

STRUGGLE TO BE THE SUN AGAIN

Introducing Asian Women's Theology

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another's light.
Her face has a sickly pallor.

We must now regain our hidden sun.
"Reveal our hidden sun!
Rediscover our natural gifts!"
This is the ceaseless cry
Which forces itself into our hearts;
it is our irrepressible
and unquenchable desire.
It is our final,
complete,
and only instinct
through which
our various
separate instincts
are unified.⁵³

In Asian women's perspective, knowledge of self leads to a knowledge of God. In their suffering, Asian women meet God, who in turn discloses that they were created in the divine image, full and equal participants in the community with men. To know the self is to know God for Christian Asian women. Asian women's knowledge of Jesus Christ, who has become a symbol of full humanity, is the subject of the next chapter.

4

WHO IS JESUS FOR ASIAN WOMEN?

Traditional Images

In order to express their experiences of Jesus, the majority of Asian women use the traditional titles that they received from missionaries. Since many Christian churches in Asia are still dominated by Western missionary theologies and androcentric interpretations of the Bible, some Asian women's theologies on the surface look similar to Western missionary or Asian male theologies. However, when we look closely at the Asian women's usage of the traditional titles of Jesus, we can find the emergence of new meaning out of the old language. The following are examples of traditional images of Jesus which have gone through the welding of meaning by the experiences of Asian women.

Jesus as Suffering Servant

The most prevailing image of Jesus among Asian women's theological expressions is the image of the suffering servant. Asian Christian women seem to feel most comfortable with this image of Jesus whether they are theologically conservative or progressive.

According to the "Summary Statement from the Theological Study Group of Christology,"¹ developed by the Asian Women's Theological Conference, Singapore, Asian Christian women from many different countries defined Jesus as "the prophetic messiah whose role is that of the suffering servant," the one who "offers himself as ransom for many." They claimed that "through his suffering messiahship, he creates a new humanity."²

Asian Christian women at the Singapore conference rejected such images of Jesus as "triumphal King" and "authoritative high priest."³ They contended that these images of Jesus have "served to support a patriarchal religious consciousness in the Church and in theology."⁴ Jesus became the Messiah through his suffering in service to others, not by his domination

over others. Like Korean theologian Choi Man Ja, many Asian Christian women make connections between their humanity and Jesus' humanity through "suffering and obedience."⁵ Because Asian women's life experience is filled with "suffering and obedience," it seems natural for Asian women to meet Jesus through the experience that is most familiar to them.

When Asian women live through the hardship of suffering and obedience their family, society, and culture inflict upon them, they need a language that can define the meaning of their experience. The image of a suffering Jesus enables Asian women to see meaning in their own suffering. Jesus suffered for others as Asian women suffer for their families and other community members. As Jesus' suffering was salvific, Asian women are beginning to view their own suffering as redemptive. They are making meaning out of their suffering through the stories of Jesus' life and death. As Jesus' suffering for others was life-giving, so Asian women's suffering is being viewed as a source of empowerment for themselves and for others whose experience is defined by oppression.

However, making meaning out of suffering is a dangerous business. It can be both a seed for liberation and an opium for the oppression of Asian women. These two conflicting possibilities shape Asian women's experience of encounter with Jesus.

Asian women have believed in Jesus *in spite of* many contradictory experiences they receive from their families, churches, and societies. Believing *in spite of* great contradictions is the only option for many Asian women who are seeking to be Christian. For example, their fathers are supposed to be the protectors, the ones who give Asian women safety in an oppressive world, providing food, shelter, and clothing. But too often Asian women are beaten by their fathers or sold into child marriage or prostitution. Asian women's husbands are supposed to love them, but frequently they batter their wives in the name of love and family harmony. Asian women's brothers are supposed to support and encourage them, but they instead often further their own higher educations by tacitly using their Asian sisters, ignoring the reality that their sisters are selling their bodies to pay for tuition. The promises of safety, love, and nurturing have not been fulfilled. Asian women have trusted their beloved men, but their men have often betrayed them. Yet Asian women still hope, still believe that, "Maybe someday, somewhere, somebody will love me and nurture me as I am." Is Jesus that somebody?

Some Asian women have found Jesus as the one who really loves and respects them as human beings with dignity, while the other men in their lives have betrayed them. At the Singapore conference, Komol Arayapraa-
tep, a Christian woman from Thailand, shared her appreciation of Jesus:

We women are always very grateful to Jesus the Christ. It is because of him that we can see God's grace for women. God saw to it that

women had a vital part in the life of Jesus the Christ from his birth to his death and resurrection.⁶

Yet the church's teachings about Jesus are very similar to what their fathers, husbands, and brothers say to Asian women, rather than what Jesus actually says to them in the gospels. The church tells Asian women:

Be obedient and patient as Jesus was to his heavenly father. He endured suffering and death on the cross. That is what good Christian women are supposed to do. When you go through all the suffering, you too, like Jesus, will have a resurrection someday in heaven. Remember, without the cross, there will be no resurrection; no pain, no gain. You must die first in order to live.⁷

This is a hard and confusing teaching for Asian women. They are asking, "Why should we die in order to gain Jesus' love? Can't we love Jesus while being fully alive?" For Asian women self-denial and love are always applied to women in the church as they are in the family. But why isn't this teaching applied to men?

Western colonialism and neo-colonialism have created an added burden to Asian women's belief in Jesus. When Western Christians brought Jesus to Asia, many also brought with them opium and guns.⁸ They taught Asians the love of Jesus while they gave Asians the slow death of opium or the fast death of a bullet. When the soldiers of the United States of America raped Vietnamese women and children and killed many Vietnamese people with Agent Orange, guns, and bombs in the name of democracy, the people of the United States still sang, "God Bless America." Death and love are connected in missionary acts whether they are religious or secular.⁹

Some Asian women still choose Jesus in spite of these contradictory personal and political experiences. Why have they continued to choose Jesus over and over again? Where was Jesus when Asian women's bodies were battered, raped, and burned? What has he done to protect them from suffering? Who is Jesus for Asian women? Is he like his own father, who allowed his son to be killed by Roman colonial power and religious hierarchies even though he cried out for help? ("My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?") Is Jesus like one of those irresponsible, frustrated Asian men who promise their lover and wife love and "the good life" but then, after stealing the woman's heart and body, say: "I will come back soon with money and gifts. While I am away, take care of *my* children and old parents. Be loyal to me." Of course such men almost never come back to their hopelessly waiting lover and wife, leaving all the burdens of survival on her shoulders. Are Asian women stuck in the battered women's vicious cycle of passive dependency? In Jesus are they again choosing a male whom they again try to love in spite of his neglect and abandonment simply because they know of no other type of relationship with men?

Some brave Asian women proclaim a resounding no to this endlessly confusing love game defined by "in spite of." They say they love Jesus *because of* and not *in spite of* who he is. They refuse to accept old, familiar ways of relating to their loved ones, which were based on forced sacrifice by women. Rather, they choose the *respect* of self. Jesus is only good for these Asian women when he affirms, respects, and is actively present with them in their long and hard journey for liberation and wholeness. Asian women are discovering with much passion and compassion that Jesus takes sides with the silenced Asian women in his solidarity with all oppressed people. This Jesus is Asian women's new lover, comrade, and suffering servant.

