

***Suggesting an Eco-feminist 'God of Land' Model  
from Feng Shui Cosmology:  
A Hermeneutic Reinterpretation of the Trinity  
in an Asian and Eco-feminist Perspective***

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## **ABSTRACT**

The aim of this dissertation is to propose an eco-feminist model of the Divine for the contemporary Korean Protestant Church, where sexism and eco-antipathy are problematic. For this purpose, the dissertation explores native Korean spiritual traditions with respect to their inherent eco-feminist sensitivity, with a view to making points of contact with traditional Christian conceptions of the Trinity. The dissertation proposes a model called 'God of Land' that brings eco-feminist Christian theology together with Feng Shui perspectives on finding an alternative divine model in a Korean context. The model is grounded deeply in both Christian confession of the Trinity and East Asian IChing cosmology. More specifically, the 'God of Land' model reinterprets Christian theological language of the Divine using non-Trinitarian symbols derived from Feng Shui in Asian cosmology, which is a symbolic thinking process fundamental to Koreans. This reinterpretation of the doctrine of the Trinity in an Asian context represents a new hermeneutical approach to Christian theology that calls for a contextualizing method of reflection, praxis, and cultural mediation.

From an eco-feministic standpoint, the proposed 'God of Land' model identifies women and nature as victims of a male-centered mindset that is well blended with native traditional patriarchy. The realities of women's multi-layered oppressions that are rampant in the contemporary Korean Protestant Church follow from this patriarchy. This dissertation criticizes how the Korean Protestant Church has for many years institutionalized the patriarchy that has led to the current ecological crisis, and women's oppression. Mindful of this patriarchy, this

dissertation offers a new model of the Divine, presented as 'God of Land', that combines an eco-feminist theological perspective and an Asian perspective in the hope that this way of thinking with Christian tradition and native Korean spirituality can be healing and restorative to both women and nature in Korea. Furthermore, the proposed model attempts to reveal rich images of a Triune God, which have been veiled behind institutionalized Christianity but that can be rekindled in dialogue with yin and yang symbolic thinking taken from Feng Shui cosmology. The claim is that the proposed interaction between Christian theology and Feng Shui cosmology, inspired by yin and yang, Chi, and the ChunJiln idea in Asian cosmology, will contribute to a more explicitly cosmological understanding of the Trinity, as informed by the traditional doctrine of perichoresis. Christian Trinitarian thinking about perichoresis will be brought into dialogue with Feng Shui cosmology around the concepts of balance and equilibrium — again with a view towards restoring the current reality of subjugated positions of women and nature in the contemporary Korean Protestant Church. In this way, the 'God of Land' model - informed by Christian Trinitarian theology and reinterpreted from an Asian perspective - is emancipatory, eco-feminist sensitive, and perichoretic; this bespeaks equal, respectful, and nurturing relationship among the persons of the Trinity, which is rich and embracive.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>ABSTRACT</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>TABLES</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>ILLUSTRATIONS</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>Chapter I - Introduction</b> .....	<b>9</b>
I.1 Aims .....	9
I.2 Religious Context in Korea .....	19
A. Dynamics of Korean Women’s Religious Practices.....	19
B. Korean Women in the Contemporary Era .....	22
I.3 Literature Review .....	24
A. Perspectives on the Connection between Women and Nature .....	25
B. The Understanding of God According to Rosemary R. Ruether and Sallie McFague.....	35
I.4 Theoretical Context and Background .....	50
A. The Eco-feministic Approach .....	50
B. Feng Shui Cosmology: ‘Land’ .....	51
I.5 Methodology.....	55
 <b>Chapter II - Korean Women’s Experience in Korean Protestant Church History from a Feminist Standpoint: The Problem of Internalized Patriarchy</b>	 <b>59</b>
II.1 Korean Women and the Introduction of the Protestant Church .....	60
A. Pre-Christian Religious Traditions in Korea and the Early Korean Protestant Churches (1884 – 1910).....	60
B. Korean Women’s Acceptance of Christianity .....	70
C. The Effect of the Early Protestant Church on Korean Women .....	72
II. 2 A Historical View of Korean Protestant Women’s Role and Position.....	74
A. The Japanese Colonial Period (1910-1945).....	75
B. The Modern Period (1945-1990) .....	79
C. The Contemporary Era (1990-Present).....	83
D. Colonial Themes from Three Historic Periods in Korea .....	90
II.3 Current Women’s Issues in the Contemporary Korean Protestant Church.....	95

A. The Problem: Internalized Patriarchy in Korean Protestant Churches ...	95
B. The Consequences of Internalized Patriarchy: Women's Subordination	103
.....	
II.4 Conclusion.....	109
<b>Chapter III - Feng Shui Cosmology and Eco-feminism: Dialogue with Sallie</b>	
<b>McFague's Metaphoric Theology.....</b>	<b>111</b>
III.1 Feng Shui Cosmology .....	113
A. The Essential Principles of Feng Shui Cosmology in East Asia .....	115
B. The Theoretical Foundation of Feng Shui Cosmology .....	117
C. The Scientific Logic System of Feng Shui Cosmology.....	122
D. The Understanding of Heaven, Land (Earth), and Humanity from the Idea	
of 'ChunJiln' in Feng Shui Cosmology.....	127
E. The Criticism on Feng Shui Cosmology and Yin and Yang Principle ...	141
III.2 Sallie McFague's Theology (Eco-feminism): Dialogue with the Feng Shui	
Cosmology .....	153
A. McFague's Metaphorical Theology.....	156
B. McFague's Understanding of God.....	170
C. The Model of 'God as Mother' .....	176
D. The Metaphor 'the World as God's Body' .....	182
III. 3 Conclusion.....	196
<b>Chapter IV - The Trinity of the Eco-feminist Model, 'God of Land':</b>	
<b>Approaching Feminist Theology.....</b>	<b>203</b>
IV.1 An Asian Contextual Approach to the Divine Trinity of the Model 'God of Land'	
.....	205
A. The Trinity of the 'God of Land' Model, Reinterpreted by Yin and Yang	
Symbolic Thinking from an Asian Perspective proposed by Jung Young Lee	
.....	207
B. The Relational and Feminist Trinity of the 'God of Land' Model Based on	
Perichoretic Union from Jürgen Moltmann and Elizabeth Johnson .....	218
IV.2 The Trinity of 'God of Land': 'Wind', 'Water', and 'Land' .....	253
A. The Holy Spirit of the Wind (Chi).....	255
B. 'God the Son as Water': Cosmic Christology of Salvation and Liberation	
.....	274
C. Creator 'God the Mother as Land' .....	300
IV.3 Conclusion .....	322
<b>Chapter V - Conclusion.....</b>	<b>325</b>
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY.....</b>	<b>340</b>

## **TABLES**

1. Similarities between the Model of Feng Shui and Sallie McFague.....	198
2. Differences between the Model of Feng Shui and Sallie McFague.....	198

## **ILLUSTRATIONS**

1. Yin and yang and Five Elements .....	120
2. ChunJiln .....	128
3. Yin and yang in Tai Chi .....	213



## Chapter I - Introduction

### I.1 Aims

This dissertation aims to develop an eco-feminist model of the Divine as a contextual theology by reconstructing thinking systems that bring together eco-feminism and Korean Feng Shui cosmology. The proposed model calls for Korean women to challenge patriarchy in the contemporary Korean Church, and to imbue Korean Christianity with a higher degree of environmental consciousness. I focus specifically on Protestant churches in Korea, and women's participation within them. When I use the term 'Korean Christianity', or 'Korean Christian Church', I am referring to the Protestant Church.<sup>1</sup> The claim of this dissertation is that for there to be a viable Christianity in contemporary Korea, given the sexism and eco-antipathy at its heart, theology must take into account native Korean women's spiritual traditions. This claim is developed through exploration of these Korean traditions in relation to doctrines of Creation, Christology, and the Church. For this model of God, I propose an eco-feminist Divine who gives and sustains life for women and nature, and who is distinct from the model of the patriarchal God who has domination over women and nature.

Methodologically, this dissertation attempts a transcultural dialogue between Korean cosmologies in Feng Shui theory and Western eco-feminist theologies, with a view to revising the patriarchal image of God in traditional Korean Christianity. The dialogue is two-way. Korean perspectives of cosmology in Feng Shui can develop a feminist divine model for regions of the world outside Korea, as an

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<sup>1</sup> The Protestant Church in Korea generally includes the Presbyterian Church, the Methodist Church, the Baptist Church, the Full Gospel Church, the Holiness Church, the Evangelical Church, etc.

alternative to Western dualism that dichotomizes the world through patriarchy into men's and women's spheres. More specifically, the God model suggested in this dissertation applies eco-feminist theology to the traditions of Korean women, in order to ultimately heal the wounds of both Korean women and nature.

A significant portion of the proposed God model involves developing and implementing new metaphorical languages to name God. Human languages are not adequate to express an image of God because God is a being beyond human language. In addition, if the language about God is to be essential for conceiving God, it must contain some explanatory value in relation to the human experience, and be constitutively inclusive, and all-embracing.<sup>2</sup> Feminist theologians assert that most languages that have been used in traditional theology are male-centered because they have been formed and developed in patriarchal cultures typical in most of the world.<sup>3</sup> Feminist theologians argue further that the use of predominantly male images and metaphors of God – such as 'King', 'Father', and 'Lord' – has strengthened the view that male-centered languages are the only suitable languages for expressing God, while women's images are not at all worthy.<sup>4</sup> Sexist language such as this, whether employed consciously or unconsciously, undermines women's equality with men, as beings who have been made fully in the divine likeness of God. Elizabeth Johnson says that deeming dominantly male language as the only language fit to describe God 'absolutizes a

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<sup>2</sup> Philip Clayton, *The Problem of God in Modern Thought* (Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, 2000), 5.

<sup>3</sup> Brian Wren, *What Language Shall I Borrow? God-Talk in Worship: A Male Response to Feminist Theology* (New York: Crossroad, 1989), 3-4. See Carol P. Christ and Judith Plaskow (eds.), *Womanspirit Rising: A Feminist Reader in Religion* (New York: Harper & Row, 1992), 7. See also Sallie McFague, *Metaphorical Theology: Models of God in Religious Language* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982), 7-10. See also Rosemary R. Ruether, *Sexism and God-Talk: Toward a Feminist Theology* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1983), 94-9.

<sup>4</sup> Elizabeth A. Johnson, *She Who Is: The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse* (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 2005), 36-38. See McFague, *Metaphorical Theology*, 9.

single set of metaphors and obscures the height and depth and length and breadth of divine mystery'.<sup>5</sup> Patriarchal speech is oppressive and idolatrous to women, and restrictive to the faithful who believe in the mystery of God.<sup>6</sup> Therefore, just naming should be employed: God should be described universally, using both women's symbols and men's symbols. New and diverse languages that cannot be easily co-opted by the systems of domination are necessary to inclusive theology.

Eco-feminist theologians have proposed particular new languages, symbols, and metaphors for reimagining God in a way that is inclusive to women. The importance of developing a new and inclusive language for God developed by eco-feminist theologians is the foundation for this dissertation. This eco-feministic approach is vital to my searching for an inclusive God model. For example, Sallie McFague,<sup>7</sup> Rebecca Chopp,<sup>8</sup> Elizabeth A. Johnson,<sup>9</sup> Rosemary R. Ruether,<sup>10</sup> Anne E. Carr, Mary Daley, Carol P. Christ, Catherine Roach, Charlene Spretnak, and

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<sup>5</sup> Johnson, *She Who Is*, 18. Brian Wren also claims that 'the systematic and almost exclusive use of male God-language, in faith in which God is revealed as incarnate in a male human being, gives a distorted vision of God and supports male dominance in church and society'. Wren, *What Language*, 4.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 40. John W. Cooper, an American theologian, challenges masculine religious language for two reasons. The first is that since God created both genders equally in his likeness, God should be equally imagined and portrayed as male and female. His second argument is straightforward and is more often assumed than explicitly voiced: There is something unfair or unjust about language that favors one gender more prominently than the other. John W. Cooper, *Our Father in Heaven; Christian Faith and Inclusive Language for God* (Michigan: Baker Books, 1998), 255.

<sup>7</sup> McFague recognizes the necessity for a feminine image of God, or an image beyond gender, to overcome the male-centered God model. She suggests metaphors of God as a mother, a lover, a friend, and 'the world as God's body'. Sallie McFague, *Models of God: Theology for an Ecological, Nuclear Age* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), 78-180. Sallie McFague, *The Body of God: An Ecological Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), 159-198.

<sup>8</sup> For Rebecca Chopp, an American theologian, theology encompasses awareness of and words about God, and God is typically understood and represented as the Word. She claims: 'As Word, God has traditionally been prevented from being represented by woman, while woman has been configured as taboo and placed on the margins of the Word'. Rebecca S. Chopp, *The Power to Speak; Feminism, Language, God* (New York: Crossroad, 1991), 3.

<sup>9</sup> Elizabeth A. Johnson presents a feminist theology, which overcomes oppressive languages and uses symbols from women's experiences. Her approach points to new metaphors, symbols, and names for God, which are related to the Trinity. Johnson, *She Who Is*, 273.

<sup>10</sup> Rosemary R. Ruether suggests a comprehensive God/ess model, which includes metaphors for both women and men. Ruether, *Sexism and God-Talk*, 48.

others,<sup>11</sup> have all contributed new linguistic ways of reimagining and re-expressing God. These feminist theologians are apostles of new linguistic ways for conceptualizing and visualizing God for women, in their rethinking of the Christological paradigm from eco-feminist perspectives.

The organic metaphorical model of ‘the world as God’s body’, which McFague proposes, will be an exploratory model for developing a new God model in this dissertation. This newly proposed divine model has a similar view of an organic model, utilizing some criteria from McFague.<sup>12</sup> McFague’s working theology<sup>13</sup> is realistic to our modern day world, and concerns itself with the well-being of the planet and justice to its people, especially the neglected and oppressed.<sup>14</sup> This way, the proposed model is grounded in the cosmology of Korean Feng Shui, which is founded on the thoughts that the world is organic, meaning that it is viewed as a dynamic, living ‘body’ with one purpose—to totally support and nurture its inhabitants. Additionally, the proposed model in this dissertation attempts to work towards functional theology from Feng Shui, which is analogous to McFague’s model. Finally, McFague’s model and the newly proposed

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<sup>11</sup> Anne E. Carr, *Transforming Grace: Christian Tradition and Women's Experience* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988). Carol P. Christ, *Laughter of Aphrodite: Reflections on a Journey to the Goddess* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987). Catherine M. Roach, *Mother/Nature: Popular Culture and Environmental Ethics* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003). Mary Daly, *Beyond God of the Father: Toward a Philosophy of Women's Liberation* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1985). Charlene Spretnak, *The Politics of Women's Spirituality* (NY: Anchor, 1982). Charlene Spretnak, *Lost Goddesses of Early Greece: A Collection of Pre-Hellenic Myths* (Boston: Beacon, 1987).

<sup>12</sup> McFague proposes an organic model, which views the world as the body of God. In this model, the world is seen through the eyes of the body, taking into account organic solidarity in the contemporary context of the world. For McFague, this organic model best describes the relationship between God and the world, and resolves the issue between the transcendence and the immanence of God. McFague, *The Body of God*, 27-63.

<sup>13</sup> Sallie McFague, *Life Abundant: Rethinking Theology and Economy for a Planet in Peril* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2001), xii.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 66.

model seek ways of grafting both theoretical frameworks into Christian theology, Trinity, and Christology.

However, McFague's theory is highly contentious, and some critics claim that her metaphorical theology simply provides metaphors for the nature of God that fit the preferences of the theologian who utilizes and tailors it.<sup>15</sup> Elizabeth Achtemeier who is an American theologian criticizes McFague's metaphorical approach to God, saying that 'the world does not emanate out of the being of God or contain some part of God within it. God has not implanted divinity within any part of Creation, not even in human beings, and therefore no created thing or person can be claimed to be divine'.<sup>16</sup> In addition, the distinct theological perspective is visible in the diverging ways McFague interprets Creation. In the traditional narrative of Creation in Hebrew Scriptures, the presence of God manifested itself in Creation, symbolized by the image of God's Spirit hovering over the waters of chaos in Genesis.<sup>17</sup> In contrast, McFague sees Creation as transcendent 'language' that brought everything into being from her metaphors.<sup>18</sup> In the Bible God reveals himself, but McFague claims that God should be understood as the unknown being, so human beings must invent language for God.<sup>19</sup>

Despite the controversies over McFague's theological attempts, her model of the world as God's body is useful as a dialogue partner for the new model

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<sup>15</sup> Frederick Sontag, 'Metaphorical Non-Sequitur?', in, *Scottish Journal of Theology*, Vol. 44, No. 1 (02. 1991) 1-18. See Alvin F. Kimel, Jr. (ed.), *Speaking the Christian God: The Holy Trinity and the Challenge of Feminism* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, 1992)

<sup>16</sup> Elizabeth Achtemeier, 'Exchanging God for "No Gods": A Discussion of Female Language for God', in, Alvin F. Kimel, Jr. (ed.) *Speaking the Christian God: The Holy Trinity and the Challenge of Feminism* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, 1992), 5.

<sup>17</sup> Genesis 1:2 - 'Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters'.

<sup>18</sup> McFague encourages a recovery of the notion that God can never be captured by language. We must talk about God, but God is beyond language. The best we can do is image God through our language, and the best way of speaking about God is metaphoric.

<sup>19</sup> Elizabeth Achtemeier, 'Exchanging God for "No Gods"', 5.

proposed in this dissertation, namely, an eco-feminist model of the Divine that is expressly liberatory. This is because McFague's model resonates with the eco-feminist concerns of Korean women and churches, and with those raised within the cosmologies of Korean Feng Shui. A goal of this dissertation will be to create a distinction between traditional patriarchal Christianity and a Christianity that promotes gender equality and the value of nature in contemporary Korea. It is also hoped to reconstruct a concept of a God who is physically close with us, by using metaphors that can overcome the limitations of the kind of traditional religious language that is prevalent in mainstream Korean churches, and that are relevant to contemporary women's reality in the Korean Church.<sup>20</sup>

Many feminist theologians assert that male-centric religious languages, symbols, and images continue to oppress women in traditional Christianity.<sup>21</sup> In addition to its linguistic and real-world patriarchy, Christianity has often been accused of complicity in ecological destruction. There have been some concerns that the Christian view of dominance over nature is to blame, at least in part, for the contemporary environmental crisis. Starting with Lynn White, many secular environmental activists claimed that Christianity was inimical to the protection of the environment, and has been so for thousands of years. White asserted that this

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<sup>20</sup> Albert Schweitzer, an American thinker and scientist, once defined Christianity as an 'ethical God' in his book *Christianity and the Religions of the World*. But Schweitzer argues Christianity's theism is ambiguous because 'it presupposes a God who is an ethical personality, and who is outside the world. It must hold fast the belief that God is the sum total of the forces working in the world'. Albert Schweitzer, 'The Ethics of Reverence for Life', in *Christendom* 1 (Winter 1936): 225-39. Reprinted in Henry Clark, *The Ethical Mysticism of Albert Schweitzer: A Study of the Sources and Significance of Schweitzer's "Philosophy of Civilization"*, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1962), 180-94. Also, Janet Martin Soskice writes that early Christian writers and theologians seemed to see multiple divine titles in ways of revelation of 'God with us'. Janet Martin Soskice, *The Kindness of God: Metaphor, Gender, and Religious Language* (New York: Oxford Press, 2008), 3.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 1-7, 147. See Mary Daly, *Beyond God the Father: Toward a Philosophy of Women's Liberation* (Massachusetts: Beacon Press, 1985), 13, 19.

Western Christianity is 'the most anthropocentric religion the world has seen'.<sup>22</sup> White's argument, however, has been controversial. In his book *Earth in the Balance*, environmentalist Al Gore argues that White missed the theological point contained in the creation stories of Genesis, where nature is depicted positively.<sup>23</sup> Nevertheless, Lynn White has awakened the Christian consciousness of ecological concerns from misguided Biblical interpretation. James Nash, one of the first Christian ecotheologians, states that the ecological complaint against Christianity is essentially valid. He writes, 'Perhaps the most urgent and difficult task in the development of a Christian ecological ethic is an adequate interpretation of Christian love in an ecological context'.<sup>24</sup> The Scripture text most often quoted by critics who regard Christianity as promoting human dominance over nature is Genesis 1:26-28.<sup>25</sup> These critics believe that misinterpretation of this verse claims that God intended humans to dominate, suppress, and exploit nature.<sup>26</sup> Consequently, nature and women have become subordinate to men, who, Christian patriarchy claims, were created in God's image –and women and nature are excluded from that divine image. As a result, women and nature have gradually lost their identities within Christianity.<sup>27</sup>

Most eco-feminists agree that women's realities have been closely

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<sup>22</sup> Lynn White Jr, 'The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis', in, *Science* 155 (1967): 1204- 6.

<sup>23</sup> Al Gore, *Earth in the Balance: Ecology and the Human Spirit* (New York: Rodale, 2006)

<sup>24</sup> James A. Nash, *Loving Nature: Ecological Integrity and Christian Responsibility* (Nashville, Tennessee: Abingdon Press, 1991), 139.

<sup>25</sup> NIV Bible: Genesis 1:26, 'Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground"'. 1:27, 'So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them'. 1:28, 'God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground"'.  
<sup>26</sup> Horst D. Preuss and Leo G. Perdue, *Old Testament Theology* (Westminster: John Knox Press, 1996), 116.

<sup>27</sup> Eleanor Rae, *Women, the Earth, the Divine* (Markynoll: Orbis Books, 1994), 3-4.

connected to ecological realities because of their exploitations during the industrial development, mostly in the third world.<sup>28</sup> This is the case for Korean women. Since the late 1960s, South Korea has been able to achieve high economic growth on the back of women's labor. Rigid government control over the industrial system has included a poor labor environment for women in particular, and a relentless degradation and exploitation of nature. Simultaneously, women's participation has gradually increased in many fields of society as South Korea rapidly industrializes. Yet the Christian churches in Korea have lagged far behind in terms of women's participation in secular society.

This dissertation presupposes that the dual oppression of women and nature is socially and theologically unacceptable,<sup>29</sup> and adopts a basic view already argued by many eco-feminists: The combined liberation of women and nature is a global task that we must undertake. Thus, I argue that Korean women must call for a change in the traditional Christian view. Redemption entails intervention on both ecological and cosmological levels.

Several eco-feminist theologians theorize that women of power are concerned with and protect the environment better than men of power.<sup>30</sup> Eco-feminist movements since the 1970s have shown that women take up a positive attitude toward the environment and its issues.<sup>31</sup> As I will demonstrate, Korean

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<sup>28</sup> Chhaya Datar, *Eco-feminism Revisited: Introduction to The Discourse* (New Delhi: Rawat Publications, 2011), 101. See Vandana Shiva, *Staying Alive: Women, Ecology and Development* (New York: South End Press, 2010), 2-5. See also Ynestra King, 'Healing The Wounds: Feminism, Ecology, and the Nature/Culture Dualism', in Irene Diamond and Gloria Feman Orenstein (eds.), *Reweaving The World: The Emergence of Eco-feminism*, (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1990), 106-7.

<sup>29</sup> Heather Eaton, *Introduction to Eco-feminist Theologies* (New York: T&T Clark International, 2005), 2.

<sup>30</sup> Datar, *Eco-feminism Revisited*, 101.

<sup>31</sup> For example: 1) 'Chipko movement' (tree-hugging); the act of hugging trees to protect them from being felled. The initial event took place on March 26<sup>th</sup> 1974, when a group of peasant women in India acted to prevent the cutting down of trees, and to reclaim their traditional forest rights that



cosmology in Feng Shui carries similar perspectives on the relationship between women and nature as those articulated in eco-feminism.<sup>32</sup> Korean Feng Shui reflects a female symbol through the metaphor of 'land.' It reflects an eco-feminist outlook on nature - a view that the feminine has been grounded beautifully in Koreans' hearts through metaphors of nature. Korean Feng Shui seeks a harmonious and balanced life among all relations on our planet, based on yin and yang, and the Chi life energy circle, which is the source of being that flows through all things.<sup>33</sup> With insights from this Korean Feng Shui cosmology, I imagine a feminist Divine, which could serve to restore a true sense of Creator God, liberated from patriarchal forms of Christianity.

This dissertation proposes a divine feminist model, referred to as 'God of Land', and informed by the cosmology of Korean Feng Shui. The cosmic background of Korean Feng Shui has conceptualized 'Land' as a feminine Divine by visualizing 'Land' as '*Jimo*', which means the 'Mother-Land', and mother as Ground of being. This model is used to reimagine the doctrine of the Trinity, and Christology, through a contextual reinterpretation. In this sense, the contextual reinterpretation of the Trinity that is advanced in this dissertation employs yin and yang symbolic thinking taken from Korean Feng Shui as a hermeneutical tool with which to understand the meaning of the Trinity. This dissertation understands the Trinity from the model of 'God of Land' by employing symbolic thinking in which

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were threatened by the contractors assigned by the state Forest Department. 2) 'Green belt movement'; an environmental organization that empowers women to conserve the environment for livelihood, founded in Kenya in 1977 by Wangari Maathai. This movement encouraged women to work together to grow seedlings and plant trees, bind the soil, store rainwater, and provide food and firewood; women then received a small monetary token for their work to use towards improving their livelihoods. Carolyn Merchant, 'Eco-feminism and Feminist Theology', in Irene Diamond and Gloria Feman Orenstein (eds.) *Reweaving The World*, 105. See Heather Eaton and Lois Ann Lorentzen, *Eco-feminism & Globalization, Exploring Culture, Context, and Religion* (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2003), 2-3.

<sup>32</sup> Doo Gyu Kim, *The Truth and Falsity in Korean Feng Shui* (Seoul: Dong Hak Sa, 1995), 146.

<sup>33</sup> Datar, *Eco-feminism Revisited*, 101.

'Land' is Mother (creator - God the Mother), 'Feng' is 'Wind' (Chi/Holy Spirit) and 'Shui' is 'Water' (God the Son). This will allow my 'God of Land' model to stay within Christian tradition.

The model proposed in this dissertation offers the possibility of overcoming the dichotomy between body and spirit and other dichotomous structures. Because 'God of Land' has the connotation that land is God's body, it implicitly allows us to break away from dualistic thinking about body and spirit. Therefore, it is hoped that this new model will provide grounds for overcoming all obstacles of dualistic patriarchal structures – where nature, minorities, people of color, and the third world - including Minjung<sup>34</sup> - have been oppressed in the same vein as women.<sup>35</sup>

However, not all theologians share these eco-feminist views. Frederick Sontag, an American philosopher, criticizes eco-feminist theologians for rejecting God the Father as the root metaphor of Christianity. He argues that they overlook that Christianity has both aspects of God, between the creator God (power), and the forgiving God (love).<sup>36</sup> Roland M. Frye, an American theologian, also claims, 'some feminist theologians' attempts to solve women's problems by changing the language for God are not true solutions at all but are distractors'.<sup>37</sup> He holds that 'according to biblical religion, only God can name God'.<sup>38</sup> In addition, Lois K. Daly, an American feminist theologian, is concerned that much eco-feminism lacks an analysis of hierarchy and the meaning of transcendence. She blames eco-feminist

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<sup>34</sup> 'Minjung' is a Korean word that is difficult to properly translate into other languages in a way that retains its historical and cultural connotations. Minjung is a combination of the two hanja characters 'min' and 'jung'. 'Min' may be translated as 'people', and 'jung' as 'the mass'. Thus, Minjung literally means 'the mass of the people', or more simply 'mass' or 'the people'. Korean Dictionary.

<sup>35</sup> Karen J. Warren, ed., *Ecological Feminist* (New York: Routledge, London, 1994), 1.

<sup>36</sup> Frederick Sontag, "Metaphorical Non-Sequitur?" *Scottish Journal of Theology*, Vol. 44, No. 1 (1991): 4.

<sup>37</sup> Roland M. Frye, 'Language for God and Feminist Language: Problems and Principles', in, *Scotland Journal of Theology*, Vol. 41, (1988): 441-470, in, Kimel (ed.), *Speaking the Christian God*, 19

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

theologians for focusing primarily on the interrelationship of sexism, racism, and classism, without sufficiently articulating the interconnections between these forms of oppression and the oppression of nature.<sup>39</sup>

Mindful of these criticisms, this dissertation holds that eco-feminists' understanding(s) of God nonetheless contribute to the dismantling of dualistic patriarchal structures, as this dissertation aims to liberate both the Korean women and the nature that have been oppressed in dualistic patriarchal ideas. Their views provide a useful foundation for my presentation of a model that emerges from integrating the cosmology of Feng Shui with eco-feminist ideas. Finally, my attempt will represent that it is feasible to imagine an abundant image of God who tenderly embraces women and nature, and who breaks the stereotypical and patriarchal Christian tradition. The ultimate objective of this different God model is to seek harmony and balance among all living things and divine creatures, building on the ideas of Korean Feng Shui. It is hoped that this eco-feminist God model will apply in the Korean context to the issues of sexism and eco-antipathy in Christian churches.

## **I.2 Religious Context in Korea**

### **A. Dynamics of Korean Women's Religious Practices**

Korea has long been a country of extreme patriarchy influenced by Confucian tradition, and at the same time a country of religion formed by the dynamic traditions of shamanism and diverse folk religions. Koreans expect to meet spiritual, living beings inherent in the natural environment — trees, rivers,

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<sup>39</sup> Lois K Daly, 'Eco-feminism, Reverence for Life, and Feminist Theological Ethics', in, Charles Birch, William Eaken, Sallie McFague, and Jay B. McDaniel (eds.), *Liberating Life: Contemporary Approaches in Ecological Theology* (New York: Orbis Books, 1990), 86-110.

mountains, and the moon. Korean women pray eagerly to these impersonal divine entities for their family's prosperity and health.<sup>40</sup> This practice is an example of Koreans' natural connection with *Hananim*—the Divine—that has been deeply situated in their hearts.<sup>41</sup>

Korean women have long carried painful memories from the aggression by foreign powers that they have suffered, and the subjugations that they have experienced. Furthermore, the harsh and suffocating environment of the patriarchal Confucian tradition has controlled and oppressed Korean women, leading to a unique emotional experience, and a poignant lament collectively known as *Han*. This has accumulated in women's hearts. It is well known that Korean women's lives have been closely affected by shamanism, which has continued as a strong tradition because of its appeal to women's needs.<sup>42</sup> The shamanistic rites of *Gut*, which is a typical shamanistic ritual, were more accessible to Korean women than either Confucianism or Buddhism. Korean women have felt a sense of intimacy in these shamanistic practices, rather than in Confucianism and Buddhism.<sup>43</sup> In fact, shamanistic practice incorporates symbols from both of these into a woman-centered practice in which women hold positions of authority. Shamanism is one of the most preferred ways to relieve Korean women's *Han*. 'Gut' is a religious practice that brings a sense of liberation and joy, like a shelter, or a haven, and a way out from the dark structures of patriarchy.<sup>44</sup> An American scholar, Laurel

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<sup>40</sup> Daniel Tudor, *Korea: The Impossible Country* (Vermont: Tuttle Publishing, 2012), 24.

<sup>41</sup> Chung Hyun Choi, *Korean Church and Shamanism* (Seoul: Sung Guwang Culture Book, 1993), 30.

<sup>42</sup> Wang Sun Gu and Hong Suh Jin, *The Structural Phenomenon of Korean Spiritual Movement* (Seoul: Dae Hwa Publishing, 1982), 77.

<sup>43</sup> Gil Sung Choi, *The Understanding of Korean Shamanism* (Seoul: Ye Jun Sa, 1998), 46, 59-60, 160-161, 177.

<sup>44</sup> Woo Jung Lee, *The Trace of Korean Christian Women For 100 years* (Seoul: Min Jung Sa, 1985), 73-74.

Kendall, who is versed in Korean shamanism, demonstrates how shamanism in Korea served as an indigenous religion, and a cultural basis for life, that provided a supportive context for the communication and expression of women's concerns.<sup>45</sup>

Korean shamanistic practices were, emotionally and metaphysically, most associated with the feminine; this is a legacy of Korean history, and not due simply to the fact that most practitioners are women.

When the Protestant Church first introduced the slogan, 'equality for all those in Jesus', to Korea around 1880, Korean women, who had been oppressed for many centuries under the patriarchal tradition, gathered to the Church in hope of being comforted, and of being given liberation by the Christian faith. But several studies demonstrate that these early Christian churches failed to provide the comforts of joy and shelter that Korean women felt through the shamanistic rituals of *Gut*.<sup>46</sup> Rather, the patriarchal image of God became well blended with Confucian tradition in the churches, and confined Korean women to another kind of oppression.<sup>47</sup> In the end, the patriarchal foundation of the Church gradually strengthened the ties between Korean women and their *Han*, and frequently burdened them with even more pain and oppression under the façade of Christianity.<sup>48</sup> However, studies of the early Korean Protestant Church demonstrate that certain Korean churches frequently used mystic revival worship services for relieving women's sufferings, and for helping them escape their painful reality. These services were designed to address women's needs so they would find

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<sup>45</sup> Laurel Kendall, *Life and Hard Times of a Korean Shaman: Of Tales and the Telling of Tales* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1988), 15-7.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid. Woo Jung Lee, *The Trace of Korean Christian Women For 100 years*, 73. See Jung Sin Park, 'Women and History', in, *Korean Society of Women's History*, Vol. 14, (2011): 175-97.

<sup>47</sup> Nam Soon Kang, *Feminist theology: Gender, Spirituality, Life* (Seoul: Korean Theological Research Institute, 2002), 284-9.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 297-304.

comforts in mystic practice.<sup>49</sup> These examples show that Christianity in Korea already accepted shamanistic elements to a large degree, and also applied a mystical interpretation of the Holy Spirit within Korean Christianity.

Despite these outlying examples of Korean Christianity incorporating shamanistic elements, in my estimation and observation the strong patriarchal tradition in the Korean Church has imposed difficulties for drawing out an embracing image of God for Korean women. Therefore, they have not had many opportunities to receive consolation from the Church, where they had once been able to receive it from the shamanistic practice of *Gut*.<sup>50</sup> Rather, most Korean women have been treated as inferior beings that are subordinated - often unconsciously - by patriarchal images of power and reverence within the Church.<sup>51</sup>

## **B. Korean Women in the Contemporary Era**

Today, South Korea is a country highly advanced in its economy and technological capacity. More women are now entering the workforce, and seeking political careers. However, as opposed how to these advancements in the status of women are generally accepted in secular society, Korean churches have fallen far behind social movements and achievements in gender equality. This lag can be attributed to the gender roles in the Church, which are still greatly biased towards patriarchal structures. According to Nam Soon Kang, a South Korean feminist theologian, the availability of women's leadership positions in most Christian churches still has a long way to go. For example, many denominations prohibit women from being ordained, and still claim that women are second-class church members. This has

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<sup>49</sup> Seung Hee Son, *The Spirituality of Korean Women and Church* (Seoul: Korea Journal of Christian Studies, Korean Society of Christianity, 1989), 138-47.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 134-5.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 133.

implications for Korean women in the Church because their role has been thoroughly excluded and ignored, including within lay leadership, and in terms of ordination as elders, deacons, and ministers.<sup>52</sup>

This ongoing phenomenon also reflects the realities of Korean Christian ministry, where male-centered language dominates women by strengthening a patriarchy strongly joined to the Confucian tradition of Korea. Feminist theologians argue that these male-centered religious languages, images, and symbols exclude women from the image of God.<sup>53</sup> They claim that because theology basically concerns language, and the attempt to find the best language with which to speak of God, religious languages make religious reality.<sup>54</sup> Likewise, male-centered languages may ignore the experiences of women, and, in the end, women may be persistently treated as inferior beings as a result. This oppressive treatment often extends not only to women but also to all people who have been in subordinate positions in society, including third-world women and minority races.<sup>55</sup>

Therefore, this dissertation seeks a viable feminist model of the Divine that might help to prevent the further oppression of women and the natural environment by the patriarchal God in Christianity, within the context of Korean women's tradition. This feminist divine model could help build women's positive self-identities, and will create a more just balance of power between men and women in Korea. It should help eradicate women's subordination, and many structures of oppression related to gender discrimination.

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<sup>52</sup> Nam Soon Kang, *Feminist theology: Gender, Spirituality, Life*, 340-2.

<sup>53</sup> Anne M. Clifford, *Introducing Feminist Theology* (New York: Orbis Books, 2002) 96. See Gray W. Deddo, 'Introduction', in Alvin F. Kimel Jr. (ed.) *This Is My Name Forever: The Trinity and Gender Language for God* (Downers Grove Ill: InterVarsity Press, 2001), 7. See also Soskice, *The Kindness of God*, 2-5. McFague, *Metaphorical Theology*, vii, 10.

<sup>54</sup> Soskice, *The Kindness of God*, 10-15.

<sup>55</sup> R. R. Ruether, *Integrating Eco-feminism, Globalization, and World Religions* (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2005), 91.

### **I.3 Literature Review**

The purpose of imagining an eco-feminist model of God is to create a model equipped with symbolic language that reflects the particular gendered experiences of Korean Christian women. The hope is that this model of the Divine will offer Korean women a holistic view of life, as opposed to the male-female dualism in dominant Christian conceptions of God, and thus present Christianity in a more viable form for women.

Many eco-feminist scholars argue that the hierarchical dualism that places men over women is deeply connected to the emphasis of humankind's needs over those of nature.<sup>56</sup> Both women and nature are considered expendable resources for the advancement primarily of men. Thus in order to create a feminist God model that resists dualistic notions of God and liberates women, this model must also account for the liberation of nature. To begin with, I will review several thematic perspectives of eco-feminist thinking on the connection between women and nature. Although eco-feminist thought around the world has different historical and cultural circumstances, and therefore reflects the global diversity of the values and struggles of women, the critical connection between women and nature is a key perspective shared among various strands of eco-feminist theory.

Secondly, I look specifically at two eco-feminist theologians, Rosemary R. Ruether and Sallie McFague, who speak of God with metaphoric language, and propose an inclusive model to overcome the idolatry of religious language. I will examine how these theories could be appropriate resources for a divine feminine model I apply specifically to considerations of God. My approach has a closer

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<sup>56</sup> Rosemarie Tong, *Feminist Thought: A More Comprehensive Introduction* (Colorado: Westview Press, 2014), 265-8.



affinity with the ideas of female theologians from the so-called Reform group,<sup>57</sup> and so I focus in this literature review on their perspective.

### **A. Perspectives on the Connection between Women and Nature**

Eco-feminism today analyses current environmental catastrophes and the devaluation of women. A basic tenet of eco-feminism is that 'there are significant connections between the oppression of women and the oppression of nature'.<sup>58</sup> Based on this principle, my dissertation explores the potential transcultural dialogue between Korean Feng Shui cosmology and eco-feminist theology, with a view towards constructing a new feminist model of God which can address contemporary ecological crises and the oppression of women - both of which are products of a patriarchal dualistic worldview. To make clear with respect to the following literature review the significant connections between women and nature, I draw on key texts that reveal various female eco-feminists' claims, and characterize trends on diverse theoretical perspectives. The eco-feminists' perspectives are organized thematically, depending on the particular focus of each scholar's work.

#### **1. The Role of Colonization and Western Dominance in the Oppression of Women and Nature**

Throughout Korea's history, Korean women have faced trials in the forms of the

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<sup>57</sup> In their work to propose fresh divine languages, images, models, symbols and a feminine image of God with which to overcome the patriarchal image of God and male-centered languages, female theologians are typically divided into two groups. One, known as the Reform group, holds that although the Bible was written in the patriarchal tradition, there can be found within the Bible and Christian tradition a basis for overcoming patriarchy. Rosemary Ruether and Sallie McFague are scholars in this group. The other group is known as the Revolutionary group, which asserts that since the essence of Biblical tradition is patriarchal it is fundamentally difficult for women to accept the Bible and Christianity. They assert that women must create new traditions based on the female experience. Mary Daly and Carol Christ are representative scholars in this group. See McFague, *Metaphorical Theology*, 152.

<sup>58</sup> Karen Warren, 'Feminism and Ecology: Making Connections,' in Mary Heather MacKinnon and Marie McIntyre (eds.), *Readings in Ecology and Feminist Theology*, (Kansas: Sheed and Ward, 1995), 106.

patriarchal Confucian tradition, systemic dehumanization under the Japanese empire, the Korean War, socio-economic discrimination during the period of rapid industrial growth, and a Christianity that is well-blended with the Korean patriarchal tradition.<sup>59</sup> In particular, many eco-feminists agree that Western colonialism and imperialism had a significant impact on Asia, including Korea.<sup>60</sup> In many cases, the organs of empire building have been focused on profit for the mother country and have had no compunction about exploiting both the women and the environment in the colonies.<sup>61</sup>

#### **a) Vandana Shiva's Perspective**

Vandana Shiva, a representative Indian environmental activist who follows the Hindu religious tradition, argues that Western colonialism and imperialism brings about the oppression of women and nature. Shiva helped redefine perceptions of third world women, focusing on the importance of the land as a means of women's livelihood. According to Shiva, Western advances in modern sciences are ideologically masculine, and she sees this phenomenon as a part of a continuing process of colonization.<sup>62</sup> She points out that the patriarchal capitalism of the modern West not only exploits women in its drive to amass wealth, but also degrades nature and other cultures. She argues that patriarchal and oppressive economic measures strip women of their traditional land-use rights, and sunder the living partnership between women and nature.<sup>63</sup> Viewed through the lens of Western development in its infinite pursuit of productivity and profits, women and

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<sup>59</sup> See Chapter II. 2.

<sup>60</sup> Jong Sung Park, *Introspection on Decolonization* (Seoul: Sallim Publisher, 2006), 37.

<sup>61</sup> Chhaya Datar, *Eco-feminism Revisited*, 17-8.

<sup>62</sup> Vandana Shiva, *Staying Alive: Women*, xvi-xvii, 2.

<sup>63</sup> Vandana Shiva and Ramin Jahanbegloo, *Talking Environment* (India: Oxford University Press, 2013), 12.

nature both are branded as intrinsically unproductive, and are accorded low economic values.<sup>64</sup> Shiva links the degradation of women and the environment to the productivity-driven destruction of forests, rivers, and soil, which are essential to women's livelihood. Specifically, Shiva stands by the principle of ecological conservation, in contrast to the Western development strategies that she terms 'maldevelopment', which lead the natural world toward a crisis of survival.<sup>65</sup>

Michael Barker, an American evolutionary biologist, disputes Shiva's stance, saying that although Shiva opposes some aspects of international capital dominance, her politics are far from anti-capitalist; rather, she is akin to a nationalist. He maintains it is fitting that she is not an eco-feminist but has 'worked closely with nationalist groups' in India'.<sup>66</sup> This raises the question of the historical relationship between capitalism and Western society. Despite the discrepancies in views among capitalism, nationalism, and eco-feminism, Shiva's position resonates with the Korean case of growth along a Western model, from an eco-feminist standpoint. In Korea there were also difficult periods in which women sacrificed a great deal; for example, during the period of rapid economic growth in the 1960s and 70s, which was driven by the Korean government and influenced by Western capitalism and industrialization. Most women workers had the lowest wages, longest work hours, and fewest workers' rights. Basic labor laws became non-existent, and in the 1970s a special law was passed preventing the formation of labor unions in South Korea. Due to the characteristics of light industries, women occupied the majority of the work force. Women received less pay and faced more

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<sup>64</sup> Shiva, *Staying Alive*, 4.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>66</sup> Michael Barker, 'Questioning Vandana Shiva', *Swans* (August 27, 2012), <http://www.swans.com/library/art18/barker112.html> [accessed March 25, 2014].

discrimination. Until the 1970s, South Korea experienced rapid economic growth through the exports of low-priced and mass-produced products, with the help of low pay and long working hours.<sup>67</sup> Shiva's theory provides a cogent example of how the imprudent application of Western economic policies has polluted the environment, and devalued women.

### **b) Through the Lens of American Eco-feminists**

Like Shiva, American eco-feminists Carolyn Merchant and Ynestra King view the development and implementation of scientific, technological, and capitalist ideologies by European white males to have caused a crisis for women and nature. Merchant asserts that the scientific revolution has the potential to adversely affect women, and lead to the death of nature. Merchant expands on this idea by arguing that women and nature are linked as nurturers, but states that since the Western scientific revolution, women and nature have been devalued as nurturers, and have come to be seen as wild and uncontrollable.<sup>68</sup> Accordingly, Merchant proposes that women and nature are regarded as entities that must be controlled.<sup>69</sup>

King also describes how the current ecological crisis is closely related to a system of hatred of women and nature, through the philosophies and technologies of Western white masculine thought. The exploitation of workers, people of color, animals, and women are directly connected with the dualistic worldview of Western civilization. Therefore, eco-feminism should be understood as a movement directed

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<sup>67</sup> Won Kim, *Female Factory Workers 1970s, Their Anti-History* (Seoul: Imagine Press, 2006), 157-78. See Mi Jin Choi, 'The Reality and the Struggles of Korean Women's Labor', in *The Marx 21*, Vol.13, (Spring/Summer 2012): 246.

<sup>68</sup> Carolyn Merchant, 'Eco-feminism and Feminist Theology', in Irene Diamond and Gloria Feman Orenstein (eds.) *Reweaving The World: The Emergence of Eco-feminism*, 100-5.

<sup>69</sup> Carolyn Merchant, *The Death of Nature: Ecology and the Scientific Revolution* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1983), xv-xvi; quoted in Eleanor Rae, *Women, the Earth, the Divine* (New York: Orbis Books, 1994), 3.

towards saving all life on the planet from the destructive forces of sexism.<sup>70</sup>

Finally, Shiva, Merchant, and King all claim that women's lives have long been oppressed by patriarchies, and that their livelihoods and the natural environment have been destroyed by Western policies of development. These eco-feminists focus on the oppression of women and nature during both colonialism and the post-colonial period of Western development - and seek liberation for both.

### **c) A Combination of Eastern and Western Eco-feminists**

Several other Asian and Western eco-feminists view the relationship between women and nature through a political dominant-submissive lens. Aruna Gnanadason, who is an Indian Christian eco-feminist, also says that ecology and economics are inextricably linked because preservation of the environment is a matter of survival to women in the third world.<sup>71</sup> Maria Mies, a German sociologist, further argues that in our current economic system women are seen as natural resources to be exploited. Her perspective hinges on the idea that women and nature hold power as being resources that cannot be produced by capital, but that men seek to control and appropriate power over these resources. In this way she establishes another link, both ecological and economic, between women and nature.<sup>72</sup>

Finally, Gabrielle Dietrich, who is a German born, naturalized Indian Christian eco-feminist, advocates that both Asian women and nature are currently enslaved, and are on the brink of non-existence; thus, because both are in positions of inferiority and subjugation, women and nature are allies and must

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<sup>70</sup> King, 'Healing the Wounds: Feminism, Ecology, and the Nature/Culture Dualism', in, Irene Diamond and Gloria Feman Orenstein, *Reweaving the World*, 106-7.

<sup>71</sup> Aruna Gnanadason, 'Women, Economy and Ecology', in David G. Hallman (ed.), *Ecotheology: Voices from South and North*, (New York: Orbis Books, 1994), 180.

<sup>72</sup> Rae, *Women, the Earth, the Divine*, 3.

protect one another in dire circumstances.<sup>73</sup> These eco-feminists also claim that the indiscriminate destruction of nature in the name of patriarchal civilization in the first world is closely linked to the survival of women, including women in the third world. I posit further that it is linked particularly to women in Korea, based on Korea's twentieth-century economic development that was accomplished through exploitative labor practices for Korean women.<sup>74</sup>

#### **d) Korean Eco-feminism: The Basis for a Feminist Divine Model**

The Korean eco-feminist perspective reflects upon the close relationship between Western societies, colonization, and patriarchy, but acknowledges that the connection between women and nature in Korea takes a different shape, due to the country's ever-present disunity. According to Mi Jung Koo, a South Korean Christian eco-feminist, the issues of eco-feminism in Korea are similar to those of other countries' in general, but are unique due to lasting intra-culture discrimination, as Korea is the only divided country in the world. The defence budget increase resulted in a heavier tax burden and has made social welfare and eco-activity not a priority. The supremacy of economic development has neglected humans and nature, especially women and children in poor communities.<sup>75</sup> Jung Wook Kim, a Korean environmental activist, gives the example that rayon factories were built in the USA in the 1920s, but before workers and neighbourhood residents could be harmed by carbon disulfide, the factories were moved to Korea and Japan, which were third world countries at the time. China, Indonesia, and India were also popular places for technology transfer. During this process of

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<sup>73</sup> Aruna Gnanadason. *Listen to the Women!: Listen to the Earth* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2005), 102.

<sup>74</sup> See Chapter II. 2

<sup>75</sup> Mi Jung Koo, *Now You Sing a Song of Life* (Seoul: Olive Tree, 2004), 72.

industrialization, young Korean women suffered in adverse work environments.<sup>76</sup> The experience of capitalism under the Japanese colonial era also fostered eco-antipathy, along with the development of Korean economic growth.<sup>77</sup> Ultimately, a patriarchal societal structure, territorial division, and the eco-antipathy of capitalism have oppressed both Korean women and nature.

The trials of my fellow Korean women led me to join the larger struggle for the liberation of women and nature. This advocacy leads me to propose a new feminist God model in order to find a viable Christianity that can exist in contemporary Korea, and allow Korean society to move towards a more inclusive and holistic understanding of women in the Church.

## **2. Physical, Cultural and Psychological/Spiritual Connections between Women and Nature in Korean Feng Shui**

In this section I explore the physical, cultural, and psychological connections between women and nature, in order to elucidate how Western eco-feminists' thoughts connect to Korean Feng Shui cosmology.

Catherine Roach, an American eco-feminist, and Carol Christ, an American feminist, analyse the connection between women and nature within the laws of the physical universe. Sherry Ortner, an American cultural anthropologist, Heather Eaton, an American eco-feminist, and Lois A. Lorentzen, an American environmental activist, also find that women and nature share a deep and inherent connection. The shared physical, cultural, and psychological/spiritual attributes outlined by these scholars and activists are similar to notions expressed in Korean Feng Shui cosmology.

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<sup>76</sup> Jung Wook Kim, 'The Understanding of Ecological Crisis', in *Modern Ecological Thoughts and Christianity* (Seoul: A Daughter of Paul Press, 2010), 51-52.

<sup>77</sup> Koo, *Now You Sing a Song of Life* 73.

### a) Connections within the Laws of the Physical Universe

Roach says that the connection between women and nature is strong. From the earliest depictions of the earth as female, to the prevalent representation of the birthing of the universe, to the common perceptions of Mother Nature, nature is consistently viewed as female. Roach says that these powerful associations paint the entire natural world as predominantly female, and as having a strong bond with the fertility, life cycles, and creativity of women.<sup>78</sup> Christ also finds value in the symbol of the Goddess in the relevance between women and nature. She emphasizes the unique changes of the female physical experience, including menstruation, childbirth, nurturing, and menopause, and sees these as being analogous to the waxing and waning of the universe, and to the cycle of life and death. This suggests that the woman's body itself reflects the life cycle of nature, and that it is a basis for understanding nature as interconnected with Goddess-worship.<sup>79</sup> However, Merchant criticizes that 'any analysis that ties women's supposed special qualities to biological destiny thwarts the possibility of liberation. A politics grounded in women's culture, experience, and value can be seen as reactionary'.<sup>80</sup> Janet Biehl, an American political writer, refutes this, maintaining that downplaying the connection between the life-giving capacities of women and nature may 'somewhat diminish the original eco-feminist passion to reclaim nature in an organic sense – certainly when it comes to women's biology'.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> Catherine M. Roach, *Mother/Nature: Popular Culture and Environmental Ethics* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003), 39-50.

<sup>79</sup> Carol P. Christ, *Laughter of Aphrodite: Reflections on a Journey to the Goddess* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987), 125.

<sup>80</sup> Carolyn Merchant, *Radical Ecology: The Search for a Livable World* (New York: Routledge, 1992); quoted in Tong, *Feminist Thought*, 287.

<sup>81</sup> Janet Biehl, *Rethinking Feminist Politics* (Boston: South End Press, 1991), 19; quoted in Tong, *Feminist Thought*, 287.



## **b) Connections within Physical, Cultural, and Psychological/Spiritual Contexts**

Ortner claims that women's connection with nature is based upon physiological factors, their social roles related to domesticity, and the female psyche.<sup>82</sup> She highlights the deep inter-connectedness between women and nature, and deems that cultural ideology and symbols have made the spirit of the role of women inferior to that of men.<sup>83</sup>

Eaton and Lorentzen argue further that three woman-and-nature connections are central to eco-feminist theory: The empirical, the conceptual and/or cultural/symbolic, and the epistemological. The empirical connection is that women—particularly poor, third world women—are disproportionately impacted by environmental degradation. Another claim is that women and nature are connected conceptually, culturally, and symbolically. Western culture has historically reinforced the connection of nature and women through hierarchical dualistic paradigms. The epistemological eco-feminist claim is that women are in a position of epistemological privilege because they are most adversely affected by environmental problems. Because women have more knowledge about earth systems than men, they are better equipped to create 'new practical and intellectual ecological paradigms'.<sup>84</sup> Likewise, Feng Shui is eco-feminist sensitive; it connotes that women's perception and intuition of nature and the universe is fundamentally broader than that of men.<sup>85</sup> And ideas of femininity prevail organically in the tradition of Korean shamanism.

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<sup>82</sup> Sherry B. Ortner, 'Is Female to Male as Nature Is to Culture?', in *Readings in Ecology and Feminist Theory*, Mary Heather MacKinnon and Marie McIntyre (eds.) (Kansas City: Sheed and Ward, 1995), 52-53; quoted in Tong, *Feminist Thought*, 263.

<sup>83</sup> Tong, *Feminist Thought*, 263-265. See R R. Ruether, *Sexism and God-Talk*, 72.

<sup>84</sup> Eaton and Lorentzen, *Eco-feminism & Globalisation*, 2-3.

<sup>85</sup> Chang Jo Choi, *New Theory of Korean Feng Shui* (Seoul: Min Eum Sa, 2009), 15.

### **c) Connections with Korean Feng Shui Cosmology**

Roach, Christ, and Ortner demonstrate that it is important to recognize the tangible, physical similarities between the female body and nature as a whole. The feminist God model I propose draws on a similar conception of the 'land' from Korean Feng Shui cosmology. The metaphor of land as feminine is capable of producing reality. The land comprises both yin and yang, both creativity and responsiveness, both being and becoming, because land is the source of all living - like a birthplace or mother. The land is, then, the matrix of all that was, is, and shall be. It is the ground of all being and becoming.

In Korean Feng Shui cosmology, women have been portrayed as a feminine 'Mother Earth'; thus both women and nature have been portrayed as feminine.<sup>86</sup> In the theory of yin and yang as according to Feng Shui, women's physiological connection with yin - which is linked to reproduction - has led to the association of yin with nature. The property of yin is also seen as evidence of yin sharing feminine properties i.e. natural cycles and rhythms in the universe.<sup>87</sup> This new model I suggest acknowledges the physical commonalities between women and nature described in Feng Shui cosmology.

Furthermore, Ortner, Eaton, and Lorentzen claim that although women have long been the oppressed sex, their deep connection with nature means they are more than capable of intellectual and leadership excellence, and can redefine their relationship with nature in a way that is not oppressive. These scholars' epistemological understanding is that women are closer to nature than men and possess innate traits of caring, community building, nonviolence, and earth

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<sup>86</sup> Jung Bae Lee, 'Korean Feng Shui and Ecology: Theological Approach on the Significance of Korean Feng Shui as Ecological Perspective', *SaMok* 162 (1992): 38-39.

<sup>87</sup> Ole Bruun, *An Introduction to Feng Shui* (Cambridge University Press, 2008), 104-106.

sensitivity.<sup>88</sup> Likewise, Feng Shui implies that women's perception of nature and the universe is fundamentally broader than that of men, and that women intuitively recognize the whole universe as a form of organic life.<sup>89</sup> Feng Shui was built on the basic idea that land is the biological mother of humankind, and symbolizes the feminine vitality of reproduction, nurturing, and caring. Korean Feng Shui emphasizes that the whole universe is no different from the human body, and reflects significant connections between women and nature. Since Feng Shui perceives a human body as a state of religion fused with cosmological life energy known as Chi, it sets up the human body as a cognitive subject who can recognize the whole universe with which it is connected. Thus we can see that Feng Shui shares some basic conceptions with Ortner, Eaton and Lorentzen. Roach, Christ, Ortner, Eaton and Lorentzen's ideas are also similar to Korean Feng Shui cosmology in terms of its physiological, cultural, biological, and spiritual sense of kinship between women and nature. The feminist God model I propose here embraces this fundamental eco-feminist idea that women and nature share a deep and inherent connection.

### **B. The Understanding of God According to Rosemary R. Ruether and Sallie McFague**

Sallie McFague and Rosemary R. Ruether seek ways to dismantle the stereotypes and idolization of theological languages, and suggest God through metaphors that fit our time. This dissertation proposes a model along these lines, following McFague and Ruether in offering criticism of patriarchal images of God, and of Christian dualistic thinking. Similarly to Ruether and McFague's perspectives, the cosmology of Korean Feng Shui has a holistic approach that overcomes dualistic

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<sup>88</sup> Eaton and Lorentzen, *Eco-feminism & Globalisation*, 3.

<sup>89</sup> Chang Jo Choi, *New Theory of Korean Feng Shui* (Seoul: Min Eum Sa, 2009), 15.

thinking. Thus, the new model derives such perspectives from Feng Shui in the hope of imagining God from a worldview that does not reflect the dualistic thinking and patriarchal images of God that Ruether and McFague have criticized. Ruether and McFague's theories will therefore be explored in this section, specifically for their understanding of God, and for their criticism of patriarchal Christian dualistic thinking with reflections on Korean Feng Shui.

## **1. Understanding God Through Images and Metaphors**

### **a) Metaphors of God, and Rosemary R. Ruether's God/ess and Gaia Models**

Rosemary R. Ruether is an American Catholic feminist who criticizes Christianity for its male image of God. Ruether regards all fixed images of God within Christianity as idolatry. In order to represent a true sense of God's image, she calls for comprehensive languages based on the experiences and images that men and women share. She argues that God's being is 'open-ended', and that all names for God are only analogies.<sup>90</sup> Therefore, she posits that we need divine languages that extend beyond patriarchy. These languages would not perpetuate women's subordination to male domination, but instead could eventually open up a whole new community, liberating humanity from the ground up.

Ruether claims that religious languages are metaphors for God, but that the persistent naming of God as 'Father' has been taken literally, and thus God has become male and not female. God, then, becomes an idol.<sup>91</sup> Ruether therefore asserts that male images of God, which have been made by naming God as 'Father' and as 'Son,' evoke us to interpret God as a leader in patriarchy, such as a

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<sup>90</sup> Ruether, *Sexism and God-Talk*, 66-67.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, 66.

monarch, or Pope. In this way, God has, by default, come to be represented by all these male patriarchal images.<sup>92</sup> Ruether argues that such masculine images of God should be judged because they limit the essential meaning of God.

There has been a significant body of theological work, which similarly to Ruether, emphasizes that religious languages and metaphor should not be taken literally. Thomas Gilby, an English dominican theologian states that Thomas Aquinas reasoned that 'When Scripture speaks of the arm of God, the literal sense is not that he has a physical limb, but that he has what it signifies, namely the power of doing and making'. In this way, 'the literal truth of Scripture would not preclude but necessitates critical exegesis and hermeneutical analysis'.<sup>93</sup> There are also theologians who interpret God in culturally specific ways, according to different societal beliefs and fashioned by the times. In regard to naming God as 'Father,' Paul Ricoeur, a French philosopher, calls attentions to the divine title 'Father' in Hebrew Scriptures as an image that must be interpreted in its historical context. In Exodus, God is described as 'the God of our Fathers.' Ricoeur indicates that this should not be understood as God is a 'Father' who is male, but rather that God is the 'God of our Fathers' which led the Israelite people. He points out that 'Father' is a metaphor for the 'covenant' between God and the Israelite people of this time.<sup>94</sup> Janet Soskice, a Canadian-born Catholic theologian and philosopher, also does not interpret the metaphor of 'God the Father' as literally male-gendered. She draws upon Moltmann's view of the meaning of Father,<sup>95</sup> and asserts that the

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> Thomas Gilby, in, Appendix 12, 'The Senses of Scripture,' to *ST*, Vol. I, 140; quoted in Janet Martin Soskice, *Metaphor and Religious Language* (New York: Clarendon Press, 1985), 86.

<sup>94</sup> Janet Martin Soskice, *The Kindness of God: Metaphor, Gender, and Religious Language* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 75.

<sup>95</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, a German theologian, has argued that the name 'Father' for God has two backgrounds - one in patriarchy, and the other in God being father of the 'first-born' Son. So

image of God the 'Father' avoids gender constraints as it evokes God's kinship not only as a father but also as a mother.

However, Ruether argues that although naming God as 'Father' has been used metaphorically, continuous literal use of expressing or painting God as 'Father' has led to fixed images of God as indisputably male. Ruether also disagrees with the notions of Moltmann and Soskice about the androgyny of God.<sup>96</sup> This is because as long as the metaphor retains the patriarchal gender disposition, the feminine aspects found in the androgyny of God will have only secondary and limited functions. Also, Ruether's view of the Mother-Father God - that is, the model of God /ess as a parent - is a negative one. She asserts that it is difficult to compare God to parents because it evokes the notion that we as children are dependent on God. In addition, our relationship to God will stay tied with the parent-child relationship forever. Ruether says that it is not enough to simply add a feminine image to the powerful and strong sovereign Father for mediation.<sup>97</sup>

Finally, Ruether suggests the God/ess model as a new concept that includes the characteristics of both women and men, in order to liberate us from dualistic hierarchy and open up a new community of equality. Ruether defines God/ess as the Primal Matrix, the great womb within which all things are generated, and as the Ground of Being.<sup>98</sup> She asserts that the image of God/ess must include women's roles and experiences, but that it is not representative of a feminine God. God is a man, and at the same time is a woman, or God is neither

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Moltmann ascribes 'Father' to the motherly attributes, that is, God is a motherly father. He wrote, 'A father who both begets and gives birth to his son is no mere male father. He is a motherly father'. Moltmann, 'The Motherly Father: Is Trinitarian Patipassianism Replacing Theological Patriarchalism?', in, Soskice, *The Kindness of God*, 82-83. See also Soskice, 'only the Son can show us the Father. Without the Son 'the Father' is not God, but an idol', *The Kindness of God*, 82.

<sup>96</sup> Ruether, *Sexism and God-Talk*, 70.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid., 69.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid., 48.

female nor male.<sup>99</sup> Therefore, Ruether claims that an inclusive God model can happen only by naming a God/ess using both female and male metaphors. To her, the true God/ess has no adequate name but good and righteous God: 'I am who I shall become'.<sup>100</sup>

Furthermore, Ruether understands ecological crises as interrelations between the oppression of women and nature within the framework of eco-justice. To overcome the ecological crisis, she suggests an ecological, imminent, feminine divine of Gaia, instead of a monotheistic understanding of God. According to Ruether's Gaia theory, God is a being in a relationship with all living creatures, communicating with them, and giving each of them a life.<sup>101</sup> This means that the universe is a living organism, fluid, and essentially formed by the flow of energy in living things; thus, all living things on the planet are thought to be interconnected.

The suggested model from Feng Shui cosmology is a feminine Divine, which is grounded on gender equality as Ruether has suggested in her God/ess model. In cosmologies of Korean Feng Shui, the Heaven (sky) implicates man (father) and the land means woman (mother). Yin and yang embrace each other, and it includes the opposites: Yin has yang in it and yang has yin in it. Likewise, in Ruether's model, God has Goddess in it and Goddess has God in it, metaphorically. Yin and yang do not represent dualistic superiority or inferiority, but rather the balance and harmony of one unit of parents that are committed to mutuality. As a result, although this dissertation proposes a feminist divine model

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<sup>99</sup> Ibid., 67.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid., 71.

<sup>101</sup> This term is used by James Lovelock and Lynn Margulis to refer to their theory that the entire planet is a living system, behaving as a unified organism. Gaia, as an immanent divinity, is seen as the all-nurturing earth mother goddess. Ruether's eco-feminist theology is tracking that cosmic Christology that came from the Hebrew idea, and later Greek thought. R. R. Ruether, *Gaia & God: An Eco-feminist Theory of Earth Healing* (San Francisco: Harper, 1992), 4-31.

from land represented as 'God of the Land', this model hopes to be an inclusive model beyond a gendered God, in order to break traditional male images of God. In cosmology of Korean Feng Shui, the land only can achieve integrity by coupling with the Heaven (sky). Thus this dissertation adopts the principles of gender equality and eco-justice contributed by Ruether's God/ess and Gaia models. The dissertation interprets them through the cosmology of Korean Feng Shui, which pursues the 'middle way', balance, or a perfect mix of these yin and yang qualities.<sup>102</sup>

However, Ruether and other feminist theologians argue for more inclusive languages to describe God against their critics. Achtemeier rejects calls from academia and from the Church for the use of feminine language for God. She argues, 'The church cannot accede to these feminist theologians' claims that language about God be changed to feminine; if that happens, the church will have lost that God in whom it truly lives and moves and has its being'.<sup>103</sup> Achtemeier asserts that the use of masculine language to portray the gender of God has profound theological significance because the writers of the Hebrew Scripture purposely wanted to make the God of Israel different from the gods that were worshipped by the nations of the ancient Near East, by using that masculine language.<sup>104</sup>

In his article, 'The Gender of Israel's God,' Fr. Paul Mankowski who is American theologian, also criticizes the sorts of ideas championed by Ruether. Fr. Mankowski indicates that the nouns, pronouns, and verbs used in the Hebrew

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<sup>102</sup> Terah Kathryn Collins, *The Western Guide to Feng Shui* (CA: Hay House, 1996), 13-29.

<sup>103</sup> Elizabeth Achtemeier, 'Female Language for God: Should the Church Adopt It?', in Donald G. Miller (ed.), *The Hermeneutical Quest: Essays in Honor of James Luther Mays on His Sixty-fifth Birthday* (Allison Park, Penn.: Pickwick Publications, 1986), 109.

<sup>104</sup> Elizabeth Achtemeier, 'Exchanging God for "No Gods"; A Discussion of Female Language for God', in, Kimel (ed.), *Speaking the Christian God*, 8.



Scripture to describe the character and acts of God are all masculine. According to him, the words 'masculine' and 'masculinity' should be used when speaking of God in order to express a grammatical category, as opposed to a sexual or biological reality.<sup>105</sup> With regards to the Hebrew Scripture, Mankowski asserts, 'YHWH is invariably "he"'.<sup>106</sup> Despite such criticism, most feminist theologians feel keenly the necessity of speaking out against the theologically based, long-term discrimination in Christianity. In particular, Ruether moved beyond criticism and reconstruction of the past, seeking ways to create a new culture through women's stories and liturgies.<sup>107</sup>

#### **b) Metaphors of God, and Sallie McFague's "The World as God's Body"**

Sallie McFague is an American feminist and Protestant who indicates that 'imagistic language' is an important part of religion because it is the foundation for conceptual theological language.<sup>108</sup> Like Ruether, she therefore believes that when God is spoken of in absolute language such as 'King', 'Father' or 'Monarch', those languages become idolatrous. In this sense, she uses the metaphor as an adequate tool to capture our understanding that religious languages should be meaningful for our time.

McFague argues that if God is called 'Father,' then Father becomes a literal description of God, and makes 'Father' the real being of God.<sup>109</sup> McFague argues

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<sup>105</sup> Mankowski Paul, 'The Gender of Israel's God', in Alvin F. Kimel Jr. (ed.), *This Is My Name Forever: The Trinity and Gender Language for God* (Downers Grove, Ill.: Inter Varsity Press, 2001), 36.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid., 57.

<sup>107</sup> Despite her commitment to the suggestions towards healed relationships between men and women, classes, nations, and between humans and the earth, the most important word in Ruether's mind is theology. She places the utmost importance on theologically inspired eco-feministic assumptions that male domination of women and male domination of nature are closely interconnected, and criticizes the Christian theological tradition.

<sup>108</sup> McFague, *Metaphorical Theology*, Preface, vii.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., 5.

that to call God 'Father' is associated with the feelings we have about fatherhood, which influence our consequent feelings about God. Because metaphors have not only emotional but also cognitive function, to say God is 'Father' appears to be a direct assertion. Ultimately, we only come to know about God through the screen of fatherhood.<sup>110</sup> McFague indicates that 'God the Father' is a metaphor, which has become a model; 'if God is understood on the model of "father", human beings are understood as "children", sin is rebellion against the "father"', and so on.<sup>111</sup>

The problem is that these patriarchal languages influence our whole way of thinking – our belief structures, and the social value systems in our culture. Thus it has justified the idea that women are subordinate to men. Naming God 'Father' from Scripture literally will affect the way we think and speak about God metaphorically, by losing diverse connotations, and functioning theologically as a male dominated hierarchy. Accordingly, McFague is suggesting that we should construct new languages by the dissolution and reconstruction of traditional languages, because every religious language is a metaphor, including languages speaking about God.<sup>112</sup>

However, Soskice claims that naming God as 'Father' in the biblical writings expresses an anticipation of great intimacy, new relation, and love for kinship. She asserts that naming God 'Father' should be understood as one of many metaphoric names which God has had in Christian traditions, such as Rock, Lamb, Forest, Shepherd, Vine-Keeper, and so on.<sup>113</sup> Nevertheless, she points out that continuous

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<sup>110</sup> Sallie McFague, *Speaking in Parables: A Study in Metaphor and Theology* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975), 44.

<sup>111</sup> 'The simplest way to define a model is as a dominant metaphor, a metaphor with staying power'. McFague, *Metaphorical Theology*, 23.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

<sup>113</sup> Soskice, *The Kindness of God*, 1-2.

use of God the 'Father' in writings, prayers, and liturgies leads to an imbalance in our ideas about God.<sup>114</sup>

McFague holds metaphor in great account because she thinks metaphor is a root of religious languages.<sup>115</sup> McFague focuses on the oppositional characteristic of the metaphor of 'is and is not' – which means that 'God is Father' at the same time as 'God is not Father' - and says that religious language can thus overcome the idolatry through the 'is not' side of the metaphor.<sup>116</sup> However, she criticizes the 'Father' metaphor used in traditional Christianity for losing its tension, for becoming fixed to the patriarchal 'Father', and for finally becoming idolized. Her main criticism is that fundamentally absolutized languages emphasize only the side of 'is'. McFague claims metaphor without healthy tension becomes dead metaphor, so we need new languages for new ecological sensibilities to avoid idolatry.<sup>117</sup>

Soskice, on the other hand, asserts that metaphors are not used to re-describe but to disclose for the first time, i.e. the metaphors have to be used for talking about something new and unique. She accuses Ricoeur and McFague of mere re-description in their understanding of metaphors of God through 'is and is not'.<sup>118</sup> When, for example, Jesus is called the Son of God, this is not simply expressing male Jesus, but rather the divinity of Jesus. In other words, the issue is not really whether we have metaphor here or not, but what the metaphor is doing, or referring to, or signifying. Soskice concludes that the 'is and is not' thesis is

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<sup>114</sup> Ibid., 66.

<sup>115</sup> McFague, *Metaphorical Theology*, 15.

<sup>116</sup> McFague uses a hermeneutic method, which Paul Ricoeur used, in which to term 'is and is not'. For example, when we call God a 'father', that term may include both meanings, it is true or it is not true; this is how metaphorical theology pursues and approaches. Metaphors, McFague suggests, are modes of language that sustain a feeling of tension. This tension would prevent religious languages from being intertwined with the dead metaphors that are fixed images of God, and inappropriate, idolatrous. McFague, *Metaphorical Theology*, 38, 76.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid., 38.

<sup>118</sup> Soskice, *Metaphor and Religious Language*, 89.

'inadequate to explain the working of metaphor', and further 'eliminates the possibility that a metaphor may be genuinely, even ontologically, novel'.<sup>119</sup> In a final critical analysis, Soskice states that metaphors of God understood through the 'is and is not thesis' from McFague and Ricoeur are simply re-describing, and are not describing for the first time.<sup>120</sup>

McFague implies that metaphors are more than just describing or re-describing. She states they contain 'the power of getting from here to there',<sup>121</sup> and that the final task of metaphors should be reformative and transformative.<sup>122</sup> In this spirit, McFague suggests a new metaphor - one that is not patriarchal, and that inspires vitality in all living things. She suggests God's metaphors are a mother, a lover, and a friend.<sup>123</sup> Furthermore, McFague suggests that the organic model for our time is the image of 'the world as God's body', which promotes this interconnectedness and deep relationship. This restores the oppressed body images from traditional Christianity, and provides a way to think about God's transcendence in an immanent way.<sup>124</sup> All of Creation is the body of God. Thus God is very much present in our everyday lives. The notion of the world as God's body heals the damage wrought by biased theologies that view the human body as dirty and sinful. Thus, this model is not dualistic. The concept that the world is God's body is a sacrament, an incarnation, of God.<sup>125</sup> God breaks into the world and becomes flesh by reconstructing Jesus' embodiment as a cosmologic Christ, and by confirming the value of our bodies, our physical and natural world, and

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<sup>119</sup> Ibid., 90

<sup>120</sup> Ibid., 89-90.

<sup>121</sup> McFague, *Speaking in Parables*, 56.

<sup>122</sup> McFague, *Metaphorical Theology*, 29.

<sup>123</sup> McFague, *Models of God*, 78 -180.

<sup>124</sup> McFague, *The Body of God*, 133.

<sup>125</sup> Sallie McFague, *Life Abundant: Rethinking Theology and Economy for a Planet in Peril* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2001), 150.

God's presence in them via sacramental tradition. Although God became an embodied spirit, God reveals the presence of a transcendent spirit. McFague takes a firm stance on panentheism, even though she is sometimes accused of just that.<sup>126</sup>

McFague's model of God serves as an exploratory model for my new model, in terms of approaches in using metaphors to understand God. However, my model comes from Korean Feng Shui, which sees land as Mother-Land and personifies this Divine by Chi energy. My model suggests a possible approach to overcoming the dichotomy between body and spirit, as McFague's model of God's body attempts to do. Because 'God of Land' imagines land as God's body, it can dissolve dualistic thinking about the human body and spirit through observing yin and yang in the cosmology of Feng Shui. Additionally, the proposed model is not a pantheistic understanding of God to which Koreans have been accustomed from their long-term shamanistic practices. Rather, it is a panentheistic God model in which God is with all people immanently and transcendentally within the God-world interrelationship. In this way, it is like McFague's God's body model, despite its controversies between pantheism and panentheism. According to McFague's metaphor, a model of God, which has both 'is and is not' components, God is the body of the world, and is not. Thus, the 'is and is not' dimensions are what create God's simultaneous immanence and transcendence. Furthermore, although my suggested model is a feminist model of God, this model draws from both metaphors; the model is both a 'female figure and is not,' which will eventually embrace both women and men. This is similar to the idea in yin and yang of Feng Shui. To achieve wholeness and inclusiveness in yin and yang, an 'is and is not'

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<sup>126</sup> McFague, *Models of God*, 72.

component is essential; yin is not only yin but also yang, yang is not only yang but also yin.<sup>127</sup> In other words, feminine nature in women includes the masculine nature, and divine immanence in my model includes the divine transcendence. Therefore, my model could be recognized as a panentheistic model in Feng Shui, like McFague's God's body model.

