Communication for Life in Cyberspace

A Christian Ethical Quest in Reference to the Korean Situation

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Communication for Life in Cyberspace: a Christian Ethical Quest in Reference to the Korean Situation
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Introduction

Problem

Cyberspace communication provides both opportunities for and threats to life. Hi-tech communication through electronic means may intensify the capacity of communication to shape life and sometimes to threaten the whole of life on earth. In this context we need a critical understanding of Cyberspace communication and an ethical guideline for communication for the fullness of life.

Definitions of Key Concepts

Life: A holistic and integral concept is needed. It is not merely a biological notion. In Korean it is SaengMyong, which means the whole life of all living entities. This integral concept of life is used to deal with multiple threats to life: geo-political, economic, political and cultural as well as ecological.

Communication: This concept needs to overcome the anthropocentric perspective and expand to a holistic and integral concept that includes humans and other living beings. There is no life without communication, because communication is the essence of life.

Cyberspace: Cyberspace is the virtual communicative space created by digital technologies. It is not limited to the operation of computer networks, but encompasses all social activities in which digital information and communication technologies (ICT)
are deployed. Cyberspace is an analytical concept that should not be separated from the real space of life.

Ethics: Ethics is defined not merely as personal rules of conduct, but also as social policy including policy alternatives.

Korean case: This term refers to the South Korean experience of Cyberspace communication since the 1990’s.

**Background**

Today all life on earth is under crisis in the process of globalization. Globalization is simply defined as a process consisting of economic, political, technological and cultural dimensions that interconnect individuals, firms and governments across national borders. This globalization has profound implications for all peoples and all life on earth. The process of globalization, in particular, has victimized the poor and even middle class people. Moreover, not only human beings but also nature is under crisis. Globalization has disseminated worldwide an industrial ideology that conquers, destroys and pollutes the natural environment through its limitless exploitation.

Power in the global market is manifested in the form of transnational corporations and global economic political regimes such as the IMF, World Bank, the World Trade Organization and their sub structures.

Cyberspace communication plays a decisive role in the process of globalization, suppressing subjective life in all levels and dimensions. Hi-tech multimedia communication and processing of information has become a dominant feature of the
global market, forming a value-added network to enforce and accelerate market dynamics among the people. This is what is new in the post-industrial global market. The process of globalization is strongly supported by the cultural process of communication and information through Cyberspace. This victimization of life is being advanced culturally on the levels of spirituality, consciousness, perceptions and senses. Life is not life without subjectivity on a cultural level, but the market mechanism does not allow this to exist. The global market assumes the culture of the West to be more conducive and exclusive than the non-Western cultures. Thus, Western cultural homogenization, in particular Americanization, is overwhelming the world, displacing various indigenous cultures through the single market.

Cyberspace communication, directed by the corporate powers and agencies of the global market, subjugates cultural values, life styles, perceptions of beauty and religious mystery, as well as ethnic national identities of persons and communities, to the market's cultural wasteland.

**Ethical Problematics of Cyberspace Communication**

Cyberspace has brought about a third revolution in the history of civilization. It has led the transfer from the manufacturing orientation of industrial society to the information-and knowledge orientation of the third revolution. It has brought infinite possibilities for a new civilization. And yet it also presents serious problems—threats—in all areas of life for all living beings. For an ethics of communication for life, we need to investigate the problematics of Cyberspace communication in their following aspects, and find their interconnections.
1) Cyberspace communication and the economy, such as advertising, marketing and financial transactions.

2) Cyberspace communication and politics, such as regulation, surveillance and digital divide.

3) Cyberspace communication and culture, such as cultural homogenization and cultural domination.

The Research Question

What is the meaning of communication for life in Cyberspace? - A Christian ethical quest in reference to the Korean situation.

Subsidiary Questions

1. What is the Asian context in regard to globalization in Asia? How does the process of globalization affect the Asian economy and victimize the peoples of Asia? How does economic globalization destroy the natural environment in Asia? How does cultural globalization impact Asian culture?

2. What is the theological response to the global crisis of life? In particular, what is the ecumenical discussion on this challenge?

3. What are Asian traditional perspectives on life and communication?

4. What is a critical analysis of ethical problematics in Cyberspace? What is the ethical foundation of the problematics in Cyberspace?
5. What is an alternative ethics from the Christian perspective to overcome ethical problematics in Cyberspace?

6. What are practical cases in Korea that examine the application of an alternative ethic in Cyberspace?

**Methodology**

This research is an interdisciplinary study of communication and theology, and at the same time an integrated study of the West (modern) and Asia (traditional).

1. Literature reviews in communication, Cyberspace communication and theology of life. The research involves the following:
   · Literature review of theology of life, centering on the World Council of Churches program on theology of life
   · Review of traditional Asian communication
   · Theoretical analysis of Cyberspace communication
   · Literature review of Christian ethical theory, focusing on Paul Ramsey’s ethical theory of agape

2. Case study of Korean Cyberspace communication, such as OhmyNews and Cyworld.

**Chapter Summary**

This research is organized into six chapters. The content of each chapter is summarized below.
Chapter 1 analyzes the recent situation in Asia with regard to globalization as the Asian context of the study.

Chapter 2 summarizes the ecumenical discussions on theology of life and communication issues.

Chapter 3 examines Asian traditional perspectives on life and its relationship with communication, such as Taoism, Buddhism, Confucianism and Tonghak.

Chapter 4 investigates the ethical problematics of Cyberspace communication according to three problematic dimensions.

Chapter 5 examines an alternative ethics from the Christian perspective to overcome those problematics.

Chapter 6 examines practical cases of Cyberspace communication in Korea such as ‘OhmyNews’, a citizen journalism site, and ‘Cyworld’, a social network site.
Chapter 1  
Asian Context of the Study:  
Recent Situation with Regard to Globalization in Asia

This chapter attempts to analyze critically the recent situation in Asia, with specific reference to the economic, ecological and cultural characteristics of globalization. The economic, ecological and cultural issues in Asia are intertwined and inter-connected through the process of globalization.

Asia proper is the South, the Southeast and the East. These three sub-regions cover an area inhabited by 3.2 billion people or 56 percent of the world’s population.

How does the process of globalization affect the Asian economy and victimize the peoples of Asia? How does economic globalization destroy the natural environment in Asia? How does cultural globalization impact Asian culture? What is the role of the global media system in promoting cultural globalization in Asia?

To explore answers to these questions, this chapter examines three aspects as follows: first, globalization and economic issues in Asia; second, globalization and ecological issues in Asia; and third, globalization and cultural issues in Asia.

1.1 Globalization and Economic Issues in Asia

Although the term globalization has been used with multiple meanings, generally speaking, globalization is regarded as a global process of increasing cross-border flows of goods, information, capital, people and culture (Held, McGrew, Goldblatt, and
Globalization causes geo-political integration of nations and it is forcing all peoples into a mono-polar world.

The process of globalization is based on neoliberalism. According to Saad-Filho and Johnston, “we live in the age of neoliberalism” (Saad-Filho and Johnston, 2005, p.1).

During the past two decades, capitalism entered into neoliberalism. According to Li, “since the early 1980s, the leading capitalist states in North America and Western Europe have pursued neoliberal policies and institutional changes” (Li, 2004, p. 21). The developing countries in Asia, thus, have adopted neoliberal policies “under the pressure of leading capitalist states and international monetary institutions (IMF and the World Bank)” (Li, 2004, p. 21).

1.1.1 Historical Background of Neoliberalism

Historically liberalism has developed through two stages. The first stage was ‘classical’ liberalism in the nineteenth century and the second one was ‘new’ liberalism in the twentieth century. Neoliberalism means ‘new’ liberalism, in comparison with ‘classical’ liberalism in the mid-nineteenth century. The key concept of classical liberalism is the principle of laissez-faire. Adam Smith points out, for instance, the ‘invisible hand’ in his book *The Wealth of Nations* in 1776. The invisible hand can be defined as a market system which works in a decentralized way with minimal or no intervention by a governing body (Seo Jeong-hoon, 2002, p. 32).

The capitalist held hegemony in the nineteenth century, the so-called ‘Age of Capital’. Eric Hobsbawm asserts that after ‘The Age of Revolution’ finished in 1848, liberalism dominated from 1875 (Hobsbawm, 1979). During the Age of Capital,
economic liberalism rapidly expanded and governmental regulations were abolished.

However, classical liberalism lost its dominant position following the Great Depression and the Second World War. To overcome the Great Depression, the government had to intervene in the free market. The leading developed countries “reluctantly accepted a raft of social welfare programs and a more activist role for the state in regulating the capitalist economy” (Kotz, 2003, p. 15). They did so in fear of “a return of the depression, and facing large and growing socialist and communist movements in many parts of the world after the Second World War” (Kotz, 2003, p. 15).

Keynesianism was a basic theory of that governmental intervention. This Keynesian regulationist approach was “dominant for some twenty-five years following the Second World War” (Kotz, 2003, pp. 15-16). But starting in the late 1970s it was “gradually abandoned and replaced by a new version of classical liberalism, with Britain and the United States leading the way” (Kotz, 2003, p.16).

Neoliberalism appeared in the 1970s, was established in the 1980s and then dominated the world in the 1990s.

Neoliberalism first emerged as the core ideology of the world economy in the 1970s. It focused on the idea that the state should cease to be interventionist and should revert to a role similar to that of the nineteenth century.

Then neoliberalism was successfully redrawn, by the end of the 1980s. Gamble demonstrates that “in Britain and the United States the political interventions represented by Thatcherism and Reaganism established neo-liberalism as the new dominant common sense, the paradigm shaping all policies” (Gamble, 2001, p. 129).

By the end of the 1990s neoliberalism had become the dominant ideology of the world and also of the globalization debate (Gamble, 2001, p. 130). The year 1995 may
be regarded as a pivotal year of neoliberal globalization in particular, when the World Trade Organization (WTO) was established as a result of the conclusion of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) of the Uruguay Round. After the establishment of WTO, the whole world was regimented into a single global market system based on neoliberalism.

1.1.2 Main Features of Neoliberal Globalization

The effects of neoliberal globalization show various aspects.

Neoliberal advocates insist that there are a number of positive effects of neoliberal globalization. For example, Bhagwati argues that globalization leads to economic prosperity and reduced poverty in underdeveloped nations. He maintains that globalization promotes economic growth and that growth reduces poverty. He cites the example of two countries, India and China. He maintains that after both countries “adopted aggressively outward-oriented economic policies” two decades ago, they had rapid growth, and this contributed to reduce poverty (Bhagwati, 2004, pp. 64-65).

In addition, Friedman argues that globalization, which is the result of the democratization of technology, finance and information, is driven by “the basic human desire for a better life – a life with more choices what to eat, what to wear, where to live, where to travel, how to work, what to read, what to write and what to learn” (Friedman, 2000, p. 21).

In fact, neoliberal globalization has been threatening people’s daily life, especially poor people in the Global South.

What are the main features of neoliberal globalization from a critical point of view?
Firstly, neoliberal globalization promotes a minimalist state or limits the state regulation of corporations. It gives market forces free rein to drive massive capital accumulation. For example, the transnational corporations (TNCs), with capital free from regulation by the state, search for maximum profits without state barriers. This has resulted in “the dismantling of state economic powers in the South” (Nuruzzaman, 2005, p. 121).

Secondly, neoliberal globalization promotes privatization of government firms and public responsibilities. Privatization transfers public sector corporations and social services into the private sector or private capital, which makes maximum profits from these services. The result is that public expenditures for social services are reduced, and public services by public sector corporations are eliminated.

Thirdly, global institutions such as the World Trade Organization (WTO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank are the major instruments of neoliberal globalization. These global institutions have spread neoliberal polices to the whole planet. According to Nuruzzaman, “While the WTO is engaged in the task of eliminating all barriers to global free trade, the World Bank and the IMF exclusively look after the liberalization of domestic capital accounts and privatization of the national economies in the Southern developing countries” (Nuruzzaman, 2005, p.112). Thus, the governments in the Global South are forced into so-called Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) of economic reform by the IMF and the World Bank. (Nuruzzaman, 2005, p.117)

Fourthly, neoliberal globalization promotes labor flexibility in the labor markets, which means removing labor market regulations. This is required since the transnational corporations need an abundant, cheap labor market to maximize profit extraction.
In the case of Korea, since the Asian financial crisis in 1997, the pressures of neoliberal globalization have been demanding flexibility in the labor market. As a result, the number of non-regular workers has increased significantly. They receive “little protection from corporate welfare, union activities, government policy and even the social safety net” (Lee Byung-hee and Yoo Bum-sang, 2008, pp. 232-233). Moreover, they receive less salary for equal work when compared to regular workers, and they are easy to dismiss. This practice is used by employers to acquire flexibility in the labor market in order to avoid regulations.

1.1.3 Neoliberal Globalization in Asia

What has been the negative impact of neoliberal globalization in Asia?

Neoliberal globalization has introduced the capitalist value system in Asia, which has significantly dismantled the economic and social values of the peoples in Asia.

The main goal of neoliberal globalization is to establish “a global free enterprise system, which allows large institutional investors and giant transnational corporations to gain greater control over future profit-flows in the region” (Gill, 1999, p. 1).

For instance, promoted by the IMF and the World Bank, a lot of developing countries in Asia adopted the free trade policy and reduced their import substitutions. India reduced its tariffs to 30% in 1997 from an average of 82% in 1990, and China to 11% in 1997 from 43% in 1992 (Fukuda-Parr, 2003, p. 168).

In 1997, Asia was hit with the financial crisis, especially South Korea (henceforth Korea), Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand. The crisis started in Thailand and spread to Korea, Indonesia, and finally the rest of Asia. Even countries such as Vietnam, Laos,
and Cambodia were gradually dragged into the crisis. Most countries in the region were faced with massive currency fluctuations, banking crises, and plummeting stock markets.

When the crisis hit, the IMF moved to institute deeper structural reforms in Asia. The fund also intended to “dismantle state-owned enterprises, create flexible labor markets (allowing workers to be fired more easily), and eliminate food subsidies” (Gill, 1999, p. 4).

In the case of Korea, the Korean government received a record $58 billion package of loans and loan pledges from the IMF. In fact, the Korean currency (‘won’) lost more than half its value in 1997 against the U.S. dollar. The devaluation of the won generated a deadly chain of bankruptcies affecting both financial and industrial enterprises.

The initial impact of the IMF policies in Korea “appeared immediately in the subsequent bankruptcies of so-called non-competitive small and medium size firms, the massive growth of unemployment, and the deterioration of living standards of the mass of the population” (Chang Dae-oup and Chae Jun-ho, 2004, p. 428).

According to Chossudovsky, the hidden agenda of IMF was to destroy Korean capitalism. He argues that “the IMF program had contributed to fracturing the chaebols.1 The latter had been invited to establish ‘strategic alliances with foreign firms’ – meaning their eventual take-over and control by foreign capital” (Chossudovsky, 2003, p. 338). As a result, more than thirty of Korea’s largest conglomerates declared insolvency. For instance, the automotive group Kia, the shipbuilding and engineering Halla Group, and Daewoo Group, which was one of the top four conglomerates, became insolvent (Chossudovsky, 2003, p. 338).

In addition, the IMF had demanded ‘nationalization’ of the ‘big six’ commercial
banks in Korea, including Korea First Bank, Seoul Bank, the merged Commercial Bank of Korea with Hanil Bank, the Korean Exchange Bank and Cho Hung Bank. The purpose was “to transfer a large share of commercial banking into foreign hands” (Chossudovsky, 2003, p. 340).

As a result of the IMF regime, foreign investors -- particularly American companies -- took over several Korean companies and banks. For instance, General Motors (U.S.) took over Daewoo Motor Company, New Bridge Capital (U.S.) took over Korea First Bank, and Lone Star (U.S.) took over Korea Exchange Bank.

Furthermore, the IMF-World Bank program also entered into South and Southeast Asia to push neoliberal globalization. There are two cases: first, India in South Asia and second, Vietnam in Southeast Asia.

First, India entered into an IMF structural adjustment program in 1991 that directly impacted the livelihood of the people in India. There were three elements of IMF economic reforms in India: first, India had to deregulate and liberalize its whole market; second, the Indian government had to reduce spending on social programs, state subsidies and price support programs; and third, the IMF demanded privatization of public enterprises (Chossudovsky, 2003, p. 150).

The result of these IMF-World Bank polices was that the Indian economy was pushed into stagflation and a large number of domestic firms and farmers were plunged into bankruptcy (Chossudovsky, 2003, p. 150).

Secondly, IMF-sponsored economic reforms in Vietnam demobilized the country’s productive capacity. For instance, “more than 5,000 out of 12,300 state-owned enterprises (SOEs) had, by 1994, been closed down or steered into bankruptcy” (Chossudovsky, 2003, p. 171). According to Chossudovsky, the hidden agenda of the
reforms was to destabilize Vietnam’s industrial base. Thus, heavy industry, oil and gas, natural resources and mining, cement and steel production were to taken over by foreign capital (Chossudovsky, 2003, p. 172).

In addition, as a result of such economic reforms, local-level famines erupted (Chossudovsky, 2003, p. 177) and commune-level health centers and district hospitals were closed down (Chossudovsky, 2003, p. 185).

In short, under the current process of neoliberal globalization in Asia, the gap between rich and poor has been significantly widened at both national and regional levels. Foreign capital and the transnational corporations have strongly dominated domestic industries. Social programs that had been subsidized by the state in the areas of education, health and food, were eliminated. In this way, the powerless and the poor peoples in Asia, in particular, have been the victims of neoliberal globalization, socially and economically.

