

LIBERATION AND HARMONY:

Toward Encounter of Minjung Theology and Process Theology¹

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Introduction

This paper is an attempt to dialogue Korean indigenous liberation theology, minjung theology² and process theology, mainly Whitehead's philosophy of organism. Minjung theology and process theology have commonalities and similarities, especially with respect to the concept of God. Despite their common interest in creative transformation of the existing social order, however, minjung theology and process theology had not been in dynamic interaction with each other. John B. Cobb, Jr., in his brief essay, points out that a contact between process theology and minjung theology may be mutually enriching.³ He holds that "[at] first glance, process theology's interest in metaphysics and cosmology seems far removed from minjung theology, but at deeper level the gap narrows."⁴ With the hope that "there may be elements in North American process theology that could prove helpful to minjung theologians",⁵ Cobb proposes a dynamic dialogue between both theologians.

Process theologians are occupied with solving broad metaphysical questions connected with the creation of a new-world relationship and too little concerned with the day-to-day problems of people in contemporary society. Minjung theologians, on the other hand, are so involved in the struggle for freedom and justice that they have effectively neglected the deeper theoretical implications of their praxis-orientation to theology. Hence creative dialogue between theses theological systems will help overcome these theological weaknesses.

In order to carry out the task for the dynamic dialogue between process theology and

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². The term *minjung* is translated in many different ways. But most of minjung theologians would agree that minjung are those who are politically oppressed, economically exploited, and socio-culturally discriminated against for a long time.

³. John B. Cobb, Jr. "Minjung theology and Process theology" in *An Emerging Theology in World Perspective*, ed., Jung Young Lee (Connecticut : Twenty-Third Publications Mystic, 1988), 51-56.

⁴. Ibid., 55.

⁵. Ibid., 55.

minjung theology, the section below deals with the concept of God in minjung theology. It is necessary briefly to describe the historical background of minjung theology in order to clearly understand the notion of God in minjung theology. This section also examines the concept of *han*, the pivotal theme of minjung theology in terms of how minjung suffering is concretely exhibited in Korean context. The section investigates the process of the resolution of *han* in terms of minjung theology, which is to be categorized in the two approaches. In so doing, I try to show that God in minjung theology is fundamentally relational, participatory, and immanent in minjung's suffering and hope. But this section points out the limitation of the concept of God in minjung theology and addresses that minjung theology should establish a metaphysical ground by encountering Whitehead's notion of God. The next section explores the concept of God in Whitehead's system. I will mainly focus on Whitehead's metaphysical discussion of non-temporal actual entity, God and His/Her relationship with the world. Final section concludes with brief comments on the perspective and promise of minjung theology in its relation to process theology.

The Character of Minjung Theology

This section begins with a brief survey of the historical background of minjung theology. Korean indigenous liberation theology, minjung theology, is a kind of political theology produced by Korean Christian's theological response and reflection upon Korean political context in 1970s. Thus, it is important to note that minjung theology is rooted in an historical setting. The context of minjung is in two major settings: First, the oppressive socio-political situation in Korea, and second, the rise of the human rights movement during military dictatorial regimes of 1970s.

The overall character of minjung theology can be summarized as follows: First, minjung theology grew out of Christian experience in the political struggle for justice and liberation. Minjung theology is an accumulation and articulation of theological reflections on political experiences of the oppressed people in which their suffering and agony, their aspirations and hopes, function as a critical theological foundation. Second, minjung theology is a political hermeneutics of the Gospel in conjunction with a political interpretation of the Korean Minjung experience. Minjung theology thus intends to provide the framework for a political theology of Korea and a socio-cultural biography of Christian *koinonia* in Korea. In this sense, in minjung theology, Korean Christians attempt to understand their mission and evangelization within their cultural and socio-political context. Minjung theologians advocate that a political hermeneutics of the gospel opens up an entirely new horizon, thus enabling us to look at the Korean Christian experience within a new framework. Third, minjung theology expands on an indigenous theology in the sense that it takes the suffering minjung in their concrete situations as the subjects of history, keeping in sight of the religio-cultural tradition. Fourth, minjung theology is a testimony

to the meeting of the minjung experience in Korean socio-cultural history. Therefore, minjung theologians try to discover Christian traditions in the minjung consciousness in Korean history, and, on the other, to illuminate Christian traditions by means of the minjung perspective. Minjung theologians draw the genealogy of minjung theology from the early history of Korean Christianity, and they hold that minjung theology was born out of the early experiences of Korean Christianity and in the political and social situation of the late 19th century. Minjung theology developed out of Korean Christians' intuitive and acute awareness of the essence of the Christian message as both political and religions, as good news and hope for liberation of the oppressed people. Therefore, an important point to note is how the historical experience of Korean Christians influences the formulation of minjung theology as a focal starting point of minjung theology.

