Abstract

This study aims to analyze how Protestantism and secular nationalism met together and construct a political subject in South Korea. Protestant was introduced in Korean Peninsular during the late Chosun and Japanese colonial rule, so missionaries emphasized the concept of nation when they diffused the religious doctrines. In this context, Protestant church played a leading role in liberalization movement of nation, state-building before the two state-systems in Korea were established after the Korean War. Therefore, when the Park Chung-hee regime pushed ahead of nationalization project, Protestant churches showed variant ways of activisms toward the state nationalism, depending on their own theoretical, political perspectives; fundamental evangelism, eclecticism, and Mijung-ims. In summary, the nation form served as a bridge that religious subjects are intertwining with political matters in Korea, and Protestant discourses of nationalism constructed another hegemonic nationalism among the common believers, blurring the conventional distinction of the divine/secular conceptualized by the Western scholars.
Introduction

Political participation of the religious group is one of the contested subjects in the social science. Its political significance has derived the attention of concerned modern scholars worldwide, but it is always the crucial point that how we understand the divine/secular distinction between the religious and the political. This distinction, following Talcott Parsons what we call “social differentiation,” is a basis of our understanding on how this ‘secularized’ society after modernization is consist of “autonomous, specialized spheres (the state, science, market, education, etc.) separated from ecclesiastical control (Martin 2005, 20).” In this condition, according to Thomas Luckmann, religion is “socially invisible”, “irrelevant”, so “privatized” from the society run by “rational bureaucracy with impersonal regulation” into mere a matter of “inwardness” of each individual (Ibid.). However, we see the phenomenon of “deprivatization (Casanova 1994, 41)” worldwide, which varied forms of religious movement come out from the private sphere to the public one casting a doubt on the distinction of divine/secular, private/public.

As Charles Taylor puts it, the concept of “a secular age” is oriented from “the West”, in specific “Northwest” or “the North Atlantic” world even though it extends also beyond that region (Taylor 2007, 1). However, when we understand the distinction of the divine/secular in the other regions, such as Korea in East Asia that this study deals, we should bear in mind that our understanding of political participations of religion in “the other regions” cannot help being based on the scheme of secularization derived from the West. The concepts such like nation, state, or politics are dominantly diffused worldwide, however those are signified in the specific context of this regions where they take root in the ground. As shown in this paper below, the secular politics and Christianity were simultaneously introduced to the Korean
Peninsula during the late Chosun, and since the Japanese colonial era and the establishment of Two Korea state-systems they have showed selective similarity on their respective ways of development so far. This peculiar experience in Korean history has constructed the unique, politicalized national identity of the Protestant in Korea. Previous studies dealt with political participation of Christians in Korea (Lee 2002; Eom 2004; Kang; 2007; Choi et al. 2007; Ryu 2009) implicitly maintain the distinctions between religion/secularity, East/West and political right/left leading to the normative categorization of “conservative/anti-communist/anti-national/pro-American/collaborative Christians.” Though inductive for comprehending the political topography among religious figures, these categories are the barriers to understand why they eagerly and spontaneously participate in politics. In this respect, this study aims to suggest that nationalism has served as a ‘common’ basis for nourishment of politics and religion and political conscience of Korean Protestants as ‘stakeholder’ in nation-building.

A Brief History of Nationalistic Protestantism in Korea during the late Chosun and Japanese Colonial rule

The origin of Protestant Church in Korea traces back to 1879 when a layman who was baptized by a missionary John Ross in Manchuria established a Sorae Church located in Hwanghae Province (Park 2011, 180). As Max Weber once indicated, the rationality of Confucianism is based on the “adjustment” to the world, whereas puritanism the “mastery” of the world by whom regards him/herself as a tool of the transcendent God (Weber 1951). That “adjustment” in Traditional Confucian Chosun was obedience to the patriarchal order which categorized the people according to their dispositions defined by their status orientation, age
and gender roles. In this context, Christianity served as a breakthrough of the closed society
confined by the caste hierarchy for people of non-Yangban (aristocratic) class, women, and
even some Yangbans who cast doubts to the Ancien Régime (Lee 1980; Park 2011: 171-185).
In this aspect, the discovery of the ‘individual free from traditional restriction’ is a way of
how Protestantism in Korea were widely diffused to the common people and creation of
modern self, especially for the subordinated groups such as non-Yangban and women (Yoon
2009; Park 2011), and this individuality is a crucial condition for creating modern national
identity (cf. Balibar 1991, 94, “All Identity is individual.”) and diversification of how every
individual imagines the nation on their own way (cf. Anderson 2006)\(^1\).

