably contradicted the *minjung* ideals of fraternity, pluralism and democracy in Korea.

Images of *minjung*, as the soldiers of the political struggle under the disguise of mask dance and court-yard drama, were mainly the invention of the cultural theories of the *minjung* school. Images of oppression, historical suffering and spiritual need for communal ecstasy were also their interpretation. There is little evidence, however, to support the argument that the Korean people had historically been nationalistic and united against rulers and foreign powers. Terms such as 'national consciousness' and particularly 'nationalist movement' did not emerge in Korea until the beginning of the twentieth century when Korea was faced with the prospect of annexation by Japan. Although evidence shows that many Koreans resisted for nearly forty years Japanese rule, and the stories of the nationalist movement left their legacy on nationalist sentiment, Korea, as a nation, had always been subject to some sort of dependency. In addition, rulers of Korea, whether of the dynasty, the colonial period, or after liberation to the end of Yushin politics, had enjoyed little unity or harmony among themselves. After the Korean war, the Korean people, including students, on the other hand, were subject to a tightly controlled national policy based on an anti-foreign ideology, anti-Communism. As discussed (in Chapter one), the prevailing characteristic of modern Korean nationalism has mainly been antagonism not only to foreigners, but also to 'outsiders' of any shape or form, such as in reference to internal politics.

Minjung theories were most effective when supported and enhanced

by Christian churches and their institutions. In fact, their foreign ideology generated the massive populist mobilization and energy through re-discovering, re-interpreting and re-educating the people in understanding their own identity and their collective spirit, Koreanness. It is ironic, however, that the essence of Koreanness, particularly Shaman traditional belief, was never before fully acknowledged until Christian theologians pronounced Shamanism as the root of the Korean people and the core of Koreanness. The role of Christian churches, in this context, was an apparent contradiction to the *minjung* ideal, which was intrinsically anti-foreign.

Moreover, this new Korean identity, which considers the ideals of 'Koreanness' as most essential, is actually built on two conflicting ideals, Confucianism and indigenous Shamanism. If a historical basis is sought for a contemporary Korean movement it is not possible to isolate wholly 'Korean' elements since they have intermingled with foreign (mostly Chinese) influences over two millennia. These two ideals are antithetical to one another and generally require opposite human behaviour. The former, for example, requires an authoritarian mentality and operates on the ideal of authoritarian hierarchy; the latter requires an egalitarian mentality and operates on the ideal of pluralism. The underlying mentality of the so-called 'new Korean identity' is, therefore, nothing more than a reintroduction of an ancient mentality which, according to *minjung* proponents, was a key source of Korea's political, social, and cultural evils.

Nevertheless, exponents of the *minjung* cultural movement, particularly through the introduction of mask and court-yard drama as a means of a protest, gave a new impetus to the Korean opposition movement and its solidarity. In this regard, Kim Chi-

ha's influence in promoting collective ecstasy, spiritual possession and Shaman mystification was outstanding. In addition, Kim's prolific imagination and powerful political impact, which enabled the integration of these cultural activities with *minjung* theology, elements of Marxism and political activism, cannot be underestimated. In particular, he gave expression to the people's *han*, and gave the people the lead in using the most potent avenues available to them (drama, literature and the church) to express their protest. The notion of *minjung* culture was thus created as a means of redemption, as a means to mass ecstasy capable of generating revolution and of achieving Korean unification. In this sense, the rulers, especially President Pak Chong-hui recognised the power of the cultural ideals thus evoked, especially the Confucian values espoused, and manipulated them for their own political purposes. No matter how problematic *minjung* ideals may have been, the fact that even the government (political opponents of the Minjung Movement) were led to tap the same cultural spring, was an indication of power of these ideals.

Minjung theology and its proponents, the Christian churches, were the greatest sources of physical and psychological solidarity for the Minjung Movement. In particular, Minjung theology, with its own philosophical discipline and a long tradition of apologetics, attempted to develop a messianic- apocalyptic interpretation of the sufferings of the Korean people, especially of their *han*. The church's social welfare programs, its attempts to protect political dissidents, its belief in the suffering messiah, and its rituals, struck a resonance with many *minjung* proponents who viewed history, religion, folklore, tradition and culture as being closely integrated and thus playing a transcending function.

According to Minjung theology, the Christian notion of a Messianic Kingdom represented the final outcome of history for the *minjung* struggle, whereby the messiah and the people would achieve victory by actualizing the justice of God in history. This notion of the Messianic Kingdom, however, is, in my view, a false hypothesis, because the notion that the *minjung* struggle is only a Christian struggle, organized by people under this single banner, is too narrow. Korea has never experienced a single religious war or any incidence of significant religious oppression (as such) in her past. Furthermore, the perception by Christian *minjung* constituents of the wider non-*minjung* community is not only too inward looking and too exclusionary, but is also contradictory to the fundamental principles of Christianity, love and fraternity.

Under the patronage of the Christian church, both the cultural movement and human rights movement proliferated in parallel in the 1970s and 1980s, reshaping images of Korean people and their tradition in a religious-historical context. The notion of *minjung* culture, based in spiritual tradition and cultural heritage, however, was an invention largely of Christian intellectuals. Kim Chi-ha, So Nam-dong and many other liberal theologians, as well as Catholic priests, were pre-eminent on this area. Their theories of *minjung* culture, reinterpreting folk art and the Korean people's traditional beliefs, ultimately created a modern Korean historiography. In this context, the *minjung* cultural movement represented a Christian movement for an egalitarian ideal.

I have argued that *minjung* thought based on socio-political theory, was also premised on false assumption and contradicted the *minjung* ideal. The leading thinkers of this school were Pak

Hyon-ch'ae and Han Wan-sang: the former saw the *minjung* in terms of the 'proletariat' who were alienated from economic power, the latter saw the *minjung* in terms of the 'excluded people' who were alienated from the three power structures: political, economic and cultural. Analysts of this school, as well as its proponents, have seen the alienation of the *minjung*, the development of the 'proletariat', as linked to national conflict, national partition and national dependence, which were the consequence of the pursuit of a dependent politics, a dependent economy and a dependent culture. The basis of this line of thought, however, contradicts the Korean ideal of fraternity and folk solidarity, for it leaves no basis for reconciliation with the wider community including rulers and capitalists.

In addition, this type of thinking also relies to a large extent on sentiment, especially where the causes of internal conflict are extrapolated to assume the dimensions of national and international determinants of partition and political power. This sentiment is founded on *minjung* claims of their unique Koreanness, but the ideology underlying it relies substantially on the Western social theories of Karl Marx and Christianity, rather than on a Korean philosophy which could have been derived either from Confucianism or from Shamanism.

Marxism inevitably played a substantial role in setting the ideological basis for perceiving *minjung* as social classes alienated from capital and from the product of their labour. Pak Hyon-ch'ae saw farmers as having been alienated from their subsistence lifestyle and forced into becoming either urban poor or wage labourers. Each of these three groups were thus seen to exist in a circulatory process as victims of capitalism. However, his thinking extended to the entire lower strata of the middle

class, whom he argued, did not have sufficient economic power in competition with large capitalists. He thus equated the *minjung* with the proletariat, recruited and 'owned' by the forces of capitalism. Yet he noted that in their economically disenfranchised condition, the *minjung* sought socio-economic reform, and being motivated to struggle against capitalism therefore represented the progressive stratum in society.

While this analysis of proletarianization was constructed mainly in terms drawn from the European experience, dependency, world-systems and bureaucratic authoritarian theories were also seen to be relevant to the Korean context. The semi-proletarianization thesis put by world-systems theorists, however, was not borne out by the Korean experience. Bureaucratic controls, supported by a Confucian social infrastructure, promoted a stable, full-time, cheap and flexible workforce through an absence of protective labour laws or formal wage system, thus facilitating the uninhibited growth of the proletariat, without the need for a semi-proletarian pool.

Ironically, it has been the economic success of Korean capitalism and not so much the struggle against capitalism, which has finally allowed the Korean workers to gain industrial strength in the form of unionism over the past ten years. The reduced capacity by industry to access additional labour, the substantially enhanced economic power of workers and the awakening social awareness of the Korean people as a whole, have combined with other elements of the Minjung Movement to force democratic reforms including reforms in the work place, but in collaboration with capitalism.

The alternate socio-economic perspective of the *minjung* examined

was that put by Han Wan-sang who distinguished two social groups, the ruling and the ruled, arguing that the possession of power determined social stratification and created inequality in the social order. He referred to the Weberian theory of social stratification to contrast the 'culturally ruling groups' with the 'cultural *minjung*' deprived of honour and prestige. He also distinguished between the 'sleeping' *minjung* and the 'awakened' *minjung*, the latter comprising the Minjung Movement, especially those who were prepared to sacrifice themselves in their challenge to the ruling order. Han's broader perspective (as compared to that of Pak) presented a more realistic basis for communal action. However, both economic class and social stratum were valid determinants impacting on the extent to which the Korean people sought radical solutions.

The ruling order under challenge by these determinants was that of a bureaucratic authoritarian state incorporating a coalition of military, security, bureaucratic and business forces. After 1961, a reshuffling of the social order developed, with the creation of a new status stratum comprised of members of this coalition, and new socio-cultural values were cultivated, based on economic competition and efficiency. This new stratum remained insulated from populist forces for nearly thirty years.

From an ideological perspective, both Pak's and Han's theories were shown in this work to contain major flaws. Pak clearly contradicted the Korean national ideal of fraternity, leaving no room for reconciliation or compromise, or for unity based on pluralism. Moreover, his concept of *minjung* did not adequately reflect the mixture of social strata which supported the Minjung Movement following the Yushin policies of the 1970s, and his analysis was shown not to adequately link class conflict with

national partition and political power. Moreover, he used a fundamentally Western ideology to define a phenomenon which was allegedly fundamentally Korean. While Han's view was more broadly based, it also provided only a relatively narrow sociological definition which failed to comprehend the full diversity which underlay the notion of *minjung*. In terms of theoretical integrity, both the theories of Pak and Han contradicted a most fundamental principle of the *minjung*, anti-foreign Koreanness, by borrowing from the Western thought of Marx and Weber.