However, Anna Case-Winters, an American theologian, criticizes McFague's model of the world as God's body because of its ambiguity in hovering between pantheism and panentheism.<sup>128</sup> Ryan Klassen who is Canadian scholar, also claims that McFague's model does not succeed in overcoming dualistic tendencies. Klassen maintains that, despite the world being God's body, God is still physically present in the world, and God and the world are still distinct. He continues on to claim that humans can encounter God only through the physical world, and only as a part of that world. He indicates that any models and any metaphors that subordinate the value of humans to nature as a whole inherently fail to motivate those devalued humans.<sup>129</sup>

John Gibbs, an American theologian, also points out McFague's model's limit in its usefulness within the Church. He questions the primary sources of 'the classic organic model', which McFague described. He also poses the question whether the source for the organic model is primarily Christian or not, and whether essential components of the model actually rely on non-Christian sources.<sup>130</sup> In

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<sup>127</sup> Jung Young Lee, *The Trinity in Asian Perspective* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996), 28.

<sup>128</sup> Anna Case-Winters, *Reconstructing a Christian Theology of Nature* (Vermont: Ashgate, 2007), 30-32.

<sup>129</sup> Ryan Klassen, 'Metaphorical Theology: An Evangelical Appropriation', in, *Quodlibet Journal of Christian Theology and Philosophy*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (2005), <http://www.quodlibet.net/articles/klassen-theology.shtml>. [accessed May 5, 2014].

<sup>130</sup> John Gibbs, *Review of McFague's The Body of God: An Ecological Theology*, 1998, retrieved from MEEESC (Minnesota Episcopal Environment Stewardship Commission) <http://www.env-steward.com/readlist/bookrevs/body.html>, [accessed May 5, 2014].

addition, Leanne Van Dyk, an American theologian, criticizes McFague's model on the basis that 'the model of the universe as God's body excludes any claims of the uniqueness and singularity of Jesus Christ. Jesus is merely one of many "paradigmatic embodiments of God"'.<sup>131</sup>

Despite these criticisms, McFague argues that 'the model is monist and perhaps most precisely designated as panentheistic; that is, it is a view of the God–world relationship in which all things have their origins in God, and nothing exists outside God, though this does not mean that God is reduced to these things'.<sup>132</sup> McFague also awakens Christians to an environmental and a planetary agenda in understanding God through the earth. She envisions the planet (sun, moon, trees, rivers, animals, and people) as God's body, and challenges the traditional worldview of dualistic patriarchy.

## **2. Ruether and McFague's Challenge to Hierarchical Dualism**

Ruether sees the current Christian God image as exuding a dualistic mindset, by reinforcing the separation of mind and body. She also blames patriarchy and male domination for the devastation of women and nature,<sup>133</sup> and sees gender hierarchies as being quintessential to the patriarchal ideals.<sup>134</sup> To Ruether, the true sense of redemption lies in overcoming all forms of patriarchy. She argues that salvation includes conversion, opening up to one another, and changing the existing systems of distorted relations.<sup>135</sup> In particular, dualistic patriarchal values reinforce and justify sexism, racism, and classism, and eventually lead to

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<sup>131</sup> Ibid.

<sup>132</sup> McFague, *Models of God*, 72.

<sup>133</sup> Ruether, *Sexism and God-Talk*, 85.

<sup>134</sup> Rosemary R. Ruether, *Women and Redemption: A Theological History* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012), 252.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid., 252, 257.

ecological crisis.<sup>136</sup>

In order to understand the dualistic thinking of these male-dominated ideas and impersonal views of nature, Ruether traces the system to its origin. Drawing on Hebrew and Greek traditions, early Christianity accorded male consciousness a transcendent status while women were regarded as being similar to material or low-grade areas of the body, according to Platonic hierarchical orders. Ruether indicates that the notion of the divine masculine and patriarchal monotheism connects men with the sky, intellect, and transcendent spirit, while women tended to be connected with the earth, matter, and nature.<sup>137</sup> This dualism of mind and body found within Platonic cosmology is connected to the exploitation of women and the exploitation of nature. Women and nature were ultimately identified as inferior, a status that would find expression in various imbalanced binaries, including male/female, human/nature, and first world/third world.<sup>138</sup>

McFague also argues that the oppression of women and exploitation of nature have long been central to traditional Christian theology. She argues that dualistic thinking shapes Christianity, and she highlights the limitations of a patriarchal God model in particular.<sup>139</sup> The traditional understanding of God views Him as a Ruler, a King or Monarch who is separate from the real world. This kind of monarchical model is an imperial, dualistic, and hierarchical model that divides humanity into male/female, white/colored, rich/poor, Christian/ non-Christian, mind/body, and so on.<sup>140</sup> Monarchical metaphors are of little use in times of ecological crisis because they contribute to a model that is dualistic and

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<sup>136</sup> Rosemary R. Ruether, 'Introduction', in, Rosemary R. Ruether (ed.), *Women Healing Earth: Third World Women on Ecology, Feminism, and Religion* (New York: Orbis Books, 1996), 1-8.

<sup>137</sup> Ruether, *Gaia & God*, 3.

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.

<sup>139</sup> McFague, *Models of God*, ix and 6-7.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*, 67.



hierarchical, and thus only emphasise one-sided dependence on God.<sup>141</sup> In the end, metaphors that portray God as Ruler, Lord, and King, and follow notions that are transcendent, absolute, and multi-potent, do not allow an understanding of love, responsibility of sharing, and interrelationship.<sup>142</sup> It is with this in mind that McFague's chapter 'A New Sensibility' in her book *Models of God* - which paints a picture of contemporary ecocatastrophes - highlights the importance of realizing the value of the interconnectedness among living things in the universe. She envisions holistic, evolving, and ecological views of reality, which overcome old traditional patriarchal hierarchies, and promote the ethical spirituality of justice and caring.<sup>143</sup>

Ruether and McFague find the male-centered worldview of dualism and theology to be the root of the current ecological crises and the devaluation of women. This patriarchal dualism may strengthen the image of a male God, and male authority, and can exclude women from the image of God. This becomes a reason to believe that women are inferior beings. Meanwhile, nature has been exploited in the same ways as women. Ultimately, Ruether and McFague's criticism of hierarchal dualism shows why women and nature must be liberated and respected. Likewise, the new model that is derived from Feng Shui has a holistic approach that does not reflect the dualistic thinking that Ruether and McFague have criticized. As yin and yang in Korean Feng Shui carries a monistic worldview, within the proposed model everything is equal, and connected.

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<sup>141</sup> Ibid., 63-69.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid., 19.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid., 64.

## I.4 Theoretical Context and Background

### A. The Eco-feministic Approach

The quintessential understanding within eco-feminism is that the oppressions of women and nature are fundamentally connected.<sup>144</sup> Eco-feminist theologians have found that today's crisis of civilization comes from the exploitation of women and nature, and they criticize the patriarchal ideology and cosmological dualism in traditional theology that has caused such degradation.<sup>145</sup> Thus, eco-feminist theologians seek a way that will restore the true value of both women and nature.

Eco-feminists assert that one of the ways to overcome the dualistic idea in Christian tradition and restore women's value is to envision diverse God models that encompass the experiences of all. They finally propose diverse feminine God models, which are heavily based on women's experiences, to break the tradition of masculine imagery that can only describe a male God. For example, McFague proposes metaphors of God as mother, friend, lover, and world as God's body. Ruether also presents a God/ess model, and suggests an ecological female divine of Gaia. Johnson proposes God as 'Sophia' and naming Yahweh as 'She Who Is'.<sup>146</sup> Further, Mary Daley, Carol P. Christ, Catherine Roach, Naomi Goldenberg, Charlene Spretnak, and others have tried looking for the Goddess—that female Divine from a pre-historical era—in order to reject the notion of the exclusively male Divine. They resist the traditional understanding of God in patriarchal

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<sup>144</sup> Karen Warren, 'Feminism and Ecology: Making Connections', in, MacKinnon and McIntyre, *Readings in Ecology and Feminist Theory*, 106.

<sup>145</sup> Patrick Curry, *Ecological Ethics: An Introduction* (Malden, Mass.: Polity Press, 2012), 127-128.

<sup>146</sup> McFague, *Metaphorical Theology*; Ruether, *Sexism and God-Talk*; Johnson, *She Who Is*. The way one expresses ideas about God by speaking 'about God in non-personal suprapersonal terms' (Johnson, *She Who Is*) include symbols such as 'the ground of being' (Paul Tillich), 'matrix surrounding and sustaining all life' (R.R. Ruether), 'power of the future' (Wolfhart Pannenberg), and 'holy mystery' (Karl Rahner). See Johnson, 76-77. Rebecca Chopp proposes 'word' for speaking about God. Chopp, *The Power to Speak*, 10-39.

Christianity, and seek ways to find God's hidden image within the female image, which has long been veiled and covered by patriarchal Christianity.<sup>147</sup> Their idea is not patriarchal, and provides infinite possibilities for moving away from a dichotomous world.

This eco-feministic approach is central to my search for an inclusive God model that can address not only the oppression of women, but also the domination of nature by humans, and the challenges of modern day ecological crises. These kinds of metaphors, symbols, and models allow us to look into the seemingly fixed symbology of pre-existing Christian traditions, and actively seek a new image of God as an alternative to the patriarchal frame of traditional Christianity. Overall, the eco-feminist approach to theology allows us to rethink the image of God, by using inclusive metaphors and language that can help explain and describe God in a way that is relevant to women and women's experiences.

### **B. Feng Shui Cosmology: 'Land'**

Feng Shui cosmology is basically part of a traditional Asian empirical geographic science of living in harmony; it is composed of yin and yang, meaning balance and harmony of everything, and the Five Elements which includes metal, wood, water, fire, and land created by yin and yang shift that is subject to changes.<sup>148</sup>

Cosmology in Feng Shui expresses the interrelationship between land and human with the vital forces of spiritual energy Chi, which permeates the in-between space of this interconnected system, and is manifested in yin and yang characteristics.

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<sup>147</sup> McFague, *The Body of God*, 14.

<sup>148</sup> Chang Jo Choi, *Korean Feng Shui Theory* (Seoul: Min Eum Sa, 1994), 21-32. The most fundamental ideas, which underlie Feng Shui, derive from the Chinese classic IChing, Book of changes, and 'Feng Shui's perception of reality is anchored in IChing'. Ole Brunn, *An Introduction to Feng Shui* (British: Cambridge University Press), 2008, 100-101.

Insights from the understandings of Chi in Feng Shui could inform thinking about the Holy Spirit in Christian tradition because Chi implies air, and breath, and is regarded in Feng Shui thought as a vital energy-cycle of life, and a creative driving force of the universe. Chi carries a meaning of power, and simultaneously holds the essence of spirit and body. While Western philosophy and Christianity see spirit and body as separated and dualistic, Chi sees spirit and body as one, being monistic.<sup>149</sup> By the principle of Chi, God is expressed as spirit, and at the same time Chi is appreciated to permeate every natural material object.

The basic concept of land underpins the Korean understanding of Feng Shui cosmology. The order of Feng Shui is built on the land, which confers on land a sacred status. This land reflects the Korean belief that all land is sacred and that God is found there. Feng Shui visualizes the land as distinctly feminine - as the Mother-Land or *Jimo*, and as being like a mother's body that feeds the children. *Jimo* is the origin of life and human genesis.<sup>150</sup>

The Feng Shui conception of land suggests that there is an organic connection between the nature, human beings, and God.<sup>151</sup> The view of the yin and yang energy flow of the land in Feng Shui cosmology implies that the world is an inclusive, positive, and dynamic organic whole. Traditional Feng Shui thought perceives the universe as a whole organic body, and accepts nature as a viable

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<sup>149</sup> Je Ran Kim, *Debates in Chinese Philosophy*, Chinese Philosophy Study Group (Seoul: Yemoon Suhwon, 1994), 120.

<sup>150</sup> Jung Bae Lee, "Korean Feng Shui and Ecology: Theological Approach on the Significance of Korean Feng Shui as Ecological Perspective." *SaMok* (1992): 38-39.

<sup>151</sup> Ole Brunn writes Feng Shui is generally oriented to holistic worldview that makes analogies between Heaven, Land and Humanity. It shares with the dynamic worldview that sees the cosmos as a huge integrated organism with 'inherent correspondence and vibrating with energy and cosmic resonance'. Ole Brunn, *An Introduction to Feng Shui*, 174-175.

and spiritual subject.<sup>152</sup> So it will be characteristic of the divine immanence from inside the land, and it will elucidate the human connection and interrelationship with God in times of critical ecological situations. Korean Feng Shui draws many parallels between McFague's eco-feministic view and Korean Feng Shui, in terms of both outlook on nature and human relationships to God.

The concept and rational foundation of Feng Shui cosmology, however, remain difficult to follow in regards to its meaning and origin. Some modern Feng Shui scholars such as Kee Back Lee, Young Joon Choi, Gu Byung Yoon, and others criticize the unscientific-ness of Feng Shui cosmology because it has been less researched and less recognized from Western academic methodologies.<sup>153</sup> But other scholars such as Chang Jo Choi,<sup>154</sup> Jung Hae Park,<sup>155</sup> and Hong-Ki Yoon,<sup>156</sup> advocate for the value of Feng Shui cosmology because Feng Shui conveys an intensified awareness the meaningful, intimate connections between humans and their immediate surroundings. Nevertheless, these scholars also admit some of the limitations of Feng Shui as well.

But more importantly for the purposes of this dissertation: how does Feng Shui relate to gender issues? In terms of the feminist aspects of Feng Shui, the yin and yang principle, which provides its metaphysical foundation, has been closely associated with gendered characteristics. In Feng Shui, yang represents male energy and yin represents female energy. Li-Hsiang Lisa Rosenlee, a Chinese American philosopher, argues that 'yin and yang has been seen as indexical of the

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<sup>152</sup> Ibid., 37.

<sup>153</sup> Chang Jo Choi, *Korean Indigenous Feng Shui 1* (Seoul: Min Eum Sa, 2011), 476.

<sup>154</sup> Chang Jo Choi, *Korean Indigenous Feng Shui 1*, 474-477.

<sup>155</sup> Jeong Hae Park, Dong Soo Han, 'An Awareness about Identical-Chi Sympathy Theory of Confucianist in the Joseon Dynasty', 146, 158. Jeong Hae Park, 'Culture : Limitation and Directivity of Identical-Qi Sympathy Theory', 263- 264.

<sup>156</sup> Hong Ki Yoon, *The Mind of Land* (Seoul: Science Books, 2011), 99.

Chinese gender system'.<sup>157</sup> Robin R. Wang, a Chinese theologian and Martin Palmer, an Anglican theologian, further explain that yin and yang as an analogies for female and male have long been described in classical Confucian texts. The two genders are considered complementary to each other and the quintessential symbol of balance and harmony. However, yin and yang are not seen as equal in Feng Shui, rather yin as feminine is considered inferior to yang representing the masculine.<sup>158</sup> Another imagining of an interdependent relationship between yin and yang values the productive nature of yin, which can be used as a resource for feminism in Feng Shui cosmology.

Nonetheless, there have been criticisms against the concept of yin and yang being commonly appropriated as an ideological tool for backing the oppression of women. Korean modern theologians Sook In Lee,<sup>159</sup> Jung Soon Shim,<sup>160</sup> along with other scholars, criticize the biased nature of yin and yang for its gender discriminative application.<sup>161</sup> However many modern Asian philosophers such as Hye Sook Kim,<sup>162</sup> Seoseria Kim<sup>163</sup> Hyun Ji Lee,<sup>164</sup> and others assert a more inclusive views on yin and yang that seeks balance and harmony. These views

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<sup>157</sup> Li-Hsiang Lisa Rosenlee, *Confucianism and Women: A Philosophical Interpretation* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006), 48.

<sup>158</sup> Robin R. Wang, *Yinyang: New Approaches to Asian History* (British: Cambridge University Press, 2012 ). (Kindle Location 172). Kindle Edition. Martin Palmer, *Yin&Yang: Understanding the Chinese Philosophy of Opposites and How to Apply It to Your everyday life* (London: Piatkus,1998), vii.

<sup>159</sup> Sook In Lee, 'The Harmony in Confucianism and Women's Identity', in, *Religious and Cultural Studies*, Vol.6, (2004): 10.

<sup>160</sup> Jung Soon Shim, 'The Confucian Difference: Yin and Yang Feminism in Korean Women's Drama', in, *Theatre Research International*. Vol. 24, Issue 3 (1999): 241-242.

<sup>161</sup> Jin Oh Lee, 'The Imagination and Creativity of Yin and Yang', in, *Journal of the Daedong Philosophical Association*, Vol. 61, (2012): 479. See Young Joo Kim, 'The Reciprocally Relational Thinking Method and the Critique on the Eastern Yin and Yang Principle', in, *Journal of East Asian Social Thoughts*, Vol.8, (2003): 9.

<sup>162</sup> Hye Sook Kim, 'Ontological Yin and Yang and Women's Epistemological Implication', in, *Korean Women's Studies*, Vol.15, (1999): 5-11.

<sup>163</sup> Seseoria Kim, 'The Theory of Yin and Yang as Philosophy of Difference and Dialectic of Difference- Between', in *The Philosophy of the Times*, Vol.17- 2 ( 2006): 11-34.

<sup>164</sup> Lee, Hyun Ji. 'The Feministic Implications of Yin and Yang Principles', in, *Asian Social Ideology* 4 (2001): 258.

allow room for feminist consciousness and discourse for creating gender equality and feminist's idea that provides a base suggesting a divine model in this dissertation.

Despite the debate on Feng Shui cosmology, the yin and yang principle allows Feng Shui to ultimately be eco-feminist friendly. The idea of yin and yang basically represents harmonious and equal relationships between masculine and feminine and opens opportunities for creative and inclusive paradigms. In this sense, the dissertation argues that the Feng Shui cosmology has an ecological and gender balanced worldview, and as such these are appropriate theoretical tools for considering theology for today's ecological crises and women's issue of oppression worldwide.

## **I.5 Methodology**

Methodologically, the dissertation will carry out contextual theology by adopting the cosmology of Korean Feng Shui to propose an eco-feminist divine model, which is based on women's life experience in the Korean context. To do this, the dissertation firstly examines the history of women's oppression in the Korean Church, along with pre-Christian religious traditions in Korea. This investigation aims to identify background problems as to why an eco-feminist God model is necessary for Korean Christian women, and to recognize the women's life experience from Korean patriarchal church and society.

Secondly, this dissertation attempts a transcultural dialogue between cosmologies in Korean Feng Shui and western eco-feminist theologies, in order to suggest an eco-feminist God model from Korea Feng Shui cosmology by presenting it in a way that engages with Korean women's life experience in the

contemporary Korean Church. For dialogue between the two, the dissertation employs comparative analyses between Korean Feng Shui cosmology and eco-feminism, specifically McFague's world-view on nature and her understanding of human relationships to God. After all, after this dialogue, an eco-feminist 'God of Land' model will be developed from Feng Shui, with adopted eco-feministic ideas from an Asian perspective.

Lastly, the suggested model 'God of Land' will be portrayed in terms of Trinitarian thinking from the Christian tradition. In doing this, the idea of yin and yang and Chi in Feng Shui cosmology will be used as a hermeneutical approach that guides the theological reinterpretation of the doctrine of the Trinity in Christian tradition. The Trinity of the 'God of Land' model, with its three hypostases, will be reinterpreted as 'Wind' (Feng, interpreted as the Holy Spirit), 'Water' (Shui, interpreted as God the Son), and the 'Land' (interpreted as God the Mother), in an eco-feministic idea based on Feng Shui cosmology taken from an Asian perspective. I explain each chapter more specifically as follows.

This current chapter, Chapter 1, is the introduction chapter. This chapter has been divided into five sections: The aims of the dissertation, an overview of the religious context in Korea, a review of relevant literature, a discussion of the theoretical context and background, and an outline of my methodology. The literature review has focused on the work of relevant eco-feminist scholars, since this thesis regards eco-feminism as a framework for practice, and guiding philosophy.

Chapter II begins with contextual explanations of Korean women, including a detailed historical analysis of the position of Korean women in the Church from the period of Protestant missionaries to contemporary times. This review aims to



examine the history of oppression of Korean women in the Church. To document women's roles in this way, I use primary and secondary sources from libraries in Korea, including classic books, magazines, scholarly articles, and newspapers. I move on to suggest an alternative image of God with which to liberate the subordinated state of women within the Church. In addition, various ideas of the East and the West are used in section three in this chapter. It is driven by the recognition that the East and the West have common issues in women's oppression in Christianity, towards theorizing a feminist Divine through the coupling of Eastern and Western ideas - specifically Korean Feng Shui and eco-feminism. I therefore draw upon the work of both Korean and Western feminist scholars, including Young Sil Choi, Hye Sim Lee, Hyun Hye Yang, Nam Soon Kang, Anne M. Clifford, Elizabeth A. Johnson, Gary W. Deddo, and others.

Chapter III examines the principles of Korean Feng Shui cosmology, and Sallie McFague's eco-feminism as a move towards bringing together these Eastern and Western ideas in imagining a new eco-feminist God model. Feng Shui cosmology is based on geomantic principles, and the East Asian cosmology known as yin and yang, Chi, and the Five Elements. I review the basic principles, the systems of logic, and the ideological background of Feng Shui cosmology all relevant scholarly literature by pioneers of this area of study, including Chang Jo Choi and Jae Kuk Song among others. I will then explore McFague's eco-feministic reflections on God, nature, and humanity, and her critiques on dualism in the Christian tradition. I will pay special attention to McFague's metaphoric model of divinity, which figures God as 'the world as God's body,' and 'God as Mother.' In doing this, all relevant literature by Sallie McFague will be referenced.

After examining these two theories, I will explore the feasibility of integrating Feng Shui cosmology with Christian eco-feminism to formulate my eco-feminine divine model. To do this, I will identify comparable and compatible characteristics between the two theories, and seek to bridge McFague's nature theology with insights from Feng Shui cosmology for its application for Korean context.

Chapter IV reinterprets the Trinity of the 'God of Land' model, which takes an eco-feminist approach by way of new hermeneutics and reconstruction theology, from a Feng Shui perspective of Asian context. For doing this, the first section examines how yin ang yang symbolic thinking from Feng Shui can be applied to Trinitarian thinking, and how this model of the Trinity can be interpreted as relational and eco-feminine. Specifically, the section examines Jung Young Lee's theology of changes through the yin and yang symbolic thinking, asking whether Christian Trinity can be reinterpreted in the principle of yin and yang. The section then examines the social Trinity of Moltmann, which explains the relational and perichoretic penetration among the persons of the Trinity. This is followed by a discussion of Johnson's eco-feminist approach to the Trinity, because the Trinity of 'God of Land' is relational and eco-feminist.

The second section of Chapter IV attempts to reinterpret an eco-feminist divine model of the Trinity from Feng Shui cosmology as held in Asian perspective, taking a feminist theological approach. In this section, the Trinity of 'God of Land,' interprets 'Wind' as Holy Spirit, 'Water' as God the Son, and 'Land' as Creator God the Mother. This Trinitarian interpretation of 'God of Land' model employs hermeneutical tools offered by yin and yang, Chi, and the idea of ChunJiln.

## **Chapter II - Korean Women's Experience in Korean Protestant Church History from a Feminist Standpoint: The Problem of Internalized Patriarchy**

The purpose of this chapter is to examine and identify, by means of a historical review, the background issues that describe why Korean Christian women in the contemporary Protestant Church need a feminist God model. This exercise in historical observation gives a contextual explanation of Korean women's life experience, alongside a historical analysis of the position of Korean women in the Church, and provides a background for understanding the current difficulties of Korean Christian women. Additionally, it provides evidence of an inextricable connection between the past and the present of Korean women in the Protestant Church, and between Korean women and nature as they are both held in oppression.

The first section begins with the features of early missionary times in the Korean Protestant Church, and a discussion of Christian women between 1884 and 1910; this was an important time of growth and change in Korean women's faith, in terms of being settled and formed. This section further examines Korean women's experiences of pre-Christian religious traditions, and how this affected early Christianity in Korea.

The second section reviews the historical changes in women's status and roles in Korean Protestant churches, and brings awareness to the ongoing issues of women's subordination, which continues in the present day. This description is divided chronologically into three periods: The Japanese Imperial Period (1910-1945), the Modern Era (1945-1990) and the Contemporary Era (1990-present). Above all, this section briefly describes connections between women and

environmental oppression. It highlights how both women and nature were exploited throughout Korea's transition from a powerless colony to a modern capitalist state through aggressive economic development.

The last section deals with the current women's issues of oppression within the contemporary Korean Protestant Church, and finds patriarchal language and a skewed interpretation of the Bible to be the critical problems that oppress women in this context. Thus, the chapter's concluding section identifies the necessity of a feminist God model for Korean women.

## **II.1 Korean Women and the Introduction of the Protestant Church**

This section begins by exploring the long-term customs of Confucianism, which have shaped the lives of Korean women and are at the root of Korean women's oppression. The following is an examination of how Korean women under the dark shadows of Confucian customs were influenced by early Protestant missionaries, and came to take significant refuge in Christianity. Additionally, this section addresses how early Protestantism in Korea affected Korean Christian women.

This portion of the dissertation provides the historical background for understanding the Korean women in the church.

### **A. Pre-Christian Religious Traditions in Korea and the Early Korean Protestant Churches (1884 – 1910)**

It is well established that Korea has been, and continues to be, a country with dynamic and diverse religious traditions, encompassing Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism, and Shamanistic folk religions. Shamanistic practice has survived as primarily a women's religion, as it appealed to women more than the other major pre-existing religions— until Christianity was introduced to Korea.

In Confucian society, during more than six hundred years of the Lee dynasty (1392-1910), there were many social creeds and norms that trapped women, including 'Chilgeojjak: The Seven Valid Causes for Divorce',<sup>165</sup> the social rule that 'wives should follow and be submissive to their husbands', the trend of 'subordination of women to men', and the ideology of 'chastity awareness', which prohibited widows from remarrying. Furthermore, according to Confucian norms, women could not attain opportunities for autonomy and self-realization, and were sharply separated from the public, and imprisoned in the domestic sphere by the *Samjongjido*<sup>166</sup> and *Naeoi Bup*.<sup>167</sup>

In the Confucian society of the Lee dynasty, women were assigned statuses, identities, and duties in relation to men. Their performances were evaluated and judged by their degree of compliance and social submission.<sup>168</sup> A woman did not attain a secure position as a member of her husband's family until she bore him a son to continue the husband's blood lineage. Furthermore, ancestor worship (*chesa*) and devoted support for parents-in-law were considered women's primary roles. The more Korean women's lives were tied to the patriarchal norms of Confucian structures, the more they turned to Shamanistic

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<sup>165</sup> *Chilgeojjak*: Known in Confucian culture as the husband's unilateral declaration of his intention to divorce his wife for disobedience to one of seven rules. The seven kinds of wrong are: Disobedience to parents-in-law, lack of providing a son, lewdness, jealousy, alcoholism, verbosity, and theft. *Korean Encyclopedia of Culture and People*, <http://encykorea.aks.ac.kr/Contents/Index> [accessed July 20, 2014].

<sup>166</sup> *Samjongjido*: The three virtues of womanly compliance, meaning that when girls are young they obey their fathers as daughters, when married they should obey their husbands as wives, and when their sons have grown up women should be dependent upon them. This Confucian creed has made Korean women more dependent in the social strata. Ibid.

<sup>167</sup> *Naeoi Bup*: Dictates that boys and girls should not sit together after they have reached the age of seven, emphasizing the separation of roles between men and women, which is established as a national standard. With the national mindset of using gender-based distinctions as the core philosophy of Korean life, the scope of personal activity available to women was limited to their families. This had the effect of minimizing the opportunities for socialization and personal development for women, which was, in essence, the unspoken intent of this social practice. Ibid.

<sup>168</sup> Hee An Choi, *Korean Women and God: Experiencing God in a Multi-Religious Colonial Context* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2005), 36-40.

beliefs in an attempt to comfort themselves internally.<sup>169</sup> Because Shamanism was essentially their only respite, it became the religion of the oppressed, and a place where women could alleviate their agonies through Shamanistic practices. At that time, most Korean women's lives could be described as lives of mysticism and Shamanistic worship, while they were bonded by the formal authoritarianism of Confucian tradition.

During these dark and gloomy times for Korean women, Christianity began to be introduced to the hermit country, as Korea started to open itself to the outside world.<sup>170</sup> This Christian mission started in the midst of the social turmoil seen in the wake of the failure of the *Gapsin Coup*.<sup>171</sup> Korea was, at that time, an arena for competition between other stronger nations, and was embroiled in social and economic chaos. Some analysts speculate this chaotic situation is one of the reasons that Korean people came to depend on the new religion of Christianity, in hope of protecting themselves.<sup>172</sup> Some argue that Korean people sought religious and spiritual power to protect their lives and property, and to save the country from foreign plunder and oppression.<sup>173</sup>

Early Protestant missionaries reported of the religious situation in Korea at

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<sup>169</sup> Hyo Jae Lee, *Women, Let us Wake up, Praise, and Sing, One Hundred Years of Korean Christian Women* (Korean Christian Press, 1985), 15.

<sup>170</sup> The acceptance of Protestant Christianity then began in earnest in 1884, after the arrival of Horace Newton Allens as a medical missionary from the Presbyterian Churches in the U.S.A. In 1885, Henry Gerhard Appenzeller from The Methodist Episcopal Church and Horace Grant Underwood from the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. came to Korea; these missionaries began to establish deep Christian roots in the country. Korean Research Institute of Christian History, *The History of Korean Christianity I* (Christian Literature and Education Publishing, 1989), 129. 185.

<sup>171</sup> The *Gapsin Coup*, also known as the Gapsin Revolution, was a failed 3-day coup d'état which occurred during the late Joseon Dynasty of Korea, starting on 4th December 1884. The pro-Japanese leaders of the coup were suppressed by a Chinese garrison in Korea, which led to Chinese domination of Korea from 1885-1894. The Korean name for the events comes from the year designated in the traditional sexagenary cycle system of dating, '*gapsin*' here referring to the year 1884. *Korean Encyclopedia of Culture and People*, <http://encykorea.aks.ac.kr/Contents/Index> [accessed July 20, 2014].

<sup>172</sup> Gwang Lin Lee, *Korean History Lecture V, Modern Section* (Seoul; Ilchogak, 1981), 133.

<sup>173</sup> *Ibid.*, 133-134.

that time, 'Powerful animism and Shamanism underlined Koreans, especially grassroots people, and many types of idol worship coexisted in Korea while Buddhism and Confucianism were considered as over mid-class people's religion'.<sup>174</sup> Over time, Shamanism had formed a cultural consciousness and a sense of identity for Koreans, and became a basic reality of religious practices among Korean people.<sup>175</sup>

For some, the introduction of Christianity in Korea was a Westernizing and colonizing force.<sup>176</sup> There has been criticism suggesting that Christianity did not respect the Korean culture, people, or society, and would eventually lead to the destruction of the spirit of the Korean people that was so deeply enmeshed in Shamanism.<sup>177</sup> It was apparent to the early Christian missionaries that Shamanism was an indigenous religion that penetrated deeply into the hearts of Koreans. However, they seemed to regard Korean ancestor worship and the indigenous religion as being irretrievably pagan.<sup>178</sup> Eventually, Christians developed the custom of a memorial service for parents and ancestors that expressed filial duty and devotion without ceremonies of offering food or traditional prayers to the spirits of the ancestors; they thus showed respect to indigenous traditions, without violating the tenets of Christian faith. There have been other opinions that Christian missions sometimes functioned as the messenger of the colonizer.<sup>179</sup> Most critically, missionaries have been regarded as key messengers or agents in the

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<sup>174</sup> H. N. Allen, 'Things Korean' (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1908), in, *Josun Lee Dynasty Travel*, trans: Bok Yong Sin, (Seoul: JipMung Dang Press, 1999), 242.

<sup>175</sup> Laurel Kendall, *Life and Hard Times of a Korean Shaman: Of Tales and the Telling of Tales* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1988), 15-7.

<sup>176</sup> Hee An Choi, *Korean Women and God*, 41-44.

<sup>177</sup> In China and Japan, Catholic missionaries first tried to understand and absorb Chinese and Japanese culture, and showed respect to ancestor worship. In Korea however, the missionaries insisted on obedience to the Christian God alone. *Ibid.*, 41, 42.

<sup>178</sup> *Ibid.*, 22.

<sup>179</sup> Jo Gwang, *Korean Catholic Pandect* (Seoul: Korean Catholic Central Association, 2004), 373.

ever-expanding imperial nation-state, as 'ideological-shock troops for colonial invasion whose zealotry blinded them'.<sup>180</sup> Christianity eventually brought both Western colonialism and Western ideologies into Korean society.

Now it is important to look into the oldest belief system, Shamanism, which has been practiced by mostly women in the pre-Christian era in Korea.<sup>181</sup> The main reason of this exploration of an old belief system is that this chapter claims that Shamanism, along with Korean women's life experience, has influenced early Christianity, as Korean women seek escape to free themselves from patriarchal society. The shaman tradition predates Buddhism, Confucianism and Christianity in Korea, but has proven to be surprisingly deeply permeated and adaptable into modern life.

### ***The Relationship between Shamanism as Pre-Christian Religious Traditions and Korean Women***

Korean Shamanism has been a significant religious practice for Korean women, because it served as a mechanism through which to tolerate life within the patriarchal sociocultural pressures they have faced for a long time.<sup>182</sup> Many scholars agree that Korean women were the main actors in shamanistic rituals, and as a philosophy Shamanism still lingers in the back of Koreans' minds.<sup>183</sup> Shamanistic practice, particularly *Gut* and the worship of household deities, is strongly female-oriented, offering women a sense of gaiety and liberation in

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<sup>180</sup> Edward Andrews, 'Christian Missions and Colonial Empires Reconsidered: A Black Evangelist in West Africa 1766–1816', in, *Church & State* 51 (2010): 663–691.

<sup>181</sup> This research on Shamanism is intended to lay out Korean women's divine perception, and is not intended to be the spiritual ground for suggesting a new model.

<sup>182</sup> Heinz Insu Fenkl, 'Dancing on Knives (*Gut*): An Introduction to the Politics of Sexuality and Gender in Korean Shamanism', in, [heinzinsufenkl.net/knives.html](http://heinzinsufenkl.net/knives.html). [accessed October 29, 2014].

<sup>183</sup> Daniel Tudor, *Korea: The Impossible Country* (Vermont: Turtle Publishing, 2012), 26. See also Heinz Insu Fenkl, *Dancing on Knives*. See also Laurel Kendall, *The Life and Hard Times of a Korean Shaman: Of Tales and the Telling of Tales* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1988), 15-17.



addition to the opportunity to resolve resentments.<sup>184</sup> Shamanism provides an autonomous space and a basis for private solidarity for Korean women who are subordinated by patriarchal Confucian traditions.

More specifically, Korean Shamanism is basically a religious tradition with many female-intensive practices that has special connections with women.<sup>185</sup> It is well known that Korean Shamanism has been an accessible religious practice for Korean women in particular because of the surrounding oppressive social structures of patriarchy within other dominant religious traditions, like Taoism and Confucianism.<sup>186</sup> Korean women have long lived with *Han* [translated as sorrow, grievance, unfulfilled desire, deep resentment], which is described as a particular collective feeling of oppression, frustration, and isolation found among people (usually women) facing overwhelming forces of patriarchy, foreign invasions, and degradation of social status. Korean women seemed to look to Shamanism for ways of coping with or overcoming the *Han* of unfair and oppressive structures of male dominance. Depending on a transcendental power for comfort in times of trouble provides people with a cathartic mechanism for escaping the pain of reality; for Korean women, this was Shamanism.<sup>187</sup>

Shamanistic practice is a women-centered practice in which women hold positions of authority.<sup>188</sup> Confucianism, on the other hand, has little for women to

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<sup>184</sup> Yul Kyu Kim, *Korean Shamanistic Practice and Folklore, its Comprehensive Study* (Korean University National Culture Research Institute Press, 1995), 70. See also Jun Sik Choi, *Shamanism: Ousted by the Power but Fundamental Faith of Koreans* (Seoul: Serving People, 2012), 119.

<sup>185</sup> Daniel Tudor, *Korea*, 26.

<sup>186</sup> Heinz Insu Fenkl, *Dancing on Knives*.

<sup>187</sup> Woo Jung Lee, *The Trace of Korean Christian Women For 100 years* (Seoul: Min Jung Sa, 1985), 73-74.

<sup>188</sup> Heinz Insu Fenkl, *Dancing on Knives*. See Woo Jung Lee, *The Trace of Korean Christian Women*, 73-74. See also Daniel Tudor, *Korea*, 26. Laurel Kendall, 'Korean Ancestors: From the Woman's Side', in Laurel Kendall & Mark Peterson (eds.), *Korean Women: View from the Inner Room*, (United State of America: East Rock Press, 1983), 97-108.

do for themselves; they are assigned duties that carry meaning only in relation to men. *Gut* is a very important shamanistic practice in which women can take the lead. Therefore, Korean Shamanism is considered by many to be the only religious practice in Korean history that gave women hope and energy for sustaining their life.<sup>189</sup> While Confucianism and Buddhism were men's religions, and patriarchal, Shamanism was a tradition without distinctions of sex, age, or class.<sup>190</sup>

Although some of the ethics of Shamanism are in competition with Confucian ethics, many are complementary.<sup>191</sup> Laurel Kendall, an American anthropologist who specializes in Korean Shamanism, characterizes Korean Shamanism as solely a women's ritual. She suggests that Korean Shamanism marks out its own cultural realm within the mainstream, male-centered, patriarchal culture. She asserts that it is neither dependent nor peripheral.<sup>192</sup>

Why, then, and how does Shamanism appeal to Korean women? Firstly, Korean Shamanism has functioned for Korean women as a context for finding a sense of freedom from the patriarchal societal structures.<sup>193</sup> This function of comfort and consolation stems from the leading role women had in shamanistic practice, which led to a sense of familiarity and intimacy with Shamanism as a set of ideas. The *Gut* ritual is a significant venue for this sort of solace.<sup>194</sup> In traditional patriarchal society, *Gut* seemed to be the only emotional outlet for women, serving as a free space for interaction and play, where women could enjoy the benefit of

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<sup>189</sup> Ohk Seung Cha, *The Religious Experience of Korean Women: Religious Pluralism and Ethics* (Seoul: Gibmoondang, 1994), 495.

<sup>190</sup> Heinz Insu Fenkl, *Dancing on Knives*.

<sup>191</sup> Woo Young Lee, *Psychoanalysis of Korean Shamanism* (Seoul: HanGil Press, 2012), 698. See Il Young Park, *Korean Shamanism and Christianity* (Seoul: Bundou Press, 2003), 74.

<sup>192</sup> Laurel Kendall, *The Life and Hard Times of a Korean Shaman: Of Tales and the Telling of Tales*, 15-17.

<sup>193</sup> Jun Sik Choi, *Shamanism*, 119-120.

<sup>194</sup> Ibid. See Il Young Park, *Korean Shamanism and Christianity*, 62.

leaving the imprisonment of their homes and going out in public. These activities served as a catharsis for releasing suppressed feelings that were forced beneath the surface in patriarchal society.<sup>195</sup> The emotional liberation achieved through *Gut* made the ritual a place of consolation and comfort.<sup>196</sup>

Secondly, another affinity between Korean women and Shamanism is that shamanistic practice is founded on principles of seeking harmony and balance. The basic characteristic of Shamanism is to restore balance through the unity of heaven, earth, and the people.<sup>197</sup> Likewise, as an oppressed group in patriarchal society, women seek to balance power structures. The position of both women and Shamanism are regarded as analogous in terms of alienation from and discrimination within Korean society.<sup>198</sup> Pil Ho Hwang, a Korean theologian, argues that the characteristics of Korean Shamanism share their fate with oppressed people, the grass roots, and women, rather than the elite or ruling clique.<sup>199</sup> This spirit of balance in Shamanism cherishes all things without neglecting anything.<sup>200</sup> The shamanistic emphasis on monism and harmony among all things appealed to marginalized people including women. Thus the main group within Shamanism is not the people in power, but people who have been marginalized – so it naturally carries a striving for egalitarianism. As such, the concept of Shamanism as a religion of women and the oppressed is even now deeply rooted in peoples' minds.

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<sup>195</sup> Ibid. The basic concept of *Gut* is that of a human encounter with God (spirits). This encounter takes place through the medium of the shaman. *Gut* offers a new dimension to human life by resolving human resentments through a fusion of the dead and the living in the body of a shaman. Shamans are thought to be in close relationships with specific spirits, such that they are able to communicate with them. During the ritual, the shaman is in a state of ecstasy. Korean women would voice their grievances, and appeal to the spirits for their sympathy and a release from *han*, which is thought to be delivered by the spirits through the shaman.

<sup>196</sup> Jung Sin Park, *Women and History* (Korean Society of Women's History, Vol. 14, 2011), 175-197.

<sup>197</sup> Il Young Park, *Korean Shamanism and Christianity*, 168.

<sup>198</sup> Ibid., 69.

<sup>199</sup> Pil Ho Hwang, *The Issues of Korean Shamanism* (Seoul: Jipmoon Dang, 2002), 121-124.

<sup>200</sup> Il Young Park, *Korean Shamanism and Christianity*, 168, 189.

Then, how do Korean women perceive God in Shamanism as a liberator and comforter in patriarchal society? This dissertation asserts that Korean women envision native perceptions of impersonal deities through shamanistic practices, which comforted Korean women in their trials of life. It explores such deities that Korean women meet in their everyday lives and in their everyday prayers, originating from the tradition of household gods (*gasin*) worship,<sup>201</sup> and *Gut* rites of shamanistic practice. The worship of *gasin* and the ritual of *Gut* within the strong subconsciousness of Korean women gave women a means to envisage impersonal deities, and provided a place for feeling a sense of liberation from patriarchal society. This kind of divine perception suggests an intimate connection between Korean women and an impersonal imagining of the divine, which they all depended on in the patriarchal Confucian tradition. In Korean folk religion, it is considered there is no pure distinction between personal and impersonal deities including gods, water, sun, stars, Heaven and the Five Elements; in other words people usually do not differentiate cosmological thoughts referring to impersonal forces

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<sup>201</sup> Since Confucian rituals were completely male-centered rites, women led their religious lives through practices surrounding *gasin* (household gods). Household gods were thought to oversee the handling of household tasks. Since women were responsible for carrying out many affairs of the house, the traditions of *gasin* worship were particularly important to them. In this sense the shamanistic practice of *gasin* became a religious tradition mainly for women, one that could provide supportive context for expressing feelings and concerns that they were not permitted to voice in public. My dissertation interprets the tradition of *gasin* worship as a means of defending the position of women against the pressures of patriarchal societal structures. In particular Kendall's research contributes the idea that women were not entirely powerless in patriarchal structures, but rather that *gasin* gave them an outlet of expression. Kendall adds that women could assert a positive position within the private sector of the house through shamanistic practices of *gasin* worship, since men were not involved in these practices. Kendall's research reveals that the various traditions were complementary in practice, that is, the women's rituals dealt with some women's issues, the men's with others. She argues that the women in a strong patriarchal environment were not entirely powerless, that is to say, despite the ordeals, women drew strength and a sense of autonomy from the practice of household worship of *gasin*. This practice was a religious tradition that allowed women a modicum of power within patriarchal structures and as such demonstrates how women can be liberated from patriarchy. Jun Sik Choi, *Shamanism*, 118-119. See also Laurel Kendall, *Shamans, Housewives, and Other Restless Spirits: Working in Korean Ritual Life* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1987), 27-28.

from divine worship.<sup>202</sup> In this way, this dissertation suggests a Divine model with an impersonal understanding of God that is much more intimate for Korean women, drawing from this insight from Korean religious traditions.

From their religious practices, Korean women have imagined feminine deities in particular, because of the resonance of feminine life experience with the goddesses that appear in shamanic practice. Women also have in their minds the diverse but mostly female household gods as reassuring guardians whom they encounter in their everyday lives. Korean women also envisage feminine images of God through meeting with the spirits of mothers and grandmothers during the performance of *Gut*, a process, which is embracing and comforting.<sup>203</sup> These characteristics of feminine divinity helped women to release the pent up frustrations imposed upon them by patriarchal structures.

The discovery and celebration of a God immanent in the natural world is clearly expressed in the practice of *Gut*. Therefore, this dissertation considers Korean women's experiences to hold two distinctive features of divine perception - femininity and impersonality - as being the basis of liberation for Korean women. This dissertation claims that these Korean women's experiences of feeling liberated within Shamanism influenced the way Koreans, particularly Korean

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<sup>202</sup> Ole Brunn, *An Introduction to Feng Shui*, 78.

<sup>203</sup> Boo Young Lee says Korean women imagine the feminine divine through the 'spirits' that they encounter during *gut* performances. The shaman mediates between the spirits and humans during *gut* and the spirits that appear are usually regarded as mother or grandmother figures. He argues that when Korean women have some issues to address they aim to do so by meeting with spirits of their mother or grandmother through the medium of the shaman. He suggests that this phenomenon is related to the maternal complex described by Carl Jung. Following this, I propose that the spirits in *gut* allow Korean women to imagine a female God, conceptualized through an emotional dialogue with impersonal gods. Boo Young Lee, *Psychoanalysis of Korean Shamanism* (Seoul: Han Gil Press, 2012), 690-691, 698.

women, worshipped and imagined God in early Christianity - and that they have had this influence in contemporary Korean Christianity as well.<sup>204</sup>

## **B. Korean Women's Acceptance of Christianity**

To Korean women who had been oppressed by the structure of patriarchal society, Christianity was a way out - a means of liberation, and a path to a new way of living. Woo Jung Lee, a Korean feminist theologian, wrote, 'One of the motivations of converting to and entering Christianity [for women] in early missionary times was the joy of liberation'.<sup>205</sup> Firstly, Christianity offered Korean women an opportunity to enter the public sphere by going to the church to worship with men, and learn Biblical scriptures. Secondly, Christianity opened Korean women's eyes to an awareness of gender equality, based on the idea that the Christian Gospel preaches the equality of all people. This was liberating in light of the former Confucian system that was so directly patriarchal. Korean women could dream of liberation from patriarchal hierarchy, via the egalitarian teachings of the Christian Church. As a result, women in Korea took advantage of every kind of opportunity to learn and develop their abilities as leaders in the Church, and ultimately in society, through the learning opportunities offered by the Christian missions.

At that time, Christianity was an eye opener to Korean women who had been oppressed by patriarchal Confucian tradition; the Christian Pauline epistle, which states 'There is neither Jew nor Gentile...nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus' (Galatians 3:28), was considered an alternative that

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<sup>204</sup> Jun Sik Choi states that since the early missionary times of the 1890s, Protestant missionaries led a demonization of Shamanism, carrying out public campaigns of physical suppression to uproot Shamanism as a heresy and superstition. He indicates that despite strong objections from the public, shamanistic traditions still pervade Korean Christianity in contemporary Korea. Jun Sik Choi, *Religious Stories in Korea* (Seoul: Hanul Press, 1995), 63. See Il Young Park, *Korean Shamanism and Christianity*, 83, 158-161.

<sup>205</sup> Woo Jung Lee, *The Trace of Korean Christian Women*, 73.

could liberate Korean women from painful patriarchal oppression. Christianity offered Korean women, who were sharply separated from the public, opportunities to participate in public activities and the public assembly of worship services. Christianity offered new opportunities for relationships, and for social roles as mothers nurturing their children, companions to their husbands, and members of the faith community.<sup>206</sup> Korean women became more interested in this new relationship with the public and community, and so converted to Christianity. Missionaries established a network of schools and hospitals as Christianity in general brought new values to Koreans, and to women especially. Christians favored the social emancipation of women, and this position impressed many women who were not Christians, which helped the spread of Christianity.<sup>207</sup>

One of the reasons that Korean women could accept Christianity is that the Protestants contributed to the spread of literacy in Korea. Prior to the arrival of Christian missions, women were not allowed to have any learning opportunities, and many women were illiterate. Female missionaries put forth multilateral efforts towards abolishing illiteracy, through Sunday school and Bible study classes.<sup>208</sup> Western educational institutions, which were introduced with Christianity, provided opportunities for learning, and a general feeling of emancipation.

Korean Protestant Christianity, which in contrast to Confucianism was known to be open and forward-thinking, was basically inherited from the conservative and fundamentalist theology of early American missionaries. In the 19th century, the faith of most American Protestants was Pietism and Evangelical.

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<sup>206</sup> ManYul Lee, *The History of Korean Christian Culture* (Seoul: Korean Christian Press, 1987), 266.

<sup>207</sup> *Ibid.*, 266-267.

<sup>208</sup> Nak Jun Baik, *The History of Korean Protestant* (Seoul: Yon Sei University Press, 1991), 146.

It followed that the missionaries, while giving new educational opportunities to Korea women, still aimed to promote patriarchal social ideals of women as good wives and mothers.<sup>209</sup> Historians who studied the early missionary history of Korea observed that missionaries' attitudes towards women were limited by fundamentalism, promoting a system in which women were still dependent on men.<sup>210</sup>

Despite this, many female Korean theologians agree that women were still somehow encouraged to awaken themselves through Christian education and its training of self-awareness, and that this enhanced self-awareness would later inspire them to proactive community participation in time of national crisis like the anti-Japanese movement.<sup>211</sup> Korean Christian women extended the meaning of the Gospel to the Korean national problem, and they eventually became enthusiastic activists against Japanese imperial forces in the nation. Uniquely, Christian women gradually emerged during this time as new leaders.

### **C. The Effect of the Early Protestant Church on Korean Women**

Many religions have played an important role in Korea, affecting Koreans' lives and community throughout history.<sup>212</sup> One of the preconditions that allowed early

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<sup>209</sup> *The Korea Mission Field*, Vol.7, No.12, 1911, 'Life of Ran Sa Ha, Who Earned The First Bachelor's Degree', in, *The Study of Soon Ryu Kwan*, by Hye Ryung Ko, Yu Kwan Soon Study 16 (2011): 96. Ha Ran Sa, from Ewha Hak Dang and influenced by missionaries, was Korea's very first woman to earn a bachelor's degree from America, in 1906. In 1911, she wrote for the English mission magazine 'The Korea Mission Field' (which was published by American missionaries regarding women's education), 'the very purpose of going to school is to be a wise mother, faithful wife, and a modernized housewife...'

<sup>210</sup> Sang Hoon Lee, 'American Missionaries' Perceptions on Korea in Late Period of Lee Dynasty Chosun', in, *The Academy of Korean Studies*, Vol. 27 (2007): 133.

<sup>211</sup> Jung Ran Yoon, 'The History of Korean Christian Women's Movements', in, *Korean History Research Collection*, Vol.44 (2003): Preface and introduction.

<sup>212</sup> Sebastian C.H. Kim and Kirsteen Kim, *A History of Korean Christianity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 7-13. Also Andrew Eungi Kim, 'Characteristics of Religious Life in South Korea', in, *A Sociological Survey, Review of Religious Research*. Vol. 43, No. 4 (2002): 291-310. Daniel Tudor, *Korea: The Impossible Country* (Vermont: Turtle Publishing, 2012), 24-65. Laurel



Christians to easily settle in Korea was the historical situation of the nation in terms of geographical and psychological instabilities. Historical circumstances and social factors that Koreans had faced, such as foreign plunder and oppression, and their anxiety about this vulnerable situation, led them to cling to religion strongly.<sup>213</sup> And as we have seen, Christianity may also have had a special meaning for Korean women, as it gave them hope of escaping from Confucian restrictions.

The impact of the introduction of Christianity on women's education was a definite step toward a new world, and provided opportunities for activism in saving the country in crisis. The network of schools established by Christian missions resulted in a sharp rise in the literacy rate, and this led to revolutionary changes in women's attitudes towards the world and their country. Many researchers posit that Christianity helped Korean women to recognize the notion of gender equality, and allowed women to attend worship with men.<sup>214</sup> As indicated above, it was thanks to Christianity that women could finally appear in public, express themselves freely, and participate in learning opportunities offered by Bible study. These positive aspects of Christianity played important roles in promoting Korean women's standing in the community.

By contrast, some commentators view the Christian missionaries in Korea in a negative light, believing them to have built on patriarchal traditions already existent in Korea. From a contemporary Korean feminist view, it is important to note that most missionaries who were dispatched to the Ewha Institute for

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Kendall. *Shamans, Nostalgias, and the IMF: South Korean Popular Religion in Motion* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2010), 1-33.

<sup>213</sup> Park, *The Research on Eschatology of Korean Churches under Japanese Colonialism*, 177.

<sup>214</sup> Woo Jung Lee, *The Trace of Korean Christian Women*, 73.

women's education were known as conservative Protestant fundamentalists.<sup>215</sup> According to several researchers, the Christian missionary education of women supported the patriarchal ideals of women's social roles as wives and mothers.<sup>216</sup> Missionaries just wanted Korean women simply to be faithful Christian housewives, rather than training them as independent individuals. Later Korean feminist critics blamed the missionaries for failing to properly train Korean women as leaders.<sup>217</sup>

As a result, Christianity seemed at first to embrace Korean women and their liberation from Confucian oppression, but then gradually strengthened its patriarchal positions - which blended well with residual Confucian traditions - and subjected women to another form of patriarchy.

Despite this criticism, some Korean feminists agree that education of Korean women by American missionaries laid a foundation of feminism in Korea.<sup>218</sup> They argue that Christian education opened women's eyes toward social injustice and gender inequality in Korean society, and led Korean women to participate in social movements around women's issues.

## **II. 2 A Historical View of Korean Protestant Women's Role and Position**

This section examines the process of change to Korean women's roles and status in the Protestant Church in Korea since 1910. Through this examination, one is able to see that the status of women in the church remained an inferior one during this time, despite evolution within secular social circles, and improvement in women's participation and achievements in multiple aspects of social life in Korea.

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<sup>215</sup> Eung Kyu Park, *The Research on Eschatology of Korean Churches*, 183.

<sup>216</sup> Hye Jung Lee, 'Christian Women's Education in Early Colonial Period of Japan: Hwalran Kim's Experiences in 1910', in, *Education History Academy 16* (Seoul: Korean Society of Education History, 2006), 29.

<sup>217</sup> Ibid.

<sup>218</sup> Nam soon Kang, *Feminist Theology*, 289.

Thus, this section explores the problematic features of women's roles in the Korean Protestant Church, along with cultural and historical elements that caused such oppression. The chronology spans three generations, the Japanese Colonial Period, the modern era, and the contemporary era.

Through looking at the roles of women throughout these three eras, this section examines how women and nature have been devalued from the patriarchy inherent in colonialism and imperialism at the turn of twentieth century into the contemporary era, in which Korean women still experience major challenges and changes. Specifically, this section includes examinations of the impacts of the Japanese colonial era and the era of rapid economic growth (the modern and contemporary era), followed by a reflection upon the oppression of Korean women and the destruction of the natural environment behind colonialism. In particular, this section explores the centrality of gender to the problematic of colonialism, and the exploitation of nature beginning in Korea's colonial era and continuing through more recent Korean history.

### **A. The Japanese Colonial Period (1910-1945)**

In order to understand the position and roles of women in Korea under Japanese colonialism, one must examine the significant changes that occurred between the 1920s and the 1930s.<sup>219</sup> Japanese capital began to penetrate the Korean economy as Japanese settlers acquired agricultural land at cheap prices from Korean farmers and landlords. The abrupt changes that arose from the transition away from subsistence agriculture to industrialized capitalism caused Korean laborers,

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<sup>219</sup> The Lee Chosun Dynasty was annexed by Japan in 1910, thus beginning Japanese imperial rule. So began the 35 years of forced rule and oppression in Korea known as the Japanese Colonial Period.

especially women, to become the poorest of the poor.<sup>220</sup> Korean women were employed mostly in the light industrial plants, where they were paid the minimum wage for long hours of work, in the absence of any labour standards. They were forced to work under poor conditions, and suffered from both gender and ethnic discrimination.<sup>221</sup> In fact, the exploitation of Korean women under Japanese colonial rule can be seen as a mingling of patriarchal sexism, and imperial capitalism based on colonial racism.<sup>222</sup> Thus, women's labour struggles were even more common during this period, as Korean women were suffering from the double pains of racial and gender discrimination.

Paul H. Kratoska, an American historian, astutely states that Asian female labor has been considered a resource to be exploited in Japanese empire capitalism.<sup>223</sup> Yi Soo Kang, a Korean sociologist argues that the poor working conditions of these female workers established during the oppressive structure of Japanese colonial rule seems to have continued even after independence. She maintains female workers have continued to be driven to harmful discriminatory practices that treat women workers differently than any other country to this day.<sup>224</sup> Korean feminists argue that prevalent gender discrimination from Japanese colonial capitalism has extended to the exploitation of nature. The introduction of imperial capitalism by the Japanese began an era of eco-antipathy that still exists

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<sup>220</sup> Yi Sup Hong, *A History of the Modern Era in Korea* (Seoul: Yon Sei University Press, 1975), 199-200.

<sup>221</sup> *Ibid.*, 200.

<sup>222</sup> Jung Ok Lee, 'National and Sexual Discrimination in the Times of Japanese Occupation; From the Women Workers' Lives in Knitting Wools and Rubber Industries', in, Women's Institutes (ed.), *Women in the Margin: Korean Modern History*, (Seoul: Seoul National University, 2013), 112.

<sup>223</sup> Paul H. Kratoska (ed), *Asian Labor in the Wartime Japanese Empire: Unknown Histories* (NY: Routledge, 2015), 4, 17-19.

<sup>224</sup> Yi Soo Kang, *Women's labor in contemporary Korea: Changes and identity* (Seoul: Culture-Science Publishing, 2011), 70-71.

in South Korea today. Nature, as well as female labor, was considered a resource to be exploited; it suffered the same fate of exploitation at the hands of colonialism as women. Yi Sup Hong, a Korean theologian, argues that although Korean women worked alongside their male counterparts in the labor-intensive manufacturing industries and contributed to the national development, both Korean women and the environment have been oppressed and degraded by the influence of the sexism and eco-antipathy— one of the harmful remnants of Japanese colonial capitalism.<sup>225</sup> Unfortunately, discrimination against women and exploitation of women as well as nature have been sustained even after independence from colonialism, resulting in the persistence of sexism and eco-antipathy during the rapid economic growth in Korea later on in the modern era.<sup>226</sup>

However, in spite of these economic difficulties and harsh conditions, the surge of capitalism exposed women to such diverse job opportunities as teachers, nurses, bankers, and clerks. Christian women's organizations led the promotion of women's rights education, and took initiatives in developing female consciousness across the country.<sup>227</sup> Thus, the time under Japanese rule was a transitional stage for women's status. Moreover, Korean women were seeking to advance their position in society, and incremental improvements did occur; but the general status of women rose only slightly, and was still very unstable, lacking any major social or legal foundations.

The position and roles of Christian women in society during this time did progress slightly, even if this change was slow and incremental. Korean Christian

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<sup>225</sup> Yi Sup Hong, *A History of the Modern Era in Korea* (Seoul: Yon Sei University Press, 1975), 199-200.

<sup>226</sup> Minh-ha, Trinh T. 'Difference: 'A Special Third World Woman Issue', in, *Discourse 8* (Fall-Winter 86-87): 11-38. See Chandra Talpade Mohanty, 'Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses', *Feminist Review 30*, (Autumn 1988): 333-354.

<sup>227</sup> *The Institution of Korean Church History Studies II*, 227-9.

women were not only coping with the many difficulties facing the nation, but were also pushing for advancement in the churches, and for more opportunities for women to be social leaders through women's syndicates or groups. But the roles given to women in the church were not noticeably progressive. In early Korean Christianity, women still played the role of 'Bible Women'.<sup>228</sup> That is, their role was confined to leading prayer meetings and Bible study groups. However, the function of 'Bible Women' in early missionary times was not secondary within the Church; it actually had a bearing on the overall operation of the whole Church.<sup>229</sup> According to Sung Jin Chang, 'Bible Women' helped establish indigenous leadership, which was different from the leadership of missionaries or male ministers. He indicates that 'Bible Women' were considered to be independent and creative leaders.<sup>230</sup> But as the period of Japanese rule began, women's roles as 'Bible Women' in the Church were unfortunately reduced to subsidiary positions, and they remained inferior to pastors under the double pains of racial and gender discrimination.<sup>231</sup> Thus, women theologians agree that the roles and positions of Christian female leaders in the church had depreciated in contrast to women in secular society, and

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<sup>228</sup> In the time of the early missionaries in Korea (1890s-1940s), Western male missionaries had trouble with evangelizing to Korean women, as men at that time were not allowed contact with women in public according to strict Confucian Naeoi Beop. Western missionaries' wives also had trouble communicating with Korean women, as there were language barriers, and they were unfamiliar with Korean customs and traditions. Therefore, they required assistants who could be mediators for communication, and teach them Korean culture, tradition, and language. They were so-called 'Bible Women'. They went on home visits with missionaries' wives to do missionary work. The Bible Women's roles were vital to women's evangelism in the early missionary era. See Female Research Association, *Source Book about Bible Women in Korean Church*, Korean Church History Research Institution, 1999.

<sup>229</sup> There is another view, that 'Bible Women' just played assistant roles in church ministry during this early time. Young Mi Lee, *The Impact on Women's Status from Biblical Interpretation in Early Missionary Times in Korea* (Seoul: Canon and Culture, 2007), 66.

<sup>230</sup> Sung Jin Chang, 'The Bible Women Who Appeared in the Early Missionary Time in Korea, and Their Major Contributions', *Women's Leadership Hunt in Early Missionary time in Korea*, *Institutes of Korean Christian History*, Newsletter (July 2006): 75.

<sup>231</sup> Young Mi Lee, 'The Influences of Christianity on the Status of Korean Women', in, Sung Jae Kim (ed.) *The Sociocultural Impact of Christianity in Korea on Modern and Contemporary Korea*, (Seoul: Institute of Korean Theology, 2005), 584-7.

were considerably weakened compared to their status in early Christianity in the Korea of the 1890s.<sup>232</sup>

## **B. The Modern Period (1945-1990)**

Entering the modern era of the 1950s, the social role and position of women in Korea improved further. With the establishment of the South Korean government in 1948, the new constitution recognized gender equality, and granted women the right to vote, thereby allowing them to participate in national policy. Korean women's suffrage was achieved instantaneously in this process, unlike Western women, who struggled for decades to obtain the right to vote.<sup>233</sup> Despite this factual difference, women could participate in politics and be directly responsible for policy implementation. So it was an important time, as the social status of women in Korea was significantly elevated.<sup>234</sup>

In the 1960s, the Christian Women's Association made moderately successful efforts to improve the status of women, through the women's enlightenment movement, which worked towards women's economic independence and improved social status.<sup>235</sup> In 1962, the first Korean economic development plans were ambitiously carried out, and achieved a rapid increase in exports. Through industrialization, technological innovation, urbanization, and changes in lifestyle, the social structure of Korea rapidly changed, and the status and the roles of women improved as well. The second economic development plan, the so-called Five-Year Plan of the 1970s, was export-oriented and drove

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<sup>232</sup> Sook Jin Lee, 'The Effects of Mainstream Discourses on the Formation of Gender Identities in Protestant Women of Korea's Modern Age', *Report to National Research Foundation of Korea*, (July 2002).

<sup>233</sup> Hyung Sik Shin and Bae Yong Lee, *A New Understanding of Korean History* (Seoul: Ewha Women's University Press, 1997), 317.

<sup>234</sup> Korean Women's Development Institute, II.

<sup>235</sup> Ok Ji Lee and In Soon Kang, *The History of Korean Women Workers' Labour Movement* (Seoul: Hanwul Academy Press, 2001), 123.

advancement in the textile, garment, and electronics manufacturing industries. This type of development plan called for the blood and sweat of young women's labor, and eventually their efforts and sacrifices made Korea the powerhouse of economic growth that it is today.<sup>236</sup> Korean capitalism's development depended more and more on women's labor.<sup>237</sup> Despite the adverse working conditions at that time, many young women worked for low wages. Still, their roles became diverse and wide-ranging. They began to claim their basic human rights, and upon entering the modern era women's status and roles were gradually improving.<sup>238</sup>

Industrialization, starting from the 1960s, brought about extensive structural changes in the Korean economy and transformed Korea into a modern capitalist country, but, from the feminist perspective, a capitalistic society is problematic.<sup>239</sup> Mee Hae Kong, a Korean sociologist argues that although Korea achieved remarkable economic growth, those who have been marginalized from the developmental process are mostly women. This is evidenced by gender segregation by occupation and sector, indicating another aspect of women's lack of power in the labor market.<sup>240</sup>

Simultaneously in this era, the drive for rapid industrialization in South Korea resulted in another negative consequence: environmental degradation. The motivation to rapidly grow the economy under industrial capitalism led to attitudes

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<sup>236</sup> Won Kim, *Female Factory Workers 1970s, Their Anti-History* (Seoul: Imagine Press, 2006), 157-78.

<sup>237</sup> Research shows that in the 1960s, the fibre and clothing industries counted female workers as 75% of the total workforce. In the rubber, electrical, and electronics industries, the proportion of female laborers was even greater. As a result, between the late 1970s and the early 1980s, female workers in all manufacturing jobs accounted for 40%. Mi Jin Choi, 'The Reality and The Struggles of Korean Women's Labor', in, *The Marx 21*, Vol.13, (Spring/Summer 2012): 246.

<sup>238</sup> Ok Ji Lee and In Soon Kang, *The History of Korean Women Worker's Labour Movement*, 154.

<sup>239</sup> *Ibid.*, 175-176.

<sup>240</sup> Mee Hae Kong, 'Rethinking Women's Status and Liberation in Korea', *Articles; United Nations Public Administration Network*, (2015): 15.



of eco-antipathy as well as exploitative attitudes towards female workers. In this way, the rapid industrialization of Korea led to the exhaustion of national resources in order to maximize economic growth, with little consideration for environmental consequences.<sup>241</sup> Per Vandana Shiva, modern science is a gendered patriarchal activity, wherein science is a male venture that subjugates nature and nature is coded as feminine, interpreted like a woman being raped.<sup>242</sup> Shiva supports the idea that modern industrialization not only exploits women, but also degrades nature and creates a partnership between the two.<sup>243</sup> According to this understanding of modernity, the system of patriarchal capitalism of modern industrialization degrades nature. This is an at approach for interpreting the ways

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<sup>241</sup> The Korean church just followed the capitalism of a recent era of modernization that also exploited nature. In the 1970s and 1980s Korean churches experienced mushroom growth as the economy dramatically expanded. From then on, the Korean church began to be aggressively institutionalized and implemented the centralization of the growth first ideology within the church that mimicked the nation's drive to grow the economy. This growth first belief was premised on the need to create huge mega churches and this relied on the exploitation of women and nature. It is well known that contemporary Korea has one of the highest concentrations of mega churches. As reported in *The Economist* in 2007, Korea has five of the ten largest Protestant churches in the world. The practice of building mega churches drove female church members out to be on the 'front lines' for recruiting church members and fundraising for church growth. The minds behind the pursuit of mega churches are also the main culprit behind the church's involvement in degrading the natural environment. Byong Seo Kim, a Korean theologian, points out that these mega churches in Korea have the negative effect degrading the natural environment. This is because, with large numbers of people flowing into the cities, the churches needed bigger buildings to hold their growing members. It is common that big churches build prayer houses, student camping sites, and training centres that can be of positive benefit for congregation members, but those are usually being built in the mountains or natural preserved areas, marring the natural environment. Yong-Shin Park, a Korea sociologist also criticizes mega churches for behaving in an irresponsible manner that they built remote annexes in places like seaside shelters and mountain retreats. The claim in this dissertation, therefore, is that the institutionalized Korean church, shaped by native traditional patriarchy, has supported and justified the discrimination against women, as well as the degradation of nature. In the end, advanced capitalism and the institutionalized Korean church together have oppressed both Korean women and nature during an era of unprecedented growth of the economy and of church numbers. See Mi Hyun Jung, 'Retrospect and Prospects on Korean Women's Theology', in Sang Hun Lee (ed.), *New Perspectives on Contemporary Korean Theology*, (Seoul: The Academy of Korean Studies, 1999), 199-257. O Come All Ye Faithful, 'God is Definitely not Dead, but He Now Comes in Many More Varieties', Article from *The Economist* 2007, Nov 1<sup>st</sup>, quoted in Yong-Shin Park, 'Hereditry in Korean Churches', *Shorenstein APARC Seminar Series*, Stanford University, California, (2012): 2. Byong Seo Kim, *The Korean Society and Christianity* (Seoul: Hannul Academy, 2005), 80. Yong-Shin Park, 'Hereditry in Korean Churches', *Shorenstein APARC Seminar Series*, Stanford University, California, (2012): 1-10.

<sup>242</sup> Vandana Shiva, *Staying Alive: Women*, 17-18.

<sup>243</sup> Vandana Shiva and Ramin Jahanbegloo, *Talking Environment* (India: Oxford University Press, 2013), 12.

in which modernization and industrialization impacted Korea, particularly its women and natural environment. Following this, Mi Jung Koo, a Korean eco-feminist supports Kong and Shiva's argument that the supremacy of economic development and industrialization has exploited humans especially women, as well as nature.<sup>244</sup>

Despite some of the gains made in women's status in secular society during this era, the role and position of women in church ministry was not significantly improved. A study demonstrates that the total number of Christians in Korea in the 1980s had nearly tripled from the 1960s, from 2.25 to 6.49 million people.<sup>245</sup> The ratio of lay men to women was 37:63, demonstrating that women's participation was much higher than men's in the increased Christian population. However, the ratio among clergy (including deacons and deaconesses) was 86:14, men to women, during this time.<sup>246</sup> This ratio shows that women's roles were not improved, despite the increase in women's population in the church. In addition, the highest rank allowed for women in the Church at that time was deaconess. Specifically, this position was not intended to be a leadership role in the Church, but rather an honorary one, meant only to fill the need for the institution to recognize women who contributed greatly to the growth of the Church. In terms of its function, the deaconess position is no more than a subsidiary one for helping male pastors. In effect, women leaders had been excluded from leadership positions. Furthermore, women's mission groups mainly focused on assisting

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<sup>244</sup> Mi Jung Koo, *Now You Sing a Song of Life* (Seoul: Olive Tree, 2004), 72.

<sup>245</sup> National Statistical Office, 'Census of Christian population', in, Ho Suk Sung (ed.), *A Search for an Educational Plan According to the Changes in the Roles of Women in Churches*, (Seoul: Korean Presbyterian Council One Hundred Memorial Project, The Church and The Faith, 2012), 111.

<sup>246</sup> Minister of Culture and Public Information, *A Handbook of Korean Indigenous Religion*, (Dec 1979), in, Ho Suk Sung, *A Search for an Educational Plan*, 113.

pastors in education, with their duties including the following: Choir member, guide and helper, volunteer, church floral arranger, meal server, and so on. When a pastor planned to visit an outside institution, like a nursing home or an orphanage, or make other outreach visits, the deaconess helped him, and so contributed greatly to church growth.<sup>247</sup> Therefore, women's domestic labor was simply extended to church work, and sacrifice and service were still demanded in this secondary role of church ministries.

To sum up, women's social status did improve slightly in the modern era – in those years between 1945 and 1990. But the status of Christian women in the Church simultaneously weakened, compared to early times during the introduction of Christianity. There was no noticeable advancement of women in leadership positions. Korean theologians agree that Korean Christianity began to emphasize patriarchal elements in the churches as the modern institutional church grew, and eventually Christianity blended into the Korean patriarchy.<sup>248</sup> In fact, the Western patriarchal tradition of Christianity was added to the Korean patriarchal tradition.<sup>249</sup> The modern institutional church increasingly constrained the church related activities of women, and began to exclude women officially.<sup>250</sup> Thus, the roles and positions of women in the Church reverted to those of the past patriarchal traditions in Korea.

### **C. The Contemporary Era (1990-Present)**

The social role and status of women in Korea has improved greatly in recent times.

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<sup>247</sup> Woo Jung Lee, *The Trace of Korean Christian Women*, 281-2.

<sup>248</sup> Nam Soon Kang, *Critical Review on Dialogue Korean Christianity and Confucianism* (Seoul: Christianity literature Press, 1998), 97.

<sup>249</sup> Ibid.

<sup>250</sup> Mi Hyun Jung, 'Retrospect and Prospects on Korean Women's Theology', in, Sang Hun Lee (ed.), *New Perspectives on Contemporary Korean Theology*, (Seoul: The Academy of Korean Studies, 1999), 199-257.

Rapid changes in many areas of life have brought the same changes to the lives of Korean women. Overall perceptions of women are shifting, and these new attitudes are facilitating women's entries into diverse fields. In addition, the proportion of women in highly educated professions is growing. The most prominent example of women's advances in Korean society was an election of a female president in 2013. In 2005, a basic family law was eliminated: The requirement that families register under the name of the male head of the household. This amendment to the patriarchal family register law will be more likely to improve the status of Korean women.<sup>251</sup>

Despite the enhanced role and status of women in secular society in general, female workers are still laboring under adverse working conditions, and have been relatively underpaid compared to men.<sup>252</sup> A Korean sociologist, Mee Hae Kong, argues that although Korea has achieved remarkable economic development within only a short period of time, gender inequality still seems to be problematic. Specifically, she indicates modernization through patriarchal structures has an adverse impact on women's status by expanding gender inequality more. Thus the capitalist patriarchy historically perpetuates women's subordinated position.<sup>253</sup> In this way, women's status does not change significantly as long as capitalist patriarchy persists.

From an eco-feminist perspective, environmental consequences of modernizing global structures are viewed as disproportionately negatively

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<sup>251</sup> Hyun Ah Yang, *Understanding of Korean Family Law System-Tradition, Colonialism, and at the Crossing of Gender* (Seoul, Creation and Criticism Press, 2012), 170.

<sup>252</sup> Soo Hyun Kim, 'Women's Labour Market Situation: Low Employment Rate, Low Wages', in, *Monthly Labor Market Monitor Magazine*, June 2012. Sung Hee Yoon, '40% of Women Part Timers are Receiving Below Minimum Wages', in, *Daily Labour News*, March 3<sup>rd</sup> 2014.

<sup>253</sup> Mee Hae Kong, 'Rethinking Women's Status and Liberation in Korea', 1-2.

impacting women and the natural environment. British eco-feminist scholar Mary Mellor discusses the association of women and nature in modernization, and she makes a case against the trends towards global economic capitalism that are destructive towards both.<sup>254</sup> Ynestra King, an American eco-feminist, also argues that the ecological crisis today is closely linked to the deep roots of modern misogyny in the dualistic worldview of Western civilization and capitalism, as nature has been identified with women.<sup>255</sup> Around the globe continuous economic growth and industrial development have led to the continuing destruction of the environment, and are considered threats to the survival of all lives on the planet. Finally, environmental destruction and women's oppression have become a contemporary, global issue of importance.