In addition, Protestant missionaries actively promoted the nation form as a way of how
their laymen understand the world they are situated. Raising the national flag (Tagukgi),
teaching the history of origin of Korean nation (Dangun history), gathering for thorough-
reading of Bible in native language (Hangul) were the chance for the devout Christians to
perceive what the Chosun nation is, and its reality of which was threatened by the
incompetent and corrupted Confucian rulers of Chosun Dynasty and the invasion of Japanese
imperialism. In this condition, Protestantism served as a “political training ground” where
modern concepts of democracy, equality, individual rights, and political culture of discussion
(Park 2007). As Chosun was lost its diplomatic sovereignty in 1905 and officially annexed to
Japan in 1910, Protestant church in Korea associated the persecuted nation of Chosun to

\(^1\) Anderson argues the traditional community of universal Christendom was diversified into modern national
communities with their own languages when the transcendental simultaneous appreciation of the meaningful
time had been cracked by the empty homogenous time appreciation without the universal meaning of messianic
providence (Anderson 2006, ch.2; 3). In similar, traditional order of Confucianism also was cracked by the
consciousness individual self who defined themselves as a “tool of God” who had a vocation of changing the
society, not obeying the existing Confucian order anymore.
Israel nation in the Bible which lost their sovereignty by the invasion of Babylonia or the Roman Empire. In 1907, Pyongyang, so called “Jerusalem in the East” witnessed “Great Revival Movement” of Christianity which cured the resentment of lost sovereignty of the nation through religious enthusiasm. Though previous literatures indicated that this religious movement concluded to de-politicization of Korean Protestantism (Lee 1991, 203-256; Ryu 2009) under the repressive rule of Japanese colonial government, it also created the tradition of Korean Christianity that even common believers without any political profession continuously “pray for the nation and country” until nowadays. This nationalized form of religion resulted in resistant activisms from the denial of Japanese Shrine worship by the individual pastor such as Joo Ki-chul, to political liberalization movements by Christian modernization elites such as Seo Jaipil, the early Yun Chi-ho, Ahn Chngho (Roh 1993, 116-148), and (though arguable) later the first President of Republic of Korea Syngman Rhee. In addition, the controversy on acceptance of socialism/communism among Christian elites in 1920s was also a key context that Christian nationalism in Korea was diversified. In summary, these experiences of nationalistic movement among Korean Protestantism resulted in their consciousness that protestant served for the nation so that now they are ‘stakeholders’ in politics of Korean modern history.

Segmentation of Protestant Denominations and State Nationalism of Park Chung-hee Regime

Through the independence from the colonial rule in 1945 and Korean War during 1950-1953, Korean Peninsula was divided into two nation-states. For South Korea (henceforward Korea), the Rhee Syngman government’s key positions consisted of the elites most of whom
were Christians, so that this initial condition served as a bridge between the state and the Protestant churches by which both have developed in similar pace during Korean modern history. As division of Korea becomes stubborn reality, political consciousness of the Korean Protestants in general became conservative, anti-communistic tones so that this is one of the ideological conditions of how they participate in politics in various ways even for nowadays (Kang 1996, 261-262; Lee 2002, 135-136; Kang 2007, 62-82). However, these political tones were varied according to how those Protestant accepts the dominant social order in general, especially the state ideology of nationalism in terms of their own organizational, theological stances.

Division of the Presbyterian Churches in 1950s

As of 2012, about 170 diversified denominations of Presbyterian churches are the most popular Christian organizations among Korean Protestant churches compared to others such as Methodist, Baptist, or Full Gospel Churches. According to the Religion in Contemporary Korea 2011 published by the Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Tourism in ROK (MCST 2011), almost 30% of Protestant believers are members of The General Assembly of Presbyterian Church in Korea (GAPC or in Korean Yejanghapdong) and The Presbyterian Church of Korea (PCK or in Korean Yejantonghap), the two biggest denominations among Protestant Churches. In addition, the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea (PROK or in Korea

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2 At that time, only 10% of the whole population of Korea was Christians whereas 25% of the administrative officials and 40% of the whole political officials including the National Assembly members was (Park 2003, 174). This Christian-bias was derived from the political function of Churches during the late Chosun and Japanese colonial rule mentioned above.
Gijang), a commonly acknowledge denomination as the most active church of political activism despite its tiny size (1.64% of all Protestant believers as of 2011, Choi 2012), originated from the dispute on how Protestant churches had to answer on the social issues in 1950s. Though associational, this study supposes that the ways of how Korean Protestant accepts the state ideology of nationalism have the selective affinity with the ideological, theological stances of these three Presbyterian denominations.

As the communist regime began to establish in North Korea, many Protestants moved toward South Korea for religious freedom before Korean War broke out. These ‘Protestant Diaspora in the South (Wolnam Gaeshingyoin)’ constituted the personal networks, and they played the dominant role in constructing Protestantism in contemporary Korea. Since 1920s, evangelization in North Korea regions were conducted by the American and Canadian Presbyterian missionaries and their mission area were segmented by their mutual convention (Kang 1996, 139). As a result, most immigrant Protestants from the northwest area (Pyongan Provinces) were relatively religiously conservative, whereas the northeast area (Hamkyong Provinces) progressive. Among them, when Pastor Kim Jae-jun (from the North Hamkyong Province) was expelled from the Korean Presbyterian assembly due to his ‘liberalistic’, ‘scientific’ perspective on the Bible in 1953, his follower organized a new Presbyterian assembly PROK with Canadian Presbyterian Churches and Chosun Theological School (now Hanshin University) (Roh 1986, 30-35; Kang 2007, 445-454; Song 2009, 143-151).