A key issue addressed in this thesis has been the identification of the *minjung*. I have examined views based on historical etymological references, and others based on sociological grounds. *Minjung* as a term or concept was shown to have become particularly subjective since the 1970s. The preconditions, which qualify individuals or groups as *minjung* constituents, were and remain much in discussion. However, the characteristics of the term are in constant flux, and can not thus be fixed within any specific type of people, or set of circumstances. I have shown that '*minjung*' as a word or term posits not only conflicting premises, but also unfolds an ambivalence in its application. This ambivalence, however, is not the result of its literal meaning, the 'masses' or the 'people in general', but from its employment. '*Minjung*', in other words, has been employed as an element of nationalistic rhetoric (with varying intensity according to circumstances) crudely designed for political purposes, by all parties involved in the civil struggle.

Minjung theory as a whole, as examined through this work, is thus flawed as a formally workable socio-economic theory and from an ideological point of view contradicts its own principle of Koreanness. Nevertheless, the mystique that has been built around

the term *minjung*, acquiring most potency in the course of the Minjung Movement, will not be wiped out, regardless of its theoretical flaws, or inherent contradictions, or circumstantial failings. The sentiment and perceptions associated with *minjung*, especially as the 'oppressed people with accumulated 'han' is no longer a simple view: it has attained a mythical status. In fact, to employ a metaphor used by K.R.Minogue to characterise nationalism⁴, I would conclude that *minjung* theory began as a whining pup on a summer's evening, and ended as a fire breathing dragon that ignited the imagination and nationalistic sentiments of the Korean populace. However, the nation's social conflagration set alight by this dragon rapidly passed as its fiery breath failed to maintain its heat amongst the people. Its ideals and calls for action ceased to be representative of the changing perspective of the majority, and are now, in the main, no longer perceived as conducive to democratic reform in a context of social stability, economic growth and national security.

Notes to Introduction

1. Si-sa-Yong-o-sa, Inc. (ed.), *New World Concise : Korean-English Dictionary* (Seoul: 1982). p. 640.
2. Pak Hyon-ch'ae, "Minjung Kwa Kyongje," (The Masses and Economy) in *Minjok Kyongjeron* (A Theory of National Economy) (Seoul: Han'gilsa, 1978), pp. 16-17.
3. Quoted by Kim Pyong-gol (author not identified) in his article "Minjung kwa Munhak" (The Masses and Literature) in "*Han'guk Minjungnon*" (A Theory of the Korean Masses) (Seoul: Korea Theological Study Institute, 1984), p. 55.

Notes to Chapter One

1. Touraine, A. "Triumph or Downfall of Civil Society", *Humanities in Review*, 1, Cambridge University Press, New York (1982), p.224.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 224.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 224.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 224.
5. Sisa-yong-a-sa, Inc.ed, *New World: Concise Korean-English Dictionary* (1982), p.640.
6. Kim Po-gyun, "Minjung-un nuguin'ga," (A round table talk) in *Wolgan Choson*, February 1989, p. 342.
7. Han Wan-sang's view of the *minjung*, which was recognized very widely in Korean social science, is separately outlined in Chapter 4.
8. Kim, Chong-ch'ol, "Minjung kwa Chisikin," (Minjung And Intellectuals) in Korea Theological Study Institute ed., *Han'guk Minjungnon* (A Theory of Korean Masses), 1984, p.41.
9. Song, Kon-ho, An, Pyong-jik & Han, Wan-sang, "Minjung ui Kaenyom kwa ku Silch'e'- Chwadam," (A round table talk on 'Concept And Reality Of The Masses') in Che-ch'on, Yu, ed, *Minjung* (1984), p.19.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 19.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 25.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 19.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 19.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 20.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 20.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 21.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 22.
18. Paek, Nak-ch'ong, "Minjung un Nuguin'ga," (Who Are The

- Minjung?) in *Han'guk Minjungnon* , p.13.
19. *Ibid* , p. 14.
 20. *Ibid.*, p. 16.
 21. Worsley, P, *The Third World*, London (1964), p. 83-84.
 22. Chong, Ch'ang-yol, "Paeksong Uisik. P'yongmin Uisik. Minjung Uisik," (Consciousness Of Paeksong, Commoners And The Masses) in *Han'guk Minjungnon*, p.158.
 23. *Ibid.*, p. 158.
 24. *Ibid* . p. 160.
 25. Yi, U-song, "Koryo Paeksongko"(A Study Of The Peoples In Koryo Dynasty)(1961), pp. 43-44. It is also quoted in "Paeksong Uisik Pyongmin Uisik Minjung Uisik," in *Han'guk Minjungnon*, p. 159.
 26. Chong, Ch'ang-yol, *op. cit.*, p. 159.
 27. *Ibid.*, p. 159.
 28. *Ibid* . p. 165.
 29. Kim, Chong-ch'ol, *op. cit.*, p. 44.
 30. *Ibid* . pp. 163-69.
 31. Chong, Ch'ang-yol, *op. cit.*, p.173.
 32. *Ibid.*, p. 174.
 33. *Ibid.*, p.177.
 34. *Ibid.*, p. 176-7.
 35. Sin, Ch'ae-ho, "Choson Hyongmyong Sonon," (Declaration of Korean Revolution) in *Han'guk Minjungnon*, p. 407.
 36. Minogue.K.R, *Nationalism* (1968), p. 29.
 37. Suh Nam Dong, "Historical References," in *Minjung Theology* (1983), p. 168.
 38. Park, Il-sung, "Legitimacy in Political, Economic and Social System," in Kim Young-soo eds., *The Identity of the Korean People* (1983), p.173.
 39. Suh Nam Dong, *Towards a Theology of Han*, p. 54.
 40. Kim, Dong-sung, "Han'guk Chisikin kwa Taehaksaeng ui Uisik Kujo," (Makings of Perceptions of Nationalism by Korean Intellectuals And Students), in *Han'guk Chongch'i hakhoebo*, No 23, vol 1, (1989), pp. 7-37.
 41. Jung Hyun, Shin, Tong Sung, Kim , Chung In, Moon and Do Hun Kim, *Han'guk Minjok-juui Yon'gu: Insikjok Punsok (The Anatomy of Korean nationalism: A Perception Anaysis)*, (1988), p.5.
 42. *Ibid.*, p. 15.
 43. Byung-joon, Ahn, *Han'guk ui Chongch'i wa Chongch'aek:Iron kwa Silje* (Politics And Policies of Korea: Theory And Substance) (1986), pp. 97-110.

44. Hans Kohn, *Nationalism: Its Meaning And History*, New York (1965), p. 9.
45. Anthony D. Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 171.
46. Minogue, *op. cit.*, p.16.
47. Lee, Cheong-soo, "Legitimacy in the History of the Korean People," in *The Identity of the Korean People* (1983), p,18.
48. Song, Kon-ho & Kang Man-gil, "Ch'aeng'mori-e," (Introduction) in Song Kon-ho & Kang Man-gil(eds.), *Han'guk Minjok-juuiron* (A Theory Of Korean Nationalism) (1982), pp. 4-6.
49. *Ibid.*, p. 4.
50. Minogue, *op. cit.*, p.154.
51. Lee, Cheong-soo, *op. cit.*, p. 12.
52. *Ibid.*, p.18.
53. *Ibid.*, p. 62.
54. *Ibid.*, p. 12.
55. Byong-joon, Ahn, *op. cit.*, p.106.
56. According to official reports, over 29,000 ethnic Chinese were counted in the 1966 Republic of Korea census, but the number was reduced to 17,000 by 1980. (Figures from United Nations, *Demographic Year Book 1971* [New York: United Nations, 1971], p. 471; and Republic of Korea, 1980 *Population and Housing Report, Volume 1* [Seoul: Economic Planning Board, 1982], p. 168.) Quoted in Nicholas Eberstadt, *Democracy and Development in East Asia: Taiwan, South Korea, and the Philippines*, p. 268. A decline by over two-fifths in less than fifteen years should be noted, especially during the period in which Korea enjoyed the biggest economic growth in its history.
57. Discrimination against the people from Cholla Province, known as Honam *chibang*, for example, is noteworthy in regard to this issue. Economic and bureaucratic favouritism towards Kyongsang Province (where Pak Chong-hui, Chon Tu-hwan and President No T'ae-u had their origin and constituency) in contrast to that towards Cholla Province, initiated by the Pak Chung-hui regime, has set today's characteristics of Korea's political and economic structures.
58. Eberstadt, Nicholas, 'Some Comments on Democracy and Développement in East Asia,' in *Democracy and Development in East Asia: Taiwan, South Korea, and the Philippines* (1991), p. 268.
59. Wing-Tsit Chan, *Reflections on Things at Hand* (New York, Columbia University Press, 1967), pp. 229, 231-232; quoted in

- Martina Deuchler, "Neo-Confucianism in Early Yi Korea: Some Reflections on the Role of Ye," in *Korea Journal*, 15.5:13 (May 1975).
60. Seouldae Kojon Kanhaeng-hoe ed., *Ilsongrok : Kojong-pyon* 19, 22nd 12th month, Kojong sipgu-nyon (1972), p.340; quoted in Chong Ch'ang-yol, "Hamal Pyonhyok Undong ui Chongch'i Kyongjejok Songgyok," (Characteristics of Politics and Economy in the Late Yi Korea's Reform Movement) in Song Kon-ho & Kang Man-kil eds., *Han'guk Minjok-juuiron*, p.18.
 61. Sin, Ch'ae-ho, *op. cit.*, p. 401.
 62. *Ibid.*, p. 407.
 63. *Ibid.*, p. 407
 64. *Ibid.*, p. 410.
 65. Allen, Chizuko T, "Northeast Asia Centered Around Korea: Ch'oe Namson's View of History," in *The Journal of Asian Studies* 49, no. 4 (November 1990), p.796.
 66. *Ibid.*, p. 796.
 67. Yi, Yong-hee, "Problems of Korean Nationalism," in Chung-shik, Chung & Jae-bong, Ro eds., *Nationalism in Korea* (Seoul: Research Centre for Peace and Unification, 1979), p. 56; quoted in Ahn Pyong-joon, *Han'guk ui Chongch'i wa Chongch'aek*, p. 108.
 68. Kautsky, J.H, ed., *Political Change in Underdeveloped Countries*, (New York, 1962), p. 57.
 69. Anthony D. Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 71.
 70. Benjamin B. Weems, *Reform, Rebellion and the Heavenly Way* (The University of Arizona Press: Arizona, 1964), p.8.
 71. Kim Sang-gi, *Tonghak kwa Tonghang'nan* (Tonghak and the Tonghak Rebellion), (Seoul: Taesong Press, 1947), p.284.
 72. O, Chi-yong, ed., *Tonghaksa* (A History of Tonghak) (Seoul: Yongch'ang sokwan, 1940), p. 112.
 73. The editorials of the *Tongnip Sinmun* analysed the problems of Korea as "the accumulated result of the ways of thinking and studying in Korea over the last several hundred years." In its 19 March 1898 edition, the paper published numerous essays concerning the ideological differences between the elite and peasants in Korea at that time. The editorials, 14 June 1898, 19 September 1898 and 9 September 1899 are particularly notable in this regard.
 74. Chong-sik, Lee, *The Politics Of Korean Nationalism*, p.68.
 75. Ernest Gellner, *Thought and Change*, (London: 1964), esp. Ch.7.
 76. George E. Ogle, *South Korea: Dissent Within The Economic*

Miracle, p. 116.

