Re-envisioning the Christian Mission between the Two Koreas Beyond the Construct of 'Self' and 'Other'

> "The 'savages' who inhabited these lands before the European invasion were possessed by Satan, and wholly devoid of any knowledge of God." (Justo Gonzalez 1992: 44)

I. Introduction

Since a ceasefire between the two Koreas was declared without an ensuing peace accord, the war has been both physically and psychologically prolonged for more than fifty years in the Korean Peninsula. Even though an armistice was signed, there has been no peace treaty or other final agreement between the two Koreas. Hence, the war has never ended in the Korean Peninsula. Recently, the tension between North and South Korea has even more escalated, as Pyongyang threatened to shut down the Kaesong Industrial Park run jointly by the two countries.[1] This threat came after North Korea had announced that it is in "state of war" with South Korea.[2]

While tension and hostility still remain and often become mounting, those who live in two Koreas had to endure estrangement and exclusion, taking the consequences in their lives that involve contradictions, gaps, and silences. The sense of resentment they feel well reverberates through the poet Ko Un, who is routinely mentioned as one of the frontrunners for the Nobel Prize in Literature.[3] In his poem, *Letter to the Tuman River*, Ko Un expresses his grievance about the suffering of the anonymous, diasporic people living in two Koreas:

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[1] See the recent news release at http://abcnews.go.com/International/north-korea-state-war-south-korea/story?id=18846180.

[2] Technically, the two Koreas are indeed in "state of war" since a peace treaty after the Korean War (1950-53) had never been signed.

[3] Ko Un has published more than 150 volumes of poetry, fiction, essays, translations, and drama, and has twice won the prestigious Korean Literature Prize. Andrew Motion, in his introduction to Ko Un's poetry collection, *First Person Sorrowful*, calls him "a major poet, who has absolutely compelling things to say about the entire history of South Korea, and equally engrossing things to say about his own exceptionally interesting life and sensibility." Ko Un, *First Person Sorrowful* (Tyne & Wear: Bloodaxe Books, 2012).

> My sister dear, one hundred times dear, ever dear sister, suppose that you die up there one day and I down here? But that's our people's life, age after age, that kind of hidden, nameless death.[4]

The death Ko Un describes for his sister and himself describes the common reality of Koreans who have gone through the chronic ordeals—as arbitrary as they could be.

In the presence of drastic social, economic, cultural formations and discourses, it is now imperative to re-envision Christian mission between the two Koreas that promotes the life and life-together beyond the strife and division. Peace and harmony must be restored, and communion and community reinstated. For this reason, in order to re-envision Christian mission between the two Koreas, this essay attempts to revisit a mission text beyond the current construct of 'self' and 'other'.

Christian mission as a divine mandate has long been considered as "religious"; however, according to cultural anthropologists, it also conveys significant social effects by making connections and relations through a synthesis of "self" and other". [5] Religious synthesis of this sort brought about the significant social consequences for both the indigenous and the foreign travelers through history and in the 19th century colonial era in particular. The Bible has been an indispensable resource in the mission as such. Particularly, the New Testament provides criteria and core themes for mission and encourages many Christian evangelists to travel fearlessly across cultures (e.g. Matt. 28:18-19). However, as the missionaries impose submission to their own conceptions of truth, mission often comes to coincide with colonialism.

Since the modern mission era, most discussions about the missional text have been concerned with its theological significance, how it relates to the 'salvation' history and what it represents in terms of the grand narrative of western Christianity. It is not insignificant that western appropriation of the text ratified scriptural sanction for colonial enterprises during the European territorial expansion. As such, the missional discourse has authorized traveling to, and entering into, the foreign lands,

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[4] Ko Un, *The Sound of My Waves: Selected Poems by Ko Un*. Trans. by Brother Anthony Kim (New York: Cornell University Press, 1993), 29.

[5] For brief summaries of the theories of synthesis, see David Levinson & Melvin Ember (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Cultural Anthropology*, Vol. 2, "Exchange," by Caroline S. Tauxe (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1996), 469-473.

making connection between mission and colonial expansion. This mission not only characterizes the travelers as superior, but also the natives as inferior, dangerous, ungodly, and helpless. In this respect, much of the significance of mission narratives comes from larger socio-historical contexts and its construct of 'self' and 'other'.