In 1959, Korean Presbyterian Churches experienced a great schism once again by the conflicting views on an international Christian organization, World Christian Council (WCC), which emphasized on social participation of churches and cooperation with Catholic Churches, Eastern Orthodox Churches in the Eastern Europe. A number of pastors such as
Hyong-ryong Park (from the North Pyongan Province), who maintained close connection with International Council of Christian Churches (ICCC) which is represented by an American religious fundamentalist Karl McIntyre, openly denounced the WCC and its supporters in Korea as “communist” or “heretic”. This chasm of positions on how and with whom the Korean Churches should cooperate internationally became one of the reasons that resulted in the secession of another huge assembly of Presbyterian churches, GAPC organized by Pastor Park and his followers with Chongshin University. The original assembly of Presbyterian Church of Korea (PCK) had Jangshin University as its official school for theological education, so now three popular Presbyterian denominations established in Korea with their own ideological institutions (Roh 1986, 35-41). Table 1 shows how churches in Korea affected by these denominations have been different in Korean modern history in their theological, social, organizational practices (Lee 2002, 94-130).

<table>
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<th>Denomination</th>
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Table 1: Key Protestant denominations in Korea and Their Theological/Social Practices

Soo-in Lee (2002) categorized the churches represented by GAPC are “fundamental evangelists” who emphasize personal conversion as an ultimate answer to social problems.

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3 A Revised version of (Table 2) and (Table3) from Lee (2002, 94-130).
That is, they minimize the social disorders when they understand the world they are in, and this tendency leads them to social consent to the dominant social order. Meanwhile, churches represented by PCK show more “comprehensive and eclectic (Kang 1996, 190)” way of how they understand political and social problems, and they selectively combine compromise and opposition to the dominant order. Theological stance of PCK is called “Comprehensive Theology (Tonghap Shinhak)” which emphasizes “togetherness” for communal life of human, nature and society and “otherness” for prohibiting the infliction of other individuals (Maeng 1989). This tendency is worthy of reference when Pastor Han Kyung-jik (from South Pyongan Province), an eminent figure in PCK, ‘selectively’ cooperated with the state institution during the Park Chung-hee regime whereas the other members of the denomination actively opposed to the regime’s authoritative rule (Lee 2011, 98-99) in the names of ‘freedom for belief’ or ‘democracy’. PROK, the most politically-active denomination developed their own religious stance on political problem called Minjung (people) Theology in the late 1970s for buttressing their ideological legitimation for participating or intervening in politics. In summary, their diverse stances on political and social issues can be categorized into 1) evangelical fundamentalism 2) eclecticism and 3) Minjung-ism.

Lee (2002) also explains that these three different ways of denominations were derived from the relation with the worldwide dominant organization such as WCC, which played a role of financial supporter. Churches which agreed with GAPC had to ‘survive’ without outside support so they gradually inclined to maintain accordance with the state institution, dominant class such as business people, whereas churches with PCK and PROK were nourished in the relative autonomy for asserting their social and political opinion. This
ideological and material condition became a basic context that they accept, compete with, or resist to the state ideology of nationalism during Park Chung-hee regime in 1960-1970s.

*State Nationalism of Park Chung-hee Regime*

The prominent feature of two state-systems (ROK, DPRK) in Korean Peninsula since the Korean War can be expressed as “Nationalism Complex (Kang 2012)”, which is derived from the necessity of legitimacy of each regime in the context of historical experiences of the colonial rule and division of the nation. As Ernst Gellner puts that “nationalism is a theory of political legitimacy, which requires that ethnic boundaries should not cut across political ones (Gellner 2006, 1),” the discrepancy of this principle resulted in hyper-exclusive national discourses of the North-South regimes in Korea against each other (Shin 2009, 131-176; Kim 2010). In these aspects, the state nationalism demarcated the exact boundary between “we” and “other,” consolidating the internal unity to mobilize the public into economic development and political purposes (Kim 2010). In this circumstance, individuals were not the distinct subject, but existed only as a part of the nation which is the concept of ultimate moral entity above both of the individual and the state (Kim(b) 2006). This ‘nationalization’ of people was not only confined to state’s official ideology observable in regime’s political, economic performance (cf. Kim(a) 2006). So-called “national modernization project” was conducted in everyday life of people, producing the ‘modern disciplined socialized subjects’ through *Saemaeul* (New Community) Movement (Hwang 2004; Koh 2006), *Bansanghoe* (Monthly Neighborhood Meeting, Seo and Kim 2015), and sanitization movement such as “Anti-Rat Drive (Kim 2010)”. In these processes, state nationalism in Korea was constructed.
in Park Chung-hee regime in three characteristics: 1) anti-communism, 2) developmentalism, and 3) moralism.