As described above, minjung theology originated in the struggle of the minjung for political, economical, and social independence. Hence, it attempts to reinterpret the traditional Christian theology from the point of view of the minjung. In particular, minjung theology seeks to reconstruct the concept of God in terms of the minjung, which would be contrasted to the traditional Christian interpretation of God.

Minjung theology emphasizes the concept of God as participant in the praxis for overcoming the contradictions of the minjung's situation. God's action is related to the minjung's suffering and hope. In general, in the traditional Christian doctrine of the relationship between God and humanity, God, as subject, is emphasized and human beings denigrated as merely powerless objects. The gulf between God and human is bridged only by the terms of faith, which means the passive attitude of accepting God's unlimited grace to save sinned human beings. But, minjung theology advocates that God is co-sufferer in the reality of the oppressed minjung, and God is also cooperator in the process of minjung's struggle for liberation and freedom.

The minjung theologian, Yong-bock Kim criticizes that Christian theology understands the existence of God only in a metaphysical context. Thus, the theory of the existence of God becomes non-biblical and non-Christian, alienated from history and especially from the minjung reality. Furthermore, he argues that the so-called proofs of God's existence in philosophical and metaphysical terms would overlook the historical connotation of the existence of the transcendent God, and that even theodicy must be reconsidered and re-examined in historical terms.⁶

⁶ . Yong-bock Kim, " Theology and Social Biography of the minjung" in *Korean Minjung and Christianity*(Seoul: Hyungsungsa, 1981), 167.

The existence of God, understood as the historical sovereignty of God and as the foundation and possibility of the minjung's history, means that the fulfilment of the promised realization of the historical subjectivity of the minjung, who struggle against evil, is guaranteed. Therefore, minjung theology insists that God's reality is only understood in his liberation activity in and with the minjung. In other words, without the reality of the minjung and God's activity with the minjung, God's reality is ambiguous. The existence of God is always related to the minjung.

Nam-dong Suh, one of the initiators of minjung theology, was influenced by process theology. As a result, he substantiates the notion of God in terms of becoming. He also employs the perspective of natural theology in order to develop his concept of God. According to him, the great discovery of modern science with respect to the universe and reality is 'evolution theory', which goes toward the higher spirit, the more conscious, and the rich freedom.⁷ Suh says that "if God is becoming, his peculiarity is future and promise. God as evolution initiates a new future. God also opens a new future of human being. God is the creativity of the evolutionary process as such."⁸

Suh sees the relationship of God and the world as organic, and he rejects the monarchical view of the world that sees the world as subservient. In the co-working between God and the world, God attains more experiences and thereby God is becoming. In this organic framework, the creation work of God is God's innateness, and the world is the effect of God's essential activity. There is no God who sustains or stops the activity of creation. Therefore, God's activity of creation is continuing.⁹

We can obviously find a point of contact between minjung theology and process theology in Suh's understanding of God. Suh's arguments are based on his existential experience in solidarity with minjung's struggle for liberation and freedom from the dictatorial regime in Korea. Suh interpreted God as the one who works together with the minjung, the oppressed, the alienated, and the exploited. He fundamentally emphasized the immanence of God in the minjung's reality. But although he was influenced by process theology, he did not give the full articulation of God's immanence or participation in the world.

⁷ .Nam-dong Suh, *Theology at the Turning Point*(Seoul: Institute of Korean theology, 1976), 369.

⁸ . Ibid., 369-370.

⁹ . Ibid., 292-293.