One example of choosing Jesus *because of* is witnessed by a Filipino, Lydia Lascano, a community organizer for slum dwellers for more than ten years, who presented her experience of Jesus as a suffering servant actively present with Filipino women in their suffering and resistance.¹⁰ She believes Jesus' suffering has two different moments. One is "passive" and the other is "active." She identifies poor Filipino women's suffering under colonialism, military dictatorship, and male domination with the suffering of Jesus. She quotes from Isaiah as an example of the passive moment of Jesus' suffering:

He had no beauty, no majesty to draw our eyes, no grace to make us delight in him; his form, disfigured, lost all the likeness of a man. Without beauty, without majesty . . . a thing despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows familiar with suffering (Is. 53:2-3 NEB).

Lascano sees that the humiliation and dehumanization of the suffering servant are the same as the core experience of Filipino women. Many Filipino women are "suffering passively without hope of freeing themselves" due to the overwhelming hardship of their day-to-day survival and the unawareness of the root causes of their oppression.¹¹ The suffering servant image of Jesus expresses well the reality that Filipino women are undergoing.¹² Jesus' passive moment of undergoing suffering is very important for poor Filipino women because they then can trust Jesus for his *lived* suffering. Jesus does not lecture or preach about suffering in the way the institutional church does. He knows women's suffering because he was the one who once suffered helplessly like them.

Lydia Lascano also identifies an active moment of Jesus' suffering which contrasts to the passive moment. The active moment of Jesus' suffering is "doing" and "accompanying" as acts of solidarity. For her, to accompany is to be beside and walk with someone.¹³ Jesus is actively present in the Filipino women's struggle for liberation, accompanying them in their doing justice. For Filipino women Jesus is not a dispassionate observer of their struggle. Rather, Jesus is an active participant in their fight for justice. Another Filipino woman, Virginia Fabella, explains this accompanying and

doing aspect of Jesus' suffering in this way: "Because he stood for all he taught and did, he consequently endured suffering at the hands of his captors as a continuation and overflow of his act of identification with his people who saw no clear end to their misery at the hand of the system."¹⁴

For Filipino women Jesus is neither a masochist who enjoys suffering, nor a father's boy who blindly does what he is told to do. On the contrary, Jesus is a compassionate man of integrity who identified himself with the oppressed. He "stood for all he taught and did" and took responsibility for the consequences of his choice even at the price of his life. This image of Jesus' suffering gives Asian women the wisdom to differentiate between the suffering imposed by an oppressor and the suffering that is the consequence of one's stand for justice and human dignity.

Korean theologian Choi Man Ja makes this liberative aspect of Jesus' suffering clear in her presentation on feminist Christology. She asks this question: "How do women who are in the situation of suffering under and obeying oppressive power, take on significance as suffering and obeying servants?"¹⁵ Her answer is:

Suffering is not an end in itself, . . . it has definite social references of divine redemptive activity. Suffering exposes patriarchal evil. Jesus endures the yoke of the cross against the evil powers of this patriarchal world. This obedience is different from simple submission to the worldly authority.¹⁶

Another Korean women theologian, Park Soon Kyung, developed further the meaning of Jesus' servanthood. According to her, Jesus' servanthood changed the meaning of being a slave among the oppressed people. The yoke of slaves is proof of the world's injustice and witness to the desire for God's righteousness.¹⁷ Therefore, servanthood is not mere submission or obedience. It is instead a powerful witness to evil and a challenge to the powers and the principalities of the world, especially male domination over women. This suffering servant who is undergoing passive suffering with powerless Asian women and who is also accompanying them in their struggle for liberation by doing liberation is the prophetic Messiah who creates a new humanity for oppressed Asian women. Through Jesus Christ, Asian women see new meaning in their suffering and service. They see life-giving aspects in their suffering and service that creates a new humanity for the people they serve.

Jesus as Lord

If the liberative dimension of the suffering servant image frees Asian women from imposed suffering and empowers them to accept suffering as a consequence of their own choice for liberation, the liberative dimension of the Lord image of Jesus frees Asian women from the false authority of

the world over them and empowers them to claim true authority which springs from life-giving experiences.

Yet like the image of the suffering servant, the image of Lord also has been used against Asian women, perpetuating their submissive and oppressed status in Asian society and the church. Traditionally Asian women have not been the owners of themselves under mainline patriarchal culture. In the East Asian context where Confucianism was the dominant social and religious ideology, women have had to obey the men in their lives: fathers before marriage, husbands in marriage, and sons in widowhood. The Asian woman's man was her lord. In addition to Confucianism, feudalism and the emperor system did not give much space for the self-determination of women. Even though women could not actively participate in any public or political affairs, they did, of course, suffer from the results of the hierarchical social system (in such concrete ways as lack of food due to oppressive taxes).

Western colonialism used Jesus' image as Lord to justify political and economic domination over many Asian countries. Western missionaries tried to brainwash Asian people by identifying the Western colonizer's Lord Jesus with the Lord for Asians, claiming that the colonizer's Lord Jesus was ruler of the whole universe. Therefore to become a Christian meant obeying the Lord Jesus and the colonial power which brought him to Asia.

This ruler image of Lord Jesus became especially strong in countries like the Philippines which were colonized by Spain. The Spanish conquistadores put Lord Jesus over all the indigenous spirits in the Philippines and put their king over the tribal leadership of the Filipino people. In their recent research many Filipino women theologians have begun to name this lordship ideology of colonial Christianity and its impact on Filipino women's lives.¹⁸ They demonstrate that the lordship ideology of colonial Christianity domesticated the vibrant pre-colonial Filipino women's self-understanding and power in the community.¹⁹ Filipino women shared equally or with even more power than men in domestic and public life before Spanish colonialism. Filipino women were active members in local politics and economics. According to Mary John Mananzan's research, even some male scholars believe that Filipino society was based on a matriarchal culture before colonization.²⁰ This active image of the power of Filipino women was diminished as Christianity was spread along with the feudal ideology of the colonial power. The ideal image of the Filipino woman became one of passivity, submissiveness, obedience, and chastity.

