

Power and Life in the Context of Globalization:

A Biblical and Theological Perspective

Yong-Bok Kim

We gather here as young theologians from Africa, Asia, Pacific, The Caribbean and Latin America (AAPACALA). This creates a fresh and special space for ecumenical theological reflection.

As we reflect upon the question of power we realize that it is a grave question for the whole inhabited earth. The overall question is directly related to the reality of the power of the Empire, which we would name clearly Pax Americana. Our immediate theological task is to look at this reality in a biblical perspective.

The Empire is the “Kairotic” context in which we are to read the text and the Bible.

The Imperial Trajectory in the Bible

The imperial trajectory in the Bible consists of the series of reigns by Egypt, Babylon, Assyria, Macedonia, and Rome. The struggles of the biblical people of God are for liberation from the imperial powers. The Exodus and the Mosaic trajectory is the primary and paradigmatic context in which the powers are to be understood. The trajectory of power in the Bible is manifold and complex. In the Bible the trajectory of the empire contains the trajectory of the political power of the nation state (kingdom) and the trajectory of social power, which is the trajectory of local community. The Exodus struggle is to set up the covenant community. The Davidic rule and the prophetic struggles are to establish God’s justice in the political community (kingdom). Some of the prophets directly witness against the imperial powers to the justice, peace and life of God. In this case the apocalyptic discourse emerges as the language of justice and peace in the cosmic trajectory.

1. Paradigm of the Empire as the Context of Jesus Ministry

For our task we focus on Jesus under the Roman Empire, that is, Pax Romana. Jesus’ attitude to the Roman Empire is very clear and without ambiguity. Our key text which underlines the position of Jesus is as follows:

Jesus called them to him, and saith unto them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them. (Mark 10:42 KJV) / So Jesus called them and said to them, “You know that among the Gentiles those whom they recognize as their rulers lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them.” (NRSV)

And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all (Mark 10:44 KJV) / Whoever wants to be first must be last

of all and servant of all. (NRSV)¹

Here is a clear definition from Jesus about the power and authority of the Gentiles, including the Roman Empire. The political order in his Reign is sharply contrasted with that of the Empire. The tyrants' authority over the people is sharply contrasted with the servanthood which serves all. This new order is the order of the upside down and the downside up. This is the primary paradigm in which we are seeking to understand the power question.

Jesus against the Roman Empire

The context of the Roman Empire defines and determines the shape of Jesus' life and ministry, even the meaning of Jesus' faith in God. The centrality of the Kingdom of God in his teaching and praxis can only be truly understood against the background of Roman domination².

Jesus' Birth under the Regime of the Roman Empire

Matthew depicts that Jesus was born under the regime of King Herod, who was appointed by the Roman Senate (B.C. 40). Herod massacred the infants of Bethlehem to kill the infant Jesus, who was regarded as a challenge to the Roman regime. Jesus was under the constant threat of Herod (Luke 13:31). Also Luke explicitly marks Jesus' birth under the regime of Caesar Augustus. The census and registration for imperial taxation was the context of Jesus' birth. His birthplace was depicted as Bethlehem, the city of David (Luke 2)³ Jesus' birth specifically him put against the backdrop of the rule of Caesar Augustus⁴ and his so-called Pax Romana, and against the census for the imposition of taxes payable to the Emperor. The purpose of the census was to determine the number of people who were obliged to pay the tax.

But Jesus' birth meant a Messianic rule. Chris Ferguson states⁵ "The message was: 'Do not be afraid, for see I am bringing you good news of great joy for all people. To you is born this day in the city of David, a savior, the messiah, the Lord...then suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: Glory to God in the highest heaven and on earth Peace, good will among all people.'"

Here Pax Jesus stands in stark contrast to Pax Romana. The two are incompatible ... one is a false peace only of benefit to the powerful and the privileged at the expense of the poor, vulnerable and oppressed. The other Peace of God through Christ is for all people and comes especially from below represented by a poor and vulnerable peasant child and revealed to homeless shepherds.⁶

¹ Text contains references to Philippians chapter 2, etc.

² Richard A. Horsley, *Jesus and Empire: The Kingdom of God and the New World Disorder* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress Press, 2002)

³ "When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the wise men." (Matthew 2:16 NRSV)

⁴ Tacitus famously quotes a Caledonian chieftain: "The Romans are the plunders of the world...if the enemy is rich, they are rapacious, if poor they lust for dominion...they rob, pillage and call it Empire and where they make a desolation they call it peace."