77. Professor Ahn Byung-joon points out the need for cross-recognition of the two Koreas by the outside powers as a means to an 'Asian security process'. See An Pyong-joon, "The Korean Peninsula and East Asian Security," in Robert A. Scalapino, Seizaburo Sato, and Jusuf Wanandi eds., *Internal and External Security Issues in Asia* (Berkeley: Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, 1986), pp. 112-137.

Notes to Chapter Two

1. Yi, Ki-baek, *Han'guksa Sillon* (A New Theory of Korean History) (1990), p. 492.
2. Suh Nam Dong, "Historical References for a Theology of Minjung," in *Minjung Theology: People as the Subjects of History*, (1983), p. 167.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 168.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 170.
5. Ki-baik, Lee, *A New History Of Korea*, translated by Edward W. Wagner with Edward J. Shultz(1984), pp.175-187.
6. *The Four Books : The Works of Mencius*, trans. James Legge (Shanghai: Chinese Book Co.,1930), Chap. iv, Sec. 6. It also appears in Chong-sik Lee, *The Politics Of Korean Nationalism* (1963), p. 11.
7. National History Compilation Committee(ed.), *Han'guksa*, Vol.10, p.565.
8. *Ibid* ., pp. 564-565.
9. Ki-baik, Lee, *A New History Of Korea*, p.250.
10. Chong-sik, Lee, *The Politics of Korean Nationalism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963), pp. 9-10.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 186
12. Two different sets of figures are shown by two eminent historians: according to Yi Ki-paek, 350,000, see Yi Ki-baek, *op. cit.*, p.251; according to Andrew Nam, 400,000, see p.101.
13. Ki-baik, Lee, *A New History Of Korea*, p. 188.
14. Carter J. Eckert, Ki-baik, Lee, Young Ick Lew, Michael Robinson and Edward W. Wagner, *Korea Old And New: A History*, (Seoul: Ilchokak, 1990), pp.115-121.
15. Two rebellions, led by Yi Ching-ok in 1453 and by Yi Si-ae in 1467, drew peasants to migrate to Hamkyong province.
16. *Ibid* . 202.

17. Korean Overseas Information Service, *A Handbook of Korea* (1978), p.103.
18. According to a statistical analysis by Hosuk T. Kang, the number of successful candidates for the higher degree which totalled 33 in King T'aejo's reign (1392-1398) increased to 14,928 in King Kojong's reign (1864-1907). For further details see, Hosuk T. Kang, *The Making of Confucian Societies in Tokugawa Japan and Yi Korea:*, pp. 198-201.
19. Ki-baek, Lee, *A New History Of Korea*, p. 247.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 254.
21. Carter J. Eckert, Ki-baik, Lee, Young Ick Lew, Michael Robinson and Edward W. Wagner, *Korea Old And New: A History*, (Seoul: Ilchokak, 1990), p. 186.
22. Hosuk T. Kang, *The Making of Confucian Societies in Tokugawa Japan and Yi Korea:*, (1971), p. 113.
23. Suh Nam Dong, "Towards a Theology of Han," in Minjung Theology: *People as the Subjects of History*, (1983), p. 54
24. Chong-Sik, Lee, *op. cit*, p.ix
25. Ch'on, Kwan-u, *Han'guksa ui Chae Palgyon* (Rediscovery Of Korean History), p. 367.
26. Chong-Sik, Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 14.
27. Han, Pae-ho, *Han'guk ui Chongch'i* (Korean Politics) (1984), p. 312.
28. Kang, Man'-gil, 'Tongnip Undong Kwajong ui Minjok Kukga Konsollon' (A Theory Of Nation-State Building In The Process Of The Independence Movement) in Song Kon-ho & Kang Man'gil (et al.), *Han'guk Minjokjuui-ron* (1982), p. 95.
29. Chong-Sik, Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 69.
30. Sin, Il-ch'ol, 'Ch'oe Su-un ui Yoksa Uisik ' (Ch'oe Su-un's Notion of History) in Yi, Hyon-hui (ed.), *Tonghak Sasang kwa Tonghak Hyongmyong* (1984), p. 12. The author of this article states that "Si Ch'onju" (Worship of Heaven) rather than "In-nae-ch'on" (Man and God are one being) be recognised as the principle doctrine of Tonghak Religion. He notes that neither books by Ch'oe Che-u, "Tongkyong Taejon" or "Yongdam Yuksa," offer any evidence that "Innae Ch'on" is the principle doctrine. However, these books do provide a number of examples of the "Si ch'onju" doctrine. * Note: the name "Su-un" shown above (note 28) is the pen name of Ch'oe Che-u, the founder of the Tonghak Religion.
31. Kenneth M. Wells, *New God, New Nation : Protestant and Self-Reconstruction Nationalism in Korea 1896-1937* (1990), p. 170.

32. Chong-Sik, Lee, p. 114.
33. Kim, Hyong-sok, *Han'guk Kidokkyo-wa Mijok Undong* (Korean Christian Church and the National Movement) (Seoul: Posong, 1986), pp. 335-82.
34. Chosen shireibu chosei, 1 June 1924: Futei Senjin ni kansuru kisoteki kenkyu, Ch. 6, Part 1, p. 41. (Chosen Mondai shiryosho, vol.6), quoted in K. M. Wells, *New God, New Nation*, p. 98.
35. International Press Correspondence, IX, No.8 (Feb. 15, 1929), 132; quoted in Chong-sik Lee, *The Politics Of Korean Nationalism*, p. 259.
36. Yi Kwang-su, *Na-ui Kobaek* (My Confessions) (Seoul: Ch'unch'usa, 1948), pp.138-139; quoted in Chong-sik Lee, *The Politics Of Korean Nationalism*, p. 240.
37. *Shakai undo no jokyo*, 1936, pp. 1485-1486; Keikidi Police Department. *Chian jokyo* (Security Condition), 1939, pp. 2-3; quoted in Chong-sik Lee, *The Politics Of Korean Nationalism*, p.267.
38. Chong-Sik, Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 278.
39. Kang Man-gil, 'Tong'nip-undong Kwajong-ui Minjok-Kukga Konsollon', in *Han'guk Minjok-juuiron*, p. 107.
40. Carter J. Eckert, Ki-baik, Lee, Young Ick Lew, Michael Robinson and Edward W. Wagner, *Korea Old and New: A History*, p.407.
41. Suh Nam Dong, "Historical Reference for a Theology of Minjung," in *Minjung Theology: People as the Subjects of History*, (1983), p. 170.
42. *Ibid.*, p. 170.
43. *Ibid.*, p. 168.
44. *Ibid.*, p. 170.
45. *Tonga Ilbo*, 21 December 1974. Address at a reception for the National Conference for Unification (UCU); Also quoted in Hak-kyu, Sohn, *Authoritarianism and Opposition in South Korea* (1989), p. 103.
46. Carter J. Eckert, *op. cit.*, p.388.

Notes to Chapter Three

1. Kim Dae Jung, *Prison Writings*, p. 233.
2. 'Declaration', by the Student Assembly of the College of Liberal Arts and Science of Seoul National University, 2 October 1973; quoted in Hak-kyu Sohn *Authoritarianism*, p.104.

3. U.S. Department of State, *In Quest of Peace and Security: Selected Documents on American Foreign Policy, 1941-1951* (Washington, C. C.: Government Printing Office, 1951), p.6; also quoted in Young Whan, Kihl, *Politics and Policies in Divided Korea: Regimes in Contest* (USA : Westview Press, Inc., 1984), p. 29.
4. U.S. Department of the Army, *U.S. Army in the Korean War, Truce Tent and Fighting Front*, prepared by Walter G. Hermes, Office of the Chief of Military History (Washington, DC.: Government Printing Office, 1965), pp.6-7, quoted in Young Whan, Kihl, *Politics and Policies in Divided Korea: Regimes in Contest*, p. 30.
5. Bruce Cumings, *The Origins of the Korean War: Liberation and the Emergence of Separate Regimes 1945-1947* (Princeton University Press, 1989), p. 135.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 135.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 135.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 135.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 136.
10. Carter J. Eckert, p. 349.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 350.
12. Kim Dae Jung, *Mass-Participatory Economy*, p. x.
13. Song Kon-ho, "P'airo-h'u ui Han'guk Minjokjuui," (Korean Nationalism After 15 August [1945]) in Song Kon-ho & Kang Man-gil (eds.), *Han'guk Minjok-juuiron* (A Theory of Korean Nationalism) (Seoul: Ch'angjak kwa Pipy'ongsa, 1982), pp.206-208.
14. *Korea Times*, 18 October 1972.
15. Hak kyu, Sohn, *Authoritarianism*, p.55.
16. 'Declaration for the Democratic Salvation of the Nation' (1 March 1976); quoted in Hak kyu Sohn, *Authoritarianism*, p.99.
17. *Constitution: Korea Background Serious* (Seoul: Korean Overseas Information Services, 1973), pp. 37-38.
18. *Ibid.*, pp. 37-38.
19. Hak kyu, Sohn, *Authoritarianism*, p. 96.
20. 'Declaration', by the Student Assembly of the College of Liberal Arts and Science of Seoul National University, 2 October 1973; quoted in Hak kyu Sohn, *Authoritarianism*, p.97.
21. 'Motion...', *Tonga Ilbo*, 21 October 1974; quoted in Hak kyu Sohn, *Authoritarianism*, p.98.
22. Kim Tae-jung's statement at his trial, 19 June 1976.
23. Kim Chi-ha, "Cry of the People," in *Bulletin of Concerned*