While retelling the mission narratives in the present, this essay attempts to reconstruct an alternative way of mission, especially between the two Koreas and describe its viable effects into the present drastic context. By way of foregrounding the life of people living in two Koreas, this essay will evaluate as well as analyze how a view of the mission text in the Gospel of Mark in particular relates to a specific geopolitical context in the Korean Peninsula.

The Gospel of Mark, along with other Gospels, was written to help the colonial subjects to learn the hard truth about their world and their mission. While Mark remains a manifesto for radical discipleship for its mission community, most commentaries on this theme are not persistent enough to investigate the effect that the Gospel has as discourse upon the readers or hearers in the past and/or in the present situation.[6] Much in the same way, the different kinds of features through which Mark affects readers are not much examined thus far, whether those features and their effects on readers are intentional or not, as Ched Myers states it:

> Too much of our biblical study remains strictly devotionalistic and often frankly superficial. Rather than a hermeneutics of suspicion we persist in a suspicion of hermeneutics. For some reason, it is acceptable to appeal to political analysis, ideological criticism, or sociological method in discerning the meaning of contemporary history, but not the meaning of scripture. In a word, we "read" contemporary history better than we "read" the Bible.[7]

Given Myer's point of view, I will propose "reading-across" as reading strategy that involves intercultural criticism, along with studies of the ethics of reading. According to Fernando Segovia, the process of intercultural criticism highlights "what it considers liberative and rejecting what it considers oppressive." In doing so, "it inserts the voice of the real reader, as constructed, into the discussion

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[6] Ched Myers, *Binding the Strong Man: A Political Reading of Mark's Story of Jesus* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1988), 11.
[7] *Ibid*., 12.

fully and unapologetically so. Criticism ceases to be a matter of recuperation and exhibition and becomes a matter of ethics and politics."[8]

These critical reflections will allow us open to constant questioning and re-visioning how the mission remains, yet to be unfolded between and beyond the Korea(s). For this overall project, I ground myself as a real reader, immersed in a specific historical, cultural, social, and geo-political location—that is East Asian global space.[9] From such a location, I will attempt to engage in dialogical imagination and engagement between the mission "within" the text and the mission "in front of" the text.[10]

II. Observing Christian Mission in Korea

At the dawning period of Christian missions in the then-one-united native Korea in the 19th century, the model of mission that dominated the scenes was the mission as "proclamation and witness to save souls."[11] This model of mission is historically related to the late 19th and early 20th century's revival movement in Western—mostly American—missionary countries. The agency in this mission is encouraged to cross the borders and proclaim, through words and deeds, the Good News of God's salvation to the heathens, converting them to the Christian religion (cf. Matthew 28:19-20, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations…teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.").[12]

Since the modern mission era, however, while not denying the necessity of witness, proclamation, and baptism, there emerged another model of mission that

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[8] Fernando F. Segovia, *Interpreting Beyond Borders* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 67.
[9] Indeed, there is no "pure" textual analysis apart from the context. All exegesis is socially situated.
[10] According to Daniel Patte, what is "within the text" is related to the questions, "What is the text?" and "How can it be described?". On the other hand, what is "in front of the text" is related to the question, "How does the text affect its readers?". Daniel Patte (eds.), The Gospel of Matthew: A Contextual Introduction for Group Study (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2003), see esp. 54-57.
[11] See "Mission, Theologies of" in Daniel Patte (eds.) in *The Cambridge Dictionary of Christianity*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 814-827.
[12] L. Sanneh indicates the notion of mission as "imperialism at prayer." *Translating the Message: The Missionary Impact on Culture* (New York: Orbis, 1989), 88.

arose from within native Korea. With the rise of Minjung Theology in the mid-1970s, Christian mission became grounded on the view that salvation (soteriological and beyond) has to be understood as consisting of the entire human existence.[13] Mission as such grew out of the struggles to embrace the holistic vision, which involves "preaching the Good News to the poor, releasing the captives, giving sight to the blind, letting the oppressed free, and proclaiming the favorable year of the Lord" (Luke 4:18-19). This particular mode of mission brought into play a profound reflection on mission as an occasion for the encounter in which believers face God as a mystery in all the multiple dimensions of human life—that is, social, political, economic, and cultural. With this overview, I turn to the missions in Korea in the colonial era in order to see how the early mission was unfolded.