Under this historical reality many Asian women who were seeking women's liberation and self-determination have become suspicious of the Lord image of Jesus. Yet they also see the liberative power of the image of Jesus as Lord of the poor and oppressed women in Asia. One of the most articulate voices who illustrate this point is Park Soon Kyung from Korea. She is fully aware of ruler ideology (*Herren Ideologie*) of the image of Jesus as Lord, but she asserts that the lordship of Jesus is "the exact opposite" of

patriarchal lordship.²¹ For her, the lordship of Jesus means the lordship of justice, which "judges the evil power of rulers in this world."²² While patriarchal lordship of this world means the ruling power that oppresses people, lordship of Jesus means the power that liberates people. The concept of power and authority in Jesus' lordship is completely different from that in patriarchal lordship. Jesus' lordship is the lordship of the "creator and savior of human and nature."²³ The title *Kyrios* (Lord), which was the word for ruler in Hellenistic culture, transformed its meaning radically when it was used to name the power of Jesus. According to Park Soon Kyung, the lordship of Jesus which comes from God limits the lordship of the rulers in this world by showing the real meaning of lordship through Jesus' deeds and his eschatological vision. All lordship in this world "should return to its origin," which is God.²⁴ Therefore, all lordship in this world becomes "relativized" under the eschatological vision of Jesus. The lordship in this world should be "the means which serves the salvation of humankind" and to "the righteousness and providence of God."²⁵ Park says:

The Lordship of Christ means that his Lordship is exact opposite of patriarchal Lordship and he eschatologically places the rule of the evil powers in this world under God's judgement. Jesus put a period to the power of patriarchal history by obeying to the righteousness of God as a male even to his death. His Lordship is the Lordship of the righteousness of God which is established by his suffering and death. This Lordship destroys the principality and power of the world and returns all the power and authority to God.²⁶

Jesus' lordship, then, says no to patriarchal domination, freeing Asian women from false authority and empowering them to obey only God and not men.

Jesus as Immanuel (God-with-us)

Jesus, who became the Lord of the universe through his suffering and service for humanity, also shows Asian women God's presence among them. Many Asian women cherish the mystery of the incarnation through Jesus' person and work. "Both the human and divine nature of Jesus are important" for Asian women's identity and mission.²⁷ Their understanding of Jesus' humanity and divinity, however, is very different from that of Nicene-Chalcedonian theological definitions stressing the Son's relationship to the Father and the two natures of his person. Asian women's concern for the humanity and divinity of Jesus derives from their resistance to colonial, male domination in their churches and cultures. Two distinguished voices which articulate the meaning of incarnation (Logos becoming flesh in Jesus) come from India and Korea. Indian theologian Monica Melancton and Korean theologian Lee Oo Chung, express the meaning of incarnation and Immanuel from their specific socio-political and religio-cultural contexts.

Monica Melanchton locates Jesus' divinity in his sinlessness, virgin birth, resurrection, and "the tremendous authority Jesus claimed and exercised."²⁸ She explains Jesus' divine power further:

The thing that impressed the masses was that the teaching of Jesus was differentiated from that of the Scribes by its innate sense of authority. It was with this power vested in him that he performed exorcism, forgave sins, healed the sick and preached with authority. That any mere human could claim such authority and back it up with his actions is beyond the remotest possibility. Hence every New Testament book attributes deity/divinity to Jesus either by direct statement or by inference.²⁹

But this Jesus also shares human finitude with us by "lying in the cradle, growing, learning, feeling the pangs of hunger, thirst, anxiety, doubt, grief, and finally death and burial."³⁰ For Melanchton, Jesus is a "representative"³¹ of the reality of "God-with-us" (Immanuel). She claims, however, that the institutional church distorted Jesus' image by emphasizing his maleness rather than his humanity. Jesus' maleness became "a constitutive factor in deciding the place and role of women."³² Jesus' maleness excluded women from full participation in the church. She emphasizes that through his incarnation Jesus becomes the representative of a new humanity, not only of men, who are just one-half of the human race, but of women too. Melanchton warns that emphasizing the maleness of Jesus is a pagan act.

If we ascribe maleness to Jesus Christ, we are also committing the mistake of ascribing the pagan/Hindu notions of sexuality to our God who transcends this. The Church in India needs to recognize the personhood of Jesus Christ and the fact that Christ is the representative human being for all people including Indian women.³³

For her, Jesus' humanity embraces all people. The Christian God transcends sexuality and therefore frees Indian women from the stereotypical role assignments in Indian culture. Jesus as the Immanuel (God-with-us) transforms Hindu culture.

In contrast to Melanchton, Lee Oo Chung shows how Korean culture transforms the meaning of Immanuel, incarnation, and the divinity and humanity of Jesus. Lee Oo Chung advocates a Christology from below in a Korean context. According to her the traditional concept of Korean gods in general is that "special persons having done special things in a lifetime, become gods after death."³⁴ There is a popular format for these special persons becoming gods:

- 1) The issue of noble family
- 2) Extraordinary birth
- 3) Extraordinary childhood

- 4) Becoming an orphan at an early age or facing other kinds of suffering
- 5) Being rescued from the situation or surviving by encountering foster parents
- 6) Facing a crisis again
- 7) Winning a victory by fighting and obtaining glory.³⁵

The above format is often seen in the stories of heroes who became gods. However, interestingly enough, when the story is about heroines, it has similar steps up to the sixth stage but "in the end she wins victory to become a god by suffering, loving, being patient, and sacrificing instead of fighting."³⁶ There are many gods in Korea who ascended to the position of god from being human through his or her love, suffering, and sacrifice. Among them, the majority are female.³⁷

In this cultural framework Christology from above (God become human) is difficult to understand for the ordinary masses of people (minjung), especially laborers. Conceptual and abstract images of God in Christian theology, such as "totally other," "unmovable mover," and "immutable, impassable, unchangeable God," do not make much sense to Korean people. Lee Oo Chung observes Korean people's understanding of Jesus:

The doctrine of God's becoming a man is a hard proposition for them [Korean Minjung] to accept. However "A man becomes a god" is easy for them to understand. Jesus Christ as Messiah can be better understood in the image of historical Jesus who has loved his neighbors more than himself and for this great love he went through surmounting suffering and sacrifice to become the Messiah, the Savior of humankind. Whereas the theory which says that because Jesus was God he was Messiah does not appeal too much.³⁸

Lee proposes a radical task of liberation for Korean Christian women: In order to fully "experience the mystery of doctrine of incarnation by choice," Korean women must get out of the imposed service role in the church and society. This is possible when Korean women "elevate our self-consciousness as high as in the realm of the divine."³⁹ This elevation of women's self-consciousness will be generated from women's "experience of real love of God, for our totality of being the body, mind, and soul, as an individual and as a social being."⁴⁰

Korean women experience the mystery of incarnation and "God-with-us" by becoming like Jesus. Many Korean Christians in the movement claim that we should become "little Jesuses" in order to become true Christians. For many Korean women, Jesus is not the objectified divine being whom people must worship. Rather, Jesus is the one we relive through our lives. The meaning of Immanuel, then, has been changed through Korean mythological symbols and language from God-with-us to God-among-us, and finally to God-is-us in our struggle to reclaim our full humanity.

New Emerging Images

New images of Jesus have emerged from Asian women's movements for self-determination and liberation. The freer Asian women become from the patriarchal authorities of their family, church, and society, the more creative they become in naming their experience of Jesus Christ. Sometimes the images of Jesus are transformed to the degree that they show the radical discontinuity between the ones found in the Jewish and Christian culture and those from the Asian women's movement. Some Asian women have become confident enough in themselves to name the presence of Jesus Christ in their own culture, indigenous religions, and secular political movements, a Christological identity that is not directly connected in the traditional sense with Christianity. They use religio-political symbols and motifs from their movement in order to describe what Jesus means for them in today's Asia. This is a *Christological transformation* created out of Asian women's experiences as they struggle for full humanity. The old Christological paradigms are transformed, new meanings are achieved, and diverse images of Jesus Christ emerge. Asian women as meaning-makers jump into an unknown open future shaping a new Christianity out of their own experience that never before existed in history. The following are examples of new, emerging images of Jesus Christ derived from Asian women who believe in their historical lived experience more than imposed authority.