⁵ It was presented at the WARC London Colney Forum, 2004.

⁶ Tamez, Horsley.

Jesus and Tax to Caesar

Roman tax was regarded as a question of allegiance to God or to Caesar. For Jesus, Roman tax was not a simple question of administration, but a matter of faith in God against the Emperor, who claims to be a god.

“Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not?” But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, “Why are you putting me to the test, you hypocrites? Show me the coin used for the tax.” And they brought him a denarius. Then he said to them, “Whose head is this, and whose title?” They answered, “The emperor’s.” Then he said to them, “Give therefore to the emperor the things that are the emperor’s, and to God the things that are God’s.” (Matthew 22:17-21 NRSV)

Jesus stood in the tradition of Galileans who resisted the paying of tribute to the emperor. In paying tribute to Caesar at least the following intertwined issues were at stake:

Tribute paid to Rome meant an explicit acknowledgement of the emperor as a god. It explicitly accepted Roman political domination. The tax, based on the head or poll tax (not based on production or land use), acknowledged the emperor’s claim to own their beings.

Jesus was challenged with a question of whether one should pay the tax to the Roman Caesar. The question was to entrap Jesus. Those that came to Jesus knew full well the answer to the question, “is it lawful” to pay taxes. It was a trap to put him in an explicit position of defying the Roman authority.

There was a contradiction between God’s rule and of tribute to Caesar. The graven image and titles like Lord and Saviour adorned the coin. This was against the prohibition of graven images. But Jesus went on to say, “Give to Caesar that which is Caesar’s and give to God that which is God’s.” Here he escaped the trap but made his point. His point was that paying the tax to Caesar, that is, submission to Caesar, would be a denial of God’s Reign.

Execution of the Rebel: Crucifixion of Jesus by the Roman Governor, Pontius Pilate.

This basic truth is revealed by the historic fact that Jesus was executed by the Roman Empire by crucifixion; a method of terror reserved for rebellious insurgents. Jesus was sentenced as a bandit, rebelling against the empire. He was sentenced as the King of the people.

The political collusion of Pilate and Herod was made to kill Jesus. Jesus was charged with committing treason against the empire, and accused with the words, “We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that he himself is Christ a King.” Jesus was charged with being a heretic to Judaism as well as being a rebel to the Roman Empire. But the fate of Jesus was decided by the power of the Roman Empire. The Roman execution of Jesus on the cross was in the name of his treason against the Empire.

Jesus Movement Against the Rule of the Roman Empire

In this context of the Roman Empire, the Jesus movement of the Kingdom of God was the practice of the Jubilee. His prayer was for debt cancellation and his announcement was of the movement of the Jubilee. This Jubilee was an expression of the Covenant Code in the context of the political and economic domination by the powers. This was the continuation and succession of the Exodus tradition and

prophetic tradition. This was the Messianic vision, expressed in Isaiah and St. Luke: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised” (Luke 4:18)

His feeding of thousands and his healing of the sick and the whole of his ministry is the movement of the Reign of God for life, which is against the reign of the Roman Empire.

Horsley has lifted up the Sermon on the Mount as the “Jubilee movement”. In the Sermon on the Mount we see solidarity and compassion, taking sides with the poor and oppressed, with children, and with women.

It is very clear that Jesus stood in the context of the domination of the Roman Empire, and his birth, ministry and death are directed against the Roman Empire for the Reign of God, which gives whole life in fullness.

Power of Jesus against the Power of the Roman Empire

For the present situation of the empire, the power of Jesus against the power of the Roman Empire is the key to understand the power of the empire today.

The *exousia* (authority) of Jesus is not the same as the religious power of pharisees, high priests and the Roman Empire. We are seeking to discern the nature of the power of Jesus in the Bible and today. This is what I have named ***doularchy*** (*doulos+arche*). It is a polity of servanthood. It is a mutual servanthood to raise each other up as the sovereign subject. The Servanthood and the Subjecthood are an intertwined reality. Here the servanthood overcomes the subjugation by the dominant power.