1.2 Globalization and Ecological Issues in Asia

Neoliberal globalization victimizes not only people but also the natural environment in Asia. It destroys the planet in the interest of human prosperity, exhausts natural resources, and pollutes the air, water and soil. Thus the natural environment in Asia is destroyed and thrown out of balance.

In a recent ‘scenarios report’, the World Business Council on Sustainable Development notes that “Globalization and liberalization of markets along with the pressures of rapid urbanization have raised the degree of social inequity and unrest to a
level that threatens basic survival of both human and environmental ecosystems” (WBCSD, 1997, p. 21).

In particular, neoliberal globalization causes deforestation, air pollution and unsustainable food and agriculture practices in Asia.

1.2.1 Forest Destruction in Asia

How does neoliberal globalization contribute to the vast forest destruction?

Among the evidence of destruction of this planet is its loss of biodiversity. French argues that the growth in international trade in timber, minerals and other natural products is contributing to the current “unprecedented biological implosion” (French, 2000, p. 15).

According to the United Nations Population Fund, nearly half of the world’s remaining biodiversity, plant and animal species, could be destroyed within 50 years due to the current rapid rate of tropical forest deforestation (UNFPA, 2001, p. 22).

The cause of forest destruction was often a direct consequence of the export-oriented policies imposed by the World Bank and IMF. For instance, Indonesia’s forests have been directly controlled by foreign corporations and globalized market forces because of bailout agreements with the IMF in 1997. The agreement aimed to “remove the restrictions on the foreign ownership of land” in Indonesia (Menotti, 1998, p. 9).

After the Asian financial crisis in 1997, the export of cash crops such as palm oil, cocoa, rubber, coffee and pepper was increased in Indonesia. For instance, 336,000 tons of cocoa was produced between October 1998 and September 1999, which was a 6 percent jump from the previous marketing year in Indonesia (Dauvergne, 2000, p. 391).
Further, Indonesia is the largest coffee exporting country in Asia, and those exports caused vast forest destruction in the country. For instance, high coffee prices encouraged some relocated families to return to conservation forests and again grow coffee (Dauvergne, 2000, p. 391).

1.2.2 Air Pollution in Asia

Does neoliberal globalization affect air pollution and climate change?

Under economic globalization, there have been increasingly greater amounts of exported and imported goods, involving more fossil fuel-burning transportation. This contributes to air pollution (Retallack, 2002, p. 13).

In other words, economic globalization forces rapid industrial development, which is highly dependent on coal-based energy and motorized urban transport. It causes large increases in greenhouse gas emissions, in particular carbon dioxide, in Asia (Zarsky, 1998). For instance, China and India in particular are producing much more air pollution than others because of their use of large quantities of coal for industrial development (McDonald, 1999, p. 2).

Air pollution and greenhouse gases are the cause of climate change, warming the earth’s surface and the atmosphere. Climate change is increasing the frequency of natural disasters such as cyclones, droughts or flooding. These natural disasters have a more serious impact on developing countries in Asia than on developed countries, because of their lower adaptive capacity and their higher vulnerability (Padilla, 2004, p. 526).

Most of the world’s poor people live in Asia. They are suffering and will continue to
suffer the most from the impacts of climate change.

1.2.3 Globalization in Food and Agriculture in Asia

How does neoliberal globalization threaten food security and ecological sustainability?

According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), globalization in food and agriculture is characterized by “the expansion of foreign private investment in agriculture; food processing and marketing, largely but not exclusively through transnational corporations; and an increasing international trade in food facilitated by the reduction of trade barriers” (FAO, 2003, p. 10).

The international economic governance institution, World Trade Organization (WTO), pushes for globalization in food and agriculture and also promotes “the U.S. side of copyright and patent protection” (Clement, 2004, p. 18). With respect to Asia, prior to joining the WTO, most of Asian agriculture was consumed by domestic households. In other words, Asia was not ready for agricultural trade liberalization due to its non-commercial nature (Guzman, 2006, p. 5).

According to Vandana Shiva, for instance, the WTO’s Agreement on Agriculture (AOA) and the Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs) agreement are primarily camouflaged “rules of robbery.” She argues that the AOA is based on the ideology of trade liberalization and was pushed by the United States-dominated multinational agribusiness corporations (Shiva, 2000a, p. 1). She argues that it is designed to undermine livelihoods and food security, and to institutionalize the practice of dumping of agricultural products in developing countries (Shiva, 2003).
For instance, rice is the staple grain for Asians, and the Asia region produces over 90 percent of the world's rice supply. However a majority of the rice patents is controlled by transnational corporations. In 1997, RiceTec, a U.S.-based transnational corporation, was granted patent protection for ‘Basmati Rice’ from the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (Clement, 2004, p. 15). However, Basmati rice had been a traditional rice strain of India for centuries. Vandana Shiva points out that U.S. law “permits patents to be filed on discoveries made in the United States, whether or not identical ones already exist and are in use in other parts of the world” (Shiva, 2000b, p. 89). Although Basmati rice already exists in India, it could be granted a patent through this unethical distortion by U.S. industrialization.

In addition, the TRIPs agreement, adopted in 1994, is the global rule on patent policy including gene, plant, animal and seed patents. Vandana Shiva argues that “living organisms and life forms that are self-creating were thus redefined as machines and artefacts made and invented by the patentee” (Shiva, 2000a, p. 3). Based on TRIPs, transnational corporations have attempted to patent various seeds and Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs). Clement points out that they have attempted to “patent various forms of food crops, such as basic grains, and then to monopolize these patented grain varieties, creating dependence on seeds of the agribusiness corporations” (Clement, 2004, p. 15). As a result, farmers in developing countries in Asia are being forced to buy patented seeds from them.

In fact, such biotechnologization of agriculture is emerging with economic globalization. At present, it comes in the form of genetic modification of genes “to change the characteristics of a targeted organism” (Abaidoo, 2000, p. 485). With the ostensible ideology of food production for the hungry and food for health, the
transnational corporations are carrying out genetic modifications and chemical treatments of food. For instance, the world’s key sustenance crops such as wheat, maize and rice are now widely genetically engineered and patented by biotech transnational corporations in United States and Europe (Spurgaitis, 2004). These genetically engineered crops threaten the natural world at its core. They could cause “broader ecological disruption as bioengineered traits are accidentally and unavoidably passed on to neighboring plants through cross-pollination” (French, 2000, p. 62).

Moreover, one of the fundamental problems of biotech agriculture is that the whole process of genetic modifications is basically market driven, its first priority being the maximization of profit instead of the health of nature and humans.

The consequences of globalization in food and agriculture are ecologically unsustainable and socially destructive.

In sum, ecological destruction and imbalance have been an irreversible trend in industrialization. This is happening in the Asian process of industrialization, driven by neoliberal globalization. As a consequence of economic globalization, biodiversity is being lost due to massive forest destruction, and the air is choking with pollution.

In addition, the promotion and expansion of the biotech industry for food and bio commodities has led to genetic modification and genetic engineering, bringing the fatal consequence of biological destruction.

Moreover, neoliberal globalization presses against the Earth's natural limits. It is “exhausting the planet's capacity to replenish natural resources and absorb our wastes” (Retallack, 2002, p. 17). Thus, as neoliberal globalization has increased, large areas of the planet have become uninhabitable.
1.3 Globalization and Cultural Issues in Asia

Neoliberal globalization has pervaded all Asian societies not only in economic terms, but in cultural terms as well. The term ‘culture’ can be understood “in its conventional social scientific sense: as the beliefs, values and lifestyles of ordinary people in their everyday existence.” (Berger, 2002, p. 2)

In the process of globalization, cultural issues have emerged as the central concern. Lieber and Weisberg explain that “culture in its various forms serves as a primary carrier of globalization and modern values and cultural issues are so fraught precisely because of their impact on both individual and national identity” (Lieber and Weisberg, 2002, pp. 291-292).

1.3.1 Cultural Globalization and Asian Values

Cultural globalization refers to “the emergence of a specific set of values and beliefs that are largely shared around the planet” (Castells, 2009, p. 117).

What is the effect of cultural globalization?

Robert J. Holton classifies and summarizes it in the following three theses: first, homogenization; second, polarization; and third, hybridization.

First, the homogenization thesis is based on “the Americanization of global culture” (Holton, 1998, p. 166). This argument is found in the literature on cultural imperialism which views the world culture as Americanized. This thesis builds on a number of key arguments. The first argument is related to “the theme of predominant American
ownership of key resources for the manufacture and transmission of culture” (Holton, 1998, p. 166). A second argument focuses on the United States’ role in “constructing a regulatory framework within culture and information industries that favours U.S. interests” (Holton, 1998, p. 167). A third argument stresses the U.S. cultural hegemony that goes “beyond culture and information industries” and includes “the very characteristics of modern social organization” (Holton, 1998, p. 167). For example, the so-call McDonaldization of society refers “not merely to the spectacular worldwide expansion of the American fast food industry, but more generally to certain broader cultural traits” (Holton, 1998, p. 167). McDonaldization shows the growing tendency toward unification of lifestyles and cultural symbols of American culture.

Second, the polarization thesis is notably represented by Samuel P. Huntington. For Huntington, “polarization is between civilizations in general, and between the West and an emergent Islamic-Confucian axis in particular” (Holton, 1998, p. 172).

Third, the hybridization thesis emphasizes “cross-cultural borrowings and intercultural fusion and blending to create hybridized or mixed cultural forms” (Holton, 1998, p. 179). For example, modern jazz is a cultural hybrid of Afro-American and Western music (Holton, 1998, p. 180).

However, considering the East Asian context, the homogenization thesis seems more acceptable and persuasive. Cultural globalization has corroded Asian values by integrating cultural, ethnic and national communities. The cultural objects and services have been commoditized into marketable goods and services, destroying any sacred values of traditional cultural communities. Thus, the Western cultural homogenization, in particular Americanization, has been overwhelming in Asia and around the globe. It is displacing various Asian indigenous cultures into a single market.
As a response to Western cultural homogenization, the Asian values (in particular East Asian) discourse has emerged in East Asia since the early 1990s. The term ‘East Asia’ includes countries such as Korea (South and North), People’s Republic of China (including Hong Kong), Taiwan and Japan.

Kim Kwang-ok describes the background of the rise of discourse on Asian values (Kim Kwang-ok, 1998, pp. 5-6).

Firstly, it comes from the desire for pursuance of East Asian identity. In other words, it is a reaction of critical reflection upon modernization based on the Western discourse. He argues that many Western scholars such as Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, Karl Heinrich Marx, Max Weber and Samuel P. Huntington place Western civilization at the center and put non-Western civilization in the background.

Secondly, it is an attempt to find an explanation for the marvelous economic growth in East Asia, whose people used to believe development was impossible without dependence on the Western way.

Lastly, it results from the desire and confidence of East Asian societies seeking to form a self-defensive community to counter the diffusion of Western globalization. Kim positively accepts this attempt to develop an East Asian model as an alternative to Western globalization.

According to Chon Je-gook, the primary argument of the Asian values discourse is communitarianism based on Confucian culture, which is contrasted with Western individualism. The advocates of Asian values criticize Western values for their retrogressive character rooted in individualism such as selfishness, lack of social discipline and self-indulgence, the dissolution of family and the rapid increase of unwed motherhood, the rampant increase of drug use, violence and crime, the breakdown of
civil society, etc. In contrast, they assert that the relative superiority of Asian values enables Asians to maintain an orderly and healthy society. They assert that the superiority of Asian values lies in their communitarianism stressing community, family and social order over individual freedom; respect for authority; preference for consensus and harmony over competition and confrontation; high enthusiasm for children’s education; thrifty and diligent life-style; and so on (Chon, 1999, pp. 44-45).

By contrast, the advocates of Western values argue that there are no common traits encompassing the whole Asia region, where diverse histories, cultures, traditions, religions, races and ideologies are mixed (Chon, 1999, p. 45). In addition, Moody contends that Asia is just a poorly defined geographical expression as a residual concept in contrast to Europe. Thus, he argues that Asian value is “an artificial construct” (Moody, 1996, p. 168).

In short, cultural globalization has eroded Asian values. It is the Americanization of Asian culture. As a response to cultural homogenization, the Asian values discourse emerged in search of an alternative to the Western values. The issue, however, is not which is superior, Eastern values or Western values. They have to complement each other to overcome their negative effects.

**1.3.2 The Oligopoly of the Global Media System**

What is the nature of the relationship between media and cultural globalization?

Globalization and media are closely intertwined. In the process of globalization, media and communication have a central place. Without the global media system, cultural globalization and even economic globalization would be impossible. The
system serves “to promote global markets and to encourage consumer values” (McChesney, 2001, p. 1). Thus, the transnational corporations use the global media system to dominate and control the market.

According to McChesney, there are two ways to show the close relationship between the global media system and neoliberal globalization (McChesney, 1998, p. 4). Firstly, the global media system is “the direct result of the sort of 'neoliberal' deregulatory policies and agreements” needed to establish global markets for goods and services. Secondly, the global media system is linked to the global market by advertising, which is a major tool for the transnational corporations in establishing new markets.

In addition, he asserts that the global media system has two characteristics (McChesney, 2001, p. 3). Firstly, U.S.-based dominant media companies are “moving across the planet at breakneck speed.” Under the process of globalization, they became global media firms instead of domestic firms. Secondly, global media firms are convergent and consolidated. He states, “the dominant players in each media industry increasingly are subsidiaries of huge global media conglomerates.” In the United States, for instance, Disney merged with ABC in 1997, and America Online (AOL) and Time Warner merged in January 2001.

The emerging global media system is dominated by U.S.-based transnational corporations. McChesney states, “The global markets for film production, TV show production, book publishing, and recorded music have been oligopolistic markets throughout much of their existence” (McChesney, 1998, p. 3). For instance, the Hollywood studios generate about 50 percent of their revenues outside the United States (Goldblatt, 1997).
1.3.3 Western Media Dominance in Asia

Domination by the Western global media system has a powerful impact upon the peoples in Asia. Kim Yong-bock argues that Western values and lifestyles, conveyed by the global media system, have corroded Asian values and ways of living. In particular, he asserts that the cultural identity of Asians has been suppressed. “Asia’s religious and cultural heritages are disparaged as pre- or anti-modern (meaning anti-Western); the languages, symbols and images of Asia are suppressed and replaced by Western ones” (Kim Yong-bock, 1992, p. 119).

Historically, the development of modern media systems in Asia started with the colonial era.

In the pre-independence period in Asia, according to Sussman and Lent, informational and entertainment infrastructure, such as commercial newspapers, advertising, cinema, telephones and broadcast radio, were established to support and manage colonial investment and trade and to keep in touch with news, overseas administrators and their families in the home countries (Sussman and Lent, 1999, p. 135). The world’s first overseas broadcasting began in 1927 when Philips Laboratories of the Netherlands transmitted shortwave broadcasts from Eindhoven to the Dutch East Indies (now Indonesia) (RNW, 2009). Then British, French, and other Western colonial powers followed suit.

In the postwar era, Asian newspapers and broadcasters depended on the Western news organizations to find out news about the world, their neighbors and even themselves. Telephone companies also were dependent on foreign capital and
technology for both domestic and international calls (Sussman and Lent, 1999, p. 135).

In addition, in the case of telecommunication industries in Asia, under the pressure of the WTO and the World Bank, Asia has had to implement a free market system. Sussman and Lent contend that this has provided “the opportunity to enter their markets with the added advantage of being able to directly offer reduced rate services” for transnational telecommunications companies, such as AT&T, Sprint, MCI, Cable & Wireless, and British Telecommunications (Sussman and Lent, 1999, p. 142).

Moreover, Asia's biggest sports content provider, ESPN STAR Sports network in Asia, is co-owned by Disney/News Corporation. A 24-hour music channel combined of mandarin and international music programs, MTV Mandarin is owned by Viacom; CNN International is co-owned by AOL/Time Warner; and Hong Kong-based STAR TV is owned by News Corporation. In 1998, a US-based monthly magazine, Reader’s Digest, had a circulation of 1.9 million copies in Asia, and Time had a circulation of 327,000 in Asia (Lee, 2003, p. 49). These figures show that the U.S.-based transnational corporations’ media products prevail over all Asia.

In the case of Korea, the domestic media system has been dominated by U.S.-based transnational corporations in terms of their capital and cultural products. For example, when the Korean government adopted and implemented neoliberal cultural policies in the late 1980s, U.S.-based transnational corporations came to dominate the Korean film market. Due to the strong demands of U.S. Trade Representatives (USTR) and transnational corporations to open the film market, the Korean government allowed direct distribution of Hollywood films by foreign distributors from 1988 (Jin Dal-yong, 2006, p. 8). As a result, U.S.-based transnational corporations have entered the Korean film market by setting up subsidiaries in Korea. United International Pictures (UIP),
Twentieth Century Fox, Warner Brothers, Columbia, and Walt Disney set up their branch offices in Korea. A total of 982 foreign films were directly distributed by them between 1988 and 2003 (Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2004). Korea has emerged as one of the top ten film markets in the world for U.S.-based transnational corporations. American films accounted for between 45 and 50 percent of the Korean film market for 2007 - 2009 (KOFIC, 2008).