Additionally, the role of women in the Korean Church still is under the invisible oppression of patriarchal elements. In early missionary times (1884-1910s), the status of Christian women took the lead in the pioneering role of the national salvation movement. In the contemporary era however, the advancement of Christian women in the Church was a secondary concern for many churches. In fact, the status or role of women was reduced, proving the persistence of patriarchy within Korean churches.<sup>256</sup> Many theologians conclude that the Church is overwhelmingly focused on a growth-first ideology. This strong focus on the ideological goal of visible growth has meant that women's equality and agency in

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<sup>254</sup> Mary Mellor, *Gender and The Environment* in Heather and Lois Ann Lorentzen, *Ecofeminism and Globalization*, Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2003, 11.

<sup>255</sup> Ynestra King, 'Healing the Wounds: Feminism, Ecology, and the Nature/Culture Dualism', in, Irene Diamond and Gloria Feman Orenstein, *Reweaving the World*, 106-7.

<sup>256</sup> Ho Suk Sung, *A Search for an Educational Plan According to the Changes in the Roles of Women in Churches* (Seoul: Korean Presbyterian Council One Hundred Memorial Project, the Church and the Faith, 2012).

the Church has not been a priority.<sup>257</sup>

Therefore, all the Church's programs have been focused on Sunday worship and church growth. While their own concerns are ignored, women have been exploited in the pursuit of church growth by being assigned duties - such as guidance to visitors, praise (choir), cleaning, and meal preparations – to aid various growth-oriented events. As a result, most women's programs in the Korean Church focus on the auxiliary functions of women's evangelism and service for the growth of the Church, rather than on fostering women's spiritual growth or leadership training.<sup>258</sup> All the hard work and dedication of many of these women, their sweat and blood, has been hidden behind incredible church growth today. Ironically, the weight of evidence suggests that male patriarchy and the subsequent exploitation of women are behind the progressive and amazing growth of the Church in Korea. In this current reality, the status and role of Korean secular women in the contemporary era has improved, even while women's role in the Church has degenerated. Women in the Korean Church are still considered vehicles of simple service labor for church ministry, and have been limited in their leadership roles. At this point in time, women are unable to secure independent positions in the Church system, which is still dominated by male church leaders.

The issue of Korean women's roles and positions, and oppressive connection between women and nature in the section are summarized as follows. Although Korean women's roles and positions in society have taken several progressive steps forward, Korean women's roles and positions within the Christian Church remain stagnantly inferior to men. Christian women in early missionary

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<sup>257</sup> Mi Hyun Jung, 'Retrospect and Prospects on Korean Women's Theology', 199-257.

<sup>258</sup> Ibid.

times took active roles in the Church. However, beginning in the Japanese Colonial Era, women's roles began to deteriorate in the Church under the double pains of racial and gender discrimination; it is also during this period, with the beginning of Japanese capitalism, that women's oppression became connected to ecological oppression. In the modern era, Korean churches had strengthened their conservative ideologies to further exclude women from leadership as the modern institutional church grew, also strengthening eco-antipathy along with the rapid growth in the economy. Then, entering the contemporary era, women were urged to serve the ideology and aims of church growth to their own detriment. Eventually, women's roles and position in the Church fell far short of their status and role in secular society. Compared to the current state of women's roles in the Church to that of early missionary times, Korean Christian women have lost status and participation potential.

Additionally, from the research on the oppressive connection between women and nature in the Korean context in this section, this dissertation sees that Korean women as well as nature have been exploited as major resources for industrial mobilization and the institutionalized Korean church for church growth. In this way, from an eco-feminist perspective, the God model proposed in this dissertation attempts to liberate women with an equal attempt to liberate nature. The dissertation, therefore, proposes a model of feminist Divine from Feng Sui which represents an instinctive and intuitive response to the natural environment that emphasizes balance between the genders and thereby pursues inherent eco-femininity in it in order to liberate both women and nature.<sup>259</sup>

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<sup>259</sup> Hong Key Yoon, *The Culture of Feng shui in Korea: An Exploration of East Asian Geomancy* (United Kingdom: Lexington, 2006), 20.

Relevant to this discussion, particularly regarding the exploitation of women and nature with the exploitation of the third world by the first world, Ruether has presented some valuable eco-feminist analysis. Ruether sees this socio-economic form of exploitation as created by 'cultural symbolic patterns by which both women and nature are inferior and identified with each other as an ideologic superstructure by which the system of economic and legal domination of women, land and animal is justified and made natural and inevitable within a total patriarchal Cosmivision'.<sup>260</sup> She adds, for example, the forests were stripped for firewood, industrial fuels and war preparation, devastating ecologies in a tragedy that still continues today.<sup>261</sup> She maintains that western modes of modern civilizations have exploited Asia in order to enrich themselves through colonialism. The two interrelated outcomes of this are the suffering of third world people and the current ecological crisis.<sup>262</sup>

In addition, Korean theologians including In Ryung Shin argue that the relationship between Korean women and nature's oppression should be seen from the experience of Korean women. In other words, the relationship between the two should be reflected in the peculiarity of patriarchies and the industrialization process from Korean women's experience.<sup>263</sup> To put it concretely, Korean women's experience has been shaped by being regarded as inferior beings in a patriarchal society, shaped by Confucian tradition, combined with the notion that nature is viewed as an object conquered by men. Also, from Korean women's experience,

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<sup>260</sup> Rosemary R. Ruether, 'Ecofeminism: First and Third World Women', *American Journal of Theology & Philosophy* Vol. 18, No. 1, *Eco-justice and the Environment*, (January 1997) : 33-45.

<sup>261</sup> Ruether, *Gaia & God*, 198.

<sup>262</sup> Rosemary R. Ruether, 'Introduction', in, Rosemary R. Ruether (ed.), *Women Healing Earth: Third World Women on Ecology, Feminism, and Religion*, (New York: Orbis Books, 1996), 1-8.

<sup>263</sup> In Ryung Shin et al, *Globalization and Women's Citizenship* (Seoul: Ewha University Press, 2002), 191-194.



women and nature are inextricably linked as major resources for developing the Korean economy. Thus, a combination of the eco-antipathy of capitalism and the process of industrialization has jointly exploited both Korean women and nature.<sup>264</sup>

Robin R. Wang also interprets the meaning of the relationship between women and nature using yin and yang principle from Feng Shui. She argues heaven is seen as father and earth as mother, so men and heaven are regarded as yang, then nature (earth) and women are regarded as yin.<sup>265</sup> In this way, he explains that women and nature are linked through the same entity of femininity from the Asian perspective.

Moreover, commonalities between women and nature, wherein women are connected to nature in unique ways, are explored by Western ecofeminist theologians. For example, women experience a monthly cycle often associated with the natural cycle of the moon and the universe is conceptually regarded as being biologically fertile and reproductive, like women. According to cultural historian Riane Eisler, women are considered to have biologically the same characteristics as nature in terms of childbearing and providing nutrients, women and fertile land were considered to be essential elements for human survival.<sup>266</sup>

Catherine Roach, an American eco-feminist and Carol Christ, an American feminist, also argue that nature has its own biological rhythm linked to productivity and women share that connection of life cycle and changes in women's fertility. They identify unique changes of the female physical experience, including menstruation, childbirth, nurturing, and menopause, with the phases of the moon, the cycles of the seasons and the flow of sunrise and sunset in natural world to the

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<sup>264</sup> Ibid.

<sup>265</sup> Robin R. Wang, *Yinyang: The Way of Heaven and Earth in Chinese Thought and Culture*, Cambridge University Press, 2012, 3.

<sup>266</sup> Riane Eisler, *The Chalice and the Blade: Our History, Our Future* (New York: HarperSan Francisco, 1988), 68-69.

cycle of life and death.<sup>267</sup> In this way, scholars have recognized the unity of women and nature. Interconnectedness between women and nature has been closely linked with the notion of fertility and abundant life. In addition Ruether considers that, by the masculine ideology of dualistic worldview, males are transcendental mental and reason, while women are defined as inferior principles of the earth or body. This dualism leads to alienation of women and nature.<sup>268</sup>

In bringing together these Asian and Western eco-feminists' claims, this dissertation argues that the oppression of women and nature are closely connected biologically and as major resources for industrial development in Korean context. In this way, this section asserts that eco-antipathy and women's oppression still continue today in the development of Korean economic growth and in the institutionalized Korean church.

The following section now turns to analysis of the colonial themes from Korean history, which I have divided into three periods. I have organized the analysis historically so that each period typically represents one key patriarchal feature affecting Korean women's lives and exploiting the natural world throughout Korean history.

#### **D. Colonial Themes from Three Historic Periods in Korea**

In order to understand the historical and cultural backgrounds of the exploitation of Korean women and nature, it is essential to analyze colonialism in Korea. This section, therefore, explores how these colonial ideas differ and how they relate to the issue of patriarchy. As such the section includes three different forms of

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<sup>267</sup> Catherine M. Roach, *Mother/Nature: Popular Culture and Environmental Ethics* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003), 39-50. Carol P. Christ, *Laughter of Aphrodite: Reflections on a Journey to the Goddess* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987), 125.

<sup>268</sup> Rosemary R Ruether, *Sexism and God-Talk*, 54.

colonialism: Christianity as a form of religious colonialism (1880-1910) which is discussed using the scholarly work of Sebastian Kim and Kirsteen Kim, Hee An Choi, and Emily Conroy-Krutz; Japanese imperialism as a form of exploitation colonialism (1910-1945), discussed using Chai, Alice Yun, Carmen M. Argibay, and Paul H. Kratoska; and lastly the economic and political colonialism introduced by the West (1945-present) that is discussed using the work of Norrie Macqueen. These forms of colonialism have different aspects of colonial ideas but they all shared the commonality of exploitation of women and nature, and furthering of patriarchy.

Firstly, the dissertation sees that the introduction of Christianity in Korea was a form of religious and cultural colonialism.<sup>269</sup> In their book *A History of Korean Christianity*, Sebastian Kim, a Korean-British theologian, and Kirsteen Kim, a British theologian, write, 'much of the early recorded history of the Korean churches is colonial mission history, that is, the story of Western missionary initiatives towards Korea rather than about Korean reception of the gospel and agency in its spread'.<sup>270</sup> Hee An Choi, a Korean-American theologian, also argues that Christianity did not respect the Korean culture, people, or society, and rejects traditional customs and morals.<sup>271</sup> With the introduction of Christianity, Shamanism was expelled as an unreasonable belief in an attempt to remove all traces of indigenous religions and the spirit of the Korean people that was so deeply enmeshed in Shamanism. On the issues of religious colonialism in the early Christianity in Korea, Emily Conroy-Krutz, who is a historian and religious scholar,

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<sup>269</sup> Emily Conroy-Krutz, *Christian Imperialism: Converting the World in the Early American Republic* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2015), 74, 102, 151, 179.

<sup>270</sup> Sebastian Kim and Kirsteen Kim, *A History of Korean Christianity*, 2.

<sup>271</sup> Hee An Choi, *Korean Women and God*, 41-44.

maintains that American evangelical Protestants of the early nineteenth century were motivated by Christian imperialism, which uses their colonial and commercial power in order to spread Christianity.<sup>272</sup> Similarly, American theologian Stephen Bevans writes, 'The modern missionary era was in many ways the 'religious arm' of colonialism'.<sup>273</sup>

Secondly, a type of economic and political colonialism linked to Western modes of economic development was introduced to Korea, which developed alongside the introduction of Christianity. British political scientist Norrie Macqueen defines Western economic colonialism as the policy or practice of acquiring full or partial political control over colonies, occupying it with settlers, and exploiting it economically to enrich the European colonial power. Interest in Christian evangelism followed industrialization in many European countries and as such it formed the basis of the civilizing missions conceived by the British Empire and other European colonial powers.<sup>274</sup> This probably marks the beginning of the way that Christian missions were used to justify the often harmful, violent and exploitative actions of the colonizers. In Korea, Western economic and religious colonialism that introduced Christianity was a form of imperialism that forced Christianity upon colonized people and was designed to dominate them politically and exploit them economically for the benefit of the colonial power.<sup>275</sup>

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<sup>272</sup> Emily Conroy-Krutz, *Christian Imperialism*, 74, 102, 151, 179.

<sup>273</sup> Stephen Bevans, 'New Evangelical Vision and Mission' in the *DIVINE WORD Missionary Magazine*, Summer 2002 and Winter 2002, <http://www.secondenlightenment.org/Christian%20Complicity.pdf> [accessed March 03, 2017]

<sup>274</sup> Norrie Macqueen, *Colonialism : Short Histories of Big Ideas* (New York: Routledge, 2014), 39. Kindle Edition.

<sup>275</sup> Toyin Falola, *Violence in Nigeria: The Crisis of Religious Politics and Secular Ideologies* (New York: University Rochester Press. 2001), 33. See David Steinberg, 'Korean Attitudes Toward the United States', *Pacific Affairs*, Vol.78, No.3 (Fall 2005): 497-499.

Thirdly, Japanese colonialism in Korea was a form of exploitation colonialism. Japanese colonialism assimilated culture and exploited women and plundered natural resources such as forests.<sup>276</sup> Mary Gilmartin, American social and cultural geographer, writes exploitation colonialism is a national policy of conquering a country to exploit its natural resources and its native population. Exploitation colonialism is the immediate financial gain made by low-cost extraction of raw materials and abuse of native people, usually administered by a colonial government.<sup>277</sup> Chai, Alice Yun, a Korean-American anthropologist, has indicated Korean women were traumatized under the colonial experience because the Japanese exploited Korean women as resources in terms of their labor as factory workers and as sexual slaves for Japanese soldiers.<sup>278</sup> This historical trauma of Japanese military for war crimes, particularly on the issue of 'comfort women', Korean women who were sexually enslaved by Japanese troops during the Second World War, still have left deep scars in the heart of Korean women.<sup>279</sup>

These various colonialisms all played a key role in the deepening of patriarchy in Korea. Robert J.C. Young says colonialism is inherently patriarchal. He says that in the imperial and colonial era, the role of women was not seen in the traditional and historical representations because it was men who made empires and colonies, and the colonies were fields where all kinds of forms of masculine

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<sup>276</sup> Anne Soon Choi, *Korean Americans* (New York: Infobase Publishing, 2007), 36.

<sup>277</sup> Mary Gilmartin, *Key Concepts in Political Geography* (California: SAGE Publications, 2009), 116.

<sup>278</sup> Chai, Alice Yun, 'Asian-Pacific Feminist Coalition Politics: The Comfort Women Movement'. *Korean Studies* 17 (1993): 67-91. See Paul H. Kratoska (ed), *Asian Labor in the Wartime Japanese Empire*, 303-325.

<sup>279</sup> Regarding the issue of Korean women's sexual slaves for Japanese soldiers, Carmen M. Argibay who is Argentina Supreme Court of Justice took part as a judge in the 'Women's International War Crimes Tribunal on Japan's Military Sexual Slavery', which gathered in December 2000 to try Japanese military for war crimes, particularly on the issue of 'comfort women' that is Japanese military sexual slavery of Korean women. Carmen M. Argibay, 'Sexual Slavery and the Comfort Women of World War II', *Berkely journal of International Law*, Vol. 21, Issue 2, 2003, 387-388.

powers were practiced. As a result, many more recent social movements against colonialism actually have been women's movements overcoming continuing unperceived and perceived forms of patriarchy that remain well-engrained in the postcolonial era.<sup>280</sup>

In this way, the three forms of colonialism throughout contemporary Korean history described here helped solidify the significance of patriarchal ideas and strengthened women's oppression and the abuse of nature. Protestant Christianity was introduced to Korea by conservative American missionaries, bringing fundamental and conservative ideas of Christianity.<sup>281</sup> These are well blended with patriarchal Confucian traditions native to Korea, and gradually strengthened women's oppression in the Korean church. In addition, economic colonialism has ushered in large inflows of foreign capital from the West that require discriminatory labor practices towards Korean women, with low wages and patriarchal economic structures. Like the idea of patriarchy in religion, this western economic colonialism combined with native Korean Confucian attitudes towards women, resulted in strong exploitation of women as well as exploitative attitudes towards the natural environment to encourage economic growth in Korea.<sup>282</sup> Moreover, Japanese colonial rule emphasized patriarchy in the sexual and economic exploitation of Korean women. In Japanese colonialism, Korean women were abused as a tool for securing war supplies for Japanese Empire.<sup>283</sup>

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<sup>280</sup> Robert J.C. Young, *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction*, 13-15.

<sup>281</sup> *The Korea Mission Field*, Vol.7, No.12, 1911, 'Life of Ran Sa Ha, Who Earned The First Bachelor's Degree', in, *The Study of Soon Ryu Kwan*, by Hye Ryung Ko, Yu Kwan Soon Study 16 (2011): 96.

<sup>282</sup> Sang Hoon Lee, 'American Missionaries' Perceptions on Korea in Late Period of Lee Dynasty Chosun', in, *The Academy of Korean Studies*, Vol. 27 (2007): 133.

<sup>283</sup> Paul H. Kratoska (edit), *Asian Labor in the Wartime Japanese Empire*, 81-90, 303-326.

## **II.3 Current Women's Issues in the Contemporary Korean Protestant Church**

This section examines and analyzes the major historical causes behind the subordination of women's positions and roles that has persisted in contemporary Korean Protestant churches since 1910.<sup>284</sup> The dissertation proposes that the root of women's problems within the Korean Church lies in the misconception of God, which is due to persistent patriarchal mindsets, languages, and male-centered Biblical interpretations. As will be shown below, the notions of God as Father, Son, King, which are linked to ideas of headship as male, and teachings that hold women to be inferior and subsidiary to men,<sup>285</sup> have contributed to the marginalization of women within the Korean Church – to the limiting of their roles, and the denial of female ordination.<sup>286</sup> Therefore, in this section, I will look into the problems and the consequences of the gender inequality that is evident in the contemporary Protestant Korean Church.

### **A. The Problem: Internalized Patriarchy in Korean Protestant Churches**

The growth of Korean Protestantism since its introduction in 1884 has been extraordinary by any measure.<sup>287</sup> Most Korean theologians agree that women had

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<sup>284</sup> The term 'Protestant' is generally used for all denominations in the Korean Protestant Church, which are not adherent to Catholic churches in Korea's contemporary Christian Church.

<sup>285</sup> Anne E. Carr, *Transforming Grace: Christian Tradition and Women's Experience* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1990), 135-137. See Anne M. Clifford, *Introducing Feminist Theology* (New York: Orbis Books, 2002), 96. See also Elizabeth A. Johnson, *She Who Is*, 37, 40. John W. Cooper, *Our Father in Heaven*, 255; McFague, *Metaphorical Theology*, 9-10.

<sup>286</sup> Young Sil Choi, 'Biblical Passages Demeaning Women: Reinterpretation from the Perspectives of Korean Grassroots Women' (paper presented at 'Reading Bible with Women's Eyes', at the 40th Academic Conference of the Korean Christian Society, Seoul, May 21, 2012), 1-2. See Nam Soon Kang, *Feminism and Christianity*, 141-143.

<sup>287</sup> Korean churches experienced rapid growth in membership, in particular from the 1960s through the 1980s. In 1960 the Protestant population was 623,000, and by 1985 it had grown over tenfold to 6,489,000. In 1995, according to a Population and Housing Census Report, the Protestant population was 8,760,000. In 2005, the number of Protestants declined slightly, to 8,616,000, a 1.6 percent decrease. See Korean Statistics Office, <http://kosis.kr/>, Population and Housing Census

a great deal to do with the growth of the Korean Church, and today females make up 70% of congregational members.<sup>288</sup> The Protestant faith was introduced to Korean women in the early missionary period, in hope of spreading the 'good news' of the Gospel, which espouses principles of gender equality and liberation from a longstanding and suffocating patriarchy.<sup>289</sup> However, as is frequently pointed out by Korean theologians and sociologists, despite the rhetoric of equality that is common today, Korean churches are another source of female oppression, rather than being a place of consolation.<sup>290</sup>

Hye Sim Lee, a Korean female theologian, claims that although women revitalized and fostered Korean Church congregations, the Korean Church did not treat women as respectfully. Lee argues that women in Korean churches are thoroughly subordinate to male clergy, so much so that they slide into a state of virtual slavery in which they are forced to do volunteer work for the Church. Lee finally claims that the Korean Church is no longer a place for women's equality and consolation.<sup>291</sup> Hyun Hye Yang, another Korean female theologian, further supports Lee's claim that the Korean Church has become a place to oppress women, because the framework of Korean churches has been structurally strengthened by patriarchal elements.<sup>292</sup> On the other hand, Hyung Ryong Park, a conservative Korean Presbyterian theologian, argues that, based on the Bible, a woman who

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Report. [accessed January 3, 2015]

<sup>288</sup> Ok Soo Shin 'Church from Women's Eyes'. *Christian Communication* (2013) <http://www.pckworld.com/news/articleView.html?idxno=62806>. [accessed January 3, 2015] See Nam Soon Kang, *Feminist Theology*, 287. Also see Chapter II. 2

<sup>289</sup> Seung Hee Son, *The Spirituality of Korean Women and Church* (Seoul: Korea Journal of Christian Studies, vol.5, Korean Society of Christianity, 1989), 129-131. See Woo Jung Lee, *The Trace of Korean Christian Women*, 73.

<sup>290</sup> Seung Hee Son, *The Spirituality of Korean Women*, 131.

<sup>291</sup> Hye Sim Lee, 'The Church System Must Be Changed' (paper presented at Methodist Gender Equality Symposium, Methodist Committee of Gender Equality, 2010), 11, 18.

<sup>292</sup> Hyun Hye Yang, 210.



was evil in nature enticed a man into committing a crime and the man was punished because of this; thus, he claims it is natural that women in the Church are subordinate to and oppressed by men.<sup>293</sup> My working assumption in this dissertation is that so many Korean male theologians and pastors like Park condone the oppression and subordination of women in the Church, because of this type of male-centered and Bible-based literary interpretation.

The subordination of women in the Korean Church begins at the level of language. Many feminist theologians have pointed out the ways that literal interpretation of patriarchal language in the Bible, and the use of particular Biblical passages,<sup>294</sup> work to limit women's full participation in the Korean Church.<sup>295</sup> It has been common for many Korean male theologians and church leaders to interpret the Bible with a male-centered, patriarchal mindset, and use predominantly patriarchal language in the Korean Church.<sup>296</sup> This presence of male-dominant language has been used and furthered in nearly all liturgy and worship throughout the history of the Christian mission in Korea.<sup>297</sup>

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<sup>293</sup> Hyung Ryong Park, *Collected Writings of Hyuong Ryong Park*, Vol.16 (Seoul: Korean Christian Education Research Institution, 1978), 62-63.

<sup>294</sup> For example: 1 Timothy 2:11-12: 'A woman should learn in quietness and full submission'; 'I do not permit a woman to teach or to assume authority over a man she must be quiet'. 1 Corinthians 11:7: 'A man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but woman is the glory of man'. 1 Corinthians 14:34-35: 'Women should remain silent in the churches. They are not allowed to speak, but must be in submission, as the law says', 'If they want to inquire about something, they should ask their own husbands at home; for it is disgraceful for a woman to speak in the church'. (New International Version).

<sup>295</sup> Nam Soon Kang, *Feminism and Christianity*, 141. See Sook Jin Lee, *The Effect of Mainstream Discourses*, 127. See also Hye Sim Lee, 'The Church System Must Be Changed', 11.

<sup>296</sup> As an extreme case of the male-centered literary interpretation of the Bible, see a speech that Pastor Tae Deuk Lim, president of the General Assembly for the Korean United Presbyterian Church, gave to students at a worship session in a school chapel on Nov 18, 2003. Among his remarks, he said, 'Our denomination will never allow women pastors and deaconesses based on the Bible; women with a diaper can't stand on the pulpit, never!' This exemplifies how patriarchal thoughts have been strengthened in the Korean Christian ministry, based on the male-centered misinterpretations of the Bible. *Oh My News*, November 28, 2003. See also *Minister Newspaper*, Apr 1, 2004.

<sup>297</sup> Young Sil Choi, 'Biblical Passages Demeaning Women', 1.

Nam Soon Kang, a Korean feminist theologian, argues that biblical scholars have relied on male-centered hermeneutics in ways that lead to the exclusion of women in churches, on the basis of unfavorable representations of women in the Scriptures.<sup>298</sup> Young Sil Choi, a Korean feminist theologian, claims that the Korean Church and its theology uses discriminatory Biblical passages as an excuse for refusing women's ordination, without considering the context of the Bible. Choi also points out that the central idea of God the Father as represented by the Korean Church identifies men as God, and holds women as inferior to men, and that this idea has been used as a backbone of patriarchal systems.<sup>299</sup> On the other hand, Hyung Ryong Park argues that the biblical passages of 1 Corinthians 11:7, 14:34-35, and 1 Timothy 2:11-12 - where Paul addressed the Church's authority to deny a women's ordination over two thousand years ago - are still valid today. He claims that Paul's position is not just the custom of a local church but rather an immutable truth for eternity; women cannot be either an elder or a pastor.<sup>300</sup> However, Se Yun Kim, a Korean theologian, refutes Park's idea, and claims that as a result of distorting the Gospel via out-of-date interpretations of the Bible, the Korean Church has encouraged women's oppression rather than their liberation. Thus, Kim indicates that the Korean churches should instead invest in more modern and contextually accurate interpretations of Scripture, in order to achieve gender equality.<sup>301</sup> Suk Ja Chung, a Korean female theologian, agrees that the Korean Church should pay more attention to abolishing the use of gender discriminatory

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<sup>298</sup> Nam Soon Kang, *Feminism and Christianity*, 141-143.

<sup>299</sup> Young Sil Choi, 'Biblical Passages Demeaning Women', 1-2.

<sup>300</sup> Hyung Ryong Park, *Collected Writings*, 62-63.

<sup>301</sup> Bit Na Lee, 'Is it True That the Church Really Doesn't Like Women?', *Christian News*, May 3, 2006.

languages, which could exclude women.<sup>302</sup>

Working from the assumption that oppression on the basis of gender is common across many cultures, eco-feminist ideologies seem to be necessary at this moment for creating a viable Christianity in contemporary Korea. This thesis claims that the issue of sexism in the Korean Church can be addressed by incorporating Western eco-feminists' ideas. Anne M. Clifford argues that exclusive stress on 'Father-God' throughout Christian tradition has idolized God and resulted in a male-centered hierarchy: 'Father-God, male, female, earth'. This creates an unnecessary distance between women and God.<sup>303</sup> Elizabeth A. Johnson says the patriarchal symbolism around God justifies a male-centered worldview and leads to practices of male superiority and female inferiority.<sup>304</sup> Gary W. Deddo also wrote that masculine languages and images portraying God as a male provide men with justification to exploit women in the Church.<sup>305</sup> Thus these Western responses to the sort of gender oppression wrought by male-centric patriarchal language in the Church certainly speak to the problems present in the contemporary Korean Church. As such, these Western challenges to patriarchy from eco-feminism will be considered alongside Eastern challenges from Feng Shui perspectives to patriarchy.

My work presupposes that male-centered interpretation of the Bible and the use of masculine language tends to reinforce patriarchal stereotypes in every aspect of Korean Church worship and liturgy. My working assumption in what follows is that the rampant idea of male supremacy and sexism in the Korean

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<sup>302</sup> Sook Ja Jung, 'What Makes Women's Church Compose Hymns for Women?', in, *Christian Thoughts* (May 1995): 158-159.

<sup>303</sup> Clifford, *Introducing Feminist Theology*, 96.

<sup>304</sup> Johnson, *She Who Is*, 37.

<sup>305</sup> Gray W. Deddo, 'Introduction', in, Alvin F. Kimel Jr. (ed.), *This Is My Name Forever: The Trinity and Gender Language for God*, (Downers Grove Ill: InterVarsity Press, 2001), 7.

Church has reinforced women's place in subordinate and secondary roles. As such, generations of female subordination has made patriarchal practices and thinking seem normal, and natural. Thus, I suggest this phenomenon of the internalization of patriarchal mindsets in a crucial women's issue in contemporary Korean Churches. This internalization can now be explored further.

Korea's long-standing Confucian patriarchal culture, combined with male-centric Biblical interpretations and religious language, has mostly contributed to Korean women's internalization of patriarchal mindsets. The Confucian tradition was dominant in Korea for more than five hundred years between 1392 and 1910, and obedience and subjection of women deemed a matter of course in this time in Korean history.<sup>306</sup> A wealth of scholarship has demonstrated that Confucian patriarchal traditions have affected Korean women by establishing a patriarchal social structure, as women are assigned status and duties that advocate and support patriarchal Confucian gender roles.<sup>307</sup> These hierarchical gender roles have reinforced in women the idea that they are inferior to men. This internalization has desensitized women from their own oppression, rather than inspiring them to fight for women's human rights.<sup>308</sup> Chun Seo Gu has argued that women belittle

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<sup>306</sup> Several Korean feminist theologians today attempt to offer points of view that depart from the typical Confucian view. They claim that Confucian ethics were not based on the logic of domination and non-domination, but on the logic of coexistence, and that Confucianism enacts a provision for maintaining public order, and upholding a common cause. Eun Sun Lee, *Searching for the Lost Transcendence* (Seoul: Subservient People Press, 2009). However, many theologians still argue that Confucian tradition was long, oppressive, and discriminatory to women, and that Korean women accept Confucian customs as matter of course. See, for example, Nam Soon Kang, *Feminism and Christianity*, 93-113, and Eon Soon Kim. 'Study on Women in Confucian Lee Dynasty-tithe Function of Proprieties' , in, *The Korean Journal of Philosophy of Education* 35 (2006): 227.

<sup>307</sup> Ki Jung Kang, *Nice Girl Complex: Gathering for Women* (Seoul: Hyun Am Press, 1995), 61.

<sup>308</sup> Eun Mi Paik, 'Maturity in Character and in Spirituality from Feminist Perspectives', in, *Korean Christian Theology Collection of Writings*, Vol. 19 (Sept. 2000), 322.

themselves by participating in and reproducing these patriarchal structures.<sup>309</sup> Korean feminist theologians argue that male church leaders have used Biblical passages that contain masculine language for recognizing men as leaders and women as secondary beings, ideas that women then unconsciously internalize.<sup>310</sup> In the same way, women recognize men as authority figures, whether consciously or unconsciously.<sup>311</sup> Further, many Christian women degrade their own selves as worthless in the eyes of God.<sup>312</sup> Therefore, masculine and exclusive language play a key role in alienating and separating women from God, making them in a sense 'others', and strengthening the domination of men over women in part through the women's own internalization. Simone De Beauvoir, a French feminist and writer, states that this kind of masculine language makes of women the status of 'other', or as Clifford synthesizes, 'the object whose meaning is determined for her by men'.<sup>313</sup>

At issue for our purposes especially is how the normalization of a patriarchal order is a hindrance to promoting female leadership roles in the Church. Ironically, women in Korean churches frequently support sexist structures, and many women themselves are rather sympathetic to patriarchy because they are accustomed to long-term sexist practices and language.<sup>314</sup> That is, in Korean Christian churches,

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<sup>309</sup> Chun Seo Gu, *Theological World Torn Down and Rebuilt* (Seoul: Korean Christian Literature Press, 2004), 161.

<sup>310</sup> Clifford, *Introducing Feminist Theology*, 96-97. See Choi, 'Biblical Passages Demeaning Women', 1-2. See also Mi Hyun Jung, *Retrospect and Prospect on Korean Women's Theology*, 77. Some male Korean theologians began to join the hermeneutics of feminist theological perspectives in 1998- see, for example, Young Jin Min, Ji Cheol Kim, and Tae Yeun Cho.

<sup>311</sup> Johnson, *She Who Is*, 37.

<sup>312</sup> Ibid.

<sup>313</sup> Clifford, *Introducing Feminist Theology*, 20. Anne E. Carr, an American feminist theologian, also criticizes masculine languages of God, which were originally derived from patriarchal societal structures. She argues that masculine languages have justified patriarchal structures and made them an internalized aspect of daily life. Anne E. Carr, *Transforming Grace*, 135-137.

<sup>314</sup> Nam Soon Kang, *Feminist Theology*, 337.

women themselves play a role in reinforcing patriarchal leadership structures. According to a survey by Noh Chi Jun, a Korean theologian, a majority of respondents approved of the idea of allowing female clergy, but when it came to hiring a senior pastor and recommending female elders, laywomen actually rejected the female appointments.<sup>315</sup> Despite the fact that women should be aware of gender discrimination, and try to improve their leadership roles in the face of the reality of their oppression, women become their own saboteurs.

I draw a connection in what follows between the sentiments expressed by women in Chi Jun Noh's results, the long-term Confucian patriarchal traditions, and the patriarchal religious language - such as King, Ruler, Judge, Son, Father, and Sovereign - that promotes a masculine image of God. Through an internalization of imprinted patriarchal imagery, Korean women presume men to be more reliable and trusted messengers of God, and thus it feels 'normal' that men should be ministers and church leaders, whereas women themselves are just secondary beings, and assistants for men. More importantly, this internalized patriarchal thinking has caused many women to not raise their voices independently in church, and to even become conspirators who are themselves skeptical of female leadership, and advocates for patriarchy. Evidence shows the internalization of patriarchal mindsets that use male-centered language and Biblical interpretations

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<sup>315</sup> This survey was conducted by Noh Chi Jun in 1997. Chi Jun Noh, *Women and Church Structure: The Characteristics of Korean Church Organization* (Seoul: Korean Christian Literature Press, 1997), 187-190. See Mi Jung Koo, a Korean feminist theologian who analyzed the 2008 results of a survey of the Korean Federation of Church Women, gives another similar example. According to her analysis, 84.3% of the respondents were women who felt there should be no discrimination against women. However, only 55.3% of women respondents agreed with the opinion that contentious Biblical passages espousing gender discrimination should be reexamined and reinterpreted. The survey suggests that the majority of female Korean church members express a wish to achieve gender equality, but remain unclear on specific methods of achieving this in the real context of the Church. Mi Jung Koo, 'What Does Church Mean to Women Today? An Attitude Survey of Women in Church with Analysis and Prospects on Questionnaires', in, *Christian Thoughts*, 599 (November 2008): 214-225.

is a crucial issue for women in contemporary Korean churches, because it rationalizes Korean women's subordination.

## **B. The Consequences of Internalized Patriarchy: Women's Subordination**

### **1. Women's Roles**

This section will review the Korean scholarship that has established that women are not occupying positions of leadership in Korean churches. Evidence suggests that women's subordination in various church roles and particularly in ordination is directly influenced by the internalized patriarchy in contemporary Korean churches.

The subordination of women is easily identified in the different roles performed by laymen and laywomen in Korean churches. Men mostly work in administrative positions and decision-making bodies, whereas women typically serve as general mission visit assistants, cleaning staff members, decoration committee members, ushers, and kitchen workers.<sup>316</sup> Kwang Soon Lee asserts that women are frequently excluded from participating in decision-making bodies of church organizations, which are generally composed of male clergy and laymen leaders.<sup>317</sup> As Noh has shown, pastors and elders are the only members of congregations who are authorized to make decisions in church matters, and women have long faced many obstacles in trying to participate as decision-making members of the Korean Church. Although women are theologically allowed to be speaking elders and female pastors in several denominations, the actual numbers of women involved in decision-making bodies in the churches is very small.<sup>318</sup> Another example is board meetings, which are mostly composed of elders,

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<sup>316</sup> Ok Soo Shin, 'Church from Women's Eyes', in, *Christian Communication* 2929 (Dec 2013).

<sup>317</sup> Kwang Soon Lee, 'Women Ordainment, and the Vitalizing and Developing of Christian Women's Leadership', in, *Presbyterian Seminary Forum* 23 (2005): 328.

<sup>318</sup> Chi Jun Noh, *Women and Church Structure*, 175-6.

deacons, and laymen leaders, who generally determine many important considerations to do with financial affairs, special events, and church occasions. These boards are made up of primarily male congregation members, and female participation is significantly marginalized.<sup>319</sup>

Nam Soon Kang provides an example of how male church leaders purposefully separate women's roles from those of men by having them wear traditional costumes called "Han Bok." Korean women commonly wear the Han Bok to formal events, special gatherings, or when they collect offerings during the worship. Kang points out that wearing a Han Bok is intended to separate women from men; men are allowed to wear modern clothes, which means that traditional clothes tie women with the past, and box them into a conservative mold.<sup>320</sup> This kind of role allocation designates women as subsidiary members of the Church, as compared to the men in leadership positions.<sup>321</sup> Ok Ra Cho, a Korean socialist, further indicates that women in Korean churches have been viewed primarily as servants or laborers for church growth.<sup>322</sup> As such, Korean churches restrain women's roles, and thus strengthen men's leadership.<sup>323</sup> These kinds of fixed roles are standard for many Christian women in Korea.

According to a survey for 'Gender Equality Awareness', 51% of participants stated that a large part of women's duties in the church involved cleaning and doing kitchen work; however, only 0.3% of participants responded that they did this

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<sup>319</sup> Ibid., 177.

<sup>320</sup> Nam Soon Kang, *Feminist Theology*, 299.

<sup>321</sup> Ibid., 299.

<sup>322</sup> Ok Ra Cho, 'Church and Women', in, *YonSei Theology Seminar Lecture Collections* (Seoul: YonSei University Press, 1996), 255.

<sup>323</sup> Kwang Soon Lee, 'Women Ordainment', 328-329.



work voluntarily.<sup>324</sup> This result shows that women are taking these positions in their stride, though they do not desire such subsidiary roles. However, the report theorises that despite the gender discrimination in the Church, women's oppression is not recognized as a serious issue, and that the discrepancy is significantly downplayed.<sup>325</sup>

This survey implies two different things. Firstly, the results of this survey resonate with the roles women have been given within both Christian and Confucian traditions. Therefore, the problem lies in the fact that many women who are accustomed to patriarchal ideas are unaware of the seriousness of invisible oppression, as aforementioned. Secondly, obedience is considered one of the best virtues that women should cultivate in order to be called faithful Christians, just as women are called to be sincere in the Korean Confucian tradition.<sup>326</sup> Elisabeth Schussler Fiorenza, a German feminist theologian, indicates that women in church think of themselves as subsidiary and simple volunteers by the virtue of obedience, which is an essential element for maintaining patriarchy.<sup>327</sup> Nam Soon Kang also points out that obedience requires Korean Christian women to accept any work in church as a privilege from God, no matter what kinds of services are indicated.<sup>328</sup> Accordingly, women's roles in church did not change significantly between missionary times and contemporary Korea, women's roles have remained

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<sup>324</sup> See the survey of National Council of Churches in Korea (NCCK) in 1995. Only 1.7% of women were involved in roles such as teaching, preaching, and other leadership positions. Kang, *Feminism and Christianity*, 172. See also Duk Ju Lee, Jung Sook Lee, In Kyu Song, *The Korean Church and Women* (Seoul: Korean Theology Students Council Press, 2013), 129.

<sup>325</sup> Nam Soon Kang, *Feminism and Christianity*, 172.

<sup>326</sup> Nam Soon Kang, *Feminist Theology*, 300-302. Korean churches convert devotion to God to obedience to the pastors. They establish different standards of behavior for women and men, urging Christian women towards obedience. See also Soo In Lee, 'We Will not Let The Church Be Sexist', in, *Munhaw Ibo*, December 10, 2003.

<sup>327</sup> Elisabeth Schuesslar Fiorenza, 'Discipleship of Equals: A Critical Feminist Ekklesia-logy of Liberation', in *Equal Disciple*, trans: Sang Bun Kim et al, (Seoul: BunDo Press, 1997), 245: quoted in Nam Soon Kang, *Feminist Theology*, 301.

<sup>328</sup> *Ibid.*, 302.

stagnant.

## 2. Female Ordination

The lack of women's ordination from most denominations in Korean churches is a significant example of how women are subordinated in Korean churches.

Contentious issues of ordination still remain a serious challenge for Korean women.<sup>329</sup> One of the main reasons given by these churches for why they cannot allow women's ordination is their interpretation of certain aspects of Scripture, and staples of Korean Confucian traditions. However, many Korean theologians agree that the primary reason for the prohibition of female clergy in conservative bodies comes from deep-rooted gender discrimination and the patriarchal tradition.<sup>330</sup>

In Korean Protestant churches, the distinction between clergy and laity is clear in terms of hierarchal structure. A pastor or clergyman typically becomes a head of the administration, who leads worship, ritual sacraments, proclamations, and ordinances. Clerical powers exceed that of all the laity, and maintain control over all church organizations.<sup>331</sup> Thus, many male leaders in the Korean Church try to maintain their power, and deny women extensive participation or increased

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<sup>329</sup> In 1974, The Korean Christian Presbyterian Church first passed a resolution allowing women's ordination. In 1991, the Korean Methodist Church congregations also removed discriminatory clauses regarding the prohibition of female clergy members. The Presbyterian Church, one of Korea's representative integration denominational bodies, followed suit and passed an item approving women's ordination on the agenda in the 1994 Congressional General Assembly. It had been 61 years since female ordination was first petitioned within the denomination in 1933. The Evangelical church of Yesung and Kisung then established women's clergyship in 2003 and in 2004 respectively, and the Bak Suk denomination finally approved female ordainment in 2011. However, despite the progress made by these various Korean religious denominations, the United Presbyterian and the Reformed Korean Christ Church, two of the largest religious denominations in Korea, continue to firmly oppose female clergyship today. Mi Hyun Jung, *Retrospect and Prospect*, 71. See Bo Kyoung Park, 'A Possibility of Women's Ministry among Korean Evangelical Churches', *Presbyterian Seminary Forum*, Vol. 44, No.2 (2012): 335.

<sup>330</sup> The Institution of Korean Church History Studies, *A History of the Korean Church III: Until The Last Part of the 20th Century After Liberation in 1945* (Seoul: Christian Literature Press, 2013), 265.

<sup>331</sup> Chi Jun Noh, *Korean Church Structure* (Seoul: Min Young Press, 1995), 77.

leadership in the congregation.<sup>332</sup>

Korean theologians have pointed out the subordinate roles of women who are ordained in the Christian churches of Korea. Kwang Soon Lee asserts that although the doors to women's ordination are open in several denominations, and although structures of decision-making bodies have loosened to some extent, female clergy are still restricted by a number of limitations, once they obtain their position.<sup>333</sup> Bo Kyung Park also indicates that though women study the same theological curriculum as men, most denominations based on patriarchal church traditions do not allow women to hold the primary or most senior leadership positions.<sup>334</sup> Jung Sook Lee suggests that it is typical of female clergy to instead go to care facilities such as nursing homes or orphanages to carry out their ministry. In many cases, female clergy are appointed work in harsh working environments, with less prestige and lower wages than male clergy.<sup>335</sup> They are also limited to certain duties, such as pastoral counseling, or home visiting ministries for the mission for housewives. Some mega-churches are open to hiring some female pastors, which despite other patriarchal tendencies shows that they are taking steps forwards to improve gender equality.<sup>336</sup> But overall their roles as leaders are weakened and are still limited to the secondary role behind senior pastors.

Korean church bodies are gradually allowing increasing numbers of female ordination, but do not seem to be interested in vitalizing women's leadership; each

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<sup>332</sup> Ibid., 77-78.

<sup>333</sup> Kwang Soon Lee, 'Women Ordainment', 335-337. See Park, 'A Possibility', 350-351. See also Hyo Sik Moon, 'Commentary on Women's Ordination in Korea', in, *International Theology* (2011): 43-44.

<sup>334</sup> Bo Kyoung Park, 'A Possibility', 350-351.

<sup>335</sup> Duk Ju Lee, Jung Sook Lee, In Kue Song, In Kyu Song, *The Korean Church and Women* 127.

<sup>336</sup> Kwang Soon Lee, 'Women Ordainment', 345.

year the numbers of women representatives gradually decline.<sup>337</sup> Kwang Soon Lee points out that female clergy have been discriminated against in the fields of real ministry, and do not have equal status with other male clergy.<sup>338</sup> These phenomena reflect the fact that women's ordinations are officially open to a certain degree, yet positions of authority in decision-making bodies are still generally not given to female clergy.

As mentioned above, many male church leaders in Korea are diametrically opposed to women's ordination, asserting that the theological doctrine of the Bible does not allow women to be ordained.<sup>339</sup> These interpretations do not, however, consider the historical and cultural context of male primacy in which the Bible was written, and fall into the trap of male-centered hermeneutics.<sup>340</sup> As a result, this becomes one of the main dogmas that male church leaders rest upon, in order to justify the limitations of women's ordainment.

To sum up, this section has shown that current Korean women's issues in the contemporary Korean Church come from the historical patriarchal stereotypes within both Christianity and Confucianism. This has caused Korean women to internalize patriarchal mindsets, and to become complicit in their own subordination. However, this dissertation acknowledges that behind women's

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<sup>337</sup> There are only seven female General Superintendents among the representatives of the General Assembly, a scant .46% of the total membership. In addition, there are only two female clergy members of the General Assembly, despite the fact that the Presbyterian churches increased the number of female clergy to 1,310 in 2011. 'Showing Good Examples of Women's Contributions and Dedications to General Assembly', in, *Christian Communication* (Sept. 2011), quoted in Park, 'A Possibility', 352.

<sup>338</sup> Kwang Soon Lee, 'Women Ordainment', 335- 337.

<sup>339</sup> Based on the verses 'Let a woman learn in silence with all submissiveness', and 'I permit no woman to teach or to have authority over men. She is to keep silent', in I Timothy, women cannot be preachers or teachers in the Church. This is based on the literal interpretation of I Corinthians 14:34-35 'Let a woman learn in silence with full submissiveness. I do not permit a woman to teach, or to exercise authority over a man, but to be in silence, women have been excluded from the ordainment and cannot be priests'. Ae Young Kim, *Critical Investigation of Feminist Theology* (Seoul: Hanshin Seminary Press, 2010), 45. See Young Sil Choi, 85-110.

<sup>340</sup> Nam Soon Kang, *Feminism and Christianity*, 141-143.

subordination is often a deep-seated sense of patriarchy, which derives from indoctrination into patriarchal understandings of God (through male-centered languages, Biblical interpretation, and the view that men are superior beings and women are inferior beings). Therefore, this dissertation seeks ways to improve such flawed perspectives, and in the conclusion for this chapter I suggest possible solutions for these women's issues in the contemporary Korean Church.

## **II.4 Conclusion**

This chapter concludes that fundamental issues of women's oppression in Korean churches stem from the prevalent patriarchal mindsets whose elements have been internalized by Korean women. The male centered patriarchal languages and male centered interpretation of the Scriptures have strengthened male authorities and been internalized by women. This has resulted in female oppression, and the degradation of women to subsidiary roles in the Korean Church. Further this patriarchal idea expands to exploitation of environment in Korea.

Therefore, this dissertation suggests possible solutions for these women and nature's issues in the contemporary Korean Church, and proposes the use of more inclusive languages to liberate Korean women and nature from patriarchal languages and develop a more comprehensive understanding of God. I believe that the Korean Church has both the obligation and the opportunity to implement a more inclusive image of God, using more relevant language to our time. Attempting to use inclusive and less gendered liturgies in Korean churches may benefit Korean women, as inclusive language could help them find a more recognizable deity in the image of a female God. More inclusive language and gender neutrality

would also make it more difficult to justify the exclusion of women from leadership roles within the Church. Furthermore, in order to describe God with a more inclusive lexicon based on Korean women's experiences,<sup>341</sup> I finally suggest an eco-feminist God model in a metaphorical way, from the Korean perspective that draws inspiration from Korean spiritual tradition in a Korean context.<sup>342</sup>

To enhance feminist understandings of God, Korean women in the contemporary Protestant Church must be aware of the negative effects inherent in patriarchal language. Korean Christians should additionally try to reinterpret the Bible from a feminist theological view, and to integrate feminist perspectives into understandings of the Bible - then share their life experiences and conceive their own image of God with their own religious languages. Finally, women should transform God's image to be inclusive of both masculinity and femininity, and expand their horizons towards a broader understanding of God. The following chapter attempts a transcultural dialogue between Feng Shui cosmology and eco-feminism, as the groundwork for proposing an eco-feministic God model in a metaphor viewed from an Asian perspective.

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<sup>341</sup> Feminist theologians argue that existing religious languages have been constructed from a masculine standpoint, and do not reflect the life experiences of women. This has led to difficulties for women in finding subjective meaning within Christianity, which further reinforces patriarchy. Ruth C. Duck, *Gender and the Name of God: The Trinitarian Baptismal Formula*, (Pilgrim Press, 1991) 23-24. See also McFague, *Metaphorical Theology*, 9-10; Johnson, *She Who Is*, 66; Ruether, *Sexism and God-Talk*, 12-13, 19.

<sup>342</sup> This dissertation proposes that women can maintain a right relationship with God when they name God by their own words, and that they can see their own reflection in the image of God. As Mary Daly says, 'To exist in humanity is to name the self, the world, and God'. Mary Daly, *Beyond God the Father*, 8. McFague also says, 'one of the functions of religious language is "naming ourselves" as we "name" God'. McFague, *Metaphorical Theology*, 10.

### **Chapter III - Feng Shui Cosmology and Eco-feminism: Dialogue with Sallie McFague's Metaphoric Theology**

This chapter offers a transcultural dialogue between the cosmology of Korean Feng Shui and Western eco-feminist theologies. Such dialogue is central to the effort to present an eco-feminist God model from the Korean perspective, for Korean women in the contemporary Protestant Church. A model of the divine informed by both these perspectives could liberate Christian women and nature from their subordinate positions in the contemporary Korean Protestant churches, which currently manifest sexism and eco-antipathy.

In this process of transcultural dialogue, this chapter retrieves the female images of divinity that have given Korean women a sense of liberation (shown in the previous chapter on traditional Korean religion). Korean Feng Shui cosmology and eco-feminism both see female attributes in nature. Both ideas see the natural world as a living organism, and seek to break free of anthropocentrism in order to garner a more cosmic view of the universe. In particular, eco-feminist theologian Sallie McFague suggests a model that expresses God as body of the world, and as a mother. Her metaphorical approach to Christian theology relocates God, understanding the world as God's body. This puts God in a relationship of profound intimacy and nurturing toward humanity, one that parallels Korean Feng Shui's cosmic outlook on nature as a living organism and as a mother, brought about through its use of metaphors of nature. However, while McFague suggests a personal God model representing mother, friend, and lover, this dissertation suggests an impersonal God model of 'God of Land,' inspired by the impersonal images of divinity from traditional Korean religion, and as a main character in Feng

Shui cosmology. This tension between an impersonal and personal God will be discussed below.

Metaphors on nature become an important link between eco-feminism and Feng Shui cosmology in this dissertation. Neither eco-feminism nor Feng Shui views things in the universe as separate, static, and isolated; rather they both view things as inclusive, dynamic, and holistic. Moreover, all things in the universe are not related only in external and causal ways, but are internally related, and mutually interdependent. Mindful of such interrelatedness, this chapter explores the possibility of a link between eco-feminism and Korean Feng Shui as the basis for a new divine model.

Ultimately, the dissertation endeavors to bring the original messages of inclusive Christianity into dialogue with the cosmologies and speculation structure of Korean Feng Shui. This dissertation is an attempt to do contextual theology in Korea alongside Western eco-feminism. Christianity has been developed into an exclusive religion because of the influence from Western dualistic patriarchal philosophy.<sup>343</sup> Christianity has often been accused of critically shaping human attitudes towards nature and women, holding them as resources to be exploited.<sup>344</sup> The cosmology of Korean Feng Shui, however, encompasses all complementary opposites through the yin and yang attributions of all things. It substantively rejects Western dualism and patriarchy, which obscures the originally inclusive message of Christianity. Accordingly, this new eco-feminist divine model offers a viable theology for liberating both women and nature through a newly appreciated image

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<sup>343</sup> Ruether, *Sexism and God-Talk*, 85. See McFague, *Models of God*, ix and 6-7.

<sup>344</sup> Mary Daly, *Beyond God the Father: Toward a Philosophy of Women's Liberation* (Massachusetts: Beacon Press, 1985), 13, 19. See Eleanor Rae, *Women, the Earth, the Divine* (Markynoll: Orbis Books, 1994), 3-4.



of God, even as it works naturally within the traditional cultural context of Korean Feng Shui.

The chapter examines two things. The first is the cosmology of Korean Feng Shui; the second is McFague's theology in dialogue with that cosmology. This chapter provides the groundwork for proposing an eco-feminist Christian God model, which can challenge the male image of God that is stamped upon Korean Christian women's minds. Then the eco-feminist God model I call 'God of Land' will take concrete shape in the concluding part of this chapter.

### **III.1 Feng Shui Cosmology**

Korean Feng Shui contains many positive elements that are not found in traditional Western or Christian theology. Based in Asian thought, Korean Feng Shui pursues harmony and balance in the relationships among all creatures, and criticizes dualistic thinking. While Korean Feng Shui basically prizes all creatures and honors the dignity of life, Western Christianity historically developed and presented theology, or ethics, that fostered pragmatic lines of thoughts and attitudes and impacted the way that Christians see and treat nature.<sup>345</sup> In this context of Western ideas, knowledge of the natural environment has been identified as an endless source of wealth for the satisfaction of individual needs and exploitation. In Asian tradition however, Feng Shui has focused more on mutual intimacy, and humans have been viewed as moderators or participants of nature, rather than conquerors or predators.<sup>346</sup> The idea of yin and yang in Korean Feng Shui posits that all things in the world are closely interconnected with the flow of Chi - and this principle of

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<sup>345</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *God in Creation: An ecological doctrine of creation* (London: SCM Press, 1985), Trans: Kyun Jin Kim, Korean Theological Institution, 1987, 359-362.

<sup>346</sup> Sang Sung Lee, 'Ecological Theology: To Find the New Possibility through Eastern Ideas', in, *Theological Thought*, Vol. 105, (1999): 259.

balance is capable of overcoming patriarchal dualistic thinking. Furthermore, Korean Feng Shui recognizes the femininity of the land as a mother image, '*Jimo*'. Ultimately, these ideas native to Korean Feng Shui, all of which have a long literary tradition emphasizing the veneration of nature, can serve as foundational ideas for a new eco-feminist divine model.

Despite their differences, Korean Feng Shui and Christian spirituality share enough similarities that it is possible to open up a dialogue between them. The term Feng Shui means 'wind and water'. Wind is understood as air, or breath of life, and is comparable to the ancient Greek word *pneuma*, meaning 'spirit' or 'soul,' which has been so theologically important to the concept of the Holy Spirit in Christianity. In addition, the idea of water in Feng Shui resonates with divine revelation and spirit. It is believed that multiple layers of spirituality are working and being experienced in the world in which we live. For a more comprehensive understanding of the spirituality at work, the concepts of 'wind' and 'water' in Feng Shui cosmology offer a more nuanced approach in our understanding of God - through Chi, spirit, and nature from an Asian perspective.

In this context, this section will examine the cosmology of Feng Shui, and further examine its structures of speculation through the idea of 'Heaven, Land (earth) and Human' as is called 'ChunJiln', along with Christian theological reflections. This section examines an approach to Christian theology by exploring Korean Feng Shui cosmology in order to develop a more comprehensive understanding of God and nature. The cosmology of Feng Shui will then serve in this thesis as a basis for proposing an eco-feminist model of the Divine.

## A. The Essential Principles of Feng Shui Cosmology in East Asia

The Eastern outlook on nature is mostly derived and established from the traditional Chinese classic 'IChing, Book of Changes', which provides the theoretical matrix for Korean Feng Shui. The perception of nature in IChing is the basis for understanding the natural outlook in Feng Shui, both Chinese and Korean. Chinese Feng Shui has strongly influenced Korean Feng Shui.<sup>347</sup> Both of them regard the 'Land' as a living organism, and treat it just like a human body, specifically as the body of a Mother.<sup>348</sup>

Chang Jo Choi, an eminent Korean Feng Shui scholar, argues that geomancy is integral to Feng Shui, which is based on the concepts of yin and yang as well as the Five Elements, which together form the theoretical matrix of 'IChing, Book of Changes'.<sup>349</sup> The Chinese classic of Feng Shui, 'Chung Oh Gyung', describes Feng Shui as follows:

'A balance of yin and yang coinciding with each other, and the earth and the sky are in concert, the Chi underground makes a seed begin to grow and Chi on the earth makes all things take shape. In this way, while Chi on the earth and underground interact with each other, Feng Shui is naturally completed'.<sup>350</sup>

Feng Shui is grounded in the ideas of yin and yang, Five Elements, and Chi.

IChing teaches that the universe is constantly changing through mutual processes of interaction between yin and yang. IChing seeks to explain the relationship

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<sup>347</sup> There is a view that Korean Feng Shui has been imported from ancient China, but Chang Jo Choi claims that there was already a native Korean Feng Shui prior to the introduction of Chinese Feng Shui, and that it was only later that they were mixed. Chang Jo Choi, *Korean Indigenous Feng Shui 1* (Seoul: Min Eum Sa Publishing, 2011), 39.

<sup>348</sup> One of the attributes that set Korean Feng Shui apart from Chinese Feng Shui is that Korean Feng Shui states that if land is apparently not fit for human settlement it should be fixed rather than abandoned. This concept of renovating rather than abandoning land is called 'Bibo', and it is not found in Chinese Feng Shui. Ibid., 60- 62.

<sup>349</sup> Chang Jo Choi, *The Construction of a New Theory of Korean Feng Shui by Chang Jo Choi* (Seoul: Min Eum Sa Publishing 2014), 212.

<sup>350</sup> Hwa Lee, *What is the Definition of Feng Shui?* (Seoul, Yhaksa Publishing, 2013), 14. See Chang Jo Choi, *The Construction of a New Theory of Korean Feng Shui by Chang Jo Choi*, 213.

between the uniqueness of each thing in the world and the self. IChing proposes a view of organic harmony that recognizes how the universe began, and ways that it has changed.<sup>351</sup> IChing explains the natural principles of the universe in the shape of the three signs of 'Hyo'—Heaven, Land (earth) and Humanity—which are organized hierarchically.<sup>352</sup> Each 'Hyo' is constantly moving back and forth between yin and yang. Through these movements, these three (Heaven, Land, and Humanity) embody the ideas of coexistence, or co-decay. In this way, the cosmic currents of Chi and yin and yang bring a kind of life energy that is behind both the creation and the destruction of all things in the universe. A series of these life energy movements ultimately forms one Chi, which sustains the entire universe in harmonious ways. This harmonious universe cannot be manipulated through human activities or power, and if humans did try to manipulate it, the result would be only disaster and disorder.<sup>353</sup>

Korean Feng Shui, which is based on the notion of harmonious principles within the universe, has a rich notion of 'Land.' Korean Feng Shui explains how to identify certain pieces of land as auspicious by examining the Chi surrounding it, and by reading its character to determine whether it can support and nourish human life.<sup>354</sup> Feng Shui sees land as alive, and able to support living things. Feng Shui, therefore, is a holistic and ecological theory of human-nature relationships based on human wisdom, which envisions a universal order by which all creatures live together on earth.

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<sup>351</sup> Jae Kuk Song, *IChing Expository* (Seoul: Yemun Suhwon Publishing 2008), 15-16.

<sup>352</sup> I Ching contains 64 hexagrams and eight basic shapes of trigram which are a combination of the three Hyos; according to these, a trigram depicts the specific meaning of heaven, earth, and humanity. Jae Kuk Song, *IChing Expository*, 15-16.

<sup>353</sup> Sang Sung Lee, 'Ecological Theology', 264.

<sup>354</sup> Chang Jo Choi, *The Construction of a New Theory of Korean Feng Shui* by Chang Jo Choi, 37.

This ecological thought in Feng Shui shares an agenda with eco-feminism. Both ideas seek harmony and balance in the world, and see the natural environment as a living organism, just like humans. In particular, the organic and cosmic thinking of Feng Shui - in which Heaven, Land (earth), and Humanity are working in one Chi - shows a means of overcoming Western dualistic thinking. From the perspective of Korean Feng Shui, the anthropocentric thinking, which characterizes Western dualism is derived from a misinterpretation of God's Creation, and exploitation of the environment. From my own perspective, this anthropocentrism and exploitation of nature, which dualism has provided, misses the true ecological significance of the Scriptures, which actually have numerous expressions of nature's value.<sup>355</sup> The perspective of Korean Feng Shui potentially offers another understanding of nature and humanity in relation to divinity, beyond the anthropocentric thinking, which characterizes Western dualism. The cosmological perception of Korean Feng Shui signifies the relationship between Heaven-Land (earth)-Humanity, and the true sense of God's intention toward nature, which abundantly thrives through yin and yang, the Five Elements, and Chi.

### **B. The Theoretical Foundation of Feng Shui Cosmology**

In this section, I examine the foundational cosmology of Feng Shui: yin and yang, the Five Elements, and Chi. Chi theory will be only briefly dealt with here, since it will be examined more deeply in the next chapter where I examine the correlations between the Chi of Korean Feng Shui cosmology and the Holy Spirit of the Christian tradition.

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<sup>355</sup> Psalms 36: 6, 104:1-35, 147: 8.

## 1. The Concept of Yin and Yang and Five Elements

The underlying concept of yin and yang is the idea that there are frequently two opposite but intrinsically interconnected and complementary forces at work in the universe. In these pairings, although one side appears to be the complete opposite of the other, further examination importantly reveals that they in fact share deeper characteristics.<sup>356</sup> According to Korean American theologian Jung Young Lee, East Asian cosmology began with the observation of the periodic rise and fall of natural phenomena. This rise and fall was understood as bipolarity, much like the waxing and waning of the moon. The idea of bipolarity begot the concept of yin and yang, which then accreted myriad associations and became represented by the famously shaped black-and-white symbol.<sup>357</sup> These phenomena of the yin and yang movement could be described as yin being the time of sunset and moon rise, and yang being the time of moonset and sunrise. These symbolic characters, yin and yang, were established to express the concept of complementarity found in ideas such as women and men, or summer and winter. Through the symbolism of yin and yang, East Asian philosophers came to explain the entire universe as a complex bundle of complementary and interrelated forces. This understanding is influenced in no small part by traditional agricultural Asian cultures, which were rooted in the natural environment, and intimately familiar with the close correlation between the movements of the sun and moon, and the seasonal changes needed for raising crops.<sup>358</sup>

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<sup>356</sup> Jung Yong Lee, *The Trinity in Asian Perspective* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1996), 24-25.

<sup>357</sup> *Ibid.*, 25-26

<sup>358</sup> Fritjof Capra, *The Tao of Physics: An Exploration of the Parallels between Modern Physics and Eastern Mysticism*, trans: Yong Jung Kim and Sung Bum Lee (Seoul: um Yang Sa Publishing, 2010), 145.

The principle of yin and yang has been developed through the idea of the Five Elements that symbolize the relationship between specific things and the makeup of the universe. These Five Elements are: Wood(木), Fire(火), Land (Earth) (土), Metal(金), and Water(水). The Five Elements are a symbolic scheme for expressing the relationship of humanity to the earth; together, they represent everything physical needed for human life. Jae Kuk Song, a Korean Taoist scholar, explains that the theory of 'Five Elements' sheds light on the mystery of the interdependence between heaven and humanity.<sup>359</sup> These elements represent the vitality and energy, which underlie all things in the universe. The polar (mutualistic and incompatible) relationship between the Five Elements can be applied to countless cases to interpret the Creation, development, and relationship between all things in the universe. In other words, associations between and combinations of the Five Elements explain all the natural phenomena of human life and the universe, and even explain their formation and extinction.<sup>360</sup>

The 'association of the Five Elements' refers to the mutual relationships in the interplay among the five. The relationship between the elements is both mutualistic and incompatible, meaning the elements are at once opposites of and complementary to one another. Another way to say this is that no element of the five is exclusive and independent, but each is complementary to and inextricably interconnected with the other elements. Furthermore, the elements have an intimate, intuitive sensibility with one another. This relationship between the Five Elements becomes the principle of the existence of life, and the polarities of mutualistic and incompatible association are eventually to be explained by the

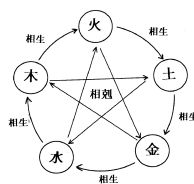
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<sup>359</sup> Jae Kuk Song, *IChing Expository*, 74-79.

<sup>360</sup> Ole Bruun, *An Introduction to Feng Shui* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 107.

complementary nature of the yin and yang theory. The Five Elements principle sees Heaven, Land (earth), and Humanity as an integrated and singular harmonized organism. And each part of the universe belongs to one organism, and each part interacts with the other parts.<sup>361</sup>

The philosophies of yin and yang and the Five Elements value the wholeness of all things—rather than individual parts—as well as life, and human intuitive sensibility. This is very different from Western philosophies. For example, Fritjof Capra, an American physicist, points out that Western culture prefers the yang, which is the masculine value and attitude, while neglecting the yin - the feminine value. He argues further that tight adherence to a masculine perspective, which focuses particularly upon practical analysis and knowledge, has led to an ecological crisis.<sup>362</sup> Thinking based on yin and yang and the Five Elements can overcome Western dualism - which has prioritized yang over yin and dualism over monism (the idea of Five Elements) - to bring humanity and the environment into perfect elemental balance and harmony.



(Yin and yang and Five Elements)

## 2. Chi

The theoretical basis of Feng Shui has its roots in Chiology, which holds that all things in the physical world are considered to work through a living energy known as Chi. In the cosmology of Korean Feng Shui, Chi is the source of creation and

<sup>361</sup> Ji Hong Bae, *Yi-Yang and Five Elements* (Seoul: Book and Trees Publishing, 2013), 118-121.

<sup>362</sup> Fritjof Capra, *The Tao of Physics*, 20.



change for all things in the universe; it works as a life force flowing through every space in the whole world. In other words, every space in the natural world – in both heaven and earth - is endowed with Chi, and the Chi is a fundamental force of all life. Therefore, all events occurring in nature ultimately operate through Chi. The Chi, while it continually gathers and scatters, constantly moves and flows through the cycles of life. Simultaneously, yin and yang, and all things in the universe, are constantly disappearing, and also springing up.<sup>363</sup>

According to Chiology, Chi existed prior to the creation of the material world, and continued to exist through the complex continuum of space and time. In some primordial age, the light part of Chi rose and formed the heavens, and the heavier and turbid parts gathered to form the earth. The Chinese philosopher Dong Zhongshu wrote: ‘Chi of Heaven is above, the Chi of the Land (earth) is below, and the Chi of Humanity is between’.<sup>364</sup> From a cosmological perspective however, the Chi of humanity is the same Chi that flows through Heaven and Land (earth). In Feng Shui, humans are perfect and pure living complexities, which are made up of both the physical and mental soul in Chi and yin and yang. Land is also viewed as a living organism, which holds the vitality of the Chi of Land fully.<sup>365</sup> All things are connected with Chi, and they are all intuitively sensitive to each other. Thus, the Chi of Heaven, Land (earth), and Humanity interplay between these aspects, as parts of one living organism.

There are many parallels between Chi and the Holy Spirit of the Hebrew Scriptures, *ruach* - which grounds creation, and is also the driving force behind it.

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<sup>363</sup> Ole Bruun, *An Introduction to Feng Shui*, 108.

<sup>364</sup> *Ibid.*, 108- 109.

<sup>365</sup> Chang Jo Choi, *The Construction of a New Theory of Korean Feng Shui by Chang Jo Choi*, 204. See Hwa Lee, *What is the Definition of Feng Shui?*, 72.

Chi can also be compared to the New Testament *pneuma*, which carries the spirit of life and living beings. In this way, Chi and the Christian Holy Spirit share many commonalities, both being dynamic forces for changes in the universe. The word 'Chi' can manifest itself as a resistant power against the dualism that tries to artificially divide natural unity. Chi will be examined more deeply in the next chapter. There it will also be explained as a power of life, because Chi can symbolize the power that liberates oppressed people.

### **C. The Scientific Logic System of Feng Shui Cosmology**

The Korean Feng Shui cosmology is divided into two paradigms, as explained by Chang Jo Choi. The first is 'the sensing paradigm of Chi sensitivity', which can be used to explain how the Chi in the land can relate to human affairs. The second is 'an empirical and scientific logic system', which arises specifically from human experience and wisdom referring to the earth.<sup>366</sup> Out of these ideas, a few basic principles of Chiology, which reflect the natural ecological awareness, will be discussed in connection with Christian theology. The cosmology of Korean Feng Shui and Christian theology share many similarities in their ways of describing and experiencing Chi as the divine spirit. The comparison will draw a picture of how an eco-feminist model of the Divine that is based on Korean Feng Shui cosmology can be placed within the contexts of Christian tradition. A more detailed comparison between the two appears in the third section of this chapter.

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<sup>366</sup> 'DongGigameungron', 'SojuGilhyungron', and 'Hyunggukron' belong to the theory of 'The Recognition Paradigm of Chi Sensitivity'. 'Ganyongbup', 'Jangpungbup', 'Duksubup', 'Junghyulbup', and 'Joahyangron' are features of the 'Empirical Scientific Logic System'. Chang Jo Choi, *The Construction of a New Theory of Korean Feng Shui*, 38.

## 1. DongGigameungron (同氣感應論): The Theory of Sensing the Same Chi

DongGigameungron, or 'the theory of sensing the same Chi', holds that bits of the same kind of Chi are intuitively sensitive to one another. DongGigameungron is a critical component of Korean Feng Shui properties, because Chi connects every physical thing. Once the Chi of humanity is connected with the web of Chi—where heaven, land, and everything encounters every other thing—human beings can tap into the power of life.<sup>367</sup> Above all, in Korean Feng Shui, the land (earth) is considered as a place that Chi is aggregated and condensed - and Chi plays a role in the growth and development of all things. Therefore, sensing the Chi of land is important.<sup>368</sup> For example, when a house is built on the ground, the Chi of the earth is flowing underneath and the householder benefits from it. In this sense, Feng Shui has a lively interest in places where Chi flows undiluted. The theory also holds that Chi qualities are basically the same between dead ancestors and living descendants, so that all members of one family tree will enjoy the same Chi qualities.<sup>369</sup> Therefore, the fortunes of ancestors are connected to descendants' fortunes.

DongGigameungron thinking is in line with the passages of the Bible that states all creatures are family - brothers and sisters - in the Spirit of God. For example, 'I am the vine, you are the branches...' (John 15:5), and, 'to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfillment—to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ' (Eph 1:10). God's Spirit that dwells in the universe also dwells within our lives. Therefore, it is essential that each human being intuitively

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<sup>367</sup> Ibid., 40.

<sup>368</sup> Jung Bae Lee, 'Korean FengShui and Ecology', 25.

<sup>369</sup> Chang Jo Choi, *The Construction of a New Theory of Korean Feng Shui by Chang Jo Choi*, 43-44.

senses the Holy Spirit, and affirms it in all things in order to receive full vitality from God. In this way, DongGigameungron tells that spirit as the power of life is not limited to any particular mode of appearance. The spirit is manifested in an infinite variety of forms and styles. God's presence is not limited, because Chi as spirit and wind is present in all things, living and nonliving.<sup>370</sup>

## **2. SojuGilhyungron (所主吉凶論)**

SojuGilhyungron is one of the principles of Korean Feng Shui, which emphasizes radical and thorough ethics. Specifically, this theory holds that if humans do not cultivate virtues then they will never get to a good place (land) i.e. it teaches that only good people will be endowed with good land. This suggests a deeper meaning, namely, the ethical idea found in Korean Feng Shui that the Chi in human beings who do not strive after virtue cannot be reconciled with the Chi of the universe. This is eventually of special importance because the ethics of the relationship between human beings and nature should be grounded in the universal principles of life.<sup>371</sup>

SojuGilhyungron, the theory of landowners' good or ill luck, reminds us of certain Bible phrases found in the Sermon on the Mount, for example, 'The meek person shall receive land' (Matthew 5: 5). The 'meek person' here in the Bible corresponds to the SojuGilhyungron view of people who honor and respect the mutual relationship between human beings and nature. These meek people can draw vital Chi energy from the universe, and can then be endowed with land.

Therefore, the principle of life in the universe adjures mutual respect and ethicality.

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<sup>370</sup> Jung Yong Lee, *The Theology of Change: A Christian Concept of God in an Eastern Perspective* (New York: Orbis Books, 1979), 108.

<sup>371</sup> Se Chang Oh, 'A Study on Pungsu Thoughts from the Viewpoint of Environmental Geography'. *Journal of Social Sciences Research* 4, 2 (1997): 381. See Jung Bae Lee, *Resubjectification of Eco-feminism and Christianity* (Seoul: Dongyun Publishing, 2010), 69.

This idea of modesty in the principle of SojuGilhyunron in Korean Feng Shui serves as a warning to human beings against the kind of greedy domination of nature that has led to the current ecological crisis.

### 3. HyungGukron (形局論)

HyungGukron refers to the landscape, and understands the land as a complexity of people, animals, and plants. The various appearances of natural scenery seem to have their own unique inherent strength or vital force. Under this premise that the appearance of natural scenery must correspond with its own inherent vital force, that force refers to the specific shape and appearance of each natural scene.<sup>372</sup> For example, 'land that is spruced up by Hibiscus syriacus Oknyo', 'the land of Drake's ascension', and so on—such phrases refer to land that is metaphorically expressed as a living organism. Therefore, HyungGukron grants that all landscapes have real life, and that they bring the earth to life. In Korean Feng Shui, there is no land without special significance; each area of land resonates with life. Every mountain and village, as seen through the Korean Feng Shui eyes of HyungGukron, has associations with a particular landscape.<sup>373</sup>

The appearance and the situation of various lands and mountains are as diverse as the appearance of persons. For those reasons, HyungGukron uses metaphorical language to describe the specific Chi of each individual land. These metaphors show that the landscapes are not expressed simply by their inherent vital forces and Chi, but by metaphors that encompass the cultural spirit of the people of the time. In this sense, a piece of land is not just land, but a land that has

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<sup>372</sup> Chang Jo Choi, *The Construction of a New Theory of Korean Feng Shui*, 48.

<sup>373</sup> Je He Lim, 'Ecological Understandings of Feng Shui and the Korean Outlook on Nature', in, *Korean Folklore*, Vol. 9, (1997): 60.

great significance as another cosmos representing the spirit of the nation. Therefore, the metaphoric expressions of the land in Korean Feng Shui's HyungGukron lie in the same line of expressing God metaphorically, as God should be understood contextually from a particular time setting. Thinking in these terms of HyungGukron parallels with Christian spirituality in that the image of God is embedded deep inside the images of all Creation, and that every creature is understood to be a word of God, and a record of God.<sup>374</sup> It shows God is manifested in nature, and rules that nature as the wind that God created. Chi (Wind) is the invisible force of God's spirit, which controls the destiny of the natural world. HungGukron tells of the inner presence of God in all things, the vital force that makes all things sustain their life.

#### **4. GanYongbup (看龍法)**

In Korean Feng Shui, an auspicious site needs a good compatible mountain where the vital energy of Chi flows, so a well-suited mountain is considered to be important to the neighboring land. Mountains are reminiscent of the movement of a dragon, so classically harmonious configurations of land are seen as being shaped like dragons – and Chi is seen as flowing to the ground.<sup>375</sup> GanYongbup means to find and receive the essential Chi pulse, which flows from a wide range of areas; the pulse flows from mountains by following the contours of the surrounding area with highly tuned intuitive impressions.<sup>376</sup> Concatenate mountains are living things and are interconnected with each other, so they appear to be the segments of one auspicious dragon. This auspicious dragon has vitality in it that is lent to all living

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<sup>374</sup> Matthew Fox, *Meditations with Meister Eckhart* (Rochester, Vermont: Bear and Company, 1983)

14. See Eun Jae Lee, *Korean Christian Collection of Writings*, Vol.30, 392.

<sup>375</sup> Chang Jo Choi, *The Construction of a New Theory of Korean Feng Shui*, 49-51.