Jesus as Liberator, Revolutionary, and Political Martyr

Jesus Christ is portrayed as liberator in many writings of women from various Asian countries such as India, Indonesia, Korea, the Philippines, and Sri Lanka. The reason why Jesus as liberator is the most prominent new image among Asian women is a consequence of their historical situation. The liberation from colonialism, neo-colonialism, poverty, and military dictatorship, as well as from overarching patriarchy, has been the major aspiration of twentieth-century Asian women.

In the composite paper of the EATWOT Asian Women's Consultation, entitled "Women and the Christ Event," Jesus is defined as "the prototype of the real liberator."⁴¹ They also claim that Jesus as liberator is evident "in the image of liberators in other non-Christian religions and movements."⁴² A participant at the consultation, Pauline Hensman, a woman theologian from Sri Lanka, described Jesus Christ as the one who "came with good news to the poor, oppressed and downtrodden" and through whom "humankind was released from servitude and alienation by those who dominated and oppressed them."⁴³ This image of Jesus Christ as liberator is made concrete as revolutionary or political martyr in the Filipino women's reflection on the Christ event presented at the same consultation. According to Lydia Lascano from the Philippines, Filipino women who participate in the people's struggle for liberation "live out with their lives

the Christ event—Jesus' life, passion, death and resurrection leaving the mark of their womanhood in the Philippine liberation project, the project of God."⁴⁴

Filipino women have suffered (under more than three hundred years of Spanish and American colonialism and military dictatorships) and have resisted in order to survive and reclaim their human dignity as a people. Filipino women find Christ's suffering, death and resurrection *in* the suffering, death, and resurrection of Filipino women themselves. They see revolutionary acts of Christ among "the militant protesting Filipino women who have taken up the struggle for themselves and for the rest of the Filipino nation."⁴⁵ In their organized action for liberation, Filipino women have been arrested, raped, tortured, imprisoned, and displaced from their homes. Many have even been killed in their struggle toward self-determination for their people. Their names are today remembered by women in protest movements. Some names include:

Lorena Barros, a freedom fighter; Filomena Asuncion, a deaconess who offered her life for the conscientization of peasants; Leticia Celestino, a factory worker shot in the picketlines while demanding for a just wage; Angelina Sayat, a freedom fighter who died while in the custody of the military; Puri Pedro, a Catechist who served the farmers, was tortured and killed while being treated in a hospital.⁴⁶

In the death of those political martyrs for freedom is the death of Jesus. Unlike the women of Jerusalem in Jesus' time, women are not just comforting or shedding tears for Jesus on his way to the cross. Filipino women shed blood for their people. Sister Lascano explains the political martyrdom among Filipino women:

Today, the passion of Christ in the Filipino people is fashioning women disciples who would accompany the suffering Christ alive among the people, not merely to comfort and support but even to die with them. In the passion for social transformation, death takes on a new level of meaningfulness. . . . Today many Filipino women do not merely accompany Christ to Calvary as spectators. They carry the cross with him and undergo his passion in an act of identification with his suffering.⁴⁷

The resurrection of Jesus comes alive in the resurrection of these martyrs. The Filipino women's resistance movement makes the spirit and vision of these martyrs come alive by persistent "organized action" and "active waiting and watching" for the future victory of the struggle.⁴⁸ When poor Filipino women are awakened to see the root cause of their suffering in structural evils, they begin to claim for themselves land and rights as human beings. They utter in discovery, "We will also have our Exodus!"⁴⁹ And

they take political action. This discovery has stirred hope in their hearts, believing that "the liberating God of the Exodus has become alive in the resurrected Christ, now alive among them as *the Bagong Kristo* (the New Christ)." ⁵⁰

Jesus as Mother, Woman, and Shaman

Many Asian women portray Jesus with the image of mother. They see Jesus as a compassionate one who feels the suffering of humanity deeply, suffers and weeps with them. Since Jesus' compassion is so deep, the mother image is the most appropriate one for Asian women to express their experience of Jesus' compassion. Hong Kong theologian Kwok Pui-lan explains this point in her essay "God weeps with our pain":

Jesus cried out for Jerusalem. His sorrow was so deep Matthew had to use a "feminine metaphor" to describe what he actually felt: How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings (Matt. 23:37). ⁵¹

Like a mother who laments over her dead son who died in the wars in Indochina, like many weeping Korean mothers whose sons and daughters were taken by the secret police, Jesus cried out for the pain of suffering humanity. Korean theologian Lee Oo Chung questions why Jesus suffered so keenly before his death. ⁵² Even Jesus says to the disciples: "The sorrow in my heart is so great that it almost crushes me. Stay here and keep watch." Jesus was not like one of those saints and heroes who died calmly and serenely. According to Lee, Jesus was different from those saints and heroes because they "bore only their own suffering while Jesus took on himself the pain and suffering of all his neighbors, even of all humankind." ⁵³

Like some of Jesus' disciples, people who were only interested in the expansion of their personal glory, honor, and power ("When you sit on your throne in your glorious kingdom, we want you to let us sit with you, one at your right and one at your left" — Mark 10:37) could not feel the pain of the suffering poor nor see the violence and evil of the oppressors. ⁵⁴ Jesus was different from them in that he felt the pain of all humanity like a compassionate mother. Lee discovers the image of Jesus as a compassionate mother who really feels the hurt and pain of her child in Korean folklore:

In the National Museum in Kyungju, Korea, capital of the ancient Silla Kingdom, is a beautiful bell. The Silla Kingdom at the time enjoyed peace, but the King, a devout Buddhist, wanted to protect his people from foreign invasion. His advisors suggested that he build a huge temple bell to show the people's devotion to the Buddha.

A specialist in the art of bellmaking was commissioned. But despite his skill and care, he failed time and again to produce a bell with a

beautiful sound. Finally, he went back to the council of religious leaders. After a long discussion, they concluded that the best way to give a beautiful tone to the bell was to sacrifice a pure young maiden.

Soldiers were sent to find and fetch such a young girl. Coming upon a poor mother in a farm village with her small daughter, they took the child away, while she cried out piteously: "Emille, Emille!" — "Mother! O Mother!" When the molten lead and iron were prepared, the little girl was thrown in. At last the bellmaker succeeded. The bell, called the Emille Bell, made a sound more beautiful than any other.