Furthermore, U.S.-based transnational corporations rushed into Korea, not only in the film market but also in the media industry. Several global media firms invested in the Korean media market in the form of joint ventures with domestic media industries or direct investment. For instance, HBO (Home Box Office), an affiliate company of Time Warner, invested $12.5 million to form a joint venture with On Media in 2000 (Heo Yeop, 2000). On Media, the first and largest multi-channel owner in Korea, owned 10 cable channels including CATCH ON, CATCH ON Plus, Tooniverse, OCN, and SUPER ACTION. MBC Sports also had an affiliation with ESPN, owned by Disney, and changed its name to MBC-ESPN in 2001.

In sum, neoliberal globalization and the global media system are strongly interconnected. Currently, the global media market has come to be dominated by Western media, especially U.S.-based transnational media corporations. Such media domination causes a homogenizing process led by Western culture and the demolishing of cultural identity in Asia.

1.3.4 Cultural Imperialism

Today, with the process of globalization, Western cultural tastes and practices are
becoming global ones. The presence of Western media images, cultural goods, life styles and ideologies are in every inhabited area of the world. The worldwide proliferation of standardized food, clothing, music, TV drama, the western business style and linguistic conventions creates the impression of a cultural homogenization. This is cultural globalization as ‘cultural imperialism’.

According to Ali Mohammadi, the term ‘cultural imperialism’ is “gathering in notions of domination in terms of both general hegemonic cultural formation (the West, Western modernity, consumer culture) and of particular national cultures (America) and accommodating this critique alongside a critique of political economy (transnational capitalism)” (Mohammadi, 1997, p. 175).

Against cultural imperialism, the first Non-Aligned Movement Summit in Bandung, Indonesia, 1955 had already mentioned the effects of colonialism on culture:

The existence of colonialism in many parts of Asia and Africa, in whatever form it may be, not only prevents cultural cooperation but also suppresses the national cultures of the peoples … Some colonial powers have denied their dependent peoples basic rights in the sphere of education and culture (Hamelink, 1994, p. 198).

During the 1970’s, the issues of cultural identity and cultural imperialism became a hot topic of debate. The Non-Aligned Summit at Algiers in 1973 states: “it is an established fact that the activity of imperialism is not limited to political and economic domains, but that it encompasses social and cultural areas as well, imposing thereby a foreign ideological domination on the peoples of the developing world” (Hamelink, 2003, p. 15).

In 1980, the issue of cultural identity was treated by UNESCO. The famous
‘MacBride Report’, *Many Voices, One World*, was issued by a UNESCO conference and commissions in 1980. The MacBride commission saw cultural identity “endangered by the overpowering influence on and assimilation of some national cultures though these nations may well be the heirs to more ancient and richer cultures” (Hamelink, 1994, p. 190).

### 1.3.5. Cultural Imperialism and Media

What is the relationship between cultural imperialism and media?

The media have a central role to play in creating culture. In fact, the media have “constituted the key instruments for the diffusion of cultural values and practices” (Banerjee, 2003, p. 58). Thus, cultural imperialism “places the media, such as television, film, radio, print journalism and advertising, at the center of things” (Tomlinson, 1991, p. 20).

An important issue of cultural imperialism in the process of globalization is the global domination of media products by a small number of transnational media conglomerates from Western countries and particularly the U.S. They produce films, television programs and popular music products for worldwide distribution and consumption.

For instance, in 1997 the US$ 19 billion merger of Disney and Capital Cities’ ABC was “the biggest media merger ever.” But four years later, the US$ 106 billion merger of America Online (AOL) and Time Warner in the US in 2001 “drew worldwide attention as it pushed media mergers to new heights” (Lee, 2003, p. 47).

Such mergers between media conglomerates caused harm to cultural diversity. The
vast media power and influence of transnational media conglomerates create a homogenous culture worldwide. Such homogenous global culture is “displacing various indigenous cultures as capitalism is turning the world into a single market for uniform commodities and social values” (Lee, 2003, p. 48). It undermines the cultures, morals and values of the global South.

1.4 Conclusion

Through neoliberal globalization, the world has become one global market. In the process of neoliberal globalization, the earth as a whole, not only human beings but also nature is under crisis.

As a result of neoliberal globalization, the gap between rich and poor has been significantly widened. State-subsidized social programs in the areas of education, health and food have been enormously reduced. Thus, in particular, the poor and even middle class people in Asia are victimized in this process of neoliberal globalization.

In addition, neoliberal globalization has introduced into Asia an industrial ideology that conquers, destroys and pollutes the natural environment with limitless exploitation of nature. Moreover, transnational corporations genetically manipulate and modify living organisms and life forms as goods to market for their profit. Such genetic developments may damage the biosphere as a whole.

This neoliberal globalization is strongly supported by cultural globalization through the global media system. Cultural globalization has corroded cultural identities and eroded the cultural values of the Asian people. The global media system plays a central
and decisive role in economic and cultural globalization to promote and control global markets. It is enforcing and accelerating the market dynamics among the peoples in Asia.

Notes

1 Chaebol refers to South Korean corporate conglomerates.
2 See: http://www.onmedia.co.kr
Chapter 2
Ecumenical Discussion on Theology of Life

In the previous chapter, I pointed out that in the process of globalization, the whole of creation on earth, not only human beings but all of nature, is under crisis. Then, what is the theological response to this global crisis of life? In particular, what is the ecumenical discussion on this challenge?

The World Council of Churches (WCC) introduced the concept of theology of life at the Vancouver Assembly in 1983. In addition, the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC) also discussed theology of life as its main theme at the Accra Council in 2004.

This chapter will examine the discussion of the WCC on a theology of life, from the Vancouver Assembly in 1983 to the Canberra Assembly in 1991. The theme of the Vancouver Assembly of the WCC was ‘Jesus Christ – the Life of the World’. It discussed theology of life from a Christological perspective. The Vancouver Assembly adopted justice, peace and the integrity of creation (JPIC) as a priority for WCC programmes to “engage member churches in a conciliar process of mutual commitment” (Gill, 1983, p. 255).

After the WCC’s Vancouver Assembly, “the discussions gained momentum with the World Convocation on JPIC” in Seoul, 1990 (Hallman, 1994, p. 3).

The year after the World Convocation on JPIC, the Seventh Assembly of the WCC was held in Canberra, Australia, in 1991. The theme of the Assembly was ‘Come, Holy Spirit – Renew the Whole Creation’. Since the Canberra Assembly, ecumenical discussion on a theology of life has focused on the Spirit as life-giver.
In addition, this chapter will examine Jürgen Moltmann’s theology of life. As one of the most important ecumenical theologians, he has articulated the Spirit of life from the Reformed perspective in a creative and sophisticated manner.

Furthermore, this chapter will examine the Accra confession of the WARC’s 24th General Council in Accra, Ghana in 2004. The Accra Confession is the Reformed Christians’ response to the global crisis of life.

Lastly, this chapter will examine communication issues in a theology of life. In the ecumenical discussion on theology of life, the concern for communication gives new insights to us for communication for life.

2.1 Background of Ecumenical Discussion on Theology of Life

For a long time the theme of ‘creation’ or ‘theology of life’ was not given attention in ecumenical discussions. Only in the past decade has theological attention to creation emerged in the ecumenical movement. Prof. Lukas Vischer notes that ecumenical discussion mainly “focused on the understanding of Christ and his Gospel” (Vischer, 1993). He contends that the ecumenical movement’s prime concern was “to seek unity of the church and common witness in the world and in this its starting point was Jesus Christ, the source of salvation.” In other words, ecumenical discussion was “occupied by the building of human community in church and in society” (Vischer, 1993).

In connection with the root of the ecological crisis, Tucker and Grim point out, our ecological crisis is “not only the result of certain economic, political, and social factors” but also “a moral and spiritual crisis” (Tucker and Grim, 1998, p. xvi).
In fact, Western Christian civilization has been a major contributor to the current ecological crisis. Lynn White, Jr. contends in his article ‘The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis’, that Western Judeo-Christian anthropocentric theology is the root of the ecological crisis. In his article, White maintains that because both modern science and technology are products of Western culture, which has at its roots Christian attitudes toward nature, Christianity bears “a huge burden of guilt” for the current ecological crisis. He argues that Christianity is “the most anthropocentric religion that the world has seen” and Christianity “not only established a dualism of man and nature but also insisted that it is God’s will that man exploit nature for his proper ends” (White, 1967, p. 1205).

Theology of life, thus, was initiated by WCC as a reflection on such a Western Judeo-Christian anthropocentric theology.

2.2 Jesus Christ, the Life of the World: The Vancouver Assembly of the World Council of Churches

As a subject of theology, ‘Life’ was initiated in the WCC’s Sixth Assembly in Vancouver, 1983. Since the Vancouver Assembly, the theology of life has been a concern within ecumenical discussions.

The Sixth Assembly of the WCC met in Vancouver, Canada, from July 24 to August 10, 1983. Representatives of the more than three hundred member churches of the WCC came together to celebrate the theme: ‘Jesus Christ – the Life of the World’.

This was a Christological expression, as Jesus Christ is “the gracious source of the
world’s life, both eternal and temporal, as its Saviour and Lord” (Lazareth, 1983, p. IX). According to Lazareth, the theme did not intend to give either a scientific description of life or a philosophical interpretation of the world.

What was the reason for choosing the theme?

Paulos Mar Gregorios contends it was that we live in a world where all life is imperiled, such as nuclear peril, the peril of biotechnology, ecological peril, and the peril of global injustice (Gregorios, 1983, pp. 34-35). In other words, the theme was chosen because of the crisis of the world.

2.2.1 What is life?

What is the meaning of life? We cannot simply define what life is and the boundary between life and non-life. To examine an answer for this question, we need an integral and holistic approach instead of one that is fragmentary and reductionist.

In particular, then, what is life according to the Vancouver Assembly?

With respect to terminology, the Greek word for life in the New Testament is zoe, not bios. The first one is “a rich overarching concept of life, temporal and eternal” and the other is “a more narrow biological term” (Lønning, 1982, p. 357).

As a theological answer to the question of ‘what is life’, life is a gift of God. This was the first sub-theme of the Vancouver Assembly. According to Paulos Mar Gregorios, there are two different but related kinds of life as a gift: first, biological life by creation, and second, eternal life by the incarnate Lord Jesus Christ. Although biological life is temporary, he points out that not only is eternal life a far superior gift, but also biological life is a gift of God’s grace (Gregorios, 1983, p. 41).
In addition, the report of the Orthodox theological symposium on the main theme of the WCC’s Vancouver Assembly distinguished five different kinds of life:

a) God’s life, self-existent, eternal, without beginning or end, not derived from others, and the source of the life of all;
   b) angelic life – created, unmixed with evil;
   c) human life – created, now pervaded by sin and mortality;
   d) sub-human life – of animals and plants, created, mortal, and affected by human sin in a fallen world; and
   e) the life of the evil power – created as good, but now by their own will and action, under power of evil, opposed to God’s purposes, and distorting life on our earth (Lazareth, 1983, p. 2).

Furthermore, from an African perspective, the term life is interconnected. In other words, “social, economic, political and family life are closely intertwined and profoundly united.” Thus, according to the African perspective, the destruction of natural life is interconnected with the destruction of human community (Mpolo, 1983, p. 166).

**2.2.2 Life Confronting and Overcoming Death**

When we confess Jesus Christ is the life of the world, we have to recognize that he has overcome death through resurrection from the dead. In other words, we can not speak about the life of the world apart from the threats to life (Lønning, 1982, p. 355).

How can we recognize the power of death?

According to Konrad Raiser, the power of death is recognized in the growth of violence in human life and the destruction of nature. It is also recognized in political,
social and economic injustice. Thus, he notes that the theme of the Vancouver Assembly was a ‘time signal’, which was “asummons to affirm life against the power of death” (Raiser, 1983, p. 67).

In addition, from the Latin American perspective, the term “death” is not only an individual concern but also a structural and institutionalized one. According to the report of the meeting of WCC member churches in Latin America, there are three dimensions among the signs of death: 1) the structural dimension – the economic structure of society which increases inequality, and encourages the concentration of wealth and power in the most prosperous sections of society; and the constant mutilation and destruction of national and especially indigenous cultures; 2) the institutional dimension – idolatry of and attribution of a sacred character to certain ecclesiastical structures which hamper the participation and involvement of the people, and the sectarianism found in some churches; 3) the personal dimension – selfishness in all its shades, individualism which unreservedly puts individual desires and interests first, and alienation, which is one of the most powerful weapons used by structures and institutions (WCC, 1982, pp. 394-395).

Thus, Ahn Myung-mu contends, Christianity has to create a movement against such power of death. It makes our confession ‘Jesus Christ, the life of the world’ more meaningful, otherwise “our confession remains a dead formula” (Ahn Myung-mu, 1983, p. 77). Konrad Raiser also maintains that we have to choose life rather than death because we believe “the power of the living God over the power of death” (Raiser, 1983, p. 66).
2.2.3 Eucharistic Vision of the Whole Creation

The cosmological dimensions of Eucharist were discussed in the Vancouver Assembly (Brinkman, 1995, p. 111). The Eucharistic vision of the whole creation is described in the reports of the Assembly: “Christ – the life of the world – unites heaven and earth, God and world, spiritual and secular” and “His body and blood, given us in the elements of bread and wine, integrate liturgy and diaconate, proclamation and acts of healing” (Gill, 1983, p. 44). Brinkman points out that this Eucharistic vision was inspired by Eastern Orthodox spirituality, which emphasizes the aspect of the unity of cosmos and Eucharist (Brinkman, 1995, pp. 111-112).

2.2.4 The Call of the Vancouver Assembly

The World Council of Churches took up the global challenge in Vancouver with its call for ‘a conciliar process for justice, peace and the integrity of creation’. As the report of the Assembly’s Programme Guidelines Committee notes, “Jesus Christ is the life of the world. This life is to be expressed through justice and peace for the whole world and respect for the integrity of all creation” (Gill, 1983, p. 251).

In addition, the report states that WCC member churches’ engagement in a conciliar process of mutual commitment (covenant) to justice, peace and the integrity of all creation is a priority for WCC programmes (Gill, 1983, p. 255).

This affirmation culminated in 1990 at the World Convocation on Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation (JPIC) in Seoul, Korea.
2.3 Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation (JPIC): Seoul Convocation

2.3.1 From JPSS to JPIC

Before the ecumenical discussion on theology of life, the WCC programme for a Just, Participatory and Sustainable Society (JPSS) was initiated by the WCC’s Fifth Assembly in Nairobi in 1975. This JPSS programme “provided a new opening for questions concerning the undergirding state of the earth within ecumenical discussions” (Granberg-Michaelson, 1994). This was stimulated by an important consultation organized by the WCC’s sub-unit on Church and Society in Bucharest in 1974. The Bucharest meeting first introduced the concept of ‘sustainability’ and ‘sustainable development’, the idea that development could be sustained environmentally, socially and economically. This concept of ‘sustainability’ became the framework for the ‘Earth Summit’ in Rio (United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, UNCED) in 1992 (Granberg-Michaelson, 1994).

In short, the JPSS discussion was expanded by the famous call of the WCC’s Vancouver Assembly for ‘a conciliar process of mutual commitment for justice, peace and the integrity of creation’.

2.3.2 Integrity of Creation: Granvollen Consultation

The Vancouver Assembly in 1983 adopted a new term -- ‘a conciliar process of
mutual commitment for justice, peace and the integrity of creation’. While the terms justice and peace were familiar, ‘integrity of creation’ was a new term and it became a new ecumenical phrase in the ecumenical discussion.

Although various attempts were made to explore what is meant to affirm the integrity of creation, the most significant development was the Granvollen Consultation on integrity of creation, which was held from February 25 to March 3, 1988 in Granvollen, Norway. There were about fifty participants from the Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Protestant churches from all parts of the world, and also representatives from other faiths – Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim and Sikh (WCC, 1990b).

The report from Granvollen is divided into two parts, the first being the theological and biblical vision on the integrity of creation, and the second part recording the experiences of various groups of people.

The Granvollen Consultation was very critical of Western culture’s presumption of ‘mastery’ over creation. It notes that “this presumed prerogative has radically transformed human life and culture and affected the rest of creation”; and says that this has resulted in the unsustainable exploitation of natural resources, the alienation of land from people and the marginalizing of indigenous cultures.

In addition, the report notes that the development of the industrial worldview is closely related to Western culture’s philosophy of dualism. It points out that this dualistic philosophy has played a significant role in many Christian theologies over the centuries. As a result, it absolutizes human-centered creation.

What is, then, the relationship between the integrity of creation, and the issues of justice and peace? The JPIC process emphasized the inter-relationship between the integrity of creation, and the issues of justice and peace. Weizsäcker, for instance,
contends, “No peace without justice, no justice without peace” and “No peace among people without peace with nature. No peace with nature without peace among people” (Weizsäcker, 1987). Further, Ninan Koshy argues that the relationship between justice, peace and the integrity of creation is not only inter-relationship but is one whole. He maintains “they are inseparable and indivisible” (Koshy, 1987).

2.3.3 The Discussion of the Seoul Convocation

The WCC’s World Convocation on JPIC in Seoul in 1990 adopted ten affirmations and four covenants (WCC, 1992, pp. 164-190).

The ten affirmations are the theological affirmations on economic inequity, racial justice, gender justice, peace and ecological destruction. Of the ten affirmations, in particular, Affirmations VII and VIII are directly related to creation and the ecological aspect.