<sup>376</sup> Jong Geun Lee and Young Ju Choi, *The Principles of Korean Feng Shui* (Seoul: DongHak Sa Publishing, 2009), 89.

things in its vicinity; it sustains the whole life of the place. In this view, mountains remain alive only when they are in harmony with the individual lives in the vicinity.

GanYongbup, according to Korean Feng Shui, is a way of viewing the ecological environment, of seeing that all living things should be in harmony with all others because they are all connected and need one another to sustain life.<sup>377</sup>

Viewed through the eyes of GanYongbup, all living things are connected with each other in the organic web of the ecosystem. This point of view shares the same cosmological outlook on nature as eco-feminism.

As we have seen, the basic principles and logical speculation that structure Korean Feng Shui embrace ecological and organic thinking. In this way, the spirituality of Korean Feng Shui shares many of the same ideological views of eco-feminist theology, and Christian tradition. The following section will further examine thoughts and reasons in Korean Feng Shui, through 'the idea of ChunJiln, Heaven-Land (earth) - Humanity'.

#### **D. The Understanding of Heaven, Land (Earth), and Humanity from the Idea of 'ChunJiln' in Feng Shui Cosmology**

'ChunJiln (天地人)' is a Samjae (trigram) expressing the tripartite idea of 'Heaven-Land (earth) - Humanity. This is the basis of Korean Feng Shui, with Heaven, Land (earth), and Humanity described as a horizontal spatial structure of the universe, and expressed in a logical diagrammatic depiction.<sup>378</sup> The character for 'Chun' depicts the condition of the Heaven; 'Ji' describes the condition of the Land, (earth) and nature; and 'In' explicates the condition of Humanity in between the two. The

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<sup>377</sup> Je He Lim, 'Ecological Understandings of Feng Shui and the Korean Outlook on Nature', in, *Korean Folklore*, Vol. 9, (1997): 55.

<sup>378</sup> Jae Kuk Song, *IChing Expository*, 129. See Sin Whan Kwak, *The Understanding of IChing: The Outlook on the Nature and Humanity of IChing*, (Seoul: Suh Kwang Sa Publishing, 1990), 307.

three are supposed to ideally remain balanced in a harmonious universe, through mutual interplay. In this sense, these three elements— Heaven- Land (earth) - Humanity —are considered to be building blocks in understanding the essence of Korean Feng Shui theory.

\_\_\_\_\_ Chun (天, Heaven, Sky)  
\_\_\_\_\_ In (人, Humanity)  
\_\_\_\_\_ Ji (地, Land, Earth, Nature)

ChunJiln (天地人)

### 1. Chun (天 Heaven): Divinity, and Religious Scope

In IChing, the foundation of Korean Feng Shui cosmology, Heaven (Chun) is thought to be the most powerful influence (the Most High) for sustaining human life. As every phenomenon occurring in heaven was believed to influence peoples' lives, people came to understand the Heaven as a volitional entity. Human interest in heaven reflects a concern for divinity. The area of human interest in divine existence is almost universally a category of religion. Therefore, the top part of Samjae (trigram), which symbolizes heaven, the residing place of God, also represents the realm of religion.<sup>379</sup> It is therefore through its ideas about Chun that we will discover what Korean Feng Shui has to say about religion.

East Asian cosmology holds that there must be an Ultimate Reality behind all nature, which bonds all things together. The Ultimate Reality is a complete, all-embracing whole— it is one thing. Eastern philosophers in general think of Heaven as 'Tao,' (in the original cosmological sense of the word, meaning the Ultimate Reality that cannot be specified and defined). Furthermore, Tao is identified with

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<sup>379</sup> Jae Kuk Song, *IChing Expository*, 129- 131.



‘God’.<sup>380</sup> In IChing, Chi is essential for the creation of the universe, which began with the harmonious interaction between the Chi of Heaven and of Land (earth).

The Feng Shui Scripture, Myung San Ron, describes the creation of the universe:

‘In the beginning, there was a chaos and all things were tangled, and there were not any divisions. Separation took place in the process of change from chaos to order...’<sup>381</sup>

To put it more concretely, the East Asian principle of creation is as follows: In the beginning there was chaos - the state before the split of yin and yang – which later also became known as the Great Void, the Ultimate, or the absolute, or Non-existence, Nothingness, and Emptiness. Polarization was an important component of the change from chaos to order. Chi (also known as wind or breath) is the movement of yin and yang, which acts through condensation and dispersion just as the Creator inspires the Holy Spirit for life. Chi aids both creation and transformation.<sup>382</sup>

The cosmogony story in IChing, which is based on ‘Chi’ and the ‘Five Elements’, has familiar themes that are also found in the narratives of Genesis in the Hebrew Scriptures, for example in passages such as ‘Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness ....’ (Genesis 1: 2). The creation from the void (emptiness/formlessness) in Hebrew Scripture suggests that the universe ultimately originated from the absolute sovereignty and power of God.<sup>383</sup> The basic

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<sup>380</sup> Chuang Tzu, trans: James Legge, arranged by Clae Waltham (New York: Ace Books, 1971), 22, quoted in Fritjof Capra, *The Tao of Physics: An Exploration of the Parallels between Modern Physics and Eastern Mysticism*. Trans: Yung Jung Kim, Sung Bum Lee, (Seoul: Bum Yang Sa Publishing), 141.

<sup>381</sup> Hwa Lee, *What is the Definition of Feng Shui?* 71.

<sup>382</sup> Jung Yong Lee, *The Trinity in Asian Perspective* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1996), 24-25.

<sup>383</sup> Feminist theologians have been highly critical of this biblical interpretation, which holds that Genesis promulgates a doctrine of *creation ex nihilo* - ‘Creation from nothing’—because it appears to have reinforced a monarchical model of God, which has dominated humanity and nature. See Mi Hyun Jung, ‘How do I Understand the Bart’s Theology as a Korean Feminist theologian?’, in *Bible, Women, Theology* (Korean Institute of Theology, 2005) 268.

element of cosmology in East Asians shares the similar scene at the moment of creation in Hebrew Scripture.<sup>384</sup>

### **a) Religious Meaning of the Land, which has Female Attributes in Feng Shui**

The understanding of Chun (heaven or sky) encompasses the religious scope of all Feng Shui ideas. Korean Feng Shui, which is grounded in the East Asian cosmology of IChing, subscribes to a doctrine of geopiety,<sup>385</sup> and signifies religiosity through the ethos of Mother-Land, or *Jimo*. In the original cosmology, Heaven denotes yang and Land(earth) denotes yin; however, they are referred to as yin and yang, not yang and yin, to indicate that the Land is regarded as highly as the Heaven. Furthermore, Korean Feng Shui has been shaped from ancient East Asian spiritual ideas, namely that Land is the foundation of all things, and that the Land is a mother. The Land signifies feminine creation and birth, and awakens the sense of geopiety.<sup>386</sup>

Geopiety expresses that Land has a great spiritual and mysterious meaning constantly unfolding within and through it. Yi-Fu Tuan, who is a Chinese-born American anthropologist, defines Feng Shui as the sacred and essential character

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<sup>384</sup> In the beginning, there was chaos in which the elements of the universe were still undivided, the state before the division of yin and yang. Chaos, which was the first stage of the creation of the universe was later replaced by the Great Void, the Absolute. The dual power, which is light or heavy arose from the chaos is the instigator of all changes as change is regarded as expression of the duality. The two components of this dual power were designated as yin and yang. Thus, this bipolarity of yin and yang is generated in the process of change from chaos to order. The Yellow Emperor, legendary Chinese emperor said "The principle of Ying and Yang is the foundation of the entire universe. It underlies everything in creation. It is the root and source of life and death." Ilza Veith, *The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine* (Berkeley: University of California Press 2002), 13.

<sup>385</sup> 'Geopiety' was a term coined by the American geographer John Kirtland Wright. Etymologically 'geopiety' comes from the Greek root *geo* (earth) and the Latin root 'pietas' (piety). Wright explains that 'geopiety' refers to 'emotional piety aroused by awareness of terrestrial diversity, of the kind of which geography is also a form of awareness'. John Kirtland Wright, *Human Nature in Geography: Fourteen Papers, 1925-1965*. (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1966), 251. According to Gertjan Dijkink, geopiety is a term for 'the belief and worship of powers behind nature or the human environment'. See Gertjan Dijkink, 'When Geopolitics and Religion Fuse: A Historical Perspective', in, *Geopolitics* 11, (2006), 194.

<sup>386</sup> Jung Bae Lee, 'Korean Feng Shui and Ecology', 24.

of seeking an auspicious spot, soul, and root of power.<sup>387</sup> He maintains that it is a sense of geopieté that expresses the feeling of solidarity with this Land. This sense of geopieté reflects the human respect and belief in a fatherly Heaven(sky) and a motherly Land (earth). Heaven in general has been a cult-figure, but it has been understood that it is the land that supports and sustains human life. In ancient agrarian societies, humans were more affected by the Land;<sup>388</sup> accordingly, geopieté became the expression of the human religious instinct and spiritual ideas about Land. Andrew L. March also investigates Feng Shui with Western approaches, and defines it as an integral experience of certain meanings. He sees Feng Shui as a way of relating to landscapes and sites as manifestations of the natural world with psychic concerns. He writes there are sub-contextual messages of holistic truth that Feng Shui dictates be found in natural world, and that, accordingly, implicit reverence for the Land is a key attribute in Feng Shui.<sup>389</sup>

This spiritual perspective on the Land found in Korean Feng Shui is connected to the idea that the Land is a living organism, and also a mother. Land is therefore a symbol of a mother's warm breast, and evokes feelings of nostalgia for the security of being cared for like a baby. The Land is also like a mother's womb, an envelope that sustains life. And finally, it is a place to which the human body eventually returns.<sup>390</sup> So children like to play with dirt because earth is the skin and warm breast of their mother for which they continue to long. Land is truly a mother's breath, a source of vitality.<sup>391</sup>

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<sup>387</sup> Hwa Lee, *What is the Definition of Feng Shui?*, 25.

<sup>388</sup> Chang Jo Choi, *Korean Fung Shui Ideas* (Seoul: Min Eum Sa Publishing, 1984), 27-28.

<sup>389</sup> Andrew L. March, 'An Appreciation of Chinese Geomancy', in, *Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 27, (1968): 253-267, quoted in Ole Bruun, *Feng Shui in China: Geomantic Divination Between State Orthodoxy and Popular Religion* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2003), 235.

<sup>390</sup> Se Chang Oh, 'Geocological Study on Feng Shui', 387-88.

<sup>391</sup> Chang Jo Choi, *Korean Feng Shui Ideas*, 13-14. See Chang Jo Choi, *Korean Indigenous Feng*

In Korean Feng Shui, therefore, an auspicious spot is associated with the uterus, reflecting the cyclical ontology within an agricultural culture - that is, the process of humans instinctively returning to the place from which they were born. Consequently, Korean Feng Shui has been regarded as a fertility-cult that secures human immortality through Land.<sup>392</sup> In this sense, Koreans traditionally devoted rituals to the god of the earth or the mountain god because they believed *Jimosin* (the god of Mother-Land) and its spirits resided and was embedded in the Land (earth).<sup>393</sup> In particular, the concepts of religious and spiritual instinct, and of femininity of Land, are well expressed in the Korean school of Dosun Feng Shui that has also been called Bibo Feng Shui.<sup>394</sup> In the Bibo school of Feng Shui, the Land is regarded as a living mother's body, so if there is something wrong with the Mother-Land (i.e. the body is sick), it should be corrected (treated and healed). As the Land is regarded as a mother's body, the Land has spots suitable for acupuncture as a human body would do, but the instruments of healing are religiously significant buildings, rather than needles. Thus, according to Bibo Feng Shui, people should build a temple or tower at the 'sick' place of the Land.<sup>395</sup>

The Bibo school of Feng Shui has a basic notion that human beings should conceive affection towards the Mother-Land, and all living things in the universe. Further, Bibo Feng Shui implies that any behaviors breaking the harmony and balance of nature – such as threatening individual lives or the ecosystem, and making nature 'sick' - are worthy of sanction by the divinity who controls nature. Je

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*Shui 1*, 480.

<sup>392</sup> Jung Bae Lee, 'Korean Feng Shui and Ecology', 32.

<sup>393</sup> Je He Lim, *Ecological Understandings of Feng Shui*, 34.

<sup>394</sup> According to Chang Jo Choi, the essence of Korean Dosun Feng Shui is a love of land and humanity, and this particular philosophy seeks healing through love. Chang Jo Choi, *Korean Indigenous Feng Shui 1*, 185.

<sup>395</sup> *Ibid.*, 184-5.

He Lim's idea of 'Chun Myung Suh,' supports this idea, holding that harming nature is a terrible trespass, and good cannot come to humans who do evil to their environment: Instead, God wreaks havoc upon them.<sup>396</sup> Therefore, Bibo Feng Shui expects human beings to respect the virtue of the Mother-Land.

Overall, adherents of Korean Feng Shui do not seek divinity through any logical creed or ideology. Rather, they understand the divinity within Creation through the cosmological notion and religious rituals of returning to a maternal matrix. This perspective was shaped in an agrarian setting where respect for the land was paramount. More specifically, Ole Bruun, an eminent European Feng Shui scholar, observed that there is only a vague link between religious creed and individual belief in East Asia.<sup>397</sup> East Asians are in fact, when they speak about gods, including the religious tenets of impersonal power; they do not tend to keep 'religion' and cosmologic thinking completely separate. In other words, there is no distinction in the realm of Feng Shui thoughts between personal and impersonal divinity – between God, Heaven, and Land, for example.<sup>398</sup> In this way Korean Feng Shui is able to speak of God in a holistic way as Divine presence within the universe. Bruun says that it would thus be appropriate to call Feng Shui a 'popular cosmology', rather than a popular religion.<sup>399</sup> Hong Ki Yoon, a geographer born in Korea, has also proposed that Korean Feng Shui holds a particularly spiritual attitude toward nature, or indeed a spiritual geomentality. He has proposed the geomentality theory that human beings have an inborn and intuitive knowledge about the environment - an instinctive response to nature. He coined the term

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<sup>396</sup> Je He Lim, *Ecological Understandings of Feng Shui*, 84.

<sup>397</sup> Ole Bruun, *An Introduction to Feng Shui* (United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 77.

<sup>398</sup> *Ibid.*, 77. See Jung Yong Lee, *The Theology of Change: A Christian Concept of God in an Eastern Perspective*, 65.

<sup>399</sup> Bruun, *An Introduction to Feng Shui*, 77-78.

'geomentality' to refer to this human mental contact with nature.<sup>400</sup> On this basis, I claim that Korean Feng Shui speaks to Koreans' strong subconscious mind, and to their ethos and psyche regarding land, which is instinctively and intuitively attentive. The land better serves this purpose than the formal creed of religions. Koreans in Feng Shui instinctively turn to the Land, where they were born, and where they used to nestle in a warm motherly breast.

## **2. Ji (地, Land, Earth, Nature): The Feng Shui understanding of Land and Nature**

'Ji' (地 land, earth, nature), which is located at the bottom of the Trigram of 'the idea of Heaven- Land (earth) - Humanity' (天地人), refers to land and natural environment. The notion of 'Ji' in Korean Feng Shui is that of respect and reverence for nature, and also represents an instinct to protect nature.

The notion of nature in Korean Feng Shui is very well described in IChing, in the Trigram relationship. This depicts how the cosmos and humanity move according to natural law. In the Korean Feng Shui perspective, the Heaven is not in a dominant position in relation to the Land (earth), but the Land (earth) is subject to the absolute law of nature with respect to the Heaven. The Land (earth) does not control the human; instead the human is compliant with the laws of nature respecting the Land (earth). In addition, humanity is considered to be a mediator between Heaven and Land (earth), and eventually a consummator. Taken overall, this is the Korean Feng Shui perspective that nature follows its own laws according

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<sup>400</sup> Hong Ki Yoon, *The Mind of Land* (Seoul: Science Books, 2011), 11.

to its own will, and that therefore it cannot be manipulated and dominated by humanity.<sup>401</sup>

From the perspective of Korean Feng Shui, nature is a mysterious and magical force. Korean Feng Shui views the Land (earth) as an epicenter from which flows the vital energy, Chi, to all the physical world. An auspicious site on the Land (earth) is one where Chi is concentrated, and it is mysterious, and magical. In this sense, building a house in an auspicious location means that the house benefits from the concentration of vital Chi energy at its foundation.<sup>402</sup> From these tenets of Korean Feng Shui, it follows that we are not supposed to destroy mountains, valleys, rivers, or the earth because to do so would cut off the flow of blood - the vital pulse of nature.<sup>403</sup>

Korean Feng Shui, which holds in high regard Chi (which in turn determines the quality of the earth), also makes much of wind and water because they affect the flow of Chi in the Land (earth). In Korean Feng Shui, the shape of Land, mountains, and rivers are the products of the creative forces of the 'winds and waters', which affect the flow of Chi.<sup>404</sup> For this reason, wind is essential to a good harvest (which, of course, is essential for healthy life). Hot springs and rivers sustain life and prevent drought.<sup>405</sup> Therefore, Feng Shui, in the literal 'wind and water' sense of the word, interprets the influence of natural forces on human life.

Hong Ki Yoon, who defined Korean Feng Shui as 'geomentality', speaks of Feng Shui as 'an alternative wisdom, created by the instinctive feel for the

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<sup>401</sup> Sang Sung Lee, *Ecological Theory*, 261-264.

<sup>402</sup> Hong Ki Yoon, *The Mind of Land*, 114-116.

<sup>403</sup> Je He Lim, *Ecological Understandings of Feng Shui*, 53, 79.

<sup>404</sup> *Ibid.*, 47. See also Hong Ki Yoon, *The Mind of Land*, 56.

<sup>405</sup> Eva Wong, *Feng Shui: The Ancient Wisdom of Harmonious Living for Modern Times* (Boston: Shambhala Publication, Inc, 1996), 13.

environment of the ancient Chinese'.<sup>406</sup> He argues that geomentality is based on Korean Feng Shui, which is the spiritual attitude toward nature (land). In this way, Korean Feng Shui - which relies on highly innate senses, intuition, and traditional knowledge - views nature as a living organism. Feng Shui is about wholeness, not individual parts, and views everything living in the physical world as part of one whole organism. Mountains, land, flowers, trees, and rocks are all part of one living organism, in which creative changes are constantly occurring. Nature continually sustains itself by controlling the cycles of formation and decline within the principles of yin and yang, Chi, and the Five Elements. The Feng Shui principle of the cyclic processes of nature overlaps with ideas in the Creation and life-cycle narratives in Genesis.

Above all, Korean Feng Shui's outlook on nature seeks harmony and balance in all things through Chi, yin and yang, and the Five Elements.<sup>407</sup> A site is considered auspicious when it is a place where the vital energy called Chi flows in a manner such that earth and water is blended harmoniously. So Korean Feng Shui seeks ways of creating a harmonious blending between humanity and nature, which is supportive of human life.<sup>408</sup> Harmonious thinking in Korean Feng Shui is based upon the cosmological idea that human beings share a common destiny with nature. This idea rejects Western dualism, which treats nature as a subject of exploitation. Korean Feng Shui sees nature and humanity as one, sharing a common destiny; humanity does not (or should not) dominate nature.<sup>409</sup>

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<sup>406</sup> Ole Bruun, *An Introduction to Feng Shui*, 96-7.

<sup>407</sup> Ji Ha Kim, 'Feng Shui Thoughts and a Keen Interest on Environment', in, Se Chang Oh, 'A Study on Pungsu Thoughts from the Viewpoint of Environmental Geography', 379.

<sup>408</sup> Se Chang Oh, 'A Study on Pungsu Thoughts from the Viewpoint of Environmental Geography', 377-9.

<sup>409</sup> Mong Il Lee, 'The Outlook on Nature and Humanity of Feng Shui', *The Development of Korea*, (1993, Spring): 134-137.



Feng Shui thought on nature is basically the same as the Asian idea of 'sintoburi' (身土不二) – which stipulates that body (humanity) and the Land (nature), are one and not two.<sup>410</sup> Perception of the nature of Korean Feng Shui that is based on Asian perspectives reveals the indelible link between the human heart and nature. In particular, the word 'buri' in 'Sintoburi' indicates that the Land (Nature) and human beings are 'one and the same', or 'they are not different from each other, and Land (Nature) and human cannot be two'. The 'sintoburi' implicates a unique Asian cosmology by using the word 'buri' (it is not two, 不二), which encodes the relationship between Land (Nature) and humanity, and also moves beyond the relationship between them to reveal that they are simply the same; metaphysical speculation exposes that they are one, and not two. The outlook on nature found in Korean Feng Shui parallels that of eco-feminism in many ways, especially in terms of seeing nature as a living organism, and seeking ways of harmonizing human life with nature. Both perspectives on nature offer a way of understanding how nature and humanity can create harmonious unity.<sup>411</sup> Also, both concentrate on ethical human behaviors toward nature as necessary for a mutual relationship of co-existence.

The Feng Shui understanding of nature will be the foundation for the proposed ecological model in my dissertation. This model has the potential to create a system of belief that liberates nature from abuse. In a world that is in ecological crisis, where human beings regularly abuse nature, Feng Shui's outlook provides a much-needed antidote by drawing our attention to harmony, balance, interdependence, and an ethical relationship between nature and humanity.

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<sup>410</sup> Se Chang Oh, 'A Study on Pungsu Thoughts from the Viewpoint of Environmental Geography', 388-9.

<sup>411</sup> Sang Sung Lee, 'Ecological Theory', 259.

### 3. In (人, Humanity): The Feng Shui understanding of Human Beings

In the trigram of IChing, Chun (天)—meaning both Heaven and yang—is associated with father, whereas Ji (地)—meaning Land, nature, and yin—is associated with mother. The product of the two—their children—is Humanity, as In (Humanity) is found at the middle of the trigram.<sup>412</sup> As a result, it is natural that the Chi of Human beings includes the Chi of the Heaven and the Land.<sup>413</sup> A scholar of the Song Dynasty, who was a renowned Chi philosopher, wrote in *Seorok*, ‘I call earth my mother, heaven my father, and the seed of my life grew from them .... I am living interconnected to all living beings’.<sup>414</sup>

In the interconnected and dynamic flow of the universe, humans are continually supported by the Chi that nourishes them. In other words, they do not thrive alone, but receive help from the Chi of the Heaven and the Chi of the Land. In this way, according to the natural law of the universe, human life is enriched by all the Chi within it. From the Chi of the Heaven, Land, and Humanity are endowed with the unique Chi of human nature, which makes human beings different from all other things in the universe.<sup>415</sup> Because human beings are subject to the physical world, they do not own it, but rather are essential components of that world. Humans are supposed to embody morality; this is what makes them unique. Furthermore, moral recognition comes from the realization that there are many factors, which make human life unpredictable. Eventually, this realization that life is unpredictable plays a crucial role in encouraging a strong moral awareness and

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<sup>412</sup> Jae Kuk Song, *IChing Expository*, 144.

<sup>413</sup> *Ibid.*, 245.

<sup>414</sup> Se Chang Oh, ‘A Study on Pungsu Thoughts from the Viewpoint of Environmental Geography’, 379.

<sup>415</sup> Jae Kuk Song, *IChing Expository*, 146.

awakening.<sup>416</sup> In other words, the constant change of natural phenomena inspires human beings to have moral awakenings, which leads to oneness, and unity of Samjae (the three materials of Heaven, Land, Humanity). This is because Korean Feng Shui tells of the mysterious workings of natural forces, of which wind and water are only the physical aspects. Such forces are believed to be responsible for determining human life and destiny in general. Therefore, Human beings are obligated to behave ethically toward the Heaven and Land (earth), as they have brought humans to recognize human morality. This concept knits Heaven-Land (earth)-Humanity together perfectly; ethical and moral awakenings of human beings have made them realize that the universe is cosmologically integrated as one organic whole, and that humans, as representing microcosmoi, are an integral part of creation.<sup>417</sup>

From this cosmological thinking, Heaven- Land (earth) comprises the cosmos, and the human body is regarded as a microcosmos. In Korean Feng Shui, the human body functions on a meridian system. That meridian system circulates Chi, and blood, and maintains life as an organic whole. The human body is of course just a micro-cosmos, and therefore mirrors the structure of the whole universe. The Heaven witnesses the movements of heavenly bodies, which are parallel to the meridians in human bodies.<sup>418</sup> In this sense, if the flow of Chi between yin and yang in the human body is blocked, the two become out of

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<sup>416</sup> Bok Kwan Suh, Il Whan Yu, trans: *Chinese History of Religious Discourse* (Eulyu MuWha Sa Publishing, 1995)

<sup>417</sup> Jin Kun Kim, *The Logic of Eastern Philosophy from IChing: The Fundamental Principle of IChing* (Seoul: The Philosophy and the Reality Publishing Co. 2004), 220.

<sup>418</sup> Se Chang Oh, 'A Study on Pungsu Thoughts from the Viewpoint of Environmental Geography', 380.

balance, and the body gets sick. The disease is healed by stimulating the flow of Chi.<sup>419</sup>

Human beings are one of the components of the universe, along with the Heaven and the Land, which are supported by yin and yang and Chi. Humans are born on the Land, and finally return to Mother Earth. Human beings are constantly connected with the Land, and eventually become parts of the Land.<sup>420</sup> In other words, in Korean Feng Shui, it is believed that all parts of the natural world—rocks, mountains, and trees—are endowed with life. Furthermore, virtuous people live an eternal life in the shape of natural objects such as rocks, mountains, and trees, and do not suffer extinction. In this sense, natural objects such as mountains and rocks are reminders that human beings can be reborn as inanimate objects.<sup>421</sup> This idea that human beings can be reborn as inanimate natural objects is a reminder that things in the physical world do not perish in Korean Feng Shui, they simply change their physical form as they pass through cycles of life in yin and yang, the Five Elements, and Chi.

In Korean Feng Shui, humans do not rule nature, nor are they subordinate to it. Positioned between Heaven and Land (earth), Human beings help to bring together all things into one organism within one Chi—the universal life force. Human identity is therefore indelibly associated with the universe. For that reason, humans need to expand the horizons of human morality and ethical consciousness through an awareness that their identity is part of the universe. Humans have a moral and ethical obligation within the universe to strive towards an integrated,

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<sup>419</sup> Fritjof Capra, *The Physics of Tao*, 146.

<sup>420</sup> Se Chang Oh, 'A Study on Pungsu Thoughts from the Viewpoint of Environmental Geography', 392.

<sup>421</sup> Je He Lim, *Ecological Understandings of Feng Shui*, 66.

community-centered life. After all, Korean Feng Shui tells us that human beings should live together harmoniously with the Land (earth), and integrate themselves into its ecosystems.

But are human beings really aware of themselves as being part of the life of the universe? This dissertation seeks to propose an ecological model from the perspective of Korean Feng Shui that could change our thinking, from a human-centered view (closed Chi between nature and human beings) to an open, cosmos-centric, and community-centered one.

### **E. The Criticism on Feng Shui Cosmology and Yin and Yang Principle**

The Feng Shui cosmology that serves, as the basis of this dissertation is a unique system of thought which is used to assess the natural environment in order to build harmonious human settlement. It is the wisdom of life that has been passed down among East Asians over a long period of time. However, this Feng Shui cosmology is often critically disputed, including criticisms of the concept of yin and yang, which underlies Feng Shui cosmology. This section examines the critical debates surrounding these two concepts.

#### **1. The Criticism on Feng Shui Cosmology**

Feng Shui cosmology emphasizes human intuition rather than empirical theory in terms of determining where Chi is centered, and for reading the nature of the land, and appraising how humans can maintain the right relationship with the land.<sup>422</sup>

Because it emphasizes intuition Feng Shui has been criticized.

The general criticism of Feng Shui cosmology is as follows. Feng Shui systematizes the idea that fortune is closely related to the shape of the land

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<sup>422</sup> Chang Jo Choi, *The Construction of a New Theory of Korean Feng Shui by Chang Jo Choi* (Seoul: Min Eum Sa Publishing, 2014), 28, 36.

through the yin and yang principle and the Five Elements. This has been criticized for being metaphysical rather than rationally logical and also because it has not been examined through scientific evidence in an open and impartial way; it just depends on mainly human intuitive sensibility. Therefore, it is considered distorted or mystified. In other words, the main criticism of Feng Shui is that it is irrational and unscientific. It has been argued that Feng Shui practice tends to have vague notions in terms of its original meaning and of its nature. There is both curiosity and debate surrounding Feng Shui's cosmology, especially regarding the idea that the natural environment entails fixing the fortunes of human beings by assessing the shape of the surrounding environment.<sup>423</sup>

Specifically, DonggiGameungron, which is the sensing of the same Chi in Feng Shui has become the central target of Feng Shui criticism.<sup>424</sup>

DonggiGameungron is one of the most important aspects of Feng Shui in suggesting the Trinity of 'God of Land' model. This is because the dissertation asserts that the three persons in the Trinity of 'God of Land' model are connected to each other in a perichoretic relationship through yin and yang in One Chi (DonggiGameungron). In addition, the ChunJiln idea which serves as the basis of the idea on the 'God of Land' model is also grounded on the idea of DonggiGameungron because it sees Heaven, Humanity, and Land are connected in the web of One Chi. Because this concept serves as such a central point in the dissertation, it is necessary and valuable to examine the criticism of DonggiGameungron.

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<sup>423</sup> Jong Eui Kim, 'The Cosmic Dual Forces and Fortune in Feng Shui', in, *Journal of the Daedong Philosophical Association*, Vol. 50, (2010): 23-25.

<sup>424</sup> Jin Sam Lee, In Ho Cheon, 'Sensing the Same Chi among the Same Family Lineage', in, *The collection of Korean Studies*, Vol. 49, (2012): 380. See Jong Eui Kim, 'The Cosmic Dual Forces and Fortune in Feng Shui', 46.

The basic idea of DonggiGameungron' is that the Chi of ancestors and their descendants are vitally interconnected with one another. That is, when someone dies, it is their children must ensure that their bodies are located in a favorable place that receives good Chi, and as a result that good Chi will recognize and bless the descendants of the deceased. The chief critique is that the DonggiGameungron of Feng Shui falls into the problem of determining the fortunes of human lives. This has become a key critical issue, and has resulted in Feng Shui skeptics hailing it as superstition, before various rational elements of Feng Shui are considered.<sup>425</sup> Critics also take issue with the DonggiGameungron explanation of how the same Chi recognizes the connection between the dead and the living. In other words, the critique is that the DonggiGameungron merely constitutes an abstract concept that dead parents and their descendants receive the same Chi as they did when they joined with the land and felt its Chi qualities.<sup>426</sup>

The earliest scholars also criticize this DonggiGameungron. Wang Chung, one of the earliest scholars with critical views of Feng Shui during the Han period of ancient China, criticized the mysterious elements of DonggiGameungron. His argument was that if a human is born and dies, he returns to nature; therefore, the dead cannot have the same Chi as a living being can have.<sup>427</sup> One of the representative scholars of the Positive School, who studied Western scholarship in the Late Lee Dynasty in Korea, Yak Yong Jeong also had a critical view of the DonggiGameungron. He thought DonggiGameungron ignored the perception of ancestral service based on filial piety. In other words, he criticizes Feng Shui for

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<sup>425</sup> Jong Eui Kim, 'The Cosmic Dual Forces and Fortune in Feng Shui', 41.

<sup>426</sup> Ibid.

<sup>427</sup> Jeong Hae Park, Dong Soo Han, 'An Awareness about Identical-Chi Sympathy Theory of Confucianist in the Joseon Dynasty', in, *Korean Folk Culture*, Vol. 41, (2011): 143.

pursuing only prosperity through the search for that auspicious place where humans can find the right Chi for good fortune, while ignoring the noble spirit of filial piety that wants to place parents in a good place. In other people he believes people following Feng Shui are more concerned with cultivating their own blessings of good Chi rather than serving one's ancestors and giving their parents a proper resting place .<sup>428</sup>

DonggiGameungron, eventually implies that Chi connects every physical thing in an interconnected web of life, where everything is related to every other thing through the cycles of life. In this way it provides one of basic ideas of the Trinity in the model of 'God of Land', which is perichoretic from Feng Shui cosmology, but this has been targeted by critics of DonggiGameungron.

Like them, modern Feng Shui scholars such as Kee Back Lee, Young Joon Choi, Gu Byung Yoon, also criticize the mysteriousness, unscientific-ness, and irrationality of Feng Shui and specially DonggiGameungron.<sup>429</sup> Modern Feng Shui scholar Jung Hae Park points out that understandings of Feng Shui focus on the expectation that humans could be blessed even in the future by putting their ancestor in a good place.<sup>430</sup> However, modern Feng Shui scholar Jong Eui Kim

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<sup>428</sup> Ibid., 144. A critical view of Feng Shui appears in scholars of the Positive School and they highlight both positive and negative aspects of Feng Shui. Most of the scholars criticize the mysterious character of Feng Shui theory that dictates the fortune of human life, although they do not ignore the other idea of Feng Shui, that those people who show filial piety deserve good land. Hence, many scholars have dualistic attitudes that both criticize and accept Feng Shui, depending on the times. Many modern Feng Shui researchers believe that most of the criticism of the Positive School scholars of Feng Shui is not an intrinsic criticism of Feng Shui theory itself, but an expression of antipathy to the social problems of customs and institutions. In other words, most scholars have made progressive claims that they are dissatisfied with the social system and wanted to change the existing framework. Sang Yeoul Bae, *A Study on the Feng Shui View of the Positive School in the Late Joseon Dynasty*, PhD Dissertation, Wonkwang University, 2008, 204. See Chang Jo Choi, *For Better Understanding of The Korean Feng Shui Cosmology* (Min Eum Sa Publishing, 1991), 69. See also Jeong Hae Park, 'Culture: Limitation and Directivity of Identical-Qi Sympathy Theory', *Korean thought and culture*, Vol. 76, (2015): 283-285.

<sup>429</sup> Chang Jo Choi, *Korean Indigenous Feng Shui 1* (Seoul: Min Eum Sa, 2011), 476.

<sup>430</sup> Jeong Hae Park, 'Culture : Limitation and Directivity of Identical-Qi Sympathy Theory', 283.



highlights that the logic and wisdom of the land that Feng Shui inherently holds has been ignored, while the superficial and tricky contents have been emphasized.<sup>431</sup>

### **The Defense on Criticism of Feng Shui Cosmology**

Despite many criticisms on Feng Shui and specially DonggiGameungron, Chang Jo Choi, an eminent Korean Feng Shui scholar, argues that the mystical elements of Feng Shui and DonggiGameungron, related with highly tuned human senses and their intuition, and the knowledge passed down from their teachers and ancestors to assess the natural environment, are positive elements that Western geography does not offer. He maintains that Feng Shui uses human wisdom distinct from Western geography that can only see the land as an object of use and possession, because of the constraints of rationality and function.<sup>432</sup> In addition, on the issue of the extreme criticism of the unscientific and irrational characteristics of Feng Shui and DonggiGameungron, Choi says that all phenomena in the field of natural geography such as topography and climatology cannot be explained perfectly with scientific verification. Therefore, it is said that the logical development process that explains them is often inferential. He argues that any discipline, when its level reaches its limit, is apt to ultimately depend on human imagination for progress, rather than rationality or science.<sup>433</sup>

Although representative Feng Shui scholar Jung Hae Park also points out the unscientific and unreasonable aspects of Feng Shui, he argues that biased criticism of Feng Shui can distort the merits and original features of this cosmology.<sup>434</sup> Park argues that Feng Shui has survived for many centuries even

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<sup>431</sup> Jong Eui Kim, 'The Cosmic Dual Forces and Fortune in Feng Shui', 25.

<sup>432</sup> Chang Jo Choi, *Korean Indigenous Feng Shui 1*, 477.

<sup>433</sup> Ibid., 474-5.

<sup>434</sup> Jeong Hae Park, Dong Soo Han, 'An Awareness about Identical-Chi Sympathy Theory of Confucianist in the Joseon Dynasty', 146.

despite such criticism because it has maintained logic in its own way.<sup>435</sup> In addition, regarding critical viewpoints arguing that DonggiGameungron is unscientific, Park points out that various efforts have been made to impart objectivity to DonggiGameungron through scientific experiments and statistical data.<sup>436</sup>

This dissertation also tackles the criticism that DonggiGameungron is unscientific by discussing the worldviews of contemporary physics and the quantum physics of modern science, which is filled with ideas of subtle, strong energy active in a unified universe where all parts of the universe interact with one another.<sup>437</sup> Thus I argue DonggiGameungron can be explained in a profoundly harmonious way by thinking that moves between the worldview of the physics of the west and the worldview of oriental mysticism. Feng Shui scholar Heung ki Yoon also emphasizes that it is important to correct the perception of Feng Shui by correcting the essence of Feng Shui academically, rather than marginalizing Feng Shui by considering it as an unscientific and irrational superstition.<sup>438</sup>

Despite continuing controversies about Feng Shui and specially DonggiGameungron, it remains true that Feng Shui is deeply rooted in Asian geographical thought and still captures the hearts of East Asians, and thus should be taken seriously. The following section examines some critics of the yin-yang principle, which is a fundamental idea of Feng Shui cosmology and also serves as the basis of the 'God of Land' model in this dissertation

## **2. The Critical Debate on Yin and Yang Principle**

Yin and yang principle, which underlies Feng Shui cosmology, also has some

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<sup>435</sup> Ibid., 158.

<sup>436</sup> Jeong Hae Park, 'Culture : Limitation and Directivity of Identical-Qi Sympathy Theory', 263- 264.

<sup>437</sup> William Amtz. Mark Vicente. Betsy Chasse, *What the Bleep Do You Know*, trans. In Jae Park (Tree of Wisdom Publishing, 2010), 88-89. See Fritjof Capra, *The Tao of Physics*, trans. Yong Jung Kim and Sung Bum Lee (BumYangsa, 2010), 21.

<sup>438</sup> Hong Ki Yoon, *The Mind of Land* (Seoul: Science Books, 2011), 99.

aspects that provoke critique from those and view the yin and yang principle as unscientific and as an abstract concept with an ambiguous meaning.<sup>439</sup>

Additionally, yin and yang has been seen as a basis for gender discrimination as a result of centuries of Confucian interpretation of the principle. This section, in particular, focuses on the criticism of yin and yang and what the yin and yang principle means for women and feminism in terms of women's discrimination, even though yin and yang is not essentially about gender.<sup>440</sup> Therefore, the section examines an interpretation of the yin and yang principle that supports discrimination against women, as well as its critics, and then examines how Asian modern philosophers are interpreting yin and yang texts that have been used for gender discrimination.<sup>441</sup>

In Asian society, women's discrimination has been manifest throughout most of Confucian culture. The IChing in particular it is important to note, may be considered as the root of gender discrimination.<sup>442</sup> In the yin and yang principle from the IChing, the idea of men's predominance over women has evolved and later become evident, and it was commonly appropriated as an ideological tool for supporting the oppression of women. It was also responsible for promoting socially discriminative attitudes towards women based on the yin and yang principle, which

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<sup>439</sup> Jin Oh Lee, 'The Imagination and Creativity of Yin and Yang', in, *Journal of the Daedong Philosophical Association*, Vol. 61, (2012): 479. See Young Joo Kim, 'The Reciprocally Relational Thinking Method and the Critique on the Eastern Yin and Yang Principle', in, *Journal of East Asian Social Thoughts*, Vol.8, (2003): 9.

<sup>440</sup> Lijuan Shen, *Gender in Chinese Philosophy*. <http://www.iep.utm.edu/gender-c/> [accessed January 6, 2017]

<sup>441</sup> It may be difficult to approach classical Chinese philosophy from a different culture or Western view of the question because cross-cultural inquiry into metaphysical questions is challenging. Chenyang Li and Franklin Perkins (eds), *Chinese Metaphysics and Its Problems* (Cambridge University Press, 2015) (Kindle Location 54). Kindle Edition.

<sup>442</sup> Ji Yang Lee, 'Debates Aroused by Feminist View in Classical Literature Studies', in, *National Literature Historical Studies*, (2003): 418. See Wai Ming Ng, 'The I Ching in Late-Choson Thought', *Korean Studies*, Vol. 24, University of Hawaii Press, (2000): 53-65.

allows for men to be understood as yang and women as yin.<sup>443</sup> This idea has dominated the majority of the Confucian culture in East Asia. This idea that yang is superior to yin formed a basis for gender discrimination which was taken for granted, and it finally became a source of Confucian ethics.<sup>444</sup>

The social order that emerged from Confucian thought regarded men as yang, which is in charge of external affairs, and women as yin, which includes a moral role to carry out internal affairs, such as housework.<sup>445</sup> Jung Soon Shim, a Korean female scholar, contends the patriarchal family in Korea demands women sacrifice, namely as “wise mother and good wife” for the sake of family and family tradition. She maintains that the notion of yin and yang essentialism translated into female-male essentialism and continues to be a trap for Korean women in the patriarchal family tradition.<sup>446</sup> However, despite this historical association with patriarchy, the yin and yang logic of the IChing has at its center an idea of equality. But in Confucian society, the differences between men and women are magnified. In other words, the fundamental principle of yin and yang is based on the ideas that these two opposing energies complement and nourish one another, but in reality, it was used to reinforce gender and social conflicts.<sup>447</sup> Overall, the IChng is condemned as the cornerstone of patriarchy in East Asia and the yin and yang principle of the IChing has become a hot issue in the field of feminism.<sup>448</sup>

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<sup>443</sup> Jin Oh Lee, 'The Imagination and Creativity of Yin and Yang', 461.

<sup>444</sup> Chae Woo Lim, 'A View of Womanhood in Context of Ying and Yang Relationship', in, *Asian Philosophy*, Vol. 25, (2002): 139. See Li-Hsiang Lisa Rosenlee, *Confucianism and Women: A Philosophical Interpretation* (State University of New York Press, 2006), 55-56.

<sup>445</sup> Yong Hwan Jung, 'Confucian Theory of Yin and Yang and Woman's Emotion', in, *Journal of Korean Philosophical Society*, Vol. 125, (2013): 286-291.

<sup>446</sup> Jung Soon Shim, 'The Confucian Difference: Yin and Yang Feminism in Korean Women's Drama', in, *Theatre Research International*. Vol. 24, Issue 3 (1999): 241-242.

<sup>447</sup> Man Chung Chiu, 'Harmonizing the Resistance, Resisting the Harmony: A Critical Discourse on the Reconstruction of Indigenous Theory of Gender Justice in Hong Kong', in, *Asian Journal of Social Science*, Volume 36, Issue 1, (2008): 96-98.

<sup>448</sup> Chae Woo Lim, 'A View of Womanhood in Context of Ying and Yang Relationship', 139. See

As a result, the yin and yang principle attracts a lot of criticism from Asian philosophers, especially from female philosophers. Confucianism, by applying the image of yin and yang to gender discrimination, has rationalized the hierarchical order of yang over yin and the superiority of men in their subordination of women. In particular, many texts associated with Confucianism emphasize noble characteristics associated with yang and masculinity, while women and yin are associated with petty characteristics, thus deepening anti-feminist tendencies, which presupposes the context of male dominance over females in the framework of yin and yang.<sup>449</sup> Despite this, harmony of yin and yang is ultimately a matter of integration and interdependence, and this is the main function of yin and yang thinking.<sup>450</sup> However, a Korean feminist philosopher, Sook In Lee argues that harmony is said to be a neutral universal concept, but in reality reasonable arguments have been weakened by the Confucian interpretation of yin and yang, and in many cases, absurdity is disguised beautifully in the name of harmony. She maintains that harmony in yin and yang that makes women subordinate is not a universal truth but rather the logic of domination.<sup>451</sup>

### **Reinterpreting Women's Issues from Yin and Yang Thinking**

Despite the criticism that the yin and yang principle has been used for gender discrimination in many Confucian cultures, many modern Asian philosophers, especially female Asian philosophers, have put a new spin on the yin and yang principle that takes it beyond this criticism.

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Chan Young Park, 'Li Chih' Yin and Yang Doctrine from the Gender Perspective and Its Implication in Comparative Study of Confucianism and Feminism', in, *Asian Philosophy*, Vol. 27, (2007): 101.

<sup>449</sup> Yong Jin Choi, 'Confucian Discourse on Gender', in, *Journal of East Asian Social Thoughts*, Vol. 8, (2003): 1.

<sup>450</sup> Robin Wang, *Yin and Yang: New Approaches to Asian History* (Cambridge University Press, 2012), (Kindle Location 437). Kindle Edition.

<sup>451</sup> Sook In Lee, 'The Harmony in Confucianism and Women's Identity', in, *Religious and Cultural Studies*, Vol.6, (2004): 10.

These scholars set out to analyze the processes that have been distorted from the Confucian notion of yin and yang. They assert that in the IChing, gender cosmology has been formed on the concepts of the heavens and earth, and yin and yang. Thereby, yin and yang can be called female and male. These scholars emphasize that the great work of the world is achieved by men and women together, recognizing that men and women are not different from each other, as all things are born from the heavenly father and the earthly mother. Men and women who participate in this creation are equal, like heaven and earth, and each has equal value.<sup>452</sup> Also, they argue that the early association of the yin and yang concept of the IChing with gender, which uses yin and yang as an analogy for female and male, was neither fixed, nor representative of hierarchal relationships.<sup>453</sup> Yin and yang is considered complementary and inseparable. This interpretation represents the productive nature of yin, or feminine powers. According to IChing, the yin and yang combination and interrelation functions for all living things and their development. Mutual reversibility between the relationship of yin and yang is thus the primary mechanism of life, which explains all forms of generation, transformation, and existence by harmony and mutual relationships that require each other.<sup>454</sup> Therefore, the relationship between yin and yang cannot be mutually exclusive, and it has both unity and demarcation at the same time.<sup>455</sup> For that reason, it is different from the antagonistic confrontation and conflict in Western gender dichotomies.<sup>456</sup> According to the logic of yin and yang, the concepts such as heaven and earth, male and female, describe how seemingly

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<sup>452</sup> Chae Woo Lim, 'A View of Womanhood in Context of Ying and Yang Relationship', 151.

<sup>453</sup> Ibid., 152

<sup>454</sup> Robin Wang, (Kindle Locations 251-252). Kindle Edition.

<sup>455</sup> Yong Jin Choi, 'Confucian Discourse on Gender', 1.

<sup>456</sup> Young Joo Kim, 'The Reciprocally Relational Thinking Method and the Critique on the Eastern Yin and Yang Principle', 4.

opposite forces are actually complementary and how they interrelate to one another.<sup>457</sup> In this sense, Li-Hsiang Lisa Rosenlee, who is a Chinese American female philosopher, explores what Confucian thought might mean for women and feminism. She argues that interaction between yin and yang is consistently complementary in the cosmos and also in the human body, which suggests a more fluid, tolerant view of sexual difference if applied to gender.<sup>458</sup>

Based on this cosmological interpretation, a Korean female philosopher Hye Sook Kim, rejects the existing yin and yang theory that saw women as yin and men as yang. She argues that both men and women are individuals and harmonious beings that incorporate both yin and yang.<sup>459</sup> A Korean female philosopher Seoseria Kim also argues that modern reinterpretation of the yin and yang principle should not be discriminatory but should be understood through the notion of difference. She argues that it should be a way of criticizing the division of yin and yang by patriarchal dichotomy, highlighting the concept of yin and yang by accepting the difference between them.<sup>460</sup> A Korean female philosopher Hyun Ji Lee, and a male philosopher Chae Woo Im, also argue that the quantity of 'yin' and 'yang' respectively in the concept of the yin and yang must equally exist through comparison with its opposite.<sup>461</sup>

As such, modern Asian philosophers reinterpret the dynamic of yin and yang as a relation that pursues harmony between men and women in the spirit of

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<sup>457</sup> Yong Jin Choi, 'Confucian Discourse on Gender', 8.

<sup>458</sup> Li-Hsiang Lisa Rosenlee, *Confucianism and Women*, 67.

<sup>459</sup> Hye Sook Kim, 'Ontological Yin and Yang and Women's Epistemological Implication', in *Korean Women's Studies*, Vol.15, (1999): 5-11.

<sup>460</sup> Seseoria Kim, 'The Theory of Yin and Yang as Philosophy of Difference and Dialectic of Difference- Between', in *The Philosophy of the Times*, Vol.17- 2 (2006): 11-34.

<sup>461</sup> Chae Woo Lim, 'A View of Womanhood in Context of Ying and Yang Relationship', 157. See Lee, Hyun Ji. 'The Feministic Implications of Yin and Yang Principles', in *Asian Social Ideology* 4 (2001): 258.

equality, rather than gender discrimination. In addition, regarding the general criticism that yin and yang theory is unscientific, the Korean philosopher Jin Oh Lee points out that the concept of yin and yang is not a scientific concept but rather has symbolic meaning, so it is not a principle to be examined by scientific demonstration.<sup>462</sup> In conclusion, even though yin and yang is critically controversial, the yin and yang symbol is deeply embedded in the emotions and thoughts of Asians. This is the most universal Asian reasoning method for pursuing equality, which embraces women through harmony from yin and yang thinking.

### **Conclusion on Feng Shui Cosmology**

This section has introduced essential concepts of Korean Feng Shui in order to propose a new ecological feminist model of the Divine from a Korean perspective. To summarise, Feng Shui is a uniquely Eastern perspective that is based upon a profoundly intuitive and cosmological understanding of Heaven- Land (earth)- Humanity as being one in Chi. Importantly, all three elements come together to make one harmonious universe within the structure of the yin and yang, the Five Elements, and Chi. They neither oppress nor exploit one another, and they are all connected with each other in one mutual, complementary, interdependent, and harmonious organism.<sup>463</sup> Cosmological understandings of the world from the perspective of Korean Feng Shui can overcome Western dualism, which separates the heavens from the earth, and would have human beings look up into the sky to worship and down at the earth as a mere object. This dualism has finally led to human alienation, and ecological crisis.

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<sup>462</sup> Jin Oh Lee, 'The Imagination and Creativity of Yin and Yang', 479.

<sup>463</sup> Sang Sung Lee, '*Ecological Theory*', 260-261.



Above all, the female essence of the Land in Korean Feng Shui offers the basis for proposing a new feminist divine model. This is because the Land in Feng Shui includes the male image as well as the female, through the principle of yin and yang and the Five elements moving towards One Chi. Yin and yang is not 'either/or', but rather 'both/and'.<sup>464</sup> Thus, female essences of the Land in yin and yang symbolic thinking are also male essences of the Land. This female imagery of Land can be grounds for suggesting a new ecological divine model, which pursues harmony and balance between men and women. Also, a spiritual understanding of land in Korean Feng Shui has much in common with the writings of McFague, who views the earth as God's body and as a mother. By drawing on these unique cosmological insights in Korean Feng Shui, this section offers a new ecological paradigm – a new eco-feminist God model with which to correct the current models, which encode sexism and anti-ecopathy.

### **III.2 Sallie McFague's Theology (Eco-feminism): Dialogue with the Feng Shui Cosmology**

This section examines the outlook on nature offered by Sallie McFague. This perspective will then be used in this dissertation, in dialogue with the cosmology of Korean Feng Shui given above, to propose an eco-feminist model of the divine. McFague's ideas are of interest because they contain many parallels with Korean Feng Shui, particularly in terms of their ontological outlook on nature. Therefore, this dissertation employs McFague's metaphors of 'God as mother' and 'the world as God's body', as they provide eco-feminist perspectives on Christian theology that are applicable to my proposed model.

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<sup>464</sup> Jung Yong Lee, trans: Jin Hong Jung, *Cosmic Religion* (Seoul: The Korean Christian Literature, 1980), 33.

McFague's theological perspective is 'post-modern', in that it is deeply influenced by the crisis of nuclear, sexual, ethnic, and hierarchical conflicts.<sup>465</sup>

McFague proposes a 'metaphoric theology' that creates a new model for our times through the transformative power of metaphor, which has the advantage of making relativity and openness parts of this new sensibility.<sup>466</sup> McFague's metaphorical theology will serve as my point of departure for proposing a new divine model from Feng Shui cosmology, for women and nature in the contemporary Korean Church, in light of the current crises.

McFague recognizes that many of the traditional images associated with God are hierarchical and patriarchal. For example, to call God 'Father' has become literalized so that people tend to actually consider God a male. This, McFague argues, results in a form of idolatry.<sup>467</sup> In its place, McFague finds that metaphor is particularly suited to religious language used for understanding God, and to new interpretations of God's relationship to the world.<sup>468</sup> Accordingly, McFague uses metaphor to express God with a hermeneutic method of 'is and is not', which is

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<sup>465</sup> Sallie McFague, *Metaphorical Theology: Models of God in Religious Language* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982), x-xi. See also Sallie McFague, *Life Abundant: Rethinking Theology and Economy for a Planet in Peril* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001), 25-33, 39-40.

<sup>466</sup> Sallie McFague, *Models of God: Theology for an Ecological, Nuclear Age* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), 8.

<sup>467</sup> McFague, *Metaphorical Theology*, 5.

<sup>468</sup> David J. Bromell, 'Sallie McFague's "Metaphorical Theology,"', in *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, Vol. 61, No. 3 (1993): 485-503. See Stephen W. Need, 'Language, Metaphor, and Chalcedon: A Case of Theological Double Vision', in *The Harvard Theological Review*, Vol. 88, No. 2 (1995): 237-255. Iris M. Yob, 'Religious Metaphor and Scientific Model: Grounds for Comparison', in *Religious Studies* Vol. 28, No. 4 (Dec., 1992): 475-485. Sallie McFague, 'Imaging a Theology of Nature: The World as God's Body', in Charles Birch, William Eaken and Jay B. McDaniel (eds.) *Liberating Life: Contemporary Approaches in Ecological Theology*, (New York: Orbis Books, 1990), 201-227. C. J. Insole, 'Metaphor and the Impossibility of Failing to Speak about God', in *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion*, Vol. 52, No. 1 (2002): 35-43. Sallie McFague-Teselle, 'Parable, Metaphor, and Theology', in *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, Vol. 42, No. 4 (1974): 630-645. Susan A Ross, 'Women, Beauty, and Justice: Moving beyond Von Balthasar', in *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics*, Vol. 25, No. 1 (2005): 79-98. Colin Gunton, 'Transcendence, Metaphor, and the Knowability of God', in *The Journal of Theological Studies*, New Series, Vol. 31, No. 2 (1980): 501-51. Frederick Sontag 'Metaphorical Non-Sequitur?', in *Scottish Journal of Theology* 44 (1991): 1-18.

tensive, and thus can avoid idolatry. By using the metaphor of 'the world as God's body', McFague presents an organic model which is ecological and feministic, and which therefore liberates the oppressed, and breaks down dualism. In a similar way, this dissertation uses the metaphor of God as 'Land' from Korean Feng Shui, and the inclusive tensions of 'is and is' and 'both/and' from the yin and yang principle, to present a comprehensive and holistic model through which to liberate women and nature in the contemporary Korean Church.<sup>469</sup>

McFague's two metaphors - 'the world as God's body' and 'God as mother' are explored for my suggested model of 'God of Land' because the 'world as God's body' model views the world as the body of God: It can therefore overcome Western dualistic thinking, which separates spirit and body, man and woman, culture and nature, and so on. In addition, the model of God as mother, that is an alternative to the patriarchal father model, suggests God as being female in an immanent way. Accordingly, these two models together serve as adequate resources for reinterpreting ecological and feministic understandings of worldviews, and for finding a new cosmology. The two models, with their emphasis on feminism, eco-justice, and overcoming dualism, are valuable in proposing an eco-feminist divine model for the Korean context.<sup>470</sup>

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<sup>469</sup> According to McFague, 'models are a further step along the route from metaphorical to conceptual language'. McFague here uses the terms 'metaphor' and 'model' more precisely, particularly regarding the relationship between them. 'Metaphor' is used in much the same way as it had been used previously, but McFague speaks precisely about 'model': 'The simplest way to define a model is as a dominant metaphor, a metaphor with staying power'. A model, though similar to a metaphor, reaches toward qualities of conceptual thought. A model suggests a more comprehensive and ordering structure, while also offering impressive interpretive potential. McFague writes 'models, as is true of metaphors but in an organic, consistent, and comprehensive manner, give us a way of thinking about the unknown in terms of unknown'. McFague, *Metaphorical Theology*, 23.

<sup>470</sup> Metaphorical theology supports the aim of this project to propose a new divine model of 'God of Land,' as it relates to linguistic processes through which worldviews and cosmologies are developed. These metaphors can address 'the impossibility of failing to speak' about God, on the

Above all things, this section argues that McFague's model still remains within the Christian tradition, and it is my intention that my suggested model is also regarded as such. Thus, McFague reinterprets the Christian traditions of Creation, sin, salvation, the death and resurrection of Christ, the work of the Holy Spirit, and the eschatological vision, through her contextual theology, and specifically in light of the present context of ecological crises. Nevertheless, she interprets the main aspects of the Christian doctrines - and re-mythologizes postmodern science's understanding of God and world - with a new sensibility that still remains within Christian tradition.<sup>471</sup> Like this, Feng Shui offers a distinct aspect of contextual interpretations in Christian tradition. The metaphor of 'God of Land' represents one of the possible reinterpretations of the Christian doctrine of the Trinity that can be formed from the contexts of Korean cultural and religious tradition.

From this perspective, McFague's outlook on nature has many ontological similarities with Korean Feng Shui cosmology. There are also many criticisms of McFague's use of metaphorical models of God. Those will be discussed in more detail in this section, which explores the landscape of McFague's nature theology. The section endeavors to bridge this with insights from Korean Feng Shui cosmology, for its application in the Korean context.

### **A. McFague's Metaphorical Theology**

This section examines McFague's theological method: metaphorical theology. This is because this dissertation proposes an eco-feminist model of the Divine from

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basis of their rich imaginations, which are open to new interpretations, and due to the staying power of their emotional appeal.

C. J. Insole, 'Metaphor and the Impossibility of Failing to Speak about God', in, *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion*, Vol. 52, No. 1 (2002): 35-43.

<sup>471</sup> McFague, 'Imaging a Theology of Nature', 203.

Feng Shui, which carries metaphorical characteristics in a similar way to the metaphorical approach in McFague's models. This examination will provide valuable insight into McFague's theological position because her metaphorical theology includes a contemporary methodology which encourages a nontraditional way of expressing God's relation to the world, and is therefore ecological and feministic. This section also discusses the tension between the metaphor of 'is and is not', and the inclusive tension in 'is and is' in Feng Shui. Further, this section seeks insight by comparing McFague's metaphor with metaphors in Korean Feng Shui.

McFague values the significance of metaphor. She argues that since all language we use to speak about God is merely a human construction, all language 'misses the mark'.<sup>472</sup> She explains this with an example of how theological models like 'God the Father' can go wrong in terms of dominance over and exclusion of other models, and also in terms of literalization, or loss of basic tension.<sup>473</sup> In this way, McFague points out the inadequacy and even the 'idolatry' of religious language, and advocates the way that metaphor is a different tool that enables religious language that is appropriate and meaningful in our time.<sup>474</sup> To McFague, avoiding idolatry is an important issue in her theology. Relevance—meaning that which is contextually appropriate to the current situation—is another important issue in her theology.<sup>475</sup> Furthermore, McFague argues that the purpose of theology is to reconstruct language, making it possible for the Gospel to be heard in our time. She maintains that metaphor is the most appropriate vehicle to capture

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<sup>472</sup> McFague, *Models of God*, 23.

<sup>473</sup> David J. Bromell, 'Sally McFague's 'Metaphorical Theology'', in, *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, Vol.61, No. 3, 493.

<sup>474</sup> See more explanation in the thesis' introduction and literature review on 'Metaphors of God and Sallie McFague's "The World as God's Body"', 29-33.

<sup>475</sup> McFague, *Metaphorical Theology*, 7-10.

the religious symbolism that cannot be recreated with secular language. Therefore, the purpose of her theology is to ensure that the Gospel can be heard in our time.

The word 'metaphor' is derived from two Greek words: '[the first] which literally means "transfer": *meta* "trans"+ *pherein* "to carry"'.<sup>476</sup> It was originally used to describe how a word could be applied and extended by moving from its primary meaning to a secondary meaning. McFague shows that metaphor can be used to speak about God whose literal reality we cannot know in our human life; we pretend 'this' is 'that' because we do not know how to speak about 'this' - we use 'that' as a way of saying something about it.<sup>477</sup> To McFague, metaphor is only a way of knowing, not a way of communicating. She maintains that in metaphors, knowledge and its expression are one and not different. What is more, she argues that there is no way other than metaphor of truly knowing anything. Some metaphors are wrong, or do not fit, or might be said to be inappropriate, yet there is no way to directly access the knowledge; we must simply offer a different and better metaphor. Such metaphors, McFague argues, are transformative in reforming the old customs by combining one thing with something else.<sup>478</sup> She assumes that metaphor is closely related with worldview. Metaphor is a way for one to recognize a thing as something else in intimate ways. In this way, metaphor affects perception.<sup>479</sup>

Regarding this perceptive function of metaphor, Paul Avis, who is a British Anglican priest and theologian, states that Janet Soskice supports a form of critical realism in which metaphorical description in theology has cognitive value, but is not

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<sup>476</sup> Martin Soskice, *Metaphor and Religious Language* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), 1.

<sup>477</sup> McFague, *Models of God*, 32-34.

<sup>478</sup> McFague, *Metaphorical Theology*, 17.

<sup>479</sup> McFague, *A New Climate for Theology: God, the World, and Global Warming* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2008), 130-131.

claimed to be veridical. It refers and depicts but does not claim to define.<sup>480</sup> In other words, metaphor, for Soskice, means speaking in non-literal language. Metaphor is 'that figure of speech whereby we speak about one thing in terms which are seen to be suggestive of another'.<sup>481</sup>

McFague argues further that there is a sense of tension in metaphor between 'is and is not'. A metaphor does not define something, but rather shows that to which it appears to be contradictory, and finds a new meaning. Metaphor carries both 'is and is not' - it opens up the possibility of avoiding the trap of literalization or absolutism, and overcomes dualism in this way. Therefore, McFague tries to understand God's relationship to the world metaphorically. She believes that metaphor carries a sense of tension, and a revolutionary power of revision in its combining of ideas with old customs.<sup>482</sup>

As to the metaphorical tension, Max Black, a British American philosopher, asserts that the focus of metaphor must acquire a new meaning when put into its new frame. This meaning is not its meaning in a literal sense.<sup>483</sup> Black argues that 'Looking at a scene through blue spectacles is different from comparing that scene with something else'.<sup>484</sup> McFague argues that the difference comes from the tension that is lost. Ricoeur calls this nature of metaphor 'is and is not'.<sup>485</sup> Ruth Duck, an American theologian, also writes on metaphoric tension: 'At first, a metaphor may seem so shocking as to evoke disbelief; then, when it is a living

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<sup>480</sup> Janet Soskice, *Metaphor and Religious Language* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), 140, quoted in Paul Avis, *God and the Creative Imagination* (London: Routledge Press, 1999), 88.

<sup>481</sup> Soskice, *Metaphor and Religious Language*, 16.

<sup>482</sup> McFague, *Metaphorical Theology*, 17.

<sup>483</sup> Max Black, *Models and Metaphor* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1962), 40.

<sup>484</sup> McFague, *Metaphorical Theology*, 38.

<sup>485</sup> Ibid.

metaphor, through tension it evokes insight'.<sup>486</sup> Living metaphors shock and challenge our preconceptions, and lead us to new discoveries. When either the 'is' or the 'is not' is absent from a metaphor, the metaphor dies. A dead metaphor cannot evoke new perceptions. Avis writes further about the function of metaphor, 'in fusing two perceptions, metaphor has a stereoscopic function. Each image carries with it a host of associations, which interact with and fertilize each other. Metaphor is not just naming one thing in terms of another, but seeing, experiencing, and intellectualizing one thing in light of another'.<sup>487</sup>

Using the insights above, this dissertation develops a model of the Divine in metaphorical and stereoscopic ways, which is not fixed and not separated in the 'is and is not', but in which the elements interact with and fertilize each other through the principles of 'is and is' and 'both/and', found in the yin and yang taken from Feng Shui cosmology. In Korean Feng Shui, humanity is regarded as a part of the cosmos, a microcosm. There is an inextricable link between humanity and the world; therefore, the relationship between humanity and the world is not separable. In Feng Shui cosmology, the cosmos operates through the interaction of yin and yang, meaning that human beings operate through the same principle because they are part of the cosmos, and not separate from it. In this way, an eco-feminist model of the Divine is proposed by using the yin and yang symbol as a hermeneutic tension, in a manner similar to that in which McFague uses the idea of the 'world as God's body'. Finally, the characteristics of the two kinds of positivity (is) and negativity (is not) in metaphor enable us to avoid the risk of idolatry because they open up the possibilities to overcome dualism, which is fixed,

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<sup>486</sup> Ruth Duck, *Gender and the Name of God: The Trinitarian Baptismal Formula* (Pilgrim Press, 1991), 14.

<sup>487</sup> Paul Avis, *God and the Creative imagination*, 85.



separated, and unconcerned for the other position. Specifically, negativity ('is not') carries characteristics, which are open, experiential, and indirect, therefore evoking a certain tension. It provides broader powers to fight against idolatry, and leads to change.<sup>488</sup>

### **1. Imaginative Picture of the God-World Relationship**

McFague offers new metaphorical language, fostering a model of God that is immanent and feministic, that is intended to stand against the dominant patriarchal models used in traditional theology. Through these models, she re-mythologizes the relationship between God and the world.<sup>489</sup> The metaphors she suggests carry the requisite tension of 'is and is not'. In this sense, when she uses metaphors of God as mother, lover, and friend, these metaphors are not literalistic affirmations of the Divine identity, but rather suggest that God may be or may not be mother, lover, and friend. Stephen W. Need, a British theologian, supports this idea that to speak of God as a mother would not imply that God is a mother, but only that God is motherly. In this way, he says 'double vision of languages and the reality depicted can be preserved'.<sup>490</sup> Metaphor makes it possible to construct concepts about God while taking the issue of paradox into consideration because a metaphor includes both the 'is and is not' of God. Therefore, metaphors are intended to change our worldview.<sup>491</sup>

This dissertation also uses the important concept of 'Land' in Feng Shui, as a metaphor for a God model. It prescribes the human way of harmonizing with the

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<sup>488</sup> McFague, *Metaphorical Theology*, 19.

<sup>489</sup> McFague, *Models of God*, xi

<sup>490</sup> Stephen W. Need, 'Language, Metaphor, and Chalcedon: A Case of Theological Double Vision', in, *The Harvard Theological Review*, Vol. 88, No.2 (Apr. 1995): 254.

<sup>491</sup> According to Paul Ricoeur, the tension of duality occurs between literal and conventional interpretations when a judgment is being made; a new interpretation, or new meaning, is recognized in this tension. McFague, *Metaphorical Theology*, 39.

environment and nature, and so has many metaphoric implications for divinity. People in East Asia have an innate reverence for 'Land' (nature), and consider it divine; this is a cosmological view of life rather than a religious creed, which has been deeply embedded in people's subconscious.<sup>492</sup> This dissertation extracts a metaphoric Divine from the 'Land', to express a better model than the dualistic and patriarchal model. This metaphor will use the more inclusive ideas of 'is and is' and 'both/and' from Feng Shui; thus, when God is represented as female and impersonal in this dissertation, that will also include male and personal characteristics, according to this inclusive metaphor. From metaphysics and the cosmology of Feng Shui, the metaphors in yin and yang show that all existence in the universe is dynamically interconnected. The way of thinking in Feng Shui is complementarity, and unity. Within Feng Shui cosmology, the universe is a continuously procreative-changing organism; in this way, Feng Shui has something in common with McFague's metaphors and models.

What, then, allows McFague to write these new metaphors about God? McFague claims that 'since all religious language is metaphorical, alternatives to traditional metaphors are possible'.<sup>493</sup> In this way, she argues that metaphors can make it possible to propose new images or models, which can reflect women's life experiences that have long been ignored. She attempts to test new metaphors and models, which can solve the issues we are facing through the openness, relativity, and iconoclasm which metaphors carry in their inborn 'is and is not'. McFague proposes focusing on the imaginative construing of the God-world relationship,

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<sup>492</sup> See Feng Shui section: 'Chun (Sky): heaven, Divinity, and religious scope'.

<sup>493</sup> Sallie McFague, *Super, Natural Christians: How We Should Love Nature* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1997), 2.

and attempts to re-mythologize Christian faith through metaphors and models.<sup>494</sup> The role of her metaphorical language is not simply to describe God, but to represent the presence of God's creative empowerment in this world.<sup>495</sup> Further, McFague speaks about the ethical dimension of metaphor, which engenders new sensibilities of God that are situated in ecological and political crises. Metaphorical images of God employ a real language.<sup>496</sup> This dissertation draws from McFague in employing metaphors to speak of God, because, as McFague's work has shown, they become part of profound symbolic statements and models of religious experience, within a specific context.

## **2. McFague's Metaphor, and Korean Feng Shui in Metaphor**

As discussed in the previous section, McFague's metaphorical speaking of God is similar to the metaphors in HyungGukron in Korean Feng Shui, which are used to describe the specific formation of each individual land shape.<sup>497</sup> In HyungGukron, the appearance and the situation of various lands and mountains are able to be named only by metaphors. Like this, my dissertation proposes a new eco-feminist model of the Divine, which possesses metaphorical characteristics.

My metaphorical model is, however, a little different from McFague's, which is characterized as 'is and is not'. My suggested model understands God with 'is and is', and 'both/and', in accordance with the principle of yin and yang. In other words, McFague understands God through metaphor, which holds the tension between 'is and is not' in order to avoid the dominant Christian metaphors she

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<sup>494</sup> Sallie McFague 'Imaging a Theology of Nature: The World as God's Body', in Birch, C, Eakin, W and McDaniel, J.B. (eds.) *Liberating Life: Contemporary Approaches to Ecological Theology* (New York: Orbis Books, 1990), 206.

<sup>495</sup> Susan A. Ross, 'Women, Beauty, and Justice: Moving Beyond von Balthasar', in, *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics*, Vol. 25, No.1 (2005): 87.

<sup>496</sup> *Ibid.*, 86-7.

<sup>497</sup> See Chapter III.1.

sees as idolatrous. McFague writes, 'Jesus "is and is not" God'. In this sense 'metaphorical statements are never identity statements; hence, idolatry, "Jesusolatry", can be avoided'.<sup>498</sup> However, the idea of 'God of Land' in Feng Shui is understood by way of metaphorical interpretation through 'is and is' and 'both/and' from the yin and yang principle. In this way, the understanding of God in the cosmology of Korean Feng Shui goes beyond McFague's metaphor, which holds the concept 'is and is not'. Inclusiveness is the essential characteristic of the yin and yang relationship. To put this concretely, all existences could be explained in Korean Feng Shui by the yin and yang principle. They seem on the surface to be incompatible with each other, but yin and yang never conflict, and always complement each other: Yin is not only yang, but also yin as well.<sup>499</sup> From this holistic principle, my proposed model is able to describe God more inclusively, and is open to new interpretations.

From the comprehensive metaphorical analysis of yin and yang, the dissertation offers a new eco-feminist metaphor of the Divine through the 'Land' in Korean Feng Shui, which is ecological and feminine. Therefore, the feminine 'God of Land', metaphorically expressed from Korean Feng Shui, is not merely referring to the literal sense of female gender and 'Land', but represents more than those literal concepts, which are all-encompassing of both contradictory and complementary aspects. In other words, where this model is proposed as female, it actually conceives of a harmonized male and female God within it. Although God is proposed as 'Land', this model will be an organic model, which unites God and humanity from ChunJiln (Heaven-Land-Humanity) thoughts. This feminine 'God of

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<sup>498</sup> McFague, *Metaphorical Theology*, 51.

<sup>499</sup> Jung Young Lee, *The Trinity In Asian Perspective* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996), 28.

Land' model is metaphorically expressed via the cosmology of Korean Feng Shui, and will be explained by yin and yang as well as Chi. Ultimately, this model includes a more cosmological and holistic divine nature, which encompasses all creatures in the universe in the web of one Chi and the principle of yin and yang, and is thus distinct from McFague's metaphoric models.

What then makes a metaphor appropriate in the Korean context? The dissertation sees that metaphors (languages or symbols) are more valuable if they are contextual. In other words, the experience of Koreans in perceiving the Divine makes a metaphor more appropriate in the Korean context. Bernard Lonergan, a Canadian theologian, supports this that "religious experience varies with every difference of culture, class or individual".<sup>500</sup> If the language about God is to be essential for conceiving and perceiving God, it is desirable for it to contain some explanatory value in relation to the human experience. In this sense, George Lindbeck, an American theologian, argues that a religion is formed by a 'cultural-linguistic framework or medium [that] shapes the entirety of life and thoughts'. He argues that church doctrine, for example, makes up a significant part of religious experience because doctrine is a kind of language, which is a system of symbols.<sup>501</sup>

Although the language itself entails no propositional truths, it can give us tools by which we can formulate truths in the specific context of cultural-linguistic framework or medium. Religious experience is an encounter with the divine; it cannot be observed, and it brings an awareness of something beyond ourselves.

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<sup>500</sup> Bernard Lonergan, *Philosophy of God, and Theology* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1973), 50.

<sup>501</sup> George A. Lindbeck, *The Nature of Doctrine: Religion and Theology in a Postliberal Age* (Westminster: John Knox Press, 1984), 32-37.

Often, this is the most convincing proof of God's existence. Ninian Smart, a Scottish theologian writes, 'A religious experience involves some kind of 'perception' of the invisible world'.<sup>502</sup> God is perceived and experienced in our human life and we wish to make sense of that experience. Our experience of faith may lead us into the community of faith. In this way, experiences of God are also an essential resource for theology.<sup>503</sup>

Religious experience is defined as an inexpressible encounter with the Ultimate Reality. In the Korean context, God has been spoken in metaphorical ways based on Koreans' experiences from their cultural and religious traditions. In this way, Koreans envision the Divine as inherently embodied in nature for example, from trees, the sky, or mountains that are perceived as impersonal deities from Korea's cultural and religious traditions. This way, new language is devised to describe the Divine and this is called as *Hananim* (the Divine) that was called as *Chonju*, which means the Lord in Heaven from Korean traditions.<sup>504</sup> In particular, Korean women have their own unique experience in the Korean cultural and spiritual context. Korean women have lived with *Han*, which is described as a unique and collective feeling of oppression in trials of foreign invasions and native patriarchy over long periods of time.<sup>505</sup> Korean women seek ways out of the unfair and oppressive structures of male dominance by retreating

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<sup>502</sup> Bryan S. Rennie, 'The View of the Invisible World: Ninian Smart's Analysis of the Dimensions of Religion and of Religious Experience', *Bulletin CSSR*, Vol 28, (1999): 65.

<sup>503</sup> Richard Carter, 'Faith Seeking Understanding Our Christian Understanding of God', *Chinese Speaking Congregation's Study Day*, 7-8.  
[http://www.smitfcc.org.uk/images/uploads/100424\\_Chinese\\_Church\\_Awayday.pdf](http://www.smitfcc.org.uk/images/uploads/100424_Chinese_Church_Awayday.pdf) [accessed Feb13, 2017]

<sup>504</sup> Daniel Tudor, *Korea: The Impossible Country* (Vermont: Tuttle Publishing, 2012), 24. See Jong Seung Yang 79-82. See Hyun Huh, "The influences of Korean Traditional religions on Christianity," *Baptist Collected Edition*, Vol 1, (1978): 25-26. See also Chung Hyun Choi, *Korean Church and Shamanism* (Seoul: Sung Guwang Culture Book, 1993), 30.