As is shown above, minjung theology emphasizes a God who acts and participates in the close relationship with the minjung's suffering and pain. The realities of the oppressed minjung are expressed as *han*. For a Korean, *han* is a very peculiar feeling. *Han* was originally a psychological term that denoted the feeling of suffering. But minjung theologians see *han* not just as a psychological concept but as a socio-political biography of the Korean people's suffering. Nam-dong Suh says that "*han* is the suppressed, amassed and condensed experience of oppression caused by mischief or misfortune so that it forms a kind of 'lump' in one's spirit."¹⁰

Another minjung theologian, Young-hak Hyun describes:

han is a sense of unresolved resentment against injustice suffered, a sense of helplessness because of the overwhelming odds against, a feeling of total abandonment("why hast thou forsaken me?"), a feeling of acute pain of sorrow in one's guts and bowels making the whole body writhe and wiggle, and an obstinate urge to take 'revenge' and to right the wrong all these constitute."¹¹

Han is the Korean people's root experiences or collective consciousness. *Han* is accumulation of unarticulated suffering over a long period of time. Therefore, minjung theology aims at the resolution of the minjung's *han*; once resolved the minjung experience liberation and freedom. In this sense, minjung theology might be called theology of *han*.

Minjung theology insists that God's reality is concretely found in minjung's *han*, be with their *han* and works for the resolution of their *han*. Therefore, when minjung theology addresses God's participation or relatedness, God is mainly explained in the close connection with minjung's *han*. Minjung theology deals seriously with the concept of *han* as a significant theological theme.

Traditionally, in Korea, the resolution of *han* happens through religious ritual, which is called *han-pu-ri*(the release of *han*). Originally the term *Han-pu-ri* came from Korean shamanistic tradition. Korean shamans play the role of the priest or priestess of *han-pu-ri*. Shamanistic *kut*(ritual) gives the opportunity for the voiceless ghosts of *han* to speak out their stories of *han*,

¹⁰ . Nam-dong Suh, "Towards a Theology of Han." in *Minjung Theology: People as the Subjects of History*, Ed by the Commission on Theological Concerns of the Christian Conference of Asia, (Singapore: Christian Conference of Asia, 1981), 65. Hereafter this book referred to as MT.

¹¹ . "Minjung, the Suffering Servant, and Hope," Paper presented at Union Theological Seminary, New York, 13 April, 1982.

thereby exorcising the *han*/sufferings. As a result, *han*-ridden person can disintegrate his or her *han*. True resolution of *han* frees people's potentiality, that was one blocked by *han*.

In the framework of *han-pu-ri*, the subject(shamans) and the object(*han*-ridden person) are not separate. In this sense, the resolution of *han* is defined as a relational healing process. Healing of *han* connotes a restoration to the fullness of life.¹² I think that the resolution of *han* embodies creation of a new life, and the maximization of good. Similarly, in Whitehead's system, the process of concrescence is the desire toward a new world and maximization of good. I see a correlation in the resolution of *han* and Whitehead's thought about process of concrescence.

In contrast to shamanistic ritual that is happening of a superficial level, minjung theology tries to substantiate the reality of *han* by means of scientific and social analysis. In this regard, I would like to address the arguments of Nam-dong Suh who was the most creative thinker of minjung theology. He employs a social-economical historical methodology for perceiving the reality of *han*. He sees *han* as the primary focus for understanding the reality and consciousness of the minjung. By means of the socio-economical historical realm, minjung's external *han* condition is revealed. *Han* is the by-product of a politically, economically unjust ruling system. For that reason, the resolution of the *han* is the demand to build a different social order.

Minjung's *han* is produced by the unjust socio-political reality. Therefore, our efforts for the resolution of *han* is changing the unjust situation through action. In this sense, Suh say that "*han* can be seen in association to social justice."¹³ Suh sees that *han* manifests itself both internally and externally. The internal dimension is characterized by defeatism, nothingness, and renunciation. This internal dimension of *han*, however, may transform into artistic expressions. The external dimension of *han* is characterized by the desire for revolutionary change in order to liberate the oppressed.¹⁴ Suh is concerned with the latter aspect of *han* that contains explosive energy for revolution. Accordingly, he proposes to use external *han*'s explosive energy both to disintegrate individual, as well as systematic social *han*.¹⁵

¹² . Andrew Sung Park, *The Wounded Heart of God: The Asian Concept of Han and the Christian Doctrine of Sin*(Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993), 102-109.