The geopolitical orbit of the Jesus movement is twofold: one part is the geopolitics of Galilee against Rome, of the margin to the centre of the power. Jesus’ geopolitical perspective is from Galilee to Rome. The other part is the geopolitics of kairos in which time and space are determined. It is the geopolitics of the Reign of God. The Reign of God transforms imperial geopolitics.

Doularchy (Servanthood) as the Power of Jesus against the Empire

In the context of globalization and the empire of the present age we are seeking to understand the power of Jesus. Let us look into the biblical world in a broad stroke.

I. “Political” Biography in the Bible

The stories of the Hebrews under the imperial rule of pharaoh are told and retold as a paradigmatic expression of the political social biography of the people. The stories of the *minjung* under the Davidic reign appear in the Bible as illustrated by the story of Naboth and his vineyard. The story of the Suffering Servant under the Babylonian Empire appears in the Servant Song of Isaiah 53. The stories of the Crucified One under the Roman Empire and many other crucified ones are also political biographies of the *minjung*, which expose the unjust despotic, imperial regimes led by the principalities and powers.

II. The Biblical Paradigm of Dominant Power

The nature of the despotic and imperial powers is described throughout the books of the Bible in the stories of the Egyptian, Babylonian, Assyrian, Greek and Roman empires and small kingdoms in the Ancient Near East. The nature of power is very well expressed in Samuel's opposition to the establishment of a kingship for the people of Israel in 1 Samuel 8:10-18:

He said, "These will be the ways of the king who will reign over you: he will take your sons and appoint them to his chariots and to be his horsemen, and to run before his chariots; and he will appoint for himself commanders of thousands and commanders of fifties, and some to plow his ground and to reap his harvest, and to make his implements of war and the equipment of his chariots. He will take your daughters to be perfumers and cooks and bakers. He will take the best of your fields and vineyards and olive orchards and give them to his servants. He will take the tenth of your grain and of your vineyards and give it to his officers and to his servants. He will take your menservants and maidservants, and the best of your cattle and your asses, and put them to his work. He will take the tenth of your flocks, and you shall be his slaves. And in that day you will cry out because of your king, whom you have chosen for yourselves; but the Lord will not answer you in that day."

The socio-economic slavery, military regimentation, "official robbery", and negation of the just rule of Yahweh are some of the manifestations of the *arche* of *despotai* (despotic rule). The fundamental character of the despotic rule is that the ruler is the legislator and therefore above the law. This is extended to the point that the king becomes an absolute authority, a religious deity. It is very clear that the biblical rulers used religious trappings to absolutise their authority. Even the Davidic monarchy, as in the cases of King Solomon and King Ahab, used religious institutions and trappings to justify their arbitrary actions and rules.

The political power (*exousiai* = authority and force, principalities and powers) of the pharaohs, emperors, and caesars of the Egyptian, Babylonian, Assyrian, Greek and Roman empires assumed a divine status in order to absolutise their authority and power. Wittfogel calls this oriental despotism, which has the distinct political economy of the hydraulic civilization. T. Van Leeuwen calls it ontocracy. The point is that the political authorities of these empires are regarded to be divine. This makes them the legislators, and since the laws are the very expression of their will, they are above the laws and are bound to none. Their authority is hierarchical, despotic and authoritarian. Baalism in the Old Testament is a similar despotic polity; and for this reasons the prophets attacked it fiercely, as it crept into the Davidic monarchy. The monarchs of the Davidic kingdoms were constantly subjected to the pressures and temptations by the despotic rules of the empires and kingdoms surrounding the people of Israel (1 Kings 21:1-15).

The political authority of *arche* in the Bible is expressed in various forms of hierarchy, patriarchy, monarchy, *basilei* (regime), *despotai* (despotism), pharaoh, caesar, *kurios*, baal (lord), and finally *diabolos* (devil or satan). *Diabolos* is the Prince of the World, self-appointed ruler of the world to injure the people and cause their death. *Diabolos* is the rule over the whole world, directly resisting God and God's sovereign rule. This is the ultimate denial of God; and when humans obey the *diabolos*, they are resisting God. Biblically and historically, God and *diabolos* cannot co-exist in the world.

When the earthly authorities do not recognize the sovereignty of God, the powers become sovereign

by themselves, and thus ultimately deny the sovereignty of the *minjung* and *saengmyung*, suppressing and subjugating them.