<sup>505</sup> Wang Sun Gu and Hong Suh Jin, 77.

to indigenous religion, in other words Shamanistic practices. Korean women have envisioned God through Shamanistic practices in their everyday lives and in their everyday prayers from the tradition of impersonal *Gasin* (Household gods' worship) and the rites of *Gut*. This has long been a part of Korean women's daily faith life. It is presumed impersonal *Gasin* worship and the Shamanistic practice of *Gut*, which had long been unconsciously a part of Korean women's faith life, have comforted them and brings them closer to impersonal deities. This dissertation, therefore, asserts that this Korean women's experience from Korean cultural and religious tradition provides them a valuable resource speaking of Christian God metaphorically for Korean contextual theology.<sup>506</sup>

Ruether and McFague also see human experience, and in particular women's experience, as key in their approach to what makes a metaphor appropriate for understanding God. As such their work is useful here. For them, the experience of women becomes a fundamental source of liberation truth, along with scripture and tradition. For example, Ruether does not leave the Biblical and Christian traditions, and intends to interpret them critically from the perspective of women's experience in order to create alternative traditions. According to Ruether, the Bible has been formed and has descended in the tradition of a patriarchal system. As a result, in this context, women remain as others in the Christian tradition and their experience is not reflected. Women's views, their own experiences, and the existence of women as human subjects are not at all in the center of community and society.<sup>507</sup> Ruether says that 'what have been called the objective sources of theology: scripture and tradition, are themselves codified

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<sup>506</sup> This Shamanism is not intended to be the spiritual ground for suggesting a new model.

<sup>507</sup> Rosemary. R. Ruether, *Womanguides: Readings Toward a Feminist Theology* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1985), ix-x.

collective human experience'. In other words, the Bible is a product of the accumulation of human experience for a long period of time and that product is based primarily, if not totally, on male experience. Ruether says human experience is the starting and ending point of the hermeneutical cycle.<sup>508</sup> The past experience has become a tradition; this codified tradition is constantly renewed or discarded through the test of present experience.<sup>509</sup>

McFague also sees the relationship of the Bible, tradition, and experience as continuity, not in isolation but inextricably bound up in the present. She says, 'Scripture is the sedimentation of experience of the salvific power of God in persuasive, powerful metaphors, models, and concepts, contemporary to the various times of interpretation'.<sup>510</sup> In this way, McFague asserts that all languages about God cannot speak the actual nature of God in a literal fashion but can only speak in a metaphorical way, with the intention that 'it is the task of theology to revision God in light of contemporary experience especially the experience of the excluded one'.<sup>511</sup> Moreover, McFague maintains that metaphor can be heuristic because it grows out of experience, it will not accept authority but will acknowledge only what it finds convincing and persuasive.<sup>512</sup> Heuristic metaphors reflect life's experiences in order to be persuasive. An example of a heuristic metaphor for God shows, an African theologian, Mercy Amba Oduyoye's metaphor of God as a motherly 'Householder' who empowers all as children in a parent's home. In this

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<sup>508</sup> Ruether, *Sexism and God-Talk*, 12.

<sup>509</sup> Ellen Leonard, 'Experience as an Source for Theology: A Canadian and Feminist Perspective', *Studies in Religion/ Sciences Religieuses*, (1990): 144.

<sup>510</sup> McFague, *Models of God*, 42.

<sup>511</sup> Ellen Leonard, 'Experience as an Source for Theology', 157.

<sup>512</sup> McFague, *Models of God*, 36.



metaphor, God is “caring, providing, helping, sharing, and ‘ministering’ to the needs of others” that is come from life’s experience.<sup>513</sup>

With Ruether and McFague’ idea, Ellen Leonard, a Canadian theologian, considers all the experience that women have through their life journeys as a valuable source for theology—all forms of women’s experience of oppression such as ‘experience of sexual harassment and violence; the experience of being a daughter, a sister, a mother, the experience of being a female body, with its rhythm such as menstruation and menopause; the experience of giving birth; the growing consciousness of sisterhood with women everywhere’ are recognized as a source for theology.<sup>514</sup>

Drawing from these perspectives, this dissertation sees that Korean experience, particularly Korean women’s experience, makes metaphor more appropriate for the oppressed in the Korean context. The dissertation, therefore asserts that the life experience of humans includes women’s experience in a theological norm is as important as other norms of Scripture and tradition in the metaphors used for God in Christianity. As Lindbeck states, cultural linguistic frameworks significantly shape religious experience or the doctrine or language that orients imagination and desire.<sup>515</sup> Thus, his articulation supports the dissertation’s assertion that masculine dominant languages in the Korean context negatively influences Korean women’s experience and as such has degraded women’s status compared to men in contemporary Korean Christianity. In this respect, metaphors must include and reflect Korean women’s experience, and not

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<sup>513</sup> Mercy Amba Oduyoye, *Introducing African Women’s Theology* (Cleveland: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 46.

<sup>514</sup> Ellen Leonard, ‘Experience as an Source for Theology’, 147.

<sup>515</sup> George A. Lindbeck, *The Nature of Doctrine: Religion and Theology in a Postliberal Age*, 32-37.

be constructed strictly from a masculine perspective, in order to enhance women's dignity and identity in Korean Christianity.

## **B. McFague's Understanding of God**

### **1. McFague's Understanding of God and Models of God**

This section examines McFague's understanding of God, and then compares it to the understanding of God from Feng Shui that provides the basis for the model of land. This is because the suggested model 'God of Land' is proposed as an ecological, feministic, and cosmological Divine that employs a metaphorical way of expressing God by sharing the understanding of God through dialogue between the two ideas. This section also analyzes contrasts between McFague's understanding of personal God, and the impersonal God proposed from Korean Feng Shui.

McFague describes the traditional languages used for speaking of God as monarchical. She views this model as having three major flaws: 'In the monarchical model, God is distant from the world, relates only to the human world, and controls that world through domination and benevolence'.<sup>516</sup> Therefore, God is only concerned with human affairs, and is essentially indifferent to the world. That is the traditional understanding of God, as McFague describes it. She raises the issues of otherness and distance from God, who is far away from the world, and not related to it.<sup>517</sup> This model recognizes God as a being that is spiritual only, and highlights God's transcendence. This is derived from the idea that spiritual things are always good and holy, and that flesh and material things are always lesser.<sup>518</sup> This is because, according to McFague, the spiritual salvation of souls is the only concern

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<sup>516</sup> McFague, *Models of God*, 65.

<sup>517</sup> *Ibid.*, 63-66.

<sup>518</sup> McFague, *The Body of God*, 20-21.

of Christianity: Christian theologians do not address the material of the physical body.<sup>519</sup>

Following this, McFague explains the models of the relationship between God and the world in four types. The first is a deistic model. In this model, God is far away, where humans cannot reach. The second model of God is the dialogic model. Here, God talks, and humans respond to God's words. The third is a monarchical model. In this model, God is the almighty king who rules the people who obey God. The fourth is the agential model. In this model, the transactions of God have the clear intention and purpose of realizing providence in history.<sup>520</sup>

McFague claims that these models all render the Divine as transcendent, distant, and irrelevant. She suggests a new organic, immanent model, based on a new sensibility, as a positive alternative to these traditional models.<sup>521</sup> The main reason to propose such a model is that we are facing a severe ecological crisis, resulting from the fact that traditional Christian theologies failed to cherish and care for the earth as part of the incarnation.<sup>522</sup> In other words, McFague claims that the immutable doctrines from early Christianity were incarnation, Christology, Eucharist, the resurrection of the body, and a religion that centers on personification, but that later it did not care much about recognizing the body. So, she claims, finding the body would be the essence of Christianity.<sup>523</sup>

McFague proposes an organic model of 'the world as God's body', along with a mutual coupling of models of transactions. After all, she claims, the God

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<sup>519</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>520</sup> Ibid., 137-139.

<sup>521</sup> Ibid., 140.

<sup>522</sup> McFague, 'Human Being, Embodiment, and Our Home the Earth', in, Rebecca S. Chopp and Mark Lewis Taylor (eds.), *Reconstructing Christian Theology*, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994) 153-155.

<sup>523</sup> McFague, *The Body of God*, 14.

model that we need in order to face the current ecological crisis is an organic and ecological one - one which supports the interdependence of all life. To fill this need, she suggests the ecological models of God as mother, lover, and friend. In addition, she proposes the 'world as God's body' model as an alternative to help us face ecological and nuclear crisis with a cosmic vision.<sup>524</sup> This is an ecological metaphor for the nuclear age, which she presents in order to discover insights regarding the most appropriate metaphor for understanding the relationship between God and the world.

McFague's suggestion of God as mother, lover, friend, and 'the world as the God's body' is not intended to be taken literally. She proposes that we can understand God in a more intimate way through such personal metaphors.<sup>525</sup> In this sense, she uses the term 'thought experiment' in connection with her theology, meaning that through the test of thinking (rather than creating) we can find an ultimate or final model.<sup>526</sup> McFague prefers diverse models for God rather than one single one, in order to prevent idolization.

McFague's expression of a personal God is not intended to define or portray God as exclusively personal. Because humans are created in God's image, personal metaphors are best suited to represent God.<sup>527</sup> American theologian Schubert Ogden also recognizes that 'the tradition asks how an impersonal God can be conceived in personal terms, whereas God as the one who is related to all others is preeminently agent—a Thou'.<sup>528</sup> However, British theologian George

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<sup>524</sup> McFague, *Models of God*, 69-78.

<sup>525</sup> McFague, *The Body of God*, 33.

<sup>526</sup> McFague, *Models of God*, 20.

<sup>527</sup> McFague, *Metaphorical Theology*, 20-21. See McFague, *Model of God*, 78-87. See also McFague, *Life Abundant*, 18.

<sup>528</sup> Schubert Ogden, 'The Reality of God', in Ewert H. Cousins (ed.), *Process Theology: Basic Writings of the Key Thinkers*, 129 - quoted in McFague, *Model of God*, 202.

Chryssides rejects models of God, which are tied to an over-literal personalism, such as God as father or mother, and the 'gender neutral' naming of the God-as-a-friend model that McFague has suggested. He argues these must be understood merely as metaphors and not as expressing any literal truths.<sup>529</sup> On my view, McFague does not seem to focus on the question of whether God should be understood as personal or impersonal. As she explains in *Models of God*, she attempts to understand God in more intimate ways as a personal God.<sup>530</sup> In a similar way, this dissertation endeavors to portray the suggested feminist model of the Divine by employing the language of Korean religious and cultural tradition, which is more intimate and experiential for Korean women. This model will be an impersonal model of 'God of Land,' so this will be compared with the personal God model from McFague's theory.

## **2. Characteristics of McFague's Models and of Models in Feng Shui**

The suggested 'God of Land' model is basically an impersonal model, which expresses – both metaphorically and symbolically - Land as Divine, because 'God as Land' makes true eco-feminist sense in Feng Shui cosmology. Here, McFague's metaphorical theology offers a good parallel to this model, in terms of expressing God in more intimate ways, and as an impersonal or personal God either way. This model is, however, distinct from those of McFague's models that are expressed metaphorically as personal. As shown in the previous chapter, religious traditions of Korea provide valuable insights for Korean women's understanding of God, and Korean women have begun to create impersonal and natural metaphors as part of

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<sup>529</sup> George D. Chryssides, 'Evil and the Problem of God', in, *Religious Studies*, Vol.23, No.4, 1987, 469.

<sup>530</sup> McFague, *Models of God*, 78-87.

their understanding of God. Korean women's notion of a God immanent in the natural world is clearly expressed through the daily practices of an impersonal God in the most intimate ways. Added to this, Feng Shui draws analogies between Heaven-Land (earth)-Humanity in the ChunJiln idea. Further support for this metaphor from an Asian perspective includes *Jimo*, which literally presents 'Mother Land' as a birth-giver, and gives 'motherly' roles to Koreans. When all the studies are combined, the Land (earth) in Feng Shui cosmology inherently carries divinity within it.<sup>531</sup> Accordingly, this impersonal 'God of Land' model represents the most appropriate and the most intimate way for Korean women to express God in their context. More importantly, this impersonal God model also can be explained as a personal God model, understanding 'God as Mother' as Land as per the *Jimo* idea in Feng Shui. In this way, this impersonal 'God of Land' model could be reinterpreted as a personal 'God as Mother' model, just like those in McFague's. God can be expressed in both personal and impersonal ways at the same time, via yin and yang symbolic thinking that is 'both/and' and 'is and is'.<sup>532</sup> As such, God transcends personal and impersonal categories.

In dialogue with McFague's understanding of God, this dissertation suggests an understanding of God influenced by Korean Feng Shui, which provides the basis for the model of Land. McFague's models emphasize a paradigm shift away from a hierarchical and patriarchal God. Her models leave something more to be desired in the role and practice of Christian life because she is heavily dependent on metaphors. However, in her books *Life Abundant* and *A New Climate for Theology* she is more concerned with the well-being of Creation, and emphasizes

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<sup>531</sup> Ibid.

<sup>532</sup> Jung Young Lee, *The Theology of Change*, 64-65.

human ethics and practices. In a similar way, understanding God from the perspective of Korean Feng Shui offers a yet more organic whole which is comprised of God, humanity, and the natural world in One Chi. Korean Feng Shui therefore emphasizes the community as bound together by a common destiny, which is a fundamental spirit of ethics for a social community. In particular, in Bibo Feng Shui, one of the key characteristics of Korean Feng Shui, the 'Land' is regarded as the living body of a mother - so if there is something wrong with the Mother-Land, it should be corrected, and not abandoned. If humans commit the sins of destroying the natural environment, they will be served justice.

Sojgilhyungron in Korean Feng Shui is a good example of the teaching that only good people will be endowed with good 'Land'. Therefore, ethical practices of caring for nature, which are found in Korean Feng Shui, are innate and critical - like McFague's models - because they view nature as a family member, and God as the family.

Moreover, Korean Feng Shui understands God as an immanent and cosmological being through the point of view of Donggigameungron (the theory of sensing the same Chi), which holds that all life-forms in networks share the same Chi, and they become one from the same one Chi. This understanding of an immanent God is similar to that of McFague's, who sees all life as profoundly interrelated, and emphasizes God's embodiment in all creatures. McFague decided to suggest a body model through which to resist the traditional monarchical and hierarchical models, and express God as transcendent and immanent. God is understood as a thoroughly transcendent and immanent being; at the same time

McFague understands the world as a sacrament in which is God with us.<sup>533</sup> But this emphasis of immanence and transcendence has often been criticized for falling back into the fallacy of dualism, which separates spirit from body because of metaphorical tension. By comparison, Korean Feng Shui understands God as also being an immanent presence in the lives of God's creatures. God is always with us, and not far away. God's immanence is understood as his immediate and sympathetic experience shared with every individual in Korean Feng Shui. This immanent understanding of God enables us to include God's divine transcendence in the complementary actions of yin and yang, and the Five Elements. Mother-Land, which is understood as one Chi relationship, is a monistic form of thinking which does not distinguish between spirit and body, via the inclusion of the yin and yang principle of complementary relationship. Therefore, the understanding of God in yin and yang is considered to be more monistic than McFague's models because the opposite is essentially considered as part of ourselves, in an exquisite harmony of yin and yang.

### **C. The Model of 'God as Mother'**

McFague's model of 'God as Mother,' that is, the Divine that carries female attributes, is similar to the model of 'God of Land' in Feng Shui in terms of the latter's also proposing female attributes. This model represents the intricate network of relationships between all life forms within the 'womb' of God, that is, within the matrix of life. Through this female and motherly image of God, McFague hopes to overcome the dualisms inherent in patriarchal religion, and the Christian tradition's alienation from the body and female gender. The 'God of Land' model is

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<sup>533</sup> McFague, *A New Climate for Theology*, 72-78.



also able to overcome Western dualism, through the monistic thinking of One Chi, within a more comprehensive and holistic cosmology. The purpose of the following examination of the model 'God as mother' is therefore to highlight the female aspects of God, and the sense of female power.

### **1. A Female God Model Developed by McFague**

McFague claims that when humans - who have been created as men and women after God's image - draw images of God, they should use both male and female metaphors. This is because religious practitioners are both men and women.<sup>534</sup>

McFague shows that social stereotypes from Christianity and Western society—the ideas that women are soft, nurturing, and passive, while men are active, rational, and creative—have expanded to include our understanding of God.<sup>535</sup> However, she argues that although mothering is a female activity, it is not feminine; in other words, to give birth to and nurture the young is simply what females do. The rich possibilities of symbolism derived from the female activities of birth and nurturing have mostly been ignored by institutionalized Christianity, but she wants this model of the mother to show a powerful image which expresses the life-sustaining nature of our relationship with God.<sup>536</sup>

The mother model that McFague proposes draws God as female but not feminine. By distinguishing between these two terms - female, which refers to gender, and feminine, which refers to qualities conventionally associated with women - she tries to show that 'female metaphors for God should be inclusive of but not limited to maternal ones'.<sup>537</sup> In particular, she draws parallels between

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<sup>534</sup> McFague, *Models of God*, 97.

<sup>535</sup> *Ibid.*, 99.

<sup>536</sup> *Ibid.*, 100.

<sup>537</sup> *Ibid.*, 99.

activities related to Creation and divine justice—which the Christian tradition has expressed as exclusively masculine—and female images. She believes that the image of a transcendent and masculine God has contributed in some degree to the current ecological crisis as well as the abuse of women.<sup>538</sup> Therefore, McFague’s model of God as mother is proposed to address the critical realities of the ecosystem, and of women. This model suggests that God is neither distant nor transcendental, but rather is with us, and shares our pains. In other words, the model of God as mother – this female model - highlights the immanent and interdependent relationship between God and humanity in the terms that God sustains life. This model can overcome dualistic thinking by understanding the world as God's body; the model represents womanly qualities, which imply the ‘procreative-emanation’ of God’s role through the idea of God giving birth to the world, and nurturing it.<sup>539</sup> In this way, the model of God as mother represents divine love for the universe, by imagining the universe as a mother's body. The mother model encompasses life from beginning to end, and represents divine love from a procreative perspective, which imagines the world as the body of God.<sup>540</sup>

However, Gordon D. Kaufman criticizes that the God in the model, ‘the world as God’s body,’ appears to be the mother of God’s own body. That is, it appears that God directs love and friendship towards God’s own body, rather than to personal counterparts. He thus implies that God appears to be in a relationship with His own self, and not with any unique subjects.<sup>541</sup> British theologian Paul Reis Bowen also argues that despite the advantages of the various female models, the

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<sup>538</sup> See chapter 1, Literature Review.

<sup>539</sup> McFague, *The Body of God*, 150-151.

<sup>540</sup> McFague, *Models of God*, 105. See McFague, *The Body of God*, 151-156.

<sup>541</sup> Gordon D. Kaufman, ‘Model of God: Is Metaphor Enough?’, in, *Religion and Intellectual Life*, Vol. 5 (1988) 16.

problem with 'Goddess Feminism' (his term) is that metaphors, models, and myths are central to their ontology, but at the same time not clearly conceptualized or unpacked. So in order for Goddess Feminism to be truly understood, more comprehensive work must be done that focuses precisely on feminist metaphysics, and elaborates on specific key metaphors, myths, and models.<sup>542</sup> He also argues that these female models are not fully functioning within religious worldviews and frameworks. He warns that it is best not to use this model exclusively, but to use it in defining the behavior and position of women. It would, he argues, be best - and more creative - if this model were fully understood for its religious implications.<sup>543</sup>

McFague, however, argues that 'God as Mother' is not intended to directly equate God with being a mother, but rather seeks to appreciate God in light of certain maternal characteristics that are associated with mothering.<sup>544</sup> It is the methodology of metaphor, namely the dynamics of 'is and is not', that allows us to understand the maternal aspect of God through mothering characteristics of giving life and nurturing it; at the same time, the model holds the tension of 'is not' as a quality of difference, wherein God is not mother.<sup>545</sup>

Speaking of God as mother invites us to consider that some qualities associated with mothering are illuminating ways of speaking of certain aspects of the relationship between God and humanity.<sup>546</sup> McFague maintains that religious language about God must be applied metaphorically; furthermore, she believes that God expressed as a metaphor laden with tension is more religious than God expressed as a dead metaphor without tension. Metaphor provides a means for

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<sup>542</sup> Paul Reid-Bowen, *Goddess as Nature: Towards a Philosophical Theology* (Ashgate, 2007), 55.

<sup>543</sup> *Ibid.*, 67.

<sup>544</sup> McFague, *Models of God*, 22-23.

<sup>545</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>546</sup> *Ibid.*, 34.

remaining open to new interpretations with tension between the 'is' and 'is not' - that is, between being absolute and not being absolute. Ultimately, McFague's mother model is iconoclastic; its metaphorical tension is capable of going beyond the dualism of traditional models. Thus this model becomes monistic as it implicates the world as the body of God, thus appreciating its role of giving birth to life, and parenting it.

McFague's model of God as mother is not intended to emphasize the superiority of women, but she suggests this model in order to provide balance with many of the traditional images of God associated with patriarchy. God as father has become literalized through common usage so much that most people actually consider God as a father. Thus, she argues that many different images in the reality of God include female as well as male images. In her article 'Mother in God', Tess Harper supports McFague's idea that to speak of God merely as a father is only a half-truth. Harper maintains that God is the perfect harmony of male and female, as we were made in the image of God. God is both male and female, mother and father. Our perception of God as father alone is incorrect, as would also be our perception of God as mother alone.<sup>547</sup>

## **2. Comparison between McFague and Feng Shui in Female God Models**

In this section I draw a comparison between McFague's God as mother model, and my suggested feminist model, 'God of Land', drawn from Korean Feng Shui. In her model of God as mother, McFague distinguishes between using the terms 'female' and 'feminine'. In McFague's model, she cherishes the maternal instinct based on women's experiences related to birth-giving and pregnancy. She prefers, however,

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<sup>547</sup> Tess Harper, *The Furrow*, Vol. 38, No. 11 (Nov., 1987), 686-692.

to use the term 'female' in metaphors for God in a way that is not limited to this maternal side, which is being identified with feminine qualities that society has conventionally used such as 'tender', 'passive', and 'nurturing'.<sup>548</sup> By this distinction, McFague hopes that 'female metaphors for God should be inclusive of, but not limited to, maternal ones'.<sup>549</sup> Meanwhile, my suggested model from Feng Shui perceives 'God as Mother', motherly feminine, which is thought to be the ground of being, and is sensed as receptive, being based on *Jimo*, or Mother-Land spirit. In this sense, Mother-Land, which places maternity in God, is represented as 'Land' in Korean Feng Shui. In my suggested model from Korean Feng Shui, 'Land' is sensed by Koreans as a mother's warm breast and womb, which is life and death itself. All these earthly realities of life have been absorbed in 'Land', where we can find God as mother. Overall, McFague's mother model demands broader, active, positive action from the female role, while the model of God as 'Land' tells more about the maternal qualities of God, which are the more passible, receptive, suffering, healing, and sustaining aspects of divine activity. From this distinction, the model 'God of Land' is represented as an eco-feminist God model by which maternal, feminine qualities are given to God as well as female qualities, so that God becomes more holistic and comprehensive. This is both desirable and necessary for the oppressed women and nature in the contemporary Korean Church.

In addition, McFague's God as mother model, a procreative-emanationist model of Creation, is considered to be a model that opens up prospects of overcoming dualism through 'procreative-emanation' - God's role of giving birth to

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<sup>548</sup> McFague, *Models of God*, 99.

<sup>549</sup> Ibid.

Creation. However, the feminist model of 'Land' in Korean Feng Shui is a model of God as mother based on the idea of *Jimo* in ChenJiln, and the monistic idea of One Chi. While McFague's God as mother model overcomes the dualism by simply viewing the world as a mother's body and God's body, the feminist God model of 'Land' in Feng Shui is able to overcome dualism through the monistic thinking of One Chi. In this way, a feminist model of 'Land' offers a more comprehensive and holistic cosmology than McFague's model, where God appears to be in a relationship with God Himself, or Herself, and not with any unique subjects, as Kaufman indicated. Above all, these mother models from both McFague and Feng Shui imply the feature of personal God.

Despite these two distinctions, both models share critical points with each other. The models that Korean Feng Shui and McFague propose are basically female-mother models; however, both seek harmony and balance between women and men, rather than emphasizing the superiority of women by balanced metaphorical methodology of 'is and is not', and yin and yang typology principles of 'is and is', and 'both/and'. Therefore, this is a feminist model in which God is not exclusively female, but includes male as well as female.

#### **D. The Metaphor 'the World as God's Body'**

This section examines McFague's model, 'the world as God's body.' This examination is useful in formulating my divine model because there are many similarities between McFague's 'God's body' model, and the 'God of Land' model drawn from Feng Shui. McFague's model sees the world as God's body, and my suggested 'God of Land' model sees Land as God. Also, these two models are commonly regarded as panentheistic and monistic models. In this regard, this

section argues firstly that McFague's model 'the world as God's body' offers a good example of a panentheistic God model, and then engages with critical dialogues on this panentheistic model. Secondly, this section discusses the soteriology and Christology of this model, to help my suggested model remain in the Christian tradition. Lastly, this section critically compares two models - 'the world as God's body' and 'God of Land' in Feng Shui - via a transcultural dialogue. This examination offers beneficial insight into proposing my 'God of Land' model as an eco-feminist God model in sacramental theology, which is panentheistic and monistic in the Christian tradition.

### **1. The Cosmic Christ**

McFague's use of the metaphor 'the world as God's body' entertains an idea that the resurrected Christ embodied all things, and represents God incarnate in Creation. The scope of this metaphor is susceptible to various interpretations, by viewing it through the cosmic Christic paradigm. In the use of this metaphor, McFague hopes to break down the traditional theological position, which places only secondary emphasis upon the body, as something valueless and inferior. This metaphor also attempts to undercut the theological paradigm of underscoring divine transcendence, and that of distinguishing between God and the world. From this perspective, McFague sees all life as profoundly interrelated, and focuses on mutuality between God and the world in order to overcome the ecological crisis current in our time.

McFague perceives the shape and scope of the body in the Christic paradigm to be as much spatial as it is temporal.<sup>550</sup> This becomes an important

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<sup>550</sup> McFague, *The Body of God*, 180

motif because McFague sees current ecologic reality on our planet as a spatial crisis. In this spatial model of God, McFague does not emphasize the 'uniqueness' of the claim that incarnation is only through Jesus of Nazareth, but rather understands the body of God as the incarnation, for God's embodiment is revealed in all life in the universe.<sup>551</sup> In the face of ecological crisis, McFague extends the scope of Christ, which has been limited to humanity and its history, to a cosmic Christic paradigm beyond an anthropocentric worldview. McFague values the spatial concept, which sees space as the body of God. She emphasizes the interrelationships within the world as the body of God, who is suffering from the ecological crisis, and she calls for human caring and responsibility toward the world.

McFague suggests an organic and agential model of 'the world as God's body': It is organic in that the world is understood as the body of God, and agential in that God is understood as an agent or the spirit of the body, or God's breath.<sup>552</sup> McFague understands the Spirit of God as God's breath, the divine wind, which swept over the surface of the water prior to Creation and gave life and breath to all creatures.<sup>553</sup> McFague understands God's spirit as God's breath of life, rather than as the transcendent spirits spoken about in traditional theology. This means that God is not primarily the controller of the universe, but rather is an immanent God, the source of the universe, and its driving force.<sup>554</sup> These views align with Jürgen Moltmann's representation of the world as God's house, and as God's spirit. Moltmann believes that God is not merely a transcendent being, but an immanent

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<sup>551</sup> Ibid., 162.

<sup>552</sup> Ibid., 135.

<sup>553</sup> Ibid., 143.

<sup>554</sup> Ibid., 144.



being also, resident in all Creation, which enlivens all creatures by God's taking the cosmic spirit.<sup>555</sup>

In McFague's organic model, which understands God's Spirit as breath, God is not only an immanent but also a transcendent being, which dwells in all forms of life and enlivens them.<sup>556</sup> In McFague's model, therefore, God is immanent, and at the same time transcendent. God, who breathes into our body, is the source of power for the moving universe. Thus, this model is panentheistic, and similar to my suggested divine model 'God of Land' from Feng Shui presented in this dissertation, which is immanently suffering with creatures in pain and transcendentally healing wounded creatures in the world.

There are, however, controversies surrounding McFague's panentheistic model. I will therefore explore: Why is there so much controversy around McFague's panentheistic model? And, how does McFague defend herself from the criticisms of her model?

## **2. Critical Dialogues on McFague's Panentheistic Model**

There are debates about whether McFague's model—'the world as God's body' - which understands God's Spirit as breath and emphasizes the immanence of God, is panentheistic.<sup>557</sup> McFague's panentheistic perspective in her model supports the aims of my project in several ways because the suggested model of 'God of Land'

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<sup>555</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 23.

<sup>556</sup> Sallie McFague, *Life Abundant: Rethinking Theology and Economy for a Planet in Peril* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001), 140.

<sup>557</sup> Panentheism is the belief that 'the being of God includes and penetrates the whole universe, so that every part exists in God, but God's Being is more than, and not exhausted by, the universe'. Or, put another way, God is ontologically united with yet distinct from the world. John W. Cooper, *Panentheism: The Other God of the Philosophers: From Plato to the Present* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006), 27.

focuses on the conception of God and God's relation to the world through a panentheistic paradigm.

Moltmann argues for the panentheistic view that the Holy Spirit is animated as the breath of life, and that God is immanent in all Creation. He claims that God dwells in the world through the presence of the Spirit, but that God is more than the world.<sup>558</sup> Thus, Moltmann's panentheistic views are similar to the way McFague sees spirit as breath. Jay B. McDaniel, an American philosopher, sees that McFague's model is based on an interconnected organic body, and therefore has the characteristics of relational panentheism: The Spirit exists in the human body, but the Spirit cannot be reduced to the body. God is present in all creation processes in the world as God's agential acts, but the world is not identical with God. Therefore, although all creatures may be cells of the divine body, they cannot be God itself.<sup>559</sup> As such, these theologians assume that McFague's model is ultimately panentheistic.

On the contrary, David H. Nikkel, an American theologian, questions whether God is sufficiently integrated to include the universe in McFague's panentheistic model. Nikkel argues that many theologians explored varied insights from science and came to talk more positively about the presence of God's power for sustaining creativity, which is common to the Western religious traditions - so every creation process is basically contingent on the divine power of every moment.<sup>560</sup> On this basis, he claims God cannot be a body of creation. Gloria

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<sup>558</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *God in Creation* [1985], trans: Margaret Kohl, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), in Nicole Newell, 'For the Good of All Creation: A Christian Ecological Ethic', undergraduate paper, St. Olaf College, 2014 (<http://pages.stolaf.edu/cis-nnewell/files/2015/03/Ecological-Ethics-Paper.pdf>). [accessed July 7, 2015]

<sup>559</sup> Jay B. McDaniel, *Of God and Pelicans: A Theology of Reverence for Life* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press 1989), 34.

<sup>560</sup> David H. Nikkel, 'Panentheism'; *The Encyclopedia of Science and Religion*, 2003.

Schaab, an American theologian, also argues that McFague's model is panentheistic in the way that God may be an unavoidable source of evil, or a silent bystander in the world. Schaab maintains that God in her model is immanently suffering but transcendentally saving the world, despite the pervasive reality of suffering endemic in the cosmos. Each incidence proves a sign of God, who is immanent and transcendent, but each sign is 'vague and fragmentary'.<sup>561</sup>

In addition, several theologians continuously criticize McFague's God's body model. Anna Case-Winter, an American Presbyterian priest and theologian, argues that McFague's model challenges identifying the relationship between God and the world. She maintains that the pantheistic option of McFague's model simultaneously removes divine transcendence and disrupts the integrity of Creation. In this model, she claims interdependence, or relationships between God and the world, have no place. Whatever human beings do is not really their own action but God's - therefore, human responsibility for Creation disappears in this model.<sup>562</sup> Ryan Klassen, a Canadian theologian, also maintains that despite McFague's hopes to break down the dualism between God and the world in this model, her own model still has a dualistic nature.<sup>563</sup> Mark Wallace, an American theologian, indicates that McFague again falls into the fallacy of dualism by separating spirit from body.<sup>564</sup> By citing Jay B. McDaniel's distinction between immanationist panentheism (which sees the world as a direct expression of God's

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<http://libres.uncg.edu/ir/uncp/f/Panentheism.pdf>. [accessed July 8, 2015]

<sup>561</sup> Gloria L. Schaab, *The Creative Suffering of the Triune God: An Evolutionary Theology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), Kindle edition, Location 510-511.

<sup>562</sup> Anna Case-Winters, 'Toward a Theology of Nature: Preliminary Intuitions', in, *Religiologiques*, Vol. 11 (Spring 1995): 249-267.

<sup>563</sup> Ryan Klassen, 'Metaphorical Theology: An Evangelical Appropriation', in, *Quodlibet Journal*, Vol. 7 (June 2005).

<sup>564</sup> Mark Wallace, *The Fragments of Spirits* (New York: Continuum Press, 1996), in, Jung Bae Lee, 'Nature as Light of Transcendence: The Ecological Theology of Sallie McFague based on the Incarnational Spirituality', *Research Paper, Theology* (2009): 105.

own being) and relational panentheism (which sees the world as another in relation to God), Winter assumes that McFague's position seems to take an immanentist understanding of panentheism, but that McFague's model is still closer to pantheism.<sup>565</sup>

Responding to those criticisms, McFague defends her panentheistic model of 'the world as God's body' by citing Raymond Keith Williamson's words - 'God is not exhausted by finite beings, not even all finite beings, yet God is in all finite creatures and apart from God there is nothing; nor is God 'apart' from anything'.<sup>566</sup> She continues that the world is dependent on God, but God does not depend on the world. God is not reduced to the universe, so, she argues, this model becomes panentheistic.<sup>567</sup> McFague argues that if personal agential metaphors were not used, including other models of God as mother, lover, and friend, the metaphor of the world as God's body would be pantheistic because the body would be in all things.<sup>568</sup> Furthermore, McFague maintains that 'it is a view of the God-world relationship in which all things have their origins in God and nothing exists outside God', so this model ultimately is monistic, and panentheistic.<sup>569</sup>

Despite the controversy of this model, it remains in the Christian tradition. Thus, the next section explores McFague's soteriology and Christology in this model, as my suggested model hopes to provide an adequate resource for Christian eco-feminist theology.

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<sup>565</sup> Anna Case-Winter, *Reconstructing a Christian Theology of Nature* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2007), 32.

<sup>566</sup> Raymond Keith Williamson, *Introduction to Hegel's Philosophy of Religion* (Albany, N.Y.: SUNY Press, 1984), 254, quoted by McFague, *The Body of God*, 149.

<sup>567</sup> *Ibid.*, 149. See McFague, *Models of God*, 71.

<sup>568</sup> McFague, *Models of God*, 71-72.

<sup>569</sup> *Ibid.*, 72.

### 3. The Soteriology and Christology of the Model of “the World as God’s Body”

The soteriology of McFague’s ‘the world as God’s body’ model approaches and embraces the ecological crisis from a salvific point of view. For McFague, salvation means healing; therefore, the most essential meaning of salvation in this model is healing and preserving the wellbeing of nature and human beings.<sup>570</sup> The cosmic Christ in this model’s metaphor is born from the resurrected body of Jesus, and exists in all the bodies on the planet. It liberates, heals, and preserves them. McFague proposes an ethic of salvation in which she asserts that we should become ‘guardians and caretakers of our tiny planet’, to articulate the profound interrelationship between humankind and all Creation.<sup>571</sup> Ernst M. Conradie, a South African theologian, issues words of caution however, in relation to this kind of stewardship. He says it still presumes that human beings are superior among the species of the earth, as guardians of the rest of the creatures.<sup>572</sup> He suggests that ‘stewardship’ is not the best way for human beings to care for the rest of the creatures; the concept points particularly to the pervasive reality of human sin.<sup>573</sup>

From my perspective, McFague’s ethical stance on healing and preserving the wellbeing of nature and human beings goes beyond simple ‘stewardship’. Human beings are not separated from the world, which is God’s body. In this sense, McFague calls for a ‘new sensibility’<sup>574</sup> of caring towards the wellbeing of God’s body from an ethical stance (responsibility for humans to take care of

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<sup>570</sup> Ibid., 146.

<sup>571</sup> McFague, *Body of God*, 109.

<sup>572</sup> Ernst M. Conradie, ‘Stewards or Sojourners in the Household of God’, *Scriptura*, Vol. 73 (2000): 153-174.

<sup>573</sup> Ernst M. Conradie, *An Ecological Christian Anthropology: At Home on Earth?* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2005), 229, in, Kevin J. O’Brien, [Society of Christian Ethics], *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics*, Vol. 27, No. 2 (Fall/Winter 2007): 299.

<sup>574</sup> McFague, *Models of God*, 3-28.

earth).<sup>575</sup> This position resembles the ethical stance found in Korean Feng Shui - that Chi in human beings who do not strive for virtue cannot be reconciled with Chi in the universe. Eventually, the relationship between human beings and nature should be grounded in the universal principles of life, which are closely connected each other. In this way, McFague speaks of the ethics of human relationships with the world, which should be grounded on the cosmic principle of life. From this perspective, ecological and cosmological salvation is an ongoing work for healing the body of God. Each person has a responsibility to be a part of salvation.<sup>576</sup> Each person takes an active part in salvation, and salvation needs our action for all. Thus the ethic of salvation is not for one person, but is to seek justice for all.<sup>577</sup> In this vein, there is a phrase about cosmic salvation in the New Testament: 'And through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross' (Colossians 1:20).

McFague is hostile to any form of idolatrous Christology, including 'Jesusolatry', which traditional Christology has long held. She rejects the Christological stereotype that salvation is human-centered, spiritual-centered, and for one person.<sup>578</sup> In this way, McFague hopes to overcome Jesusolatry through a sacramental Christology characterized by divine immanence.<sup>579</sup> In this model, God incarnates in the whole of Creation, and cares for wounded nature including any forms of wounded life. Ultimately, Christology in this model expresses the love of an immanent God who is with us, and suffering with us.

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<sup>575</sup> McFague, 'Imaging a Theology of Nature', 212-213.

<sup>576</sup> Ibid., 143.

<sup>577</sup> Ibid., 145.

<sup>578</sup> McFague, *Life Abundant*, 159.

<sup>579</sup> Ibid., 163-164. 168-169.

Regarding McFague's sacramental Christology,<sup>580</sup> Daphne Hampson, a British theologian, critiques McFague's view of Jesus as a 'paradigmatic person' and 'not unique', as one who is a 'very fine human being, but not God'. She argues that, if Jesus is simply paradigmatic, McFague's position cannot remain within the Western Christian tradition. Hampson is not sure whether McFague's embodiment model can meet practical application for Christian worship by replacing the traditional models. Hampson indicates that this model risks depicting a God who 'loves not individuals but the world as a whole'.<sup>581</sup>

Warren McWilliams, an American theologian, also argues that McFague's Christology does not fully reflect on the aspects of Christ's divinity in logos Christology. He says that although logos Christology is a better way of describing the cosmic Christ, McFague is not successful in giving life to the meaning of her cosmic Christ through logos Christology.<sup>582</sup> Van Dyk, an American theologian, adds that McFague's Christology seriously warps logos Christology.<sup>583</sup>

From my perspective however, McFague presents a Christology that reflects the postmodern situation in a context of ecology. She develops a Christic paradigm as cosmic Christ from the healing story of Jesus. Her Christology is intended to deconstruct traditional thinking, and reconstruct more inclusive, nonhierarchical ways of salvation. McFague advances healing stories, which embrace physical bodies in pain, exemplified by the inclusive eating stories of Christ.<sup>584</sup> McFague

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<sup>580</sup> Ibid.

<sup>581</sup> Daphne Hampson, *Feminism and Theology* (Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers, 1989), 158, 159, 160.

<sup>582</sup> Warren McWilliams, 'Christic Paradigm and Cosmic Christ: Ecological Christology in the Theologies of Sallie McFague and Jürgen Moltmann', in *Perspectives in Religious Studies*, Vol. 25 (1998): 345.

<sup>583</sup> L. Van Dyk, review of *The Body of God: An Ecological Theology*, in, *Theology Today*, Vol. 5 (1994): 178.

<sup>584</sup> McFague, *Body of God*, 162-168.

recalls an example of Jesus' communal table fellowship, which implies a meal that is to be shared sitting at the same table of the planet, where the invitation is extended to the whole of life on the planet, without any exclusion.<sup>585</sup> In these radical ideas of engagement toward all life, McFague calls for an 'ecological sensibility' that she recommends we adopt in our time in terms of interdependence, rationality, and reciprocity.<sup>586</sup> McFague presents us with a Christology that has been extended from logos Christology, which shows a love that unites all relationships of caring and being cared for. The Christology of this model calls for our action of comprehensive love towards all who experience oppression in any form, including nature and animals.<sup>587</sup> Christology in McFague's model addresses the needs of those whose bodies require healing, and it espouses an egalitarian principle that is based on balance and harmony in the planet.

Does, then, the Christology and soteriology of McFague's 'the world as God's body' have something of value worth sharing with the Trinity of 'God of Land'? Regarding this, the next section examines similarities and dissimilarities between these two models for finding adequate resources needed for making this model a Christian model.

#### **4. Comparison between 'the World as God's Body' and 'God of Land' in Feng Shui**

The Christology and soteriology in McFague's model is concerned with healing and preserving the world, which is God's body. Her theological understanding proclaims the end of hierarchical distinction, and oppressive dualism. Her theology claims the changes of moving towards an inclusive way of doing theology. It calls

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<sup>585</sup> McFague, *Models of God*, 54.

<sup>586</sup> *Ibid.*, 53.

<sup>587</sup> McFague, *Body of God*, 159.



for human responsibility towards participating in healing the wounded ecological reality. In this way, this dissertation refers McFague's soteriology and Christology in order to create a contextual God model by applying Feng Shui cosmology to Christian theology, which can liberate Korean women and nature. Similarly, the Christology and soteriology of this God model is grounded on Feng Shui cosmology, which comprises three hypostases of 'Wind', 'Water', and 'Land', replacing the Holy Spirit, the God the Son, and God the Father respectively. In this way, the Christology of the suggested model is portrayed from 'God the Son as Water', which represents an immanent God's revelation, and God's work for all existences in the universe, in terms of Creation, and salvation from the Spirit that was at work in Jesus' healing ministry. In other words, the Christic paradigm of the suggested model is cosmic in nature, and based on the belief in God's revelation in all Creation, and in the spirit of human beings - in a similar way to that suggested by McFague's 'the world as God's body' model. The use of metaphors from Feng Shui idioms - of the cosmic paradigm of Water - represent the presence of divine revelation in an immanent way in the world for all Creation (God's revelation), in order to heal and preserve all living things, from the love of inclusiveness (God's work).

After all, this dissertation applies a Christology to Feng Shui principles that pursues the liberation of all Creation, especially that which is oppressed, and seeks harmony and balance toward Oneness in the universe from this cosmic paradigm of salvation. Feng Shui cosmology holds notions similar to McFague's understandings of a cosmic Christ and the sacramental theology of incarnation and embodiment; Koreans have sensed for a long time the divine revelation from nature, which is concerned with the wellbeing of the whole planet as a sacred

body.

In addition, McFague's model of 'the world as God's body' is similar to the Korean Feng Shui model of 'God of Land' in that both are immanent-transcendent panentheistic, and are not dualistic. McFague's monistic ideas stress the continuity of God and the world by suggesting the model of God the creator as mother; the world is born from the being of God—that is, the world as God's body—in order to overcome the monarchial model that emphasizes the difference between God and the world (dualism). In this model, 'the world as God's body,' McFague understands Spirit as the breath of God, as the agent, which God takes. In this way, she claims that the aspects of transcendence and immanence in this model are preserved. God is related to the world as a spirit is to a body, which is immanent and panentheistic. However, this model has been criticized as panentheistic and ultimately tending towards dualism. Despite the controversies surrounding this model, this dissertation considers McFague's model not only a monistic one (not dualistic) because the model holds that God is the only source of all things, but also a panentheistic one because the model does not claim that God is identical with the world.<sup>588</sup>

Similarly, the 'God of Land' model in Feng Shui cosmology is also a monistic model; it is based upon the One Chi thinking of ChunJiIn, which seeks balance and harmony from three Heaven, Land (earth), and Humanity. However, such strict monistic thinking entails the risk that it will eventually be understood as pantheistic. But the 'God of Land' model in Feng Shui is thought to be able to overcome this pantheistic aspect because the yin and yang principle in Feng Shui - which has the complementary relationships of 'is and is' and 'both/and' - encompasses all things.

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<sup>588</sup> McFague, 'Imaging a Theology of Nature', 216.

This model does not connote an 'either-or' logic; in this model, the transcendental aspect of God (yang) includes the aspect of immanence (yin) in its nature. The immanent nature of God also embraces the transcendental nature of God. The logic of 'is and is' and 'both/and' in this model implies the immanent and transcendent nature of God. Therefore, this model goes beyond pantheism, and into panentheism, according to the complementary and embracive logic of yin and yang. This model of God of Land is immanent-transcendent panentheistic, which is similar to the model of God's body from McFague.

Moreover, McFague's 'the world as God's body' model portrays the world as the body of God, but not as a human body. In this respect, Klassen critiques McFague's model, which identifies God with the world. He argues that her model does not fit an evangelical understanding of the nature of God and the world. He assumes that this model is an experimental way of describing God, that is, it is truth mingled with falsehood. He thus proposes a more effective model for imagining the relationship between God and the world: That of humanity as God's body. All humankind is God's physical manifestation on earth, and the mediation of God's presence to the world. He claims this model would be beneficial over McFague's panentheistic model.<sup>589</sup>

In contrast to McFague's idea, the 'God of Land' model in Feng Shui suggests that 'Land' has long been metaphored, not only as the body of God, but also as the source of the body of human beings. This model is grounded on the idea of ChunJiIn, which is comprised of Heaven, Land (earth), and Humanity in One Chi. Feng Shui understands the human body as a religious state fused with cosmic life, which is Chi. The human body is regarded as a microcosm, and as a

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<sup>589</sup> Ryan Klassen, 'Metaphorical Theology : An Evangelical Appropriation'

cognitive subject that can understand the universe's ecosystems. Feng Shui connotes that the world (Land) is the Divine body, and that it is not different from the human body (Sintoburi; 身土不二).<sup>590</sup> In Feng Shui cosmology the Heaven, Land (earth), and Humanity are not separable ontological components of world. Therefore, the 'Land' in Feng Shui cosmology seeks both the unification of humanity with God and a cosmological understanding of life. This comprehensive cosmological thinking opens up prospects for overcoming hierarchical dualism and gender discrimination. In this way, this dissertation offers a more comprehensive, holistic, and positive eco-feminist model of the Divine from eco-feminism and the cosmology of Korean Feng Shui, which engages with McFague's ideas, via a transcultural dialogue.

### **III. 3 Conclusion**

This chapter attempts a transcultural dialogue between eco-feminism and Feng Shui cosmology, which draw an analogy between humanity and nature. This dialogue is essential for representing an eco-feminist model of the Divine, with the goal of liberating women and nature from the sexism and eco-antipathy that is at the heart of the contemporary Korean Church. This conversation attempts to draw upon a feminine model, the 'God of Land,' from Feng Shui cosmology, in order to craft a model of an eco-feminist God in Christian theology.

The model of 'God of Land' is a feminine and impersonal divine model, which is grounded in yin and yang, Chi and ChunJiln ideas from Feng Shui cosmology. Therefore, this model is well aware of unity (balance) and inclusiveness (harmony). This model also offers an opportunity to follow the

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<sup>590</sup> Jung Bae Lee, 'Korean FengShui and Ecology'. 48.

essence of yin, which is feminine and embracing, differing from the masculine character of yang of the Western ideas.<sup>591</sup> From all of these characters, this model will provide a sense of liberation, and a sense of wellbeing for women and nature in the contemporary Korean Church.

In order to draw this 'God of Land' model as an eco-feminist model of God, this chapter attempts to fuse Feng Shui cosmology and eco-feminism through a transcultural dialogue. Hence the extended analysis of McFague's thoughts and models; her outlook on nature and her ontological and metaphysical understanding of God largely resemble both theories. In addition, McFague's 'the world as God's body' model, and the 'God of Land' model, share much in common - but there are also some differences. The similarities and differences are summarised in the following tables.

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<sup>591</sup> Bede Griffiths, *Universal Wisdom* (London: Harper Collins, 1994), 27.

**Table 1. Similarities between the Model of Feng Shui and Sallie McFague**

<b>Similarities</b>	<b>Feng Shui; 'God of Land'</b>	<b>Sallie McFague; 'the World as God's Body'</b>
<i>Hermeneutical Approach</i>	Metaphor; God as Land	Metaphor; World as God's body
<i>Divine Figure of Identity</i>	<i>Jimo</i> (Mother-Land); Female	God as Mother (Mother Model); Female
<i>Outlook on Nature</i>	Organic, ecological cosmology	Organic, ecological worldview
<i>Cosmology</i>	Oneness of Humanity, God and Nature, cosmocentric	Interconnectedness, paradigm shift from anthropocentric to cosmocentric
<i>Conceptions of God</i>	Monistic, Panentheistic; (One Chi, ChunJiIn thought)	Monistic, Panentheistic (World as God's body)
<i>Vision of a different present based on a new future (Christology and soteriology)</i>	Community bound together by a common destiny. Morally responsible for healing, and comfort of nature and women	New ethics of eco-justice, "New Sensibility," healing, preservation
<i>Aim</i>	Unity (harmony) and inclusion (balance)	Egalitarianism

**Table 2. Differences between the Model of Feng Shui and Sallie McFague**

<b>Differences</b>	<b>Feng Shui; 'God of Land'</b>	<b>Sallie McFague; 'the World as God's Body'</b>
<i>Image of God</i>	Impersonal/personal	Personal
<i>Creative Tension</i>	Metaphor: 'is and is' and 'both/and'	Metaphor: 'is or is not'
<i>Symbolic Expression of God</i>	Cosmological implication of God's spirit, and God's presence in all beings	God incarnated and embodied to World
<i>Divine Characteristics</i>	Maternity (both Female and Feminine)	Maternity (Female)

Clearly, the two theories have many similarities. Firstly, McFague's models speak of God metaphorically in the way that she understands God; likewise, this

dissertation suggests a metaphorical God model through the place of Land in Korean Feng Shui. Feng Shui itself is not a metaphor, but this dissertation uses the important concept of Land in Feng Shui as a metaphor for a divine model. It prescribes the human way of harmonizing with environment and nature, so it has many metaphoric implications for divinity. Also, nature is represented as female in both Feng Shui and McFague's models. The notion of *Jimo*, which is Mother-Land in Feng Shui, and the procreative-emanationist model seen through McFague's 'world of God's body', which is born from a mother, both imply a feminine divinity. In addition, both theories take the ecological perspective that the whole universe is a living organism. Cosmology in Korean Feng Shui emphasizes that all living things in the planet are interconnected, and mutually dynamic and supportive. Thus, they all belong to the universe, and ultimately our ecosystem is one community. Likewise, in McFague, the cells of our body are regarded as being closely connected to the creation of spirits; the cells in our body are all unique, and are constantly evolving members of the cosmos.<sup>592</sup> Moreover, the understanding of God and His relation to the world in both theories seeks to move from anthropocentrism toward cosmocentrism. Feng Shui cherishes intuition, and seeks to integrate the human self into the cosmos. McFague also suggests we should turn away from anthropocentrism, which focuses on ourselves as owners of the earth, and towards cosmocentrism, which focuses on the earth and where we belong within it.<sup>593</sup> Above all, God is neither transcendent nor foreign in these two models; rather, God is immanent as a part of our lives. In other words, both theories imagine God as a metaphysical being that is immanent-transcendent,

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<sup>592</sup> McFague, *Models of God*, 4.

<sup>593</sup> McFague, *A New Climate for Theology*, 49.

monistic, and panentheistic, while God in Western Christianity is typically understood as transcendent.

Furthermore, the Christology and soteriology in McFague's model are concerned with healing and preserving the world for the oppressed. Similarly, the model in Feng Shui cosmology challenges traditional orthodox Christology toward ecological responsibility, and offers a new vision of salvation for the oppressed, including Korean women and nature. In terms of Christology and soteriology, both call for human responsibility in healing the wounded ecological reality of our time. In other words, healing means a balanced integration in all the parts of an organism, which works for healing on the planet. This perspective makes us responsible for all life on this planet. Lastly, these models from Korean Feng Shui and McFague both seek unity and inclusiveness through the mutual cooperation of all things, which can overcome all dualistic worldviews.

Despite the many similarities, the two models do not share some views. While McFague's model of God represents a personal God as mother, friend, and lover, Korean Feng Shui represents 'God as Land' as an impersonal model, but this impersonal God model can also be explained as a personal one via the 'Land as a mother' concept that comes from the *Jimo* idea harbored in Feng Shui. In addition, more inclusive and holistic cosmology is shown in the Feng Shui model than in McFague's model. For example, McFague simply sees the world as God's body, whereas the 'God of Land' model in Feng Shui understands God, humanity, and the universe (Land) as one integrated organic being. Also, while McFague uses the metaphoric tension of 'is and is not', metaphors used for God in Feng Shui employ a comprehensive tension of 'is and is' and 'and/both', based on the yin and yang typology. But McFague's mother model represents a wide range of



roles of the female as well as maternal characteristics of God, while the 'God of Land' model emphasizes more of the maternal characteristics of God as *Jimo* idea that Land is mother from Feng Shui, thus the eco-feminist 'God of Land' model includes female and feminine attributes.

Overall, these two models share more similarities than dissimilarities. In this way, this eco-feminist model of the Divine benefits from the dialogue between Feng Shui and McFague. In other words, this dissertation aims to present a contextual God model from both Asian and Western eco-feminist perspectives, which is highly pertinent in our time of persistent entrenched sexism and eco-antipathy in the contemporary Korean Church. This innovative 'God of Land' model, which is based on the ideas of relational cosmologies from these two theories, would be an ecological, organic, and feminine model. This model is basically an eco-feministic 'God of Land' model, created by linking the two theories from East and West; it becomes ecological and feminine, and it eventually has features of immanence-transcendence.

More to the point, the purpose of this chapter is to work towards a contextual theology by reconstructing thinking systems through a linking of McFague's eco-feminism and Korean Feng Shui cosmology. The proposal of this new Korean eco-feminist model of the Divine is that it eventually aims to free women and nature from the patriarchal tradition, and to expand the horizon of theology from a cosmological point of view. This model may have similar criticisms to those of McFague's because she does not give full authority to the Scriptures, and rejects preexisting Biblical and theological interpretations as absolute; instead, she reconstructs a new interpretation appropriate to our time. Regarding this matter, Gordon Kaufman says that theology is essentially construction or

reconstruction activities, and not about explaining or technical activities.<sup>594</sup> McFague also indicates that theology 'is reflection on experiences of God's liberating love from various contexts and within the Christian community'.<sup>595</sup> According to McFague, Christianity is not tied by rigid dogma, but can be reconstructed contextually from each place where it is practiced. American theologian Stephen B. Bevans supports these ideas, stating, 'there is no such thing as "theology"; there is only contextual theology'.<sup>596</sup> From this perspective, Scriptures should be contextualized and interpreted from the cultural and historical background from which they emerged. This is because Christianity has developed and taken shape depending upon the cultural traditions and backgrounds of the places where it is practiced. In other words, Christianity is no longer exclusively identified as a Western religion, but a world religion. This means Christianity cannot be understood exclusively from Western perspectives, and must be contextually understood from diverse cultures.<sup>597</sup> Therefore, the suggested model should be contextually understood from the particular context of Korea.

From the eco-feministic perspective, the 'God of Land' model from Feng Shui is proposed in the particular context of the contemporary Korean Church, where sexism and eco-antipathy is prevalent. The next chapter will present clues regarding how yin and yang and Chi symbolic thinking in Feng Shui can also be Christian Trinitarian thinking. Furthermore, the chapter will explore the Trinity of 'God of Land', and how this model can be reinterpreted contextually from the Christian Trinity, which is eco-feministic and relational.

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<sup>594</sup> Gordon D. Kaufman, *An Essay on Theological Method* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995), trans. Christian Academic Institute (Seoul: Handul Press, 1999), 15.

<sup>595</sup> McFague, *Life Abundant*, 39-40.

<sup>596</sup> Stephen B. Bevans, *Model of Contextual Theology* (New York: Orbis Books, 2013), 3.

<sup>597</sup> Jung Yong Lee, *The Trinity in Asian Perspective*, 11.

## **Chapter IV - The Trinity of the Eco-feminist Model, 'God of Land': Approaching Feminist Theology**

This chapter endeavors to develop the meaning of Trinity from the eco-feminine divine model of 'God of Land' as suggested in this dissertation, by employing Feng Shui cosmology from Asian perspectives. More specifically, this chapter shows how the 'God of Land' model taken from the contextual thinking process of Feng Shui cosmology can be reinterpreted into the Christian Trinity, with feminist theology.

In this chapter, the Trinity of the 'God of Land' model will be explained in symbolic and metaphorical terms as three hypostases, identified as 'Wind' (Feng, Chi - Holy Spirit), 'Water' (Shui - God the Son), and 'Land' (Earth - God the Mother), and imagined as female figures. The 'Wind' (Feng) is the power of the Holy Spirit that gives life to all things. 'Water' (Shui) expresses God the Son, which is the gracious invitation of Jesus' reaching out to humanity for liberation and salvation. And finally 'Land' (Earth) is conceived of as the Mother of Creation (God the Mother). This theological reinterpretation is an Asian contextual and eco-feminist's approach to the divine Trinity. Drawing from Feng Shui cosmology, symbolized by the yin and yang way of thinking, the Trinity of 'God of Land' is inclusive and holistic, and emphasizes that there is no fixed order in the Trinity. In this way, these three hypostases of the Trinity in the 'God of Land' model are to be regarded as having a feminine disposition, and as being complementary to one another.

The relationship among the three hypostases of the triune God from the 'God of Land' model based on yin and yang symbolic thinking are described via the

concept of 'perichoresis', i.e. interpenetration and unity with another.<sup>598</sup> In other words, the 'both/and' paradigm of yin and yang in IChing,<sup>599</sup> which represents the inexhaustible resources of everything in creation and in sustaining all things, is based on a relationship that is mutually cooperative and equal. Therefore, this model expresses Trinitarian thinking that can overcome gender discrimination by highlighting the necessity of including feminine thought and perspectives in order to balance the male-centric models presented in Korean churches. In addition, the feminist and impersonal attribute in the Trinity of 'God of Land' will be interpreted from yin and yang's symbolic 'both/and' way of thinking, as it includes both the personal and impersonal, and at the same time both the feminine and the masculine. Furthermore, the Trinity of this model attempts a feminist theological approach based on Feng Shui principles, which conceive female symbols from 'Wind' (Feng), 'Water' (Shui), and 'Land' as three hypostases. In this way, the chapter develops a feminist theological approach to the divine Trinity that emphasizes women's experiences, and includes a relationship of mutual respect and interdependence that they have with each other. In this sense, this model is neither metaphysical nor abstractive, but is empirically based on women's experiences, and the relational divine Trinity, which emphasizes the unity between persons by perichoresis. Also, through the feminist theological and Trinitarian thinking of this 'God of Land' model, God's spirit of creation and salvation will be

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<sup>598</sup> This is an ancient concept of community without one, and personality without individualism. It is used to express: 'Whirl' or 'rotation' as nouns, going from one to another, walking around or encircling and embracing, mutual interpenetration, and mutual indwelling. Jürgen Moltmann, 'Perichoresis: An Old Magic Word for a New Trinitarian Theology', in M. Douglas Meeks (ed.), *Trinity, Community, and Power: Mapping Trajectories in Wesleyan Theology* (Nashville: Kingswood Books, 2000), 113-114.

<sup>599</sup> 'According to IChing, I or change is the ultimate reality or the great ultimate, and being or substance is simply the manifestation of change'. 'In IChing, change is regarded as the absolute and is comparable with the Great Ultimate. It operates through the interaction between yin and yang'. Jung Young Lee, *The Trinity in Asian Perspective* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996), 23, 27.

discussed from a feminine perspective by employing Feng Shui cosmology.

This Trinitarian reinterpretation of the 'God of Land' model employs the cosmology of Feng Shui, using the yin and yang paradigm as a hermeneutic key. In this way, the dissertation attempts to reconstruct the meaning of the traditional doctrine of the Trinity from the feminist theological perspectives in Feng Shui. From this symbolic thinking, which is fundamental to the contextual thinking process of East Asians, the dissertation proposes the model 'God of Land' through retrieving the meaning of the Trinity to transform Christian spirituality in the contemporary Korean Church. This is for liberating and healing the oppressed—especially women and nature.

#### **IV.1 An Asian Contextual Approach to the Divine Trinity of the Model 'God of Land'**

This section describes the basic concepts of the Trinity of the 'God of Land' model from an Asian perspective. It involves examining the practical implications of the Trinity in relation to 'God of Land', which is feminine and impersonal, and how Trinitarian thinking retrieved from yin and yang principles can serve as the paradigm that helps establish the 'God of Land' model. Further to this, the section derives theological implications for developing a relational (non-hierarchical) and feministic Trinity for the 'God of Land' model from the work on the Trinity of two outstanding scholars: Jürgen Moltmann, and Elizabeth Johnson.<sup>600</sup>

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<sup>600</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *In der Geschichte des dreieinigen Gottes*, trans. Sin Keun Lee, *The History of the Triune God*, (Seoul: Korean Christian Literature Publishing, 1998). See Jürgen Moltmann, *Trinität und Reich Gottes* (München: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1980), trans. Kyun Chin Kim, *The Trinity and the Kingdom* (Seoul: The Christian Literature Society of Korea, 1982). Jürgen Moltmann, *Erfahrungen theologischen Denkens: Wege und Formen christlicher Theologie*, Gütersloh: Chr. Kaiser, 1999. trans. Kyun Chin Kim, *The Method and Form of Theology: My Journey to Theology* (Seoul: The Christian Literature Society of Korea, 2001). Jürgen Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life: A Universal Affirmation* (Minneapolis: First Fortress Press, 2001). Jürgen Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, trans., Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993) Jürgen Moltmann

The section is divided into two parts. By employing Feng Shui to understand the Trinitarian concept of 'God of Land', the first part explores the Trinity of 'Change' (IChing) proposed by Korean-American systematic theologian Jung Young Lee, and reinterprets the meaning of Trinity from 'Change (IChing), which has been the foundation behind Feng Shui cosmology. Lee presents the symbolic thinking of yin and yang theory as a way to understand the Triune God of Christianity using the hermeneutical framework from an Asian perspective. Lee suggests the possibility of interpreting the Trinity as being one substance in three hypostases through the yin and yang, 'both/and' way of thinking.<sup>601</sup> This 'both/and' approach opens up prospects to understand the Christian concept of the Trinity from the 'God of Land' model, which is feminine, and impersonal.<sup>602</sup> Thus, the yin and yang symbolic approach developed from a Trinity of 'Change' provides the ideological basis for explaining how the Christian tradition of Trinity is present in my 'God of Land' model. This Asian perspective serves as the foundation for approaching the idea of Trinity in my 'God of Land' model in this chapter.

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and Elisabeth Moltmann-wendel, *Humanity in God* (New York: Pilgrim Press, 1983). Jürgen Moltmann, 'Perichoresis: An Old Magic Word for a New Trinitarian Theology'. Elizabeth Johnson, 'The Incomprehensibility of God and the Image of God Male and Female', in *Theological Studies*, Vol. 45, (1984). Elizabeth Johnson, 'Trinity: To Let the Symbol Sing Again', in *Theology Today*, Vol. 54, (1997). Elizabeth Johnson, *She Who Is: The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse* (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 2005).

<sup>601</sup> It has been argued by Jung Young Lee that the Trinity should be interpreted as three hypostases in one. A Western 'either-or' way of thinking is to view reality in an exclusive way, while the yin and yang 'both/and' way of thinking of is considered to be more Trinitarian because of its inclusiveness. He interprets the Christian Trinity through yin and yang symbolic thinking, based on the principle of IChing (Trinity of Changes). Jung Young Lee, *The Trinity in Asian Perspective*, 21-49. See Jung Young Lee, *The Theology of Change*, 113.

<sup>602</sup> Jung Young Lee tries to interpret Christian faith tradition, which has been generally recognized as presenting a transcendent, personal, and masculine image of God—from an Asian perspective, and with a contextual approach. According to the 'both/and' symbolic way of thinking about the cosmic concept of Trinity as proposed by Lee, God is not only both male (yang) and female (yin), but both immanent and transcendent, as well as impersonal and personal, masculine and feminine. His unique hermeneutic framework, 'Trinity of Changes', sees the elements of Trinity as a perichoresis relationship because yin and yang are considered as symbols in a process of changes. Jung Young Lee, *The Theology of Change*, 49-56.

The second part of this section examines the relational Trinity, especially Jürgen Moltmann's theology of the Trinity, which emphasizes (non-hierarchical) perichoresis among the three hypostases, and Elizabeth Johnson's theology of the Trinity, which approaches the same topic through Christian feminist theology. Moltmann stresses perichoresis, and develops his fully social doctrine of the Trinity (relational Trinity), which emphasizes the relative interdependence of the persons. Methodologically, the 'God of Land' model speaks of the meaning of the Trinity from the 'Wind', 'Water', and the 'Land' that are similar to Moltmann's principle of perichoresis in a Trinitarian sense, based on the immanence, interrelation, and unity among the three (non-hierarchical) via a yin and yang way of symbolic thinking. Like Johnson, I attempt a feminist theological approach for practical purposes, using gender-inclusive Trinitarian symbols such as 'Wind', 'Water', and the 'Land' to point the way towards the liberation of women and nature. These two theologians' Trinitarian ways of thinking, which are relational (non-hierarchical), and feministic, provide an insightful Trinitarian approach to the 'God of Land' model, which has an interconnecting principle (like Moltmann's theory) and draws feminine symbols (like Johnson's theory) from an Asian context.

### **A. The Trinity of the 'God of Land' Model, Reinterpreted by Yin and Yang Symbolic Thinking from an Asian Perspective proposed by Jung Young Lee**

The understanding of the Trinitarian principles from the yin and yang symbolic thinking proposed by Jung Young Lee provides insightful hermeneutic tools for proposing this chapter's Trinity model of 'God of Land' from Feng Shui. Therefore, the first part of this section examines how these impersonal and feminine objects, symbolized as three hypostases by 'Wind', 'Water', and 'Land' from the 'God of

Land' model, bring the principle of the Trinity in Christianity into dialogue with yin and yang symbolic thinking.

### **1. Reinterpretation of the Doctrine of the Trinity from IChing, through Yin and Yang Symbolic Thinking, and Revisioning the Christian Trinity**

Jung Young Lee presents his theological methodology through the yin and yang principle based on the Cosmology of IChing.<sup>603</sup> Lee sees that the cosmology of East Asia basically comes from the nature of yin and yang (the bipolarity of nature). This complementary bipolar relationship of yin and yang is a basic element that makes up the universe.<sup>604</sup> Everything in the universe is considered to have its complementary opposites known as yin and yang, and this constitutes the basic principle of the universe. It is the principle of everything in creation, and of change. Therefore, the changes of yin and yang are the foundation of everything in the universe, which is endless flow of changes described in the IChing (Book of Changes).<sup>605</sup>

Lee attempts to reinterpret the Christian God from an Asian perspective through this IChing. Lee claims that God is immutable and perfect; he argues for neither a fixed nor a static being, but rather for God as change itself. In other words, God's immutability does not mean to be static, but God is seen as part of the reality of change. Lee finds it apt that God is expressed as 'Change itself' – as 'becoming itself', rather than 'being itself'.<sup>606</sup> In other words, Lee implies a change in the ontology (the ontological Change), as opposed to the Western idea of

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<sup>603</sup> Jung Young Lee, *The Trinity in Asian Perspective*, 21-49. See Jung Young Lee, *The Theology of Change*, 1-5.

<sup>604</sup> Jung Young Lee, *The Trinity in Asian Perspective*, 24.

<sup>605</sup> Jung Young Lee, 'East Asian Theology: IChing and Christianity', in, *Theological Thinking Publishing*, Vol. 198, 480-481.

<sup>606</sup> Jung Young Lee, *The Theology of Change*, 30.



ontology of substance (a fixed and a static ontology).<sup>607</sup> He describes God as the source of all dynamic changes, which create all things in the yin and yang dynamic.<sup>608</sup> According to his understanding of God based on IChing, God 'is definitely not the "unmoved mover"; it is the "moving mover", or "changing changer", that is the source of all creative becoming'.<sup>609</sup> This idea of 'Change' in East Asia is similar to so called 'process theology', in the way it declares the breakup of static ontology.

#### **a) Impersonal and Feminine Divine Symbols in the 'Both/And' Yin and Yang Symbolic Way of Thinking**

Jung Young Lee suggests that another understanding of the Christian doctrine of the Trinity is made possible by the yin and yang principle, given that yin and yang represent an inclusive 'both/and' mindset. He indicates that, in this way, God can be expressed as the transcendence and immanence of God, male and female, or personal and impersonal, at the same time.<sup>610</sup> The Western 'either-or' way of thinking – predominant in Western theology - splits opposites, and imposes an alternative judgmental and dualistic way of thinking, which is neither inclusive nor appropriate for theological thinking. The 'either-or' way of thinking has been closely linked with absolutizing the Christian God, and as a result it becomes idolatrous.<sup>611</sup> Lee claims that according to this exclusive way of thinking only personal names or symbols such as King, Lord, or Father were used to speak about God, and in this way impersonal symbols were denied from the sphere of religious reasoning in the

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<sup>607</sup> Heup Young Kim, 'An East Asian Interpretation of the Trinity', in, *Korean Society of Religion* (2011): 254-255.

<sup>608</sup> Phil Ho Whang, 'Christianity and IChing', *Journal of Woowon Thoughts*, Vol. 6, (1998): 49.

<sup>609</sup> Jung Young Lee, *The Theology of Change*, 41.

<sup>610</sup> Ibid., 49-56.

<sup>611</sup> Jung Young Lee, *The Trinity in Asian Perspective*, 59,152.

West.<sup>612</sup> He proposes a way of thinking that is based on yin and yang symbolism in a holistic manner, which can express the transcendence of God while also accommodating the diversity of changes.<sup>613</sup> In this sense, the 'both/and' way of thinking can overcome the absolutizing tendency of the 'either-or' way of theological thinking predominant in the West.

Lee is not the only theologian to propose this way of thinking. Korean theologians Heup Young Kim, Chan Soon Lim, Seh Hyung Lee, and others also sympathize with Lee's yin and yang symbolic 'both/and' way of thinking as a means of describing the Trinity from an Asian perspective.<sup>614</sup> Wilfred Cantwell Smith, a Canadian theologian, has also indicated that the ultimate truth lies not in the 'either-or' way of thinking, but rather in a 'both/and' way of thinking. Smith saw the possibility that the symbols of yin and yang could include the central doctrine of Christianity itself.<sup>615</sup> The divine symbol in the yin and yang symbolic way of thinking is therefore considered to be an embracing and inclusive 'both/and', rather than an exclusive 'either-or', way of thinking. In yin and yang symbolic ways of thinking, God is expressed as not only both male and female, but also as personal and impersonal.<sup>616</sup> In the 'both/and' way of thinking from yin and yang symbolic thinking, 'God is at once transcendent and immanent, God is not only the negation of all genders but also the affirmation of all gender. Therefore, 'God could be

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<sup>612</sup> Jung Young Lee, 'IChing and Christian Thought', trans. Jin Hong Jung (Cheon An: Korean Institute of Theology, 1980), 8.

<sup>613</sup> Jung Young Lee, 'East Asian Theology: IChing and Christianity', 483. See Chan Soon Lim, 'An Eastern Asian Theological Method: "Both/and" Ways of Thinking and Trinitarian Ways of Thinking Based on a Yin and yang Way of Thinking', in, *An Asian Philosophy*, (2008): 441-442.

<sup>614</sup> Heup Young Kim, 'An East Asian Interpretation of the Trinity', 254. See Chan Soon Lim, 'An Eastern Asian Theological Method: "Both/and" Ways of Thinking and Trinitarian Ways of Thinking based on a Yin and yang Way of Thinking', in, *Methodology of Asian Theology*, 2008, 440-443. See also Seh Hyung Lee, *The Theology of Tao* (Seoul: Handul Publishing LLC, 2002), 35-37.

<sup>615</sup> Heup Young Kim, 'An East Asian Interpretation of the Trinity', 254. See Jung Young Lee, 'East Asian Theology: IChing and Christianity', 485. See also Jung Young Lee, *The Theology of Change*, 17.

<sup>616</sup> Jung Young Lee, *The Theology of Change*, 50-56.

expressed as both male and female, and at the same time neither male nor female'.<sup>617</sup> In this way, the Trinity of the 'God of Land' model, which is feminine and impersonal, includes simultaneously attributes of masculine and personal via the idea of 'both/and', which is based on the yin and yang symbolic way of thinking.

### **b) Trinity of the 'God of Land' Model in Yin and Yang as Symbolic of a 'Both/and' Way of Thinking**

Jung Young Lee's approach does not replace the 'either-or' way of thinking with the yin and yang symbolic 'both/and' way of thinking. He thinks 'both/and' is more holistic, inclusive, and embracive than the 'either-or' way of thinking.<sup>618</sup> He argues further that this 'both/and' way of thinking from an Asian perspective may eliminate the false aura of exclusiveness in Christianity, and embrace a new understanding of divine plurality.

In the Bible, God has been named as 'Logos', an impersonal and metaphysical symbol, rather than a personal symbol. For example, the God who said to Moses 'I am who I am' (Exodus 3:14) was unnamable, thus transcending all the names – His very existence was impersonal. In addition, there are many examples of female images of God in the Hebrew Scripture, as well as masculine images. In Isaiah 49:15, God is compared to a nursing mother: 'Can a woman forget her nursing child, or show no compassion for the child of her womb? Even these may forget, yet I will not forget you'. In Isaiah 42:14, God is described as a woman in labor: 'For a long time I have held my peace, I have kept myself still and restrained myself; now I will cry out like a woman in labor, I will gasp and pant'. And in Psalm 131:2, God is described as a Mother: 'But I have calmed and quieted my soul, like a weaned child with its mother; my soul is like the weaned child that is

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<sup>617</sup> Ibid., 51.