When it rang, most people praised the art that had produced such a beautiful sound. But whenever the mother whose child had been sacrificed heard it, her heart broke anew. ⁵⁵

For Lee, Jesus is like the little girl's mother. Jesus' heart breaks anew when he hears the cry of humanity. People who do not know the meaning of sacrifice enjoy the achievement based on other people's sacrifice. But people "who understand the sacrifice can feel the pain." ⁵⁶ This image of Jesus shows Asian women that the redemption of humankind "has not come through those who are comfortable and unconcerned, but only through the One who shared the suffering of all humankind." ⁵⁷

This compassionate, sensitive mother image of Jesus was shared by the Indonesian theologian Marianne Katoppo. She illustrates her point by quoting a prayer of Anselm and a poem from the Indian poet Narayan Vaman Tilak:

And thou, Jesus, sweet Lord, art Thou not also a mother?
Truly, Thou art a mother, the mother of all mothers
Who tasted death, in Thy desire to give life to Thy children
— Anselm ⁵⁸

Tenderest Mother-Guru mine,
Saviour, where is love like thine?
— Narayan Vaman Tilak ⁵⁹

This mother image of Jesus demolishes "the paternalistic, authoritarian and hierarchical patterns" in our life and builds the "maternal, compassionate, sensitive, bearing and upbearing" relationship among people. ⁶⁰

Some Asian women see Jesus Christ as a female figure in their specific historical situation. Two articulate voices on this position are found in Korea. Park Soon Kyung concluded her Christology at the gathering of the Korean Association of Women Theologians by saying that even though Jesus has a male physical form, he is "a symbol of females and the oppressed" due to his identification with the one who hurts the most. Therefore, on a symbolic level, we may call Jesus the "*woman Messiah*" who is the liberator of the oppressed. ⁶¹ She claims justification for naming

Jesus' humanity as female in the current historical situation because Christology needs to be liberated from the patriarchal church structure.

Choi Man Ja goes one step further by identifying Korean women's historical struggle for liberation with "the praxis of messiahship."⁶² She says, "Even though women are excluded from the ordained ministry, in fact women are the true praxis of messiah-Jesus, in Korea."⁶³ For her, Jesus' messiahship comes from his suffering servanthship. Therefore, she can recognize the praxis of new humanity most clearly through a female messiah who is in the suffering and struggle of Asian women. This female Christ is "the new humanity, siding with the oppressed, and liberating women from their suffering."⁶⁴

Another female image of Jesus comes from the image of the shaman. Virginia Fabella shares her learning from Korean women in her article "Asian Women and Christology."⁶⁵ Under oppressive political and economic oppression, and under the added burden of the Confucian system of ethics which inculcates male domination, Korean women's life experience is *han* itself. The resentment, indignation, sense of defeat, resignation, and nothingness in *han* make many Korean women brokenhearted and physically sick. In this situation, what would be the significance of Jesus Christ for them? Fabella cites an answer from a Korean woman: "If Jesus Christ is to make sense to us, then Jesus Christ must be a priest of Han" for minjung women.⁶⁶ For the minjung women, salvation and redemption means being exorcised from their accumulated *han*, untangling of their many-layered *han*. Since Korean indigenous religion is shamanism, Korean women easily accept the Jesus of the synoptic gospels, who exorcised and healed the sick and possessed like a Korean shaman. As the Korean shaman has been a healer, comforter, and counselor for Korean women, Jesus Christ healed and comforted women in his ministry.

In Korea the majority of shamans are women. Shamanism is the only religion among the various Korean religious traditions where women have been the center all through its development. Women shamans have been "big sisters" to many deprived minjung women, untangling their *han* and helping them cope with life's tribulations.⁶⁷ When Korean women, therefore, see Jesus Christ as the priest of *han*, they connect with the female image of Jesus more than the male image of Jesus. They take Jesus as a big sister just as they take the shaman as a big sister in their community.

The female image of Jesus Christ is expressed most vividly by a theologian in India, Gabriele Dietrich,⁶⁸ who makes a connection between women's menstruation and Jesus' shedding of blood on the cross. She sees the meaning of the Eucharist in women's monthly bloodshed. She expresses her point powerfully through her poem:

I am a woman
and my blood
cries out:

Who are you
to deny life
to the life-givers?
Each one of you
has come from the womb
but none of you
can bear woman
when she is strong
and joyful and competent.
You want our tears
to clamour for protection.
Who are you
to protect us
from yourselves?

I am a woman
and my monthly bloodshed
makes me aware
that blood
is meant for life.
It is you
who have invented
those lethal machines
spreading death:
Three kilotonnes of explosives
for every human being
on earth.

I am a woman
and the blood
of my abortions
is crying out.
I had to kill
my child
because of you
who deny work to me
so that i cannot feed it.
I had to kill my child
because i am unmarried
and you would harass me
to death
if i defy
your norms.

I am a woman
and the blood

of being raped
is crying out.
This is how you keep
your power intact,
how you make me tremble
when i go out at night.
This is how you keep
me in place
in my house where
you rape me again.
I am not taking this
any longer.

I am a woman
and the blood
of my operation
is crying out.
Even if i am a nun
you still use my body
to make money
by giving me a hysterectomy
when i don't need it.
My body is in the clutches
of husbands, policemen,
doctors, pimps.
there is no end
to my alienation.

I am a woman
and the blood
of my struggles
is crying out.
Yes, my comrades,
you want us
in the forefront
because you have learnt
you cannot do without us.
You need us
in the class struggle
as you need us
in bed and to cook
your grub
to bear
your children to dress
your wounds.

You will celebrate
women's day
like mother's day
garlands
for our great supporters.
Where would we be
without our women?

I am a woman
and the blood
of my sacrifices
cries out to the sky
which you call heaven.
I am sick of you priests
who have never bled
and yet say:
This is my body
given up for you
and my blood
shed for you
drink it.
Whose blood
has been shed
for life
since eternity?
I am sick of you priests
who rule the *garbagriha*,
who adore the womb
as a source for life
and keep me shut out
because my blood
is polluting.

I am a woman
and i keep bleeding
from my womb
but also from my heart
because it is difficult
to learn to hate
and it might not help
if i hate you.

I still love
my little son
who bullies his sister.

He has learnt it outside,
 how do i stop him?
 I still love
 my children's father
 because he was there
 when i gave birth.
 I still long
 for my lover's touch
 to break the spell
 of perversion
 which has grown
 like a wall
 between women and men.
 I still love
 my comrades in arms
 because they care
 for others who suffer
 and there is hope
 that they give their bodies
 in the struggle for life
 and not just for power.
 But i have learned
 to love my sisters.
 We have learned
 to love one another.
 We have learned
 even to respect
 ourselves.

I am a women
 and my blood
 cries out.
 We are millions
 and strong together.
 You better hear us
 or you may be doomed.

Dietrich questions the hypocrisy of the patriarchal church and society which "deny life to the life-givers." They "adore the womb as a source" but shut out women from full participation in life. The womb is praised but not those who have wombs. Most of the so-called higher world religions condemn women's menstruation as dirty or polluting. Women cannot preside in the ritual of many religions because their monthly flow will "corrupt" holy altars. Dietrich asks Christian priests who worship the holy blood-shedding of Jesus: "Whose blood has been shed for life since eternity?"