III. The Sovereignty of the Minjung under Douarchy

The reign of *doulos* in *oikos tou theou* is the conclusive theme in the Bible.⁷

“If any one would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all” (Mark 9:35).

This is our key text for the notion of the douarchy. This is the political economy (*oikos*) of God in which Jesus Christ has fulfilled the servanthood to serve all, that is, to raise them up as the subjects of life against the dominant, oppressive and destructive power of the empire in the global market..

Phases of Douarchy in the Bible

Phase I

The Covenant declares the slaves to be the subjects of liberation in the story of the Exodus. The sovereignty of Yahweh is the denial of the sovereignty of pharaoh against Yahweh and over the Hebrews, thus opening a historical space for the sovereignty of the *minjung* and *saengmyung*. The meaning of the Covenant is that God has established a relationship of partnership with the slaves and all creation in God's sovereign rule. Thus, the event of the Exodus is an original paradigm of the political economy of God, in which the servants are lords and subjects.

The Covenant Code in the tribal confederacy is a conjugation of the Exodus *douarchy* paradigm. In the tribal communities in the Palestine area after the Exodus there had continued the reproduction of the slave-based productive relations. In this situation the sovereign rule of God is expressed in the form of the Covenant Code, especially in the Sabbath laws (Exodus 21:1-33:33).

Now these are the ordinances which you shall set before them. When you buy a Hebrew slave, he shall serve six years, and in the seventh he shall go out free, for nothing. If he comes in single, he shall go out single; if he comes in married, then his wife shall go out with him. If his master gives him a wife and she bears him sons or daughters, the wife and her children shall be her master's and he shall go out alone. But if the slave plainly says, 'I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free,' then his master shall bring him to God, and he shall bring him to the door or the doorpost; and his master shall bore his ear through with an awl; and he shall serve him for life. When a man sells his daughter as a slave, she shall not go out as the male slaves do. If she does not please her master, who has designated her for himself, then he shall let her be redeemed; he shall have no right to sell her to a foreign people, since he has dealt faithlessly with her. If he designates her for his son, he shall deal with her as with a daughter. If he takes another wife to himself, he shall not diminish her food, her clothing, or her marital rights. And if he does not do these three things for her, she shall go out for nothing, without payment of money (Exodus 21:1-11).

In this Covenant Code the slave is transformed into someone who has “rights” over the master. In fact, in the productive relations of slavery, it is the role of the slaves which undergirds the status of the master,

⁷ “And Jesus called them to him and said to them, ‘You know that those who are supposed to rule over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. But it shall not be so among you; but whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For the Son of man also came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many’”. (Mark 10: 42-45)

functionally speaking.

Phase II

In the Davidic monarchy under the Covenant Code the reign is legitimated on the basis of the Covenant Code. This means that the rights of the slaves will be protected and the rule of God's justice will be established. The prophetic movement against the powers and principalities is fundamentally towards the order of *doularchy* where the powerless, the weak and the slaves are the partners of God, participating in the Reign of God.

The historically existing paradigm of power, such as despotic monarchy, was to subjugate the people and to rule over them. The Davidic covenant demanded that the king be under the Covenant Code in which the slaves are to be liberated and should be protected. That is, the institution of the king existed to serve the people in covenant with the (elders of the) people (2 Samuel 5:1-3). If the king were established according to the model of the despotic ruler, the people would be turned into slaves (1 Samuel 8:10-18). Here the king becomes the servant of God; and the king is to serve the people, who is the partner of God in the covenant. At the same time the king is doubly in covenant with God and with the people of God. The reason for the existence of the king is to implement the Covenant Code, which is the order of the Exodus.

When this order of reign was disturbed by "despotic rule", the prophets resisted against the kings. The first king who was challenged on this ground was King David himself, when he took Bathsheba, killing her husband Uriah (2 Samuel 12:1-15).

Typical of the despotic kings was Ahab, against whom the prophet Elijah rose up to defend people like Naboth (1 King 21:1-29). The model king was described as one who was faithful to the covenant with God and with the people (2 Kings 23:1-3).

Phase III

The *Ebed Yaweh* under the imperial rule of Babylon is envisioned as the king of the peoples of God. The Suffering Servant appears on the scene who would reveal the Justice (of God) to all nations and who would establish peace. The suppressed nation as the corporate subject of the Suffering Servant provided the form of political identity, which would bring about the Messianic Reign of Shalom in which the suffering *minjung* and *saengmyung* would be vindicated (Isaiah 50:4-9). This does not mean that the Suffering Servant would become a despotic ruler. It means that the oppressive rule will end and it will be replaced by the rule of the Shepherd, who gives his life for the sheep (Ezekiel 34).