¹³ . Nam-dong Suh, *In Search of Minjung Theology* (Seoul: Institute of Korean Theology, 1983), 44.

¹⁴ . Nam-dong Suh, "Towards a Theology of Han", 58.

¹⁵ . In this regard, Park says that "if *han* is unraveled positively, it can be converted into the fuel

Another approach to substantiate the concept of *han* is literal-artistic-sociological one. It shows internal reality of minjung's *han*. Suh explores minjung's internal *han* by studying their artists' language and cultural expressions. Through minjung drama, fine arts, music, poetry, novel, etc., the minjung reveal their sense of *han*. In other words, minjung arts are the public channel for the expression of their *han*, and their articulation of the minjung's struggle and aspiration for liberation and freedom.¹⁶

Suh says that "minjung arts are the expressions which artistically sublimate minjung's *han*." ¹⁷ He sees *talchum*(mask dance) and *pansori*(Korean form of opera) as the most representative artistic forms of the minjung's *han*. They are reflection of the minjung's awakened consciousness. Minjung theologian, Yonghak Hyun contends that the minjung experience the critical transcendence in the mask dance:

They(the minjung) laugh at and make fun of their own fate in this world, thereby transcending their own condition.... They not only see correctly the reality of the world...but also envision another reality over against and beyond this one which both the rulers and leaders cannot see.¹⁸

The *pansori* and mask dance not only express the *han* of the minjung, but also criticize and resist the system, morality, power and presence of the ruling class through satire and ridicule, thereby expressing their yearning for the coming of a whole new world and liberation.

So far, along with brief sketch of the historical background of the minjung theology, I have discussed the concept of God in minjung theology, and have examined the process of *han*'s release not only in traditional religious ritual(shamanistic *kut*) but also in social-historical and literal-artistic dimensions. The concept of God in minjung theology can be stated as follows: 1) God is fundamentally in close relationship with the minjung's reality. God cannot be conceived of separated from minjung's reality. 2)God does not arbitrarily exercise his initiative(leadership) in

for building up new community." Ibid., 138.

¹⁶ . See, Nam-dong Suh, *In Search of Minjung Theology*, 70. Suh were influenced by the writers' description of *han* phenomenon.

¹⁷ . Nam-dong Suh, *In Search of Minjung Theology*, 71.

¹⁸ . MT 50.

association to minjung (as is shown in Suh's argument). 3) God, along with minjung, is towards limitless creation, liberation, and the maximization of good.

In addition, minjung theology analyzes minjung's suffering, *han*, and tries to show its efforts for the resolution of *han*. It is minjung theology's contribution to substantialize and concretize the concept of *han*. But, since minjung theology emphasizes liberation and freedom through shift of unjust system, it would overlook the holistic view of liberation and freedom. Furthermore, while minjung theology emphasizes God who participates in minjung's *han*, the theology does not depend on God in its effort to resolve *han*. Also, minjung theology would ignore *han*'s interdependence or essential relatedness. In this case, liberation and freedom come out of the change of unjust social reality. Where does liberation and freedom originally come from? For what reason is suffering(*han*) produced? These questions are fundamentally related to metaphysical issues. In this regard, minjung theology should pursue the question of the metaphysics of liberation and freedom.

The concept of God of minjung theology has been criticized for its partiality, its exclusiveness, and its classicism because the nature of God in minjung theology is so occupied with the minjung's socio-political reality that it would lose the universality of God. Minjung theology has attempted a too phenomenological and contextual approach to God. Consequently it does not admit another context, except the minjung's context. This fact violates harmony in the world. And for minjung theology, the concept of God is quite strategic. Where do we find metaphysical ground of God's participation and immanence in minjung's reality?

In this regard, I think that Whitehead's philosophy of organism, especially his notion of God, could provide a significant framework for overcoming the limitation of minjung theology as thus explained. In this sense, all strategic categories of God's concept in minjung theology should be re-evaluated in light of Whitehead's system.

The Metaphysical Structure of Process Theology

Whitehead's philosophy of organism begins with rejecting traditional Western metaphysics which emphasizes that the real being or substance endures without change and does not require sets of relations to something else beyond itself.¹⁹ Whitehead argues that anything real can no longer be substance as traditionally understood but is temporal and relative to others.