Then she claims priests, not women, "have never bled and yet say: this is my body given up for you and my blood shed for you, drink it." Jesus shed blood on the cross due to his solidarity with the poor, oppressed, and alienated. He bled so as to give others everlasting life. Like Jesus, women's blood has been shed from eternity. Women's menstruation is a holy Eucharist through which the renewal of life becomes possible. Jesus joins women in his life-giving bleeding.⁶⁹

Jesus as Worker and Grain

Female images of Jesus Christ enable Asian women to image Jesus on the earth. The revelation of God they have heard from the church is usually the revelation from above. Theology based on the revelation from above can easily be distorted into a theology of domination because this theology is based on the abstract thinking of the head and not on the concrete experience of the body. It is based on distant (and largely male) intellectualism and not on the everyday, experiential reality of Asian women. Some Asian women find Jesus in the most ordinary, everyday experience. They see the revelation of God from below, the bottom, the earth. They refuse any kind of heroism. They are not looking for great men and women to worship. Rather, they want to find God, the saving presence within their daily lives.

A witness of faith from a Korean factory worker shows the meaning of Jesus Christ among the ordinary poor people:

I don't know how to live a Christ-like life. But I am discovering and awakening to the meaning of it little by little in my daily life. This is a cautious and mysterious process. [In order to explain this point,] I would like to talk about my mother. She is a women full of "Han." She describes herself like that. She was married when she was seventeen. She gave birth to three children. Then her husband died even before she became thirty. Now my mother gets up 4:30 a.m. every morning and goes to marketplace for banding. There are too many people in the marketplace. It is hard to walk there. I think that marketplace is truly our context of life.

From early morning my mother carries heavy bundles and walks around the marketplace distributing the vinyl bags used for wrapping to banders and stores. She gathers the money from them later. That work is too strenuous for a woman of my mother's age and physical strength. Therefore, whenever she happens to have a holiday (like a full moon festival), she becomes sick and has to stay in bed. Her shoulder becomes unbalanced and her back is bent. Her cheek becomes red with ice since she has to work outside in the cold winter. Her life seems like a tired, hard, and insignificant one.

Whenever I see my mother, her face reminds me of the tired faces of my friends in the factory who are working eighteen to twenty-four

hours a day without even any facial expression. Workers do not stop their work even when they are overwhelmed by despair and disgust. And workers really know how to love other people. Since they experience despair, are humiliated by the rich and endure miserable situations, they know how to love the people in despair under every circumstance—even though we are in despair all the time. The world is constructed out of these hearts.

When I see workers, I feel the breath and heart-beat of history and the meaning of humanity and Christ in them. I think we will not be saved without workers because workers truly have the loving power and unbeatable endurance. I wonder how Jesus the Christ will look when he comes back again. When I was young, I dreamt about Jesus wearing silverly white clothing, accompanying many angels with bright light and great sounds of music. But now I wonder. If Jesus comes again, he may come to us wearing ragged clothing and give my tired mother, who even dozes off while she is standing, a bottle of *Bakas*⁷⁰ or he may come to me, working mindlessly in the noisy factory, and quietly help my work while wearing an oily worker's uniform. I think *our Christ is the ground of life, and my faith is in the midst of this working life and workers.*⁷¹

This factory worker sees her Christ in workers and their hard struggle for survival. She does not believe any longer in the image of a flamboyant Jesus who looks like one of the rich and famous people in her childhood. She finds Jesus in her fellow workers who endure despair, humiliation, and back-breaking hard work, yet share their love and resources with other workers. Jesus Christ does not descend from glorious-looking heaven; Christ emerges from the broken-body experience of workers when they affirm life and dare to love other human beings in spite of their brokenness. Workers become Christ to each other when they touch each other's wounds and heal each other through sharing food, work, and hope.

Another image of Jesus Christ which emerges from the earth is found in a poem from an Indian woman. She meets her Jesus Christ when she receives two hundred grams of gruel in a famine-stricken area. For her, Christ, God's beloved Son, is food for hungry people.

Every noon at twelve
In the blazing heat
God comes to me
in the form of
Two hundred grams of gruel.

I know Him in every grain
I taste Him in every lick.
I commune with Him as I gulp

For He keeps me alive, with
Two hundred grams of gruel.

I wait till next noon
and now know he'd come:
I can hope to live one day more
For you made God to come to me as
Two hundreds grams of gruel.

I know now that God loves me—
Not until you made it possible.
Now I know what you're speaking about
For God so loves this world
That He gives His beloved Son
Every noon through You.⁷²

Without food, there is no life. When starving people eat the food, they experience God "in every grain." They "know" and "taste" God when they chew each grain. Food makes them alive. The greatest love of God for the starving people is food. When the grain from the earth sustains their life, they discover the meaning of the phrase, "For God so loves this world that He gives His beloved Son." When God gives them food through other concerned human beings, God gives them God's "beloved Son," Jesus Christ.

In conclusion, we have observed that there are *traditional* images of Jesus, which are being interpreted in fresh, creative ways by Asian women, largely based on their experiences of survival in the midst of oppression and on their efforts to liberate themselves. We also have observed *new* images of Jesus that offer a direct challenge to traditional Christologies. These new images of Jesus are also based on Asian women's experiences of survival and liberation. Because Jesus was a male, however, some Asian women think there is a limit to how much he can be transformed to meet the needs of Asian women. This is the main reason why Asian women theologians have emphasized the importance of Mary in their recent writings. We turn next to Mary in our examination of emerging Asian women's theology.

11. Sixty-six women and men, drawn from various churches in India, attended the National Consultation on "Towards a Theology of Humanhood: Women's Perspective," November 21-24, 1984, Whitefield, Bangalore. This ecumenical consultation was organized by the All India Council of Christian Women (Women's Subgroup of the National Council of Churches in India), Catholic Women, and the Association of Theologically Trained Women in India. The consultation was sponsored by EATWOT as a part of establishing Asian women's theology. The findings of the consultation were published in book form by the All India Council of Christian Women. For more information see, Gnanadason, *Towards a Theology of Humanhood*.
12. "Liturgy Used at the Indian Women Theologians' Conference," in *IGI* (December 1984), p. 28.
13. *Minjung* is a Korean word meaning "people," specifically "oppressed people." According to a Korean minjung theologian, Suh Kwang Sun, minjung are "the oppressed, exploited, dominated, discriminated against, alienated, and suppressed politically, economically, socially, culturally, and intellectually, like women, ethnic groups, the poor, workers and farmers, including intellectuals themselves." (From Suh Kwang Sun's class lecture given at the School of Theology at Claremont Graduate School, August 1983.) The term *minjung*, therefore, is a bigger and broader concept than *proletariat*. Minjung theologians try to articulate theology out of the concrete historical experience of the Korean minjung.
14. Hyun Young Hak, "Minjung: The Suffering Servant and Hope," a lecture given at James Memorial Chapel, Union Theological Seminary, New York, April 13, 1982, p. 2.
15. See Suh Nam Dong, "Toward a Theology of *Han*," in *Minjung Theology* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1983), pp. 55-72.
16. *Ibid.*
17. Lee Oo Chung, pp. 63-78.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 67.
19. *Ibid.*, pp. 74-75.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 74.
21. For more information on the Asian women's movement, see *IGI* (April 1986).
22. Sigrid, "Through Woman's Eyes," *IGI* (December 1985/February 1986), pp. 31-32.
23. See Lee Sun Ai, "A Reading from a Taoist Funeral Song Designated for Women," *IGI* (April 1984), p. 5.
24. Lucy D'Souza, "My Sadhana," *IGI* (September 1988), p. 18.
25. Rita Monterio, "My Image of God," *IGI* (September 1988), p. 35.
26. Jurgette Honclada, "Notes on Women and Christianity in the Philippines," *IGI* (October 1985), p. 17.
27. Susan Joseph, "I Am a Woman," *IGI* (September 1988), pp. 30-31.
28. Her prostitute support group, called *Han-so-ri* ("the sound of *han*" or "big sound"), was in the Yong San area in Seoul, Korea. This group was enabled by Maryknoll sisters from the United States. These Catholic sisters did not impose their religion on the prostitutes, nor did they try to evangelize Korean prostitutes into Christianity. What the sisters did was offer sanctuary to the prostitutes. I visited them in the summer of 1987 and had an opportunity to share some time with the prostitutes.
29. Interview with the author, Seoul, Korea, August 10, 1982.