In *Korea: The Land People and Customs* (1907), George H. Jones, the President of the Biblical Institute of Korea, prefaced his work by saying that he intends "to show the conditions amidst which the missionaries labor, by briefly describing the land, people, customs, and religious life of the Koreans."[14] He states that:

> There are more gods than people in Korea. The name of these spirits is legion. To the Korean mind they exist everywhere, in earth, in sky and sea...They abound, making sport of human destiny and driving man mad with fear.[15]

Here Jones, as the man from a civilized nation, identifies the Korean indigenous as the ones who live in darkness close to an evil, dangerous state.[16] For his observation, the evil spirits never stop abusing the destiny of a Korean:

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[13] In this regard, Richard Horsley notes that "because of the modern western separation of religion from political-economic life and institutions, the interrelationship of religion and power becomes obscure, thereby losing the focus of power operative through religion." "Religion and Other Products of Empire" in *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, Volume 71, Issue 1, March 2003, 15.

[14] George H. Jones, *Korea: The Land, People, and Customs* (New York: Eaton & Mains, 1907), 52.

[15] *Ibid*., 59. However, Jones later notes that "the results of mission work certainly seem to prove that they are pre-eminently a religious people, although, when we first arrived, their attitude toward their old system had led us to believe that they were lacking in religious sentiment. 99.

[16] The early missionary, L. H. Underwood states that "it must be acknowledged that all three of the Korean faiths, or better, superstitions or philosophies have accomplished very little in giving any real moral tone to the nation." *Fifteen Years among the Top-Knots* (Boston: American Tract Society, 1904), 95.

> They touch him at every point of his life, preside at his birth, follow him to the grave, and dance on it when he is buried…The very willingness of the Koreans to offer a costly service to pagan gods, becomes transformed into a free, unreserved, full-hearted love to God and service to their fellow-men.[17]

From his report, one may see that the mission serves to cultivate both the physical and mental space of the indigenous people. Jones's description of 'transformation' stands close to the view of his colleague, A. W. Wasson. He states in his mission report that:

> Christianity had entered Korea along with a great caravan of culture traits from the West…The purpose of the missionary is to bring about changes, those changes in the attitudes and institutions of a people which are necessary to that progressive enrichment of life which is commonly called the coming of the Kingdom of God.[18]

For Wasson, the mission brings about "change," and this change validates the position of the Western travelers as a divine appointment. A journey of this sort, however, often brings in military companionship. In another mission report by L.H. Underwood, *Fifteen Years among the Top-Knots* (1904), he states that:

> Thus should we march through the land like conquerors, instilling awe and terror in all hearts, and none who looked on this tableau would ever again dare assail a foreigner. Now this was of course exactly the impression that we wished to produce as missionaries! We pictured ourselves going about preaching the cross, with such an object lesson as this, trying to win the hearts of the people, while driving their compatriots before us in chains, and we enjoyed that vision hugely. It would hardly have been possible to have obtained the relief of our Koreans without the arrest of the criminals, several of whom were identified as notorious men, whose seizure was necessary to the peace and safety of the community.[19]

Ironically, when South Korea was governed by a military dictatorship in the latter part of the twentieth century, Christian mission has further combined itself with such discourses as anticommunism, modernization and globalization. Ched Myers points out in this regard that:

> In South Korea evangelists from the U.S.A. are subsidized by the military regime to sponsor revivals, preaching a middle-class, moralistic Christ, in favor of the

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[17] *Ibid*., 64.
[18] A. W. Wasson, *Church Growth in Korea* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Libraries, 1931), 50.
[19] *Ibid*., 95.

> socialization of the growing urban managerial class in the "capitalist miracle" of this Asian nation.[20]

For the mission that still unfolds, traveling and travelers are not neutral subject. The missional text in Mark's Gospel proves highly suggestive in this regard. It is now in order to turn to the story of the sea-crossing in Mark.