- Asian Scholars* (vol.9, no.12, April-June 1977), p. 38.
24. Young-whan, Kihl, *Politics and Policies in Divided Korea: Regimes in Contest* (Westview Press, 1984), p. 83.
 25. See, Chaengjom: 'Muosi Kwangju ui Chinsang' inga' (theme: What is the Truth of the Kwangju Incident?), *Sindonga*, March 1988, pp. 214-241; 'Kwangju ui Majimak-nal: Naega-bon Ku-hyonjang' (The Last Day of Kwangju: The Scene That I Witnessed Myself), *Sindonga*, May 1989, pp.286- 297.
 26. See the roundtable discussion, 'Why Does Anti-Americanism Grow More Clamorous by the Day?' held on 19 February, 1989, *Seoul Chugan Choson* (FBIS-EAS-89-046, 10 March, 1989, pp. 24-32) among four Koreans: Cho Sun-song, Assemblyman (PPD); Hwang Tu-yon, a high ranking bureaucrat, Ministry of Trade and Industry; Ch'a Yong-ku, Analysis Director, Korea Institute of Defense; Kim Kun-t'ae, Plans and Policy Director, *Chonminnyon*.
 27. Mark Peterson, 'Kwangju nun Chon Tu-hwan Chibgwon-ui Tan'gyejok K'udet'a Yotta' (Kwangju Incident was the *coup d'etat* in Stages for the Chun Tu-hwan Regime), *Sindonga*, May (1989), p. 309.
 28. Many Koreans, particularly intellectuals and university students considered that the political intervention of the US government (or refusal to intervene at crucial time, for example, at the Kwangju Incident) since liberation in 1945, had brought major national conflicts and propped the illegitimate military authoritarian government of Chon Tu-hwan. See, 'Uri-nun Wae Mi-Munhwawon-e Turogayaman Haenna' (Why We Had To Break Into The American Cultural Centre?), *Sindonga Pyolch'aek Purok*, January (1991), pp. 125-126.
 29. *Segye Ilbo*, December 30, 1987. Also quoted in Wonmo Dong, "Student Activism and the Presidential Politics of 1987 in South Korea," in Il-pyong J. Kim and Yong Hwan Kihl ed., *Political Change in South Korea* (New York: Paragon House, 1988), p. 182.
 30. Wonmo Dong, "Student Activism and the Presidential Politics of 1987 in South Korea," in Il-pyong J. Kim and Yong Hwan Kihl ed., *Political Change in South Korea* (New York: Paragon House, 1988), p. 182.
 31. *Ibid.*, p. 183.
 32. Byung Yung Ahn, "Yuwol Minju Hangjaeng-kwa 6.29 Sonon," (The June Democratic Revolution and 6.29 Declaration), in Tonga Ilbo (ed.), *Hyongdae Han'guk* (1988), p. 348. Also quoted in

- Wonmo Dong, "Student Activism and the Presidential Politics of 1987 in South Korea", p. 179.
33. Manwoo Lee, "Anti-Americanism and South Korea's Changing Perception of America," in *Alliance Under Tension: The Evolution of South Korean-U.S. Relations* (Seoul: Kyungnam University Press, 1988), p. 12.
34. "Songmyongso: Miguk un Toisang Han'guk ul Soguk-uiro Mandulji-malgo Ittang-eso Mulrogara" (Declaration: America, Stop Controlling Korea as Your Dependency Any Longer and Leave) in *Poylch'aek Purok* (Special edition), *Sindonga* (January, 1991), p. 116.
35. Chon'guk Taehakwulli Yon'guhoe ed., "Ilbo Chonjin," (A Step forward) in *Hakwon Munje Yon'gu Charyo*, p. 335; quoted in "Minjung Undong kwa Minjok," (The People Movement and The Nation) in An Chong-su et al., *Chonhwan Sidae ui Minjok kwa Minjung Inyom* (an Ideology of Nation and the People in the Transition Period) (1986), p.48.
36. Chon'guk Taehakwulli Yon'guhoe ed., "Kitbal," (A Flag) in *Hakwon Munje Yon'gu Charyo*, p. 287; quoted in "Minjung Undong kwa Minjok," (The People Movement and The Nation) in An Chong-su et al., *Chonhwan Sidae*, p. 48.
37. Chon'guk Taehakwulli Yon'guhoe ed., "Minjung, Minjujuui, Minjok Hyongmyong Undong ui Kibon Kaenyom-ul Chongnib-haja," (Let us establish a basic concept of the Movement for the people, democracy and national revolution) in *Hakwon Munje Yon'gu Charyo*, p. 53.
38. "Ilbo Chonjin," op. cit., p. 53.
39. Hak Kyu, Sohn, "Radicalism in South Korea: Comparing the Park [Pak Chong-hui] Period with Today." Paper presented at the conference, 'Korea 1991 Workshop,' organized by the Research School of Pacific Studies, Australian National University, August 12, 1991. p. 1.
40. *Ibid.*, p.1.
41. *Ibid.*, p.1.
42. Modern Thought Study Society ed., *Pro-Leftist group In Korea* (Seoul: Shin Won Publishing co. 1987), p. 32. For a detailed analysis, see O Kun-sok, *P'alsimnyon-dae Minjok Minju Undong*, p. 88-95; Inyom Munje Yon'guso ed., *Chonhwan Sidae-ui Minjok kwa Minjung Inyom* (An Ideology of a Nation and People in the Transition Period), 1987, pp.47-55; Christian Institute for the Study of Justice and Development (CISJD), ed., *Lost Victory: An Overview of the Korean People's Struggle for*

- Democracy in 1987* (Seoul: Minjungsa, 1988), p. 209.
43. Sim Yang-sob, "P'alsimnyon-dae Sipdae Sagon-ui Hyonjang-eso: Chusap'a Tungjang," (At the Scene of the Ten Major Events in the 1980s : Emergence of the Chusa Faction) in *Wolgan Choson*, (December 1989), p. 168.
 44. O Kun-sok, *P'alsimnyon-dae Minjok Minju Undong* (National Democracy Movement in the 1980s), (Seoul: 1988), p. 90.
 45. Special edition for January, *Sindonga* (January 1991), p. 317. Also see CISJD ed., *Lost victory*, p. 209.
 46. Modern Thought Study Society ed., *Pro-Leftist group In Korea*, p. 41.
 47. Hak kyu Sohn, *Authoritarianism*, p. 16

Notes to Chapter Four

1. Han, Sang-jin, "Minjung Sahoehak-ui Iron kwa Chaengjom", (Social Science Theories and Issues regarding the Masses) in *Sahoe Kwahak kwa Chongch'aek Yon'gu* (Vol.8 no. 1, Institute of Social Science, Seoul National University, 1986), p. 107.
2. Pak, Hyon-ch'ae, "Minjung ui Kyegup-jok Songgyok Kyumyong," (Examination of the Characteristics of Masses in terms of Social Class) in Kim Chin-gyun et al, *Han'guk Sahoe ui Kyegup Yon'gu* (Study Of Social Classes In Korea), p. 49.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 49.
4. David, McLellan, ed., "Peasants and Artisans in Capitalist Society", in *Karl Marx: Selected Writings*, (Oxford University Press, 1977), p 398.
5. David, McLellan, ed., "Bourgeois and Proletarians", in *Karl Marx:Selected Writings*, p.227.
6. Pak, Hyon-ch'ae, *op. cit.*, p. 50.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 51.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 51.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 53.
10. Hagan Koo, "From Farm To Factory : Proletarianization In Korea", in *American Sociological Review* 55 (October, 1990), p. 669.
11. Charles, Tilly, *As Sociology Meets History*, (New York: Academic, 1981), p.179; quoted in Hagan Koo, "From Farm To Factory."
12. According to the analysis of a survey provided by Professor So Kwan-mo of Ch'ungbuk University, the size of the proletariat increased from 36.4% in 1963 to 51.4 in 1983.

This survey distinguishes Korean class structure into three categories: 1) capitalist classes; 2) petty bourgeoisie; and 3) the proletariat. The proletariat consists of: wage and salary workers - 13.5%; production workers - 26.1%; service and sales workers - 7.7%; and unemployed- 4.1%. For more detailed information, see So Kwan-mo, *Hyongdae Han'guk Sahoe ui Kyegup Kusong kwa Kyegup Punhwa* (Class Composition and Class Division in Contemporary Korean Society) (Seoul: Hanul, 1984), p, 46; and for the 'revised theory' of this topic (claims the author), see So Kwan-mo, *Han'guk Sahoe Kyegup Kusong ui Yon'gu* (A Study on the Class Composition in Korea), Unpublished Ph D. dissertation, Department of Sociology, Seoul National University (1987), pp.50-68.

13. Immanuel, Wallerstein, *Historical Capitalism*, (London: Verso, 1983), p. 27.
14. For more detailed information see Hagan Koo, "From Farm To Factory in *American Sociological Review* 55 (October, 1990), p.673; So Kwan-mo, *Class Composition and Class Division in Contemporary Korean Society*, (Seoul: Hanul, 1984) and "A Study of the Class Composition in Korea".
15. Johnson, C, *Political Institutions and Economic Performance: The Government-Business relationship in Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan*; quoted in F. C. Deyo ed, *The Political Economy of the New Asian industrialism*. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1987), p. 6; also in James Cotton, "Understanding The State In South Korea: Bureaucratic-Authoritarian or State Autonomy Theory?," in *Comparative Political Studies* (Vol. 24. No.4 January, 1992), p.527.
16. Hagan Koo, *op. cit*, pp. 673-674.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 675.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 677.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 677.
20. The prejudice against the labour movement and the state tendency to identify labor movement activists as "radical" or "communists", according to many scholars including Bruce Cumings, are the legacy of the United States Military Government in Korea (USAMGIK, 1946-1948) under General Hodge. Furthermore, Syngman Rhee skillfully manoeuvred the anti-communist standpoint of the American government and its representatives in Korea, and used it to eliminate his political foes. In his essay "Human Rights in South Korea 1945-1953," Gregory Henderson writes: "Blanket instructions

to arrest all leftist leaders and agitators were known to have been issued in the 1946-1947 period.... By mid-1947, there were almost 22,000 people in jail, 50-100 percent more than the Japanese had jailed in South Korea. Syngman Rhee... needed the police as protection against leftist foes and as support for his regime." (Gregory Henderson, "Human Rights in South Korea 1945-1953," in William Shaw (ed.), *Human Rights in Korea: Historical and Policy Perspectives* (1991), p. 137.) "The original labor-union movements were increasingly repressed; a right-wing one was established and force-fed by the government. In 1949, Rhee ordered all unions combined into the Korean Federation of Trade Unions. Except in 1960-1961, a truly free labor-union movement has never thereafter been permitted." (*Ibid.*, p.145). See Gregory Henderson, "Human Rights in South Korea 1945-1953, pp.137-145; Also see Bruce Cumings, *The Origins Of The Korean War :Liberation and the Emergence of Separate Regimes 1945-1947*, pp.135-151; and George E. Ogle, *South Korea : Dissent Within The Economic Miracle* (Zed Books Lt, London & New Jersey, 1990), pp. 47-93.