Affirmation VII affirms “the creation as beloved by God.” It affirms the two aspects of the integrity of creation. The one is a social aspect, “peace with justice,” and the other is an ecological aspect, the “self-renewing, sustainable character of the natural ecosystem.” It also affirms that all creatures including humanity are “good” in God's sight, so churches must resist human exploitation of creation, the extinction of species, consumerism, harmful mass production and pollution of land, air and waters that lead to the destruction of creation. Such resistance requires Christians to commit themselves as members of both “the living community of creation” and “the covenant community of Christ” and also as “full co-workers with God” respecting the rights of future generations and the inherent value of all creation before God (WCC, 1992, p. 174).
In addition, Affirmation VIII states, “the earth is the Lord's.” It claims, “Human use of land and waters should release the earth to regularly replenish its life-giving power, protecting its integrity and providing spaces for its creatures” (WCC, 1992, p. 174). This implication appeals to churches to resist treating the land merely as a marketable commodity and to stop dumping and exploitation of land. Churches are also called to resist the unequal distribution of the land and its products. In addition, the Seoul participants committed themselves “to join in solidarity” with indigenous communities, peasants, poor farmers and seasonal agricultural workers, and “to have reverence for the ecological space of other living creatures” (WCC, 1992, p. 175).

To solidify concrete commitments to these Affirmations, the Seoul participants adopted four covenants in the areas of justice, peace, creation, and racism. Particularly, the focus for the integrity of creation was on the threat of global warming and ways to combat the causes of destructive changes to the earth’s atmosphere.

The Seoul participants committed themselves to build a culture that can live in harmony with creation's integrity through five steps. The first step to achieve this goal is to search for ways to live together in harmony with God’s creation through developing a new theological perspective and educational programmes, acting together globally and locally, sharing the resources of the earth, and rejecting hierarchical thinking. The second step is to join in global, local and personal efforts to safeguard the world’s atmospheric integrity and quality through education, cooperating with environmental organizations, popular movements, scientific associations, and international bodies, and creating specific policies and programmes. The third step is to resist globally the causes, and to deal with the consequences of, atmospheric destruction, through reducing the emission of carbon dioxide, banning the use of chlorofluoro-carbons (CFCs), preserving
forest eco-systems, promoting strategies for renewable energy resources, and so on. The fourth step is to challenge thinking about unlimited energy consumption and economic growth by monitoring international negotiations, encouraging bilateral and multilateral development and educating congregations. The fifth and last step is to commit themselves personally to promote and facilitate the achievement of these goals through their witness, life style and solidarity (WCC, 1992, pp. 186-189).

In short, the Seoul Convocation on JPIC brought the challenge of global ecological issues as an important agenda into the ecumenical discussion. Additionally, the Seoul convocation marks the beginning of a new cooperative relationship between churches, grassroots movements, and international bodies.

2.4 Holy Spirit and Life: The Canberra Assembly of the World Council of Churches

The Canberra Assembly of the WCC in 1991 continued focusing on theology of life. The theme for Canberra was 'Come Holy Spirit – Renew the Whole Creation'.

Before the Canberra Assembly, most previous WCC general assemblies had worked with Christological themes such as Evanston in 1954 (“Christ, the Hope of the World”), New Delhi in 1961 (“Jesus Christ, the Light of the World”), Nairobi in 1975 (“Jesus Christ Frees and Unites”), and Vancouver in 1983 (“Jesus Christ, the Life of the World”). The Canberra Assembly was the first time that the Holy Spirit was the center of attention. Moreover, the theme links the two themes ‘Holy Spirit’ and ‘creation’.

According to Brinkman, the theme of the Canberra Assembly was not “an
alternative” but “a good supplement” to the theme of Amsterdam in 1948 (“Man’s Disorder and God’s Design”) and to the other Christological themes. He contends that the theme of Uppsala in 1968 (“Behold, I Make All Things New”) is “the closest to the theme of Canberra” (Brinkman, 1990, p.152).

The main theme of the Canberra Assembly was broken into four sub-themes: 1) Giver of life – sustain your creation; 2) Spirit of truth – set us free; 3) Spirit of unity – reconcile your people; and 4) Holy Spirit – transform and sanctify us. In particular, its first sub-theme, 'Giver of life – sustain your creation,' developed the relationship of the Holy Spirit to creation.

2.4.1 The Relationship of the Holy Spirit to the Creation: A Pre-Assembly Consultation in Kuala Lumpur

The WCC sub-unit on Church and Society coordinated a pre-assembly consultation on the first sub-theme in Kuala Lumpur in 1990 to prepare for the Canberra Assembly. The primary objective of the consultation was to recast the theological understanding of creation in relation to the Holy Spirit.

The Kuala Lumpur report describes the Spirit as “God’s uncreated energy alive throughout creation” and this Spirit is "in, with, and under ‘all things’ (ta panta)” (WCC, 1990a, p. 316).

With respect to the relationship between human beings and other creations, the report notes that human beings coexist with the rest of nature in various ways: as trustees, as servants, as priests, as tillers and keepers, as co-creators, or as a portion of
nature. But in all cases, the report emphasizes that human beings “belong to the community of all created life” (WCC, 1990a, p. 316).

Moreover, the consultation developed an ethic for justice and sustainability. The main concept was a new vision to “integrate our interdependent ecological, social, economic and spiritual needs” (WCC, 1990a, p. 317). In this sense, pursuing justice demands that we “learn new ways of paying attention to all of creation—the land, water, air and living creatures, as well as the unseen physical and spiritual forces that sustain our fragile lives” (WCC, 1990a, p. 317).

### 2.4.2 Discussion on the Giver of Life – Sustain Your Creation

The report of Section I of the Canberra Assembly affirms that the Spirit as the giver of life is based on a Trinitarian understanding of life. It states that the boundless mystery of all life has its source in the Triune God: God who is the creator present in all things; Jesus Christ who has redeemed, renewed and reconciled the entire creation; and the Holy Spirit who binds human beings together with all created life (Kinnamon, 1991, pp. 54-55).

In addition, the focus on economic and ecological sustainability was the main concern for creation in Canberra. The report of Section I affirms, “It is not production and consumption that sustain our earth but rather ecological systems that have to support human life” (Kinnamon, 1991, p. 60). This led to the six strategies to reform the global market economy for realizing of “social justice and ecologically responsible human behavior”: 1) support local self-empowerment in small local communities where small groups of people are resisting “the global corporations with their policies for
development from above” and trying to “live against the trends of an acquisitive society in which individual greed and social and ecological exploitation predominate”; 2) reform the international economic order by pressuring governments “to establish just patterns of trade and to share their resources with the poor nations”; 3) rethink economics so that development results in “a self-sustaining whole” instead of growth resulting in “degradation and death”; 4) cooperate with other NGOs, government and the United Nations in support of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and UN ‘Earth Charter’ initiatives; 5) support democracy and good government by “more participation in political and economic decision-making”; 6) encourage conscientization, education and spirituality to “recognize the unity of all creation” and to “educate ourselves, each other and our children in the new ecological values and responsibilities” (Kinnamon, 1991, pp. 62-66).

In short, the Canberra Assembly was the first time that WCC linked the two notions ‘Holy Spirit’ and ‘creation’. Since Canberra, much of the ecumenical discussion has explored the relationship of the Spirit to the creation.

2.5 The Spirit of Life: Jürgen Moltmann’s Creation Theology

As the Canberra Assembly of the WCC linked the two themes ‘Holy Spirit’ and ‘creation’, Moltmann also has developed pneumatological creation theology.

He raises the issue, “Faced as we are with the progressive industrial exploitation of nature and its irreparable destruction, what does it mean to say that we believe in God the Creator, and in this world as his creation?” (Moltmann, 1993, p. xiii). He points out
theological tasks that have emerged from the ecological crisis, “Now theology must show how nature is to be understood as God’s creation” (Moltmann, 1993, p. 38). In other words, Christian theology has to rethink its understanding of the relationships among God, nature and human beings.

With regard to the cause of the ecological crisis, Moltmann argues that its starting point was in the modern industrial countries, which were under the influence of the Christian tradition (Moltmann, 1993, p. 20). According to him, modern Christianity in the West has an anthropocentric world view that has made human beings the rulers of the earth (Moltmann, 1993, p. 31). This world view has resulted in today’s ecological crisis and the subjugation of nature. In fact, neoliberal globalization also has its root in the modern industrial civilization of the West. Modern industrial civilization has developed and become established as the form of neoliberal globalization today.

Moltmann maintains, thus, that “the European and American Christianity of the Western churches” is “not guiltless of the crisis in the world today” (Moltmann, 1993, p. 21). Moreover he contends that Christian theology “must free that belief from the modern anthropocentric view of the world” (Moltmann, 1993, p. 31).

2.5.1 The Relationship between God and the World

Moltmann’s creation theology is a form of panentheism. Then, what is the meaning of panentheism?

According to P. Clayton, panentheism is defined as the view that “the world is within God, though God is at the same time more than the world” (Clayton, 1999, p. 289). In other words, there is a reciprocal relationship between God and the world.
God is not identical with the world, but God is mutually dependent with the world. This is shown in another description of panentheism:

God is not the world, and the world is not God. But God includes the world, and the world includes God. God perfects the world, and the world perfects God. There is no world apart from God, and there is no God apart from some world. Of course there are some differences. Whereas no world can exist without God, God can exist without this world. Not only our planet but the whole universe may disappear and be superseded by something else, and God will continue. (Birch and Cobb, 1981, pp. 196-197).

According to Moltmann, when we understand nature as God’s creation, nature is ‘the world’ (Moltmann, 1993, p. 38) In terms of the relationship between God and the world, Moltmann describes “God in the world and the world in God” (Moltmann, 1981, p. 105).

The center of Moltmann’s creation theology is “the recognition of the presence of God in the world and the presence of the world in God” (Moltmann, 1993, p. 13). He argues, “through his cosmic Spirit, God the Creator of heaven and earth is present in each of his creatures and in the fellowship of creation” (Moltmann, 1993: 14). He continues, “God creates the world, and at the same time enters into it” and “he calls it into existence and at the same time manifests himself through its being” (Moltmann, 1993, p. 15). In other words, Moltmann asserts that God is transcendent and immanent in the world at the same time.

In addition, Moltmann himself describes his panentheism as primarily based on the Trinity. For example, he states, “When everything is ‘in God’ and ‘God is all in all,’ then the economic Trinity is raised into and transcended in the immanent Trinity” (Moltmann,
There are two concepts which can be used to help us understand Moltmann’s creation theology: the Old Testament word *ruach* and the *Shekinah*.

The Old Testament word *ruach* is different in meaning from the word ‘spirit,’ which belongs to Western culture. The word ‘spirit’ is always conceived as “antitheses to matter and body.” When we talk about the Spirit of God, we then mean “something disembodied, supersensory and supernatural.” But if we talk in Hebrew about Yahweh’s *ruach*, we then mean “God is a tempest, a storm, a force in body and soul, humanity and nature” (Moltmann, 2001, p. 40).

In addition, Moltmann explains the immanence of ‘Holy Spirit’ with the idea of the *Shekinah*. Moltmann says, “The divine secret of creation is the *Shekinah*, God’s indwelling; and the purpose of *Shekinah* is to make the whole creation the house of God” (Moltmann, 1993, p. xv).

The *Shekinah* is “the descent and indwelling of God in space and time, at a particular place and a particular era of earthly beings and their history” (Moltmann, 2001, p. 47). In the history of Israel, “the *Shekinah* shares Israel’s joys and suffering.” Moltmann contends, “it is more especially Israel’s divine companion in suffering” (Moltmann, 2001, p. 48). Although *Shekinah* is the present God, it is distinguished from his eternity. In other words, “If the *Shekinah* is the earthly, temporal and spatial presence of God, then it is at once identical with God and distinct from him” (Moltmann, 2001, p. 48).

According to Moltmann, the theology of the *Shekinah* contributes to an understanding of ‘Holy Spirit’ as follows; 1) the personal character of the Spirit: the Spirit is the presence of God in person; 2) the sensibility of God the Spirit: the Spirit
indwells and suffers with the suffering; 3) the self-emptying of the Spirit: the theophany of the Spirit is not anthropomorphism, but is through his indwelling in created being (Moltmann, 2001, p. 51).

In short, Moltmann explains God’s transcendence and immanence in the world by his Trinitarian panentheism. He states, “the Father created heaven and earth through the Son in the Spirit” (Moltmann, 1993, p. 94). In other words, “The Father is the creating origin of creation, the Son its shaping origin, and the Spirit its life-giving origin.” Thus, according to Moltmann, “Creation exists in the Spirit, is moulded by the Son and is created by the Father” (Moltmann, 1993, p. 98).

2.5.2 The Relationship between Human Beings and the World

According to Moltmann, human beings are at once ‘image of the world’ (*imago mundi*) and ‘God’s image’ (*imago Dei*).

Firstly, Moltmann asserts that human beings are an ‘image of the world’.

He explains that the Old Testament makes it clear that “the human being is one creature among others” (Moltmann, 1993, pp. 186-187). In the history of creation, there is a particular order and “human beings are the last to be created.” He contends that although human beings are “the apex of created things,” they are not “the crown of creation” but it is “the sabbath with which God crowns the creation” (Moltmann, 1993, p. 187).

What then distinguishes human beings from other creatures?

Moltmann argues that as ‘image of the world’, human beings represent all other creatures. This means “human beings are priestly creations” and they “intercede before
God for the community of creation” (Moltmann, 1993, p. 190). This interpretation of human being as a priest of the world is Moltmann’s contribution to renew the understanding of the relationship between human beings and the world. As a priest and representative of the world, the human being stands before God and worships God. When we understand the role of the human being as a priest, humans cannot abuse and exploit the other creatures.

Secondly, Moltmann asserts that human beings are ‘God’s image’.

According to Moltmann, the term ‘image’ is expressed in two different words: selem and demuth in Hebrew, imago and similitudo in Latin. The first one is “used for the concrete representation,” which expresses “the outward representation.” The second one is “used for the similarity,” which expresses “the reflexive inward relationship.” In other words, Moltmann argues that human beings represent God as his image, and also they reflect God as his similitude on earth (Moltmann, 1993, pp. 218-219).

As ‘God’s image’, Moltmann contends that human beings have the function of a “justice of the peace” and also they have “stewardship over the earth” for God (Moltmann, 1993, p. 224).

Moltmann emphasizes human beings’ responsibility for the world by his notion of “the sanctification of life.” He maintains that “life has to be sanctified” because “life comes from God and belongs to God,” which means life is “itself holy” (Moltmann, 2001, pp. 171-172). According to him, sanctification means “defending God’s creation against human aggression, exploitation and destruction” (Moltmann, 2001, p. 172). Based on this notion, Moltmann extends Jesus’ words about the double commandment of love (Matthew 22:37-40) to creation: “You shall love God and this earth and all your fellow creatures with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might” and
“love this earth as yourself, and yourself as this earth” (Moltmann, 2001, p. 172).

In short, human beings represent all other creatures as image of the world. At the same time, human beings also represent and reflect God as his image and as his similitude on earth.

### 2.5.3 Three Types of Creation

Moltmann argues that there are three types of creation: ‘creation in the beginning’ (*creatio originalis*), ‘continuous creation’ (*creatio continua*), and ‘new creation’ (*creatio nova*).

First, according to Moltmann, ‘creation in the beginning’ (*creatio originalis*) is “creation without any preconditions or presuppositions.” In other words, it is ‘creation out of nothing’ (*creatio ex nihilo*). This *creatio ex nihilo* means “the miracle of the world’s existence in general, and the initial contingency of being itself” (Moltmann, 1993, p. 207).

In addition, Moltmann contends that creation in the beginning is ‘the creation of time’ and it has to be understood as ‘variable creation’ (*creatio mutabilis*). Thus he describes that creation is “not closed within itself” but “open for its history” (Moltmann, 1993, p. 207). Moltmann’s ‘continuous creation’ is based on this openness of creation.

Second, ‘continuous creation’ (*creatio continua*) follows ‘creation in the beginning’. Moltmann distinguishes between two types of continuous creation. First of all, creation in history is “God’s activity in preserving creation from the powers of annihilation”; and “the continuous sustaining of the creation which was once brought into being” (Moltmann, 1993, pp. 208-209). At this point, Moltmann accepts theological tradition
on the preservation of the world (conservatio mundi).

However, continuous creation is not merely preservation of the world but at the same time the new creation. Moltmann points out that God’s historical activity is not “towards the preservation of what was once created,” but “towards the anticipation of the salvation in which creation will be consummated.” It is not merely ‘continuous creation’ (creatio continua), but it is at the same time ‘new creation’ (creation nova) and ‘anticipative creation’ (creation anticipativa). In other words, the “unremitting creative activity of God” is “an activity that both preserves and innovates” (Moltmann, 1993, p. 209).

Lastly, ‘new creation’ (creatio nova) means “the consummation of creation in the kingdom of glory” (Moltmann, 1993, p. 206). According to Moltmann, this consummation of creation means not “timeless eternity” and “the end of history,” but “eternal time” and “the end of pre-history and the beginning of the eternal history of God, human beings and nature” (Moltmann, 1993, p. 213).

God’s last word was not about judgment but about ‘new creation’; “Behold, I make all things new” (Revelation 21:5). It means God will not make ‘new’ all things but he will make ‘all things’, which were already created by God, new.

Then how can we understand this ‘new creation’? Moltmann raises an eschatological question: “What is the ultimate goal? Is it the world in God, or God in the world?” This is the question of either “the redemption and consummation of the world in God” or God’s going into “history and the consummation of the world’s salvation” (Moltmann, 1999, p. 37). Moltmann holds with the immanence of God in the world (Moltmann, 1999, pp. 37-39). He even holds that “everything will not be in God, but God will be in everything” (Moltmann, 1999, p. 40).
2.5.4 An Evaluation of Jürgen Moltmann’s Creation Theology

Brinkman points out that “Moltmann sees a new perspective for a Christian creation theology in the life-giving power of the Spirit of God” (Brinkman, 1990, p. 150). Bouma-Prediger says of Moltmann that “he has articulated the most creative and sophisticated creation theology from the Reformed perspective” (Bouma-Prediger, 1995, p. 16).