<sup>618</sup> Jung Young Lee, 'East Asian Theology: IChing and Christianity', 484.

with me'.<sup>619</sup>

Accordingly, the yin and yang symbolic way of thinking can speak of a personal God at the same time as speaking of an impersonal God because God is a being beyond personality. God also goes beyond gender, and could be understood as both masculine and feminine at the same time. After all, the yin and yang symbolic way of thinking includes notions of a personal/impersonal and a feminine/masculine God from an Asian perspective, while in the Western tradition God has been described as mostly personal and masculine.<sup>620</sup>

Lee's yin and yang symbolic thinking would be helpful in establishing the basis for the impersonal and feminine hypostasis from the Trinitarian symbols of Feng Shui in the 'God of Land' model. In other words, 'Wind', 'Water', and the 'Land' - which will be described as being the feminine nature of Trinitarian hypostases from the 'God of Land' model - go beyond the symbol of a feminine Divine. Thus it is both entirely personal and completely impersonal, and includes both the feminine and the masculine. The Trinitarian 'God of Land' model that is informed by the yin and yang symbolic way of thinking that is 'both/and' implies a cosmic Christ, which is embracive, and transcends gender. Moreover, the yin and yang 'both/and' can easily explain the Christian Trinity. Lee explains as follows:

“‘Either–or’” thinking, based on the Aristotelian axiom of the ‘excluded middle’, cannot describe God, since God transcends the differentiation between subject and object, essence and existence, transcendence and immanence. By ‘either-or’ logic God must be either one or three, He cannot be both one and three at the same time. But to describe the divine Trinity requires the most inclusive category of description, that is, the ‘both/and’, or yin and yang, way of thinking, which derives from the idea of change. Using this way of thinking we may be able to resolve some of the problems in the

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<sup>619</sup> Young Mi Lee, 'Retracing God in Old Testament with Spiritual Eyes', *Old Testament Forum*, Vol. 19, (2013): 195.

<sup>620</sup> Jung Young Lee, *The Trinity in Asian Perspective*, 65.

doctrine of the Trinity'.<sup>621</sup>

How, then, can the impersonal and feminine model of 'God of Land' be offered as a creative reinterpretation for the Christian doctrine of Trinity from yin and yang, with its inherently 'both/and' way of thinking?

## **2. A Trinitarian Reinterpretation by Jung Young Lee and Trinitarian Thinking of the 'God of Land' Model**

The hermeneutical approach for Trinitarian thinking through the yin and yang symbolic way of thinking proposed by Lee will be the foundation to approaching the Trinity of the 'God of Land' model, which will be retrieved from 'Wind' (Feng), 'Water' (Shui), and the 'Land' (Earth).

Lee explains the Trinity through the diagram symbolized by a circle of Tai Chi, or the Great Ultimate. Lao-Tzu, a Chinese thinker and philosopher, describes the Tai Chi (Great Ultimate) thus: 'The way begot one, and the one two, and then the two begot three and three all else'.<sup>622</sup> Heup Young Kim, a Korean theologian, also claims that Tai Chi is the dynamic process of yin and yang interaction. He adds that Tai Chi is a source of creativity, and that it entails unity in diversity, or diversity in unity, which is an essential principle for Trinitarian theology.<sup>623</sup> Lee demonstrates the Trinitarian principle of Tai Chi, which is one in three and three in one, based on yin, yang, and the dots in the diagram of Tai Chi.



(Yin- Yang in Tai Chi)

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<sup>621</sup> Jung Young Lee, *The Theology of Change*, 113.

<sup>622</sup> *Ibid.*, 41.

<sup>623</sup> Heup Young Kim, 'An East Asian Interpretation of the Trinity', 253.

Lee explains that yin and yang include and are included in each other; they form a Trinitarian relationship. Such inclusiveness of yin and yang is symbolized by the preposition 'in'. 'In' refers to the 'dots' which are in yin and yang respectively in the diagram of Tai Chi, the Great Ultimate. There are yin and yang, and the inter-connecting principle, which refers to the 'dots' in yin and yang and that cannot exist by itself. 'In' connects yin with yang and makes them complete. The inclusive nature of yin and yang is always one and three at the same time.<sup>624</sup> In other words, 'in' functions as the third factor to the other two. This 'in' connects yin and yang so that two are connected and two are in one, and, therefore, one is three.<sup>625</sup> In this sense, Yun Koo Dong, a Korean-American theologian, agrees that the Trinitarian principle is clearly present in the Tai Chi, the Great Ultimate.<sup>626</sup>

#### **a) Jung Young Lee's Reinterpretation of the Trinity from IChing: Yin and Yang Symbolic Thinking**

What, then, is Lee's hermeneutics for the Trinity from IChing? Lee uses metaphysical symbols from Change (the Creator), yin (Spirit), and yang (Word), which could be interchangeable with the biblical symbol of the Creator as the Trinity (the Father), Word (the Son), and the Spirit (Holy Spirit). He sees the Trinitarian principle between them—'threeness in one, and oneness in three'—in yin and yang, and the 'both/and' way of thinking, which has continuum in all

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<sup>624</sup> Jung Young Lee, *The Trinity in Asian Perspective*, 58-59.

<sup>625</sup> In John 14:11, 'Believe me that I am 'in' the Father and the Father is 'in' me.' Jung Young Lee writes, 'the Father and the Son are one in their 'inness' but also at the same time, they are three because 'in' represents the Spirit, inner connecting principle, which cannot exist by itself'. *Ibid.*, 58-59.

<sup>626</sup> Koo Dong Yun, *The Holy Spirit and Chi: A Chiological Approach to Pneumatology* (Oregon: Pickwick Publications, 2012), 53.

things.<sup>627</sup> Lee thus claims that the Creator cannot be understood apart from the Word and the Spirit. He writes that 'there is continuum between the change and yang as well as between the change and yin' in the 'both/and' and yin and yang way of thinking.<sup>628</sup> The interaction between yin and yang is essential for creation, and each of the three is to be created through the 'both/and' principle, which connects the yin and yang of two complementary symbols. The yin (Spirit) and yang (Word) are distinct, yet are one substantial essence (the Change, Tai Chi, and the Creator). Lee claims the paradoxical truth that the 'three in one and one in three' is possible from this comprehensive logic of yin and yang, and the 'both/and' way of thinking within the IChing.<sup>629</sup>

Lee also uses the East Asian analogy of Trinity – 'Heaven, Land (earth), and Humanity' - in correspondence with the Christian Trinity. He claims that the use of familial symbols would be Asian Trinitarian, which is to say a household of the universe as Heaven, Land (earth), and Humanity. Heaven is identified as the Father yang, Land (earth) as the Mother yin, and human beings as their children, which is yin and yang.<sup>630</sup> Chinese philosopher Cheng Chung-Ying also interprets the Trinity of 'Heaven, Land (earth), and Humanity' in the way Lee does. He suggests that God the Son is an ideal person as a child and Humanity, God the Father is the creative Spirit of Heaven, and the Holy Spirit is the receptive Land (earth) and mother.<sup>631</sup>

Heup Young Kim points out that Lee's use of familial symbols for the Trinity

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<sup>627</sup> Jung Young Lee, *The Theology of Change*, 113.

<sup>628</sup> *Ibid.*, 115

<sup>629</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>630</sup> Jung Young Lee, *The Trinity in Asian Perspective*, 70-150.

<sup>631</sup> Chung-ying Cheng, *Trinity*, 225, in, Heup Young Kim, *The Theology of Tao: Toward a Theo-Tao* (Seoul: DaSan Geul Bang Publishing, 2001), 331.

through yin and yang symbolism has quite patriarchal elements, although Lee tries to present a comprehensive God from an Asian perspective. Kim critiques Lee's Trinity, which is Father, Mother, and Child because the household God model still reveals the male-dominated mindset long held by traditional Christianity.<sup>632</sup> This dissertation, however, understands Lee's Trinitarian thinking - which interprets Father as yang (Heaven), and Mother as yin (Land) - as not focusing on the superior being of yang (Heaven), and as simply demonstrating the most important aspect of the Trinity: That harmony and balance of yin and yang that focuses on the perichoresis of fellowship with each other. Seseria Kim, who is Korean philosopher, supports the idea that the yin and yang principle of defining men as yang and women as yin has been claimed as an idea of men's predominance over women.<sup>633</sup> However, she indicates that yin and yang in East Asian cosmology does not just show the value of yang alone. The value of yang is revealed only when yang is with yin, and vice versa.<sup>634</sup> Thus Lee's reinterpretation for the Trinity from IChing ultimately transcends gender, and therefore speaks of gender equality. This dissertation sees the value in Lee's work in that it demonstrates that yin and yang symbolic thinking is relational, and reflective not of superiority or inferiority but of complementary dualism, which can explain the Trinity through perichoresis. In this way, Lee's Trinitarian thinking in yin and yang symbolic thinking is the basis of Trinitarian thinking from my suggested model of 'God of Land'.

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<sup>632</sup> Heup Young Kim, *The Theology of Tao 2* (Seoul: Dong Yun, 2012), 212-215.

<sup>633</sup> Seseria Kim, 'Yin and Yang Theory Reinterpreted from the Concept of "Difference and Gap"', in, *Korean Women's Philosophy*, Vol. 3, (2003): 80. See Hyun Ji Lee, 'The Feministic Implications of Yin and Yang Principle', in, *Asian Social Ideology*, Vol. 4, (2001): 266-267.

<sup>634</sup> Ibid.



## **b) Trinitarian Thinking of 'God of Land' Model; Yin and Yang Symbolic Thinking**

This chapter envisages a Trinitarian view of 'God of Land' from the yin and yang way of thinking in a way that is distinct from Lee's. While Lee uses familial symbols for explaining the Trinity through the basic idea from 'Changes', the Trinitarian thinking of 'God of Land' pursues feminist theology for gender issues from the 'Wind', 'Water', and 'Land', which bear the feminine disposition of Trinitarian thinking. In other words, while Lee uses the familial symbols of Father, Mother, and Child as hermeneutic tools for Trinitarian relationships, this chapter attempts a creative interpretation of the Christian doctrine of the Trinity on the basis of feminist theology, by using Wind, Water, and Land - which are considered to have feminine attributes - in order to develop a Christian God model that can liberate women and nature from the patriarchal dualistic mindset.

The Trinitarian thinking of 'God of Land' will be interpreted in the theory of the yin and yang symbolic way of thinking about one in three and three in one. Yin and yang will also be interpreted as a set of perichoresis together with each other. Without the two, one cannot be explained, and vice versa. They are mutually helpful, and will be described as being in a complementary relationship. In other words, the complementary relationship between Wind, Water, and Land enables us to interpret the yin and yang way of thinking; thus the Trinity is to be interpreted as a holistic symbol in the yin and yang principle. The 'God of Land' model of the triune God, who is inclusive and feminine, seeks unity and equality in the yin and yang principle of 'both/and', for liberating the oppressed with the dualistic thinking of women/men, body/spirit, etc. The feminine nature of each of the three persons (hypostases) in the suggested model is eventually holistic - one in three persons –

while the three are also distinguished from one another in the yin and yang principle.

The following section examines how the Trinity of the 'God of Land' model could be developed in non-hierarchical and feminist ways from the Trinity theories of Moltmann and Johnson, who developed the ideas of a social doctrine of the Trinity and of a feminist's way of Trinitarian thinking, respectively. This examination will help connect the idea of the Trinity in the 'God of Land' model to the ideas of Moltmann and Johnson, in terms of their approaches to relational and feminist ways of thinking about Trinity.

### **B. The Relational and Feminist Trinity of the 'God of Land' Model Based on Perichoretic Union from Jürgen Moltmann and Elizabeth Johnson**

This section explores theological foundations for developing a relational and feminist Christian Trinity for the suggested model 'God of Land,' through the Trinitarian theology of Jürgen Moltmann and Elizabeth Johnson.

Moltmann is an influential theologian, who opposes any monarchical doctrine of the Triune God, and claims that no hierarchy exists among the three divine persons in the Trinity. Moltmann asserts dissolution of any gendered Trinitarian formula through the relationship established by the perichoretic friendships among the three divine persons, in order to dispute the understanding of God as monarchical.<sup>635</sup> Moltmann develops his Trinitarian theology through the Eastern Orthodoxy concept of perichoresis in relational Trinity.<sup>636</sup> This is to say that

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<sup>635</sup> Moltmann, *The History of the Triune God*. See Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom*. See also Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*.

<sup>636</sup> The following are Moltmann's opinions on the filioque, which has been the subject of great controversy between Eastern Orthodoxy and the Western Church. 'Moltmann's position is that his overthrows Trinitarian Patriarchy. Moltmann sides with the Eastern Orthodox's rejection of the *filioque* because the *filioque* subjugates the Holy Spirit to the Son, where in the East, the Son and

he explains the unity of the Triune God from the three hypostases in God. The three persons of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are differentiated in their characteristics, but related as the unity of God by the perichoretic union of three divine persons.<sup>637</sup>

Johnson also proposes the Sophia Trinity, using the female symbol retrieved from the Christian tradition, as she seriously considers feminist claims that the doctrine of Trinity carries the impression that the terms for speaking of God are exclusively, literally, and patriarchally used for male designation – which thus justifies the dominance of men over women. She grounds her Sophia Trinity on the mutual friendship among the three persons in the Trinity by linking feminist theology with traditional theology.<sup>638</sup>

Both these theologians imagine God in the Trinity as the unity and equality of persons in a relationship of perichoretic friendships. Thus, the Trinitarian understanding they propose offers a potentially liberating way of overcoming the structure of dominance and subordination, by shifting our typical image of a patriarchal and monarchical God established from dualistic thinking. In this way, they provide an appropriate and viable interpretation of the Trinitarian relationship in God, which is significant for human liberation and social equality—particularly for women. They also respond to the gender issue of the traditional Trinitarian formula,

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the Spirit are two hands of the Father, as Irenaeus imagined. In Moltmann's view, the Holy Spirit is not subjugated to the Son or the Father because the Holy Spirit appears besides the Father as the Divine Mother of the Divine Family, such that the Father and the Holy Spirit (as Mother) exclude both Patriarchy and Matriarchy. Both the Father and the Mother are hence liberated, and they are liberated in the Son (Jesus Christ), such that the Son (Jesus Christ) also is not subjugated to the Father or Mother (Holy Spirit)'. <http://postbarthian.com/2015/03/21/jurgen-moltmann-holy-spirit-feminine-spirit/> [accessed February 7, 2016]

See Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*: 105. See also Moltmann, *The History of the Triune God*, 130-1.

<sup>637</sup> Sung Yong Jin, 'Trinitarian Pneumatology with Joachim of Fiore as the Centre', *Collection of Writings of Prof.* Seoul Theological Seminary, Vol.18, (2006): 328.

<sup>638</sup> Elizabeth Johnson, *She Who Is*, 124-187.

which is patriarchal and hierarchal. In addition, they offer reliable theological options that enhance the equality and liberation of Christian women, and encourage ecological restoration, in the contemporary Korean Church.

Because of the emancipatory nature of Moltmann's and Johnson's respective work, I build upon their Trinitarian thinking in my development of the Trinity of the 'God of Land' model that will be described in this chapter. The 'God of Land' model also emphasizes that there is no hierarchal order in the Trinity, and that the three divine persons that are 'Wind' (Feng), 'Water' (Shui), and the 'Land', are considered as having feminine and motherly characteristics respectively. These three are mutually equal, deriving from the yin and yang symbolic way of rethinking the Trinity in the frame of perichoresis. Accordingly, this dissertation asserts that the Trinity of the 'God of Land' model, inspired by the inclusive and equitable Trinitarian relationships in Moltmann and Johnson's work, gives promise of liberating both nature and Korean Christian women, which have been oppressed under the patriarchal dualistic mindset prevalent in Korean churches.

In many ways, the Trinitarian understanding of God in the 'God of Land' model shares common viewpoints with Moltmann and Johnson in terms of its perichoretic understanding of the relational Triune God. This is because the Trinity of the 'God of Land' model seeks non-hierarchy and gender equality through complementarity, and through the dynamics between yin and yang, which are relational, and represent perichoretic unity. Similar to the intention of Johnson, the Trinitarian thinking from the 'God of Land' model is also applied from the perspective of feminist theology, by using the feminine symbol to describe a Trinitarian God.

## 1. Relational Trinity Based on Jürgen Moltmann's Social Trinity

Moltmann's so-called social trinity - that is, an understanding of the Trinity as inherently relational - is important to the Trinity of the 'God of Land' model because it responds to gender inequality by regarding the Trinity in a non-hierarchical way. This section discusses the concept of perichoresis in Moltmann's social trinity, in order to examine the basis for a non-hierarchical Trinity that is relevant to the Trinity of the 'God of Land' model.

Moltmann's relational Trinity does not focus on transcendental subjectivity or the sovereignty of God; rather he suggests a social doctrine of the Trinity, which speaks of dynamic interpenetration and mutual constitution described as perichoretic unity, a unity consisting of a loving relationship.<sup>639</sup> Moltmann's social doctrine of the Trinity does not locate God in a relationship of monarchy, hierarchy, and patriarchy, but in the relationship of fellowship, which is considered as the essence of Triune God. Moltmann's social doctrine of the Trinity is based on his understanding of one God, which is distinguished from the traditional understanding that the one God is manifest in three persons. He speaks of the unity of God that is three distinct persons, or hypostases, which are in integral relation with one another.<sup>640</sup>

Moltmann draws much upon but also criticizes work like that of Karl Barth and Karl Rahner, which he sees as creating a hierarchical and monarchical view of God in the Trinity.<sup>641</sup> He critiques Barth's employment of a Trinitarian

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<sup>639</sup> Moltmann, *The History of the Triune God*, 10-13.

<sup>640</sup> Kyung Chul Chang, 'The Trinity and Community: The Study of Social Trinity of Jürgen Moltmann', *The Research Institute of Humanities*, Seoul Women's University, (1995): 331-333.

<sup>641</sup> Moltmann, *The Trinity and Kingdom of God*, 139, 141, 143-145. See Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *The Trinity: Global Perspectives* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007), 100-110. See Paul D. Molnar, *Divine Freedom and the Doctrine of the Immanent Trinity* (New York: T&T Clark, 2002),

understanding of God, which carries the risk of legitimizing the one Lordship of God which holds sovereignty while the two other persons are traditionally treated as dependent entities. Moltmann argues that this interpretation falls into monarchism.<sup>642</sup> Moltmann asserts that Barth's understanding of God, which is one personality and three different ways of being (3 *Seinweise*), is monarchical.

Like Barth, Rahner understands the Trinity of God in a way which merely discloses the three-folded-in-one divine essence. Rahner proposes to use 'distinct manners of subsisting' (*drei distinkte Subsistenzweisen*). What he means by this phrase is that the God who has one consciousness subsists in three different ways; this avoids the heresy of tritheism.<sup>643</sup>

Moltmann critiques both these theologians' ideas as insufficiently Trinitarian because they see God the Father as the first person of the Trinity, and as the origin of the Son and the Spirit.<sup>644</sup> In other words, Moltmann points out the fallacy of the classical idea of the Trinity - that God the Father is one absolute subject, and the other persons are secondary and dependent to the first person in the Trinity.<sup>645</sup> Moltmann rejects the idea that God is assumed as an absolute subject, which came from a monotheistic and non-Trinitarian concept of God. Moltmann understands God as 'trinity, the three-in-one'.<sup>646</sup>

More specifically, Moltmann refuses to take Arius' subordinationism, which is portrayed as monotheism because it gives up the divinity of Christ so as to maintain the concept of the one and only God. Therefore, according to this view

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197-206. See also Johnson, *She Who Is*, 207. Stanley J. Grenz, *Rediscovering the Triune God* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2004), 79.

<sup>642</sup> Moltmann, *The Trinity and Kingdom of God*, 171.

<sup>643</sup> Karl Rahner, *The Trinity* (New York: Crossroad Publishing, 1997), 103-115.

<sup>644</sup> Moltmann, *The Trinity and Kingdom of God*, 178 -183.

<sup>645</sup> Moltmann, *The History of the Triune God*, 176.

<sup>646</sup> Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *The Trinity: Global Perspectives* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007), 101.

Jesus is not God, but simply a human being who is moved by the Spirit and who is filled with the Spirit. Moltmann also rejects the modalism of Sabellius, which is the foundation of the Trinity for Rahner and Barth. This modalism premises the one God from the tradition of the Western Church, which is basically monotheistic. The divinity of Christ could be preserved in this modalism, but the identity of revealer and revelation are lost.<sup>647</sup> Unlike Rahner and Barth, Moltmann learns his understanding of the Trinity - which consists of three divine persons in one God - from the traditions of the Eastern Church. The essence of Moltmann's Trinity is relationality - the perichoretic unity of God the Father, God the Son, and the Holy Spirit that is brought about through fellowship and communication.

#### **a) Jürgen Moltmann's Identity on The Economic/ The Immanent Trinity**

In dialogue with Barth and Rahner, Moltmann understands the discourse on Trinity from the context of the economic Trinity, which focuses less on God's triune nature (immanent Trinity) and more on God's salvific activity in history.<sup>648</sup>

Barth treats the Trinity in close connection with the context of God's salvific activity through Christ because he believes Jesus Christ is the Word of God and the self-revelation of God. Barth is on a different footing from Rahner's rule that the immanent Trinity is the economic Trinity and vice versa. He argues that God's immanent being (being in-himself-of-God, or immanent Trinity) is not the same as God's economic presence seen in self-revelation in History (being-in-relation-to-us-

<sup>647</sup> Beharte Lotze, trans. Young Chul Gu, *History of Christian Dogma, Chronological Approach* (Seoul: Concoldia Publishing, 1988), 63. See Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom*, 163-223

<sup>648</sup> 'Economic Trinity' means the Trinity's relationship to the world, or the outworking of the divine plan and the divine relations within history (as opposed to how these relations between the Father, Son, and Spirit exist within the Immanent Trinity). 'Immanent Trinity' means 'the Trinity's internal (intra-trinitarian) relations, which have always existed in God's Triune life for eternity, as opposed to how these Triune relations exist within the outworking of affairs in the life the Economic Trinity. In this way, the Immanent Trinity is the basis for the Economic Trinity'. Stephen R. Holmes, Paul D. Molnar, Thomas H. McCall, Paul S. Fiddes, *Two Views on The Doctrine of the Trinity* (Michigan: Zondervan, 2014), 218-219.

of-God, economic Trinity). That is to say, Barth argues that God's immanent being includes God's economic presence.<sup>649</sup> By claiming that the immanent Trinity and the economic Trinity are closely related, although the economic Trinity is partly coherent with the immanent Trinity, Barth tries to secure divine transcendence, and divine freedom from the creatures.<sup>650</sup> In other words, Barth emphasizes God's salvific events in the person of Jesus Christ – yet divine freedom and the doctrine of the immanent Trinity cannot be reduced to salvation in history. The immanent Trinity cannot be simply identified or synthesized with the economic Trinity. On the other hand, Barth's greater stress upon the priority of the immanent Trinity over the economic Trinity may reduce the significance of the history of God with the world.

Karl Rahner also regards the Trinity as the Christian experience of God's salvific activity in history. He sees the doctrine of the Trinity as a fundamental statement about the salvation by the Father through the Son and the Holy Spirit. From this understanding, he finds no distinction between God in eternity (the immanent Trinity) and God's actions in history (the economic Trinity). Rahner argues that the economic Trinity is identical to the immanent Trinity, and vice versa.<sup>651</sup> Paul Molnar, however, refutes this claim by questioning whether the immanent Trinity is identical to the economic Trinity; in other words, if the eternal presence of God is exactly the same as the God of temporal action within history, then God becomes exactly the same as the acts of Creation and redemption in history. Finally, God's transcendence and absolute divine freedom is lost.<sup>652</sup> In this

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<sup>649</sup> Paul Molnar, 'Toward a Contemporary Doctrine of the Immanent Trinity: Karl Barth and the Present Discussion', in, *Scottish Journal of Theology* 49 (1996): 311-313.

<sup>650</sup> Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *The Trinity: Global Perspectives* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007), 68-70.

<sup>651</sup> Rahner, *The Trinity*, 22.

<sup>652</sup> Paul Molnar, 'The Function of the Immanent Trinity in the Theology of Karl Barth: Implications for Today', in, *Scottish Journal of Theology* 42 (1989): 367.



regard, Paul Molnar asserts that the most crucial threshold of Christian faith must be Jesus Christ as God incarnate, not as a human revealer. A theology advocating the idea that the economic Trinity has greater ontological priority makes God dependent upon humanity - that is to say, the Creator needs Creation. Molnar argues that the doctrine of the immanent Trinity must be secured if Christian theology prizes the significance of Christ.<sup>653</sup>

Drawing upon both Rahner and Barth, Moltmann argues for a relational understanding of the doctrine of the Trinity. By 'relational' he means that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit live within a relationship of interactive mutuality. Moltmann's views are shared by Catherine LaCugna, Leonardo Boff, Ted Peters, Thomas Torrance, Wolfhart Pannenberg, Eberhard Jüngel, Elizabeth Johnson, and others. This group of theologians agrees that God is closely identified with his events in history, and they share an understanding of the immanent Trinity as being the eschatological fulfillment of the economic Trinity. In other words, because of the incarnation, God is truly and fully present in history. Moltmann attempts to approach the doctrine of God through a 'salvation historical' and 'social' doctrine of the Trinity.<sup>654</sup> Catherine LaCugna supports Moltmann's idea that the immanent Trinity is not an analysis of God's inner being from eternity, but rather is the economic Trinity, that is, God's self-revelation through his salvific activity in history.<sup>655</sup> After all, Moltmann understands the immanent Trinity as the eschatological fulfillment of the economic Trinity, and he claims that the unity of three divine hypostases—God the Father, God the Son, and the Holy Spirit—is

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<sup>653</sup> Paul D. Molnar, *Divine Freedom and the Doctrine of the Immanent Trinity* (New York: T&T Clark, 2002), 118-119.

<sup>654</sup> Stephen R. Holmes, Paul D. Molnar, Thomas H. McCall, Paul S. Fiddes, *Two Views on The Doctrine of the Trinity*, 218-219.

<sup>655</sup> Catherine M. LaCugna, *God for Us: The Trinity and Christian Life* (New York: Harder San Francisco, 1991), 224-225.

maintained through perichoretic fellowship.

The Trinity of 'God of Land' as proposed in this chapter is relational, and based on yin and yang fellowship such that yin is in yang and yang is in yin. This relational Trinity based on yin and yang from the 'God of Land' model bears a close resemblance to Moltmann's relational Trinity that is based on perichoretic fellowship of the three persons, such that the immanent Trinity is regarded as the eschatological fulfillment of the economic Trinity. Moltmann accepts Rahner's axiom of identity in the sense that the immanent Trinity is the economic Trinity, and vice versa. Through this, this section proposes a better way to express the relationship between the economic and immanent Trinities, which can be applied to the yin and yang principle. Just as yin and yang always coexist without losing their distinctive identities and essence, the economic Trinity and the immanent Trinity always coexist; they are distinctive and without conflict, but they are also inclusive.<sup>656</sup> In this sense, Moltmann's relational understanding of the Triune God, which is in perichoretic fellowship, is similar to that of the relational 'God of Land' Trinity model, which is described as based on the yin and yang principle. In the principle of yin and yang, the economic and immanent Trinity are inclusive of each other. In the Trinity of 'God of Land,' which is an inclusive rather than identical relationship, the immanent Trinity is not free of the world; everything that happens in the world is part of God's experience. And the life of God cannot exclude the economic.<sup>657</sup> The yin and yang principle does not replace the mystery of the Trinity, but attempts to mediate and facilitate, to receive the meaning that is central to the Trinity: Relationship and communion through the perichoretic interpenetration in

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<sup>656</sup> Kärkkäinen, *The Trinity; Global Perspectives*, 328-329.

<sup>657</sup> *Ibid.*, 329.

the Trinity. What, then, are the issues pertaining to Moltmann's relational Trinity that are also shared by the 'God of Land' model?

### **b) Problems Pertaining to Moltmann's Social Trinity**

Moltmann's relational (social) Trinity is a close parallel to the Trinity of the 'God of Land' model, which presents the unity of God as the perichoretic union based on the yin and yang principle. In this sense, it is important to examine Moltmann's relational Trinity through scholarly discussion, as the 'God of Land' model draws some implications from the concept of the relational Trinity in this chapter. The raised issues are as follows.

Firstly, it has been suggested that Moltmann so emphasises the triune God in salvation history (i.e. the economic Trinity) that he leaves little room for the immanent Trinity, which may thus lose divine freedom and transcendence to the world of Creation. German theologian Walter Kasper also points out that Moltmann's understanding of the Triune God runs the risk of losing the crucial point that God transcends all God's creation because of the concept's limits in the issues of divine action in history, and human sin.<sup>658</sup> These criticisms of Moltmann's view are applicable to my suggested 'God of Land' model.

Moltmann responds to this criticism by explaining God's preexistence; the immanent Trinity that existed before and apart from God's activity in history, called the Trinity in the origin, or the primordial Trinity. According to Moltmann, God's Trinitarian life preexists God's activity in the history of the world; thus God has inherent divine freedom, transcendence, and ontological superiority over God's

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<sup>658</sup> Kasper, *The God of Jesus Christ*, 60-61.

creation.<sup>659</sup> Moltmann writes, 'As God appears in history as the sending Father and the sent Son, so he must earlier have been in himself. The relation of the one who sends to the one sent as it appears in the history of Jesus thus includes in itself on order of origin within the Trinity, and must be understood as that order's historical correspondence'.<sup>660</sup>

Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, a Finnish theologian, however, poses this question to Moltmann's response: 'By positing the Father as the eternal origin, isn't Moltmann not only contradicting the idea of mutuality but also exercising 'metaphysical' thinking in terms of origin?'<sup>661</sup> In other words, Kärkkäinen criticizes that Moltmann contradicts himself in his understanding of the Trine God, and that this causes a conflict between divine immanence and God in activity in history (the economic Trinity). Moltmann responds that the immanent Trinity is conceived as the eschatological fulfillment of the economic Trinity. Moreover, the immanent Trinity and the economic Trinity are mutually influential; that is, the two modes of the Trinities are closely relational and distinguishable, but ultimately the same.<sup>662</sup> According to Moltmann, the economic Trinity is expressed as God's activity in the history of salvation, and the immanent Trinity is the Trinity that is praised and glorified in worship. In other words, as praise is basically grounded on the experience of the salvific work of God, the immanent Trinity is dependent on the economic Trinity; thus they are closely interconnected. In this context, Moltmann claims, 'the economic Trinity is the object of kerygmatic and practical theology, while the immanent Trinity should be understood from the context of doxological

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<sup>659</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, trans., Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), 53-54.

<sup>660</sup> *Ibid.*, 54.

<sup>661</sup> Kärkkäinen, *The Trinity: Global Perspectives*, 122.

<sup>662</sup> Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, 161.

theology'.<sup>663</sup> Moltmann says that the concept that the doctrines of salvation and doxology do not contradict one another is founded on the fact that there are not different Trinities. In other words, there is only one, single, divine Trinity, and one, single, divine history of salvation. The triune God can only appear in history as God in Godself, and in no other way. God is in Godself as God appears in salvation history, for it is God in Godself who is manifest, and God is just what God is manifested as being.<sup>664</sup>

The implication from Moltmann's relational Trinity for the Trinity of the 'God of Land' model is that for Moltmann, 'person' has always meant 'person in relationship.' This concept of a relational Trinity reflects exactly the same meaning of the yin and yang principle of East Asians, just as the Chinese character expresses human as human in relation (人間). In this sense, the 'God of Land' model has inherently included the economic Trinity: The economic Trinity is included in the immanent Trinity and vice versa, within the yin and yang of the 'both/and' principle. Therefore, the relational Trinity of the 'God of Land' model can maintain divine freedom and transcendence to the world of creation, and God's divine activity in history, at the same time.

Moltmann's understanding of the relational Trinity has been criticized on a second count because Moltmann's social Trinity tends to fall into tritheism. G. Greshake points out that Moltmann's model has an inclination towards justifying tritheism, or plurality, by emphasizing the three separate individual persons in the

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<sup>663</sup> Ibid., 152.

<sup>664</sup> Ibid., 153.

Trinity.<sup>665</sup> Kasper, Peters, and Kärkkäinen also indicate that Moltmann's emphasis on the three separate subjects or centers of action risks an eventual plurality.<sup>666</sup>

However, Moltmann responds to this criticism by explaining that the idea of tritheism never exists in Christian theologies.<sup>667</sup> He maintains that his model of the social Trinity becomes tritheism only when each individual person is expressed through extreme individualism, and not as related to the other hypostases. In other words, the problems in tritheism arise only when the concept of hypostasis (person) exists independently, and enters into a relationship with other independent hypostases. Moltmann argues that the unity of three divine hypostases has defined their mutual relationship from the beginning; thus the idea of tritheism is not possible in this model. He asserts that his social Trinity demonstrates a strong relationality and integrity among the persons, and can thus overcome plurality or tritheism through the interpenetrating relationships.<sup>668</sup> In addition, Leonardo Boff, a Brazilian theologian, also claims that a completely open relationship between one person and the other persons in the way of perichoresis shows promise of overcoming the criticism of tritheism.<sup>669</sup> And what's more, the social Trinity, quite unlike the one God concept or single personal reality in Christian tradition, offers feminists' visions and values, according to interpenetrating relationships by perichoresis: 'Because feminism identifies interrelatedness and mutuality - equal, respectful, and nurturing relationships - as

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<sup>665</sup> G. Greshake, *Der Dreieine Gott, Ein trinitarische Theologie* (Freiburg: Herder, 1997), 168-171; Myung Yong Kim, 'The Trinity of Moltmann', in, *Presbyterian Theological Seminary Press*, Vol. 17 (2001): 111.

<sup>666</sup> Walter Kasper, *The God of Jesus Christ* (New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1986), 60-61; Ted Peters, *God as Trinity: Relationality and Temporality in Divine Life* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993), 105. See Kärkkäinen, *The Trinity; Global Perspectives*, 116.

<sup>667</sup> Ted Peters, *God as Trinity*, 103-105.

<sup>668</sup> Moltmann, *The Method and Form of Theology*, 342-343.

<sup>669</sup> Leonardo Boff, *Trinity and Society*, trans. Se Hyung Lee (Seoul: Korean Christian Literature Publishing, 2011), 170.

the basis of the world as it really is and as it ought to be, we can find no better understanding and image of the Divine than that of the perfect and open relationships of love'.<sup>670</sup> This idea supports the Trinity of the eco-feminist 'God of Land' model, developed from the Trinitarian perichoresis of the yin and yang.

Millard J. Erickson's rejoinder to Moltmann's response is the ancient concept of perichoresis, which goes back to the time of John of Damascus and others, and which Erickson believes was always used as a means of defending unity. That is not necessarily the case; for John of Damascus, perichoresis is not the means of defining unity, but rather unity is the premise condition for perichoresis. Unity for John is established by the idea of the Father as the source of the Spirit and the Son.<sup>671</sup> Stanley J. Grenz, an American theologian, also presents the critique that Moltmann's social trinitarianism has elevated the three persons to the detriment of the divine unity, and that therefore that it borders on tritheism.<sup>672</sup> Further, Paul Molnar argues that Moltmann's Trinity represents a mutually conditioned relationship between the Creator and Creation, away from classical trinitarianism. This obscures the distinction between Creator and creatures critical to classical trinitarianism because of its failure to distinguish between the immanent and economic Trinity.<sup>673</sup> Kärkkäinen also supports Molnar's criticism that although Moltmann accepts Rahner's rule for its logical purpose, he rejects the distinction between the economic and immanent Trinity, and finally includes the immanent Trinity within the economic Trinity.<sup>674</sup>

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<sup>670</sup> Karen Kilby, 'Perichoresis and Projection: Problems with Social Doctrines of the Trinity', in, *New Blackfriars*, Vol. 81 (2000): 436.

<sup>671</sup> Kärkkäinen, *The Trinity: Global Perspectives*, 116.

<sup>672</sup> Stanley J. Grenz, *Rediscovering the Triune God*, 85.

<sup>673</sup> Stephen R. Holmes, Pal D. Molar, Thomas H. McCall, Paul S. Fiddes, *Two Views on the Doctrine of the Trinity*, 88.

<sup>674</sup> Kärkkäinen, *The Trinity: Global Perspectives*, 117.

Although Moltmann's Trinity has been criticized by the above mentioned theologians, Moltmann claims that the immanent Trinity is the eschatological fulfillment of the economic Trinity. For Moltmann, the eschatological kingdom cannot be a universal monarchy of the Lord of Creation, but rather a harmonious fellowship between liberated nature, humans, and God.<sup>675</sup> His understanding of the triune God, which is a relational and perichoretic unity of three divine persons, is significant for explaining the unity of the Trinity in the 'God of Land' model through the yin and yang principle of equality. The 'God of Land' model seeks ways of finding the unity of the three individual divine hypostases through the yin and yang principle; this may be exposed to the charge of tritheism, but Moltmann's perichoretic understanding of God provides room for overcoming the risk of tritheism in this model. In addition, the practical application of Moltmann's social Trinity finds its expression in perichoretic fellowship, equality, and interdependence in the 'God of Land' model, which can overcome the monarchial and patriarchal understanding of the Triune God held by dualism – the understanding which enforces domination and subordination.

What, then, is the aspect of Moltmann's perichoresis that understands God in detail?

### **c) Moltmann's Understanding of Trinity God through Perichoresis**

'The hypostatic Persons of the triune God are seen and contemplated in their eternal perichoresis and their eternal simultaneity. Through their reciprocal relationships they indwell one another, forming their unity through their unique community, no longer through their unilinear movement. Their unity is constituted by their 'togetherness'. Their eternal 'simultaneity' makes them equal in rank, so that even the Father, for whose glory everything in salvation history takes place, is no longer the First, but One among the Others. The original hypostatic differentiations are ended and consummated

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<sup>675</sup> Norman Metzler, 'The Trinity in Contemporary Theology', in, *Concordia Theological Quarterly*, Vol. 67, 277.



in the eternal perichoresis, and it is this that is extolled in the trinitarian doxology'.<sup>676</sup>

Moltmann's book *The Spirit of Life* explains well the concept of perichoresis as it appears in his relational Trinity. The meaning of perichoresis described in Moltmann's book bears a close parallel with the understanding of the Trinity of the 'God of Land' model as taken from the concept of 'Donggigamung', which is sensing intuitively the same Chi in yin and yang from Feng Shui. The perichoretic fellowship of Moltmann's relational Triune God offers community in communion by providing equality, freedom, and egalitarian relationship without any oppression, or subordination. Moltmann understands the divine unity of the three hypostases in terms of the perichoretic unity of a community. God is identified as three distinct persons, and is the relational community of the fellowship of three distinct persons existing in a unique community.<sup>677</sup> He argues that the divine unity has to be found in the perichoretic union of three distinctive persons. The meaning of perichoresis in terms of understanding the Trinity is the perfect interpenetration of each hypostasis within one another, and each hypostasis living intimately in one another – all expressing unity and equality in the Trinity.

In the doctrine of the Trinity, perichoresis is used for capturing the idea that the divine persons are 'habitable', i.e. that they embrace one another in love, and exist in one another.<sup>678</sup> The divine persons exist intimately with each other, and in one another, thus constituting a single and complete unity, and then finally

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<sup>676</sup> Jürgen Moltmann. *The Spirit of Life: A Universal Affirmation* (Kindle Locations 4292-4295). Kindle Edition.

<sup>677</sup> Jürgen Moltmann and Elisabeth Moltman-Wendel, *Humanity in God* (New York: Pilgrim Press, 1983), 99-100. See Moltmann, *The History of the Triune God*, 138- 139.

<sup>678</sup> Randall E. Otto, 'The Use and Abuse of Perichoresis in Recent Theology', in, *Scottish Journal of Theology*, Vol.54, No.3, (2001): 382.

achieving the Trinitarian concept of God.<sup>679</sup> Such relationship of Trinitarian perichoresis among the persons helps us to conceive the Trinity beyond any dualistic problems. Moltmann expresses a unique community through this perichoresis of the Trinity.<sup>680</sup> Therefore Moltmann's social Trinity understands God from three persons not as one God, but rather as becoming one God through the way of perichoresis.<sup>681</sup> Moltmann offers an analysis of three related terms, which together constitute the communal nature of God: Relationship, personhood, and perichoretic union.<sup>682</sup> In the doctrine of the Trinity, perichoresis is used to capture the mutual indwelling of the equal divine persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.<sup>683</sup>

Moltmann contends that the triune God from the concept of perichoresis is not a dictator who dominates over all things in the mystic solitariness of God in heaven, but a God who is in the fellowship of rich relationship. This is to say that the Triune God is not represented in the unilateral relationship of subordination/obedience, nor in the relationship of master/servant, but in a mutual exchange of love and mutual penetration among the three divine persons. What, then, are the implications of this concept of perichoresis, which Moltmann uses for describing the Triune God, for the Trinity in 'God of Land'?

#### **d) Application of Moltmann's Perichoresis Concept to the Trinity in 'God of Land'**

This part explores how the Trinity in 'God of Land', which is based on the yin and yang principle, works within the same framework of Moltmann's perichoresis in

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<sup>679</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, 'Perichoresis: An Old Magic Word for a New Trinitarian Theology', in M. Douglas Meeks (ed.), *Trinity, Community, and Power: Mapping Trajectories in Wesleyan Theology*, (Nashville: Kingswood Books, 2000), 117.

<sup>680</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Method and Form of Theology: My Journey to Theology*, trans. Kyun Chin Kim, (Seoul: The Christian Literature Society of Korea, 2001), 333-353. See Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom*, 17-78.

<sup>681</sup> Moltmann, *The History of the Triune God*, 176.

<sup>682</sup> Moltmann, 'Perichoresis: An Old Magic Word for a New Trinitarian Theology', 117.

<sup>683</sup> Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom*, 111 -121.

how it explains the Triune God (relational Trinity) through non-hierarchical fellowship among the three hypostases. This examines the relevance of the concept of perichoresis to the yin and yang principle in three ways: In the possibility for overcoming dualism, in recognizing the immanence of God with us, and in finding feminist ways of seeing God in the Trinity.

First, Moltmann uses the concept of perichoresis in the relational Trinity for describing the Triune God of equal divine persons because he claims that the traditional Trinitarian formula should be balanced, due to the fact that it creates a hierarchical, patriarchal, and androcentric social structure.<sup>684</sup> For this reason, Moltmann posits a Trinity of equality derived from the term perichoresis, which is similar to the yin and yang principle that describes the Trinity of 'God of Land'. In other words, Moltmann uses the concept of perichoresis in the Trinity through the logic of a dynamic fellowship that has the potential to overcome hierarchical dualism. Moltmann claims that his Trinitarian communion of perichoresis could be an alternative for overcoming gender discrimination. The perichoretic fellowship of the Triune God offers community, fellowship, and harmony in a livable place, which is habitable for one another and gives one another open life space by providing equality, freedom, and an egalitarian relationship without oppression/subordination.<sup>685</sup> Moltmann's perichoretic concept of the Trinity is a useful foundation for the Trinity of 'God of Land' because it offers a way of thinking that can promote gender equality, and overcome dualism.

Secondly, Moltmann attempts to restore the immanence of the Triune God, who is with Creation through perichoretic fellowship. Through a perichoretic

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<sup>684</sup> Moltmann, *The History of the Triune God*, 16.

<sup>685</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

understanding of the Triune God, he wants to restore divine immanence into nature as a Creator facing environmental destruction. Moltmann argues that the restoration of divine immanence means that God's Trinitarian life is determined exclusively in and through the world as Creator for the world. Moltmann contends that nature, which is God's creation, premises that the Triune God is beyond Creation, but at the same time radically immanent in Creation.<sup>686</sup> In this way, the immanence of God includes transcendence/immanence together in perichoresis, which can eventually lead to the breaking of hierachal dualistic thinking.

In a similar way, the yin and yang principle in the Trinity of 'God of Land' is used to express the divine immanence of the Triune God in nature through the symbolized hypostases of Wind, Water, and Land from Feng Shui. This is used to express the Trinitarian thinking from Feng Shui cosmology that everything is one in singular unity, which involves a mutual interpenetration of the different natures - divine and human. In this way, the person of the divine-nature-human, ChunJiln (Heaven-Land (earth)-Humanity), is understood as one in another, that is, in perichoretic fellowship. In other words, God is not transcendent, but is in the perichoretic fellowship within which each embraces the other in love among ChunJiln. In this sense, destroying nature and environment is regarded from the ecological perspective of Feng Shui as doing harm to the Mother-Earth.<sup>687</sup> In this way, the immanence of the Triune God in nature, which is expressed in the symbolized hypostases of Wind, Water, and Land from Feng Shui, provides the basis for overcoming dualistic thinking, and also includes God's transcendence from the yin and yang principle.

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<sup>686</sup> Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life: A Universal Affirmation* (Kindle Locations 585). Kindle Edition.

<sup>687</sup> Je he Lim, 'Ecological Understanding of Feng Shui and a Korean Outlook on Nature', in, *Korean Folklore*, Vol. 9, (1997): 84.

Thirdly, Moltmann attempts to provide a Trinitarian theology that challenges patriarchal and masculine images of God by finding feminine and motherly aspects of the Holy Spirit in the Trinity via the perichoretic understanding of Triune God.<sup>688</sup> He challenges us to use the term 'uterus of Father', in order to find the feminine motherly aspect of God the Father by reinterpreting this symbol in a Trinitarian sense.<sup>689</sup> The feminine figure of the perichoretic Triune God opposes the patriarchal Triune God. Moltmann attempts to overcome sexism by understanding the 'mutuality' that is grounded in feminist theology as the circulation and fellowship of perichoresis.<sup>690</sup> This idea offers a theological foundation for overcoming sexism, by providing feminine images of God that the Trinity of the 'God of Land' builds upon through the feminine figures of Wind, Water, and Land from Feng Shui.

Through the perichoretic fellowship of mutual respect and indwelling, men and women can give themselves to each other, and empty themselves into one another, pursuing gender equality without sexism.<sup>691</sup> Such a perichoretic understanding of the Triune God is proposed by several contemporary theologians. Boff insists that divine unity in the perichoretic unity of the three divine persons, characterized by equality and fellowship, helps liberate oppressed people.<sup>692</sup> Catherine LaCugna, an American feminist theologian, has a similarly-voiced concern that the perichoretic unity of the Triune God should be understood as communion, which is characterized by interpenetration between Trinitarian persons with no hierarchy. Especially of note here, she argues that this Trinitarian thought helps to encourage oppressed people to liberate themselves for true fellowship and

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<sup>688</sup> Moltmann, *The Method and Form of Theology: My Journey to Theology*, 313.

<sup>689</sup> Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom*, 198-199.

<sup>690</sup> Moltmann, *The History of the Triune God*, 17.

<sup>691</sup> Ibid.

<sup>692</sup> Boff, *Ecological Theology*, 24- 25, 181.

communion.<sup>693</sup> Johnson also suggests the model of Sophia God in Trinity, which seeks a way to overcome gender discrimination through perichoretic relationship, from a feminist theologian perspective. In this way, Johnson reconstructs the Triune God retrieved from God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, as the Spirit Sophia, Jesus-Sophia, and Mother-Sophia, which is not hierarchical in perichoretic relationship. This dissertation ultimately suggests the premise of overcoming sexism through non-hierarchical relationship, working within the same understanding of Moltmann's perichoretic fellowship (relational Trinity), as well as with the yin and yang principle, to explain the Trinity of 'God of Land.'

***How is Moltmann's Perichoretic Unity Helpful for the Trinity of 'God of Land'?***

According to the yin and yang principle, the strong sense of a perichoretic relationship is expressed as 'yin in yang' and 'yang in yin', which embraces the opposites.<sup>694</sup> Yin and yang include and are included in each other, so that two are in One (Ultimate Reality, Tai Chi) - that is to say, they are in a perichoretic relationship. This relationship is explained in the dynamics of yin and yang movement. The amount of yin is constantly changing, as is the amount of yang. Both are constantly shifting in mutual influence.<sup>695</sup> In this way, the Trinity of the 'God of Land' model expresses the unity of God through the mutual interpenetration of perichoresis.

In addition, this perichoretic relationship among the three hypostases of the 'God of Land' model is explained through the relationship between Wind, Water, and Land. In Feng Shui, the Land does not exist alone. The vitality and Chi of the

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<sup>693</sup> Catherine LaCugna, 'God in Communion with Us', in, Catherine LaCugna (ed.), *Freeing Theology: The Essentials of Theology in Feminist Perspective*, (U.S: Harper Collins, 1993), 92-102.

<sup>694</sup> Hyun Gi Lee, 'The Feminist Implications from Yin and Yang Principle', 267.

<sup>695</sup> Ibid.

Land are formed by the interaction between Wind and Water. Therefore, Wind and Water are prerequisites essential for locating an auspicious spot on the Land. In other words, Land provides the space where Wind and Water are habitable, and where Wind helps Water to penetrate into the Land. Wind and Water in Feng Shui finally are moved and penetrated in the space in which Land provides and preserves the Chi of life. The perichoretic unity of Wind, Water, and Land is open and circular, so that the whole world can find space and eternal life within it. In Feng Shui, all life will enter into God to find the space where the Chi of life is full; that is, their home in God. In Feng Shui, the relationship between the Wind, Water, and Land has been expressed by the control of sensitivity through Wind and Water.<sup>696</sup> In this way, the Trinitarian relationship of Wind, Water, and Land found in the 'God of Land' model uses the perichoretic understanding of God that Moltmann asserts. This perichoretic unity of the Triune God achieves God's redemptive plan, that moves from the creation to the consummation of the world through the distinct unity and fellowship of Trinitarian relationships.

Accordingly, the 'God of Land' model is neither monarchical nor dualistic; thus it carries implications for gender equality. After all, the Trinity of 'God of Land' does not express hierarchical fellowship, nor any superiority among the three persons, following Moltmann.<sup>697</sup> This chapter perceives that this Trinitarian understanding favors overcoming monarchical and masculine images of God. The Trinity of Moltmann and the 'God of Land' model seek the same divine paradigm of sharing, non-hierarchical, and interpenetrating relationships in the Trinity.

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<sup>696</sup> Je he Lim, 'Ecological Understanding of Feng Shui', in, *Korean Folklore*, Vol. 9, (1997): 47. See also Hong Ki Yoon, *The Mind of Land* (Seoul: Science Books, 2011), 56.

<sup>697</sup> Moltmann, *The Method and Form of Theology: My Journey to Theology*, 336-341.

To summarise, this section examined Moltmann's perichoretic fellowship in terms of its potential for overcoming hierarchal dualism that lead sexism, which the Trinity of 'God of Land' pursues. It is established that the yin and yang principle from Feng Shui could be interpreted as being consistent with the perichoretic understanding of the Triune God in the same context.

## **2. The Trinity of Elizabeth Johnson from a Feminist Perspective**

One of the main aims of this dissertation is to develop a model of God that is inclusive towards women, while also remaining in the Christian tradition. As such, the development of a feminist reimagining of the Trinity is essential. In searching for theological foundations for a feminist Trinity, the work of Johnson has proven to be particularly salient.

Johnson is one of the more prominent feminist theologians whose focus on the relational doctrine of the Trinity uses symbols from a feminist perspective. Johnson develops her Trinity based on the Christian tradition, and seeks ways of recovering gender equality and women's human rights from a feminist perspective. Johnson endeavors to rename the Triune God with the female language of Sophia - then she reconstructs the Trinity in a non-hierarchical way. Johnson provides revealing insights for developing the idea of how the 'God of Land' model approaches the doctrine of the Trinity by using female symbols from an Asian feminist perspective.

### **a) The Sophia Trinity of Elizabeth Johnson**

Johnson argues that established Trinitarian theology focuses on the masculine language of the persons, and that its literal exegesis leads to dualistic thinking by



reinforcing patriarchy.<sup>698</sup> She criticizes established Trinitarian theology, which leads to women's alienation from the evocative power of the masculinized symbols in the Trinity. Johnson reconstructs the Trinity based on women's experiences in the image of God, to approach the Trinity with symbols that are inclusive towards women's liberation from a feminist theological perspective. Johnson then reinterprets the classical Trinity by accepting Moltmann's social Trinity, which is particularly non-hierarchical, and non-patriarchal.<sup>699</sup> Johnson's claim is similar to that of LaCugna, who advocates a relational Trinity from the perspective of feminist theology. Like Johnson, LaCugna understands the Triune God to be identical with an act of communion, and holds that the Triune God is thus essentially relational rather than hierarchical. This understanding of Trinity is in solidarity with the lived experience of women, and liberates them by affirming human freedom and equality.<sup>700</sup> LaCugna maintains that the doctrine of the Trinity is not ultimately a teaching about God, but a teaching about God's life with us, and our life with each other.<sup>701</sup>

The value of feminist theologians' understandings of 'relation' among hypostases in the Trinity resides solely in that the Holy Spirit, symbolized as female, is basically equal with the other two hypostases. More specifically, the Triune God is inherently relational, and not hierarchal but a community of mutual love and equality.<sup>702</sup> In other words, feminist theologians argue that the Holy Spirit,

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<sup>698</sup> Elizabeth Johnson, 'The Incomprehensibility of God, and the Image of God Male and Female', in, *Theological Studies*. Vol. 45, (1984): 443.

<sup>699</sup> Ibid., 460. See Johnson, *She Who Is*, 191-193.

<sup>700</sup> Catherine LaCugna, *God for Us: The Trinity and Christian Life* (San Francisco: Harper, 1993), 298.

<sup>701</sup> Paul D. Molnar, *Divine Freedom and the Doctrine of the Immanent Trinity* (New York: T&T Clark, 2002), 4.

<sup>702</sup> Elizabeth Johnson, 'Trinity: To Let the Symbol Sing Again', in, *Theology Today*, Vol. 54, (1997): 308. See Johnson, *She Who Is*, 142.

which has been neglected in the tradition of Christianity, symbolizes the oppressed women in the Church; thus in the same vein, the Triune God must be understood in this way as sharing this same kind of equality and mutuality for the liberation of women.<sup>703</sup>

Johnson, who advocates the understanding of the Triune God as relational, asserts that the exclusive use of masculine language, which is the Father-Son pattern in the Trinity, is not the essence of the Triune God. She maintains that women's religious experience of life continues to be the starting point for speaking of the mystery of God.<sup>704</sup> In this way, Johnson reconstructs divine language in the Trinity from feminine symbols and language, which are congruent with women's experiences. Johnson explores the characteristics that each hypostasis may have in terms of female metaphors, and seeks how these characteristics occur in fact from women's experience and Biblical tradition. She reflects on the Sophia story, which empowers feminine symbols via the classical teaching of Biblical wisdom, and then draws a feminist interpretation of the Spirit-Sophia in the tradition that is congruent with the experience of women's lives. She then applies it to her Trinitarian theology.<sup>705</sup>

Johnson's approach to Trinitarian theology that uses female language differs from the Trinitarian approach of LaCugna. Although LaCugna criticizes patriarchal language in naming the Triune God, she does not entirely replace masculine language with female alternatives. She rather attempts to understand the Triune God based on the salvation experience through Jesus-Holy Spirit.<sup>706</sup> On the other

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<sup>703</sup> Ibid., 130-131.

<sup>704</sup> Ibid., 193.

<sup>705</sup> Ibid., 124-187.

<sup>706</sup> LaCugna, *God for Us: The Trinity and Christian Life*, 379.

hand, Johnson points out the harmful effects of the exclusive use of masculine languages for the Trinity, thus attempting to reconstruct a Sophia Trinity through female language and metaphors.<sup>707</sup> In addition, in order to address the same problem, which is at the heart of feminist critiques, feminist theologians such as Rosemary R. Reuther, Sallie McFague, Rebecca Chopp, Anne E. Carr, Ann Loades, and more have contributed new linguistic ways of renaming God.<sup>708</sup>

When the language describing the Triune God in terms of the female metaphor of Sophia is thus renamed, Johnson believes that the classical doctrine of the Trinity could be remodelled in beneficial ways for overcoming hierarchy involving domination/subordination. In this way, Johnson reframes the traditional order of God as God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, into Spirit Sophia, Jesus-Sophia, and Mother-Sophia, which is not hierarchical. Just as Johnson speaks of Sophia-Trinity using female symbols, this chapter proposes the Trinity of the 'God of Land' using female alternatives of languages and symbols, which come from Feng Shui perspectives, in place of male-centered tradition that has often neglected the experience of women's lives. These symbols have female attributes that reflect women's life experiences, so they show a potential to overcome the patriarchal understanding of God, and to speak more of the divine Trinity. Why, then, do we need more symbols in approaching the mystery of God?

#### **b) Understanding God in Immanent and Economic Trinity: Symbols**

Johnson reconstructs the Trinity by using female symbols from a feminist perspective based on women's religious experiences. In the same way, this dissertation endeavors to suggest a Trinity of 'God of Land' by using female

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<sup>707</sup> Ibid., 48- 49.

<sup>708</sup> See footnotes 7-11.

symbols taken from Feng Shui, and based on Korean women's life experience. Therefore, it is worth examining further how Johnson understands symbols to express God from spiritual tradition and religious experience.

In her discussion of symbols, Johnson suggests that the symbol of the Trinity arises and develops historically from the religious experience of God, who encountered Jews and Gentiles through Jesus of Nazareth, in the power of the Spirit. She says that language about the Triune God is grounded in the Christian experience of faith. Like Rahner, Johnson advocates the significance of religious experience.<sup>709</sup> According to Rahner, the experience of our God (single, whole of reality - absolute being) is an innate experience, and the Christian God has been involved with the world from the beginning. Rahner seeks ways to know God, and believes that human experience leads necessarily to knowledge of the transcendent God, on the presupposition that 'the primordial ground' which we all experience is identical with the Triune God known in faith.<sup>710</sup> Therefore, for Rahner, the theological question is not whether this experience of God is an experience of the true God; rather, it is a question of how we interpret this experience correctly and properly, through the self-validating experience of God.<sup>711</sup> Rahner believes that Christians know God directly from their experiences, primarily the experience of the 'nameless', through his symbolic theology.<sup>712</sup> Therefore, Rahner claims 'all beings are by their nature symbolic because they necessarily 'express' themselves in order to attain their own nature'.<sup>713</sup>

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<sup>709</sup> Johnson, *She Who Is*, 197-8.

<sup>710</sup> Paul D. Molnar, *Divine Freedom and the Doctrine of the Immanent Trinity*, 118-119.

<sup>711</sup> *Ibid.*, 117, 119.

<sup>712</sup> Paul D. Molnar, 'Can We Know God Directly? Rahner's Solution from Experience', in, *Theological Studies* 46 (1985): 231.

<sup>713</sup> Karl Rahner, 'The Theology of the Symbol', in, *Theological Investigations IV: More Recent Writings* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1974), 224.

Johnson stresses the significance of religious experience that is identical with the experience of the Triune God as known in faith, as Rahner has mentioned. Johnson's basic theology is specifically grounded in the feminist's concern for naming God from the matrix of women's experiences. To this end, she points out that the use of exclusively masculine symbols subordinates women. She claims that the mystery of God is more clearly revealed when more diverse symbols are used. Johnson argues that the symbol of God functions as our ultimate referent, so we must replace the traditional symbol for feminist purposes.<sup>714</sup> In this sense, she offers the Triune God through the feminine symbol of Sophia, and fellowship with God in hopes of equality for women.

Regarding the issue of symbols that include religious experience, McFague claims that human experience is a way to approach and to conceive of God. McFague doesn't seem to be concerned with knowing the true inner being of God (immanent Trinity), and instead focuses more on the economic Trinity, which is relevant to contemporary human reality in a mythological way. McFague wants to describe a God who not only adequately responds to our contemporary circumstances for the practical relevance of the doctrine for contemporary Christian life, but who is also dependent upon, and intrinsically related to, the world.<sup>715</sup> She rejects the idea that we can actually know anything about the immanent Trinity.<sup>716</sup> She writes, 'I see no way that assumptions concerning the inner nature of God are possible. My interest centers on economy Trinity, on the experience of God's activity in relation to the world'.<sup>717</sup>

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<sup>714</sup> Paul D. Molnar, *Divine Freedom and the Doctrine of the Immanent Trinity*, 9.

<sup>715</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>716</sup> McFague, *Models of God*, 223-4.

<sup>717</sup> *Ibid.*, 224. Molnar, 'Toward a Contemporary Doctrine of the Immanent Trinity: Karl Barth and the Present Discussion', 321.

In addition, the images and symbols of God, according to Kaufman, are created within the experience and language of human imagination. The human mind constructs diverse worldviews and experiences, and some of these reinterpret and reconstruct the traditional concept of God from languages, through which reality is mentally grasped.<sup>718</sup> Kaufman emphasizes the symbolic character of the doctrine of the Trinity. He argues that God is the construct we hold in our minds, and is an objective reality that exists independently of our conceptions and knowledge of God that come to us through revelation. For Kaufman, the Trinity is primarily a structure of our knowledge, in which we conceive God as transcendent through the symbols of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, via revelation.<sup>719</sup>

Paul Molnar, however, points out that 'Christians have often misused Christian symbols'. He maintains that Kaufman and McFague think theology is merely a human effort to give meaning to existence using theological symbols, which are judged in terms of adequacy and relevance for human purposes and circumstances.<sup>720</sup> For feminist concerns, Molnar challenges the feminist's naming of God from the matrix of women's experience, arguing that God as Father and Son have never been understood as male in the history of Christian tradition, including dogma and scripture. He indicates that God must be understood from God in Godself, rather than from a human experience, whether male or female.<sup>721</sup> Stanley Grenz also argues that a symbol is merely a simple means of speaking about God, and that it just degrades God to the status of a mere object, thus finally

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<sup>718</sup> Gordon Kaufman, *Theological Methodology*, trans. Institute of Interdisciplinary Studies (Seoul: Handeul Publishing, 1999), 34-36.

<sup>719</sup> William J. Hill, *The Three-Personed God; The Trinity as a Mystery of Salvation* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University Press, 1982), 176.

<sup>720</sup> Molnar, *Divine Freedom and the Doctrine of the Immanent Trinity*, 2.

<sup>721</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

reducing the Christian faith to anthropology or psychology.<sup>722</sup>

In response to this type of critique, Johnson summarizes the essential values of the symbols of the Triune God from her experience-based method, arguing that symbols speak for mutual relation, radical equality, and community in diversity and plurality.<sup>723</sup> Johnson writes that 'the Trinity provides a symbolic picture of a totally shared life at the heart of the universe'. 'Mutual relationship of different equals appears as the ultimate paradigm of personal and social life'.<sup>724</sup> The Trinity as pure relationality becomes the perfect example of the connectedness of all beings in the universe.<sup>725</sup>

Like Johnson's model, the Trinity in the 'God of Land' model is portrayed through the female symbols from Korean women's experience in Feng Shui cosmology. The East Asian understanding of God has been portrayed through the symbols of yin and yang, the Five Elements, and Chi. The vector point where yin and yang meet is regarded as heaven, and also as the realm of God.<sup>726</sup> That is why many East Asian philosophers and theologians develop the symbol of 'ChunJiln' (Heaven-Land-Humanity) as the cosmic Trinity from the family concept of the Triune God in East Asian cosmology. In other words, they are the heavenly Father as a father, and a feminine symbol of the Holy Mother - and God the Son is a symbol of the children created between the father and the mother that have been portrayed in the Trinity.<sup>727</sup> In this dissertation, I attempt to explain the Triune God through the female symbols of Wind, Water, and Land, from Feng Shui cosmology,

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<sup>722</sup> Stanley J. Grenz, 'Jesus as Symbol: Robert Neville's Christology and the Neo-Liberal Theological Project', *Modern Theology* 20 (2004): 467-473.

<sup>723</sup> Kärkkäinen, *The Trinity: Global Perspectives*, 206-207.

<sup>724</sup> Johnson, *She Who Is*, 222.

<sup>725</sup> Ibid.

<sup>726</sup> Hee Jung Kim, *Dreaming Oneness of Body, Nation, and Universe* (Seoul: Gungri Publishing, 2008), 65.

<sup>727</sup> Heup Young Kim, *The Theology of Tao* 2, 208.

which includes women's experience. Although theologians take the view that human experience is a fundamental starting point for theology, they typically focus on the human experience of men, not women.<sup>728</sup> Therefore, Feng Shui cosmology offers interrelatedness and mutuality - equal, respectful, and nurturing relationships between Wind, Water, and Land - through the female attributes of these symbols, and through the yin and yang principle. It allows us to find a better image of the Divine, and a better understanding, that is a perfect and open relationship of love.

### **c) The Trinity in Johnson and that in the 'God of Land'**

The significance of the Trinity in Johnson's work is that, firstly, Johnson contributes to renaming the Triune God with the female language of Sophia from the traditional patriarchal language of the Trinity. In other words, Johnson explores the female characteristics of three persons in speaking of God, and suggests a Sophia Trinity from the feminist revival of the tradition as a symbolic sense. This understanding of the Trinity, which promotes gender equality and inclusivity, will contribute to the restoration of women's dignity, as well as to the restoration of nature, rescuing them from the suffering of dualism.

In similar way to Johnson, the 'God of Land' model approaches the Trinity from a feminist perspective, using feminine symbols from Feng Shui cosmology, in order to respond to the gender issues arising from the exclusive use of masculine language in the Trinity, and to overcome patriarchal dualism. In other words, this chapter attempts new interpretations of the Trinity from an Asian perspective, using feminine images of Wind, Water, and Land in keeping with the feminist perspective,

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<sup>728</sup> Johnson, *She Who Is*, 33. See R. R. Ruether, *Sexism and God-Talk*, 12-16. See also Nam Soon Kang, *Feminist Theology: Gender, Spirituality, Life* (Seoul: Korean Theological Research Institute, 2002), 27, 44-45; Ruth C. Duck, *Gender and the Name of God*, (Pilgrim Press, 1991), 23-24; McFague, *Metaphorical Theology*, 9-10.



and explores the meaning of relation in the Trinity through the metaphor of mutuality. Also, God's creation, salvation, and mystery will be reinterpreted in feminist theology through female alternatives of the three hypostases, as in the tradition of Feng Shui. This female Triune God, expressed by female language and incorporating images that include women's experiences, will help fight the oppression caused by patriarchal language. In this way, the Trinity of the 'God of Land' model offers a major contribution to the task of readdressing the idolatrous use of exclusively masculine language for naming the Triune God. The model eventually contributes to freeing women within the context of the all-pervading patriarchy in the contemporary Korean Church, which oppresses them.

How, then, can female imageries of the three metaphored hypostases of Wind, Water, and Land from Feng Shui cosmology be explained in the concept of the traditional Trinity? In Feng Shui cosmology, Wind (Feng) is understood in the same way as Chi, which is wind, and breath of life, and the vital force of change that has been expressed as female imagery. 'Wind' (Chi) is interpreted in this chapter as being an alternative way to view the 'Holy Spirit' in traditional Christianity, which is called 'ruach' in Hebrew Scripture, and Greek 'pneuma' in the New Testament. Also, in Feng Shui, Water (Shui) is related to femininity, and has been recognized as the womb of all beings of life.<sup>729</sup> Griffiths describes that water as dynamic and creative in that it is receptive, which is one of the essences of the feminine.<sup>730</sup> This sense of female imagery of water is understood as a redeemer, or savior, which is in this section 'God the Son' in the Trinity, from a Feng Shui perspective. Water (Shui) has long been seen as a symbol of cleansing and of

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<sup>729</sup> So Young Chun, *The Legend of Water* (Seoul: Chang Hae Publishing, 2000).

<sup>730</sup> Bede Griffiths, *Universal Wisdom: A Journey through The Sacred Wisdom of the World* (Harper San Francisco, 1994), 28.

being reborn spiritually; this carries a meaning of salvation through unity with Christ. Lastly, the imagery of Land symbolizes the productivity and creativity of all beings, and expresses the Creator – Mother - that embraces all beings. In other words, Land (Earth) is the symbol of a loving mother, which was held sacred as 'Jimo' in Feng Shui. This section explores the meaning of relationships in the Trinity, through the Land, which is a motherly figure and is held as sacred divine. 'Land' will then be reinterpreted as the 'God of Mother' in the Trinity.

Overall, this section proposes a new interpretation of the Trinity in the 'God of Land' model, from a Feng Shui perspective based on the three hypostases of Wind, Water, and Land, which represent female images in Feng Shui cosmology. In this way, the Trinity of 'God of Land' is in line with the Trinitarian understanding advocated by Johnson, who renames three persons in the Trinity through Sophia. In the same manner, the section retrieves the symbol of the Triune God by exploring the tradition of female alternatives of Water, Wind, and Land, from a Feng Shui perspective. By renaming the three hypostases in the Trinity of 'God of Land', the section eventually offers a feminist theological approach that can liberate women and nature within the realities of the all-pervading presence of suffering from dualistic thinking.

The second significance of Johnson's Trinity is that she reconstructs her Trinity in a non-hierarchical way, which is similar to the way of Moltmann.<sup>731</sup> This attempts to replace the hierarchical ways of conceiving the Triune God with a relational, equalitarian, and inclusive way - one that is 'a relational of mutual giving

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<sup>731</sup> Johnson, 'The Incomprehensibility of God and the Image of God Male and Female', 441-465. See Johnson, *She Who Is*, 124-131.

and receiving'.<sup>732</sup> Her Trinitarian theology is based on equal friendship among three divine persons, not the relationship of domination/ subordination. Johnson criticizes the imbalance of hierarchical relationships in the traditional Trinity, which has God the Father as the first Person.<sup>733</sup> She suggests a new understanding of each hypostasis in the Trinity by starting the name of the Trinity with Spirit-Sophia, Jesus-Sophia, and Mother-Sophia.<sup>734</sup> Just like Moltmann, Johnson points out that the Holy Spirit has been overlooked in the Trinity. Johnson realizes that the Holy Spirit is deeply linked with the all-pervading realities of women's oppression in the Church, and in society. She then reads women's oppression into the Holy Spirit.<sup>735</sup> This kind of non-hierarchical approach to Trinitarian metaphors have also been found in the Trinity as suggested by McFague. McFague presents the Trinitarian metaphor of mother, lover, and friend, which is a union of three persons, and a mutual interpenetration between the persons.<sup>736</sup> Thus Johnson's speaking about a God who is relational and non-hierarchical shares the same idea of the Triune 'God of Land,' which has the non-hierarchical hypostases of Wind, Water, and Land.

Then, what is the fundamental element that underlies the reconstruction of the non-hierarchical Trinity model of the 'God of Land' in this chapter? It is yin and yang, which are relational symbols in a process of circulation. Such circulation has its validity for divine creativity and receptivity, and the Triune God indwells in communion with all existence. In this cyclical relationship, there is neither absolute subjection nor hostile relation to each other. This embracing relationship in its process of circulation continues changing towards revolutionary unity, without

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<sup>732</sup> Kärkkäinen, *The Trinity: Global Perspectives*, 206.

<sup>733</sup> Johnson, *She Who Is*, 222-223.

<sup>734</sup> *Ibid.*, 125.

<sup>735</sup> *Ibid.*, 125-126. 130-131.

<sup>736</sup> McFague, *Models of God*, 78-87.

constituting dualism. Since the ultimate objective of the yin and yang in the process of circulation is harmony and balance, it has no hierarchy. Therefore, another understanding of the Christian concept of the Trinity is possible from yin and yang symbolic thinking, which can reconstruct the non-hierarchical Trinity, as seen in this chapter.

Why, then, is it so important to begin with Wind (Chi/Holy Spirit) for the Trinitarian discourse in this section? This is because Wind is understood as a dynamic power of changing energy - as a female acting subject for restoring Korean women's dignity.<sup>737</sup> As the Trinity of the 'God of Land' model aims to find gender balance, and then to restore the all-pervading realities of women's oppression, this model offers an alternative to traditional patriarchal understandings of the Triune God, and emphasizes the female traits in God. Regarding these dynamics of Wind (Chi), Heup Young Kim agrees that Chi is the source of vibrant and dynamic power for return and restoration. He describes Chi as a surge of Holy Spirit, and as the vital energy for reviving wounded women and nature.<sup>738</sup>

Johnson points out that the Holy Spirit has been overlooked, or recognized as secondary in the Trinity. She indicates that envisioning the Triune God from the Holy Spirit is a mode of expression that is congruent with the alienated experience of women's lives.<sup>739</sup> She thus starts the Triune God at the Holy Spirit. In a similar way, this chapter retrieves the symbol of the Triune God starting with Wind (Chi/Holy Spirit), which is the source of power required to restore women's dignity.

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<sup>737</sup> Koo Dong Yun, *The Holy Spirit and Chi: A Chiological Approach to Pneumatology* (Oregon: Pickwick Publication, 2012), 60.

<sup>738</sup> Heup Young Kim, *The Theology of Tao 2* (Seoul: Dong Yun Publishing, 2012), 247.

<sup>739</sup> Johnson, *She Who Is*, 125-126, 130-131.

It then continues on to explain Water as God the Son, and Land as God the Mother, in order to readdress the Trinitarian God from a Feng Shui Asian perspective in a non-hierarchical way.

To summarise, the Trinity of 'God of Land' is similar to that of Johnson in many ways. However, while Johnson proposes a new constructive interpretation of the Trinity based on Biblical tradition with feminist methodology, the Trinity of the 'God of Land' model turns to Feng Shui cosmology for female alternatives to represent God in the Trinity. Now, the next chapter will more specifically describe the Trinity of 'God of Land,' which is a contextual model based on a unique culture and built from the concept of a non-hierarchical Trinity of Wind, Water, and the Land. Through these three persons, the Trinity of the 'God of Land' model, which seeks ways of equality and harmony, grows more understandable.

#### **IV.2 The Trinity of 'God of Land': 'Wind', 'Water', and 'Land'**

This section attempts to reinterpret the meaning of the Trinity in the 'God of Land' model proposed in this dissertation. Drawing on Feng Shui cosmology, symbolized by 'Wind' (Feng, interpreted as the Holy Spirit), 'Water' (Shui, interpreted as God the Son), and the 'Land' (interpreted as God the Mother), this section examines the hermeneutical approaches that guide the theological doctrine of the Trinity through a process of contextual and theological inculturation from an Asian perspective.

The aim of this attempt at reinterpreting the Christian doctrine of the Trinity through female symbols of 'Wind', 'Water', and 'Land' employed from Feng Shui is not simply to describe women's experiences, which eco-feminists in the West could reinterpret from the empirical sciences and Western rationalism. It is because women from different socio-cultural contexts need different hermeneutical tools

with which to mediate upon and bridge the meaning of the Trinity.<sup>740</sup> In order to meet this challenge, this contextual approach employs Feng Shui symbols that are fundamental to Korean contextual structures of thinking. This approach facilitates Korean women receiving and realizing the doctrine of the Trinity from their different existential and spiritual needs. In this way, this section argues that the pervasive influence of patriarchy, and the exclusive use of masculine language and symbols in the contemporary Korean Church, still further women's oppression. Furthermore, this dissertation adopts the fundamental idea behind the eco-feminist view that there is a relationship between the subordination and oppression of women, and the exploitation and degradation of the natural world. Therefore, I here propose to use female symbols taken from Feng Shui cosmology as a receptive hermeneutical approach that guides theological reinterpretation, in order to seek ways of liberating women and nature.

As Christianity in the West has depicted God through Western metaphysical structures, this section offers to propose a new symbol and language based on the cosmic metaphysics of IChing that are grounded in Feng Shui cosmology - since God is universal, and the meaning of the symbols of God change according to our context.<sup>741</sup> In this way, this section explains how the non-Trinitarian symbols, 'Wind', 'Water', and 'Land' that comprise the three hypostases of the 'God of Land' Trinity, can enrich the traditional understanding of the Trinity, which in Western tradition is the Holy Spirit, God the Father, and God the Son. More importantly, this section explores how these symbols could function as theological language for understanding a different meaning of God in the contemporary Korean context.

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<sup>740</sup> Refer to Chapter II

<sup>741</sup> Refer to previous section.