21. Hagan Koo, *op. cit.*, p. 679.
22. Han, Wan-sang, *Minjung Sahoehak* (Sociology of the Masses), (Seoul: Chongno Sojok, 1981), p. 64.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 57.
24. Yu, Che-ch'on, "So: Minjung Kaenyom ui Naep'o wa Oemyon," (Introduction: Content And Appearance Of The Concept Of The Masses) in Che-Ch'on, Yu, ed., *Minjung* (The Masses) (1984) p.23.
25. H. H. Gerth and G. Wright Mills trans., "The Power Position Of Bureaucracy", in *From Max Weber: Essays In Sociology* (Routledge & Kegan Paul LTD, 1967), p.232.
26. H. H. Gerth and G. Wright Mills trans., "Status Privileges", in *From Max Weber: Essays In Sociology*, p. 191.
27. Han Wan-sang, *op. cit.*, p. 18.
28. H. H. Gerth and G. Wright Mills trans., "Status Honor", pp. 186- 187.
29. Han Wan-sang, *op. cit.*, p.64.
30. David Beetham trans., "Gesammelte Politische Schriften", in David Beetham, *Max Weber and the Theory of Modern Politics*, p.80.
31. Hyung-a, Kim, Van Leest, "Political Satire in Yangju Pyolsandae Mask Drama," in *Korea Journal* (vol.31, no 1,

- 1991), p.92.
32. H. H. Gerth and G. Wright Mills trans., "The Prestige And Power Of The 'Great Powers', p.161.
 33. Georg Lukacs, *History and Class Consciousness: Studies in Marxist Dialectics*, translated by Rodney Livingstone, (London: Merlin Press, 1971), pp. 149-222.
 34. Han Wan-sang, *op. cit.*, p.27.
 35. *Ibid.*, p.28.
 36. *Ibid.*, p. 28.
 37. *Ibid.*, p. 28.
 38. *Ibid.*, p. 28.
 39. *Ibid.*, p. 34.
 40. *Ibid.*, p. 34.
 41. *Ibid.*, p. 47.
 42. *Ibid.*, p. 31.
 43. *Ibid.*, p. 33.
 44. James Cotton, "Understanding The State In South Korea: Bureaucratic-Authoritarian or State Autonomy Theory?," in *Comparative Political Studies* (Vol. 24. No.4 January, 1992), p.527.
 45. *Ibid.*, p. 527.
 46. Han Wan-sang, *op. cit.*, p. 195.
 47. *Ibid.*, p. 195.
 48. Ch'oi Woo-sang and Han Hwa-gap, *Kim Dae Jung Conscience In Action*, (Seoul: Chungdo Publishing Co.1988), p. 14.
 49. Kim Dae-jung, *Prison Writings*, translated by Ch'oi Song-il and David R. McCann, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), cover page.
 50. *Ibid.*, p. 232.
 51. Kim Dae Jung, *Mass-Participatory Economy: A Democratic Alternative for Korea* (1985), p.x.
 52. *Ibid.*, p. 2.
 53. *Ibid.*, p. 227.
 54. Han Wan-sang, *op, cit.*, p. 50.
 55. Han Sang-jin, "Minjung Sahoehak-ui 'Minjung-non Pip'an," (Criticism of the Social Science Theories of *Minjung* Based on the Masses) in *Sindonga*, (April 1987), p.513.
 56. Newsreview ed., "Challenges facing 'Minjok' Literature Examined," in *Newsreview* (March 9, 1991), p. 28.

Notes to Chapter Five

1. Kim Chi-ha, "A Declaration of Conscience," in *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars*, IX:2 (April-June 1977), p. 10.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 11.
3. Ogle, George E., *South Korea: Dissent Within The Economic Miracle*, p. vii.
4. See Choi Jang-jip, *Labour and Authoritarian State: Labour Unions in South Korean Manufacturing Industries, 1961-1980*, Koryo University Press (1989).
5. Kim Chi-ha, *Kim Chi-ha's Poetry: Hwangt'o*, p. 103.
6. Suh, Kwang-sun David, *op. cit.*, p. 29.
7. Hyung-a Kim Van Leest, "Political Satire in Yangju Pyolsandae Mask Drama," in *Korea Journal* (vol.31, no 1, 1991), p. 87.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 87.
9. Choi Chung-moo, "Minjung Cultural Movement: Politics of Folk Culture and Nationalism," paper presented at the Conference on Korea's Minjung Movement: The Origin and Development of Populist Nationalism, November 1989, at Indiana, p. 9.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 9
11. Kim Yong-su, "Legitimacy of Korean Traditional Culture and Thought," in *The Identity of the Korean People*, p. 124.
12. See Benedict Ruth F, *The Chrysanthemum and the sword : Patterns of Japanese Culture* (1954), p. 223.
13. See Hosuck T, Kang, pp. 122-128.
14. Yi He-ku, *A History of Korean Music* (1970), p. 33.
15. Kim Chi-ha, *I Kamun Nal-e Pigurum* (The Rainy Cloud In These Drought Times) (1988), pp.28-29.
16. Wallechinsky David, *The Complete Book Of The Olympics* (1984), pp.52-53.
17. Paek Ki-wan, "Minjok kwa Kut," (Nation and Shaman Ritual) in Minjok-gut Hoe ed., *Minjok kwa Kut* (1987), title page.
18. Younghak, Hyun, "A Theological Look at the Mask Dance in Korea," in Kim Yong-bock (ed.), *Minjung Theology : People as the Subjects of History*, p. 46.
19. Suh Nam Dong, "Towards a Theology of Han," in *Minjung Theology*, p.64.
20. Choi Chung-mu, *op. cit.*, p.12.
21. Suh Nam Dong, "Towards a Theology of Han" p.60.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 60.
23. Clark, Donald N., *op. cit.*, p. 19.
24. Suh Nam Dong, "Towards a Theology of Han" p. 58.
25. Ch'ae Hui-wan, *Kongdongch'e ui Ch'um Sinmyong ui Ch'um* (Dance

- for Unity [and] Esctacy) (1985), p. 109.
26. Suh Nam Dong, "Towards a Theology of Han" p. 53.
 27. Clark, Donald N., *op. cit.*, p. 20.
 28. Ch'ae Hui-wan, *op. cit.*, p. 157.
 29. *Ibid.*, p. 162.
 30. *Ibid.*, p. 102.
 31. *Ibid.*, p. 102.
 32. Kim Chi-ha, "Saengmyong ui Tamjija-in Minjung" (*Minjung Are The Carriers Of Life*), in *Hang'uk Minjungnon*, p.515.
 33. *Ibid.*, p. 515.
 34. *Ibid.*, p. 528.
 35. *Ibid.*, p. 496.
 36. Kim Chi-ha, "A Declaration of Conscience," in *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars*, IX:2 (April-June 1977), p.10.
 37. *Ibid.*, p. 11.
 38. Kim Chi-ha, "Saengmyong ui Tamjija-in Minjung", in *Han'guk Minjungnon*, p. 490.
 39. *Ibid.*, p. 491.
 40. *Ibid.*, p. 531.
 41. *Ibid.*, p. 491.
 42. *Ibid.*, p. 531.
 43. Park In-song, "Saengmyong ui Segyegwan: Kim Chi-ha Sasang ui Munjejom kwa Kwaje e Taehae (A World View Of Life - About The Concerns And The Subjects Of Kim Chi-ha's Thought)", in *Kim Chi-ha: Ku ui Munhak kwa Sasang (Kim Chi-ha : His Literature And Thought)* (1984), p.172-174.
 44. *Ibid.*, pp.172-174.
 45. Ko Un, "Kim Chi-ha: Poet of Blood and Fire," in *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars*, IX:2 (April-June 1977), p.24.
 46. Suh Nam-dong, "Towards a Theology of Han", p. 57.
 47. *Ibid.*, p. 57.
 48. Ko Un, *op. cit*, p. 24.
 49. Kim Chi-ha, "A Declaration of Conscience," in *Bulletin.*, p. 9.
 50. *Ibid.*, p. 10.
 51. *Ibid.*, p. 10.
 52. *Ibid.*, p. 10.
 53. Choi Chung-moo, *op. cit.*, p. 2.
 54. Paek Ki-wan, "Minjok kwa Kut (Nation and Shaman Ritual)," *Minjok-gut Hoe ed., Minjok gwa Kut* (1987), p. 12-13.
 55. *Ibid.*, p. 12-13.
 56. Choi Chung-moo, *op. cit.*, p.17.

57. President Pak, at the annual inspection of the Ministry of Education, 4 February 1976. *Ibid.*, 5 February 1976. Quoted in, Hak-Kyu Sohn, *Authoritarianism*, p. 93.
58. President Pak at his annual inspection of the Board of Unification. *Ibid.*, 11 February 1976. Quoted in, Hak-Kyu Sohn, *Authoritarianism*, p. 92.
59. Kim Kwangok, "Socio-Cultural Implications of the Recent Invention of Tradition in Korea: An Overview," in *Papers of the British Association for Korean Studies* (1991), p.11.
60. *Ibid.*, p. 12.
61. President Pak, at the annual inspection of the Ministry of Education, 4 February 1976. *Ibid.*, 5 February 1976. Quoted in, Hak Kyu Sohn, *Authoritarianism*, p 93.
62. See Kim Kwangok, *op. cit.*, p., especially pp. 10-16.
63. Interview with a Swedish newspaper, 4 January 1976, cited in *Tonga Ilbo*, 5 January 1976.
64. *Ibid.*
65. President Pak's comment at the annual inspection of the Ministry of Justice, *Tonga Ilbo*, 4 January 1977.
66. 'An affirmation', adopted at the International Consultation sponsored by NCKK, 25-27 November 1976, mimeograph. Quoted in, Hak Kyu Sohn, *Authoritarianism*, p.101.
67. 'Declaration of the Nation', National Congress for the Restoration of Democracy (Minju Hoebok Kungmin Hoeui) NCRD, 27 November 1974. Quoted in, Hak Kyu Sohn, *Authoritarianism*, p.101.
68. Hak Kyu Sohn, *op. cit.*, p. 101.