It is depicted by the prophet Isaiah as the suffering servanthood.

"Who has believed what we have heard? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? For he grew up before him like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground; he had no form or comeliness that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him. He was despised and rejected by men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that made us whole, and with his stripes we are healed. All we like

sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation, who considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people? And they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth. Yet it was the will of the Lord to bruise him; he has put him to grief; when he makes himself an offering for sin, he shall see his offspring, he shall prolong his days; the will of the Lord shall prosper in his hand; he shall see the fruit of the travail of his soul and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous; and he shall bear their iniquities.” (Is. 53:1-11)

Phase IV

When Jesus described himself as the “*doulos* or *diakonos* of all”, it was against the worldly political order of the Roman Empire and against the political order of hierarchy, even in the mind of his disciples. Jesus’ reference is to the Suffering Servant and to the Shepherd, who serves and dies for the sheep (Mark 9:35; Mark 10: 42-45).

Jesus’ practice of servanthood in John 13:1-20 (Jesus washing the disciples’ feet) is to establish the *doularchy* directly and personally in the midst of the community of the people of God. Therefore Jesus took the form of the servant, as it is expressed in Philippians 2:7 (*morphe doulou*).

Thus Jesus’ *doularchy* is a direct transgression of the Roman political economy of the slavery and the Roman *exousia* of the caesar; his *doularchy* is being the servant of all, against all oppressive politics; and his *doularchy* is to make all people and *minjung* and *saengmyung* the sovereign partners of God in the Messianic Reign. In the *doularchy*, politics means making the *minjung* and *saengmyung* the political subjects.

Phase V

Participation under *doularchy* in common bond is the connection between *koinonia* and *diakonia*. *Doularchy* and *koinonia* (bond) are closely connected: the *minjung* and *saengmyung* in corporate bond become subjects to serve each other so that they become sovereigns and sovereign servants. In Galatians 5:13 “Serve each other through *agape*” is the order of the one body in Christ in inter-linking faithfulness (covenant) (Gal. 3:26-29). Thus ecclesial order is the paradigmatic manifestation of the Jesus *doularchy* in the political order of humankind, including the Roman Empire.

The Present Reality of Power is the Empire in the Context of Globalization

Power has been the perennial problem in human history. The reality of power is complex; it is multidimensional; and its use and misuse in all human, social and political relations and interactions has been a question of utmost importance for all peoples and their communities. In movements for liberation from oppression, the question has been always raised not only in terms of use or misuse, but also in terms of the very nature of power.

Power is a relationship, structural and functional, between all living beings in and between their

communities and their groups. In this sense questioning the power realities is a fundamental task in liberation movements and in sustaining life on earth.

Today global power politics is the central question for our reflection as well as all dimensions of power. Politically speaking, globalization with the breakdown of socialist states, the crisis of modern liberal nation states, and upheavals in traditional or semi-traditional despotic and authoritarian states, raises new questions about power. The nation state structures are to be questioned radically, for they are the basic unit of the structures of the political powers that have been most powerful.

The global market agencies, such as transnational corporations, are emerging as the most powerful agencies of power and determine global power structures and power relations on a global scale. These agencies supercede nation states in power terms. As human history begins the 21st century, the reality of power is being formed in the context of the global market. The political economy of such a market is sustained by the new global power configuration. It takes the emerging form of the empire on the global scene.

This demands a radical reorientation of ecumenical thinking. It should form a perspective from Galilee to Rome.

In the post Cold War situation and the post-modernization process, the breakdown of modern social philosophies and political ideologies, as well as traditional social thoughts, opened the door to great confusion in social thinking among Asian peoples and to a lack of clear ecumenical theological direction in Christian communities; but at the same time it has opened a new era of creative and active social thinking in ecumenical movements and social movements around the world. This demands fresh initiatives in theological and social thinking for the ecumenical query on the question of power.