¹⁹. Shubert M. Ogden, "The Reality of God," in *Process Theology*, Ed Ewert H. Cousins (New York:

Traditionally, at least so far as Western philosophy is concerned, God is thought as the 'unmoved mover' which derived from Aristotle, or wholly omnipotent one which exists beyond the world.²⁰ But for Whitehead, even God, who is an actual entity, must be conceived as relative and as a becoming being,"and therefore as radically different from the wholly timeless and unrelated absolute of traditional theism."²¹ There is no absolute real substance or realm in the world but mutual relatedness of actual entities. The concept of actual entity is the pivotal concept in Whitehead's system. Actual entity or actual occasion are the concrete and basic elements out of which the world is made. An actual entity is not a static substratum, undifferentiated and enduring substance, which requires nothing but itself in order to exist.²² Instead, actual entities are conceived as dynamic and interactive entities. This interactive character of an actual entity is called "process." "It (each actual entity) can only be understood as a process."²³ "The process is the becoming of actual entities."²⁴ For Whitehead, being is 'becoming', not a static substance. Just as Aristotle identifies "being with form", so Whitehead identifies "being with acting". This is a starting point of Whitehead's philosophy of organism, distinguished from the traditional Western philosophy.

According to Whitehead, actual entities are divided into two kinds: (a) temporal actual entities or actual occasions, and (b) non-temporal actual entity, that is, God. In what follows I will chiefly discuss non-temporal actual entity and its relationship to temporal actual entities.

Newman Press, 1971), 121.

²⁰. According to Descartes, the actual thing(substance) 'required nothing but itself in order to exist.' Ed Donald W. Sherburne, *A Key to Whitehead's Process and Reality* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1966), 134. For more detail discussion about Whitehead's philosophy and traditional Western philosophy, see chapter six, 126-170. Hereafter this book will be referred to as *A Key*.

²¹. Ogden, "The Reality of God," 122. Ogden calls this position neo-classical notion of God in contrast to classical theism.

²². David R. Griffin and Donald W. Sherburne, ed., *Process and Reality: An Essay in Cosmology by A.N. Whitehead* (New York: The Free Press, 1978), 50. Hereafter PR.

²³. PR 227.

²⁴. PR 22.

Before entering into the discussion of the notion of God, it is necessary briefly to examine the nature of actual entity and the process of concrescence. For Whitehead, actual entities have two different aspects, conditionedness or relatedness as well as transcendence or unrelatedness. They are affected conditioned by, and related with other entities as well as freely self-caused, self-determined, and unrelated for their own sake.²⁵ While every entity is dynamically interrelated to other entities, it is seen as that of a *versa causa* or real cause of its own activity.²⁶ In other words, every entity cannot be absolutely destined or determined by a rule or formula free from its own aim. The reason is that each actual entity has the nature of the subject by which it is self-creative or has something for itself.²⁷

Actual entity is process. "Each actual entity is concerned as an act of experience arising out of past data"²⁸ But while Whitehead refuses an absolute division between past data and present actual entities, he also recognizes the transcendence or non-relation of actual entities beyond the inheritance of the data derived from the past.²⁹ In other words, an actual entity is never completely determined by the past. It is partly determined and partly determines itself. This is the distinctive argument in Whitehead's philosophy of organism, but he still remains in traditional Western metaphysics insofar as he insists that there are unconditionedness or unrelatedness in an actual entity.

The process of actual entities is proceeded by subjective response to past data. In other words, actual entities as subjects transcend inheritance from the past. Instead, each actual entity

²⁵.In his book *Science and the Modern World*, Whitehead discussed two aspects of actual entity in terms of scientific level. But the scientific level does not specifically explain how the two aspects, which seem to be antithetical, coexist and are reconciled in an actual entity. In PR, Whitehead deals with how these dual aspects are reconciled in his system in metaphysical level.

²⁶.PR 119.

²⁷.According to Whitehead, in the process of reacting to other actual entities, an actual entity has a dipolar nature: the subject and the subject. As subject, an actual entity exercises its function of being an object; an actual entity presides over its own process of becoming. PR 222.