III. Re-envisioning the Missional Text from the Present

1. The Story of the Gerasene Maniac (Mark 4:35-5:20)

The story of the Gerasene Maniac in the Gospel of Mark consists of two episodes (Mark 4:35-41; 5:1-20). The first recounts a nature miracle involving the interaction of Jesus and the disciples, and the second relates to Jesus' mission as discovering distant lands and civilizing the native. The first story is relatively brief; yet its dramatic emphasis sheds a light on the next story of the Gerasene Maniac.

Before traveling to the other side of Galilee, Jesus invites his disciples to accompany him to cross the sea. When the storm arises, Jesus remains unconcerned and asleep, and the terrified disciples scream at their master, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" (Mark 4:38). Showing fear as such can be added to Mark's frequent characterization of the disciples as uncomprehending and unfaithful. At that moment, Jesus wakes and stills the storm (Mark 4:39).[21] Like the unclean spirit (Mark 1:25), the wind is rebuked and silenced, and the waters listen to Jesus.[22] The wind and sea was believed to be uncontrollable by humans, oftentimes viewed as deities. However, spirits or demons behind the scene cannot deny Jesus' location in the hierarchy of powers. The quelling of chaotic nature not only shows the divine power Jesus has, but also relates to his unlimited access to all the geographical spaces

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[20] Ched Myers, *Binding the Strong Man: A Political Reading of Mark's Story of Jesus* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1988), 21.

[21] Mary A. Tolbert notes that here "Jesus presents the two basic alternatives for human response, fear or faith." *Sowing the Gospel: Mark's World in Literary-Historical Perspective* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989), 166.

[22] Cf. Mark 5:36, "…Do not fear, only believe."

of the world.[23] The sea-crossing dramatizes a difficult, yet worthwhile travel from the southern "Jewish" to the northern "gentile" side. If the storm represents a chaos in between, the sea serves as a site of struggle to integrate two worlds together.[24]

Interestingly, upon arrival on the Gerasenes, Mark's Jesus encounters a man who is possessed by evil spirits:

> And when he had stepped out of the boat, immediately a man out of the tombs with an unclean spirit met him. He lived among the tombs; and no one could restrain him anymore, even with a chain; for he had often been restrained with shackles and chains, but the chains he wrenched apart, and the shackles he broke in pieces; and no one had the strength to subdue him. Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains he was always howling and bruising himself with stones. (Mark 5:2-5).

The man that exhibits deviant behavior and powers should be viewed as dangerous. However, this man immediately recognizes the authority Jesus has. Jesus is the "Son of the Most High God" (Mark 5:7). When he sees Jesus from a distance, he runs and bows down before him. The emphasis is, then, laid on Jesus' power to domesticate and control supernatural spirits. As he prostrates himself before Jesus, the legion of spirits that holds the man begs Jesus not to send them out of the country (Mark 5:10). The legion thereby acknowledges that Jesus is higher in the cosmic hierarchy that the demon(s). When Jesus demands it, the legion of demons obeys. By the command, Jesus "dismissed" them into the water (Mark 5:13). The entire change and transformation the maniac goes through shows that Jesus is indeed the traveler *par excellence.*

While the disciples are silent in the narrative, they are nevertheless present and traveling with his master. For the local residents, however, the drowning of a herd of pigs is a disruptive threat. The passage of Jesus and his companions brings consequences, and that frightens the local residents. In this respect, the commentators point out that the mission does not really exempt the Bible from imperial violence,

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[23] E. S. Malbon notes that Mark "presupposes the connotation of the sea as chaos, threat, danger … from the Hebrew scriptures." *Narrative Space and Mythic Meaning in Mark* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1986), 97.

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oftentimes a "costly" contact.[25] Indeed, the very settings, plots, and characters of the canonical text reflect the imperial power relations, associated with the mission. However, it is noteworthy that the same Bible also conveys the critique of its own values in its margin so that the readers ascertain another voice.[26] Without listening to this voice, the narrative of Jesus is only conceived as an exhortation to the ongoing mission, patterned after imperialism and colonialism.[27]

While the mission in the Gerasenes unfolds in a most drastic way in the sea and the land, the story of the Syrophoenician woman represents a quite different type of integration.