Signs of the Times: Fundamental Trends and Changes on Earth

The world has become one global market. All life on earth is now condemned to the global market. They say that there is no realistic option for life outside of the market, whatever it is and however it operates. While socialism existed, this was not the situation. Today, the neo-liberal market has become an absolute reality, although some question whether this is the case, at least, in theoretical terms. This globalization has profound implications for the peoples and all life on earth. Power in the global market is manifested in the form of transnational corporations and global economic political regimes such as the IMF, World Bank, and World Trade Organization and their sub structures.

The corporate economic entities are claiming to be the most “creative and efficient” technocracy and, therefore, most powerful, controlling modern science and technology as well as information and communication in the global market and seeking to knock down all cultural, national or political barriers in order to open highways for their market plays. What are unique in this market globalization are the Asian socialist countries, which have also embraced the market economy or are in the process of doing so. They call it the “socialist market economy”. It is not yet clear what this means for Asian people. What is clear is that these socialist market economies are also growing very rapidly.

The people are undergoing an economic victimization which deepens the gap between the rich and the

poor—*minjung*, poor communities and consumers—due to absolute and limitless growth and competition in the neo-liberal global market which is dominated by the mammonism of the giant corporate entities and is led by the global financial corporate powers. The financial victimization of the people will be noiseless and bloodless but extremely destructive. Natural life, human persons, the hungry, the poor and even the not-so-poor middle class people, together with relatively weak economic agencies, will be powerless economic losers in the globally competitive market.

National economic security nets of self-reliance and protection, wherever they exist, are rapidly eroded in the name of the open market, as the weak economic agencies in every nation are exposed to the market plays of the globally powerful economic agencies. Structural adjustment programs are forced upon the national economies by the global regimes of market. The traditional communities are likewise more vulnerable under the pressures of the global market forces, which are destroying life everywhere. This is paradoxically taking place in the midst of global economic growth and technological advancement.

In this global context the people must take initiatives for economic justice, for direct participation and intervention in the market process, and for economic actions for sustainable life.

2. The geo-political change and concomitant market globalization have brought about the fusion of the local, national, global and cosmic (natural) horizons. All persons or communities and corporate entities must deal with the new multi-dimensionally fused horizons. One must simultaneously think and act locally, nationally and globally, realizing that a local action will have effect not only on the local level, but also on the national, global and cosmic levels. In addition, issues of life and relations among people, groups and communities are affected by these fused horizons on all levels.

In this new nexus of relations, the global geo-politics are determined by the global military hegemony of the empire. The empire seeks to secure the global market through its global military strategy with the omniscient wars and its monopolar formation of hegemonic domination. The US War on Terror is a global war without any limits and is a manifestation of the global domination of the empire. There is an emerging convergence of the global marketization and global geo-politics, which is unparalleled.

The common security of life is being dismantled and subjugated to the jungle of the globalized market, exposing the people to economic, social, political, cultural, ecological and spiritual violence. Life will no longer be secure; and it is vulnerable to the violent conflicts and confrontations produced by limitless competition. This violent process is permeating the relations among international and political powers, social classes and cultural groups, national and ethnic groups, caste and religious communities, making it very hard to bring about peaceful resolution of conflicts and disputes among the struggling parties and eroding the foundations of peaceful life.

There has been a tendency for the peace question to be reduced merely to the reduction or elimination of violent military confrontations among nation states and political groups; but now it is the question of securing the common life of all living things on earth. The question of peace and security over against violence is to be understood on the economic, cultural, ecological and spiritual levels as well as on the social and political levels.

3. In the context of the globalization process nation states are being subjugated to the empire and to

the power of the global market. The democratic dimension of national sovereignty is dramatically eroded and subverted in the global regime of the global market and the empire.

The symbiotic centers of the power nexus, controlled by the hegemonic power and neo-liberal global market, have shifted substantially from the nation state structures to the global corporate entities, deeply affecting the life of the people, and their communities. Democracy is understood and advocated to create conditions for a free market both in the national and international levels of governance.

In response, people are seeking various forms of participatory or direct democracy as a framework in which they can participate directly and form multilateral and multi-dimensional solidarity linkages for creative interventions in the global market process. This means that the people's sovereignty (participation) is being organized locally to respond to the global dynamics of the world market as well as to the national dynamics of powers and principalities. The people seek to participate directly and immediately, bypassing the ambiguous political mediation of the nation states.