In fact, Moltmann contributes to a renewed understanding of the relationship between nature and human beings, and also God’s relationship to the world as his creation. He extends the notion of redemption to all creatures on earth beyond human beings. Overcoming pantheism, he developed Trinitarian and eschatological panentheism.

However, Moltmann’s pneumatological creation theology is an expansion of Christology.

Richard Bauckham points out that Moltmann’s theology is based on “a Christological centre and a universal eschatological horizon” (Bauckham, 1995, p. 35). In his creation theology, Moltmann distinguishes between the Spirit of creation and the Holy Spirit (Moltmann, 1993, p. 99). He identifies this Holy Spirit as the Spirit of Christ. According to him, the Spirit of creation is “the presence of God in the creature he has made” but the Spirit of Christ “does not supersede the Spirit of creation but transforms it” (Moltmann, 1993, p. 263).

Besides this, in his book ‘The Spirit of Life’, Moltmann emphasizes Christology such as the cross of Christ. He argues that “because of God’s cross, creation already
lives from God, and will be transformed in God. Without the cross of Christ this vision of ‘the world in God’ would be pure illusion” (Moltmann, 2001, p. 213).

In short, Moltmann gives the Spirit of Christ priority over the Spirit of creation. He understands the Spirit of creation from a Christological perspective. Thus, Moltmann’s pneumatological creation theology does not go beyond the limit of the Christological-centered theology.

2.6 Accra Confession on Life: The Accra Council of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches

The World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC) has developed a theology of life through the Accra Confession, adopted by the delegates of the WARC’s 24th General Council in Accra, Ghana in 2004. The theme for the General Council was ‘That all may have life in fullness’. The Accra Confession expresses a theological conviction as the Reformed churches’ response to global economic injustice and ecological destruction. A characteristic of the Accra Confession is that it takes justice for life as the confessional subject, which is usually taken from “dogmatic or ecclesiological issues” (Sheerattan-Bisnauth, 2008, p. 241).

The Accra Confession is the outcome of a long process. In 1997, at the WARC General Council in Debrecen, Hungry, delegates called WARC member churches to engage in “a process of confessing in the midst of the situation of economic injustice and destruction of life on earth” (processus confessionis). It was a similar movement to the WCC conciliar process for mutual commitment to justice, peace and the integrity of
creation (Sheerattan-Bisnauth, 2008, p. 239).

After the Debrecen Council, *processus confessionis* became a major WARC programme and it culminated in the Accra Council in 2004.

The Accra Confession declares that the signs of the times indicate “The root causes of massive threats to life are above all the product of an unjust economic system” (WARC, 2005, p. 154). In other words, the signs of the times challenge us to recognize that the life of human beings and the rest of creatures and the earth are under serious crisis.

In addition, the Accra Confession clearly states that the cause of crisis is “directly related to the development of neoliberal economic globalization (WARC, 2005, p. 154). Moreover, it recognizes the matters of economic injustice and ecological destruction as a matter of faith. Thus, the Accra Confession notes, “the integrity of our faith is at stake if we remain silent or refuse to act in the face of the current system of neoliberal economic globalization” (WARC, 2005, p. 156).

On the basis of these analyses, the Accra Confession states that they reject “the current economic order imposed by global neoliberal capitalism and any other economic system, including absolute planned economies.” The confession continues that the current economic order defies God’s covenant “by excluding the poor, the vulnerable and the whole of creation from the fullness of life” (WARC, 2005, pp. 156-157).

In conclusion, the confession proclaims that they will commit themselves, their time, and their energy to “changing, renewing, and restoring the economy and the earth, choosing life” (WARC, 2005, p. 160).

In short, the Accra Confession is a great challenge for churches to reconsider the issues of global economic injustice and ecological destruction and to seek alternatives to
the current neoliberal economic globalization. Significantly, the Accra Confession takes justice for life as a matter of confession. In the Accra Confession, matters of economic and ecological justice become a matter of faith.

2.7 Communication Issues in the Theology of Life

What are the communication issues in the ecumenical discussion on a theology of life? What is the perspective of communication on a theology of life?

Unfortunately, communication does not play a key role in the ecumenical discussion on a theology of life. For instance, only the Vancouver Assembly of WCC adopted an official report on communication; there were no reports from the World Convocation on JPIC, the Canberra Assembly of WCC or the Accra Council of WARC. However, a few theologians and experts in communication have addressed the communication issues.

This section, in particular, will examine two issues: first, the relationship between communication and JPIC; and second, the relationship between communication and the Spirit.

2.7.1 Communication and Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation

What is the relationship between communication and JPIC?

Without serious consideration of the important role of communication, JPIC is impossible to accomplish. This was affirmed in a report called ‘Communicating Credibly’, approved at the Vancouver Assembly of the WCC: “Credible communication
serves the causes of justice and peace by setting standards that resist national, cultural, racial stereotypes and the building of enemy images, and provide space and time for the views of minority and marginalized groups” (Gill, 1983, p. 106).

In addition, the report criticizes the control of mass media by “a few powerful countries and transnational corporations” (Gill, 1983, p. 105). Thus it notes the importance of Christian communication: “the Church has sometimes become the only source of credible information on human rights violations and injustice of every kind” (Gill, 1983, p. 106). Moreover, it comments, “Churches are encouraged to experiment with alternative forms of communication” (Gill, 1983, p. 109).

According to Michael Traber, only through communication can peaceful coexistence of different peoples and nations be possible (Traber, 1984, p. 67). He contends that all communication that fosters “reconciliation, harmony, mutual respect, humanness, joy, brotherhood and sisterhood, community,” is communication for peace (Traber, 1984, pp. 67-68).

2.7.2 Communication and the Spirit

What is the relationship between communication and the Spirit? Although the Spirit is not human, can an incorporeal spirit communicate?

According to Moltmann, “The Spirit of life means especially the connections and cohesions of everything created.” He continues, “the Spirit of the new creation creates communities for living shared by human beings and other living things, just as it creates communities among people” (Moltmann, 1997, p. 24). In other words, Moltmann maintains that we have to interpret the Spirit as communication (Moltmann, 1993, p.
When we interpret the Spirit as communication, we have to consider that there are other ways of communication than those based on sense perception. According to Michael Traber, “Language and linguistic analysis are insufficient to explain human consciousness, or indeed communication” (Traber, 1990, p. 210).

Since the Spirit as communication is indwelling in all created beings, not only human beings but also nonhuman creatures can communicate. Moreover, “nonhuman creatures communicate not only with each other but also with human beings and with God” (Bergmann, 2005, p. 108). For instance, according to Psalm 150:6, everything that has breath praises the Lord. Even sun, moon and stars praise the Lord, because they were created by the Lord’s command (Psalm 148:2-5). In other words, everything, even sun, moon and stars, communicates with God.

The Cappadocian theologian Gregory of Nazianzus recognizes “a concept of ‘natural communication’ in the sense of nonrational language exchange between sensuous creatures” (Bergmann, 2005, p. 108). He understands that all creation, “angels, matter and human beings,” sings God’s praises. On the other hand, God also communicates with his creatures “through the language of nature” (Bergmann, 2005, p. 110). Besides, Gregory maintains four different levels of ‘language act’. He asserts that all four levels are constantly connected with one another:

1) Within human beings themselves, the body, soul, and spirit or mind communicate;
2) Human beings communicate with spiritual-corporeal creation as well as with fellow human beings and fellow creatures;
3) Angels and corporeal creatures communicate with one another;
4) God and creation communicate with one another, with God
communicating in multifarious ways with angels, bodies, human beings, and the whole of the world (Bergmann, 2005, p. 111).

In short, there is no life without communication, because “life is communication in communion” (Moltmann, 1993, p. 3). The Spirit of life, as communication, creates community with human beings and other living things. Thus communicative relationship is a way to live together in harmony with human beings and other living things.

2.8 Conclusion

Prof. Lynn White, Jr. contends that Judeo-Christian anthropocentric theology is the root of the ecological crisis. This anthropocentric theology has made human beings rule the earth and subjugate nature. The theology of life was initiated by WCC to reflect on such anthropocentric theology. The theology of life extends the theological focus beyond human beings to include all living beings.

Further, the theology of life is a theological response to the global crisis. It points out that we live in a world where all life is threatened by the power of death. The power of death is recognized in the growth of violence against human life, destruction of nature, and political, social, economic and cultural injustice. The theology of life resists all of these as it fights against the power of death.

Communication has an important role in overcoming the power of death and accomplishing justice, peace and the integrity of creation. Only through communication can peaceful coexistence be possible among peoples and all other living beings.

Moreover, Moltmann argues that ‘life is communication in communion,’ and he
even interprets ‘the Spirit as communication’. Thus we have to consider there are other ways of communicating than those based on human sensory perception. Not only human beings but nonhuman creatures also can communicate; all living beings are communicating subjects, not objects to be communicated to. This means we have to free ourselves from the anthropocentric perspective on communication.
Chapter 3
Asian Traditional Perspectives on Life and Communication

This chapter will examine Asian traditional perspectives on life and communication. In particular, it will focus on traditional perspectives in East Asia such as Taoism, Buddhism, Confucianism and Tonghak.

The Taoist and Confucian traditions have a long historical legacy in East Asia, extending from China, across Korea and into Japan. In the case of Buddhist tradition, it arose in India and spread throughout East Asia. Lastly, Tonghak (literally ‘Eastern Learning’) started in Korea in the nineteenth century.

This chapter, then, will examine how these East Asian traditional perspectives affect communication perspectives. In conclusion, I will suggest three dimensions of communication for life.

3.1 Overview of Western and Eastern Worldviews

In recent decades, as a response to the ecological crisis, Eastern traditions of thought have been reconsidered in seeking alternatives to conventional Western attitudes and values.

What are the features of the Western worldview?

In the first place, the Western worldview is largely anthropocentric, with nature considered to be of secondary importance. As a result, humans have conquered nature
and are governing it according to their desires. This human-centered attitude has caused irresponsible exploitation of nature. Moreover, it places humans over and against other living beings.

The second feature of the Western worldview is dualism. The dualistic worldview looks at material and spiritual, body and soul, as two separate entities. According to the dualistic worldview, the human body is like a part of a machine, and body and soul are not related. Hence human beings are “both essentially and morally segregated from nature” (Callicott and Ames, 1989, p. 5).

By contrast, the Eastern traditional worldview looks at the universe as an organism, which means “all of the parts of the entire cosmos belong to one organic whole and that they all interact as participants in one spontaneously self-generating life process” (Wei-Ming, 1989, p. 67). It is helpful to establish a more harmonious relationship between humans and nature. Asian people have lived in that organic worldview throughout their history.

As for communication perspectives, traditionally communication theory has been based on the Western worldview. Contemporary communication theories thus focus mainly on anthropocentric perspectives. For example, Western perspectives of communication are dominantly “language-centered and rationality-biased” while Asian perspectives place “emphasis on intuition, direct experience, and silence” (Miike, 2006, p. 11).

In addition, in the West, theories of rhetoric were developed because communication was considered as a method to deliver messages. In Asia, by contrast, communication thought developed because communication itself was considered to be the philosophical subject (Park Huh-shik, 2008, p. 78). In fact, while philosophical concern with regard to
the language of Western communication theory first appeared at the beginning of the twentieth century, Asian communication theory has had this concern since ancient times (Park Huh-shik, 2008, p. 97).

Such Asian traditional perspectives on communication can provide new ideas and different perspectives beyond the limitations of Western communication perspectives. In the last three decades, thus, Asian communication studies have been newly developing (Chen, 2006, p. 295). For instance, Yoshitaka Miike proposes five kinds of agenda for Asian communication studies: (1) deriving theoretical insights from Asian cultures; (2) expanding the geographical focus of study – beyond cultural China, Japan, South Korea, and India and including South Asian indigenous viewpoints; (3) comparing and contrasting Asian cultures to explore both similarities and differences among them; (4) pluralizing and historicizing theoretical lenses in order to respond to the diversity of Asian communicative experiences and to contextualize Asian communication practices; and (5) confronting metatheoretical and methodological questions instead of presuming the universality of Eurocentric metatheory and methodology (Miike, 2006, pp. 13-22).

In short, it is not an issue of which one is true or not, between Eastern and Western worldviews. Instead, to overcome the limitations of Western perspectives, we need to utilize the collective wisdom to come up with East-West integrated studies. This means that the East and the West should examine and review their mutual traditional thinking, suggest alternatives, and review them with each other.
3.2 Taoist Perspective on Life and Communication

Tao, which is usually translated as ‘the Way’, is one of the most important concepts in East Asia. The term ‘Taoism’ is associated with assorted naturalistic or mystical religions. Sometimes the term ‘Lao-Chuang Philosophy’ is used to distinguish the philosophical from the more religious Taoism. There are some differences between philosophical Taoism and religious Taoism. Their attitudes toward immortality, for instance, show some differences. While philosophical Taoism accepts death as a natural part of life, religious Taoism looks for ways to avoid death.

3.2.1 Tao: Cosmic Substance

What is the relationship between Heaven, Earth and human beings in Taoism?

According to Taoism, Tao is the ultimate beginning of the world and cosmic substance. Lao Tzu, the founder of Taoism, describes Tao in Chapter 42 of Tao Te Ching:

Way gave birth to one, and one gave birth to two.  
Two gave birth to three, and three gave birth to the ten thousand things.  
Then ten thousand things shouldered yin and embraced yang, blending chi to establish harmony. (Hinton, 2002, p. 51)

This denotes a primordial unity. The ‘One’ refers to the primordial totality. It firstly splits into two opposing yin and yang, and then interaction between yin and yang gives rise to a mediating third force, chi from which comes all things (Kleeman, 2001, p. 62).
In other words, human beings and all other beings are produced by *Tao*.

While *Tao* produces the ‘ten thousand things’ (all things in the universe), the ten thousand things constitute *Tao*. Thus we can find *Tao* everywhere. Chuang Tzu describes ‘where is *Tao*’:

Tung-kuo Tzu asked Chuang Tzu, “What is called *Tao* - Where is it?” “It is everywhere,” replied Chuang Tzu. Tung-kuo Tzu said, “It will not do unless you are more specific.” “It is in the ant,” said Chuang Tzu. “Why go so low down?” “It is in the weeds.” “Why even lower?” “It is in a potsherd.” “Why still lower?” “It is in the excrement and urine,” said Chuang Tzu. Tung-kuo gave no response. (Chan, 1963, p. 203)

In addition, all things are the result of the integration of two basic vital forces of *yin* and *yang* in Taoism. Thus, all things including heaven and earth as well as human beings must possess the elements of *yin*, *yang* and *Tao*. This means the life of all living beings is a oneness. It shows Taoism has an organismic worldview in which there is no such dualism as subject and object.

As for *yin* and *yang* in Taoism, it penetrates all of life; for instance, heaven is *yang*, earth is *yin*; sun is *yang*, moon is *yin*; man is *yang*, woman is *yin*. Although *yin* and *yang* are opposite, there is no conflict between them. Instead, *yin* and *yang* coexist and interact. Moreover they generate *chi* (or ‘*ki*’ as pronounced in Korean and spelled as ‘*qi*’ in China) to establish harmony.

### 3.2.2 Non-Action Activity

*Wu-wei* is one of the most important concepts to understand Lao Tzu’s worldview. It
focuses on natural harmony. The term of *wu-wei* is a combination of *wu* (no) and *wei* (action) and in opposition to *yu-wei* (being-action). It is literally translated as ‘non-action’ but its proper meaning is ‘not acting willfully’ or ‘natural action’, which distinguishes it from ‘intensified action’ or ‘unnatural action’ (*yu-wei*) (Ames, 1989, p. 136).

The term of *wu-wei* is often used in *Tao Te Ching*, twelve times in ten chapters (Xiaogan, 2001, p. 318). For instance, it is firstly used in the second chapter of *Tao Te Ching*, “Therefore the sage manages affairs without action (*wu-wei*) And spreads doctrines without words” (Chan, 1963, p. 140). This chapter describes the style of the sage with *wu-wei*.

According to Chuang Tzu, “Although the myriad things are many, their order is one” (Chan, 1963, p. 204). This ‘order’ is *Tao*, so we can interpret *Tao* as laws of nature or order of nature. It means *Tao* operates in the life of all living beings. The concept of *wu-wei* is following such order of nature.

Lao Tzu literally says, “*Tao* invariably takes no action, and yet there is nothing left undone. If kings and barons can keep it, all things will transform spontaneously” (Chan, 1963, p. 158). It denotes that *wu-wei* is a characteristic of *Tao*, and the human being has to practice *wu-wei*. In other words, *wu-wei* seems to do nothing, but it gets a better result. The wisdom of *wu-wei* negates pushing to control and command, and instead embodies the natural harmony among human societies and between humans and nature.

In addition, Lao Tzu says, “he supports all things in their natural state but does not take any action” (Chan, 1963, p. 170). This sentence describes *wu-wei* supporting “all things in their natural development,” which indicates “the harmonious relationship of all creatures in the universe” (Xiaogan, 2001, p. 328). In other words, if human activities
follow the spirit of *wu-wei*, nature will not destroy. But humans have destroyed nature by aggressive action for industrialization and commercialization.