Thus, this Trinitarian presentation of the Feng Shui symbols, 'Wind', 'Water', and 'Land' is an inculturation process of contextual theology from an Asian perspective because the meaning of the Trinity is always relative to its context. In this way, the section does not attempt to replace the traditional Trinity of God; rather, it offers a more holistic and inclusive understanding of the meaning of the Triune God of Christianity, based on yin and yang symbolic thinking in Feng Shui, from an Asian perspective.

The section begins with 'Wind', which is the Holy Spirit in the Trinity, because this chapter advocates the criticism of Moltmann and Johnson that the Christian tradition neglects the Holy Spirit and marginalizes women.<sup>742</sup> Along with those contemporary Christian theologians' understanding of the Holy Spirit, 'Wind' is discussed as having powers of transformation and change for Korean women, moving them towards liberation.

### **A. The Holy Spirit of the Wind (Chi)**

I argue that the 'Spirit of the Wind' from Feng Shui is a more nuanced and appropriate concept with which to express 'Holy Spirit' in the Trinity. This section therefore approaches the Trinity of the Holy Spirit in Christianity by suggesting a Feng Shui understanding of the 'Spirit from Wind (Chi)', and also examines how this works for eco-feminist theology. The concept of the Holy Spirit in this section develops a contemporary interpretation of the Holy Spirit that speaks to a more comprehensive and panentheistic understanding, which is different from the traditional view of the Holy Spirit that separates Spirit (mind) from the body (material).

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<sup>742</sup> Johnson, *She Who Is*, 125-126. 130-131.

## 1. The Similarities between Wind (Chi) and Holy Spirit

### a) Holy Spirit and Wind (Chi)

#### *Ruach and Pneuma*

The Hebrew Scripture uses the English word 'Spirit' for the Hebrew word '*ruach*', while the New Testament uses '*pneuma*.' *Ruach* actually means air, breath, wind, life, and vitality, but the root of the word is basically Wind. In this sense, God's Spirit is described as the Wind of Creation. Young Jin Min, a Korean Hebrew Scripture theologian, says that the word *ruach* occurs 378 times, and describes it as natural Wind 117 times.<sup>743</sup> In this way, Wind expresses the presence of God's power 'Shekinah'. *Ruach* also means breath to living creatures. Therefore, *ruach* means power of life and creation in God's Spirit that can give life, and bring new life.<sup>744</sup> *Ruach* is often expressed as 'breath of God', and came to refer to the principal of life (Genesis, 1,30; 2,7; 6,17; 7,15) (Book of Job 33:4).<sup>745</sup>

The word *pneuma* in the New Testament also originally meant breath, or the movement of air and Wind that is similar to *ruach* (Luke 8: 55). *Pneuma*, which is essential to all living existences on earth, means that all lives begin with the breath. The imagery of *pneuma* is described as 'wind', which is often expressed as either a storm or a light breeze. But the breath is basically associated with the divine power of giving life.<sup>746</sup> The Spirit blows where it wills (John 3:8), and, at Pentecost, the Spirit comes like a wind (Act 2:2). Breath is used for understanding the Divine; Jesus is associated with the Spirit just as God in the Hebrew Scripture is. Jesus

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<sup>743</sup> Young Jin Min, 'The Understanding of the Spirit in Old Testament', in, *Theological Thought*, Vol. 31, (1980): 617-637.

<sup>744</sup> Jung Young Lee, *The Theology of Change*, 103.

<sup>745</sup> Ha Kwon Jung, *Dictionary of Korean Catholic Church*, The Compilation Committee of Korean Catholic Church (Seoul: Institute of Korean Church History, 1985), 619.

<sup>746</sup> Se Hyung Lee, *The Theology of Taoism* (Han Deul Publishing, 2002), 196. See Eun Hee Shin, 'The Eros of the Holy Spirit and Chi: Toward a Chi-Pneumatology', in, *Theological Thoughts*, Vol.128, (2005): 185.



breathes the Spirit into the disciples (John 20:19-23). At Pentecost, *pneuma* is understood as the divine power of freedom, emancipation, and vitality.<sup>747</sup>

### ***Wind (Chi)***

Wind (Chi) in Feng Shui has a concept similar to *ruach* or *pneuma*; thus it is suitable for connecting Wind (Chi) and the Divine. The word 'Feng' in Feng Shui basically means 'Wind', which has the same meaning as 'Chi'. The flow of Chi corresponds to the flow of Spirit. The original meaning of Wind (Chi) is the primordial breath of nature, and the ancient thinking in East Asia is typically that Chi is the breath of heaven and earth.

In this sense, Wind (Chi) is expressed in terms of vitality, which sustains life, and is the driving force of nature. Wind (Chi) symbolizes all living phenomena and is the source of all becoming.<sup>748</sup> Kyung Duk Suh, who was a scholar during the middle years of the Lee Dynasty in 12th century Korea, supports this idea that Wind (Chi) sustains all creatures in the world. He argues that Chi is a matrix of physical and spiritual realities, and a mysterious energy of life.<sup>749</sup> Jung Young Lee states that Chi flows where yin and yang are interplaying and changing by condensation and dispersion. Lee writes 'Condensation caused by the yin must be followed by the dispersion caused by the yang; the forces involved are equal'.<sup>750</sup> He maintains that Wind (Chi) as the Spirit mediates the power of change, and supports the process of procreation in the universe, keeping it in balance and harmony through the fundamental relatedness of yin and yang.<sup>751</sup> What, then, are the potentially strong theological grounds for Chi being reinterpreted as the

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<sup>747</sup> Byung Mu Ahn, 'Chi and World', in, *Theological Thoughts*, Vol.73, (1991): 342.

<sup>748</sup> Maryuama Toshiyaki, trans. Hee Jun Park, *What is Chi Really? From the Discourses of Confucius to Science Today* (Seoul: Spiritual World Publishing, 1989), 25-26.

<sup>749</sup> Jum Sik Ahn, *Chi: What is This All About?* (Seoul: Joy Mission Press, 1999), 139.

<sup>750</sup> Jung Young Lee, *The Trinity in Asian Perspective*, 96.

<sup>751</sup> Hwa Lee, *What is Definition of Feng Shui?* (Seoul: Yhaksa Publishing, 2013), 70.

panentheistic Holy Spirit?

### **b) Resemblance between the Eastern Concept of Wind (Chi) and the Holy Spirit**

This section will examine how the Wind (Chi) is relevant to contemporary theological thoughts about the panentheistic Holy Spirit in three ways. First, both are regarded as the 'Spirit of life'; second, both have been interpreted as female images and symbols; finally, both are non-hierarchical, and not dualistic.

#### ***The Holy Spirit and Wind (Chi) Regarded as 'the Spirit of Life' with Immanent Transcendence***

As explained earlier, Spirit is breath or Wind, which gives life. In the Scriptures, the Spirit of God creates life, (Genesis 2:7), and gives life (The Book of Ezekiel 37, John 20:22). 'When you hide your face, they are dismayed when you take away their breath, they die and return to their dust' (Psalm 104:29). 'When you send forth your Spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the ground' (Psalm 104:30). 'God withdrew his spirit and breath' (Job 34: 14). In these ways the Holy Spirit is being described as the Spirit of life.

The Holy Spirit, as the Spirit of life, includes both the transcendental and the immanent dimension of the Spirit. In other words, the Spirit is immanent in all things, and at the same time is transcendent from all things. Moltmann sees God's spirit as both an immanent and transcendental one of communion that connects the Creator with creatures through divine energy, thus allowing for sharing fellowship with humanity.<sup>752</sup> McFague also reflects on the Trinity through her model of 'the world as the body of God.' She suggests the Trinity of God to be an invisible face, invisible body, and mediating spirit that mediates the invisible to the visible.<sup>753</sup>

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<sup>752</sup> Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, 217-220.

<sup>753</sup> McFague, *The Body of God*, 192-195.

In other words, Spirit is understood as being immanent and transcendent. The Holy Spirit is present in this world, and, therefore, immanent transcendence of the Spirit of life are immanent in this world.

The Chi has characteristics similar to the contemporary theologians understanding of the Holy Spirit. Its meaning has gradually expanded to encompass nature's breath or Wind that connects heaven with earth, and has been considered to be the source of life. Chi is understood as a vital energy that sustains biological phenomena.<sup>754</sup> East Asian Feng Shui thought suggests Chi brings the force of high Winds to cluster clouds together, and then create rain. Thus Chi was regarded as the primordial vitality for productivity in agrarian society, and became an essential element for all living creatures.<sup>755</sup>

According to Kwak Bahk, a third century Chinese Feng Shui scholar, the source of Chi as seen in the yin and yang principle is that Chi was spewed from the mouth, and became Wind. The Wind rises up, then the steam turns into clouds. The clouds fall out of the sky as rain, and rain penetrates into the earth to be Chi.<sup>756</sup> Within this principle of circulation, the Wind (Chi) serves as a link that connects all existence through a source of vitality. In other words, Chi allows all things in the universe to be in a continuous process of change. So for Jang Jae, who was a philosopher in the Song Dynasty in China, Wind (Chi) is present in all things, and gives unity to make all things united.<sup>757</sup>

East Asians think that Chi is the substance of which all existing phenomena are constituted, including all the phases of matter, energy, vitality, and various

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<sup>754</sup> Eun Hee Shin, 'The Eros of the Holy Spirit and Chi', 190.

<sup>755</sup> Jum Sik Ahn, *Chi: What is This All About?* 152.

<sup>756</sup> Hong Ki Yoon, *The Mind of Land* (Seoul: Science Books, 2011), 43. See Chang Jo Choi, Chungoh Kyung, *Kumnam Kyung* (Seoul: Minum Press, 1993), 71-72.

<sup>757</sup> Jin Kwan Kwon, 'Pneumatological Analysis of Chi: Based on Jang Jae and Hwadam's Ideas', in, Korean Society of Religion, (2003): 103-5.

forms of Spirit. They generally believe that Chi contains Spirit as a vitality, as well as primordial matter, which encompasses a wide range of physical and spiritual realms within it. In other words, the Wind (Chi) is a fundamental vapor present in the reality of time and space. It has an intrinsic physical property, which is not captured in the everyday sense; rather it has a supernatural spiritual nature that has transcendent and psycho-physiological elements.<sup>758</sup> In this way, Wind (Chi) flows and exists everywhere, so that living things can be sustained.

Therefore, we can understand both Chi and the Holy Spirit as having immanent transcendence, and vitality for life. Koo Dong Yun understands that the 'chiological approach will bring out another dimension of God that will complement Western theologies'.<sup>759</sup> However, the difference between the Holy Spirit and Wind (Chi) is that while the Holy Spirit is considered the source of life and its vitality, and not just an element of matter, Wind (Chi) becomes the matrix of life and of all things, including all the phases of matter and energy that are in the category of yin and yang. While *ruach*, which is impersonal, is understood as *pneuma*, which is personal, Wind (Chi) seems not to have a personal nature. This difference can be solved by employing the inclusive 'both/and' thinking of Feng Shui.

### ***The Holy Spirit and Wind (Chi) as Female Images and Symbols***

In the era of early Christianity, Syrian Fathers in the early Christian Church used the feminine gender of the word for Holy Spirit to give rise to a theology in which

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<sup>758</sup> Ibid., 106. See Young Han Kim, 'Chi and Holy Spirit: Theological Analysis on Chi', in, *Sungsil University, Institute of Humanty Research* Vol. 31, (2001): 8.

<sup>759</sup> Koo Dong Yun, *The Holy Spirit and Chi: A Chiological Approach to Pneumatology* (Oregon: Pickwick Publications, 2012), 39. There has been some debate on the comparative works on Chi and the Holy Spirit among Asian theologians. Jum Sik Ahn insists that Chi cannot be compared to the Holy Spirit, so he indicates Chun Sen Chang made a mistake to identify Chi with the Holy Spirit. Jum Sik Ahn, *Chi: What is This All About?* 148, 154. But Eun Hee Shin suggests Chi can be used properly as a fitting comparison for the Holy Spirit. Eun Hee Shin, 'The Eros of the Holy Spirit and Chi', 178-212.

the Holy Spirit was considered feminine - which is the Holy Mother. Basillius meanwhile asserted that the Holy Spirit comes from the Father, and Augustinus claimed the Holy Spirit was a bond of love between the Father and the Son.<sup>760</sup> Early Syrian Fathers thought of the Holy Spirit as a comforter, just like a mother who cares for her children. They posit that believers are reborn through the Holy Spirit, which evokes the image of a merciful mother giving birth to her people.<sup>761</sup> The Holy Spirit appeared as a nursing mother in the anthem of the Syrian Christians, so the Holy Spirit has been associated with a feminine nature of the Divine, and has been spoken of through images of a mother.<sup>762</sup>

The Holy Spirit is often symbolized by doves, which are expressed as feminine. Moltmann also represents the Holy Spirit as a mother. He maintains that if the Holy Spirit is a comforter, she comforts someone just like a mother.<sup>763</sup> This comforter is '*ruach*' which is expressed as feminine in the Hebrew Scripture, '[a]s a mother comforts her child so will I comfort you' (Isaiah 66: 13). In addition, Moltmann indicates that although Yahweh is represented as the King, the Savior, and the Judge, his earthly activities according to the experience of the God of Israel are notably described by feminine metaphors: The *ruach* of Yahweh, Yahweh Howkma, and Shekina are all feminine metaphors.<sup>764</sup>

The Holy Spirit is also represented through these female images: A mother that gives a birth to a new life, a woman or a mother that cleans dirt, and a mother bird that sits on a nest of eggs to conceive a new life. In this way, the Holy Spirit

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<sup>760</sup> Moltmann, *The History of the Triune God*, 141.

<sup>761</sup> Ibid.

<sup>762</sup> Johnson, *She Who Is*, 84.

<sup>763</sup> Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, 214.

<sup>764</sup> Moltmann, *History and the Triune God*, 141.

has traditionally been associated with feminine symbols.<sup>765</sup> Johnson portrays the Holy Spirit that embraces sufferings of the world as a great womb of the mother (Acts 17:28).<sup>766</sup> John B. Cobb also identifies the Holy Spirit as the feminine aspect of God - which is receptive, protective, and shares suffering.<sup>767</sup> Jung Young Lee also says 'The Spirit is known as she, the Mother, who complements the Father'.<sup>768</sup> Further, Moltmann has related the Holy Spirit to perceived maternal functions in Scripture or the Christian tradition, with salvation and liberation through fellowship. This feminine aspect of the Holy Spirit, as expressed through female metaphors and that permeates all things in or of life, implies the Spirit of creation and liberation.

As the Holy Spirit has been regarded as a female symbol, Wind (Chi) in Feng Shui cosmology has also long been conceived of as a female image. Taoism and Feng Shui, based on IChing, have expressed God as a divine feminine.<sup>769</sup> In particular, Wind (Chi) has been imagined in Feng Shui as the animating power that flows through all living things, working to contract and consolidate harmony and balance. As such, Wind (Chi) always has been recognized as a maternal primordium from the moment of conception.<sup>770</sup> Many ancient East Asians regarded Wind (Chi) as one of the first and highest expressions of the divine Spirit and presence, based on their daily experiences, and the effects of Wind (Chi).<sup>771</sup> Ancient East Asians therefore had a special devotion to the Wind (Chi), which is

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<sup>765</sup> Johnson, *She Who Is*, 84. Ae Young Kim, 'Renewal Towards Community of Life and Holy Spirit of the Mother', in *Korean Women's Theology*, (1999): 97-100.

<sup>766</sup> Johnson, *She Who Is*, 134.

<sup>767</sup> Johnson, 'The Incomprehensibility of God and the Image of God Male and Female', 459.

<sup>768</sup> Jung Young Lee, *The Trinity in Asian Perspective*, 95.

<sup>769</sup> Se Hyung Lee, *The Theology of Tao*, 192.

<sup>770</sup> Jung Hae Park, 'The Theological Meaning of Wind Expressed on Kumnam Kyung', *Hanseong University, Institute of Asian Literature Study*, Vol.28, (2013): 85.

<sup>771</sup> Maryuama Toshiyaki, *What is Chi Really?* 26.

regarded as the breath of heaven and earth. They believed in a God who controlled the Wind, and performed rites to the Wind God.<sup>772</sup> Song Wang, in the Period of the Song Dynasty, was aware of the divine Wind (Chi), which earth holds, and is affected by the Land God. He came to imagine the divine appearance of the Wind for East Asians as divine Motherhood.<sup>773</sup>

The figurative idea of 'blowing Wind' makes one feel the maternal imagery of God, which has been highly valued by East Asians. In this way, Wind (Chi) gives birth, fosters, and protects life; it represents the idea that nothing in the world is as important as women and mothers. As I have shown, both Holy Spirit and Wind (Chi) have a long tradition of being expressed through maternal images and metaphors.

***The Holy Spirit and Wind (Chi) as Not Hierarchical, and Not Dualistic***

Contemporary theologians including Moltmann, Johnson, McFague, Lacugna, Zizioulas, and others understand the Holy Spirit as an essence of fellowship between the other persons of the Trinity and respect the individual hypostasis with equality, rather than as being subordinate to God the Father and God the Son.<sup>774</sup> Despite the debate about compromising the Spirit as a person by reducing it to a mere essence of fellowship, this dissertation understands the Holy Spirit as an essence of fellowship, reflecting the idea of flowing Chi, and the idea of sensing the same Chi from the concept of 'donggigameungron' (or 'gameung') in Feng Shui. More specifically, the Trinitarian relationship of fellowship speaks to diversity in unity, which is neither hierarchal nor dualistic. This understanding of the Holy Spirit pursues a unity through harmony and balance that can create an opportunity to

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<sup>772</sup> Ibid.

<sup>773</sup> Jung Hae Park, 'The Theological Meaning of Wind Expressed on Kumnam Kyung', 85.

<sup>774</sup> Moltmann, *The Trinity and History of God*, 128-133.

overcome discrimination. This non-hierarchical communion between the Holy Spirit and the other hypostases follows the same thinking as that of gameung - sensing the same Chi - in Feng Shui. 'Gameung' means that they react with each other, and mutually influence all things from wholeness, not individual parts; this means everything is alive, connected, and changing all the time because changes are the dynamic signs of vital, living Chi.<sup>775</sup> In Feng Shui, changes are experienced everywhere in the physical world - the seasons, our bodies, our cultures, and our emotions. Our environments are not only alive and connected with their surroundings, but are also constantly changing. Therefore, this section argues that this kind of sensing the same Chi gameung can be explained by the term 'fellowship', or 'perichoretic relationship', which some contemporary Western theologians use. In other words, Chi forces tend to act towards a unified yin and yang. Therefore, yin and yang sense the unifying Chi force working upon themselves because Chi requires a moderate, balanced polarity from the interaction between yin and yang. For this reason, this kind of sensing is not hierarchical nor dualistic. The principle of this sensibility is at work in the cycle of the natural world. In other words, the grand cycle of nature in Chi and yin and yang interaction maintains natural life from Chi to Wind, from Wind to cloud, from cloud to rain - and then rain runs through the earth.<sup>776</sup> The Wind (Chi) in everything is constantly changing, based on the principle of natural circulation. In this way, Wind can move everything through the fellowship of Chi with yin and yang, based on gameung. Wind (Chi) produces change constantly by moving in our physical

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<sup>775</sup> Chun Sen Chang, *Heaven and Humanity is the Same One Asian Theology* (Seoul: Bundo Publishing Co), 1991, 164. See Doo Kyu Kim, *Our Feng Shui Story* (Seoul: Book House, 2006), 85-86. See also Siik Park, *Korean Feng Shui Architect* (Seoul: Ilbit Publishing, 2004), 53.

<sup>776</sup> Jung Hae Park, 'The Theological Meaning of Wind Expressed on Kumnam Kyung', 99.



universe.

That being said, Wind (Chi) does not exist as a single independent entity. This is because Chi is created by the constant movement of yin and yang within the life cycle. Chi keeps yin and yang in a non-hierarchical and monistic relationship, based on mutual fellowship and gameung. By drawing from the understanding of fellowship, Chi speaks of the Holy Spirit through the relationship with yin and yang, which is equal and monistic. Through sensing the same Chi, the Spirit plays a powerful role in the relationship between humans and God, realizing the fact that it is the Chi that we experience when we experience God.<sup>777</sup>

In summary, this section examined three theological bases for reinterpreting Wind (Chi) as the Holy Spirit from a panentheistic view, by exploring Wind (Chi) and the Holy Spirit as the breath of life with immanent transcendence, as feminine symbols, and as neither hierarchical nor dualistic. In this way, this chapter discovers the potential that Wind (Chi) has as a new interpretation of the Holy Spirit from an East Asian perspective. As such, the next section examines how 'Spirit of the Wind (Chi)' works for the oppressed women in the patriarchal church in Korea.

## **2. The 'Spirit of the Wind (Chi)' as an Empowering Force for Women and Nature: An Approach to Eco-Feminist Theology**

### **a) The 'Spirit of the Wind (Chi)' as the Spirit of Life and Liberation**

Johnson discusses how the mystery of the Holy Spirit is at work and present in this chaotic world, and is involved in renewing, healing, and liberating the world from the grip of suffering.<sup>778</sup> Because God as the Spirit has manifested herself as Wind (Spirit, Chi), Wind has expressed the power of life in nature. Like Israel's

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<sup>777</sup> Chun Sen Chang, *Heaven and Humanity is the Same One Asian Theology* 177. See Hyun Ji Lee, 'Discourse of Gender Role from Yin and Yang Principles', in, *Asian Society Thoughts* Vol.14 (2006): 17.

<sup>778</sup> Johnson, *She Who Is*, 126-127.

description of Yahweh's power of the Spirit in liberating the people from slavery in the Hebrew Scripture, the 'Spirit of the Wind' (Chi), as the Eastern term for life force energy, works for the oppressed - in particular women and nature - as a spirit of preservation and liberation for empowering them.

Under the dichotomous thinking prevalent in Western society and traditional Christianity, the Spirit and nature have been considered separate from one another. Therefore, the Spirit was not considered as a natural element of life.<sup>779</sup> However, modern theologians such as Moltmann, McFague, Johnson, Lacugna, and Rahner have begun to acknowledge that the Holy Spirit resides in all things, and that God as the Spirit becomes the source of life. The Holy Spirit bestows life upon the whole universe and upon all creation.<sup>780</sup> This understanding means that God's spirit is not removed from all creatures as a transcendent being, but lives in all creatures to form an intimate relationship and fellowship with Creation: God is seen as immanent transcendent in all things. So God as Spirit is in all things; he is not removed from the world as a transcendent ruler of the world, but is an immanent being in all things. In this understanding of God's Spirit in all creation, with God's Spirit dwelling in all things, all things are envisaged as connected with each other through God's Spirit, as one family.<sup>781</sup> This idea leads to the ecological thinking that nature is not just as an object of conquest, domination, and utilization, but must be valued as our siblings and relatives, in one family. Thus, the idea of the Spirit as the source of life leads to the idea of interconnectedness and unity because all creatures are siblings in one family, which contrasts with a hierarchical

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<sup>779</sup> Refer to Chapter I.

<sup>780</sup> Johnson, *She Who Is*, 212.

<sup>781</sup> Kyun Jin Kim, *Christian Theological Understanding of Natural Environment* (Seoul: Yon Sei University Press, 2006), 210-211.

or dualistic image of God in the Trinity. In this way, the Holy Spirit serves to liberate the oppressed, especially women and nature, from dualistic thinking. This Spirit of liberation can be shown throughout the Scriptures. God's Spirit freed the oppressed peoples who are groaning (Exodus 37-12): God's Spirit works for renewal and healing, and finally preserves people.

Applying this understanding of the Holy Spirit, Moltmann sees that the Holy Spirit is the energy of life, and sees the Spirit as having the power of creating a new possibility awakened by God's Spirit.<sup>782</sup> Peter C. Hodgson also speaks of the Holy Spirit as the spirit of life and creation, which is 'the liberation of the world and the perfection (or freedom) of God'.<sup>783</sup> In addition, James Nash sees the Holy Spirit as a life-giving power of creation that inspires being alive, reconciled, renewed, and liberated.<sup>784</sup> Johnson states that the Holy Spirit is with those who are suffering, and that She works for the oppressed, and those being infringed upon.<sup>785</sup> Hodgson says that these contemporary theologians' understanding is not anthropocentric, but represents a holistic pneumatology – 'one that embraces the world creation and recognizes in the Spirit the symbol of wholeness, relatedness, energy, life'.<sup>786</sup>

### ***The 'Spirit of the Wind' (Chi) as the Spirit of Liberation***

Along with contemporary theologians' understandings of the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of liberation, the Asian understanding of Spirit known as Wind (Chi) from Feng Shui, discussed in the previous section of this chapter, is a useful way to interpret the Holy Spirit from an Asian perspective. Wind (Chi) has characteristics

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<sup>782</sup> Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, 83-94.

<sup>783</sup> Peter C. Hodgson, *Wind of the Spirit: A Constructive Christian Theology*, (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1994), 291.

<sup>784</sup> James A. Nash, *Loving Nature: Ecological Integrity and Christian Responsibility* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1991), 111.

<sup>785</sup> Johnson, *She Who Is*, 127.

<sup>786</sup> Hodgson, *Wind of the Spirit*, 277.

similar to the Ultimate Reality (the Divine in Feng Shui), which gives life to the very being of the universe, and energy for change. In other words, the Wind (Chi) is nestled inherently in all things, and becomes a dynamic power of vitality that creates things and changes things through a process of yin and yang interaction.<sup>787</sup> Therefore, 'Spirit of the Wind (Chi)' participates in all processes, and becomes the essence of all things, as all things are created and changed because of the power of Spirit as Chi.<sup>788</sup>

This 'Spirit of the Wind' is not fixed (John 3:8), but blows to create life. Therefore, the 'Spirit of the Wind (Chi)' reflects the fact that the spirit of God's participation is at work in this world. And the Wind (Chi) in Feng Shui cosmology, as a cosmic power of life, has an element that liberates the oppressed out of their bonds. As such, the 'Spirit of the Wind (Chi)' leads to liberation and equality for the oppressed, as expressed in the biblical verse: '[t]here is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus' (Galatians 3:28).

Having established that Wind (Chi) is a liberating force, we may ask, where is this emancipatory power of the Spirit (Chi) for the oppressed (especially women and nature) coming from? This section asserts that Wind (Chi) gives us power and strength via the interaction of yin and yang, through a process of unity and harmony that occurs between the two elements through their sensing the same Chi, (gameung). Chinese philosopher Lao-Tzu wrote that Wind (Chi) seeks unity and harmony, as all things have yin and yang, and Chi mediates a harmonious

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<sup>787</sup> Chun Shen Chang, *Heaven and Humanity is the Same One Asian Theology*, 146.

<sup>788</sup> Leonardo Boff, *Ecological Theology*, trans. Hang Sup Kim, (Seoul: Catholic Publishing, 1996), 72.

unity of all things through the balance of yin and yang.<sup>789</sup> Therefore, this chapter claims that Wind (Chi) creates a new force through a process of unity and harmony in 'gameung.' And this new force is the power and Spirit of liberation. This new power of Wind (Chi) is identified as a dynamic energy, with the creation and liberation of all life. Wind (Chi) has been embedded within the Asian people's concept of the cosmos as the realm of the dynamic Chi (Wind).<sup>790</sup> Therefore, this chapter understands the 'Spirit of the Wind (Chi)' as an immanent transcendental Spirit with vitality that is the dynamic energy that works towards the purpose of liberation for women and nature.

More specifically, the energizing presence of 'Spirit of the Wind (Chi)' - which is spoken about in Feng Shui - is that the Spirit resides within all things, so that it becomes the source of transforming energy among all creatures. This is a dynamic power for all life to empower, renew, and restore all kinds of the oppressed - and in particular to free the wounded women and damaged nature out of the patriarchal structure of community. In Psalm 104:30, a poet wrote about this kind of Holy Spirit's empowering: 'When you send your Spirit, they are created and you renew the face of the ground.' (NIV) In this way the Spirit of the Wind is the source of being, and She frees all kinds of sufferers from discrimination and injustice. The Wind (Chi) sustains life by justice and peace where Wind (Chi) needs to be engaged in the reality of the world. Accordingly, the dynamic and transformative power of the Spirit of the Wind can liberate oppressed women and nature.

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<sup>789</sup> Chun Shen Chang, *Heaven and Humanity is the Same One Asian Theology*, 146-148.

<sup>790</sup> Jin Kwan Kwon, 'Pneumatological Analysis on Chi; Based on Jang Jae and Hwadam's Ideas', in, *Korean Society of Religion*, (2003): 104.

### ***The Dynamic and Transformative Power of the 'Spirit of the Wind (Chi)'***

Regarding this dynamic energy of the Wind (Chi), which is the source of transforming and liberating power, Jung Young Lee infers Chi from John 8:31-32 in the Bible. He argues that it was the power of change that urged the disciples to follow Jesus by giving up human desires and adhere to the status quo; the power of the Holy Spirit led them to change".<sup>791</sup> The Spirit manifested as Wind (Chi) gives life, and at the same time renews it through its empowering energy that is Spirit. Therefore, he understands the nature of Spirit by saying 'all dynamic qualities, all that causes movement, change, or transformation, reveals the nature of *prana* (spirit)'.<sup>792</sup> This emphasizes the transformative and liberating power of Chi, the Spirit of the Wind. Kyung Duk Suh also supports the notion that Chi is manifested as Wind and power, which exudes a dynamic energy of changes through interplay with yin and yang.<sup>793</sup> Chun Shen Chang also writes that Chi (Wind) is expressed as a dynamic energy or power within the religious and spiritual realm.<sup>794</sup>

So what is this dynamic power? It is not fixed in one state, but is always changing towards something new - that is to say it has the power of transformation. Regarding this dynamic power of Spirit, Paul Tillich refers to the Spirit as the power dynamics of existence, the power of life and the strength to transcend Herself without losing Herself.<sup>795</sup> Moltmann also refers to such dynamics as bioequivalence, which is the Spirit's dynamics that cause the transformation coming from divine power.<sup>796</sup> Wallance adds that the dynamic of the Holy Spirit is a

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<sup>791</sup> Jung Young Lee, *The Theology of Change*, 111.

<sup>792</sup> *Ibid.*, 108.

<sup>793</sup> Jin Kwan Kwon, 'Pneumatological Analysis on Chi', 91.

<sup>794</sup> Chun Sen Chang, *Heaven and Humanity is the Same One Asian Theology*, 145.

<sup>795</sup> Paul Tillich, *Systemic Theology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963), 3:21, in Jung Young Lee, *The Theology of Change*, 107.

<sup>796</sup> Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom*, 152.

force for peace and solidarity, and that it empowers renewal of all creatures in this world of violence.<sup>797</sup> In addition on the topic of the dynamics of Wind (Chi), Byung Mu Ahn, a Korean theologian, says that Wind (Chi) is the power of transformation. Furthermore, he interprets Chi in relation to the alienated people and classes. In other words, Wind (Chi) is a power of changes, of resistance to the obstacles of discrimination and injustice. In this sense, the Wind (Chi) is also referred to as being liberating towards 'Minjung - ordinary people'.<sup>798</sup> Heup Young Kim also sees Wind (Chi) as a force of dynamism and transformation. He describes the power of Chi via the illustration of tender carp swimming against a raging stream - that is, the power of Minjung, which represents an awakened dynamism, and the power of transformation.<sup>799</sup>

Within this dynamic strength of the Holy Spirit, there are many other references to Jesus' Spirit working in the New Testament. For example, powerless people who followed Jesus were transformed through the power of the Holy Spirit at the event of Pentecost (Acts of the Apostles 2:1-31). Ahn also explains Wind (Chi) by referring to the words of the Pentecost in Acts 2, saying that the fiery wind is blowing on the head of every man. It was the force of the Holy Spirit to transform, which is present in the Wind of Spirit (Chi) from an Asian perspective.<sup>800</sup>

In this section then, Spirit manifested as the Wind (Chi) is a dynamic force and liberating Spirit, which can transform the oppressed to be awakened for their liberation. The word 'liberation' in this chapter represents the whole cycle of coming back to God from the separation of the community. Therefore, the 'Spirit of the

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<sup>797</sup> Jin Kwan Kwon, 'Pneumatological Analysis on Chi', 99.

<sup>798</sup> Byung Mu Ahn, 'Chi and World', in, *Theological Thoughts*, Vol. 73, (1991): 335.

<sup>799</sup> Heup Young Kim, *Toward a Theo-tao* (Seoul: DaSan Geul Bang Publishing, 2001), 344-355.

<sup>800</sup> Byung Mu Ahn, 'Chi and World', 342.

Wind (Chi)' serves to liberate the exploited life that women and nature face. Thus the liberating Wind (Chi) seeks ways to restore wounded women and damaged nature from otherness, led by the Holy Spirit as unity, and as Mother Nature. So, the 'Spirit of the Wind(Chi)' is the holistic Holy Spirit that overcomes all dualism and hierarchical order, in a world that will eventually liberate women and nature.

### **b) The Feminist Theological Meaning of the 'Spirit of the Wind (Chi)'**

The 'Spirit of the Wind (Chi)', which is presented as containing an emancipatory meaning, is important for feminist theology. The traditional Trinity, which used exclusively male language and the hierarchical structures of the Church, excluded and marginalized women from Church and society, as does the Korean Church. The lives and experiences of women have not been reflected in the Trinity of God. The same is true of women in the contemporary Korean Church. In other words, women in the Church have been degraded as a subjugated class, by masculine images of God. Women have only been able to take secondary roles in the Church. Women are too often constrained by commitments, and by low expectations in their leadership - for example with their being denied ordination.<sup>801</sup>

Johnson and Moltmann see the marginalization of women as symbolically similar to the Holy Spirit, which has been overlooked by the patriarchal church; they therefore consider the Holy Spirit to be in solidarity with women.<sup>802</sup> Thus Johnson argues that the Holy Spirit is with those who are suffering, and is trying to free them from the structure of a destructive humanity.<sup>803</sup> In this way, the 'Spirit of the Wind (Chi)' has infinite possibilities for the creation and preservation of life, and finally for the liberation of alienated women. In other words, God is the source of all

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<sup>801</sup> Refer to Chapter II

<sup>802</sup> Johnson, *She Who Is*, 207. See Hodgson, *Wind of the Spirit*, 434.

<sup>803</sup> Johnson, *She Who Is*, 216.



things in the world - not only human beings but all created things. Wind (Chi) makes a family kinship in relationship with yin and yang because all creatures are inhabited by one Spirit of God, which enables women to escape from sexism. The 'Spirit of the Wind' is not the Spirit, which is patriarchal, but rather the Spirit of liberation and creation. In this way, the 'Spirit of the Wind' includes a positive image of women, which helps women recognize that God is within them. Thus the 'Spirit of the Wind' has an emancipatory and restoring element that frees women from the patriarchal structure of community and society. In addition, the feminine metaphors and symbols that the 'Spirit of the Wind' carries create possibilities for women to change traditional and patriarchal symbols that are dominating structures within the Church.<sup>804</sup> In this way, the 'Spirit of the Wind' can overcome sexism, as Chi embraces life, makes it whole, and offers a new vision to heal the oppressed in particular.

Finally, the 'Spirit of the Wind' from Feng Shui Cosmology, which is represented in female symbols, is the Spirit of liberation that seeks ways of harmony and unity that sense the same Chi with yin and yang interplay. Therefore it is neither dualistic nor hierarchical, but emancipatory - a liberating Spirit that is capable of overcoming dualism. Due to these characteristics, which are not dualistic but inclusive, harmonious, and embracive, the 'Spirit of the Wind (Chi)' will be the crucial element in doing feminist theology; the 'Spirit of the Wind (Chi)' opens up a way to reinterpret God through its nature of suffering, and through participating and sympathizing with the community of life.

In summary, this section attempts to re-interpret the Feng Shui hypostasis Wind (Chi) from an Asian perspective, for the Trinity of the Holy Spirit in

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<sup>804</sup> Ibid., 212-221, 231.

Christianity. This chapter sees the 'Spirit of the Wind (Chi)' as a crucial element of emancipatory essence, for bringing transformation to society. This dynamic power of the Spirit - that which can overcome dualism - supports the suggested 'God of Land' model in terms of restoring wounded women and nature.

In this section the 'Spirit of the Wind (Chi)', which is considered as a feminine Spirit, is made more dynamic by the interplay between yin and yang, and can transform and liberate by sensing the same Chi, 'gameung.' A new image of Wind of Spirit, which is more familiar to Korean women through Feng Shui, heals and restores the hurt from the oppression. The 'Spirit of the Wind (Chi)' renews and empowers women to become liberated from patriarchy. This is the Spirit that is feminine and liberating, and that embraces the experiences of women's lives. Finally, the 'Spirit of the Wind (Chi)' works for the oppressed, especially women and nature, in order to heal, liberate, and restore their original shape.

### **B. 'God the Son as Water': Cosmic Christology of Salvation and Liberation**

This section attempts to reinterpret the person of 'God the Son' in the Trinity, by employing the symbol 'Shui' (Water) from Feng Shui. The section therefore develops 'Christology of Water', by connecting the soteriological meaning of Water in Feng Shui together with the person of 'God the Son', as the source of new creational life from Feng Shui cosmology. This is because 'Water' in Feng Shui provides a more nuanced meaning for 'God the Son', Jesus, who is not only identified with the Divine, but also with an inexhaustible, eschatological, and soteriological source of spring water that becomes the means of inviting people to eternal life. The section examines the appropriateness of water images from Scripture, and from the symbol 'Shui' (Water) from Feng Shui, for water serving as

an agent, both actual and metaphorical, for the revelation of Jesus as the Christ.

John's Gospel demonstrates the most references to water as a theme of eternal life, Holy Spirit, revelation, and salvation.<sup>805</sup> Water imagery as the symbol of life has long been widely acknowledged as pervasive in the Hebrew Scripture. In Judaism, water was most commonly understood as Torah, wisdom, or Holy Spirit.<sup>806</sup> Many Johannine theologians, such as Raymond E. Brown, Rhonda G. Crutcher, George R. Beasley-Murray, Paul Larry Jones, Wai-Yee Ng, Sanders-Mastin, and others, in attempting to interpret the meaning of water in the New Testament have interpreted water as a symbol of both 'Spirit' and 'Revelation'.<sup>807</sup> They have also seen water as a symbol for life-giving Spirit, which was the most conventional method for interpreting the meaning of water.<sup>808</sup>

Baptism has generally been symbolized as the gift of the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures.<sup>809</sup> Water intensifies and magnifies 'Spirit' by means of the many figurative ways, and water, wisdom/teaching, and Holy Spirit have been considered to be analogies for one element that precipitates new birth - all being given from above.<sup>810</sup> In baptism, water also sometimes means death, from which we must be

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<sup>805</sup> Sang Sub Yoo, *Jesus' Holy War Against Satan* (Seoul: Solomon Press, 1999), 117-119.

<sup>806</sup> C. H. Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge: University Press, 1953), 137-138.

<sup>807</sup> Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel According to John: Introduction, Translation, and Notes* (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc, 1966). George R. Beasley-Murray, *Word Biblical Commentary 36: John* (Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1999). Paul Larry Jones, *The Symbol of Water in the Gospel of John* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997). Rhonda G. Crutcher, *That He Might Be Revealed: Water Imagery and the Identity of Jesus in the Gospel of John* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, an Imprint of Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2015). Wai-Yee Ng, *Water Symbolism in John: An Eschatological Interpretation* (New York: Peter Lang, 2001). Joseph Newbould Sanders, Brian A. Mastin (ed.), *Commentary on the Gospel According to St. John*, Hendrickson Pub, 1988. John Paul Heil, 'Blood and Water; The Death and Resurrection of Jesus', CBQMS, 27, The Catholic Biblical Association of America (Washington D.C. 1995). C. R. Koester, *Symbolism in the Fourth Gospel: Meaning, Mystery, Community* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995).

<sup>808</sup> Stephen Um, *The Theme of Temple Christology in John's Gospel* (NY: T&T Clark Publishing, 2006), 9-10.

<sup>809</sup> Luke 3:21-22, Matthew 3:11-17. F.F. Bruce, *The Gospel of John* (Basingstoke: Pickering&Inglis Ltd., 1983), 110-111, quoted in *Ibid.*, 11.

<sup>810</sup> John 1:32-34. *Ibid.*, 9.

spiritually resurrected, rather a symbol of life and regeneration. (Romans 6:1-8) In contrast, John speaks in John 1:32-33, 'I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him. And I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, "The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit"'. In that sense, as used here by John, both 'water' and 'Spirit' are spiritually the same entity, which is 'Revelation' and 'Spirit'. Through water baptism, Jesus' true identity was confirmed that Jesus is the one who administers the spirit with his baptism by the descent of the spirit as a dove. As an image, water is more complex than is commonly accepted in this context. After all, many Western theologians agree in defining water as a symbol of Spirit, and Revelation.<sup>811</sup>

In this context, the section highlights that water serves a revelatory function, in relationship to Jesus' identity. From John's narratives (John 1:31-32) that 'I myself did not know him, but the reason I came baptizing with water was that he might be revealed to Israel. I saw the Spirit come down from heaven from heaven as a dove and remain on him', so water as revealing something about Jesus' identity as Son of the Father is revealed; water is mentioned in every narrative in John's Gospel.

In these ways, the symbol of water as distinctively being the Divine 'Revelation' that is Jesus Christ supports the fundamental idea of 'Christology of Water' in this section. To do this, the section refers to some of the most notable stories in the Gospel that involve the symbol of water as Revelation: The changing

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<sup>811</sup> Ibid., 10. See Heil, 'Blood and Water', 102. See also Koester, *Symbolism in the Fourth Gospel*, 155-184.

of the water into wine (John 2: 1– 11),<sup>812</sup> and Jesus' conversation with the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4: 7– 15).<sup>813</sup> The first example of Jesus changing water to wine was a sign that Jesus was Yahweh himself fleshly manifested as Divine Revelation. In the second example, where Jesus speaks to the Samaritan woman, Jesus shows his ability to offer eternal life as represented by water - the result of His unique relationship with Yaweh whom He manifests in human flesh. John's Gospel 7:37 declares people's hope that the eschatological kingdom is not only coming, but is already here in the person of Jesus Christ, who is Divine Revelation in human flesh, and the source of all blessings.<sup>814</sup>

All these passages provide support for the idea in 'Christology of Water' of Divine 'Revelation' as Jesus Christ. This section therefore considers Jesus as the symbol of water manifested in Divine 'Revelation', which is an inexhaustible source of living water giving life. This living water would break the cyclical human quest to escape the burden of life, leading to transformed, non-conventional, and new eternal life. 'God became human and walked among them' (John 1: 14): This is, at

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<sup>812</sup> When Jesus and his disciples went to a wedding at Cana, Jesus turns water into wine. This sign made the disciples believe in Jesus, and revealed his glory (John 2: 11). By changing the water into blood-red wine, Jesus symbolically represents Moses' miracle of turning the Nile to blood (Ex 4: 9; 7: 19– 21), using Yahweh's words to Moses stating that this 'sign' was to be done 'so that they may believe that the Lord, the God of their ancestors, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has appeared to you' (Ex 4: 5). Jesus' changing water into wine at Cana was a sign that Jesus was Yahweh himself, fleshly manifested among them. This 'sign' represents the purpose for which Jesus has come: To open up the new era expressed by the wine. Beasley-Murray, 'Word Biblical Commentary', 32-36. Crutcher, *He That Might Be Revealed*, Kindle Location 2450.

<sup>813</sup> The story in John 4: 7– 15 tells about another dimension of new life that occurs in an inappropriate situation, where Jesus breaks the cultural taboo by talking to a Samaritan woman. The water He gives to the Samaritan woman would break the conventional dimension of life, but leads to non-conventional eternal life. Jesus offered the water, saying 'a gushing spring within you that issues in eternal life'. This living water would make her life easier because she doesn't have to come to the well every day to draw water any more. In this way, the water that Jesus provides is metaphorically living water that gives life. Jesus, manifested as human flesh, says that the living water he offers will become 'within you'. Beasley-Murray, 'Word Biblical Commentary' 56-65. John Shelby Spong, *Jesus for the Non-Religious* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2007), 257-258.

<sup>814</sup> 'I am the living water' (John 7: 37– 38). When He says, 'Let anyone who is thirsty come to me, and let the one who believes in me drink', He is expressing divine power through water. Jesus then goes on to make a declaration about rivers of living water, which will flow from either himself or the one who believes in him. Beasley-Murray, 'Word Biblical Commentary', 100-122.

its heart, the message of the water image of the Gospel.

From a Christological view, 'Water' in this section functions as a symbol for God the Son, Jesus, who represents a universal and comprehensive feature of Divine Revelation that becomes a sacrifice of the humble. The symbol of Water in IChing that becomes the basis of Feng Shui cosmology is considered to be the perfect manifestation of change and circulation in the world. According to this belief that Water demonstrates the wheel of life cycle—life, death and rebirth -by incorporating this symbolism of Water into the incarnation of Christ; that is, 'Water' represents the Cosmic Christ, who was raised from death, as an appropriate Asian interpretation of the Trinity. In East Asian tradition, Water has been used in a figurative way to represent the Divine.<sup>815</sup> Drawing on the resources of Feng Shui cosmology, which is deeply grounded in the IChing that represents basic processes of changes and circulation in transformation, this section attempts to formulate the Christology of Water. In this way, the section offers distinctive features for the different portraits of Jesus by drawing on the metaphysics of the IChing, crystallized in the concept of the yin and yang relationship, which constitutes the two primordial and alternating components of change and transformation. In His life of death and resurrection, Jesus represents the perfect manifestation of change, which includes decay and renewal of life, the phenomena that really show how Water works, and how Water circulates, changes, and transforms in phenomenological and figurative ways in the idea of IChing. His crucifixion is the perfect symbol of decay, and his resurrection is the perfect symbol of renewal of life, 'Thus Jesus as the perfect symbol of the change unites both decay and growth, or death and resurrection, in the process of constant change

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<sup>815</sup> Won Sub Lee, *Lao Tzu* (Seoul: Samjungdang Publishing, 1983), 28.

and transformation'.<sup>816</sup>

## **1. Exploring the Meaning of Water in Christianity and Feng Shui**

This section explores the meaning of 'Water' in Christianity and Feng Shui because the word 'Water' is used in a variety of metaphorical ways. In this way, the section explores the appropriateness of 'Water' as 'God the Son', and an eco-feministic aspect of explaining 'Water' as 'God the Son' in Christianity.

### **a) The Meaning of Water in the Biblical and Christian Tradition**

The word 'Water' is used in a variety of metaphorical ways in the Christian tradition. The symbolism of water in Christianity has a universal undertone of fertility, humility, purity, life, silence, blessing, baptism, and so on. In Genesis 1: 1-2, 'Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters', water is viewed as the source of life itself, as Creation, from which life emerges. Water symbolizes the state of Creation, the basic source for all beings. Thus water precedes Creation, as a creation, and as a creative mediator between God and God's creatures. Water already existed prior to all Creation - it becomes a source of Creation, holds the power of transition, and enriches Creation with renewed creative potential.<sup>817</sup>

In the synoptic Gospels, giving water for drinking was viewed as an action of compassion (Mark 9:41, Matt 10:42, 25:35, Luke 16:24). Further, water has been used as the means of cleansing through baptism, and focuses on Jesus who provides water (Mark 7:4, 9:22, 14:13; Matt 3:11, 7:3, 23:25; 27:24, Luke 3:16, 11:39, 22:10). Many Johannine scholars have interpreted water in John's Gospel to

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<sup>816</sup> Jung Young Lee, *Theology of Changes*, 100.

<sup>817</sup> Mircea Eliade, *Introduction of the History of Religion*, trans. Jae Sil Lee (Seoul: Magpie Publishing, 1993), 184-185.

be a symbol of 'Revelation' (of teaching, the Torah, wisdom, and so on). Meanwhile, some scholars favor interpreting living water as a symbol of the Torah,<sup>818</sup> and others have interpreted it as the teachings of Jesus.<sup>819</sup> American New Testament scholar Rhonda G. Crutcher contends that thorough exploration of the interconnections between the water motif and the revelation of Jesus' identity in the Gospel is required.<sup>820</sup> Beasley-Murray, a British New Testament theologian, interprets that living water has a wide variety of nuances - that living water is Jesus' being itself, or life transmitted through Jesus.<sup>821</sup> American New Testament theologian Paul Larry Jones concludes that water symbolizes the Spirit, but that water calls for a decision either for or against Jesus.<sup>822</sup> Wai-Yee Ng, who is a Chinese New Testament theologian based in Hong Kong, refocuses on the revelation of Christ's identity, and also on the importance of water imagery to the Gospel's eschatology. Ng also interprets the symbol of water in John's Gospel in the canonical context of biblical revelation.<sup>823</sup> Rudolph Bultmann argues that water is considered as a gift from God the Father, and also as divine life giving revelation, that is, the spirit that gives life.<sup>824</sup> (John 7: 38-39) These scholars view water as a symbol of the new law, which would replace the old law with new a one

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<sup>818</sup> J. Marsh, *Saint John* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1968), 213. See Ernst Haenchen, *John I: A Commentary on the Gospel of John chapter 1-6* (Hermeneia; trans. Robert W. Funk; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), 220. See also Alan R. Kerr, *The Temple of Jesus' Body: The Temple Theme in the Gospel of John* (JSNTSup, 220; London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), 181, quoted in Um, *The Temple Theme*, 9.

<sup>819</sup> Odeberg H., *The Fourth Gospel* (Amsterdam: B.R. Gruner, 1974), 168. See Glasson T.F, *Moses in the Fourth Gospel*, *Studies in Biblical Theology*, 40 (London: SCM Press, 1963), 56, and others, quoted in Um, *The Temple Theme*, 9.

<sup>820</sup> Crutcher, *He That Might Be Revealed*, Kindle Location 2449.

<sup>821</sup> Beasley-Murray, 'Word Biblical Commentary', 100-122.

<sup>822</sup> Jones, *The Symbol of Water in the Gospel of John*, 231.

<sup>823</sup> Ng, *Water Symbolism in John*, 87-97.

<sup>824</sup> Bultmann Rudolf, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, trans. G.R. Beasley-Murray, R.W.N. Hoare, and J.K. Riches (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1971), 175-193, 190-191, quoted in Stephen Um, *The Theme of Temple Christology in John's Gospel* (NY: T&T Publishing, 2006), 9, 11.



leading to the spiritual teachings of Jesus.<sup>825</sup> In this sense, these scholars have argued that the spiritual knowledge Jesus offers will bring individuals to non-conventional and new dimensions of eternal life.

Many commentators have also associated water with the Spirit in John's Gospel.<sup>826</sup> While there are Johannine scholars who interpret water as Revelation, Raymond E. Brown, who was an American Roman Catholic priest, considered the symbol of water as Spirit, viewing the symbol of living water as Revelation or Jesus' teaching, and as the Spirit which connects with Jesus' Spirit.<sup>827</sup> Scholars who favor interpreting water as Divine Revelation from the Christological view tend to be inclined to associate water with the concept of the 'Spirit'.<sup>828</sup> Dale C. Allison, an American New Testament scholar, connects the water Jesus gives with the Spirit, and concludes that water works as a metaphor for the reality of Spirit that became available with Jesus' ministry.<sup>829</sup> Joseph Newbould Sanders, who is a British New Testament theologian, also relates water to the life giving power of the Spirit.<sup>830</sup> Water in the Gospel of John has been symbolized as 'Revelation' and as 'Spirit', and it flows out continuously; it is also the eternal water of life.

Aside from this, water has been used as a means and mediator of many religious observances in several senses, including metaphors or analogies of physical and spiritual salvation.<sup>831</sup> Furthermore, there are many passages in the Bible that base salvation on water symbolism where Christian ritual is performed through the medium of water. Baptism is the prime example; water is the objective

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<sup>825</sup> Ibid.

<sup>826</sup> Frederick Fyvie Bruce, *The Gospel of John* (Michigan: William B. Eerdmens Publishing Company, 1983), 83.

<sup>827</sup> Brown, *The Gospel According to John*, 178-179.

<sup>828</sup> Stephen Um, *The Theme of Temple Christology in John's Gospel*, 12.

<sup>829</sup> D.C. Allison, 'The Living Water', in, *St Vladimir's Quarterly* 30, (1986):152-54, in Jones, 29.

<sup>830</sup> Sanders, *Commentary on the Gospel According to St John*, 147.

<sup>831</sup> Isaiah 12:03, Genesis 16; 7-14, Exodus 3: 53-55, Psalm 40: 2.

element of salvation, and the promise of Christ in absolute terms. In this sense, water has a great part to play in being 'born again' or 'regenerated' through cleansing and physical changes in figurative ways. Mircea Eliade, who was a Romanian historian of religion and philosophy, wrote that water symbolizes returning to the previous state before forming its shape, and that it symbolizes also complete regeneration, and the new birth of being reborn.<sup>832</sup> In this way, water equates with repeating the behaviors of all regenerations occurring in space - and all contacts with water include regeneration. After all, primordial water in the Scriptures represents the source of the living water that springs up into eternal life. Water is considered sacred because it also represents new birth of being reborn, or regenerated, in a figurative way.

## **b) The Meaning of Water in Feng Shui from an Eastern Perspective**

### ***The Meaning of Water from Feng Shui***

The word that best describes the Water in Feng Shui is 'Jangpungdeuksu', which means receiving enhanced Chi by preventing Chi being scattered by a blowing wind. This is a cosmology that seeks ways to obtain vital living Chi from harmony with surrounding nature, via contact with water.<sup>833</sup> Water is, from the Feng Shui perspective, believed to be the first condition for human settlement based on the two major infrastructures of the living environment - water and mountains. Thus, Koreans have favored setting up homes in a region of 'Baesanimsu', a place with its back to the mountain that faces the water. In other words, an auspicious site in Feng Shui was one where the vital energy called Chi flowed between the mountains and the water, in a manner that was harmonious and supportive of

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<sup>832</sup> Mircea Eliade, *Patterns in Comparative Religion*, trans. Eun Bong Lee, (Seoul: Hangilsa, 1996), 209.

<sup>833</sup> Chang Cho Choi, *Chung Oh Kyung. Kung Kang Kyung* (Seoul: Minumsa Publishing, 2001), 76.

human life.<sup>834</sup> Therefore, in basic Feng Shui thinking, water is vertically and horizontally moved by the transporting power of transition from liquid, to solid, to vapor, which then becomes a symbol for changes, and for philosophical transformation (circulation). In his book titled *Jangkyung*, Kwak Bahk wrote that Chi is the fundamental matrix of water, and where there is Chi, there is already water.<sup>835</sup> In Feng Shui, every good place is eventually the right place where water and Chi gather.

Taoism, which is influenced by the idea of IChing just like Feng Shui, also speaks of another dimension of water. In Tao Te Ching, water is called 'living water' or 'water of life'.<sup>836</sup> In Taoist tradition, water is considered an important aspect of Tao. The Chinese philosopher Lao-Tzu considered water to be the closest thing to Tao. Water is the origin of everything, and is excellent in benefitting all things. Water takes the lowest path, and thus flows in a modest way, and does not compete.<sup>837</sup> According to the classical Chinese philosopher Mencius, who compared human nature to water, the goodness from the nature of human beings is just like water, which flows to the lowest point.<sup>838</sup> In this sense, water acquires an aspect of Ultimate Reality, in the tradition of the Taoist.<sup>839</sup>

Ultimately, water has been an integral component of Feng Shui for the optimal place where all Koreans aspire to settle. While Koreans generally consider mountains as religious and sacred sanctuary, water has been related to women's achievements in particular, which were recognized as the womb of all living

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<sup>834</sup> Hong Ki Yoon, *The Mind of Land* (Seoul: Science Books, 2011), 56.

<sup>835</sup> Du Kyu Kim, *Our Land, Our Feng Shui* (Seoul: Donghacksa, 1998).

<sup>836</sup> Lao-Tzu, *Tao Te Ching*, trans. Kang Nam Oh (Hyunahmsa Publishing, 2000), 48.

<sup>837</sup> Ibid., 47-50.

<sup>838</sup> Sarah Allan, *Confucius and Lao-tzu, What did they see in Water?* trans. Mang Jong Oh (Seoul: Yemoon Suhone Publishing, 2001), 76.

<sup>839</sup> Lao-Tzu, *Tao Te Ching*, 47- 48. See Sarah Allan, *The Way of Water and Sprouts of Virtue* (New York: SUNY Press, 1997), 32-49.

beings.<sup>840</sup>

### ***Water Symbolized as Female from Feng Shui Cosmology***

From the Korean Feng Shui tradition, the human body is considered as a complex made up of three components - Water (below the waist), Chi (from neck to waist), and soul, which is viewed as the head. These three components interact with each other via Chi, which is Wind. The matrix of these three components is thought to be Water, which is yin, and Mother of all things - that is, the womb of the Earth.<sup>841</sup> In this way, Water is considered to be important in mediating the delivery of Chi, which symbolizes maternity, abundance, creation, and a life that is both weakly strong and softly persevering—showing women’s paradoxical nature.

This female characteristic of Water has also been found in the East Asian perspective of the Taoist tradition. Griffith contends that Tao, which is essentially feminine, could be compared to water because water is excellent in benefitting all things. According to him, ‘Water’ has the essence of feminine power - of active passivity and receptivity - which is dynamic and creative, and which makes communion unite and grow.<sup>842</sup> Here the symbolic meaning of Water speaks of Tao, which is the essence of femininity, and expresses the Ultimate Reality.

In Asian tradition, water is viewed symbolically as both female and as the source of life itself; countless creation myths recall life emerging from primordial waters. In the folklore of Jeju Island, a goddess who was thirsty drank standing water from a pig hoof in Mount Halla, then became pregnant. Another myth follows that wishing for a baby in front of spring water would be granted, since water was

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<sup>840</sup> So Young Chun, Dong Hyun Kim, *Water, The Very Source of Life, and Legend of Water* (Seoul: Changhae Publishing, 2000).

<sup>841</sup> Wang Ming, *The Chinese Classic ‘Taepyung kyunghapkyo’* Jung Hwa Suh Guk, 728.

<sup>842</sup> Bede Griffith, *Universal Wisdom* (London: Harper Collins, 1994), 26-27.

thought to be a source of life. In particular, many ancient nations have associated progenitor mythology with spring water. In Feng Shui thought, a spring (or well) is an image of the womb from which new life begins.<sup>843</sup> The water that is the source of life represents the maternity in cosmology of Feng Shui, and expresses receptivity and dynamic changes, which attract Chi, enhancing it and making it flow.

## **2. The 'God the Son as Water' and Christology: An Eco-feminist Approach**

This section attempts to reinterpret the person of 'God the Son' from the symbol of 'Water' (Shui) in Feng Shui, and then explains 'Christology of Water' using the principle of changes in IChing. Here I interpret 'God the Son', the Divine revealer who was raised from the dead and manifested Himself in human flesh, as water moving through the circulation described in IChing. Water connotes a metaphor in Christology that expresses 'Revelation', as the Johannine scholars argued. In this way, the section re-imagines 'Christology of Water' to facilitate a symbolic understanding from the perspective of Feng Shui cosmology. This 'Christology of Water' is developed from the principle of yin and yang that explains the power of change, renewing and transforming just as is water in circulation. I also draw from an eco-feminist perspective, due to the nature of water being interpreted as female in its receptive and salvific characteristics.

### **a) 'God the Son as Water' and Christology from Feng Shui Cosmology**

#### ***Contextual Reinterpretation on 'God the Son as Water'***

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<sup>843</sup> Jung Young Lee, *The Trinity in Asian perspective*, 114.

The incarnation of 'God the Son' is regarded as a personal concept in Christian theology. How, then can the impersonal concept of 'God the Son as Water' be explained in Christian theology?

The Western Christian tradition does not have the same understanding of the impersonal nature of God as they do in Korea. An impersonal nature of God, which this section proposes, is distinct from that of the West because of Korean cultural context. As Christianity has developed and taken shape depending upon the cultural traditions and backgrounds of the places where it is practiced, Christianity in Korea has formed according to Korean cultural tradition and background.<sup>844</sup> This has led to an impersonal understanding of God distinct from Western imaginings of the nature of God. Il Young Park, a Korean theologian, claims that religions in Korea have permeated and been permeated by its indigenous culture, and that these changes have been deeply assimilated into Korean tradition by their acculturation.<sup>845</sup> Another Korean theologian, Heung Yun Cho, also supports the assertion that every religion naturally adapts to its particular culture, time, and place.<sup>846</sup> In this way, many Korean theologians agree that Korean Christians, who were accustomed to traditional Korean Shamanism for many centuries, seem to approach Christian worship in ways of its tradition.<sup>847</sup>

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<sup>844</sup> Heung Yun Cho, *Shamanism: The History of Phenomenon of Korean Shamanism* (Seoul: Natinal Press, 1997), xxv.

<sup>845</sup> Il Young Park, *Korean Shamanism and Christianity*, 83, 158-161.

<sup>846</sup> Heung Yun Cho, *Shamanism*, xxv.

<sup>847</sup> Il Young Park, *Korean Shamanism and Christianity*, 73. Although God is represented strongly in the male image as Father and Son in contemporary Korean Christianity in a male-centered interpretation of God influenced by Korean Confucian tradition, impersonal images of God from Korean cultural tradition and shamanistic elements have penetrated Korean Christian practice. In this way, many Korean theologians analyze that most Korean Christians tend to understand Christian God as an impersonal deity, influenced by the native Shamanistic perception of deities. However, this does not mean that Koreans are confused between Christian God and shamanistic deities, but this phenomenon just reflects that how Korean women imagine Christian God is influenced by native perception of deities in their traditional religious and cultural practices. In other words, Korean Christianity formed uniquely based on Korean cultural tradition and background.

Accordingly, complex acculturation processes with Korean traditional religion have distinctively shaped Christianity in Korea today—one such example is in understanding God through impersonal metaphors.<sup>848</sup>

In this way, this dissertation attempts to propose an impersonal symbol of God as a contextual model, ‘God the son as Water’, in a more intimate way of speaking about God based on the Korean cultural and religious traditions. This is because Koreans in general tend to imagine God in an impersonal way, as residing in nature from Korean religious traditions. Traditional Korean religious practices, mainly Shamanism in fact, have pantheistic thinking that engages in the belief that the material world is occupied by living spirits; thereby, nature is considered to be living and all things in nature are considered to be inhabited by the divine Spirit. Thus, the sky, land, sun, moon, stars, trees and other natural features were the objects of devotion that Koreans worshiped in their daily life.<sup>849</sup> Korean Shamanism was grounded on polytheism, which has been deeply rooted in impersonal divine worship from the ideas of animism.<sup>850</sup> Similarly, Feng Shui cosmology sees all things in the physical world are endowed with Chi. This includes things considered inanimate such as rocks, trees, plants, and land.<sup>851</sup> Every single physical thing is alive and endowed with its own unique Chi as well as the Chi qualities they bring to it with Korean people’s own reactions, experiences, and memories.<sup>852</sup> From the

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<sup>848</sup> Jun Sik Choi, *Religious Stories in Korea* (Seoul: Hanul Press, 1995), 63. See Il Young Park, *Korean Shamanism and Christianity*, 83, 158-161.

<sup>849</sup> Dae Suk Suh, *Shamanism and Peoples's thoughts* (Seoul: Sungkunkwan University Press, 1984), 496-502.

<sup>850</sup> Man Ja Choi, “Feminist theological interpretation of Korean Shamanism,” *Korean Feminist Theology*, (1990): 36-48. See Nam Hyunk Chang, “Shamnaism,” *Mission and Theology* Vol. 6, Presbyterian Seminary Press, (2000): 145. See also Jong Seung Yang, 77.

<sup>851</sup> Maryuama Toshiyaki, trans. Hee Jun Park, *What is Chi Really? From the Discourses of Confucius to Science Today* (Seoul: Spiritual World Publishing, 1989), 25-26.

<sup>852</sup> Chun Sen Chang, *Heaven and Humanity is the Same One Asian Theology* (Seoul: Bundo Publishing Co), 1991, 164.

perspective of the Korean cultural and spiritual background, God generally appears as an animating force that is impersonal and universally pervasive in the natural world. From the perspective of Asian cosmology, it is considered there is no real distinction among personal, impersonal deities, and animating natural force.<sup>853</sup>

In this regard, this section demonstrated the notion that 'Water' has a special relationship with God the Son, Jesus Christ from Feng Shui thought. It is a common way to perceive God through personification of impersonal beings such as 'Water' in Korean cultural and religious tradition. From Feng Shui and Taoist's thoughts based on IChing, the impersonal symbol of Water can be regarded as the source of God the Son in the Asian Trinitarian thinking. Because Water has more nuanced images of divine characteristics, for example the emptiness and openness to the infinite that God the Son Christ holds, it makes a good symbol for God the Son. Furthermore, the eternal life cycle of Water found in nature represents a good metaphor, which implicates the resurrected Christ from an Asian context.<sup>854</sup>

The dissertation sees that contextualization is inevitable in doing theology because theology is to talk about God. Theology has special responsibility for the symbols, images and language used for expressing the relationship between God and the world in every context. The symbols become meaningless without real life experience in a particular cultural context. Henri Bouillard, a French theologian, argues that 'a theology that is not up-to-date is false theology' and Stephen Bevans has paraphrased this argument, saying 'a theology that is not somehow reflective of our time, our culture, and our current concerns-and so contextual-is also a false

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<sup>853</sup> Ole Brunn, *An Introduction to Feng Shui*, 78. See Jung Yong Lee, *The Trinity in Asian Perspective*, 64-65.

<sup>854</sup> Lao-Tzu, *Tao Te Ching*, 47- 48. See Sarah Allan, *The Way of Water and Sprouts of Virtue* (New York: SUNY Press, 1997), 32-49. See also Won Sub Lee, *Lao Tzu* (Seoul: Samjungdang Publishing, 1983), 28.



theology'.<sup>855</sup> In this regard, Robert J. Schreiter and Bruce C.E. Fleming, American theologians, emphasize the necessity of contextual theology in Christian theology.<sup>856</sup> Thus this contextualization that includes indigenization and enculturation, points to the fact that theology needs to interact and dialogue not only with traditional cultural value, but with social change, new ethnic identities with human experience in a balance.<sup>857</sup>

In seeking to carry out a contextual theology, the section employed impersonal and non-Trinitarian symbols, which reinterprets the mystery of the divine Trinity through Feng Shui cosmology in order to reflect the Korean spiritual traditions and imagination of God. This approach would be a more appropriate and intimate way to imagine God from the Korean religious experience and particular to their ethnic identity.

### ***God the Son as Water***

The Christology proposed here uses the Feng Shui concept of 'Water' to represent 'God the Son' in the Holy Trinity. Water was chosen to represent God the Son because of the eternal cycle of changes that water inherently has, which are able to portray Christ's cyclical journey through the realm of human life, and His spiritual life of death and resurrection. In other words, the inherent life cycle of water represents a good metaphor for the resurrected Christ. The concept of Water in Asian philosophy carries an understanding that life is one with death. Water is a symbol of both birth and death. Water is therefore understood as eternal, based on the idea of the wheel of life that repeats perpetual changes. As for the water cycle,

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<sup>855</sup> Bevens, *Models of Contextual Theology*, 5.

<sup>856</sup> Robert J. Schreiter, *Constructing Local Theologies* (New York: Orbis Books, 1985), 2-4. Bruce C.E. Fleming, *Contextualization of Theology: An Evangelical Assessment* (CA: William Carey Library, 1980), 83-87.

<sup>857</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.

Lao-Tzu describes it as something of an endless process of movement above and below the surface of the Earth. He maintains that although water goes through different phases of its life in a series of natural and spontaneous changes, basically water is one nature in different shapes.<sup>858</sup> In this way, 'Water' can explain the person of 'God the Son', who is 'Spirit revealed', and who rose from the dead in a way similar to the never-ending changes of the water cycle. In other words, Jesus' resurrection follows the principle idea of change - that living things are born, and grow, decay, and die. According to IChing, life is identical with death, which means death is not the opposite of life, but a part of it in the whole.<sup>859</sup> Jesus' ultimate sacrifice leads to the ultimate reality that is beyond life and death. In this way, through the meaning of the life cycle of water and the interplay of the yin and yang principle, I interpret Jesus' death in life, and Jesus' life in death, from the principle of changes in IChing.

Both aspects of divine and human nature possessed by the person of the 'God the Son' could be explained from the principle of yin and yang. If yang is expressed as the divine nature of God the Son, yin becomes Jesus' human nature. Since yin and yang are related to each other, yin becomes yang because of their mutual inclusivity.<sup>860</sup> In this way, the divinity of Jesus Christ as a relationship between yin and yang becomes a cosmic event of union with the humanity of Christ.<sup>861</sup> 'God the Son as Water' expresses the unity, divinity, and humanity of Jesus Christ, completing the Trinity by unifying God the Mother and the Holy Spirit. As such, 'God the Son as Water' becomes monistic, and forms a perichoretic

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<sup>858</sup> Lao-Tzu, *Tao Te Ching*, 48-7-50. See Young Park Choi, *Water of Nature, Water of Human Being* (Seoul: Jipmundang Publishing, 1994), 12.

<sup>859</sup> Stuart Alve Olson, *T'ai chi According to IChing: Embodying the Principles of the Book of Chang* (Vermont: Inner Traditions / Bear&Co, 2001), 55.

<sup>860</sup> Se Hyung Lee, *The Theology of Tao* (Seoul: Handul Publishing, 2002), 167-168.

<sup>861</sup> *Ibid.* 169.

relationship with the other persons of the Trinity. 'God the Son as Water' expresses the revelation of God, revealing change in a comprehensive way. Based on the principle of changes in IChing and the yin and yang principle, which is the ideological background of 'God the Son as Water', the never-ending cycle of water has a new meaning of creating life. The cycle is not simply repetition – rather the endless running of time represents unlimited creation and changes, leading to eventual salvation. What, then, does this mean for 'God the Son as Water' regarding creation and salvation?

Water in Feng Shui is considered as a source of the life-cycle, and also as a source of renewal for all lives. Regarding the life giving Spirit of water, the Gospel of John records, 'But whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life' (John 4:14). Water is expressed as the Spirit of Jesus Christ, that is, Water is a symbol of eternal life. As such, 'Water' is an appropriate way to reinterpret God the Son, in its life-giving creation and salvation, and as inviting new life through the principle of change in Feng Shui cosmology.

Griffith refers to the creativity of Water, which is grounded on the basic idea of Lao-Tzu. He discusses how the nature of Water accepts everything that is actionless, active, and actively passive, to create an essence of femininity for dynamic creation. Griffith therefore maintains that the virtue of Water leads paradoxically to the value of emptiness, which is yin, and thus eventually leads to a creative force, which is yang.<sup>862</sup> This creative power of Water works for uniting Creator God the Mother from the yin and yang principle, and then works together with the Spirit of life, creation, and salvation, which God the Son holds.

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<sup>862</sup> Bede Griffith, *Universal Wisdom* (London: Harper Collins, 1994), 28.

Traditional theological views separate the doctrine of salvation from the doctrine of Creation, and the Creation event is prior to the salvation event, which is another matter.<sup>863</sup> But this section argues that the salvation of 'God the Son as Water' is one with the Creation.<sup>864</sup> That is, in the yin and yang principle of the water cycle, God the Father and the Son are not separated but are one God. In this way, God of the Mother (Land) completes its creative work in the ministry of salvation of 'God the Son as Water' through the Holy Spirit (Wind).<sup>865</sup>

Through this salvific thinking, 'God the Son as Water' becomes a savior by accepting divine creativity in its receptivity. Eventually, the soteriology of 'God the Son as Water' is similar to Moltmann's theory that sees the immanent Trinity as eschatological fulfillment of ecological salvation of the Trinity. The completion of ecological salvation is 'God the Son as Water' in the perichoretic principle of yin and yang, and 'God the Son as Water' is included for eternity with the immanent God the Mother (Land). What, then, is the soteriology of the Christology of 'God the Son as Water,' as revelation?

### ***Christology of 'God the Son as Water': Soteriology***

The Christology of 'God the Son as Water' addresses the cosmic universality for collective salvation, going beyond the traditional concept of individual salvation. The Christology of 'God the Son as Water' is based on the idea of changes and circulation (transformation) from IChing in the yin and yang principle, therefore the salvation in 'God the Son as Water' is not only for humans, but for all creation in the natural world. In other words, Jesus' ministry is towards everyone, including the

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<sup>863</sup> Jung Young Lee, *The Theology of Change*, 138. See Se Hyung Lee, *The Theology of Tao*, 164-5.

<sup>864</sup> See chapter 5, section 1. Contemporary theologians Moltmann, LaCugna, Hodgson, Boff, McFague, Johnson, and others understand that the Creation happened with salvation.

<sup>865</sup> Se Hyung Lee, *The Theology of Tao*, 170.

poor and oppressed; just as water flows everywhere, so all is fair in water. Water allowed Jesus' salvation to spread to the oppressed and to poor women, but Jesus' teachings always included those people. From the cosmic paradigm of salvation, the Christology of 'God the Son as Water' is therefore universally applicable to all things, and invites the oppressed to a communal table, based on the idea of changes and circulation from IChing.

This concept of Christology for universal salvation has been proposed by several contemporary theologians. McFague contends that her Christology broadens the circle of salvation to include oppressed women and the abused natural world, from an eco-feminist's sensibilities.<sup>866</sup> Moltmann's Trinitarian Christology also focuses on a social Trinity that emphasizes relationship, claiming that all things are in relationship with Christ together.<sup>867</sup> A similar Christological understanding is claimed in Taoist theology by Korean scholar Se Hyung Lee. He contends that the concept of salvation in Tao is to love all things that God loves – to have love for all things that God created.<sup>868</sup>

In the same manner, salvation in the Christology of God the Son as Water goes beyond the traditional meaning of human sin and forgiveness, based on the principle of yin and yang, which is inclusive, comprehensive, and universal for all things in the world. In this way, this section claims an ecological and feministic cosmic Christ for liberating women and nature, which have been abused and oppressed. What, then, is the basic idea in the soteriology of Christology of 'God the Son as Water' that is the cosmic Christ?

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<sup>866</sup> Sallie McFague, *Life Abundant: Rethinking Theology and Economy for a Planet in Peril* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2001), 166-167.

<sup>867</sup> Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus*, trans., Kyun Jin Kim and Myung Yong Kim (Seoul: Korean Christian Publishing, 2003), 115.

<sup>868</sup> Se Hyung Lee, *The Theology of Tao*, 184.

The basic ideas of the cosmic Christology of 'God the Son as Water' as a savior come from the two attributes of water. Firstly, the metaphysical meaning of Water is that it is soft. Water has an undertone of meekness and gentleness, which has been understood as the virtue of emptiness.<sup>869</sup> The emptiness inherent in Water itself adds a dimension to the self-emptiness in 'God the Son'. In other words, the human flesh of Jesus is a symbol of self-sacrifice and God's love, which is incarnated in this world. Jesus achieves perfect human nature through self-sacrifice and emptiness. By the self-sacrifice of His divine liberation, Jesus achieves the completion of salvation. From this perspective, the virtue of the emptiness of 'God the Son as Water' contains an understanding of inclusive and universal salvation that is available equally to the world's oppressed and needy outcasts.<sup>870</sup>

Another basic idea of the cosmic Christology of 'God the Son as Water' is that it is well grounded in the principle of yin and yang, and the principles of changes and circulation (transformation) in IChing. The principle of circulation is premised on the yin and yang principle: Changes and circulation represent the principle of return.<sup>871</sup> In other words they reach the end, then return the other way (evolution-involution). This principle of alternation is the principle of yin and yang, which maintains its unity even while achieving unity. Such liquidity and flexibility which Water inherently holds would be the ground of universality of the person of God the Son as Water, without claiming its independence, but rather through the interaction and relationship between the other persons of the Trinity, which are Land and Wind. Finally, Water as God the Son fulfills the Triune 'God of Land'

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<sup>869</sup> Griffith, *Universal Wisdom*, 27-8.