Life contains a politically living subject as its core. It cannot be reduced to a passive object. The global market with its "neo-liberal" developments has weakened the liberal democratic subjecthood of individual persons, powerless groups such as racial and ethnic minorities, and local communities. The people as participating agents in the political process succumb to the syndrome of apathy, hopelessness, and de-capacitation, and the national democratic states are weakened. This political victimization goes beyond suppression of the political subjecthood of the people, to weaken the participatory process at the global level, taking away national and community protections of political subjecthood.

4. Socio-political relations in the globalized market are not merely structural but also dynamically relational; and therefore, contradictions and conflicts in the global market are dynamically relational. Likewise, conflict and contradictory power relations characterize the struggles, negotiations and cooperation and even solidarity among peoples in the global market across classes, castes, races, genders and all other contradictory camps among groups, communities and ecosystems. The social doctrines of the survival of the fittest and of unlimited competition have made contradictions infinitely complex and intensively violent.

5. Globalization enforces cultural one-dimensionalization or homogenization, undermining the cultural identity and richness of the peoples and communities. Electronic information and communication and order, with its hi-tech multimedia are a dominant feature of the global market. Its value-added network of communication and information enforces and accelerates the market dynamics in the life of the people. Human subjectivity as the participatory agency of life in all its dimensions is subjugated under this new post-industrial global information order. This may be named as colonization of consciousness. The aesthetic world of beauty and spiritual world of mystery is destroyed by the commercialization and commodification of cultural heritages and creation. The market dominates the cultural powers.

The global market process is strongly supported by the cultural process of communication and information through hi-tech multimedia. The victimization of life is being advanced culturally on the levels of spirituality, consciousness, perceptions and senses. The multimedia, directed by the corporate powers and agencies of the global market, subjugate cultural subjecthood, cultural values, lifestyles,

perceptions of beauty and religious mystery, as well as ethnic national identities of persons and communities to the market's cultural wasteland. The arena of our consciousness and perceptions has become the battleground between the forces of life and anti-life. This is truly a "cultural war." The exploitation by the market of post-modernistic sensibilities, especially those emerging among the young generations, is a good illustration. The consciousness itself is being subjugated and "colonized" by the empire and the global market.

6. Globalization affects world religions in a negative way, causing religious fundamentalism as they react to the culture of the greedy market. Empire misuses religions for its power. Global market exploits religious and cultural rituals for propagation of market values and advertisement. The market subverts religion, and it becomes symbiotic with the powers of capital. It creates mammonism, which is the religion of the market.

The global market powers will battle against the people's religious communities and spiritual powers, sapping their spiritual strength and promoting spiritual wilderness and wasteland where souls and spirits will be broken and people's spiritual sources of life will be lost. Religious revivals and the emergence of new religions must be seen in this context of spiritual victimization of the people. Religious communities, it is our hope, will emerge as counter-veiling centers of life, giving identity, values and meaning. Initially they will feel the crisis posed by the global market, but world religions will be great reservoirs of spiritual energy for the life and struggle of the people.

7. The market globalization process has engaged the vitality of life and the power of death in bitter contest, as the garden and oasis of life is being turned into a jungle and desert of destruction. The global market penetrates the microcosmic world through biotechnology and its industry. Biotech industry modifies, manipulates and controls the micro-cosmic world as well as polluting and degrading the biosphere of life.

Hitherto the Western industrial culture has dictated the relations between life in nature and life in human society, both capitalist and socialist. Now it is the dynamics of the global market that will dominate these relations. The culture of the globalized market is neither life-preserving nor life-enhancing. Its limitless competition upholds the logic of the survival of the fittest and the strongest. The market will allow the winners to dominate the losers, and life will be the ultimate loser, becoming deprived of its spiritual foundation as well as its natural base due to the arbitrary contradiction between the natural and the spiritual imposed by the global market.

A Concluding Word⁸

The empire claims universal and absolute authority over all beings in the cosmos. It does not tolerate any authority which challenges the empire. It claims that its head is a god and the empire is the body of the god. It is religious and spiritual. The empire enslaves all beings. The empire makes all powers as servants and vassal under its authority.

Against this empire, God's sovereignty is for the sovereignty of the *minjung* and *saengmyung*, debunking the *arche* of the imperial *diabolos*. Power does not have any independent ontological status; it is non-being. Only the *minjung* and *saengmyung* can erect the authority to rule; the *minjung* and *saengmyung* are sovereigns; and the *arche* is *doulos*. *Doulos* makes *arche* (servant makes master). The *doulos* are in common bond to establish true *exousia*.