2. The Story of the Syrophoenician Woman (Mark 7:24-30)

The story of the Syrophoenician woman emerges as most peculiar with its discursive use of gender, place, and identity.[28] When Jesus goes away to the region of Tyre and enters a house, a woman whose little daughter has an unclean spirit immediately hears about Jesus. The non-Israelite woman seeks help from Jesus, the Israelite holy man. Thus, she comes and falls down at the feet of Jesus, begging him

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[25] See Michael Prior, *The Bible and Colonialism: A Moral Critique* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), esp. 264-286.

[26] In this regard, see Fernando Segovia's helpful questions for the Bible readers today: "How do the margins look at the world—a world dominated by Empire—and fashion life in such a world? How does the center regard and treat the margins in the lights of its own view of the 'world' and life in that world? What images and representations of the other-world arise from either side? How is history conceived and constructed by both sides? How is 'the other' regarded and represented?" F.F. Segovia, "Biblical Criticism and postcolonial studies," pp. 57, 171 in R. S. Sugirtharajah (ed.), *The Postcolonial Bible* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998). This kind of multi-layered questioning and investigating helps us to see alternative constructions that challenge our own convictions.

[27] R. S. Sugirtharajah notes that this colonial interpretation is "one-way from the agents of mission to those who are the objects of mission." "Biblical Studies after the Empire: From a Colonial to a Postcolonial Mode of Interpretation" in *The Postcolonial Bible* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 20; Concerning the object of mission, Carlos F. Cardoza-Orlandi also points out that "being the object of mission symbolized a religious and social location that assumed that my cultures were inferior and that multiple religious backgrounds were deficient. As one who has been missionized, one who has been the object of mission, I am expected to be grateful for the gospel transmitted, civilized by the education given…In other words, I was never expected to become a subject of mission." *Mission: An Essential Guide* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2002), 12.

[28] The colonial mission often employs the female gender to validate relationships of subordination and domination. Dube points out that "the use of female gender to describe the colonized serves to construct hierarchical geographical spaces, races, and cultures, but it also comes to legitimate the oppression of women in societies where these narratives are used." Musa Dube, "Reading for Decolonization" p. 57 in Musa W. Dube and Jeffrey, L Staley (eds.), *John and Postcolonialism: Travel, Space and Power* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002).

to heal her daughter (Mark 7:25; cf. 5:22f.). Prostrating oneself at the feet of another is the gesture of a client seeking a favor from a patron. Surprisingly, however, Jesus' response is that of a strong insult in the Mediterranean world. Jesus likens her to a dog: "Let the children be fed first, for it is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs" (7:27).[29]

In Israel, dogs are unclean animals. The language Jesus employs is, in fact, conveying her own state of estrangement from the Jews. She takes, however, the metaphor as such and turns it back over and against the 'gaps' and 'contradictions' she goes through: "Sir, even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs" (7:28). The woman's reply indicates unusual trust in Jesus. With the woman's response, Jesus instantly grants her request and heals the child: "He said to her, 'For saying that, you may go—the demon has left your daughter.' So she went home, found the child lying on the bed, and the demon gone" (7:29-30).[30]

Under the table, the non-Israelite, Syrophoenician woman reinstates her own agency. The table, in which she participates, turns into a site of communion between and beyond Jews and Gentiles. Probably, another example of this mode of encounter can be found in the Parable of the Prodigal Son in Luke's Gospel (Luke 15:11-32). After the return of the younger brother, the older son raises a sharp critique toward his father and denies entering the banquet:

> For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat…But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!" (Luke 15:29-30).

However, the father takes him back to the banquet in a most consoling and consistent manner: "Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found" (Luke 15:31-32). Following the father's call

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[29] cf. Matt. 7:6; "Do not give what is holy to dogs; and do not throw your pearls before swine, or they will trample them under foot and turn and maul you."