How, then, does the Taoist worldview affect the communication perspective?

### 3.2.3 Nameless Communication

Since *Tao* is the cosmic substance, it cannot be understood by human sensory organs but can only be understood by the heart. In other words, *Tao* cannot be captured by human media such as language and character. On the contrary, it can be understood through our mind beyond language. Thus, Kim Jeong-tak argues that communication has to expand from brain-to-brain communication into heart-to-heart communication (Kim Jeong-tak, 2010, p. 39).

Why cannot *Tao* be understood by human sensory perception?

According to Lao Tzu, *Tao* is called “formless form or nothing’s image” (Hinton, 2002, p.16). Thus he describes it in Chapter 14 of *Tao Te Ching*, “We look at it and do not see it,” “We listen to it and do not hear it” and “We touch it and do not find it” (Chan, 1963, p. 146). Hence, it cannot be understood with human sensory perception.

How then can the *Tao* be understood?

According to Lao Tzu, the sound, which we listen to, but which is not to be heard, is ‘The Inaudible’ (Chan, 1963, p. 146). This ‘The Inaudible’ is the life-centric language, instead of anthropocentric language. Humans, thus, can listen to it with the mind rather than the ear (Park Huh-shik, 1996, p. 73).

In addition, when one performs *wu-wei* or non-action, the individual can follow the natural way. Following the natural way and with an absent state of mind, humans can
understand the *Tao*. Because *Tao* is also empty. (Kim Jeong-tak, 2010, p. 106).

This methodology to understand the *Tao* differs from Western thinking, which emphasizes analysis. While the Taoist mode of thinking is holistic, Western thinking is analytic. Thus, Westerners consider the holistic mode vague. This reflects the different ideas of value and the different cultural backgrounds.

Westerners absolutely depend on language to express their logic. They consider that the language reflects the reality completely and that objects have a fixed meaning through language. Eastern traditional perspectives on communication, however, have a negative response to language. They accept language as a tool to communicate and to emphasize communication beyond human language and character (Kim Jeong-tak, 2010, p. 354). They consider that language can not express the world completely, as the world changes continuously.

Based on this analysis, the concept of ‘nameless communication’, which is a core characteristic of Taoist communication, can be understood.

The opening message of *Tao Te Ching* starts with language concern:

The *Tao* that can be told of is not the eternal *Tao*;
The name that can be named is not the eternal name.
The Nameless is the origin of Heaven and Earth;
The Named is the mother of all things. (Chan, 1963, p. 139)

Lao Tzu says all things exist because they have names. For instance, a tree exists because it has the name ‘tree’. In other words, there was Nameless in the world. But names make distinctions between all things. For this reason, Lao Tzu notes the Named is the basis of all things.
However, Lao Tzu says, ‘The name that can be named is not the eternal name’. In other words, the definition is required to understand the concept. But the definition cannot capture the fundamental meaning of the concept. It is just a way to understand the concept. The definition will be changed depending on the situation. Thus, according to Lao Tzu, the name (concept) that can be named (fixed by a definition) is a dead name. For instance, regarding the definition of the concept of life, if life is defined or fixed, the fundamental meaning of life will be lost. A defined understanding of life is only temporal and one aspect in one moment.

In addition, Lao Tzu says, ‘The Tao that can be told of is not the eternal Tao’. This means the genuine Tao cannot be captured through language because of the limits of language. Only a part of the genuine Tao can be reached through language. The genuine Tao, thus, “has to be captured in a way that is beyond language” (Mou, 2000, p. 430). Chuang Tzu describes in the Inner Chapters, “saying has never had norms” (Graham, 2001, p. 57). In other words, language has never been a fixed concept by definition.

Taoism, thus, has the deconstructive view. It negates and deconstructs everything and also negates language. But it does not negate ‘eternal name,’ only the definition of name. In other words, it deconstructs the form of language to reach the fundamental meaning.

These concepts of language in Taoism can be explained with the ‘signified’ and ‘signifier’ of Saussure’s (1857-1913) semiotics. For instance, Taoism negates the signifier because it has a limit (Kim Jeong-tak, 2004, p. 242). The genuine signified cannot be captured by the signifier. For Taoism, language means the signifier reaches the signified. Taoism, thus, focuses more on signified than signifier. In other words, Taoism continually deconstructs the signifier to reach the genuine signified.
The idea of negation of Taoism is echoed in Jacques Derrida’s (1930-2004) notion of ‘deconstruction’. In his book ‘Of Grammatology’, Derrida maintains that conceptuality and problematics of metaphysic must be deconstructed (Derrida, 1997, p. 68). He converts the meaning of ‘the presence of center’ into ‘the absence of center’. Although structuralists believe in the being of center as the truth or origin, Derrida notes it is impossible to get a fixed truth. In other words, signified cannot be fixed by signifier. For this reason, Derrida tries to deconstruct the dualistic way of thinking in the West. This is similar to the negation of fixed definition in Taoism.

3.2.4 Harmonious Communication

Harmony is the cardinal concept of the Asian worldview as well as communication (Chen, 2006, p. 298). Taoism is characterized by the activity of wu-wei to maintain the harmonious relationship of all living beings. To achieve harmony between humans and also between humans and nature, Taoism focuses on harmonious communication among all living beings.

The Scripture of Great Peace (Taiping jing) is an important Taoist text of the Eastern Han Dynasty (25-220 A.D.) The text contains a wealth of information about communication between Heaven, Earth, and humanity. In the Scripture of Great Peace, ‘Central Harmony’ (zhonghe) is an important concept as “the proper means to preserve and circulate harmonious communication between Heaven, Earth and human beings” (Lai, 2001, p. 100). For instance, the lack of mutual communication between the three elements causes cosmic disorder. But if there is mutual communication between them, the era of Great Peace will come (Lai, 2001, p. 103).
In addition, the *Scripture of Great Peace* formulates a theory of three *chi*: the great *yang*, the great *yin*, and Central Harmony:

There are always the three *qi* that heaven’s way consists of. The first one likes to bring to life. It is called *Yang*. The second enjoys letting things grow. It is called harmony (*he*). The third loves to kill. It is called *Yin*. Heaven is appointed to give life. Man is in charge of nurture and growth... Heaven, earth, and men combine their efforts; their activities rely on each other. Without *Yang* there is no life, without harmony no growth, without *Yin* no killing. These three rely on each other to form one family and to let all twelve thousand plants and beings grow. (Hendrischke, 2006, pp. 82-83)

In other words, the *chi* of Central Harmony is leading the *yin chi* and *yang chi* into united harmony and also it is establishing “reciprocal communication” (*xiangtong*) between them. As a result, the *chi* of Central Harmony brings about “the dynamic balance and spontaneous growth of nature” (Lai, 2001, p. 102).

As for humans, they stand in “the central position of the cosmic order” and are designated to “conduct the *qi* (*chi*) of Central Harmony.” Thus, humans have a mission to maintain harmonious communication with Heaven and Earth in order to bring about “Great Peace or Great Harmony upon the world” (Lai, 2001, p. 104).

### 3.2.5 Martin Buber’s Encounter with Taoism

The Taoist worldview also affects the communication perspective of Martin Buber, a well-known Jewish philosopher and scholar of religion (1878–1965). In fact, he was actively concerned with Taoism as well as with Hasidism, Hinduism and Buddhism, and they played “an important part in his early developmental thinking” (Friedman, 1976, p.
Throughout his life, Taoism in particular had a great influence on his thought. His long essay on “The Teaching of the Tao” was published in 1911, and “Talks and Parables of Chuang Tzu,” his translation of and commentary on the Taoist classic, *Chuang Tzu*, was published in 1910.

Buber distinguishes three types of communication: technical dialogue, monologue, and genuine dialogue. Technical dialogue is prompted “solely by the need of objective understanding” (Buber, 1965, p. 19). In other words, the purpose of technical dialogue is to build objective understanding through the exchange of information.

Second, monologue, a distorted type of dialogue, occurs when people need to communicate something for the sake of having their own thoughts. Thus, there is no connection or learning.

Third, genuine dialogue, whether it is spoken or silent communication, is “where each of the participants really has in mind the other or others in their present and particular being and turns to them with the intention of establishing a living mutual relation between himself and them” (Buber, 1965, p. 19).

This silent communication, for Buber, plays a crucial part in dialogue. He describes “a conversation (in which) no sound is necessary, not even a gesture. Speech can renounce all the media of sense, and it is still speech” (Buber, 1965, p. 3). He continues, “even wordlessly, between men, the word of dialogue has happened sacramentally” (Buber, 1965, p. 4). This is similar to the Taoist point of view on language. Buber also recognizes the limits of language and is concerned with ‘wordless’ or silent communication.

Another example of Taoist influence on Buber can be found in his notion of three spheres of “I-Thou” relations. In the book *I and Thou*, Buber identifies these three
spheres: first, the I-Thou relationship with nature; second, the I-Thou relationship with men; and third, the I-Thou relationship with spiritual beings (Buber, 1970, p.150).

For Buber, the I-Thou relation is genuine dialogue in which both dialogue partners communicate to one another as equals, as opposed to I-It relations. In the first sphere of I-Thou relations, Buber shows his idea of I-Thou relations between humans and nature. This can be explained with Chuang Tzu’s story “The Woodcarver.”

In Thomas Merton’s book *The Way of Chuang Tzu*, we find the story of “The Woodcarver” (Merton, 2004, pp. 127-128). Khing, the master carver, made a bell stand of precious wood. When it was finished, those who saw it were amazed. They said, “It must be the work of spirits.” The Prince of Lu asked Khing, “What is your secret?” Khing replied:

I am only a workman. I have no secret. There is only this: When I began to think about the work you commanded, I guarded my spirit, did not expend it on trifles that were not to the point. I fasted in order to set my heart at rest. After three days’ fasting, I had forgotten gain and success. After five days I had forgotten praise or criticism. After seven days I had forgotten my body with all its limbs. By this time all thought of your Highness and of the court had faded away. All that might distract me from the work had vanished. I was collected in the single thought of the bell stand. Then I went to the forest to see the trees in their own natural state. When the right tree appeared before my eyes, the bell stand also appeared in it, clearly, beyond doubt. All I had to do was to put forth my hand and begin. If I had not met this particular tree there would have been no bell stand at all.

Khing concluded his answer with these words: “My own collected thought encountered the hidden potential in the wood. From this live encounter came the work which you ascribe to the spirits.” In other words, the woodcarver considers the tree to have its own identity. When the woodcarver enters into a “live encounter” with “this
particular tree,” he encounters its “hidden potential.” The wooden bell stand comes out of this I-Thou relation between the woodcarver and a “particular tree.”

According to Maurice Friedman, this story is “one remarkable example of Buber’s affinity to Taoism” (Friedman, 1976, p. 417). He points out that this story is “not only a remarkable representation of the philosophy of meeting, but actually explains one of the most obscure parts of I and Thou” (Friedman, 1976, p. 416).

3.3 Buddhist Perspective on Life and Communication

Buddhism was formed in the sixth century B.C. in India. It reached China in the first century A.D. and Korea in the fourth century A.D.

3.3.1 The Principle of Dependent Arising

According to the Buddhist worldview, humans and other living beings are linked to each other. In other words, all things in the universe exist, not in isolation but co-dependently. For example, nature cannot exist without humans, and humans cannot exist without nature. In this regard, nature and humans are one life.

The concept of the principle of dependent arising (‘Pratīyāsaṃutpāda’ in Sanskrit) is the central doctrine of Buddhism to understand the Buddhist view of the world. The principle of dependent arising is referred to as “the interdependence or interrelationship among all beings” (Bae Sang-hwan, 2006, p. 767). Thus, according to the principle of dependent arising, humans cannot be seen as separated from nature. In other words, all
life forms are closely correlated as an organic whole (Bae Sang-hwan, 2006, p. 781).

In early Buddhism, the meaning of the principle of dependent arising follows the law of coexistence, such as “this exists because that exists; because this generates, that generates.” Because of this mutual relationship, Buddhism emphasizes “the importance of harmony and mutualism” rather than “promoting competition and disputes” (Bae Sang-hwan, 2006, p. 768).

Depending upon the principle of dependent arising, Buddhism recognizes the “non-duality of self and others,” meaning that humans and nature are not separate but one life. In this regard, the self is extended from ‘humans’ to ‘nature’. If the self is extended and embraces nature, we will live in harmony with nature.

The traditional understanding of the world is mostly a linear causal pattern, or cause and effect. It sees the relationship between cause and effect as a one-way relationship among substances. But Buddha sees the world as “reciprocal causal patterns which interact” (Silva, 1998, p. 40). Buddha sees that everything exists co-dependently like a network. There is an endless process of change in a relationship of cause and effect. Buddhism, thus, sees that all things in the world exist not as substance but as process based upon their relationships.

The Buddhist view of the world as a network is similar to Fritjof Capra’s ‘Systems Thinking.’ According to Capra, “there are no parts at all. What we call a part is merely a pattern in an inseparable web of relationships” (Capra, 1997, p. 37). For him, “nature is seen as an interconnected web of relationships.” For instance, when we draw a picture of a tree, we usually draw leaves, branches and a trunk. But the roots of the tree are “interconnected and form a dense underground network” in a forest (Capra, 1997, p. 40). In other words, what we call ‘tree’ does not exist as the eternal substance of the word
‘tree.’ But it is temporarily called ‘tree’ as a network of relationships among leaves, branches and a trunk. This shows the limits of language.

### 3.3.2 Nondependence on Language

Buddhism’s attitude toward language is similar to that of Taoism. Buddhism also notes the limits of language -- that is, language cannot capture the truth. In other words, language is just hypothesis because it cannot designate the substance of the object in accordance with the principle of dependent arising.

A characteristic of the Buddhist attitude toward language is the concept of ‘Nondependence on Language,’ which means ‘cannot express with language.’ According to the Buddhist view, language has no essence in itself. Buddhism thus focuses on the signified of Semiotics. It notes that the genuine signified cannot be captured through language as signifier.

Due to the limits of language, Buddhism has the concept of ‘Outer Doctrine Separate Communication,’ meaning the communicating from one mind to another mind to complement the limits of written or spoken language. In other words, while the inner doctrine is communication with language, the outer doctrine is communication by mind to mind.

In short, the concept of ‘Nondependence on Language’ in Buddhism is not the negation of language, but a critique of attitude. It emphasizes mind-to-mind communication beyond the limits of language.
3.3.3 Consciousnesses-only Theory

Consciousness-only (‘Vijnanavada’ in Sanskrit) is the theory that all existence is nothing but consciousness. It notes that nothing lies outside of the mind. Hence, this theory is closely related to the principle of dependent arising.

According to the Consciousness-only theory, the entire cosmos is interdependent or interrelated based on the ground-consciousness of the eight consciousnesses. In other words, all beings, such as humans, animals, plants, or inanimate beings, are on the same foundation of ground-consciousness. This commonness of all beings, based on the ground-consciousness, says that all existences in the world are a oneness.

The Consciousness-only theory notes that we can communicate with the eight consciousnesses: 1) eye-consciousness, 2) ear-consciousness, 3) nose-consciousness, 4) tongue-consciousness, 5) body-consciousness, 6) mental-consciousness, 7) the afflicted mind-consciousness, and 8) ground-consciousness (Rinpoche, 1998, pp. 11-12).

The first five consciousnesses are the sensate consciousnesses. They are the basic consciousnesses for human senses such as seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting and tactile feeling. Human beings can communicate to the world through these five sensory consciousnesses. The sixth consciousness is the substance of the mind. The seventh consciousness acts as a communication link between the sixth consciousness and the eighth consciousness. It continually transmits the functions of the sixth consciousness to the eighth consciousness.

The eighth consciousness is the most important. It is called the storehouse, because it stores all information transmitted to it by the seventh. In addition, the eighth
consciousness is called the ground or foundation (‘alaya’ in Sanskrit) consciousness (Rinpoche, 1998, p. 13). The seven prior consciousnesses are based and founded upon the eighth.

According to the Consciousness-only theory, the human being’s knowing exists as a thing in which absolute nothingness contains something caused by depending upon others. For instance, we say that eyes see, but it's not actually the eyes themselves that see. It is the eye consciousness which sees. Then, where does the eye consciousness come from? The Consciousness-only theory notes that it is from the mind. The same goes for all the other consciousnesses as well.

With respect to language, it is the ground for human beings’ understanding of their world. Language is a way of communication to the world with the first five sensate consciousnesses. But the Consciousness-only theory argues that language is not the same as the world because of its limits.

In addition, the Consciousness-only theory notes that there are other ways of communicating to the world through the seventh and the eighth consciousnesses. Thus, instead of language, the Consciousness-only theory suggests nonverbal meditation to reach the truth and genuine communication.

3.4 Confucian Perspective on Life and Communication

Confucianism is a significant area of traditional thought in East Asia for understanding the Asian attitude toward the life of all living beings.

Classical Confucianism found its historic role during the Han Dynasty (206 B.C.-
220 A.D.) in China, which was the first to proclaim Confucianism as the official ideology. Classical Confucianism refers to the early part of the tradition, through the Han Dynasty up until the 9th century in China. Neo-Confucianism is a later development of the tradition that arose in the 10th to 12th centuries and has continued down to the 21st century. Neo-Confucianism became influential in East Asia following the academic tradition of Chu-Hsi (1130-1200).