1) Anti-communism: Park Chung-hee, who came to power by the military coup in 1961, was required to secure the domestic and overseas support of his legitimacy. In these aspect, anti-communism during Park’s regime showed pro-Americanism for receiving financial and public support from “Free World” against the Communist countries (Kim and Cho 2003, 143), especially DPRK. Communism. In addition, communism is not a just ideological deviance toward liberalism, but Park himself blamed it as “indifference” and “heterogeneity” of “National Spirit (Park 2005, 867)”. In these context, diverse discourse of anti-state or democratic discourse against the state nationalism were signified as “commies,” so ‘betray of nation’. This perception led the anti-communist discourses to the functionalistic, differential view on the DPRK regime and North Korean people, which selectively comprise the latter as ‘members of nation’ persecuted by the former against which the South Korean Regime must win out by the superior ability of economic development(Kim(a) 2006, 162).

2) Developmentalism: Economic development and its performance such as accumulation of capital and increase of job places were the most efficient project for illegitimate regime to domestic popular support (Kim(a) 2006, 233). People under the regime were disciplined as a ‘diligent member’ of the “Competent”, “productive” nation which fight against the North Korea and international competition (Park 2005, 760). These emphases on economic nation was concluded as “Economy First, Politics Frozen”, “Productive Politics”, “Korean Democracy” and “Full-Uniformity of Nation (Gungminchonghwa)” after the Yushin regime in 1971(Park 2005, 805-815). These slogans were essentially practiced with minimization of the political process in the representative government and the bureaucratic authoritarianism to
suppress the popular demand of democracy and fair working condition by labor forces or student resistance (Im 1987).

3) Moralism: As mentioned above, these processes were not only ‘outwardly repressive’ toward the society, but they were ‘inwardly persuasive’ for the populations who were created as ‘the newly modernized, disciplined subjects of Nation’. Park himself consider the nation as ‘immortal Deity’ who determine ‘national conscience’, to which every individual including himself serve as a sacrifice on the “Altar of Nation” via enthusiastic patriotism (Park 2005, 259-264; 805-821; Kang 2012, 44). This “service” toward Korean Nation was officially declared by words of “National Revival (Park 2005, 792-793)” which strived to overcome “old convention” of “partisan politics” of Chosun’s “Faction politics (Bungdang Jeongchi)” and its contemporary example of the former democratic regime of Chang Myeon (Park 2005, 357-366). In addition, the emphasis on the egalitarian and communitarian ethics of nation based on ‘total homogeneity of nation’ (Hwang 2004, 490) was an effective strategy to secure popular support when he differentiated himself against ‘politically, economically established class’ and reproached them as ‘selfish’ (Park 2005, 329-330; 643-657). In these context, the individual and the nation were strictly identified each other, and these “pressure for equality,” when public campaign such as Saemaul Movement partially provided the chance for individuals to discover himself against economic hardship or traditional restriction such as devastated agricultural culture or patriarchal order (Hwang 2004).

In summary, state nationalism was not only ‘encouraged’ or ‘mobilized’ by Park Chunghee regime, but its final result was its fundamental diffusion to the overall Korean society. However, as mentioned, not only the state serves as a promoter of dominance of “nation form (Balibar 1991)”, but churches had already educated their religious doctrines in the name of
the nation from the initial time of its mission in the Korean Peninsula. In this context, Korean Protestant Churches not only serves as “ideological state apparatus (ISA, Althusser, 2008[1970])”, but their function of producing diversified national discourses also resulted in “hegemonization” or “naturalization” of the concept of the nation (Seo 2005), regardless of consent, competent, or resistant Protestant believers toward the state national discourse. This coincidence of ‘domination’ and ‘resistance’ in the hegemony of nation is similar with the case of the student movements in 1980s, which were broke out ‘in the name of nation,’ which is the very name that the Park Chung-hee and his consecutive follower’s regime try to suffice (Seo 2009).

How church answered: Consent, Competition and Disagreement on the state nationalism

As mentioned above, political and social stance of Korea Protestants can be understood in association with the division of Presbyterian Churches. Churches of fundamental evangelism showed ‘consent’ to the state nationalism of Park Chung-hee regime during 1960s-1970s, which converge in the three aspects of anti-communism, developmentalism, and moralism. Eclectic organization such as The National Council of Churches in Korea (NCK), in which the PCK, the Koren Methodist Churches and the PROK play the leading role, selectively accepted and resisted to the state’s authoritarian rule in 1970s. The Minjung-ism was the peculiar form of religious ideology of the PROK since the late 1970s, when the representative figures of the denomination such as Pastor Ahn Byung-moo and Seo Nam-dong adopted the concept of the Minjung as an alternative, comprehensive form of community to the existing
Fundamental Evangelism

It is hard to figure out the overall practice of national discourse of churches like GAPC, as its founder of Park Hyong-ryong ostensibly denied the political and social participation in the level of the whole churches (Lee 2011, 77). This tendency is congruent with political and social consciousness of general Korean Protestants, as mentioned above mostly members of the GAPC and its subsequent segmental denominations, are summarized as “critical conservatism”, or more correctly, “political cynicism” (Baek 1994; ITSH 2004, 83-84, 308-309). In this aspect, political and social stance of fundamental evangelism is observable in the practices of few, but influential prominent Protestant figures who shared the common sense of theological perspective of GAPC which emphasizes the “personal” salvation of all nation contrary to the social and political interpretation of salvation that NCCK or PROK insisted. Pastor Kim Jun-gon, the founder of interdenominational student organization Korean Campus Crusade for Christ (KCCC), can be the good example of fundamental evangelist who actively asserted his opinion in the politics in the name of the nation.