[30] Myers points out that Jesus grants her request, "not because of her faith but because of her argument" *Binding the Strong Man: A Political Reading of Mark's Story of Jesus* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1988), 204.

to the banquet and celebration, both the "prodigal" and the "disciplined" may enter a true experience of communion—that shapes and re-shapes the construct of "self" and "other". The encounter as such becomes a true experience of mission that one enters and in which one is moved by the Good News in the deepest part of her or his own existence.

This mode of mission totally frames who "I" am and who "you" are, so that "we" have a new life together as "us". The most "real" reality emerges therein and re-members human lives.[31] This mission cannot be divided or discriminatory; neither interested nor 'ideological'. It goes far beyond exclusive motivations of the subject-object relations; yet transforms "our" identities as a community between and beyond 'self' and 'other'. The point is not to proclaim a good news of morality and discipline in both Koreas, but rather to recognize the mission as an occasion of communion—specifically, the (comm)union that fosters a mutual, 'heteronomous' unity, such as 'hugging' and 'kissing' with the 'prodigal' son (cf. Luke 15:20). This holistic, sacramental/liturgical experience presents how mission has to be unfolded between and beyond the two Koreas.

IV. Conclusion: Re-envisioning Mission between and beyond the two Koreas

Mission as imbedded in colonizing power carries within it the force to combat all structures of the indigenous. This mission suggests a massive inclusion of race, lands, and gender, based on unequal relationships. Given the global experience of colonial mission and exploitation of the natives, however, we need to read and re-engage in Scripture and foster a new narrative of mission as a communion which fosters diversity.

When hostility mounts between the two Koreas, Christian mission should provide a venue for reconciliation—that is, a communion through which the two

[31] Sarah Coakley, "Kenosis and subversion," pp. 82-111 in Daphne Hampson (ed.), *Swallowing a Fishbone?* Feminist Theologians Debate Christianity (London: SPCK, 1996); Cristina Grenholm, *Motherhood and Love: Finding Space for Thought Beyond the Gendered Stereotypes of Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdsman, 2011); Daphne Hampson, "On Autonomy and Heteronomy" pp. 1-16 in Daphne Hampson (ed.) *Swallowing a Fishbone?* Feminist Theologians Debate Christianity (London: SPCK, 1996).

Koreas enter and share a true experience of transformation. Within and around the table, the people of God would meet their satisfaction to the fullest (Eph. 3:13, “Until all of us come to the unity of faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ”). This experience cannot be transmitted directly—because it is not an idea or doctrine that one can understand. People only experience it in a true experience of communion with the others. By engaging in mission as such and getting deeply connected to each other, the believers may reach the end of the war against the “axis of evil” in their midst.

Christian mission today inevitably becomes a comparative and dialogical practice, resists the drive toward stereotypical homogenization and abandons hierarchical biases and privileges. This mission, however, can never take place beyond perspective and contextualization. It also never misses the vision of the beyond. Christian mission should not be fixed in form, but is always changing, subject to reconstitution, or better transformation, because it is the outcome of present struggles and contests between and beyond ‘self’ and ‘other’.

Abstract

Since a ceasefire between the two Koreas was declared without an ensuing peace accord, the war has been both physically and psychologically prolonged for more than fifty years in the Korean Peninsula. Recently, the tension between North and South Korea has even more escalated, as Pyongyang threatened to shut down the Kaesong Industrial Park run jointly by the two countries. In the presence of drastic social, economic, cultural formations and discourses, it is now imperative to re-envision Christian mission between the two Koreas that promotes the life and life-together beyond the strife and division. Peace and harmony must be restored, and communion and community reinstated. For this reason, in order to re-envision Christian mission between the two Koreas, this essay attempts to revisit a mission text beyond the current construct of 'self' and 'other'. While retelling the mission narratives in the present, this essay reconstructs an alternative understanding of mission, especially between the two Koreas. By way of foregrounding the life of people living in two Koreas, this essay will evaluate as well as analyze how a view of the mission text in the Bible and in the Gospel of Mark in particular relates to a specific geopolitical context in the Korean Peninsula. The critical reflections as such will allow us open to constant questioning and re-visioning how the mission remains, yet to be unfolded between and beyond the Korea(s).

Key Words:
Missional Narrative, North Korea, Mission, Missionary

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