3.4.1 Organic Holism

The characteristic worldview of Confucianism is an organic holism, that is, “the universe is viewed as a vast integrated unit, not as discrete mechanistic parts” (Tucker and Berthrong, 1998, p. xxxvi). This concept is already clear in the early Confucian traditions, as in the Book of Changes (I Ching). The Book of Changes is one of the basic Confucian Classics. It is divided into texts and commentaries. The commentaries are an interpretation of the texts from the Confucian view.

The meaning of ‘Changes’ is “production and reproduction” (Chan, 1963, p. 266). The term “production and reproduction” is used in Confucianism and Neo-Confucianism to express ongoing creativity. For example, it is like a river: “Everything flows on and on like this river, without pause, day and night” (Wilhelm and Baynes, 1967, p. lv). In other words, the meaning of ‘Changes’ is endless change without stopping, even for a moment. In the Book of Changes, we find that life is continuously changing through interaction with all existence.

In addition, the Book of Changes notes, “The great characteristic of Heaven and Earth is to produce” (Chan, 1963, p. 268). In other words, Heaven and Earth, as well as
human beings, produce all things. Thus, all things in the universe are correlated. In this sense, human and nature form a unity.

According to the *Book of Changes*, the Great Ultimate engenders the Two Modes, *yin* and *yang*. This Two Modes generate the Four Forms, major and minor *yin* and *yang*. Then the Four Forms generate the Eight Trigrams: heaven, earth, thunder, fire, lake, wind, water, and mountain (Chan, 1963, p. 267). The Eight Trigrams are the inter-relationship of all things in the universe.

Furthermore, Chang Tsai (1020-1077) also describes humans as an integral part of the cosmos. According to him, human beings are sons and daughters of the universe, like mountains and rivers. He notes in his article ‘The Western Inscription’:

> Heaven is my father and Earth is my mother, and even such a small creature as I finds an intimate place in their midst. Therefore that which fills the universe I regard as my body and that which directs the universe I consider as my nature. All people are my brothers and sisters, and all things are my companions. (Chan, 1963, p. 497)

### 3.4.2 Vital Force (Chi)

The philosophy of *chi* originated from Taoism and Confucianism approximately 2500 years ago. It is commonly translated as ‘material force’ or ‘energy flow’ in English. Wing-Tsit Chan, in his *Source Book of Chinese Philosophy*, notes that *chi* denotes “psychophysiological power associated with blood and breath.” Thus, he points out, *chi* should be translated as ‘vital force’ or ‘vital power’ (Chan, 1963, p. 784).

In addition, Chang Tsai developed the concept of *chi*. He notes in his article
'Correcting Youthful Ignorance':

Material force moves and flows in all directions and in all manners. Its two elements unite and give rise to the concrete. Thus the multiplicity of things and human beings is produced. In their ceaseless successions the two elements of *yin* and *yang* constitute the great principles of the universe. (Chan, 1963, p. 505)

According to this concept *chi*, along with *yin* and *yang*, produces myriad things besides human beings. Mountains, rivers, rocks, trees, animals, and human beings are “the result of fusion and intermingling” of *chi* (Wei-Ming, 1989, p. 72). In fact, all things exist based on different compositions of *chi*. Hence human beings are organically linked with all other beings (Wei-Ming, 1989, p. 74).

That is, we humans are an integral part of nature. Like all other beings, we are the result of the integration of *yin* and *yang*. Mary Evelyn Tucker points out that the philosophy of *chi* provides “a common ground for all living things by recognizing that… *chi* runs through everything” (Tucker, 1998, pp. 189-190). She also notes that the philosophy of *chi* provides “a nondualistic cosmology for going beyond the conventional Western separations of matter and spirit, mind and body” (Tucker, 1998, p. 188).

What, then, is the role of human beings? The *Book of Rites (Li chi)* notes, “If they can assist in the transforming and nourishing process of Heaven and Earth, they can thus form a trinity with Heaven and Earth” (Chan, 1963, p. 108). This sentence demonstrates the unity and interaction between human beings and the cosmos. Human beings are an essential component of a trinity with Heaven and Earth. Humans thus have the responsibility to harmonize with all of life.
In sum, the characteristics of Confucian cosmology are organic holism and dynamic vitalism, which provide the basis of the interconnectedness of all forms of life. Confucianism is a rich source for rethinking the relationship between human beings and all other beings. It has been characterized as more of an anthropocosmic worldview than an anthropocentric one.

### 3.4.3 Chi-Based Communication

What is the relationship between *chi* and communication? Can we understand *chi* as one of the communication-relevant concepts?

Although traditional discussions illustrate *chi* as energy, the *chi* concept is not limited to physical senses. In recent years, *chi* concepts have been applied to research on communication (Liu, 2008, p. 83).

*Chi*-based communication characterizes *yin-yang* interplay as the communicating process. For instance, communication between *yin* and *yang* can generate all things. Without communication, *yin-yang* interplay will not happen and all the things cannot generate (Chung, J., 2008, p. 98).

In addition, Confucius emphasizes the importance of *chi*-based communication in Chuang Tzu’s *The Inner Chapters*:

“May I ask about the mind’s fast?” “Center your attention,” began Confucius. “Stop listening with your ears and listen with your mind. Then stop listening with your mind and listen with your primal spirit. Hearing is limited to the ear. Mind is limited to tallying things up. But the primal spirit’s empty: it’s simply that which awaits things. *Tao* is emptiness merged, and emptiness is the mind’s fast.” (Hinton,
In other words, since all the things in the universe exist based on different compositions of \( \text{chi} \), humans can communicate with all things through \( \text{chi} \)-based communication. Hence, Confucius emphasized, ‘listen with \( \text{chi} \) (primal spirit).’

Moreover, this dialogue with Confucius indicates that humans can get to the cosmic substance (\( \text{Tao} \)) through ‘the mind’s fast’ by \( \text{chi} \)-based communication. In other words, when our mind is empty of prejudices, by \( \text{chi} \)-based communication we can become one with the \( \text{Tao} \) because \( \text{Tao} \) abides in emptiness.

### 3.4.4 Confucius’s View of Language

Compared with Taoism and Buddhism, Confucianism focuses on the role of humanity in the cosmic communication process. According to the Confucian worldview, the most important thing is the harmonious relationship between Heaven, Earth and human beings. While Heaven and Earth have permanent truth, human beings’ truth is changeable. Thus, humans as a changeable entity must cultivate and practice to form a unity with Heaven and Earth for permanent truth. The ‘Rectification of Names’ is the implementation of the Heavenly Way in human society (Park Huh-shik, 2008, p. 240). In other words, humans can follow the Heavenly Way through the Rectification of Names.

The characteristic of language in Confucianism is the ‘Rectification of Names.’ In his \textit{Analects}, Confucius said:

Tzu-lu said: “The ruler of Wei is waiting for you to serve in his administration.
What will be your first measure?” Confucius said: “It will certainly concern the rectification of names.” Tzu-lu said: “Is that so? You are wide of the mark. Why should there be such a rectification?” Confucius said: “Yu! How uncultivated you are! With regard to what he does not know, the superior man should maintain an attitude of reserve. If names are not rectified, then language will not be in accord with truth. If language is not in accord with truth, then things cannot be accomplished. If things cannot be accomplished, then ceremonies and music will not flourish. If ceremonies and music do not flourish, then punishment will not be just. If punishments are not just, then the people will not know how to move hand or foot. Therefore the superior man will give only names that can be described in speech and say only what can be carried out in practice. With regard to his speech, the superior man does not take it lightly. That is all.” (Chan, 1963, p. 40)

Although Tzu-lu asked about the first measure of politics, Confucius answered, “the rectification of names.” In other words, language is in accordance with the performed act. At this point, the performed act is also the signifier, as in language, to reach the truth.

In addition, Confucius replied to Duke Ching of Ch’i on his question about government in the Analects of Confucius: “Let the ruler be a ruler, the minister be a minister, the father be a father, and the son be a son” (Chan, 1963, p. 39). This sentence demonstrates ruler, minister, father and son have to act in accordance with their names.

As for Confucius, actions are more important than speaking. Hui-Ching Chang explains that “the most important thing is to be able to put words into practice; otherwise, words are merely empty form” (Chang, 1997, p. 116). For instance, when Tzu-kung asked about the superior man in the Analects of Confucius, Confucius said, “He acts before he speaks and then speaks according to his action” (Chan, 1963, p. 24).

This practice-based language in Confucianism is differentiated from the persuasion-based rhetoric in the West. That’s because the West emphasizes the techniques of
expression and considers language as a means of persuasion. In fact, the emergence of
the art of rhetoric in the fourth century was “a consequence of the political
developments and activities of the Archaic Period,” when “the ability to address
audiences convincingly about public issues was prized” (Johnstone, 1996 p. 6).

Confucianism further points out the limits of language in the *Analects*:

Confucius said, “I do not wish to say anything.” Tzu-kung said, “If you do not say
anything, what can we little disciples ever learn to pass on to others?” Confucius
said, “Does Heaven say anything? The four seasons run their course and all things
are produced. Does Heaven say anything?” (Chan, 1963, p. 47)

In other words, Confucius does not want to speak about universal principles, but
they “manifest themselves directly for human beings to contemplate, and for this reason,
words may not be important at all” (Chang, 1997, p. 118).

Moreover, Confucius notes about the relationship between writing, words and
thoughts in the *Book of Changes*:

The Master said: Writing cannot express words completely. Words cannot
encompass thoughts completely. Are we then unable to see the thoughts of the holy
sages? The Master said: The holy sages set up the images in order to express their
thoughts completely; they devised the hexagrams in order to express the true and the
false completely. Then they appended judgments and so could express their words
completely. (Wilhelm and Baynes, 1967, p. 322)

In these sentences, Confucius points out the limits of writing and words as the tools
to communicate thoughts. The *Book of Changes* suggests how we can communicate
with Heaven and Earth. It is impossible to communicate with Heaven and Earth through
writing and words. Thus, the superior man set up the images and hexagrams to communicate with them. (Lee Hyang-mann, 2000, p. 361)

3.5 Tonghak’s Perspective on Life and Communication

Tonghak (literally ‘Eastern Learning’) was founded by Choe Je-u (1824-1864) in Korea. His pseudonym is ‘Suun’ (which means ‘water-cloud’). As a religious movement, Tonghak was started in 1860 and it exists now as Chondogyo (The Heavenly Way Religion). The third leader of Tonghak, Son Byeong-hui (1861-1922) changed the name from Tonghak to Chondogyo in 1905.

Choe Je-u gave the movement the name ‘Eastern Learning’ in response to Western influence, which was called ‘S’ohak’ (literally ‘Western Learning’). The term ‘Eastern’ may also be read as ‘Korean.’ Korea was called Eastern Country (Tongguk in Korean) in geographical relation to China. Hence, ‘Eastern Learning’ can also be read as ‘Korean Learning.’

In the nineteenth century, Korea experienced threats from Western countries. The Catholic mission in Korea had begun in the late eighteenth century, but the mission activities of Christianity were joined by Western imperialism. Tonghak was an indigenous religious and social movement to defend Korea from Western imperialism in the nineteenth century and to promote social equality under the repressive government and class system of the Chosun Dynasty (1392-1910) in Korea.

Tonghak is characterized by its holistic integration of Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism and Christianity. Eastern and Western traditions, thus, are converged and
integrated into Tonghak. Therefore Tonghak is neither Confucianism nor Taoism, nor Buddhism, nor Christianity. Eastern and Western ways of thinking are converged into Tonghak and create a new way of thinking.

Two books are attributed to Choe Je-u: ‘Great Eastern Scripture’ (*Tonggyong taejon* in Korean) and the ‘Songs of Yongdam’ (*Yongdam yusa*). The former is a series of discourses, while the latter is a collection of didactic songs and poems.

### 3.5.1 God (Hanulnim)

What is the meaning of *Hanulnim*? Does it have the same meaning as ‘God’ in Christianity?

Tonghak refers to God as ‘*Hanulnim.*’ God in Tonghak is transcendent and at the same time immanent. *Hanulnim* includes “both heaven and earth and contains the concept of the cosmological” (Chondogyo, 2002, p. 55). Choe Je-u used *Hanulnim*, identifying it with ‘*Chonju*’ (Lord of Heaven), a term which Korean Roman Catholics used for God.

However, *Hanulnim* is not equated with ‘God’ in Western culture. According to Choe Si-hyung (known as Haeweol, 1827-1898), the second leader of Tonghak, “human beings are God (*Innaecheon*), so treat a human being as you would treat God (*Sainyeocheon*)” (Lee Young-roh, 2000b, p. 159). These conceptions of God are panentheism beyond the two contrasting religious traditions of monotheism and pantheism. In other words, *Hanulnim* is “the leader of creation who brings all things into being.” At same time, *Hanulnim* is also “a God who continuously operates through human beings to create anew to help them evolve” (Chondogyo, 2002, p. 57).
Moreover, this Hanulnim’s creation and evolution is not artificial but is ‘change without action’ (Muwihiha). In ‘Great Eastern Scripture’ (Tonggyong taejon) Choe Je-u says, “My Way is change without action (Ohdo muwihiha)” (Yoon Suk-san, 1996, p. 71). This concept of Muwihiha is similar to the wu-wei activity of Taoism. But there is a difference between them. While the concept of wu-wei activity follows the order of nature, the concept of Muwihiha follows the providence of Hanulnim. Thus, to accomplish Muwihiha, the human communicates completely with Hanulnim and forms a unity.

3.5.2 The Cosmos (Ultimate Vital Force, Chiki)

According to Confucianism, chi is vital force and li is the underlying principle of the universe. The concept of Chiki, which can be translated as ‘ultimate vital force’, in Tonghak includes chi and li simultaneously. In other words, Chiki is not only a vital force but also a fundamental principle.

The concept of Chiki refers to the fundamental source of all existences having both chi and li. The universe as a whole is the appearance of Chiki itself. Chiki is the ultimate vital force of Hanulnim, which “constitutes the substance and very foundation of the Cosmos” (Chondogyo, 2002, p. 59). Since all things of the universe are made by Chiki, they continue their activities through communication with all living things to maintain their life and form. This is the notion of “Realization of Chiki” (Kiwha). In this sense, “all the myriad things of the universe are organically linked” by the ‘ultimate vital force’ (Chiki) of Hanulnim (Chondogyo, 2002, p. 60). That is, Chiki is the ultimate vital force which communicates between Hanulnim, Earth and human beings.
3.5.3 Humankind (Sicheonju)

_Sicheonju_ can be translated ‘Serve God,’ which is the core principle of Tonghak. According to the principle of _Sicheonju_, human beings are God (_Hanulnim_) because they serve God. In other words, there is a union between God and humans: God and human beings are one.

When Choe Je-u had his revelatory experience, God said to him, “My mind is your mind. People do not know it” (Yoon Suk-san, 1996, p. 65). When Choe Je-u heard this, he realized the truth that God does not exist somewhere separate from us, but is enshrined within our body. In other words, human beings were born with the mind of God (_Cheonsim_), which can be restored to them through _Sicheonju_. _Sicheonju_ means “the restoration of the most pure heart and mind (the innate nature of humankind) that human beings were born with” (Chondogyo, 2002, p. 64).

Not only human beings could serve God (_Sicheonju_), however; all living beings could do so. Choe Si-hyung says: “The myriad things serve God. If it is possible to know this principle, even though destruction of life is not prohibited, it prohibits itself” (Lee Young-roh, 2000b, p. 203).

What are the significances of the concept of Serve God (_Sicheonju_)?

First, humans have to respect the myriad things because all things are God because they serve God. Thus, humans should not do harm to other living beings, because that is harm to God.

Second, the concept of Serve God can apply to all followers, regardless of education, background, gender or class. Anyone who serves God could become God (_Hanulnim_).
In this sense, the expression *Sicheonju* signifies the equalitarian message, under the class system of the Chosun Dynasty, that regardless of social class or gender, everyone has the potential to become *Hanulnim*.

Based on the concept of Serve God (*Sicheonju*), Choe Si-hyung teaches the concept ‘With Heaven eats Heaven’ (*Yicheonsikcheon*) (Lee Young-roh, 2000c, p. 495). In other words, all things as well as human beings are God because they serve God. When people eat other things such as animals and plants, it means that *Hanulnim* eats *Hanulnim*. In this sense, all things and human beings are brothers and sisters having the same root *Hanulnim*. There is no dualism here.

### 3.5.4 The Language of God

Since Tonghak is characterized by its important worldview of ‘one vast living organism’, Tonghak recognizes the language of God (*Hanulnim*). According to Tonghak, the myriad things, such as human beings, plants and animals, are *Hanulnim* because they serve *Hanulnim*. Thus, even the songs of birds are the language of *Hanulnim*. Choe Si-hyung notes about the language of *Hanulnim*:

I have always spoken about the language of *Hanulnim*. There is no separate language of *Hanulnim*. The human’s word is the language of *Hanulnim*, and the songs of birds are the same. Then how can we distinguish between the human’s word and *Hanulnim*’s word? The language of *Hanulnim* does not come from human greed or emotion but from the public truth and *Hanulnim*’s heart. If any words fit the truth and communicate with the Way, that is the language of *Hanulnim*. (Lee Young-roh, 2000a, p. 485)
In other words, Tonghak’s perspective on language is beyond the anthropocentric perspective and includes the languages of all living beings as the language of *Hanulnim*.

3.5.5 Swearing in Mind

How can people hear the language of *Hanulnim*? How can people communicate with *Hanulnim*?