Notes to Chapter Six

1. David, Kwang-sun, Suh, "Minjung and Theology in Korea : A Biographical Sketch of an Asian Theological Consultation," in Kim Yong-bock (ed.), *Minjung Theology : People as the Subjects of History*, p. 18.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 18.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 19
4. Kim, Yong-bock, "Korean Christianity as a Messianic Movement of the People," in *Minjung Theology*, pp.106-113.
5. David, Kwang-sun, Suh, *op. cit.*, p.21.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 19.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 20.
8. Gustavo Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, 1973. Also

- quoted in Kim, Young-ho, *Minjung Education Through Minjung Stories*, Unpublished MA thesis, University of California, Berkeley, 1986, p.16.
9. Walter M. Abbott, S.J and Joseph Gallagher (eds.) *The Documents Of Vatican II : With Notes and Comments by Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox Authorities*, 1966, p.202.
 10. *Ibid.*, p. 206.
 11. *Ibid.*, p. 282.
 12. *Ibid.*, p. 289.
 13. George E. Ogle, *Liberty to the Captives* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1977), p. 130.
 14. Rev. George E. Ogle, a Methodist missionary from the United States, was deported on 14 December 1974. See George E. Ogle, *South Korea: Dissent Within The Economic Miracle* (London & New Jersey: Zed Books Ltd, 1990).
 15. 'Theological Declaration of Korean Christians, 1973' in *Five Beneath The Foot*, 1984, pp. 80-81.
 16. 'Han'guk Kurisudoin-ui Sinhak-jok Songmyong' (Theological Statement of Korean Christians), signed by 66 theologians and church leaders, 18 November 1974, pamphlet; quoted in Hak kyu, Sohn, *Authoritarianism*, pp. 99-100.
 17. Clark, Donald N., "Growth And Limitations of *Minjung* Christianity in South Korea", presented at the Conference on Korea's *Minjung* Movement : The Origin and Development of Populist Nationalism, November 12-14 1989 at Indiana University, Bloomington, p.12.
 18. *Ibid.*, p. 20.
 19. Kim, Young-ho, *op. cit.*, p.19.
 20. Suh, Nam-dong, "Cultural Theology, Political Theology and *Minjung* Ideology : A review of Choan Seng Song's *Third-Eye Theology* (1979), *The Compassionate God* (1982), and *Tell Us Our Names : Parables for Folk Theology* (1983), in *Theological Thought: the Quarterly of the Korea Theological Studies Institute*, XLII (Fall 1983), translation distributed by the North American Coalition on Human Rights in Korea.
 21. Quoted in Suh Nam Dong, "Historical References for a Theology of *Minjung*" in *Minjung Theology*, p. 155.
 22. *Ibid.*, p. 156.
 23. *Ibid.*, p. 156.
 24. *Ibid.*, p. 156.
 25. *Ibid.*, p. 157.
 26. *Ibid.*, p. 157.

27. *Ibid.*, p. 158.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 158.
29. *Ibid.*, p. 158.
30. *Ibid.*, p. 158.
31. *Ibid.*, p. 159.
32. *Ibid.*, p. 160.
33. *Ibid.*, p. 160.
34. *Ibid.*, p. 160.
35. *Ibid.*, p. 161.
36. *Ibid.*, p. 163.
37. *Ibid.*, p. 166.
38. *Ibid.*, p. 167.
39. *Ibid.*, p. 170.
40. *Ibid.*, p. 173.
41. *Ibid.*, p. 173.
42. For a detailed analysis, see Hyung-a Kim Van Leest, "Political Satire in Yangju Pyolsandae Mask Drama" in *Korea Journal* (Vol. 31 No.1 Spring 1991), pp. 87-109.
43. Suh Nam Dong, "Historical References for a Theology of Minjung", p. 176.
44. *Ibid.*, p. 178.
45. *Ibid.*, p. 179.
46. *Ibid.*, p. 179.
47. *Ibid.*, p. 179.
48. *Ibid.*, p. 179.
49. *Ibid.*, p. 180.
50. Kim Chi-ha, *Kim Chi-ha's Poetry: Hwangt'o (Yellow Earth)*, Reprinted in 1984, p. 103.
51. Si-sa-Yong-o-sa, Inc.(ed.), *The New World Concise Korean-English Dictionary* (1989), p. 1709.
52. Suh Nam Dong, "Towards a Theology of Han" in *Minjung Theology*, p.54.
53. *Ibid.*, p. 58.
54. *Ibid.*, p. 54.
55. Kim Chi-ha, *Gold Crowned Jesus and Other Writings* (1978), pp.27- 30; Suh Nam Dong, "Towards Theology of Han", pp.62-65.
56. Quoted in Suh Nam Dong, "Towards a Theology of Han" in *Minjung Theology*, p. 64.
57. Kim Chi-ha, "A Declaration of Conscience" in *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars*, IX:2 (April-June, 1977), p.11.
58. *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars*, IX:2 (April-June, 1977), p.11.

59. Quoted in Suh Nam Dong, "Towards Theology of *Han*", pp. 61-62.
60. Suh Nam Dong, Historical References for a Theory of *Minjung*, p. 180.
61. Kim Young-bock, "Messiah and *Minjung*: Discerning Messianic Politics over against Political Messianism," in *Minjung Theology*, p. 185.
62. *Ibid.*, p. 186.
63. *Ibid.*, p. 186.
64. *Ibid.*, p. 188.
65. *Ibid.*, p. 187.
66. *Ibid.*, p. 188.
67. *Ibid.*, p. 188.
68. *Ibid.*, p. 188.
69. *Ibid.*, p. 188.
70. *Ibid.*, p. 189.
71. *Ibid.*, p. 193.
72. *Ibid.*, p. 195.
73. *Ibid.*, p. 195.
74. David, Kwang-sun, Suh, *op. cit.*, p. 18.
75. Definitions of the middle class in South Korea vary depending on the criteria used by different analyses. As a result, estimates of the size of the middle class in the late 1980s range from 43 percent to 84 percent. For low estimate see, Su Kwan-mo, "*Han'guk Sahoe Kyegup-Kusong ui Yong'gu* (A Study on the Class Composition in Korea)", Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Department of Sociology, Seoul National University, 1987, pp. 146-148; for high estimate see, *Dong-a Ilbo*, 4 April 1987.
76. Maire Nic Suibhne, "Catholics say the Pope is failing them", *The Canberra Times*, 29 May 1992.
77. David, Kwang-sun, Suh, *op. cit.*, p. 19.
78. Sin Yu-kil. "Minjung ui Sin'gyokhwa-rul Ottokke Polkkosin'ga" (How do we view the 'Apotheosis of the *Minjung*'?), in *Kwangjang* (November 1989), pp. 84-93.
79. *Ibid.*, p. 93.
80. *Ibid.*, p. 93.
81. *Ibid.*, p. 93.

Notes to Conclusion

1. Kim Chi-ha, "Five Bandits," in *Cry of the People and Other Poems* (Japan: Autumn Press, 1974), p. 51.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 40.
3. Paek Wan-gi, "Han'guk Chongch'i Haengjong-munhwa-ui Isang kwa Hyonsil," (The Aspirations and The Reality of Korean Politics and Administration Culture) in Han'guk Chongsin-munhwa Yon'guwon (ed.), *Han'guk Minjuhwa-ui Chuyo Chaengjomkwa Kwaje* (The Essential Topics and Tasks of Korea's Democratization) (1989), p.44.
4. K.R. Minogue refers to nationalism in terms of the story that, "Nationalism ... begins as Sleeping Beauty and ends as Frankenstein's Monster." See K.R. Minogue *Nationalism*, p.7.

Glossary

List of Korean terms

Note: Chinese characters are only shown where they are required to clarify the intended meaning of the words.

	Korean	Chinese
Chamint'u	자민투	自民鬪
chipdansinmyong	집단신명	
ChangIl-dam	장일담	
changgo	장고	
ch'on'guk	천국	天國
ch'unghyosasang	충효사상	忠孝思想
chungin	중인	中人
ch'onmin	천민	賤民
han	한	恨
HanMinjok	한민족	韓民族
haedongkung'nak	해동극락	海東極樂
huch'onkaebyok	후천개벽	後天開闢
hyongjang	현장	現場
inmin	인민	人民
In-nae-ch'on	인내천	人乃天
kongjung	공중	公衆
kungmin	국민	國民
kut	굿	
kwijok	귀족	貴族
kyegup	계급	階級
madang-guk	마당극	
madang-gut	마당굿	
minjokhaebang	민족해방	民族解放
minjung	민중	民衆
minjungminju-juui	민중민주주의	民衆民主主義
minjungminjok-juui	민중민족주의	民衆民族主義
minjungmunhwaundong	민중문화운동	民衆文化運動
minjungundong	민중운동	民衆運動
Minmint'u	민민투	民民鬪
mudang	무당	
myolgong	멸공	滅共

	Korean	Chinese
Namin	남인	南人
nongch'onkyemongundong	농촌계몽운동	農村啓蒙運動
nongjang	농장	農場
okwi-gut	오귀굿	
paeksong	백성	百姓
paekjong	백정	白丁
pan'gong	반공	反共
p'ansori	판소리	
p'ungsok	풍속	風俗
p'yonbob-juui	편법주의	便法主義
p'yongmin	평민	平民
salp'ulli	살풀이	
sammin	삼민	三民
sangmin	상민	常民
simin	시민	市民
sinhungyangban	신흥양반	新興兩班
Sohak	서학	西學
somin	서민	庶民
saemaulundong	새마을운동	
tajung	다중	多衆
taejung	대중	大衆
t'lch'umnori	탈춤놀이	
Tonghak	동학	東學
uisik	의식	意識
um	음	陰
yahakundong	야학운동	夜學運動
yang	양	陽
yangban	양반	兩班
Yushin	유신	維新