1) Anti-communism of “Chosen Christian Nation”: His perspective on nation can be summarized in the official slogan of KCCC, “Implant the Bloody Christ to Every Nation and Let the Season of Christ come to this Country!” Kim Jun-gon himself was the founder of National Morning Prayer Meeting in which politicians including the President participate since 1968, and his KCCC hold the mega rally called “EXPLO 74” which were publicly reported as the “key chance for eradication of communism and atheism” through the media (Kang 2007, 119-140). In EXPLO 74, Kim equated the communist camp with reprehensive
vocabularies such as “moral astray”, “heresy”, “rubbish” “evil” contrary to liberal camp as “Christian Spirit” (Kim 1984, 147-148) and his anti-communism could be accomplished when “All of our nation become full of the Holy Spirit (Kim 1984, 306-307)”. His support on Park Chung-hee regime was obvious when he legitimized the “Yusin reformation” in 1971 as “inevitable means” to fight against the North Korean regime (Chang 2006, 109-111; Kang, 119-140). In specific, he actively differentiated with other Christian organization such as NCCK which resisted to the authoritarian rule of Yushin, reproaching them as “specious” popular movement of “fence sitters” in between liberalist camp and communists (Chang 2006 110-111).

2) Developmentalism in Protestant Churches: “National Evangelization (Minjokbogunghwa)” was not limited in the religious conversion, but it was accompanied with quantitative development of Churches. EXPLO 74 was a sensational event at that time of modernizing Korean Society that about 6,500 thousand of believers were gathered in the Yeoeuido Square. This large size of rally could not be held without the explicit/implicit permission of the authoritarian regime, which used this gathering as a chance for showing off regime’s benevolent stance toward churches and disguise the domestic resistance (Park 2003, 182-188). In effect, unofficial connection with the state and financial support of big businesses for the rally showed the typical case of how fundamental evangelists have maintained the hegemonic bloc of the Korean society (Chang 2006, 122-127). In addition, the ethic of the quantitative mobilization of believer shows how churches in Korea consider their religious success in terms of numerical statistics on the participants and the amount of money they get, as the state captures the national development by GNP, growth rate, saving rate (Kim(a) 2006, 169-230). Pastor Kim once anticipated ‘when the National Evangelization would be
accomplished’, assessing that the churchgoers were 2,700 thousand a week in 1980, and this figure would increase in proportion of 30% every year, then the total evangelization would occur in 1984 (Kim 1984, 265). The convergence of ‘economic nationalism’ with the religious aim was also found when Pastor Kim “blessed” Yushin regime in the National Morning Prayer Meeting in 1973, that “[E]conomic boom nowadays is a prelude of October Yusin … [It is] revolution of spirit and it is blessed promised in Deuteronomy Chp. 28 […] if it is [accompanied with] the successful ‘All-Soldier-Evangelization movement’ [which is expected to] expand to ‘the All-nation-Evangelization Movement’ (Kim 1973).”

3) Moralism with Protestant Doctrine: Based on the ‘Premilleranian perspective’, Pastor Kim anticipated the apocalyptic world war among communist states, the European states which at that time pushed ahead toward the EU with a number of metaphors based on the Revelation (Kim 1984. 251-256). In the same text, he stressed the moral behaviors only possible by believing the Christianity, and this narrative structure resembled the discourse of decadence of nation and its redemption such as “National Revival” mentioned above. In addition, he initiated so-called “Holy City Movement”, which asserted the conformity of political, administrative principle and religious ethics (Kwon 2006). These practices were conducted in the name of his doctrinal slogan “National Evangelization” that could be perceived as possible by Christianization of all sphere of life including politics, economy and culture.

Eclecticism

Eclectic participations in social movements were conducted by the members of the NCCK, which the PCK and other churches in accordance with WCC were in charge of main role. The
key characteristic of eclectic Protestants was their competitive stance on the concept of the nation with the state nationalism, in that they accept the subsequent concepts addressed by Park Chung-hee regime but they strategically ‘distorted’ or ‘interpreted’ them in terms of their own theological stance. In this aspect, eclecticism is the typical case of how dominance and resistance collided in the field of national discourses buttressing the concept of the “genuine nation” itself remained intact.