²⁸. *A Key*. 7. The term *datum* is a technical term for Whitehead. A datum is a give entity.

²⁹. Ivor Leclerc, *Whitehead's Metaphysics: An Introductory Exposition*(New York: the Macmillan co., 1958), 121.

transforms the inherited data into a new entity, compatible with the comprehending subject. The process of an actual entity begins with antecedent data, but the process is completed with the self-formation of that actual entity guided by its final cause or subjective aim.³⁰

According to Whitehead, all actual entities in the process of becoming are the subject. They are becoming beings and acting subjects. Whitehead calls the subjects "subjective immediacy."³¹When an actual entity enjoys itself with immediacy, it is called the subject. But when actual entities terminate the activity of their self-creation, they are perished. At that time, the subjective act of actual entities ends and they become 'objectification for the subsequent actuality. "Actuality in perishing acquires objectivity, while it loses subjective immediacy. It loses the final causation... and it acquires efficient causation whereby it is a ground of obligation characterizing the creativity."³²Therefore, an actual entity needs bipolar explanations: 1)an actual entity is a potentiality for the objectification in the process of becoming of other actual entities. 2)at the same time, it requires the process of constituting itself.

The process of each actual entity, according to Whitehead, is directed by a subjective aim. The subjective aim does not come from the given data. It must be derived from somewhere; it cannot come from nowhere or nothingness. "This 'somewhere' is the non-temporal actual entity."³³ The non-temporal actual entity is God. In other words, the subjectivity which grounds the process of actual entities and guides their direction is based on God.

Just as temporal actual entities have dual aspects, so non-temporal actual entity, God has also dipolar aspects: primordial and consequent. Whitehead says,

God, as well as being primordial, is also consequent. He is the beginning and the end...He has a primordial nature and a consequent nature. The consequent nature of God is conscious; and it is the realization of the actual world in the unity of his nature, and through the

³⁰.PR 24, 87.

³¹.PR 25.

³². PR 29.

³³. PR 46.

transformation of his wisdom. The primordial nature is conceptual, and the consequent nature is the weaving of God's physical feelings upon his primordial concepts.³⁴

As a primordial nature, God provides each temporal actual entity an initial aim which is primordial source for the becoming temporal actual entity. God as an actual entity, effects or conditions temporal actual entities through supplying its initial aim for them. In this sense, God is *causa sui* or cause of itself,³⁵ and is not conditioned by other actual entities. As *causa sui*, God's nature is considered as primordial. God's primordial nature is "the unconditioned conceptual valuation" of the temporal world.³⁶ God's primordial nature (the potential pole), is "what God is eternally", and its potentiality is "absolute, eternal, and infinite."³⁷ By God's primordial nature "each actual entity acquires not only the specific character which constitutes it as that distinguishable individual actuality, but it is also its generic character which it shares with all other actual entities."³⁸

God as primordial nature lures temporal actual entities. God does not force temporal actual entities to follow His/Her urge. "God is the lure toward its ideal realization."³⁹ In a word, God is conceived as a persuasive entity which lures actual entities to toward the highest fulfilment possible for them. In this sense, God's primordial aim is the foundation of progress in actual entity.

On the other hand, Whitehead says that God has consequent nature. Due to God's consequent nature, God comprehends temporal actual entities and took them into His/Her own nature as abject for the fulfilment of God's own being. "The subjective forms of God's physical comprehensions conform...to their data[Derived from the temporal world]."⁴⁰ Where God is

³⁴. PR 345.

³⁵. PR 38.

³⁶. PR 31.

³⁷. Ronald Nash, ed., *Process Theology* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1987), 19.

³⁸. Ivor Leclerc, *Whitehead's Metaphysics: An Introductory Exposition*, 201.

³⁹. Cobb B. John, Jr. *A Christian Natural Theology* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1965). 217.