Bibliography

- An, Chong-su, et al., *Chonhwan-Sidae ui Minjok kwa Minjung Inyom* (An Ideology of Nation and the People in the Transition Period). Seoul: Inyom Munje Yon'guso, 1988.
- Ahn, Byung-joon, *Han'guk ui Chongch'i wa Chongch'aek: Iron kwa Silje* (Politics And Policies of Korea: Theory And Substance). Seoul: Chonyewon, 1986.
- Ch'on, Kwan-u, *Han'guksa ui Chae Palgyon* (Rediscovery Of Korean History). Seoul: Ilchokak, 1975.
- Han'guk Sinhak Yon'guso, ed., *Hang'uk Minjungnon* (Theory of The Korean Masses), Seoul: Korea Theological Study Institute, 1984.
- Hansin Taehak Che 3 Segye Munhwa Yon'guso, ed., *Han'guk Minjungnon ui Hyondang'gye: Punkwa Hangmun-pyol Hyonhwang kwa Kwaje* (Present Stage of The Theories of Korean Masses : The Present State and Tasks According to Divisional Studies). Tolbegae, 1989.
- Han, Sang-jin, *Pyonhyok ui Chuch'e nun Nuguin'ga* (Who Are The Principal Actors of the Reform?). Tonga Ilbosa, 1988).
- Han, Sang-jin, *Minjung ui Sahoe Kwahakjok Insik* (Sociological Understanding of the Minjung). Munhak kwa Chisongsa, 1987.
- Han, Pae-ho, *Han'guk ui Chongch'i* (Korean Politics). Seoul: Pangmunsa, 1984.
- Han, Wan-sang, *Minjung Sahoehak (Minjung Sociology)*, Chongno Sojok, 1989.
- Im, Hyon-yong, et al., *Kim Chi-ha : Ku ui Munhak kwa Sasang* (Kim Chi-ha: His Literature and Thought). Seoul: Segye, 1984.
- Kang, Sin-ch'ol, et al., *80-nyondae Haksaeng Undongsa: Sasang Iron-kwa Chojik-noson-ul Chungsim-u ro (1980-1987)* (A History of the Student Movement in the 1980s: Focuses on the Theories of Ideology and Organizational Lines). Seoul: Hyongsongsa, 1988.
- Kang, Won-don, "The Genesis of Minjung Theology and Its Fundamental Concerns," in *Christ and Liberation*, Vol.11 No.2, November 1990.
- Kim, Chi-ha, *Sallim: Kim Chi-ha Susanglok*, Tongkwang Ch'ulp'ansa, 1987.
- Kim, Chi-ha, *I Kamun-nal-e Pikurum* (The Rainy Cloud In These Drought Times). Tongkwang Ch'ulp'ansa, 1988.

- Kim, Chi-ha, *Ojok* (The Five Thieves). Tongkwang Ch'ulp'ansa, 1985.
- Kim, Chi-ha, *T'anun Mongmarum-uro* (With a Burning Thirst), Seoul: Ch'angjak kwa Pip'yongsa, 1982.
- Kim, Chin-kyun, et al., *Han'guk Sahoe ui Kyegup Yon'gu 1*, (Study of Class in Korean Society 1). Hanul, 1985.
- Kim, Sang-gi, *Tonghak kwa Tonghang'nan* (Tonghak and the Tonghak Rebellion). Seoul: Taesong Press, 1947.
- Minjok-gut Hoe, ed., *Minjok kwa Kut* (Nation and Shaman Ritual). Seoul: Hang'minsa, 1987.
- National History Compilation Committee, ed., *Han'guksa*, (A History of Korea), Vol.10, Seoul: 1977.
- O, Chi-yong, *Tonghaksa* (A History Of Tonghak) (Yongch'ang Sokwan, 1940).
- O, Kun-sok, *80-nyon-dae Minjok Minju Undong* (The National Democracy Movement in the 1980s). Seoul: Nonjang, 1988.
- Si-sa-Yong-o-sa Inc., ed., *New World : Concise Korean-English Dictionary*, 1982.
- Sim, Wu-song, *Minsong'munhwa wa Minjung Uisik* (Folk Culture And The Consciousness Of Minjung). Taehwa Ch'ulp'ansa, 1978.
- Song, Min-hwa, *Minjung Munhangnon* (A Theory of the Minjung Literature). Seoul: Munhak kwa Chisongsa, 1984.
- Song, Kon-ho & Kang, Man-gil, eds., *Han'guk Minjokjuui-ron*, (A Theory of Korean Nationalism). 2 Vols. Seoul: Ch'angjak kwa Pip'yongsa, 1983.
- Tonga Ilbo, ed., *Hyondae Han'guk* (Modern Korea). 1988.
- Yi, Ki-baik, *Han'guksa Sillon: Sinsu-p'an* (A New Theory of Korean History: New Revision). Ilchokak, 1990.
- Yi, Kwang-su, *Na-ui Kobaek* (My Confessions). Seoul: Ch'unch'usa, 1948.
- Yi, Sang-il, *Han'gukin ui Kut kwa Nori* (The Shaman Ritual And Play of Koreans). Munumsa, 1981.
- Yi, Hyon-hi, ed., *Tonghak Sasang kwa Tonghak Hyong'myong* (Tonghak Ideology and the Tonghak Revolution). Ch'ong'a Ch'ulp'ansa, 1984.
- Yu, Che-ch'on, ed., *Minjung* (The Masses). Seoul: Munhak kwa Chisongsa, 1984.

English Publications

- Abbott, Walter M. S J and Joseph Gallagher, eds., *The Documents Of Vatican 11 : With Notes and Comments by Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox Authorities*. London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1966.
- Avineri, Sholmo, ed., *Karl Marx on Colonialism Modernization*. New York: Anchor Books, 1969.
- Beetham, David, *Max Weber and the Theory of Modern Politics*. London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1974.
- Bottomore, T.B., *Karl Marx : Early Writings*. London: C.A.Watts & Co. Ltd., 1963.
- Brandt, Vincent S.R., *A Korean Village: Between Farm and Sea*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1971.
- Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars*. vol. 9/no. 12, April-June, 1977.
- Chan, Wing-Tsit, *Reflections on Things at Hand*. New York, Columbia University Press, 1967.
- Christian Institute for the Study of Justice and Development (CISJD), ed., *Lost Victory : An Overview of the Korean People's Struggle for Democracy in 1987*. Seoul: Minjungsa, 1988.
- Choi, Jang-jip, *Labour and the Authoritarian State: Labour Unions in South Korean Manufacturing Industries, 1961-1980*. Seoul: Korea University Press, 1989.
- Choi, Woon-sang & Hahn Hwa-gap, *Kim Dae Jung, Conscience in Action*. Seoul: Chungdo Publishing Co., 1988.
- Constitution: Korea Background Series. Seoul: Korean Overseas Information Services, 1973.
- Cumings, Bruce, *The Origins of the Korean War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989).
- Cumings, Bruce, *The Origins of the Korean War*, vol. II, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990).
- de Bary, Wm. Theodore & Haboush, Jahyun Kim, eds., *The Rise of Neo-Confucianism in Korea*. New York: Columbia University, 1985.
- Deyo, F. C., ed., *The Political Economy of the New Asian Industrialism*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1987.
- Eckert, Carter J., Lee Ki-baik, Lew Young Ick, Michael Robinson and Edward W. Wagner, *Korea Old And New A History*. Seoul: Ilchokak, 1990.
- Gellner, Ernest, *Thought and Change*. London: Weidenfeld and

- Nicolson, 1969.
- Gerth H. H. & Mills, G. Wright, trans., *From Max Weber: Essays In Sociology*. Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd, 1967.
- Henderson, Gregory, *Korea: The Politics of the Vortex*. Harvard University Press, 1978.
- Hofheinz, Jr. & Calder, Kent E., *The Eastasia Edge*. New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1982.
- Howard, Keith, *Bands, Songs, and Shamanistic Rituals: Folk Music in Korean Society*. Seoul: Royal Asiatic Society Korea Branch, 1989.
- Il-pyong J. Kim and Yong Hwan Kihl ed., *Political Change in South Korea*. New York: Paragon House, 1988.
- Kang, Hosuk T., *The Making of Confucian Societies in Tokugawa Japan and Yi Korea : U.S.A: Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1970*.
- Kautsky, J.H., ed., *Political Change in Underdeveloped Countries*. New York, 1962.
- Kedourie, Elie, *Nationalism*. London: Hutchinson University Library, 1966.
- Kihl, Young Whan, *Politics and Policies in Divided Korea: Regimes in Contest*. Boulder: Westview Press, 1984.
- Kim, Chi-ha, *Cry of the People and Other Poems*. Japan: Autumn Press, 1974.
- Kim, Dae Jung, *Mass-Participatory Economy: A Democratic Alternative for Korea*. University Press of America, 1985.
- Kim, Dae Jung, *Prison Writings*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987.
- Kim, Yong-bock ed., *Minjung Theology : People as the Subject of History*. Singapore: The Commission on Theological Concerns, 1983.
- Kim, Young-ho, *Minjung Education Through Minjung Stories*. Unpublished MA thesis, University of California, Berkeley: 1986.
- Korean Overseas Information Service, *A Handbook of Korea*. 1978.
- Kornhauser, William, *The Politics of Mass Society*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1968.
- Chong Sik, Lee, *The Politics of Korean nationalism*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963.
- Chong Sik, Lee, ed., *Korea Briefing, 1990*. Westview Press, 1991.
- Lee, Ki Baik, *A New History Of Korea*, translated by Edward W. Wagner with Edward J. Shultz, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1984.
- Legge, James, trans., *The Four Books : The Works of Mencius*.