What is the polity of feminist politics? What is the polity of liberation politics in the belly of the empire? How should the theologies of liberation seek a common political order in this 21st century?

The *doularchy* of Jesus makes the *minjung* and all living beings as subjects of their life. This is the being and ministry of Jesus against the empire. In Jesus, faith in God the Creator creates life as subjects, and makes all living beings partners of covenant, which means the bond of justice, peace, love and life.

The political economy of the *minjung* is mutual servanthood and a mutual bond (community) that makes them sovereign, and turns *doulos* into *arche*: *doularche*, which guarantees the *minjung*'s participation as sovereign-in-bond (covenant). This is radically different from social contract theories. *Doularchy* in 21st century politics should mean that the *minjung* and *saengmyung* become a

⁸ "These will be the ways of the king who will reign over you: he will take your sons and appoint them to his chariots and to be his horsemen, and to run before his chariots; and he will appoint for himself commanders of thousands and commanders of fifties, and some to plow his ground and to reap his harvest, and to make his implements of war and the equipment of his chariots. He will take your daughters to be perfumers and cooks and bakers. He will take the best of your fields and vineyards and olive orchards and give them to his servants. He will take the tenth of your grain and of your vineyards and give it to his officers and to his servants. He will take your menservants and maidservants, and the best of your cattle and your asses, and put them to his work. He will take the tenth of your flocks, and you shall be his slaves. And in that day you will cry out because of your king, whom you have chosen for yourselves; but the Lord will not answer you in that day." (1 Sam 8:11-17)

"Now Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard in Jezreel, beside the palace of Ahab king of Samaria. And after this Ahab said to Naboth, 'Give me your vineyard, that I may have it for a vegetable garden, because it is near my house; and I will give you a better vineyard for it; or, if it seems good to you, I will give you its value in money.' But Naboth said to Ahab, 'The Lord forbid that I should give you the inheritance of my fathers.' And Jezebel his wife said to him, 'Do you now govern Israel? Arise, and eat bread, and let your heart be cheerful; I will give you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite.' So she wrote letters in Ahab's name and sealed them with his seal, and she sent the letters to the elders and the nobles who dwelt with Naboth in his city. And she wrote in the letters, 'Proclaim a fast, and set Naboth on high among the people; and set two base fellows opposite him, and let them bring a charge against him, saying, 'You have cursed God and the king.' Then take him out, and stone him to death.' And the men of his city, the elders and the nobles who dwelt in his city, did as Jezebel had sent word to them. As it was written in the letters which she had sent to them, they proclaimed a fast, and set Naboth on high among the people. And the two base fellows came in and sat opposite him; and the base fellows brought a charge against Naboth, in the presence of the people, saying, 'Naboth cursed God and the king.' So they took him outside the city, and stoned him to death with stones. Then they sent to Jezebel, saying, 'Naboth has been stoned; he is dead.' As soon as Jezebel heard that Naboth had been stoned and was dead, Jezebel said to Ahab, 'Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give you for money; for Naboth is not alive, but dead.' (1 Kings 21:1-15)

comprehensive sovereign in the bond of servanthood, liberated and not enslaved, erect and not bowed down. This means direct participation in authority and politics by mutually serving community for the enhancement of all life; it means the covenant solidarity of all *minjung* and all living beings on the earth.

Minjung and all living beings have become the subject of the *oikonomia* (economy) of life. They are convivial subjects, living together for fullness of their life. They are peacemakers according to geopolitics of justice, overcoming the military hegemony of the empire. They are participants in the politics (*polis*) of life together in solidarity. When Jesus said, "I am the Good Shepherd," he speaks in the tradition of *doularchy* in Ezekiel 34 and 37, Psalm 23, Isaiah 53 as well as Exodus 21. The Good Shepherd gives his life for the sheep. Here the *arche* is transformed into *doularchy*. They are workers of justice in social, economic and political relations. They are creative subjects and artists who make beauty blossom, and they form cultural identities and values for meaning of life. Here all living beings find the locus of the feast of life. They are gardeners of life for conviviality. They are partners of God to whom they sing praise and whom they glorify forever. Their subjects cannot be eradicated by the powers that be even if it is the power of the empire.