1) **Genuine Anti-communism**: Kang In-chul argues that NCCK’s anti-communist rhetoric was such like “churches taught the ‘genuine anti-communism’ to the military regime (Kang 2007, 86)”. At first, like Park Chung-hee, the NCCK officially defined communist in the North Korea as “National Enemy (NCCK 1987, 1835).” However, they also rebuked “mammonism (worship for money)” and “idolization of political system” in the South Korea as another “materialism of evil spirit” (NCCK 1987, 1802) harmful as communism was. Sometimes this kind of strategic wordings were threatening to the state when they argued that “inequality between the rich and the poor”, “Distrust between the state and people from the strong dictatorship” “Corruption of Bureaucracy” were the real cause of communism, so they identified the pastors and priests of NCCK who had the democratic rally as “the real anti-communist (NCCK 1987, 1856-1857)”. However, these statements also indicated the harsh reality of the authoritarian regime that those who wanted to speak the political argument had to prove themselves as devout anti-communist.

2) **Democratic developmentalism**: Political persons or social activist of NCCK, WCC criticized the induction of foreign capital or dependency form export-oriented strategy by Park’s administration as “anti-national”, or “lack of national autonomy” (NCCK 1987, 1911-1912), but they fail to deny the ideal of development itself which was focusing on the gross
growth of national economy (Kim 2003; Kim(a) 2006, 286). Whenever they tried to protect
the labor right, welfare, and urban environment, their vocabulary of “sacred labor cooperative
for the national economy” “frontline of development” were similar with the ones of state
developmentalism (CPDAIMK 1987, 17). However, they actively resist to state’s “Productive
Politics” or “Full-Uniformity of Nation” during the Yushin regime, demanding the
“constitutional amendment” for democratization for the sake of “the National revival by the
suffering of Jesus Christ” (NCCK, 1987, 1845).

3) Sanctified humanitarianism: It is evident that the NCCK denied ethic of state
developmentalism as “idolatry” of “the gospel of efficiency, performance, economy first”
(NCCK 1987 1027, 1802). In addition, they understood the secular humanitarianism in terms
of religious vocabulary. They argued that the arbitrary interpretation of nationalism by the
state in the name of ‘public matter’ resulted in another ‘private’ infliction of human right. For
them, the human right of the individual is “autonomy from God” who bears the ‘ultimate
decider’ of what the publicity is, so Park Chung-hee’s eradication of individuality in the name
of nation is “devilish” and “defiance against God” (NCCK 1987, 6-11). In summary, they
attempted to regain the status of “immortal Deity” from the secularized nation of Park’s
regime so that they insisted state’s decision on what the moral was wrong. In addition, they
criticized the fundamental evangelists who were passive in social participations when they
argued that “Service indifferent in social justice is unfaithful behavior” (NCCK 1987, 1513).
These were the ‘another’ moral, defensive judgements on how the state and dominant
Christians were religiously illegitimate when they openly stigmatized the social participations
by the NCCK as ‘communist’ of ‘heresy’ mentioned above.
Minjung-ism

As mentioned the PROK, one of the member of the NCCK was the most active denomination which continuously engaged in political matters during the authoritarian regime. Since the late 1970s, they began to develop the alternative concept of the political community called *Minjung* (people) to the state-centered nation in the theological perspective.

1) *On Minjung Theology:* According to Lee Nam-Hee (2010), the concept of *Minjung* comprised the oppressed people in the sociopolitical system determined by repressive regimes, bourgeois capitals, and foreign powers. This notion is from the perception that in the modern history of Korea, there was no true historical subject because of the negativity of colonialism (by Japan), foreign intervention (By the US and USSR), the Korean War. The critical scholars and university students began to contemplate new historical subjectivity of the nation on this crisis of identity. Those tasks entailed the rethinking and reevaluating of the major historical events that defined the rulers and the ruled, the conqueror and the conquered, and the ethnicity made by the state. In this aspect, “the making of *Minjung*” is the revolutionary processes of the politics of representation by revaluation of traditional cultures overlooked by the dominant, official, elitist ideology.

Pastor Ahn Byong-moo and Seo Nam-dong interpreted this concept in more religious connotation (Seo 1983, 52-55; Ahn 1987, 11-43). They distinguished the words in Mark ‘ochlos’, which signified ‘people out of the boundary’ and ‘laos’ ‘inside the sovereign rule’. He focused on the former when it was used to indicate people who followed Jesus Christ, and he identified it with *Minjung* and the latter with ‘nation’, especially the concept of the nation promoted by the contemporary state-system. In this aspect, *Minjung* always ‘transcend’ the
range of the formal definition of the nation by state nationalism, re-conceptualizing of who belong to the nation and who are the legitimate subjects of political community.

Against both of communism and official anti-communism: Anti-communism of Minjung theology was not just anti-thesis on communist regime of North Korea as the state nationalism declared. Minjung comprises not only the nation under the ROK regime, but non-Christians and “people(Inmin)” under the DPRK regime, who were everyone marginalized by the two authoritarian state-systems in Korean Peninsula. This conceptualization was partly similar with functional understanding of state nationalism which differentiated the resident and the communist regime in the North Korea as mentioned. However, the essence of Minjung was its enthusiastic subjectification of non-state population in two Koreas as the genuine subject of national reunification (Ahn 1987, 41-42). In this regard, ideologues of Minjung eagerly attempted to visit the North Korea for peacekeeping dialogue, which the authoritarian strictly banned except the official bureaucrats or politicians with regime’s special admission. One of the PROK pastor Moon Ik-hwan’s case was typical example when he was arrested in violation of National Security Law after the visit to North Korea and meeting with Kim Il-sung in 1989.