- Shanghai: Chinese Book Co., 1930.
- Levenson, Joseph R., *Confucian China and Its Modern Fate: A Trilogy*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1965.
- Lichtheim, George, *The Concept of Ideology and Other Essays*. New York: Vintage Books, 1967.
- Lukacs, Georg, *History and Class Consciousness: Studies in Marxist Dialectics*. Translated by Rodney Livingstone, London: Merlin Press, 1968.
- McLellan, David, ed., *Karl Marx: Selected Writings*. Oxford University Press, 1977.
- Minogue K.R., *Nationalism*. Penguin Books Inc., 1967.
- Modern Thought Study Society ed., *Pro-Leftist Groups In Korea*. Seoul: Shin Won Publishing Co. 1987.
- Nam, Koon-woo, *South Korean Politics: The Search for Political Consensus and Stability*. University Press of America, Inc. 1989.
- Ogle, George E., *South Korea: Dissent Within The Economic Miracle*. U.S.A.: Zed Books Ltd, 1990.
- Ogle, George E., *Liberty to the Captives*. Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1977.
- Pye, Lucian W. with Mary W. Pye, *Asian Power and Politics: Cultural Dimensions of Authority*. Harvard University Press, 1985.
- Robinson, Thomas W, ed., *Democracy and Development in East Asia: Taiwan, South Korea, and the Philippines*. Washington: The American Enterprise Institute Press, 1991.
- Rozman, Gilbert, ed., *The East Asian Region: Confucian Heritage and Its Modern Adaptation*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1991.
- Runciman, W.G., *Social Science and Political Theory, 2nd Edition*. London: Cambridge University Press, 1969.
- Sawer, Marian, *Marxism and the Question of the Asiatic Mode of Production*. Martinus Nijhoff/ The Hague, 1977.
- Scalapino, Robert A, Seizaburo Sato, and Jusuf Wanandi, eds., *Internal and External Security Issues in Asia*. Berkeley: Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, 1986.
- Shaw, William, ed., *Human Rights in Korea: Historical and Policy Perspectives*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1991.
- Smith, Anthony D., *Theories of Nationalism*. New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1971.

- Sohn, Hak kyu, *Authoritarianism and Opposition in South Korea*.
Routledge, London and New York, 1980.
- Tilly, Charles, *As Sociology Meets History*. New York: Academic,
1981.
- Wallerstein, Immanuel, *Historical Capitalism*, (London: Verso,
1983).
- Weems, Benjamin B., *Reform, Rebellion and the Heavenly Way*. The
University of Arizona Press: Arizona, 1964.
- Wells, Kenneth M., *New God, New Nation : Protestant and Self-
Reconstruction Nationalism in Korea 1896-1937*. Allen & Unwin,
1990.
- Yang, Sung-chul, *Korea and Two Regimes*. (Mass.: Schenkman
Publishing Com. Ind., 1981).
- Yi Hye-gu, *A History of Korean Music*. Seoul: Ministry of Culture
& Information, 1969.

Articles Written in Korean

- Cho, Kap-je, "Han'guk Sahoe ui Munhwa Taehyongmyong" (The Great
Cultural Revolution In Korean Society), *Wolgan Choson*
(February 1989): pp.222-255.
- Ch'oi, Chang-jip, "Minjung Minjujuui ui Kusang" (The Concept Of
Minjung Democracy), paper presented at Sungsil University, 16
November, 1989.
- "Chaengjom: Muosi Kwangju ui Chinsang'-inga" (theme: What is the
Truth of the Kwangju Incident?), *Sindonga*, March 1988, pp.
214-241.
- Chi, Hae-bom, "Chonminnyon, Undong-inya Chongch'i-nya"
(*Chonminnyon*, Is It a Movement or Politics ?), *Wolgan Conson*,
February 1989, pp. 358-371.
- Han, Sang-jin, "Minjung Sahoehak ui Minjung-non Pip'an"
(Criticism of Theories of *Minjung* in Social Science),
Sindonga, April 1987, pp.508-521.
- Han, Sang-jin, "Minjung Sahoehak ui Iron Kujo wa Chaengjom:
Pangbomnonjok nonui" (The Theory Structures And Issues Of
Minjung Sociology: Methodological Discussion), *Sahoe Kwahak
kwa Chongch'aek Yong'u*, August 1986, pp. 98-130.
- Kang, Min. "Han'guk Chongch'i Ch'eje ui Kujojok T'uksong:
Sin-Kwonwui-juui-rul Chungsim-uro" (The Organizational
Characteristics of Korean Politics: Focused on New
Authoritarianism), paper presented at the Conference on,
"Han'guk Chongch'i Paljon ui T'uksong kwa Chonmang",

- organised by The Han'guk Chongch'i Hakhoe Hyondae Sahoe Yon'guso, 1984. pp.1-48.
- Kim, Dong-sung, "Han'guk Chisikin kwa Taehaksaeng ui Uisik Kujo" (Makings of Perceptions of Nationalism by Korean Intellectuals And Students), *Han'guk Chongch'i Hakhoebo*, No 23, vol 1, 1989.
- Kim, Hyo-jae, "6-wol Hangjaeng: Yoksa Hurum-bakkun Minjung Hyongmyong" (June Struggle: People's Revolution That Changed the Flow of History), *Wolgan Choson*, December 1989. p. 166.
- Kim, Hyong-sok, *Han'guk Kidokkyo-wa Minjok Undong* (Korean Christian Church and the National Movement) Seoul: Posong, 1986.
- Ko Un, "Minjung kwa Chisikin" (*Minjung And Intellectuals*), *Inteligensia wa Chisikin*. Han'minsa, 1983.
- Pak, Ch'ang-hui, "Minjung Minjujuui-nun Kasik-ui Minjujuui" (People's democracy is a hypocritical democracy), *Kwangjang*, November 1989, pp. 66-74.
- Pak, Hyon-ch'ae, "Minjung kwa Kyongje," (Minjung And The Economy) in *Minjok Kyongjeron* (The Theory Of The National Econmy). Han'gilsa, 1978.
- Peterson, Mark, "Kwangju nun Chon Tu-hwan Chibgwon-ui Tan'gyejok K'udet'a Yotta" (Kwangju Incident was the Coup D'etat in Stages for the Chun Tu-hwan Regime), *Sindonga*, May (1989), pp. 304-317.
- Sim Yang-sop, "P'alsimnyon-dae Sibdae Sagon-ui Hyonjang-eso/ Chusap'a Tungjang" (At the Scene of the Ten Major Events in the 1980s : Emergence of the Chusa Faction), *Wolgan Choson*, December 1989, p. 168.
- Sin Yu-kil. "Minjung ui Sin'gyokhwa-rul Ottokke Polkkosin'ga" (How do we view the 'Apotheosis of the Minjung?'), *Kwangjang*, November 1989, pp. 84-93.
- "Tae-nonjaeng: Minjung-un Nukuin'ga" (Open Discussion: Who Are The Minjung?), *Wolgan Choson*, February 1989, pp.340-357.
- Yu In-t'aek, "Minjung Munhwa ui Chuch'e nun Nukuin'ga" (Who Are The Principal Actors Of Mass Culture?), *Sindonga*, December 1988, pp. 506-521.

Articles Written in English

- Ahn, Byung-joon, "The Korean Peninsula, and Peace and Stability in East Asia," paper presented at the Conference, on 'Korea 1991 Workshop,' organized by the Research School of Pacific Studies, Australian National University, August 12, 1991.
- Allen, Chizuko T, "Northeast Asia Centered Around Korea : Ch'oe Namson's View of History," *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 49 no.4. November 1990. pp. 787-806.
- Clark, Donald N., "Growth And Limitations of *Minjung* Christianity in South Korea," presented at the Conference on 'Korea's *Minjung* Movement: The Origin and Development of Populist Nationalism,' November 12-14, 1989 at Indiana University, Bloomington.
- Cho, Hung-youn, "The Characteristics of Korean *Minjung* Culture," *Korea Journal*, vol.27. November 1987. pp. 4-17.
- Choi Chung-moo, "Minjung Cultural Movement: Politics of Folk Culture and Nationalism," paper presented at the Conference on 'Korea's *Minjung* Movement : The Origin and Development of Populist Nationalism, November 12-14, 1989, at Indiana University, Bloomington.
- Cotton, James, "Understanding The State In South Korea: Bureaucratic-Authoritarian or State Autonomy Theory?," *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 24. No.4, January, 1992, p.512-531.
- Cotton, James, "On the Identity of 'Confucianism': theory or Practice?" *Political Theory Newsletter*, March 1991, pp. 113-121.
- Eberstadt, "Some Comments on Democracy and Development in East Asia," in Thomas W. Robinson, ed., *Democracy and Development in East Asia: Taiwan, South Korea and the Philippines*. Washington: American Enterprise Institute Press, 1991, pp. 261-311.
- Kalton, Michael C, 'Korean Modernity: Change and Continuity' in Chong-Sik Lee, ed., *Korea briefing*, 1990. pp.119-131.
- Kim, Kwang-ok, "Socio-Cultural Implications of the Recent Invention of Tradition in Korea: An Overview," in *Papers of the British Association for Korean Studies*, 1991, pp.7-28.
- Koo, Hagan, "From Farm To Factory : Proletarianization In Korea", in *American Sociological Review* 55, October, 1990. pp. 669-681.
- Han, Wan-sang, "Change in the Political Conception of Koreans

over a Transitional Period," *Korea Journal*, vol.29, November 1989. pp. 33-53.

- Lee, Manwoo, "Anti-Americanism and South Korea's Changing Perception of America," in *Alliance Under Tension : The Evolution of South Korean-U.S. Relations*, Seoul: Kyungnam University Press, 1988. pp. 7-27.
- Sasse, Werner, "Minjung Theology and Culture," in *Papers of the British Association for Korean Studies*, 1991, vol.1, pp.29-43.
- Shim, Hyun-nyo, "Yun Ch'i-ho and the Independence Club," *Korea Journal*, Vol. 30, No. 10, October 1990, pp. 27-39.
- Sohn, Hak Kyu, "Radicalism in South Korea : Comparing the Park [Pak Chong-hui] Period with Today," paper presented at the Conference, on 'Korea 1991 Workshop,' organized by the Research School of Pacific Studies, Australian National University, August 12, 1991.
- Song, Soo-nam, "Shinmyong in Korean Group Dance Performance" *Korea Journal*, Vol.30, No.9, September 1990, pp. 32-35.
- Touraine, A. "Triumph or Downfall of Civil Society," *Humanities in Review*, 1, Cambridge University Press, New York (1982).
- Van Leest, Hyung-a, "Political Satire In *Yangju Pyolsandae*," *Korea Journal*, vol. 31, No. 1, Spring 1991, pp. 87-109.
- Yi, Yong-hee, "Problems of Korean Nationalism," in Chung-shik Chung & Jae-bong, Ro, eds., *Nationalism in Korea*. Seoul: Research Centre for Peace and Unification, 1979.