⁴⁰. William A. Christian. *An Interpretation of Whitehead's Metaphysics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959), 370.

conditioned by or comprehends the temporal world, God's nature is regarded as consequent. God is temporal in the sense that God comprehends temporal actual entities derived from the world. God is neither far from the temporal actual world nor unaffected by it. God is in the world. God comprehends or responds to "the temporal world on the nature of God."⁴¹ God's consequent nature grows with the growth of the world, and through his valuations of the world as saved in his consequent nature.....⁴² God reveals "the judgment of a tender care that nothing be lost."⁴³ In other words, "He[God] saves the world as it passes into the immediacy of his own life."⁴⁴ In God's consequent nature, "there is no loss, no obstruction."⁴⁵ Therefore, God's consequent nature is conceived of as the preservation of all actual entities.

God transmutes what is derived from the temporal world into a "living, ever-present fact."⁴⁶ The living, ever-present fact is God's comprehension of each actual entity for what it can be in a perfect system. God's perfect system involves His/Her reception and transformation of the temporal world where there exist many difficulties such as sorrow and suffering. Whitehead says:

The consequent nature of God is the fulfilment of his experience by his reception of the multiple freedom of actuality into the harmony of his own actualization. It is God as really actual, completing the deficiency of his mere conceptual actuality.....the immediacy of sorrow and pain is transformed into an element of triumph. This is the notion of redemption through suffering which haunts the world.⁴⁷

As the above sentence show, Whitehead explains God's subjective reception of temporal actual entities in terms of redemption. Consequently temporal actual entities in the world are transformed into a new world in God's nature which results in unity and harmony.

⁴¹.PR 13.

⁴².A Key. 227.

⁴³ .PR 346.

⁴⁴.PR 346.

⁴⁵.PR 346.

⁴⁶.PR 350.

⁴⁷.PR 349~350.

In summary, God and the temporal world reactively interact with each other. The dynamic cooperation and interaction between God and the temporal world are considered as creative on-going-ness. Thus, without the participation of God in the temporal world, "there could be nothing new in the world..."⁴⁸ Whitehead expresses the dynamic and interactive relationship between God and the world as follows:

It is as time to say that the world is immanent in God as that God is immanent in the world..... It is as time to say that God creates the world, as that the world creates God.⁴⁹

As is shown above, God and the world are the community of the whole world. The dynamic interaction between God and the actual world is considered creative on-going-ness or activity which is called "creativity." Creativity is a character of dynamic relatedness between God and the temporal world.

According to Whitehead, an actual entity is a self-creating or self-determine entity and a final causation.⁵⁰ Every actual entity is considered a self-free, self-creative entity. Although every actual entity is conditioned or determined by and related to other entities, it is also regarded as an entity which has free determination apart from its conditionedness by and dependence upon other entities. In a word, every actual entity, including a non-temporal actual entity, God, is determined as well as free from others. These dual aspects seem to be inconsistent but coexist in an actuality in Whitehead's system.

So far, I have examined the nature of actual entity, especially a non-temporal actual entity, God and His/Her relatedness to others. And also I have investigated as to how two different views of actual entity are reconciled in Whitehead's system. The concept of God in Whitehead's system can be summarized as follows: 1) As the non-temporal actual entity, God has both a primordial nature and a consequent nature. God's primordial nature is unconditioned by and unrelated to others. It provides His/Her own ideal comprehension for the temporal actual entities. God's consequent nature is conditioned by, related to, and determined by the temporal actual entities. God's consequent nature comprehends actual entities derived for the temporal world. It is the preservation of all actual entities and the transmutation of all actual entities into a unity and

⁴⁸.PR 247.

⁴⁹.PR 348.

⁵⁰.Cf. PR 24.

harmony. 2)The notion of the conditionedness or relatedness of God is a new creative idea distinguished from traditional Western metaphysics which emphasizes an immutable or unchangeable substance that needs no other reality in order to exist. 3)Whitehead's notion of God advocates a creative transformation of the actual entities derived from the past. 4)Whitehead also emphasizes the responsibility of the actual entities insofar as they are self-causation, self-determination and self-freedom independent God. 5)Since God and the world are in the dynamic relationship, they are commonly toward unity and harmony.

Conclusion

From what has been discussed so far, the following conclusions for a dynamic dialogue between minjung theology and Whitehead's philosophy of organism can be emerged.