2) Minjung as ‘unproductive’ political subjects: As persons in the NCCK did, Pastor Seo criticized Korean political economy as dependent on foreign capital and big businesses, designating as “feudalism”, “(neo) colonialism” (Seo 1985, 152-153). However, the radical stance of Minjung-ism against the state ideology of national economy was its emphasis on “incompetent” “useless” individual as the protagonist of national history. Mentioning “the disabled, patients, women, orphans, prostitutes, wanderers” in the Bible, Minjung theologians denounced not only the mobilization by state-centered economic development but
dichotomous proletariat-centered categorization by the communist regimes (Seo 1983, 176-177). This argument is comparable to the NCCK’s emphasis on the rights of the labor forces who took part in the productive process of national development as mentioned above.

3) Messianic politics by Minjung: As mentioned, fundamental evangelists equated the ethical conduct with personal salvation, and the eclectic sanctified individual’s rights and judged ‘political passiveness’ of Christian as a kind of sin. However, Minjung theology partly cast a doubt on those moral judgement is derived from the differentiation of the strong and the weak by the dominant class. “Lawful-ritualistic thinking” by both of the state and church plays “a leading role of maintaining the existing order” (Ahn 1987, 91-92; Seo 1983, 151), and this moralistic ethics resulted in stigmatization such as “commie” “social misfit” by the state and Christian nationalism. This rationale was possible when Minjung theology understood the crucifixion of Jesus as the exemplar, ahistorical, representative “case” of the persecuted Minjung, not only the redemption of personal salvation that evangelists argued. In this aspect, Minjung is the Messianic subject transpiercing every moment of history, as Walter Benjamin argued the simultaneous appreciation of Messianic time regardless of chronological, sequential segmentation of contemporary “empty homogeneous time” (Benjamin 2007[1955]). As state nationalism’s “immortal Deity”, who works in the narrative of past-present-future, legitimized existing Park Chung-hee and its subsequent regimes, Minjung theology provided the resistance ideology for realization of Messianic intervention “just at present.” However, this radicalization of time-appreciation was also shown in the state nationalism when Park Chung-hee rationalized his Yusin regime as “inevitable” in front of “The Altar of Nation” (Park 2005, 647), and fundamental evangelist also used the rhetoric of Apocalyptic narrative of Premillennialism as mentioned above.
A Brief History of Political Participation by Korean Protestants since 1987

A number of political scientists and sociologists of religions appreciates that the role of Protestant Churches such as the NCCK and the PROK were crucial in democratic movement in 1970s-1980s, especially as an ‘incubator of democratization and a center for organizing the personal networks (Choi 1989; Kang 200; Park 2003; Im 2006). As stark example, the rally of National Movement Headquarter for achievement of Democratic Constitution, which triggered the June Uprising and Commencement of 6th Republic of Korea in 1987 was held in Hyangrin Church, a member of PROK.

However, since the democratization in 1987, as the friction between the state and politically-active churches decreased, fundamental evangelical churches who had shown ‘tacit consent’ to the state institution began to raise their collective voice and action, and gradually occupied the discursive hegemonic status in the basis of abundance of material resources compared to the churches of the NCCK and the PROK (Kang 2007, 602-610). It is symbolized as the foundation of the Christian Council of Korea (CCK) of fundamental evangelist churches in 1989. In addition, more liberalized civil society provided a hot bed to develop more issue-specific Protestant NGOs such as Christian Ethic Movement (CEM). In these context, the conflict between different opinions and theological-political lines of denominations once oppressed by the authoritative state resulted in fragmentation of so-called ‘democratic churches’ and the overall hegemony of fundamental evangelist churches (Ibid.). This caused the lack of continuing discussion about the concept of the nation among Protestant, entailing the unquestioning acceptance of the concept of nation established by the
state-system. This combined with the perception of nation-state, as the fortress against the collapse of the community in Korean society from economic crisis in 1997, and it also overlapped with the concept of the “chosen nation” that must serve evangelical missions to other ‘underdeveloped’ nations. In addition, fundamental evangelist churches began to re-unification movement in a different way from what the NCCK or PROK once took, emphasizing the anti-communistic and legitimate government who protect—especially religious—freedom of the nation and active intervention into DPRK regime in the name of ‘humanitarian intervention’. These complexities of situations were deepened when the New Right movement and formation of a number of Christian parties were initiated since 2000s for the sake of checking the “left-biased” Kim Dae-jung and Roh Moo-hyun government. These successive events have influenced in the seizure of power by Christian President Lee Myong-bak and the incumbent President Park Geun-hye, a daughter of Park Chung-hee.

**Conclusion: Protestant Hegemonic Nationalism in Post-Secular Society in Korea**

However, regardless of ‘which forces of Protestant churches come to power’ or ‘how they are “progressive” or “conservative” in politics, we can elicit the theoretical implication on nationalism and secularization in general from the historical cases of Korean Protestantism mentioned above.