<sup>870</sup> Sarah Allan, *The Way of Water and Sprouts of Virtue*, 32-49.

<sup>871</sup> Lao-Tzu, *Tao Te Ching*, 176-77.

through such fellowship and unity. Therefore, the cosmic Christology of 'God the Son as Water' offers freedom for the oppressed, and recovery of equal relationships based on the transforming power of Water in salvation. This characteristic of Water is universal and comprehensive, just as Jesus realized God's inclusive love of equality by sacrificing Himself in death against an oppressive structure.

### **b) Christology of 'God the Son as Water' from Feng Shui: An Eco-feminist Approach**

In this section, the Christology of 'God the Son as Water' is approached from a feminist theological perspective taken from Feng Shui. Specifically, the section examines how 'God the Son as Water' would play a role in terms of liberating Christology for recovering women and nature that have been oppressed.

#### ***Christology of 'God the Son as Water' from an Eco-feminist Approach***

Christological interpretation from eco-feminist theologians points out that patriarchal social structures have created a patriarchal Christology that emphasizes the masculinity of Jesus, and has thus strengthened patriarchy in the Church. They therefore point out that the traditional doctrine of Christology distorts the true meaning of liberation and salvation that Christ holds.<sup>872</sup> In this way, the oppression of women is closely interconnected with the abuse of nature.

This section argues that male-dominant Christology relegates woman to an inferior status in both creation and redemption, so Christology must be recovered for women. In this sense, women must reject the patriarchal structure of ordination/subordination for women, and claim instead an egalitarian human nature based on women's experience. So Christology from the hypostasis of 'God the Son

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<sup>872</sup> Johnson, *She Who Is*, 151-152. See Ruether, *Sexism and God-Talk*, 134-35.

as Water' seeks ways for liberating women and nature, which have been oppressed and abused. Thus, traditional patriarchal male-God images and value systems should be denied in favor of female imagery, or a female symbol of divinity. The image of Water from Feng Shui is inherently eco-feministic, so the section suggests an alternative model of Christological options from it, which is grounded on the yin and yang principle, and the notion of the transforming power of changes in Water.

Virginia Ramey Mollenkot, an American feminist theologian, claims that Christ can represent women when Jesus is drawn as both genders.<sup>873</sup> Similarly, Ruether argues for a bisexual Christ, which emphasizes the feminine aspects of the vision that could make Christ speak for women.<sup>874</sup> Rita N. Brock who is a Japanese- American theologian attempts to use the term 'Christa', rather than 'Christ', which traditionally refers to Jesus, as a new female symbol to represent women.<sup>875</sup> McFague also affirms God as mother, which is the doctrine of Creation, and rejects the patriarchal image of God.<sup>876</sup> Korean feminist theologians challenge the patriarchal structure enforced by a patriarchal system; feminist theologians of Korea, such as Chung Hyun Kyung and Soon Kyung Park, suggest Christ as a female, just like a Mother.<sup>877</sup> The main reason that these feminist theologians propose different Christian symbols, including the female symbol, is that existing male-dominated social structures justify women's oppression.

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<sup>873</sup> Virginia Ramey Mollenkott, 'The Androgyny of Jesus', *Daughter of Sarah*, Vol.2, No.2 (March 1976), 4, quoted in Nam Soon Kang, *Contemporary Feminist Theology, Korea* (Seoul: Christian Publishing, 1994), 141.

<sup>874</sup> Ruether, *Sexism and God-Talk*, 134-135.

<sup>875</sup> Rita N. Brock, *Journeys by Heart: a Christology of Erotic Power* (New York: Crossroad, 1988), 113.

<sup>876</sup> McFague, *Models of God*, 109.

<sup>877</sup> Soon Kyung Park, *The Journey to the Unification Theology* (Seoul: Hanul Publishing, 1992), 353. See Hyun Kyung Chung, *Struggle to be the Sun Again*, trans, Jae Sun Park, (Seoul: Bundo Press, 2007), 101-103.



Therefore, 'God the Son as Water' suggests a cosmic Christ paradigm through the female symbolic imagery of Water from Feng Shui, for the liberation of women. The unique salvific features of Water arise from feminist and ecological sensibilities, which is a different approach to a reimagining of Jesus simply as a mother, as adopted among Korean feminist theologians. On the contrary, this model offers the 'Christology of Water' through the symbol of Feng Shui, which broadens the circle of salvation to include women and nature. Although 'God the Son as Water' represents itself as a female symbol, it is grounded on the idea of yin and yang, so that Jesus is prevented from being confined to being either a male Jesus or a female Jesus. In this way, the person of 'God the Son as Water' is represented by feminine symbolic language, but not confined to any gender solely; it is thus comprehensive, and universal.

From the standpoint of eco-feminist theologians' views, the basic thinking of a Christology of 'God the Son as Water' sees that all life is connected via the perichoretic relationship and monistic understanding, like Moltmann's, based on the yin and yang principle. Therefore, it is not patriarchal. Like Johnson's suggested 'Sophia of Jesus', the Christology of Water expresses the female symbol from Feng Shui for the liberation of women. The question is then, how can a Christology of 'God the Son as Water', as understood from an eco-feminist perspective, be liberating for Christian women and nature, in Korea?

***The Christology of 'God the Son as Water' on the Liberation of Korean Christian Women and Nature***

'God the Son as Water' represents God's human manifestation in the flesh, which came into the world through the circulation of Water (change, incarnation), and addresses the question of 'how can Christianity be reinterpreted to save Korean

women and nature from Patriarchy?' 'God the Son as Water', which has female characteristics, stays with Korean women who are oppressed in the Church community as the resurrected Christ, who stands for justice, and love of equality. This way, according to the yin and yang principle, 'God the Son as Water' asserts that women should participate in the ministry of Christ equally with men. A salvific ministry of 'God the Son as Water' Christology is thus one of universal cosmic love and non-patriarchal thinking that includes all the oppressed based on yin and yang, and the change and circulation (transformation) of IChing that goes beyond gender and colors.

In other words, 'God the Son as Water' represents solidarity with women (yin) and nature, and also what should be women's equal participation with men (yang) within ministry. Therefore, 'God the Son as Water' plays a role in liberating oppressed women and nature by re-naming, from Feng Shui, the patriarchal symbols and languages as female symbols in the contemporary Korean Church, where patriarchy is still rampant. In addition, 'God the Son as Water' is a feminine symbol of the power of changes and transformation, which is based on yin and yang symbolic thinking, and which renews women's strength and restores their weariness. In this way 'God the Son as Water' fulfills the Trinity, focusing on the equal relationship between the persons in the Trinity, and will complete each hypostasis toward unity. Therefore, 'God the Son as Water' is neither hierarchical nor discriminatory. 'God the Son as Water' eventually offers paradigmatic manifestations of Christ that are inclusive of God's receptive and embracive love. In this way it will free women from discrimination in the extremely hierarchal Korean Church.

Thus, reimagining Christ through the 'Water' from Feng Shui seeks ways of

liberating oppressed women and nature, based on the nature of 'God the Son as Water'. This is inherently receptive and salvific. From the perspective of Jesus' life of death, resurrection, and ministry, which was characterized by liberating, healing, and communal fellowship with the marginalized, the nature of Christ is directed toward liberating and healing the oppressed – this is based on receptivity, just as 'Water' holds the form of the object in which it sits. In this way, this section claims the person of 'God the Son as Water' is living 'Water' that gives life for liberating and securing wellbeing from oppressive structures - just as a savior from the power of circulation (transformation) 'Water' holds. Therefore, the eco-feministic and liberating qualities of 'God the Son as Water' in the yin and yang principle implies Trinity, which is working with us for the world. This also works for the abused women and nature in Korea, and finally completes the salvation of the immanent Trinity of Creator, God the Mother. The person of 'God the Son as Water' has a characteristic of yin rather than yang. And this person of 'God the Son as Water' also expresses a maternal image, and images of the womb. Thus 'God the Son as Water' is not patriarchal, but rather emancipatory to Korean women in the Church. In other words, 'God the Son as Water' is both emancipatory and equally balanced, as according to the yin and yang principle of harmony.

To summarise, this section attempts to reinterpret the person of 'God the Son' from the word 'Water' (Shui), and suggests a cosmic 'Christology of Water' from Feng Shui that is based on the idea of IChing from an eco-feminist theology. This section suggests a new Christology of Water from the particular context of Korea, as the Christology has been proposed in a particular situation - and at various periods - because feminist theologians argue that the life experience of women in general functions as a context and a worldview for thinking about God,

from a particular perspective. In this way, the section proposes an eco-feminist Christology of Water in order to restore the destroyed nature and the reality of women's oppression, which still continues in the contemporary Korean Church.

Form this perspective, the section offers a cosmic ecological 'Christology of Water', which carries universal and comprehensive thinking that is based on yin and yang symbolic thinking from IChing. The Christology of Water becomes a dynamic symbol of Christ, which is grounded in the thinking of change and circulation (transformation) of water that shows a power of transition for liberating the oppressed, specifically women and nature, in Korea. In this way, the Christological soteriology of 'God the Son as Water' as Revelation acquires meaning as a cosmic Christ paradigm of harmony and balance, inviting all things in the world to the salvation based on Feng Shui cosmology.

### **C. Creator 'God the Mother as Land'**

This section attempts a new interpretation of the person of 'God the Father' in the Trinity through the symbol of 'Land' from Feng Shui cosmology, which is imbued with a feminine gender, as a mother. To do so, the section presents the Creator, 'God the Mother as Land', in the Trinity from an eco-feminist approach, and demonstrates a new theological reinterpretation of the Trinity from an Asian context and perspective. 'God the Mother as Land' is suggested from ideas that are deeply grounded in the yin and yang principle and the spirit of oneness (ChunJiln), and in the idea of balance and harmony as understood from the Asian ecological perspective. In this way, the section attempts to draw a complete picture of how religious imagery of 'Land' (ji 地) articulates the person of 'God the Mother as Land' (Chun, 天) through Humanity (in, 人), and in the spirit of oneness that is taken from

ChunJiln (天, 地, 人) thought. The section therefore attempts to reinterpret the traditional image of a patriarchal God - 'God the Father' - as a Creator 'God the Mother as Land', which is comprehensive, and inclusive. This is of cosmic significance in the sense of eco-feminist hermeneutics for the contemporary Korean Church, which has sexism and eco-antipathy at its heart.

### **1. The Meaning of 'Land' in Christianity and Feng Shui**

This section explores the meaning of 'Land' in Christianity and in Feng Shui, as a foundational discussion for proposing 'God the Mother as Land'.

#### **a) The Meaning of 'Land' in the Scripture**

'Land' is a pervasive theme in Hebrew Scripture, representing the relationship between Yahweh and his people.<sup>878</sup> For Israelites, Land was the realistic space of life and the scene of their history with Yahweh, which was always filled with memories of Yahweh's promises, vows, and identity. Walter Brueggemann wrote, 'Land is a central theme of biblical faith, which is a pursuit of historical belonging that includes a sense of destiny derived from such belonging. The 'Land' for which Israel yearns and which it remembers is never unclaimed space, but is always a place with Yahweh, a place well filled with memories of life with him, promises from him, and vows to him'.<sup>879</sup> Genesis, the first part of the Bible, tells us that God

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<sup>878</sup> Eryl W. Davies, 'Land: Its Rights and Privileges', in, Ronald E. Clements (ed.), *The World of Ancient Israel: Sociological, Anthropological and Political Perspectives* (Cambridge University Press, 1989), 349-353. Kaiser Jr, Walter C., 'The Promised Land: A Biblical Historical View', in, *Bibliotheca Sacra*, 138, (1981): 302-312. Walter Brueggemann. *The Land: Place as Gift, Promise, and Challenge in Biblical Faith* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2002), quoted in Jonathan D. Morgan, *Land, Rest & Sacrifice: Ecological Reflections on the Book of Leviticus* (2010 University of Exeter PhD thesis, 2010), 33. Moshe Weinfeld, *The Promise of the Land: The Inheritance of the Land of Canaan by the Israelites* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993), 183-221. R.W. Klein, *Israel in Exile: A Theological Interpretation* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979), 23. Frank Moore Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic: Essays in the History of the Religion of Israel* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997), 275.

<sup>879</sup> Walter Brueggemann, 'Land', in, Revised Edition *Overtures to Biblical Theology* (Kindle Location 309). Kindle Edition

created the 'Land', and the last part of the book of Revelation discusses the newly created heaven and earth; thus the beginning and the end of the Bible both relate to the Land. The word 'Land' in the Bible contains various levels of meaning that cannot be separated. In other words, the 'Land' does not simply mean natural material that includes the soil and landscape, but spiritual perspectives, and hopes built on historical experience. 'A symbolic sense of the term affirms that Land is never simply physical dirt, but is always physical dirt freighted with social meanings derived from historical experience'.<sup>880</sup>

Typical terms for 'Land' in Hebrew Scripture are '*adama*', and '*erets*'. *Erets* is applied in a more or less extended sense to the whole world (Genesis 1:1), and to Land as opposed to sea (Genesis 1:10). *Erets* is often understood as nature itself. On the other hand, *adama* is the Land (earth) in the sense of soil or ground, particularly that which is susceptible to cultivation, and which was believed to be used for creating human beings (Genesis 2:7).<sup>881</sup> In this sense, human beings are of quite the same nature as that of other living creatures, who exist in a community bound together by a common destiny. The Hebrew Scriptures, through the Land given to the people of God, represent the blessings and covenants. 'Land' is not simply a symbol of wealth, but rather the ground of a promise, as in the 'Promised Land'. Land is the place in which the 'Promise' will be achieved - the place where God and people are intimately connected, and which will finally be the place of forming a new relationship with God.<sup>882</sup>

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<sup>880</sup> Ibid., (Kindle Location 306-308, 311-312).

<sup>881</sup> Trent C. Butler (ed.), 'Land, Ground', in, *Holman Bible Dictionary* (USA, Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1991, <http://www.studydrive.org/dictionaries/hbd/view.cgi?n=3753>. [accessed May 22, 2016] G. Johannes Botterweck & Helmer Ringgren, (eds.), *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament Vol. 1* (Eerdmans Publishing Co, 1974), 388-405.

<sup>882</sup> Brueggemann, 'Land', (Kindle Location 346).

Yahweh's word on Land as a promise is closely connected with Exodus in the Hebrew Scriptures. In Exodus 3:7-9, the Lord said, 'I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out .... I have come down to rescue them from the land of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey....'. The land, to Israelites, was a gift from Yahweh, binding the Israelites in new ways to the giver.<sup>883</sup> Additionally, Genesis 48:4 states, 'I am going to make you fruitful and increase your numbers. I will make you a community of peoples, and I will give this land as an everlasting possession to your descendants after you', while Genesis 26:4 reads, 'I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky, and will give them all these lands, and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed'. The Israelites were wandering homeless in exile because of a promise from Yahweh to be in the Land, to be placed and secured where Yahweh speaks. Their whole life and history is closely connected with hope, and with response to that promise of Yahweh, which means all the Land and Israelites belong to Yahweh.<sup>884</sup> A sense of place is a human yearning in general, and the Bible suggests that a sense of place is a primary category of faith.<sup>885</sup>

Above all, the Hebrew Scriptures have some significant references to ecology and the natural environment. This may be useful in arriving at salvation metaphorically through the theme of 'Land'.<sup>886</sup> It was written, 'No longer will they call you Deserted, or name your land Desolate. But you will be called Hephzibah

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<sup>883</sup> Walter. C. Kaiser, *Toward an Old Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Pub. House, 1988), 171.

<sup>884</sup> Elmer A. Martens, *God's Design: A Focus on Old Testament Theology* (D. & F. Scott Publishing, 1998), 9.

<sup>885</sup> Brueggemann, 'Land', (Kindle Locations 325-326).

<sup>886</sup> Jonathan D. Morgan, *Land, Rest & Sacrifice*. See David G. Horell, *The Bible and the Environment: Towards a Critical Ecological Biblical Theology* (London: Equinox Publishing, 2010).

(my delight is in her) and your land Beulah (married); for the Lord will take delight in you, and your land will be married' (Isaiah 62:4). This passage has salvific implications from the view point of eco-feminism, for liberating women and nature that have long been abused.<sup>887</sup> By recognizing the underlying impact of patriarchy over women and nature, this passage presents God's work in creating a new Heaven and a new Earth that will be achieved in this world (Land), where life is abundant.

### **b) The Meaning of the Mother Image of 'Land' from Feng Shui Cosmology**

In Feng Shui, 'Land' refers to the complexity of condensed yin, as opposed to the concept of Heaven. Feng Shui cosmology that is grounded in IChing is holistic, making use of analogies between Heaven, Land (earth), and Humanity. Above all, among these three elements in ChunJiln thought, Land becomes the fundamental source of the world.<sup>888</sup> According to IChing, the feminine principle that 'Land' inherently holds has been valued and honored, and 'Land' and Heaven are a matrix of all things, and fundamental units of yin and yang. The combination of yin and yang are relational symbols in the process of change. In IChing cosmology, 'Land' has been regarded as yin, and Heaven as yang.

'Land', from the tradition of Korean Feng Shui, has been one of the main subjects of folk religions, along with Heaven.<sup>889</sup> The Land, despite its impersonal image, has formed an intimate image of a mother that permeates Koreans' sub-consciousness. Therefore, the notion that Land is a mother, *Jimo*, underlies all

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<sup>887</sup> In Sik Choi, 'Ecological Vision of Jesus towards the Korean Church in the 21st Century: From the Point of View of Land, Body, and Women', in, *Theology and Mission*, Vol. 32, (2006): 336.

<sup>888</sup> Re Kwang Ahn, *DaeGwae Feng Shui: Reading the Destiny of Land and Humanity from Logic of Feng Shui by DaeGwae Feng Shui* (Seoul: Publishing Nice Room, 2015), 105.

<sup>889</sup> Ole Bruun, *An Introduction to Feng Shui* (United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 174.



Korean Feng Shui thought overall. In and through the shape of benevolent maternal birth that is given to all things, the Land has been a symbol of a numinous maternal principle in East Asian tradition. Land also raises all things. Because of this maternal characteristic of Land, it has been associated with manifold images of abundance, fecundity, richness, and fertility of women. Thus, women are considered to be responsible for the crop harvest of the year because they seem to be mediators for the mysteries of creation.<sup>890</sup> Based upon this ideation of the feminine principle, it was soon accepted that women control the mysteries of life and death, and also preside over the supply of food. In this sense, 'Land' was symbolized as female, and as closely linked to the centre of cosmic abundance.<sup>891</sup> Because the ancient agricultural society was bound to get all the products that sustain life from Land, it was the home of the source of life, and the place where all things are created. In the way that children are cared for, humans are cared for by Land, which is perceived as a loving mother who is creative and fertile. For these reasons, Land is held as sacred, and is regarded as Creator the Mother.

The idea of *Jimo* (Land as a Mother) in Feng Shui signifies the Land where life originated and emerged. The character of maternity perceived from Land makes it a mysterious cosmic place where life begins, and to which it returns. Land is believed to have the inherent power of creation and extinction, and of engaging with and caring for the universe. Land is not only the ground of all being but is also the source of its unity and interconnectedness. Therefore, the *Jimo* idea in Korean Feng Shui (the Do Sun school of Feng Shui in particular) typically emphasizes the

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<sup>890</sup> Se Chang Oh, 'A Study on Pungsu Thoughts from the Viewpoint of Environmental Geography'. *Journal of Social Sciences Research* 4, 2 (1997): 387-88. Chang Jo Choi, *Korean Indigenous Feng Shui 1* (Seoul: Min Eum Sa Publishing, 2011), 480.

<sup>891</sup> Young Mee Lee, 'Reading of God in the Old Testament with Feminist Eyes', in, *Korea Old Testament Society*, Vol. 19, (2013): 181.

idea that humans and Land are inseparable, and that the fate of one is closely associated with the fate of the other; this means that Land raises humans, and that humans care for Land in return. That is, Land consciousness and female consciousness are assumed to be identical in Korean Feng Shui. Land and the feminine are perceived to be at the centre of the movements of the Five Elements, and are therefore symbolized to be the place of origin for primordial life.<sup>892</sup> In this way, Land in Feng Shui is considered to be the uterus or womb, from which people come, and to which they return. This idea reflects the harmonious cycle of life, growth, and decay - the waxing and waning in the agricultural era.

## **2. Creator 'God the Mother as Land' from Feng Shui Cosmology**

This section examines the essential character of 'God the Mother as Land' from a Feng Shui perspective.

### **a) The Understanding of Creator God from Contemporary Christian Theologians**

To represent the Creator 'God the Mother as Land' from Feng Shui in Asian perspective, it is necessary to refer firstly to how Creation is described in the Scriptures, and by Western contemporary Christian theologians. Genesis 1: 1 - 2 reads, 'In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters'. Traditional theologians argue that Creation happened from nothingness - for 'creation from nothing' (*creatio ex nihilo*). Edmond Jacobs contends that from only a few activities of God described in

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<sup>892</sup> Jung Bae Lee, 'Korean Feng Shui and Ecology' 37.

Genesis 1, Creation can be considered as 'creation out of nothing'.<sup>893</sup> Other contemporary theologians however, including McFague, argue that Creation is not created *ex nihilo*, but involves ordering activity from chaos.<sup>894</sup> Regarding this claim, traditional theologian Gerhard May argues that the doctrine of 'creation out of nothingness' represents the absolutely unconditioned nature of the creation. He emphasizes God's omnipotence, along with the unconditioned freedom and contingency of God's creative work.<sup>895</sup> Moltmann also affirms the 'creation from nothing' (*creatio ex nihilo*) of this traditional classical theism. He maintains that God who creates the world 'out of nothing' continues His creative works as a creative spirit, dwelling in the world that He created (*shechina*).<sup>896</sup> Process theologians such as Alfred N. Whitehead and John Cobb advocate Moltmann's idea that God's creative work continues to progress; however, they reject the Divine absolute from the concept of God's creation *ex nihilo* because this advocates defending the sovereignty and transcendence of God.<sup>897</sup> They argue that humans have always related God to another world. They also claim that rejecting 'creation out of nothing' provides the opportunity to affirm that God continues to create and relate with the other beings of the world. McFague also rejects the Divine absolute from the concept of God's creation *ex nihilo* because this advocates defending the sovereignty and transcendence of God, as well as dualism.<sup>898</sup>

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<sup>893</sup> Edmond Jacob, *The Spirit and the Word*, trans. Arthur W. Heathete and Philip J. Allcock (London: Hodder&Stoughton/ N.Y.: Harper), quoted in Ben C. Ollenburger, Elmer A. Martens, Gerhard F. Hasel (eds.) *The Flowering of Old Testament Theology; A Reader in Twentieth-Century Old Testament Theology, 1930-1990* (Indiana: Eisenbrauns 1992) 146-168.

<sup>894</sup> McFague, *Models of God*, 109-110. See John B. Cobb, Jr. and David Ray Griffin, *Process Theology*, trans. Kee Jong Ryu (Seoul: Yulim Publishing, 1993), 91-92.

<sup>895</sup> Gerhard May, *Creatio Ex Nihilo: The Doctrine of 'Creation out of Nothing' in Early Christian Thought*, trans. A.S. Worrall (New York: T and T Clark International, 2004), Foreword.

<sup>896</sup> Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 117-120.

<sup>897</sup> John B. Cobb, Jr. and David Ray Griffin, *Process Theology*, 91-92.

<sup>898</sup> McFague, *Models of God*, 109.

Regarding the issue of sovereignty and transcendence of Creator God, Karl Barth claims that the economic Trinity is not identical with the immanent Trinity of Creator God.<sup>899</sup> Therefore he argues that God is a being of thorough sovereignty and transcendence, and a being of freedom for the World who is also free from the World.<sup>900</sup> By claiming that the economic Trinity is the immanent Trinity, and vice versa, Karl Rahner argues that God communicates Himself to the world (economic) as God really is in the divine life (immanent); he is not emphatic regarding God's transcendence and freedom.<sup>901</sup> Further, Moltmann, Lacugna, Ted Peters, and Wolfhart Pannenberg reject God's sovereignty and transcendence, favoring instead God's immanence. These theologians think that dualistic thinking from the understanding of divine transcendence and sovereignty can be overcome by the perichoretic relationship and fellowship. In a similar way, the person of 'God the Mother as Land' represents the immanent Creator who is not far away, but who indwells our world, and suffers with us here. She is God Creator, who is monistic, immanent, and relational between the persons in the Trinity as according to the ideas of Feng Shui cosmology.

#### **b) The Concept of Creation in Feng Shui Cosmology and Creator 'God the Mother as Land'**

Regarding the principle of creation, Feng Shui cosmology, as grounded on the ideas of IChing, explains a principle of creation from the symbolism of yin and yang, Five Elements, and Chi. The origin of yin and yang can be traced to the idea of chaos, the primordial existence of all things before yin and yang split, known as the Great Void. However, creation is made by a cosmic 'change' of bipolarization,

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<sup>899</sup> Paul Molnar, 'Toward a Contemporary Doctrine of the Immanent Trinity: Karl Barth and the Present Discussion', in, *Scottish Journal of Theology* 49 (1996): 311-313.

<sup>900</sup> Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *The Trinity: Global Perspectives*, 68-70

<sup>901</sup> Karl Rahner, *The Trinity* (New York: Crossroad Publishing, 1997), 22.

or a split of yin and yang, rather than through God's absolute sovereign intervention in creative activities during the process of changes from disorder (chaos) to order. Creation is understood as a continuous and ongoing progress of change.<sup>902</sup> The 'change' is the Great Ultimate as well as a source of all creatures.<sup>903</sup> Therefore, the principle of yin and yang is the ordering principle of basic change, which becomes the source of creation.<sup>904</sup>

In this respect, the principle of creation in Feng Shui is based on the dynamic act of 'change' that makes the becoming of yin or yang possible.<sup>905</sup> Bipolarization took place in the process of 'change' that yin and yang has produced. This interaction of yin and yang produces the four images (the four duograms), and then four images produce the eight trigrams.<sup>906</sup> 'The sixty-four hexagrams in the IChing, which represent the germinal situation of all changing phenomena, constitute all the possible combination of the eight trigrams'.<sup>907</sup> This interplay of yin and yang becomes the matrix of all things, which makes change possible in the universe. Therefore, the creative process of change has a structure of repetition and cycles. In this way, the person of 'God the Mother as Land', which is the Ultimate Reality, continues to do creative works in the process of 'change'. In other words, from the perspective of Feng Shui as a dynamic and living cosmology, the two fundamental structural units of creation are yin, which belongs to 'Land' (receptivity, responsiveness) and yang, which belongs to heaven (creativity).<sup>908</sup> Therefore, all things are eventually created through these two forces. God as the

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<sup>902</sup> Se Hyung Lee, *The Theology of Tao* (Seoul: HanDul Publishing, 2002), 131.

<sup>903</sup> Jung Young Lee, *The Theology of Change*, 71.

<sup>904</sup> Phil Ho Whang, 'Christianity and IChing', in, *Journal of Woowon Thoughts*, Vol. 6, (1998): 51.

<sup>905</sup> Jung Young Lee, *The Theology of Change*, 78-79.

<sup>906</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>907</sup> *Ibid.*, 6, 78.

<sup>908</sup> *Ibid.*, 78.

creator of changes is not simply a creator of creatures or a ruler, but the only ground of all being and becoming. Therefore, the concept of creation from IChing is an ongoing process, which is monistic, relational, and immanent through the principle of cyclic yin and yang flow, rather than a transcendent or absolute sovereign power. In this theology of 'change', Jung Young Lee suggests that God must be understood neither as 'being itself', nor as 'is-ness itself', but as 'becoming itself'.<sup>909</sup> 'Being' and 'is-ness' are mutually exclusive categories, whereas 'becoming' includes both. In other words, God as 'becoming itself' affirms that God is 'change itself', since change is the source of both 'being' and 'is-ness'. In this sense, this Creator as 'God the Mother as Land' becomes the ground of creativity.

As such, in the proposal of 'God the Mother as Land' inspired by IChing, 'change' is understood through the creative work by the creator of itself, and therefore it becomes the source and ground of all existence.<sup>910</sup> The primary attribute of 'God the Mother as Land', which is yin and receptive, receives the seed, which makes her fertile and productive. Such receptivity of 'Land' provides the place of life and death, and expands the realm of divine Creation. This Creation reflects the etymology of YHWH, which is originated from Hebrew 'haya', meaning to be, or to become, or 'is-ness'. Therefore, God is understood as the very source of creating all beings, which transcend both time and space.<sup>911</sup> From the perspective of Feng Shui, the Creator 'God the Mother as Land' participates in the life of creatures, and continues to sustain life based on the principles of yin and yang, and the Five Elements. God the Mother as Land inhabits all beings, hence She empathizes with all creatures, and eventually becomes a mother who suffers

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<sup>909</sup> Ibid., 18. See Phil Ho Whang, *Christianity and IChing*, 51.

<sup>910</sup> Jung Young Lee, *The Theology of Change*, 30, 70.

<sup>911</sup> Ibid., 31.

with her children.

### **c) The Creator, God as Mother**

The Creator 'God as Mother' as symbolized by Land is 'conceived not only as original Creator, Faithful Preserver, Server, and Sustainer, but also as Continuous Creator of the cosmos'.<sup>912</sup> Rejecting Her Divine transcendence and sovereignty, but representing Her immanence, which is with us as Faithful Preserver, Server, and Sustainer, the symbol of Mother expresses an interrelationship of life through the birthing and nurturing process.<sup>913</sup> Therefore the symbol of 'God as Mother' claims divine immanence through a continuously changing relation of God towards the world. The metaphor of 'God as Mother' shows Land is not just a subject awaiting exploitation, or one being conquered by a dualistic thinking system; rather, it is perceived as a part of the body of God Mother.

More to the point, Creator God is being expressed as 'God as Mother' in a personal way, despite using the impersonal symbol 'Land' from Feng Shui cosmology. This model originates from the *Jimo* idea that 'Land' is a mother, who becomes the first person of the Trinity, which is 'God the Mother as Land' in this section. The idea of *Jimo* in Feng Shui thought tells that Land would be the womb of a mother, from which all lives emerge, and to which they return. In this way 'God of Land', which is proposed by the impersonal symbol of 'Land', could eventually be conceived as a personal divine model of Creator God as Mother, symbolized as Land. This idea parallels McFague's 'the world as the God body' model, but she compares this model to 'Mother, Lover, and Friend' in terms of the personal aspects of speaking about God. McFague's Mother model implies 'procreative-

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<sup>912</sup> Gloria L. Schaab, *The Creative Suffering of the Triune God: An Evolutionary Theology* (The American Academy of Religion), (Kindle Locations 1401-1402). Kindle Edition.

<sup>913</sup> McFague, *Models of God*, 100.

emanation' of God's role, through the giving birth to 'the world as the God body'.

McFague suggests that those personal metaphors, which resemble human images, can more intimately represent God: Her perspective confines God to be associated with personality.<sup>914</sup> But God cannot be described in exclusively personal ways, and God, we know through human language, is more than a personal being.<sup>915</sup> The impersonal aspects and impersonal renamings of God are frequently found in the Bible. Soskice, for example, asserts that God has many metaphoric and impersonal names such as Rock, Lamb, Forest, Shepherd, Vine-Keeper, and so on, in Christian traditions.<sup>916</sup> It is recognized within the discipline that many theologians have described God in impersonal ways.

The understanding of God in Feng Shui includes a comprehensive divine nature, which encompasses diverse analogies of relationships between Heaven-Land (earth)-Humanity. In this way, the 'God of Land' model is being proposed in this dissertation through the impersonal metaphor of 'Land', which inherently holds an image of 'mother' that in turn encompasses all things through the idea of Oneness of ChunJiln. Impersonal beings such as the 'Land' (earth) and Heaven (sky) are the sources of human beings and of all Creation. Heaven, therefore, is identified as father, 'Land' is identified as mother, human beings as their children, and other creatures as members of the household of the universe, which is the household of God in a familiar sense.<sup>917</sup> Therefore, my suggested model represents a more organic worldview that is intimate, holistic, and inclusive, its components being strongly attached and related to each other. In this way, the

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<sup>914</sup> McFague, *Metaphorical Theology*, 20-21. See McFague, *Model of God*, 78-87. See also McFague, *Life Abundant*, 18.

<sup>915</sup> Jung Young Lee, *The Trinity in Asian Perspective*, 65.

<sup>916</sup> Soskice, *The Kindness of God*, 1-2.

<sup>917</sup> Jung Young Lee, *The Trinity in Asian Perspective*, 63.



'God of Land' model can be expressed in both personal and impersonal ways from the idea of Oneness of ChunJiln. Moreover, God transcends personal and impersonal categories through yin and yang symbolic thinking, which includes 'both/and', and 'is and is'.<sup>918</sup> From this inclusive way of symbolic thinking, this section argues that an impersonal 'God of Land', which is based on the idea of *Jimo* from Feng Shui, is suggested as a personal 'God as Mother' model because *Jimo* represents the idea that 'Land' is mother. In other words, the impersonal 'Land' as understood from the Asian perspective is used to suggest a personal God model, which is 'God as Mother' in the same way in which God is described in Christianity as being a personal creator - speaking, showing, and sometimes appearing. God symbolized as a mother expressed by Land represents a divine immanence, who is with us in this world as a sustainer and continuing Creator. This way, 'God as Mother', understood as 'Land', presents a viable Christian response to, and feminist understanding of, the Divine, which reflects the pervasive reality of women's life. This then begs the question: What is the primary nature of Creator 'God the Mother as Land', as it is presented in this section?

#### **d) The Nature of 'God the Mother as Land' as Creator**

Traditionally, the primary metaphors for speaking of God in Christianity mostly come from a dualistic view, which see God as an absolute monarch. This dualistic view puts some distance between God and His creatures.<sup>919</sup> Therefore, the nature of God has been mostly conveyed with masculine images of King, Son, or dictator, formed as concepts of the ruler – an absolute, transcendent, and omnipotent God. This section, however, explores the nature of 'God the Mother as Land', through

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<sup>918</sup> Ibid., 65

<sup>919</sup> McFague, *Models of God*, 19.

the monistic and immanent yin and yang principle from Feng Shui cosmology. The section contends that the person of 'God the Mother as Land' represents the nature of the Creator which is 'Love and Mercy', as inspired by the Korean Bibo school of Feng Shui, which explores optimal places through diagnosing and balancing the surrounding Land.<sup>920</sup> This is about how to read and correct problematic locations or structural features of Land. In the Korean school of Bibo Feng Shui, people should build a temple or tower specifically at the 'sick' place of the Land, in order to correct the defect and maintain the environmental balance.<sup>921</sup> In other words, Korean Bibo Feng Shui is essentially oriented towards achieving harmony between humans and the surrounding place. In Bibo Feng Shui, the Land is regarded as the body of a living mother (or 'mother Land'), so if there is something wrong with the place it should be corrected i.e. treated and healed. As the Land is regarded as a mother's body, it has spots suitable for acupuncture or corrective practices, where the instruments of healing were not needles but religiously significant buildings or towers. According to the Bibo school of Feng Shui, people should build a temple or a tower at the 'sick' place of the Land. Therefore, the essence of Korean Feng Shui bears a heart of 'Love and Mercy' for the Land, and for the people. Love and Mercy is eventually represented as seeking correction of the beloved Land, which is regarded as a body of Mother.<sup>922</sup> Ultimately, God the Mother as Land, which is presented from the ideas of the Bibo school of Feng Shui, pursues harmonious and balanced life in the world. Therefore, 'God the Mother as Land' becomes a suffering God in the midst of a suffering cosmos; God feels the suffering of

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<sup>920</sup> Hoe Ik Chang, *Science and Meta-science* (Seoul: JisikSanup Publishing, 1990), 192-206. .

<sup>921</sup> Won Suck Choi, *Korea Feng Shui and Bibo* (Minsokwon Publishing, 2004), 23. See Chang Jo Choi, *Korean Indigenous Feng Shui 1*, 115-124.

<sup>922</sup> Chang Jo Choi, *Korean Indigenous Feng Shui 1*, 185.

humanity, and suffers with the oppressed, making an effort to liberate them.

Such qualities of Love and Mercy, which 'God the Mother as Land' hold, are grounded on the idea of Oneness found through the interaction among all things, via the harmony and balance from the basic principles of yin and yang that form the foundation on which Feng Shui is built. 'God of Mother as Land', which becomes the coordinator of the interaction of yin and yang, establishes harmony, giving birth to things. This is because Land is associated with productive and fertile qualities, which are receptive. Yin and yang is a symbolic equality rooted in the unified, dynamic, and harmonized unity of the universe, which continues to change. The change that pursues harmony and balance is Ultimate Reality,<sup>923</sup> which is represented in this section as 'God the Mother as Land'. This section considers this change to be the primary nature that 'God the Mother as Land' inherently holds, which operates towards balance and harmony, achieving a whole One without any kind of alienation through ChunJiin thought. More precisely, this change, which is the being and becoming of all things in the cosmos, is inevitably attended by pain, suffering, and death in the movement towards all existences. 'God the Mother as Land' therefore inherently concerns itself with and intimately suffers with the oppressed and the marginalized. Accordingly, 'God the Mother as Land' rejects any oppressive structure that breaks balance and harmony, and claims to liberate all types of oppression. In this sense, the ever-changing relationship between yin and yang is responsible for the constant flow of the universe and life in general, and seeks ways of harmony and balance, which is Love and Mercy, in the primary nature of 'God the Mother as Land'. In this way, the section argues that 'God the Mother as Land' represents Her very nature of Love and Mercy by embracing the

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<sup>923</sup> Jung Young Lee, *The Theology of Change*, 30, 70.

oppressed and the marginalized, through the harmonized unity of the universe.

Regarding the nature of God, some Western theologians argue that God is 'love' and 'compassion' by nature. Matthew Fox, an American Episcopal priest and theologian, also explains the nature of God as 'compassion'. Through his theology of creation spirituality, Fox emphasises a holy relationship between humanity and nature. Accordingly, the protection of nature is considered a sacrament, and an expression of the 'compassion' of God.<sup>924</sup> Moltmann sees divine nature as the love of God. He sees God's creative activity being just creation from the love of God (*creatio ex amore Dei*).<sup>925</sup> Moltmann claims that such a creative and productive act, wherein God created the world for others, would be true love.<sup>926</sup> McFague also claims that mother God's love is agape, which loves all the creatures in creation. She sees God's creative agapeic love – in which God cares deeply for the needs of the world and all creatures by continuously parenting and nurturing from birth - as God's very nature.<sup>927</sup>

Thus 'God the Mother as Land', represented by the nature of Love and Mercy, is reflected well in the life and ministry of Jesus through the perichoretic relationship of the Trinity. The nature of Love and Mercy in 'God the Mother as Land' is the perfect manifestation of merciful God the Mother. This merciful God became incarnate in the person and ministry of Jesus, who is rooted in and enlivened by his intimate and loving relationship with God. Jesus' person, life, and ministry radiated merciful love and unconditional compassion towards those who suffer. The person of 'God of Mother as Land' is an active participant in history;

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<sup>924</sup> Matthew Fox, *Spirituality Named Compassion: Uniting Mystical Awareness with Social Justice* (Vermont: Inner Traditions, 1999), 2-14.

<sup>925</sup> Moltmann, *God in Creation*, 120.

<sup>926</sup> Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom*, 76-77.

<sup>927</sup> McFague, *Models of God*, 101-109.

She is immanent in the struggle, suffering, and pain of the universe and its creatures. In this way, this section claims that the person of God the Mother as Land's nature seeks harmony and balance through Her nature of cosmological Love and Mercy, understood from a Feng Shui perspective. The Creator, 'God the Mother as Land', pursues restoring Her created world, especially oppressed women and nature, by claiming harmony and balance – which are reinterpreted by yin and yang symbolic thinking from a Feng Shui perspective - for all creatures.

### **3. Creator 'God the Mother as Land' from Feng Shui: Approaching Eco-feminism**

#### **a) Female Image of God: A Feminist Perspective**

Many eco-feminists claim God the Mother has been understood as 'Creator'.<sup>928</sup> This is because a mother gives birth to and nurtures her children, and forms an intimate relationship them. Therefore, all creatures are brothers and sisters from the same womb of the one mother of the universe who dwells in bright darkness.<sup>929</sup> They claim that the image of the Mother God is the most appropriate symbol with which to express the inherent performance of the immanent, receptive, and fertile God. In this sense, Johnson argues that the Mother who created something out of nothing in the beginning enlivens the dead with Her saving power.<sup>930</sup> God the Mother, as one of the persons in the Trinity, bears an intimate relationship with Creation, giving birth to all things to come. God the Mother reveals Herself inherently, in the cosmos and its creatures.

Creation in ancient religions has been portrayed through the feminine values of nurturing and life-conception, and the apotheosis of its creation has been

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<sup>928</sup> See Sallie McFague, Elizabeth A. Johnson, Rosemary R. Ruether, Catherine Roach, Charlene Spretnak, and others.

<sup>929</sup> Johnson, *She Who Is*, 179.

<sup>930</sup> *Ibid.*, 180

described as a goddess. In ancient societies feminine values were more honored - a natural female goddess was worshipped as the mother-creator, who gives life without subordination to masculine values.<sup>931</sup> The female life-giving principle was considered divine, and was a great mystery in ancient religion. The female as divine is largely based on the number of carvings of a female shape with big breasts or big buttocks found from this era.<sup>932</sup> The female principle that gives birth, nurtures all, and establishes order in the universe, appeared in mother imagery in the goddess myths.<sup>933</sup> However, female principles and imagery were gradually driven out of religion. In other words, Christianity gradually emphasized a fixed image of masculine monotheism, rather than the 'primordial goddess concept of God' emphasized by pantheism.<sup>934</sup> But female images of God are often portrayed in the Hebrew Scripture by metaphors of women's delivering the creation of Israel. God has been likened to a nursing mother who does not forget her children (Isaiah 49: 14-15). The Hebrew scripture scholars have mostly likened the image of the Creator God to the war gods of ancient Mesopotamia, who fought against the forces of chaos; however, the principle of creation is based on the female principle that stems from the creative womb of life.<sup>935</sup>

From this, Western eco-feminist theologians try to find female aspects of God. This does not mean that they are trying to regress to the goddess era, but rather that they are trying to draw attention to the connection between and the

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<sup>931</sup> Jung Bae Lee, 'FengShui and Ecology', 133.

<sup>932</sup> Young Ran Chang, 'Images of Death and Females among Greek Myths and Philosophy', in, *Korean Women's Philosophy*, Vol.3 (2003): 3. See R.R. Ruether, *Goddesses and the Divine Feminine: A Western Religious History* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2005), 33- 34.

<sup>933</sup> Young Mee Lee, 'Reading of God in the Old Testament with Feminist Eyes', 194.

<sup>934</sup> Yasuo Yuasa, *Body as a Part of Cosmos*, trans. Jung Bae Lee, Han Young Lee, (Seoul: Mosinunsaramdul Publishing, 2013), 264-5.

<sup>935</sup> Young Mee Lee, 'Reading of God in the Old Testament with Feminist Eyes', 195.

common destiny of the subordination of women and the exploitation of nature.<sup>936</sup> Furthermore, feminist consciousness goes beyond masculine images of God in the Christian Church, by representing female images of God that can reflect women's experiences. In this way, women can be empowered by the female imagery of God. This section now approaches the female image of God, represented as 'God the Mother as Land', from an eco-feminist consciousness.

### **b) Creator 'God the Mother as Land': An Eco-feminist Approach**

As Western eco-feminist theologians try to retrieve hidden feminine images of God,<sup>937</sup> this section proposes 'God the Mother as Land', which seeks female nature from Feng Shui cosmology. The mother image, which is the *Jimo* idea of Land in Feng Shui, is a fundamental thought process of 'Geomentality', which is the basic ecological notion of the Land held innately and intuitively by Koreans. This section attempts to reinterpret the *Jimo* idea in Feng Shui, which has been regarded as one of the fertility cults of the agricultural era, in religious and theological languages. In this way, the proposal of 'God the Mother as Land' is similar to the works of Western eco-feminists.

In the outlook of Koreans, there is a wholeness, or oneness, of analogies between Heaven-Land (earth)-Humanity, which see the universe as an integrated unity with inherent correspondence among existences.<sup>938</sup> In this way, Feng Shui thinking is shared with an ecological and organismic worldview, which represents a spirit of oneness, and a relation of coexistence. Above all, Feng Shui cosmology

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<sup>936</sup> Jung Bae Lee, *FengShui and Ecology*, 133.

<sup>937</sup> Catherine M. Roach, *Mother/Nature: Popular Culture and Environmental Ethics* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003), 39-50. See Carol P. Christ, *Laughter of Aphrodite*, 125. See also Ruether, *Sexism and God-Talk*, 48. McFague, *Models of God*, 78 -180.

<sup>938</sup> Ole Bruun, *An Introduction to Feng Shui* (United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 174

cherishes 'Land' as a mother, and as a part of the human body. Accordingly, Koreans personify and animate Land in a way that can correspond with human beings. In Feng Shui thinking, the natural environment (Land) is thought to be a vast, integrated creature, which inherently communicates with humanity by vibrating with energy and cosmic resonance. A unique and new perspective from Korean Feng Shui finds the possibility for understanding the true nature of God through the image of Mother-Land. And the image of the Mother-Land manifests a unique incarnation, embodying the meaning of God's mercy and the motherly love of nature through God's Creation. Therefore, all things in this world were born from God the Mother as Land. This way, we are all one who were born in the same womb of Land as according to the idea of ChunJiln, the cosmic family of Heaven-Land (earth)-Humanity.<sup>939</sup> 'God the Mother as Land' is the source of all things, which completes the salvation from 'God the Son as Water'.

Most importantly, the Creator 'God the Mother as Land', as represented by a female figure, includes male and female from the cosmological yin and yang principle, and a mother who embraces both women and men. In other words, under the principle of change and reverse circulation through the use of movement, 'God the Mother as Land' is represented as mother and also as father.<sup>940</sup> This idea represents the yin and yang symbolic thinking of 'both/and', 'is and is', which is dually affirmative. In addition, 'God the Mother as Land' has the dual characteristics of immanence but also transcendence, and is impersonal but also personal. 'God the Mother as Land' holds the cosmic and comprehensive nature of Love and Mercy, and in this way the 'God the Mother as Land' concerns the

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<sup>939</sup> Johnson, *She Who Is*, 189.

<sup>940</sup> Se Hyung Lee, *The Theology of Tao*, 154.



marginalized and the oppressed, as the Creator. Therefore, from the stories of oppressed women in the Korean Church, 'God the Mother as Land' reconstructs an Asian women's theology. 'God the Mother as Land' witnesses to the Korean women's history of suffering under long-term patriarchy. Therefore, 'God the Mother as Land' fits alongside the theological reflection in which the Bible and Christian tradition function, as the context in which to understand women's experiences from the comprehensive, inclusive, and embracing thinking of Feng Shui.

Moreover, the Creator 'God the Mother as Land' presented in this section encourages Korean women in the Church to re-imagine and portray God through their own images. As a result, I hope they will be able to form a positive self-identity. It is because the male-centered God image prevails in the Korean Church that Korean women have been ignored and treated as inferior.<sup>941</sup> Some Christian feminists argue that gender equality within the Christian faith could be achieved through rethinking the portrayal and understanding of God as a female, or as a gender-neutral being.<sup>942</sup> Therefore, the female image of 'God the Mother as Land' could help women fulfill the desire from these symbols that reflect women's religious experiences, and that could finally empower women.

To summarise, this section has attempted to reinterpret and rename the person of 'God the Father' in the Trinity as 'God the Mother as Land', from a Feng Shui perspective. In this way, the section reconstructs 'God the Mother as Land' by reimagining the female principle of God the Mother from the symbolic thinking of

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<sup>941</sup> See chapter II.

<sup>942</sup> McFague proposes metaphors of God as mother. Ruether also presents a God/ess model and suggests an ecological female Divine of Gaia. Johnson proposes God as Sophia. Carol P. Christ, Catherine Roach, Naomi Goldenberg, Charlene Spretnak, and others tried looking for the Goddess—that female Divine from a pre-historical era—in order to reject the notion of the exclusively male Divine.

yin and yang and ChunJiln in terms of feminist language and theology from Asian perspectives. The section therefore posits the Creator 'God the Mother as Land', which is God as mother of Love and Mercy - God as a mother who is not only the ground of cosmic being but also the source of unity and interconnectedness.

Within the eco-feminist perspective, the section expands on the Feng Shui view that the most appropriate imagery through which to articulate the creative nurture and love of God within a theology of Changes is from the female procreative experience. In so doing, the section formulates a model of the creative suffering of God as Land in terms of a female image for God, drawn from yin and yang symbolic thinking, and the IChing cosmology. By using an impersonal metaphor of 'Land', the section references Feng Shui insights concerning liberating hermeneutics associated with the personal God as mother, which is the creative suffering of God that comes from God's nature of 'Love and Mercy'. The Creator as held by 'God the Mother as Land' references the source of all existence from yin and yang and ChunJiln thoughts, and is a monistic and relational Creator. In this way, cosmic and universal dimensions of 'God the Mother as Land' expand the horizon of ecological sensibility, and restore female characteristics of God that can transform the contemporary Korean Church, in which sexism and eco-antipathy is rampant. This can finally lead to the liberation of Korean women and nature, which have long been neglected, and abused.

### **IV.3 Conclusion**

This chapter attempts to reinterpret the Trinity of 'God of Land' from native non-Trinitarian symbols taken from Feng Shui cosmology in a Korean context. This contextual approach to the Trinity of 'God of Land' is a new hermeneutical tool with

which to understand the meaning of the Trinity from an Asian eco-feminist perspective.

An understanding of the Trinity through traditional non-Trinitarian symbols of yin and yang as proposed by Jung Young Lee provides hermeneutic tools for establishing the Trinity model of 'God of Land' from Feng Shui. In addition, Moltmann's idea on the Trinitarian perichoresis of the Social Trinity (non-hierarchical) is a foundation for the Trinity of 'God of Land' because it offers a way of thinking that can overcome dualism, and promote equality and egalitarian relationship without any domination and oppression. It also offers a way of thinking that recognizes the immanence of God with us, and finds feminist ways of seeing God in the Trinity. Moreover, the Trinity of the 'God of Land' model attempts an eco-feminist theological approach towards the liberation of women and nature, just as Johnson does. Therefore, this Trinitarian understanding of 'God of Land' rejects monarchical and masculine images of God. The three hypostases in the Trinity of the 'God of Land' model are held in equal, respectful, and nurturing relationships, in order to achieve one divine unity through Trinitarian perichoresis, via the yin and yang principle.

The Trinity of 'God of Land' as based on the yin and yang principle provides a new meaning through an alternative theological interpretation that is culturally relevant to Korean women in the Korean context. This way of approaching the Trinity of 'God of Land' is a kind of 'inculturation' in contextual theology, which comes from the process of developing functional equivalence of cultures as Robert J. Schreiter stated.<sup>943</sup> Therefore, this Feng Shui reinterpretation of the Trinity in the 'God of Land' model is in line with the basic idea of Jung Young Lee, who

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<sup>943</sup> Robert Schreiter, *Constructing Local Theologies* (New York: Orbis, 1985), 5.

reinterprets the Trinity from the thoughts of 'Theology of Changes and IChing'. Lee writes:

'The various metaphysical systems have served as vehicles for the Christian faith. Christian theologians have used Platonic, or Aristotelian, or Kantian, or Cartesian, or Hegelian metaphysics to convey the idea of the ultimate reality, and in no case do we consider their metaphysics a betrayal of their Christian faith. If Christianity is truly not a sect but a universal religion, we have no reason to reject a clear and comprehensive interpretation of change simply because it originated in China. Chinese philosophy is as acceptable a vehicle for Christian faith as Greek philosophy. If it were not, Christianity would not be ecumenical and universal.'<sup>944</sup>

This is because the truth of Christianity does not belong to 'either/or' thinking.

Rather, it belongs to the Trinitarian 'both/and' way of thinking; as a result, Christian theology is considered to be a universal and ecumenical religion.<sup>945</sup> For this reason, this chapter attempts to retrieve the symbols from IChing, which is the basis of Feng Shui, for interpreting the Triune God from an Asian perspective through the process of inculturation in contextual theology. This is different from Johnson's Trinity, which reinterprets the Western Christian Trinitarian tradition.

The Trinity of the 'God of Land' model, comprised of Wind, Water, and Land, as an inculturated contextual theological model expresses our deepened conviction that the essence of the Triune God identifies interrelatedness and mutuality, which is grounded on the yin and yang principle viewed from an eco-feminist theological perspective. In this way, this Trinity of the 'God of Land' model firmly excludes the dualistic thinking that poses gender discrimination. In this sense, the chapter asserts that the Triune 'God of Land,' which is presented from a Feng Shui perspective, is holistic and cosmic, and opens up exciting prospects for liberating women and nature.

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<sup>944</sup> Jung Young Lee, *The Theology of Change*, 26.

<sup>945</sup> Ibid.

## Chapter V - Conclusion

This dissertation suggests an eco-feminist divine model of 'God of Land' as a new theological solution to the all-pervading patriarchy in the contemporary Korean Protestant Church, which is greatly affected by sexism and eco-antipathy. This model takes an eco-feminist approach through a way of new hermeneutics and reconstruction theology, taken from a Feng Shui perspective in the Asian context. This attempt would go beyond the scope of the traditional hermeneutical theology of Christian language, and aims at breaking away from the patriarchy of traditional Christianity through eco-feminist theology. This adopts a contextual approach to an eco-feminist imagining of the Divine, based on the yin and yang symbolic thinking of Feng Shui from an Asian perspective, and is suitable for the goal of being inclusive and restorative towards Korean women, and nature.

Above all, by proposing a Trinitarian interpretation of 'God of Land' from Feng Shui cosmology, this model represents the possibility of a theological interpolation across the range of Christian theological disciplines. In other words, the Christian God cannot be spoken of only from the Western perspective, but can also be spoken of from the viewpoints of different cultures and histories. The eco-feminist 'God of Land' model from Feng Shui represents an inculturated, eco-feminist theology native to Korea, which reconstructs eco-feminism based on the cosmology and structures of Feng Shui thinking. This model, which is reconstructed from different theological and hermeneutical methods, and which is ecological and feminist, represents a new eco-feminist attempt from an Asian perspective.

This concluding chapter re-states the main idea with its four key

components that have been featured in the proposed 'God of Land' model. First of all, this dissertation draws upon a contextual model of Asian Feng Shui. This inculturated, contextual model of 'God of Land' intuitively perceives the reality of the ecological crisis and women's oppression, in dialogue with the insights of Feng Shui cosmology where symbols of divine reality participate in human life and human experience, and vary according to their context. In this way, an eco-feminist interpretation of the Divine, 'God of Land', as based on contemporary Korean women's life experience, is reinterpreted through the yin and yang principle and Chi, via Feng Shui cosmology. As Feng Shui has long been understood by Koreans as a dominant traditional outlook on nature, it is inherently feminine, and ecological. The proposed model attempts to read and interpret Scripture and tradition within the Korean spiritual context; thus this model is to be understood within the context of Korea.

While most of Christianity in the West understands God through a view of metaphysics, Korean cultural and historical context draws closely from the cosmology of IChing for its understanding God.<sup>946</sup> In this way, the dissertation attempts to make sense of the Trinity of 'God of Land' from the insights of Feng Shui inspired by IChing cosmology. The dissertation sees that a contextual theological approach will facilitate Koreans in interpreting and practicing Christian faith, and in finally receiving the Divine Trinity. The yin and yang principle, Chi, and the idea of ChunJiIn in IChing become the basis for suggesting the divine model in this dissertation.

Methodologically, this contextual theology takes women's life experiences

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<sup>946</sup> Jung Young Lee, *The Theology of Change*, 26.

into account in proposing a new model in this dissertation,<sup>947</sup> because human experience is one of the valid sources for theological expression.<sup>948</sup> According to feminist theologians, Christian theology relates human experience to the terms of men, without considering the experiences of women.<sup>949</sup> So the traditional image of the Christian God is based on masculine experience, and has been recognized in solely masculine images such as Father, Son, and King; my aim has been to find a feminist alternative to these male-centered images.<sup>950</sup> This dissertation is doing contextual theology from Korean women's perspectives, in the Korean spiritual tradition. In this regard, this dissertation asserts the realities of Korean women's life experience, past and present, because the newly proposed model aims to address the problems in patriarchal Korean Christianity. The image of God without women's experience accentuates men's experience solely, and cannot embrace women; this then drives them to the periphery of the Church. To address this, this model represents an inclusive image of God, which embraces the perspectives of women and enables them to face a God who finally reflects their experience and identity.<sup>951</sup> This model finally facilitates women's endeavors to form relationships built on mutuality, and to grow a right relationship with the Divine. Therefore, this

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<sup>947</sup> 'Women's experience is fundamental to understanding feminist theology; in its emphasis on experience as foundational for the theological task, feminist theology is not novel'. Michelle A. Gonzalez, *Created in God's Image: An Introduction to Feminist Theological Anthropology* (New York: Orbis Books, 2007), 97.

<sup>948</sup> Stephen B. Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology* (New York: Orbis Books, Maryknoll, 2013), 4.

<sup>949</sup> Johnson, *She Who Is*, 33. See R.R. Ruether, *Sexism and God-Talk*, 12-16. See also Nam Soon Kang, *Feminist Theology: Gender, Spirituality, Life*. (Seoul: Korean Theological Research Institute, 2002), 27, 44-45. Ruth C. Duck, *Gender and the Name of God*, 23-24. McFague, *Metaphorical Theology*, 9-10.

<sup>950</sup> Johnson asserts that the use of masculine language for describing God as Father, Son, and King according to men's experience fosters the male image of God: God is recognized as male gendered God. Johnson, *She Who Is*, 33. Nam Soon Kang also argues the emphasis on only male experience eventually leads to the recognition that God is male gendered. Nam Soon. Kang, *Feminist Theology*, 27. 44-45.

<sup>951</sup> Mary Daly, *Beyond God the Father*, 8. See McFague, *Metaphorical Theology*, 10.

suggested model from Feng Shui should be contextually understood from the particular context of Korea, and as based on Korean women's life experience. Despite the fact that this eco-feminist and contextual model takes culture into account, it remains within the traditional way of doing western theology through inter-culturation.

The next key component of this dissertation is its use of religious language, which is comprised of symbols, images, and metaphors that are culturally relevant for Korean women. The divine model is proposed through the symbol 'Land', taken from Feng Shui cosmology, which is feminine and ecological, and thus believed to best serve the aims of liberating women and nature, who - as I have outlined - have been historically oppressed in Korean Christianity. This way, the dissertation attempts to amend the problems of the contemporary Korean Christian Protestant Church by exploring culturally specific symbols, images, and metaphors that are appropriate, accurate, and efficacious for understanding the Christian God, and the world, from an Asian perspective.

The East Asian understanding of God has been portrayed through the symbolic thinking of yin and yang and Chi. The place where yin and yang meet is considered to be the realm of God.<sup>952</sup> In this regard, East Asian philosophers and theologians have developed the idea of 'ChunJiln' as the cosmic Trinity, from the Asian cosmological idea of the family concept of the Triune God, and using yin and yang and Chi.<sup>953</sup> Likewise, the Trinity in the 'God of Land' model is portrayed through the feminine symbols and metaphors of 'Wind', 'Water', and 'Land' from Feng Shui cosmology, which reflects Korean women's life experience by using yin

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<sup>952</sup> Hee Jung Kim, *Dreaming Oneness of Body, Nation, and Universe* (Seoul: Gungri Publishing, 2008), 65.

<sup>953</sup> Heup Young Kim, *The Theology of Tao 2*, 208.



and yang and Chi. It is meaningful in this context to rename the Triune God by the female symbols and metaphors which can best serve women and nature.

Importantly, the female God model in this dissertation is aimed at balancing many of the traditional images of God associated with patriarchy. The 'God of Land' model can be described as a female symbol, and as a metaphor of 'God as Mother' of the universe, taken from the idea of *Jimo*. 'God as Mother' represents God's immanence that implies God is with us. Thus, the metaphor of 'God as Mother' does not see Land (nature) as an object of conquest, but as part of the body of God - which demonstrates how this model can overcome dualism. In this way, the 'God as Mother' model makes fine ecological and social sense for the liberation of women and nature.

More significantly, the dissertation employs a symbol and metaphor of 'Land' (nature) for suggesting the Divine model, which is feminine and impersonal, as an alternative to a male and personal deity. The background idea of 'God of Land' is from the notion of *Jimo* (Land as mother), and the impersonal metaphor of 'Land' comes from the idea that underlies Koreans' sub-consciousness in Feng Shui. Furthermore, the idea of ChunJiln makes use of analogies among Heaven-Land (earth) - Humanity.<sup>954</sup> In Feng Shui, all beings are not basically different in ontological terms, and they are all inherently and mutually interconnected. In this sense, nature is viewed as a vast, living, organic unity, and human beings dwell with all creatures in nature, in interconnectedness with the sacred Divine power (ChunJiln). More specifically, the idea of ChunJiln holds that human beings and nature are created by the interaction of yin and yang, which becomes the principle

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<sup>954</sup> Dong Sik Yu, *Fengliu Refinement and Korean Religious Thought* (Seoul: Yonsei University Press, 1997), 177.

of everything in creation. The Ultimate Reality (God) participates in this creation process as moderator. The universe is seen as an endless flow of changes through the interaction of yin and yang. The Great Ultimate generates yin and yang through movement, maintaining two forces in balance; the interplay of yin and yang thus generates God, known as the Great Ultimate. Therefore, human beings, nature, and the Great Ultimate become inseparable. Symbolically speaking, human beings recognize the Divine through nature. In this way, the Oneness from the ChunJiln idea states that human beings understand God through communicating with nature. Therefore, this dissertation claims nature (Land) could be a symbolic metaphor that can express God based on the idea of ChunJiln.

Importantly, this impersonal 'God of Land' could be understood as an appropriate and efficacious personal conception of 'God as Mother'. In addition, the impersonal 'God of Land' model can be understood through the comprehensive symbolic thinking of the yin and yang principle because the God we understand through our symbols and metaphors is more than a personal being. God can be spoken of by both personal and impersonal symbols, as yin and yang symbolic thinking embraces 'both/and' thinking.<sup>955</sup> Ultimately, the feminine, impersonal God model from nature (Land) presented in this dissertation is different from the understanding of God in the Western Christian tradition, which is personal and masculine. Therefore, this model is a novel and unique one for the Korean context as seen from an Asian perspective, and enriches the meaning of these divine symbols for Korean women.

The third key component of the 'God of Land' model in this dissertation is that the model brings Feng Shui into a transcultural dialogue with eco-feminism, in

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<sup>955</sup> Jung Young Lee, *The Theology of Change*, 64-65.

order to find an alternative model for the liberation of women and nature in the contemporary Korean Church where sexism and eco-antipathy remain dominant. To this end, the dissertation compares the ideas of eco-feminism, particularly the ideas of Sallie McFague, with those of Feng Shui because there are many parallels between them in terms of ontological and metaphysical understandings of God: The dissertation develops an eco-feminist God model from the cosmology of Feng Shui with an eco-feministic view within the Korean context of culture expressed in symbolic ways.

More specifically, Feng Shui expresses an inherently feminine indwelling presence of God in the natural world, so it is appropriate for suggesting an emancipatory divine model for abused women and nature. Moreover, the outlook of nature in Feng Shui has an organic worldview that sees the universe as a huge integrated unit that has inherently corresponding and closely interconnected relations of cosmic resonance. Therefore, the dissertation suggests a God of cosmic significance, who is somewhat removed from anthropocentric thinking. From this perspective, the images, metaphors, and symbols suggested by McFague to Feng shui are significant for my model, as nature is viewed in common with the feminine, and each holds a spirit of reverence for nature and all forms of life. Both assert that nature is a living organism. Above all, these two worldviews share the view that God is not transcendent, but is a part of our lives. More specifically, the two imagine God as immanent-transcendent, monistic, and panentheistic, while Western Christianity understands God as transcendent. These two models both seek unity through mutual cooperation and inclusiveness, which can overcome all dualistic worldviews.

This eco-feminist model 'God of Land' from Feng Shui represents a different dimension of understanding the cosmic God, who is immanent and comprehensive, and so opens up new prospects of overcoming traditional understandings of God, which are transcendent, exclusive, dualistic, and patriarchal.<sup>956</sup> The 'God of Land' model presents a holistic and comprehensive God, who is moving away from anthropocentric, patriarchal, and masculine portrayals and towards a comprehensive and cosmological view, based on an eco-feministic view of Feng Shui.

More specifically, IChing's basic idea of Feng Shui describes a cosmic God who pursues balance and harmony of life, and who continues to change and regenerate. The monistic ideas of the yin and yang principle, Chi, and ChunJiln open up the possibility of overcoming the dualism that is believed to cause ecological crisis and human marginalization. This eco-feminist model replaces an 'either/or' way of thinking with a 'both/and' way of thinking, which represents its comprehensiveness.<sup>957</sup> The eco-feminist 'God of Land' model, which is female and cosmic as according to the ChunJiln idea, eventually pursues harmony and balance in the world without any bias, by using the 'both/and' way of thinking of yin and yang. In this way, this 'God of Land' model from an eco-feministic view of Feng Shui moves toward a cosmologic vision, which considers all of the creatures in the universe to be significant.

The last important component of the 'God of Land' model in this dissertation is its retrieving the doctrine of the Christian Trinity by interpreting the Trinity of the

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<sup>956</sup> Ruether, *Sexism and God-Talk*, 85. See McFague, *Models of God*, ix, and 6-7. See also Mary Daly, *Beyond God the Father*, 13, 19. Eleanor Rae, *Women, the Earth, the Divine* (Markynoll: Orbis Books, 1994), 3-4.

<sup>957</sup> Jung Young Lee, *The Theology of Change*, 26.

'God of Land' model from the insights of Feng Shui. The dissertation examines how this Trinitarian thinking from Feng Shui can relate to the Christian concept of the Trinity, as approached by eco-feminist theology. More specifically, the Trinity of the model expresses three feminine hypostases: 'Wind', which is the Holy Spirit that gives birth to life, 'Water', as Jesus Christ, who saves and liberates, and finally the Creator God, who is expressed as Mother 'Land'. These three feminine hypostases of this model's Trinity represent the unity of God in three persons, distinct from one another but each 'God', whole and entire. In other words, this dissertation addresses how the non-Trinitarian model 'God of Land', which is represented by Feng Shui cosmology as a feminine and relational Divine, can provide a theological resource for receiving the Triune God of the Christian Church.

Specifically, the three hypostases of 'God of Land' have been described in terms of a relationship of mutual penetration among the persons. In other words, this is a collaboration of yin and yang that can overcome gender discrimination through breaking dualism on the bases of equality and of the mutual relations between them. In addition, the dissertation addresses the Trinity of 'God of Land', which is not abstract, but rather is empirical and relational, being based on women's life experience from an Asian perspective. In this way, the Trinity of 'God of Land' reconstructs the Trinity in a non-hierarchical way, based on the principles of yin and yang, Chi, and ChunJiIn – and this is similar to the approaches of Johnson and Moltmann. This attempts to change the hierarchical way of conceiving the Triune God to a manner that is relational, egalitarian, and inclusive. What is seen in the 'God of Land' model, which is made relational and immanent through an eco-feminist approach, is the promise of acceptance in the Christian faith. The dissertation addresses theological understandings of this model, in order to

contribute towards eco-feminists' concerns with liberating oppressed Korean women through Asian sources of Feng Shui that identify aspects of divinity in the symbol of Land.

### ***The Limitations of the Trinity 'God of Land' Model***

The goal of this divine model is to engage in the task that liberates the long-neglected women and nature of the Korean context. From this point, there still remains some work to be done in the field of eco-feminism – work which involves reimagining the eco-feminist divine in this dissertation.

First of all, this 'God of Land' model focuses on liberating women and nature through eco-feministic views of Feng Shui cosmology. Therefore, there is a need for a more balanced concern for nature's degradation to be explored alongside the issue of women's oppression, as this dissertation has not engaged with ecological issues as far as it has with feminist issues. In this way, the dissertation leaves in speculation the diverse and critical environmental issues that we are facing today.

Secondly, this dissertation does not fully cover the wide range of issues in Korean women's oppression in terms of the racial, social, and economic exploitation, as is demanded by exploring the contemporary Korean situation; this is because Korea is currently undergoing many drastic changes. This dissertation mainly focuses on the issue of the patriarchal language for God that is presumed to cause women's oppression in the contemporary Korean Church, from an eco-feminist theological standpoint. If further issues of the racial, social, and economic oppression of women were fully included in this dissertation, this model would be more universally accepted - not only by women in Korea, but also by women in the third world, as one of many possible contextual interpretations.

Thirdly, 'God of Land' is a contextualized divine model, which is suggested

from a Korean socio-cultural context through the inculturation process. This divine model, which is based on Korean cultural traditions, therefore focuses on a new hermeneutic approach to God's actions of salvation and liberation because the divine model suggested in the dissertation claims salvation and liberation for the oppressed women and nature in Korean context. This contextualized theological model requires more work in order to confront the diverse issues occurring in the contemporary Korean Church. This model would have even greater value if it covered a wide range of theological issues, such as the Kingdom of God, sin, evil, and others in the Christian tradition, as well as divine salvation.

Lastly, this dissertation requires a closer engagement with why this divine model from Feng Shui is an appropriate choice for engaging Western eco-feminist theological praxis, and also needs to establish a theoretical path for dialogue partners that could provide insight into how to induce a transformation in the contemporary Church in the Korean context. In this way, this contextual Asian perspective model could be made more clearly understandable to Western theologians, as one of the attempts at developing a contextual interpretation of divine reality. The meaning of the 'God of Land' model from Feng Shui is relative to the Korean context, and that context is unique to Korean time and place. Thus, a Western understanding of the divine reality would be demanded by an Asian understanding because their contexts and cosmology are different. Furthermore, as this divine model built from an Asian perspective uses culturally-specific symbols and metaphors, these could be misunderstood and misread in different cultures. This divine model from Asian cosmology, which is based on the principles of yin and yang, Chi, and the concept of ChunJiln, would be a challenge to a traditional understanding of God in Christianity because these Asian ways of

thinking reverse the Western ontological and metaphysical assumption that yin and yang are symbols of entity or substance.<sup>958</sup>

### ***Practical Outcomes of the Feminist 'God of Land' Model***

If employed more widely, the approach of imagining and discussing God employed in this dissertation, particularly in envisioning a feminine model of the divine, could lead to the practical outcomes of liberating Korean women and nature. Naming God as feminine within the daily practices of women's group worship in Korean churches will help Korean women realize the reality of their oppression from the patriarchal hierarchy, which has operated in the Korean church through solely masculine images of God. This feminist God model offers a challenge to rethink patriarchal images of God that have led to the exploitation of women and nature, and promotes church renewal and transformation away from the current patriarchal thinking within the theology of Korean Christianity. Envisioning God as female in this way reflects Korean women's own image and as such offers liberation from the association of God with male-ness. It is through this association of God with the masculine that men are prioritized and women marginalized in the Korean church, so imagining and naming God in a more feminine way in women's group worship is a liberatory action.

Nevertheless, this eco-feminist idea has to be actively discussed and adopted by women's working groups within churches in Korea, so while this dissertation offers a theological foundation for this work, it must be followed by practical action. I am interested in developing a program of seminar series to raise eco-feminist critical consciousness in Korean churches to spread this idea to the

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<sup>958</sup> Jung Young Lee, *The Trinity in Asian Perspective*, 27.



whole church community and society via women's working groups. In addition, in order to spread this idea more broadly to Korean Christian women, I aim to make the content of the dissertation, suggesting a feminist Divine metaphor, accessible via publication in theological journals and magazines in order to engage Christian women to think about and discuss eco-feminist ideas. Moreover, the women's working groups in Korean churches could begin instituting the more inclusive practice of naming God as feminine, by reimagining eco-feminist 'God of Land' as an alternative metaphor for God that demonstrates women's ongoing endeavors for justice.

The dissertation asserts that when women envision God through their own image, they can develop a better self-identity and have a more intimate relationship with God. It can enhance women's dignity and identity, allowing them to liberate themselves from patriarchy. This practice takes Korean women one step closer toward self-realization that will eventually liberate them from the patriarchy of the Korean church.

For future work, as I have already mentioned in the 'limitations' section of the dissertation, I am considering discussing a wider range of issues in terms of Korean women's oppression, particularly racial, social and economic exploitation occurring in the demanding contemporary Korean situation. I am interested in pursuing this work in response to the criticisms that the mainly white field of feminism tends to heavily focus on God's language in the Christian church as the main problem in women's oppression.<sup>959</sup> Following black womanists and other women of colour I am interested in dealing with the issues of economic, political and social oppression, particularly in the context of modern Korea.

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<sup>959</sup> This question was asked by the examiners during the upgrade viva of Exeter University.

Although I am an Asian woman, I only deal a little bit with racial, social and economic pressures in the dissertation and focused on issues of naming, representing and imagining God. My dissertation adopted western eco-feminist theory, so it mainly addresses God's language as the main problem leading to Korean women's oppression in the contemporary Korean church. In this way I have limited the scope my dissertation to women's oppression in the church mainly coming from patriarchal language of and about God. In future work, I would like to deal more with themes of racial, social and economic pressures of Korean women's oppression, as well as God's language. I will continue further exploring my God model 'God of Land' to include a wider range of issues relating to its role as a universal God model, especially representing a God model for third world women. In addition, this future work would also consider a wide range of theological issues: the Kingdom of God, sin, evil, and etcetera, in the Christian tradition, as well as divine salvation and liberation.

### ***The Significance of the Trinity 'God of Land' Model***

The first theological significance of the eco-feminist 'God of Land' model that has been built here from Feng Shui is that it represents new hermeneutics and a new reconstruction theology, which are seen from an Asian perspective and are thus applicable to women's experience. This contextual model of 'God of Land' attempts to retrieve the meaning of the divine Trinity through a new interpretive method for the Christian Triune God, reconstructed by an eco-feminist theological standpoint, and Feng Shui cosmology. The second significance of this model is that it attempts to rename the Triune God through female symbols and metaphors, which can best serve women and nature from the eco-feminist view of Feng Shui cosmology. Thirdly, the dissertation uses 'Land' (nature) for suggesting a model of the Divine

that is not a traditional 'father figure' God, but is a 'mother figure' of the 'God of Land' as perceived from nature, which is inherently female and impersonal. Lastly, 'God of Land' is a more comprehensive, monistic, and cosmological eco-feminist model, based on the principles of yin and yang, Chi, and the concept of ChunJiln. In this way, this 'God of Land' model has a significance that goes beyond a Christian understanding of God, which is exclusive and transcendent. This model will enrich a holistic understanding of the Christian faith from an Asian perspective and context, by offering new theological insights.

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