First, I discover fundamental commonality between God in minjung theology and God in Whitehead's system in the sense that they advocate God as participant or immanent one in the world. Minjung theology emphasizes that God's existence becomes apparent when God participates in minjung's reality, and works for their liberation. God cannot be thought as the one who separated from minjung's oppressed context. Whitehead insists that God is immanent in the temporal world, and to be perceived in its dynamic relationship. God cannot be conceived as unrelated to something else. As is seen in the relationship of God and temporal actual entities, minjung theology can find a metaphysical ground of God's reality which participates and works in minjung's context.

Second, the concept of God in minjung theology is so heavily occupied with minjung's social-political unjust context that it has not profoundly embraced the universality of God. Accordingly, God in minjung theology has partiality, classicism, and exclusiveness in association to God's relationship to the universe. Minjung theology should employ the basic concept of God in Whitehead's system, especially God's primordial nature which is characterized as limitless process towards liberation and freedom, and conception for life in order to avoid the critics that God in minjung theology is so contextual and strategic.

Third, minjung theology has a tendency to approach too phenomenologically to the issue of liberation and freedom. For that reason, minjung theology focuses on shift or change of the unjust system. Where do liberation and freedom come from? Whitehead indicates that an actual entity has self-determination, self-causation and self-freedom. Self-freedom means self-creation.

"The freedom inherent in the universe is constituted by this element of self-causation"⁵¹ In the light of the subjective aim of actual entity, liberation and freedom are derived from God's loving presence as persuasive and promoting rather than coercive or controlling: minjung theology can discover metaphysical basis of liberation and freedom. On this ground, minjung theology should focus not only on the change of system but also on the maximization of good.

Forth, minjung theology is mainly concerned with the phenomenal or existential reality of *han* (the long accumulated feeling of being suppressed), and on that basis tries to resolve *han*. This is only an emphasis on the socio-political dimension of *han*. Minjung theology should examine the concept of *han* in metaphysical dimension by which minjung theology can discover universality of *han*, its relational nature. Minjung's *han* should be liberated in countless process by the encounter of God and humanity (minjung). As God's primordial nature lures a new creation in the process of concrescence, God should offer a motivation for resolving of *han*, which is a life-giving power. In this point, *han* can be understood as desire for life and a new creation, and its metaphysical principle is built on such an assumption.

Fifth, insofar as actual entities have self-causation, and self-determination, they have responsibility. The responsibility means the maximization of good. Although God, as primordial, motivates or provides possibility of good, free and love for actual entities, whether such possibilities accept or not depends on an individual actual entity. Minjung theology predominantly attributes the cause of all evils and sins to the unjust system, thereby overlooking sin or responsibility of an individual.

Sixth, in order to avoid the challenge that Whitehead's system is quite an elite metaphysics and the lack of specialty or concreteness, it needs to encounter minjung theology which consistently emphasizes God who works in minjung's concrete context. Whitehead's God is not the one who suffers and pains in the temporal world with the oppressed people. In this sense, minjung theology and Whitehead's system should be in a dialectical partnership. Minjung theology should be able to take into account seriously the metaphysical framework in Whitehead's system for overcome of weakness of its praxis-oriented theology. Likewise, Whiteheadians, if they are to have any real impact on the contemporary scene, must come to grapple with the urgent practical issues raised by minjung theology.

⁵¹.A Key. 31.

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Abstract

This article is an attempt to dialogue Korean indigenous liberation theology, minjung theology and process theology, chiefly Whitehead's philosophy of organism. Minjung theology and process theology have commonalities and similarities, especially with respect to the concept of God. Despite their common interest in creative transformation of the existing social order, however, minjung theology and process theology had not been in dynamic interaction with each other.

Process theologians are occupied with solving broad metaphysical questions connected with the creation of a new-world relationship and too little concerned with the day-to-day problems of people in contemporary society. Minjung theologians, on the other hand, are so involved in the struggle for freedom and justice that they have effectively neglected the deeper theoretical implications of their praxis-orientation to theology. Hence creative dialogue between theses theological systems will help overcome these theological weaknesses.

In order to carry out the task for the dynamic dialogue between process theology and minjung theology, I will try to show that God in minjung theology is fundamentally relational, participatory, and immanent in minjung's suffering and hope as process theology emphasizes God's relationship with the world.

Key Words

Minjung Theology, Process Theology, Whitehead, Nam-dong Suh, Primordial, Relationship, Concrecence

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