First, as simply alluded above, Protestant churches in Korea functioned as an informal institution of “hegemonic nationalism.” Analyzing modern Chinese nationalism, Jungmin Seo (2005) introduced “nationalism as hegemony,” which legitimizes the political discourses of the ruler and the ruled regardless of their contentious political stances. Owing to the works
of scholars with various disciplines such as Comaroff and Comaroff (1991), Foucault (1980), and Balibar (1991), “nationalism as hegemony” suggests a) nation as a “take-for-granted”, “naturalized” social factuality of political contention b) nation as a non-agentive form of habitual practices c) nationalistic discourses as a dynamic process of formulation of both domination and resistance (144-155). This conceptualization emphasizes that certain ruling ideology of nationalism, which logically takes the form of nation, can serves as common political grammar of other resistant nationalistic ideologies (Seo 2009) as unintended consequences of dominant class or the state agency.

From the beginning of its introduction in Korea, Protestantism took a form of nation as a unit of how they produce their religious doctrines in the context of crisis of national sovereignty under the fall of Chosun and Japanese colonial rule. As Bansanghoe became the place that how common people imagine the nation every month in daily life (Seo and Kim 2015), “praying for the country and nation” every Sunday (or even every day for devout believers) provided laypeople the chance they imagine ‘someone’ who shares the realm of (come-to-be) Christian Nation beyond their meticulous life affairs. The diversifications of how the Korean Protestants accept the hegemonic project of state nationalism in Park’s regime and their subsequent activisms are also the unintended consequences from the position of the missionaries who initially introduced the concept of the nation and the state officials who intended to secure the full hegemony of the society. As Protestant were already aware of nation in their own way before the state-building, their consent, competition, and disagreement on state nationalism were inevitable. In addition, as “naturalized” hegemonic stance of a certain concept of the nation is maintained, it is ‘obvious’ to engage in political affairs when that concept is threatened by other “ideological intentions” by the others that
“take-for-granted” concept of the nation defines. Consider how fundamental evangelists denounced other denominations as ‘communist’, ‘too political’ whereas those ‘other denominations’ called them as ‘power-seeking’, ‘coward’, ‘unjust’, and both of them rebuked each other as ‘heresy’. This is definitely observable how Minjung-ism tried to conceptualize the new concept of community and salvation against the hegemonized state nationalism and personal salvation in Korean Protestantism.

Second, the argument that active participation of Korean Protestantism in political and social movement is due to the very concept of nation that the state and church shares indicates how we think about the conventional distinction of the divine/secular. According to the experiences of the West but comprising the contemporary phenomena worldwide, Charles Taylor categorizes the concept of secularity in three phases: 1) emtping of religion from autonomous social sphere; 2) the falling off of religious belief and practice in overall society; and 3) a shift from a society where belief in God is unchallenged, unproblematic, to one in which it is understood to be one option among other alternative world views (Taylor 2007, 1-22). Taylor’s conceptualization of secularity is based on how we understand the autonomy of social spheres once occupied by the religion and the present condition that religion became the one of those very social spheres.

In the cases of Korean Protestants, evangelization of Protestantism was undergone hand in hand with nationalization of once pre-modern people, and this nationalization cannot help but be tinged with political connotation depending on the secular process of the state-building. As Korean nation was under the Japanese colonial rule, the concept of the secular sovereignty was partly maintained in churches; when the secular state tried to push ahead the nationalization, one group of churches showed consent whereas the others resisted in
dreaming more democratized nation. These were possible when the latter insisted their autonomy based on the distinction of divine/secular toward the state while they bore in mind the another version of ideal of the secular nation (a rhetoric of the NCCK “freedom of religion” is emblematic example). Or, for the former, political indifference or tacit consent was also from that divine/secular distinction (a rhetoric of “Caesar to Caesar, God to God” is exemplar), while they in effect supported the “nationalized, taken-for-granted” state nationalism under the authoritarian secular regime. In this aspect, the cases of Korean Protestant, in which Taylor’s secularity 1) and 2) are absent in historical experiences, already showed secularity 3) in more complex form from at the beginning as the religious sphere asserted their own autonomy selectively for the purpose of the secular political sphere. This tendency is expected to be more reinforced in “post-secular society” where religions which have been once-regarded as disappeared from the public sphere are 1) getting public and attention in global society; 2) providing “the community of interpretation” of the secular world and 3) causing the challenge of a pluralism of ways of life (Habermas 2008, 20-21).

In this context, political participation of fundamentalism of 1) a resistance toward the invasion of the secular politics into the divine reign 2) an intrusion of the divine principle into the secular political arena (cf. Garvey 1993, 17-22) are obscured in Korean cases. As Protestants in Korea maintain the nation form and its resultant memory of political engagement, the political participation of Protestants in Korea, especially of fundamental evangelists, such as attempts for establishing the Christian Party emergent since 2000, will be continuous in voluntary ways for a near future.
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