30. This consultation was held during May 24-27, 1983. The issue of homosexuality was debated among participants of a bible study led by Old Testament scholar Dr. Elizabeth G. Dominguez.
 31. Consultation report from Theologically Trained Women of the Philippines, "A Continuing Challenge for Women's Ministry," *IGI* (August 1983), p. 8. (Hereafter referred to as "A Continuous Challenge.")
 32. *Ibid.*
 33. *IGI* carried an article, "Emerging Patterns in the Women's Movement in Asia," in its December 1985/February 1986 issue in which associate editor Ranjini Rebera interviewed seven feminist women from different Asian countries on their involvement with the women's movement in their respective countries and the women's movement's relationship to church and society. Interviewees were: Ruth Kao (Taiwan), Audrey Rebera (Sri Lanka), Jocelyn Armstrong (New Zealand), Saramma Jacob (India), Prakai Nantawasee (Thailand), Cynthia Lam (Hong Kong) and Andrea McAdam (Australia).
 34. A poem by Akiko Yosano from Japan. It is believed that this poem was written in the dawn of the century. In *Voices of Women: An Asian Anthology*, ed. Alison O'Grady (Singapore: Asian Christian Women's Conference, 1978), p. 13.
 35. Gallup, p. 22.
 36. *Ibid.*
 37. *Ibid.*
 38. Chitra Fernando, "Towards a Theology Related to a Full Humanity," *IGI* (April 1985), p. 21.
 39. Virginia Fabella, "Mission of Women in the Church in Asia: Role and Position," *IGI* (December 1985/February 1986), p. 8.
 40. "A Continuing Challenge," p. 7.
 41. *Ibid.*
 42. *Ibid.*
 43. Monteiro, p. 35.
 44. *Ibid.*
 45. Lee Sun Ai, "Images of God," *IGI* (September 1988), p. 36.
 46. This phrase has been chosen as the World Council of Churches' mission goal for the next decade. Many Asian church women welcome this direction and have had national consultations in order to carry out this goal.
 47. Susan Joseph, "Images of God," *IGI* (September 1988), p. 37.
 48. Lee Sun Ai, "Images of God," p. 37.
 49. Astrid Lobo, "My Image of God," *IGI* (September 1988), p. 38.
 50. *Ibid.*
 51. Pearl Derego, et al., "The Exodus Story," *IGI* (September 1988), p. 48.
 52. Fernando, p. 24.
 53. Hiratsuka Raicho, "The Hidden Sun," in O'Grady, p. 10.
4. *Who Is Jesus for Asian Women?*
1. "Summary Statement from the Theological Study Group," paper presented at the Consultation on Asian Women's Theology on Christology, Singapore, November 20-29, 1987. This consultation was sponsored by *In God's Image*. For more information on the conference, see *IGI* (December 1987-March 1988). The documents from the consultation were published in *IGI* during 1988-1989. (Hereafter referred to as Consultation on Asian Women's Theology-1987.)

2. Ibid., p. 1.
3. Ibid., p. 2.
4. Ibid.
5. Choi Man Ja, "Feminist Christology," Consultation on Asian Women's Theology—1987, p. 3.
6. Komol Arayapraatep, "Christology," Consultation on Asian Women's Theology—1987, p. 6.
7. This is the common teaching Asian women receive from the institutional, male-dominated churches in Asia. When I was a Sunday school teacher at a Korean church in Orange County, California, in 1983, I witnessed a Korean woman, who was a bible teacher for a college student group, share her experience of death and resurrection of self in front of the entire congregation. She confessed how sinful she was in relation to her husband. She said that she was not able to obey her husband because she thought he was not reasonable and fair. So she argued with him a lot. One day her husband, who was a medical doctor, threw a kitchen knife at her out of anger during an argument. Fortunately the knife missed her and stuck into the wall behind her. At that point, she said, she experienced the love of God through the judgment of her husband. She believed then that as a wife she had to obey her husband as God's will. She witnessed to the congregation that her old self was *dead* and her new self was born through her husband's *love*. This woman concluded her statement with: "There have been no arguments and only peace in my family after I nailed myself on the cross and followed God's will." After her talk, the entire congregation responded to her with a very loud "Hallelujah!" This is only one example of "woman hate" in Asian churches. I have heard countless examples of women's oppression in the church from other Asian women through various church women's gatherings.
8. For more information on the missionary history of China, see Kwok Pui-lan, "The Emergence of Asian Feminist Consciousness on Culture and Theology" (Hong Kong: unpublished paper, 1988).
9. I know that there are conflicting views on the role of the missionaries in Asia. Some people think that their role was destructive and others believe it was positive. My view is that their role was primarily, though not exclusively, negative.
10. Lydia Lascano, "Women and the Christ Event," in *Proceedings: Asian Women's Consultation* (Manila: EATWOT, 1985), pp. 121-29.
11. Ibid., p. 123.
12. Ibid., p. 125.
13. Ibid.
14. Virginia Fabella, "Asian Women and Christology," *IGI* (September 1987), p. 15.
15. Choi, p. 6.
16. Ibid.
17. Park Soon Kyung, *Hankook Minjok Kwa Yeosung shinhak eu Kwajae* [The Korean Nation and the Task of Women's Theology], p. 50.
18. See Honclada, pp. 13-19.
19. See Mary John Mananzan, "The Philipino Woman: Before and After the Spanish Conquest of the Philippines," in *Essays on Women*, pp. 7-36.
20. Ibid.
21. Park Soon Kyung, *Hankook Minjok Kwa Yeosung Shinhak eu Kwajae* [The Korean Nation and the Task of Women's Theology], p. 47.

22. Ibid.
23. Ibid., p. 48.
24. Ibid.
25. Ibid., p. 49.
26. Ibid., p. 47.
27. Consultation on Asian Women's Theology—1987, p. 2.
28. Monica Melanchton, "Christology and Women," Consultation on Asian Women's Theology—1987.
29. Ibid., p. 1.
30. Ibid.
31. Ibid., p. 2.
32. Ibid., p. 4.
33. Ibid., p. 6. Note the contradictory theological position on the appropriation of the Hindu notion of God in Christian theology (cf. Gallup).
34. Lee Oo Chung, "Korean Cultural and Feminist Theology," *IGI* (September 1987), p. 36.
35. Ibid.
36. Ibid., p. 37.
37. Ibid.
38. Ibid.
39. Ibid., p. 38.
40. Ibid.
41. "Women and the Christ Event," in *Proceedings: Asian Women's Consultation* (Manila: EATWOT, 1985), p. 131.
42. Ibid.
43. Pauline Hensman, "Women and the Christ Event," in *Proceedings: Asian Women's Consultation* (Manila: EATWOT, 1985), p. 116.
44. Lascano, p. 121.
45. Ibid., p. 125.
46. Ibid., p. 127.
47. Ibid.
48. Ibid., p. 128.
49. Ibid.
50. Ibid.
51. Kwok, "God Weeps with Our Pain," in Pobee and von Wartenberg-Potter, p. 92.
52. Lee Oo Chung, "One Woman's Confession of Faith," in Pobee and von Wartenberg-Potter, p. 19.
53. Ibid.
54. Ibid.
55. Ibid., pp. 19-20.
56. Ibid., p. 20.
57. Ibid.
58. Marianne Katoppo, "Mother Jesus," in O'Grady, p. 12.
59. Katoppo, *Compassionate and Free*, p. 79.
60. Katoppo, "Mother Jesus," in O'Grady, p. 12.
61. Park Soon Kyung, *The Korean Nation and the Task of Women's Theology*, p. 51. See also James Cone, *God of the Oppressed* (New York: Harper and Row, 1975). Cone makes a similar argument. For Cone, Jesus is black because if Jesus represents

oppressed humanity, Jesus must be black in our historical situation where black people are constantly crucified.

62. Choi, p. 8.

63. Ibid., p. 7.

64. Ibid., p. 6.

65. See Virginia Fabella, "Asian Women and Christology."

66. Ibid.

67. Ibid.

68. Gabriele Dietrich is of German origin. Since 1972 she has been working in South India, first in Bangalore, and for the last ten years in Madurai, teaching in a Tamil-medium college. She is committed to the women's movement. I include her as a theologian in India due to her commitment and her identification with Indian women and her acceptance by other Indian women in the movement.

69. Gabriele Dietrich, *One day i shall be like a banyan tree* (Belgium: Dileep S. Kamat, 1985).

70. Popular Korean drink.

71. Suh Nam Dong, *In Search of Minjung Theology* (Seoul, Korea: Kankil Sa, 1983), pp. 355-56. Translation and emphasis mine.

72. Anonymous, "From Jaini Bi—With Love," in O'Grady, p. 11. The editor explains that the Jaini Bi stands for all people who suffer extreme deprivation in a seemingly uncaring world but who receive a spark of hope from humanitarian concerns and actions.

5. *Who Is Mary for Today's Asian Women?*

1. Anonymous poem entitled "Mary Song," from "Mariology: A Pakena Perspective," Consultation on Asian Women's Theology—1987, pp. 2-3.

2. Ibid., p. 1.

3. Ibid.

4. Katoppo, *Compassionate and Free*, p. 21.

5. "Mariology: A Pakena Perspective," p. 1.

6. Katoppo, *Compassionate and Free*, p. 17.

7. Ibid., p. 73.

8. Ibid.

9. "Mariology: A Pakena Perspective," pp. 1-2.

10. See the poem "Mary Song" at the beginning of this chapter.

11. "Mariology: A Pakena Perspective," p. 1.

12. Astrid Lobo, "Mary and the Woman of Today," *IGI* (September 1988), p.

7.

13. "Summary Statement on Mariology," Consultation on Asian Women's Theology—1987, p. 1.

14. See the poem "Mary Song" at the beginning of this chapter.

15. Katoppo, *Compassionate and Free*, p. 21.

16. Ibid., p. 20.

17. Ibid.

18. Ibid.

19. Ibid.

20. Ibid.

21. Han Kuk Yum, "Mariology as a Base for Feminist Liberation Theology," Consultation on Asian Women's Theology—1987, p. 3.

22. "Summary Statement on Mariology," p. 1.

23. Han Kuk Yum, p. 3.

24. Katoppo, *Compassionate and Free*, p. 21.

25. "Who Is Mary?" in *Proceedings: Asian Women's Consultation* (Manila: EATWOT, 1985), p. 156.

26. Lobo, "Mary and the Woman of Today," p. 7.

27. Ibid., pp. 7-8.

28. Nalaan, Navaratnarajah, "Mariology," Consultation on Asian Women's Theology—1987, p. 1.

29. "Summary Statement on Mariology," p. 1.

30. "Who Is Mary?" p. 156.

31. Ibid., p. 155.

32. Ibid. Emphasis mine.

33. Lobo, "Mary and the Women of Today," p. 11.

34. Anrora Zambrano, "Mariology," Consultation on Asian Women's Theology—1987, p. 6.

35. "Summary Statement on Mariology," p. 2.

36. Ibid., p. 2.

37. Ruth Ong, "A Woman of Faith and Hope," Consultation on Asian Women's Theology—1987, p. 3.

38. Han Kuk Yum, p. 2.

39. "Summary Statement on Mariology," p. 2.

40. Ibid., p. 2.

41. Virginia Fabella, "Mission of Women in the Church in Asia: Role and Position," *IGI* (December 1985), p. 82.

42. Ibid.

43. Lobo, "Mary and the Women of Today," p. 11.

44. "Who Is Mary?" p. 155.

45. Katoppo, *Compassionate and Free*, p. 23.

46. Han Kuk Yum, p. 4.

47. Ibid., p. 5.

48. Loretto-Eugenia Mapa, interview with the author, Women's Theological Center, Boston, February 8, 1989.

49. See Han Kuk Yum, p. 7.

50. Emily Mei Ling Cheng, "Mariology," Consultation on Asian Women's Theology—1987, p. 5.

51. Loretto-Eugenia Mapa, interview with the author, Women's Theology Center, Boston, February 8, 1989.

52. Ibid.

6. *Emerging Asian Women's Spirituality*

1. Ting Ling, untitled poem, in O'Grady, p. 46. Ting Ling is from China. At first, I hesitated to quote the poem due to its seemingly individualistic perspective. But I changed my mind later because of the concrete historical context of this poem, which was written in a China undergoing massive structural change.

2. Mary John Mananzan and Lee Sun Ai, "Emerging Spirituality of Asian Women," in Fabella and Oduyoye, p. 79.

3. "Women's Spirituality—Workshop Report," Consultation on Asian Women's Theology—1987, p. 1.