According to Tonghak, humans can communicate with *Hanulnim* through the method of “swearing in mind” (*simgo*) (Chondogyo, 2002, p. 80). This “*simgo*” is a religious practice and “method of belief.” The notion of “*simgo*” means people tell *Hanulnim*, whom they serve in mind, their true hearts. When people practice “*simgo,*” they have to “keep a good mind” (*susim*) and “have the right spiritual force” (*cheonggi*) to achieve union with the ‘ultimate vital force’ (*Chiki*) of *Hanulnim* (Chondogyo, 2002, p. 82).

3.6 Conclusion: Dimensions of Communication for Life

The most important characteristic of traditional worldviews in East Asia is their organic holism. Organic holism means the universe is viewed as a vast integrated unit. Thus human beings are organically connected with all things such as rocks, plants, and animals. In other words, humans and other living beings are linked to each other. All things in the universe exist not in isolation but co-dependently. This organic holism provides a basis for reciprocity and relationship between humans and all life-forms.
through an understanding of the connections of human mind-and-heart to nature.

Since these are traditional worldviews in East Asia, language, which is based on human senses, has limits in communicating. Language is insufficient to explain human consciousness and it is not even suitable to communicate with other living being. Thus we have to consider various ways of communication beyond language. Since all living beings are communicating subjects, not objects to be communicated to, we have to overcome the anthropocentric perspective on communication. In this way, we human beings may build a community with all living beings and develop harmonious relationships with them to live together on the earth.

For these reasons, I suggest a communication value named ‘communication for life’. The notion of ‘communication for life’ can not simply define. Just as the notion of life is integral and holistic, communication for life is not fragmented communication but holistic, integral communication among humans and other living beings. This holistic and integral approach is an Asian mode of thinking to understand the concept of communication for life.

What are the limits of the conventional definition of communication?

The word communication comes from the Latin, *communicare*, which means “to make common.” Although there are many definitions of communication, Joseph A. DeVito defines communication as “The process or act of transmitting a message from a sender to a receiver, through a channel and with the interference of noise” (DeVito, 1986, p. 61). This definition shows an anthropocentric perspective on communication and focuses only on delivering messages between sender and receiver. However, the notion of ‘communication for life’ seeks to overcome this anthropocentric perspective and expand it to integral and holistic concept including all living beings.
What, then, is the relationship between life and communication?

Communication is the essence of life. All living beings are communicating entities. Without communication, no living being can exist. For example, the human body consists of billions of cell. These cells consist of organs such as brain, heart, stomach and so on. The human body can sustain and survive because of communication between them. If there is dis-communication, it causes illness or death of the human body. In other words, dis-communication means death of the living being. This perspective can also be applied to the universe as a vast integrated unit. In this sense, it can be said that communication is a synonym for life.

In conclusion, I suggest three basic dimensions of ‘communication for life’ based on East Asian tradition.

First, communication for life is to overcome anthropocentrism in communication. So far, the concern about communication is only related to human-centered communication. But Eastern traditions of thought contend that all parts of the entire cosmos belong to one organic whole. Moreover, human beings are companions of all things in the universe and we are interconnected with all other forms of life. Communication for life, thus, is to create community with all living beings in the universe, not just human beings. All living bodies are communicating entities; they are communicating partners to each other and among themselves.

According to the *Scripture of Great Peace*, harmonious communication between Heaven, Earth and human beings is most important to establish the Great Peace in the universe. This Great Peace is not only for human beings but also for all living beings. In other words, without reciprocal communication between humans and other living beings, Great Peace in the universe will not come true.
Besides, when humans become one with all living beings, there are no barriers to communication between humans and nature. Thus, humans need to develop various ways of communication such as susceptibility to communication with nature.

Secondly, communication for life is a value-based communication. It is to live together with all living beings. Humans and other living beings in the universe do not exist in isolation but exist co-dependently. Thus, the role of communication is important to link with all living beings. Communication for life strengthens the harmonious relationships between humans and nature in order to bring cosmic harmony and peace.

All communication that fosters values such as harmonious relationships, peace, justice, participation and coexistence is communication for life. By contrast, all communication which fosters values such as confrontation, conflict, injustice, exclusion and domination is communication for death. The core value of communication for life is to overcome communication for death and to bring mutual living to the human society and the entire cosmos. Communication for life pursues the conviviality of all living beings in the cosmos.

Lastly, communication for life converges all forms of communication. It is converging Eastern and Western ways of communication: Eastern and Western ways of communication are converging and integrating into communication for life that will bring Great Peace to the universe. Eastern and Western ways of communication are converged into communication for life and create new ways of communicating. Communication for life is not fragmentary. In linking up human beings and other living beings, as well as the East and the West, it is holistic, integral communication.
Chapter 4
Cyberspace Communication:
Ethical Problematics in Cyberspace

In the previous chapter, I have suggested three dimensions of communication for life. In this chapter, I will apply the framework of communication for life in analyzing Cyberspace communication.

This chapter aims to provide a critical analysis of ethical problematics in Cyberspace based on the perspective of communication for life. This analysis includes three aspects: first, Cyberspace communication and the economy; second, Cyberspace communication and politics; and third, Cyberspace communication and culture.

4.1 Cyberspace and Communication

The term Cyberspace was first used by William Gibson in 1984, in his book *Neuromancer*. Although we cannot define the notion of Cyberspace simply, it is “the virtual communicative space created by digital technologies” (Hamelink, 2000, p. ix).

Cyberspace is virtual space but it is closely interconnected with physical space. It is not separated from physical space but has become a part of it. People are carrying out their social activities in Cyberspace. They live, meet and communicate with other people in Cyberspace.

Cyberspace communication herein refers to a wide range of communications in Cyberspace through various tools such as e-mail, chatting, instant messages, blogs, Web pages, mobile phones, Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs) and the like.
Cyberspace communication has significant characteristics:

Firstly, Cyberspace communication is beyond the limitation of physical time and space. For example, people can communicate with others locally and globally whenever they access the Internet.

Secondly, Cyberspace communication is interactive. It is not one-way communication but two-way and interactive communication among people.

Thirdly, Cyberspace communication is convergent, as Cees Hamelink describes: “All signals – whether they carry sound, data, or pictures – converge into the digital format” (Hamelink, 2000, p. 11). As a result the interactive integrated media are emerging as a new media.

With respect to the impact of Cyberspace communication, socio-economic, political and cultural implications are the most important factors (Hamelink, 2000, p. 17).

4.2 Cyberspace Communication and the Economy

4.2.1 Digital Economy as a New Economy


In particular, electronic commerce is the core element of the Digital Economy. The
Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) defines electronic commerce as “all financial and commercial transactions that take place electronically, including electronic data interchange (EDI), electronic fund transfers (EFT), and all credit/debit card activity” (OECD, 1999, p. 28). The growing number of Internet users in the world (some 1.4 billion in 2008\(^1\)) has been developing electronic commerce.

Electronic commerce is growing especially fast in the business-to-customer (B2C) and business-to-business (B2B) realms. Here are some of the reasons:

Firstly, Internet consumers purchase on the Web because of convenience, ease to find things online and good prices. For instance, in 2007 total electronic commerce sales in the U.S. grew by 19.8 \% over 2006. Over the past five to six years in the U.S., while retail sales growth has been 6\%, retail electronic commerce sales growth has been 25\% or more (eMarketer, 2008).

In Korea, a total of 4,531 Internet shopping malls are operating in 2006. In 2006, retail electronic commerce sales in Internet shopping malls grew by 26.1\% over 2005 (KIEC, 2007, p. 52).

Secondly, electronic commerce in the business-to-business area is “used for coordination between the purchasing operations of a company and its suppliers” and “the sales organizations and the wholesalers or retailers that sell its produce” (U.S. Department of Commerce, 1998, p. 12). In Korea, electronic commerce sales between businesses in 2006 grew by 14.7\% over 2005 (KIEC, 2007, p. 79).

According to the OECD’s report, there are three factors in the quick adoption of electronic commerce for business-to-business dealings:

i) a reduction in transaction costs and improvement of product quality and customer service; ii) a defensive reaction to competitors engaging in electronic commerce.
commerce; and iii) insistence by large businesses that all of their suppliers link into their electronic commerce system as a condition of doing business (OECD, 1999, p. 12).

4.2.2 Cyberspace Communication and Global Market

Cyberspace communication has opened up new opportunities for global markets. It does not recognize national borders. Investment, production, management and technology are organized across national boundaries through Cyberspace communication.

For example, transnational corporations (TNCs) are the biggest beneficiaries of electronic commerce. In the world economy, transnational corporations are the most important actors. John Tomlinson points out that the economic power of the transnational corporations in “exploiting markets, natural resources and labor forces worldwide has, for many critics, come to represent the high point of capitalist development and the major determinant of the economies of the Third World” (Tomlinson, 1991, p. 37).

Through Cyberspace communication, transnational corporations have access to all parts of the globe. For example, “information about new product introductions, corporate earnings, forecast sales patterns, and materials requirements can be shared almost instantaneously via corporate e-mail systems and value-added networks, and now, over the Internet” (U.S. Department of Commerce, 1998, p. 49).

Thus, the Internet has become the information infrastructure of the global economy. Electronic commerce uses the Internet’s key infrastructure applications such as email, the World Wide Web and the browser.
In fact, the development of Cyberspace communication formed a powerful tool in the globalization process. This has resulted in the domination of global markets by transnational corporations. Dan Schiller points out, “By the mid-1990s, transnational companies generated some two-thirds of world exports of goods and services” (Schiller, 2000, p. 38). For instance, between 1973 and 1993, transnational corporations “grew in number from 7,000 to 26,000” (Schiller, 2000, p. 37). Dan Schiller explains, “Sophisticated network systems in turn comprised the increasingly essential infrastructure for engorged transnational corporations, pursuing export-oriented, regionally or even globally integrated production strategies” (Schiller, 2000, p. 40).

In addition, Susan Barnes points out that since transnational corporations have their facilities around the world, “an improved transnational computer communication system developed with worldwide capabilities” to aid their cross-border production activities (Barnes, 2003, p. 320).

In particular, U.S. companies have been able to successfully expand their market globally, achieving a dominant position. For instance, according to Dan Schiller, “U.S. companies held fully 75 percent of global software markets and in this estimate claimed roughly the same share of the worldwide Internet economy” (Schiller, 2000, p. 82).

Moreover, Cyberspace communication promotes globalization of capital. Financial services, including banking, stock trading, insurance, and provision of financial information, are likely to be significantly affected by electronic commerce. Martin Carnoy notes, “Many financial institutions have twenty-four-hour trading capabilities, and large institutional investors engage in automatic (“program”) computerized trading, often worldwide, and in diverse financial instruments” (Carnoy, Castells, Cohen and Cardoso, 1996, p. 79). As a result, global markets have become more interdependent.
than ever due to developments in Cyberspace communication.

4.2.3 Global Market and Global Media

The global media system was and is an indispensable component of the global market economy. Ali Mohammadi points out that the global media “has played an important role as the key promoter of consumer goods throughout the developing countries. The bulk of media advertising is purchased by transnational corporations to promote their products” around the world (Mohammadi, 1997, p. 78). In other words, the global media, including the Internet, “provide the main vehicle for advertising corporate wares for sale, thereby facilitating corporate expansion into new nations, regions, and markets” (Herman and McChesney, 1997, p. 10).

However, this global media system is dominated by fewer than “ten mostly U.S.-based transnational media conglomerates, with another thirty to forty very large, mostly North American and Western European firms occupying niche and regional markets” (Herman and McChesney, 1997, p. 189). This denotes the oligopoly and concentrated control of global media by a small number of U.S.-based transnational media corporations.

4.3 Cyberspace Communication and Politics

The development of Cyberspace communication has made an impact not just in the economy but also in politics. There are positive and negative aspects to the relationship
between Cyberspace communication and politics.

4.3.1 The Internet as a Democratic Medium

There is a positive perspective that Cyberspace communication will improve people’s participation in public decision-making and as a result contribute to building up a more democratic society. For instance, the Internet allows people to engage in debate. The Internet will increase the power of people by enabling them to more actively participate in public decision-making. As an example, democratic movements across the world have begun to use the Internet in their cause for political freedom.

Susan Barnes notes, “the Internet empowers individuals by providing them with a vast array of different perspectives” (Barnes, 2003, p. 304). According to her, “the Internet has been described as a truly democratic medium and a forum for the free flow of information and ideas” (Barnes, 2003, p. 292).

With respect to characteristics of the Internet as a democratic medium, Susan Herring points out four specific characteristics (Herring, 1996, pp. 477-478). The first characteristic is “accessibility.” She describes “increasing numbers of people are able to gain access to computer networks at little or no cost.” The second characteristic is its “social decontextualization.” Without social status cues such as actual name, sex, geographical location, accent, voice and appearance, people can communicate with each other through the Internet on a more equal basis. Third, the Internet “lacks a set of consensually agreed-upon and established conventions of use.” It can lead to “the breakdown of traditional hierarchical patterns of communication.” Finally, “censorship on the electronic networks is as yet rare.”
Although there are several potentially democratizing characteristics, the establishing of democratic Cyberspace communication will not be automatic. It will require people’s ongoing efforts and activities.

There is also a negative perspective on Cyberspace communication and politics. First, there are increasing efforts by governments to regulate and conduct surveillance on the Internet. Second, the digital divide, the gap between information haves and have-nots, is another negative aspect. The ability to access the Internet is a major issue for electronic democracy.

4.3.2 Regulation and Surveillance by Governments

All over the world, governments have undertaken efforts to regulate and restrict Internet use. Governmental efforts to control the Internet may include three ways:

(1) restricting access by controlling networks and instituting registration requirements; (2) restricting content by the filtering of information, blocking of forbidden sites, disciplinary actions, and even virus attacks on banned sites; and (3) credibly threatening to arrest or imprison those who access unauthorized information or use the Internet to organize and mobilize politically (Guillen and Suarez, 2005, pp. 687-688).

Cees Hamelink points out that governmental regulatory measures cover a wide range:

laws requiring self-censorship by ISPs (Australia, 1996), obligations for Internet subscribers to register with the authorities (China, 1996), control over individual access (Cuba, 1996), the application of laws on pornography and
racism to Cyberspace (Germany, 1997), legislation against Internet offences (Japan, 1996), censorship measures (Philippines, 1996; Republic of Korea, 1996) or the monitoring of Internet contents (Malaysia, 1996) (Hamelink, 2000, p. 140).

In addition, according to the OpenNet Initiative, Internet filtering takes place in at least forty states worldwide including many countries in Asia and the Middle East and North Africa. Related Internet content control mechanisms are also in place in Canada, the United States and a cluster of countries in Europe.

For instance, most of the governments in Asia are expanding their mandate to filter sensitive content, both technically and through ‘soft controls’ such as legal regulation and delegated liability.

In addition, most countries in the Middle East and North Africa, “authorities use technology and legal and physical restrictions to limit what users can access online.” In Latin America, “Governments and especially courts in Latin America are engaged in an adaptive process of regulating online activity and content.”

Governmental efforts to control the Internet are not only happening in developing countries but also in developed ones. For example, in Europe, “filtering of online content takes a variety of forms among the nations of Europe.” In the United States and Canada, with respect to online surveillance, “Lawmakers in both countries have imposed Internet-specific regulation that can limit their citizens’ access.”

However, in the most serious case, the authoritarian government directly regulates access to the Internet. For example, in the case of North Korea, it “does not allow any access to the Internet.” In Cuba “public Internet access is restricted to a selected number of universities and employers” (Guillen and Suarez, 2005, p. 688).

At the international level, the US National Security Agency (NSA) established the
‘ECHELON’ project after the Second World War to “detect keywords in military and political information as well as in economic information used by commercial firms and stores relevant data for later analysis” (Hamelink, 2000, p. 126). This British-American surveillance program targets the Intelsat satellites used to relay most satellite phone calls, Internet, e-mail, faxes and telexes around the world.

4.3.3 Digital Divide

The term ‘digital divide’ means “the gap between individuals, households, countries and geographic areas at different socio-economic levels with regard both to their opportunities to access information and communication technologies (ICTs) and to their use of the Internet for a wide variety of activities” (OECD, 2001, p. 5).

Before people can participate in Cyberspace communication, “they must be able to access and use the network infrastructure” such as “fixed-line communications, cable TV, cellular mobile networks, satellites, broadcasting networks and even electricity distribution networks” (OECD, 1997).

For example, the U.S. Department of Commerce’s National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) reported on the problem in *Falling Through the Net: Defining the Digital Divide* in 1999 (NTIA, 1999). The report explains that “more Americans than ever have access to telephones, computers, and the Internet.” However, it also points out that “there is still a significant digital divide separating American information haves and have-nots” (NTIA, 1999, p. xv). According to NTIA, two important social factors such as income and education levels together influence this gap.
In addition, NTIA points out that geographic location also is an important social factor influencing the gap: rural residents are lagging behind urban residents in Internet access.

The case of the United States is only one of many nations confronting the issue of unequal access to information and communication technologies. Susan Barnes maintains that “Unequal access to information and communication technologies can lead to social stratification in the new global information society” (Barnes, 2003, p. 326). Unequal access to information and communication technologies is a feature of both the industrialized and the developing countries. In particular, most developing countries are seriously confronted with the challenges of the digital divide.

At the international level, Cees Hamelink points out that “at the present time the worldwide distribution of ICT resources is enormously unequal” (Hamelink, 2000, p. 82). For instance, one good indicator of the global digital divide is the number of Internet hosts. It supports the model of the enlarging global digital divide between rich countries and poor countries. In 1996, the United States possessed 64 percent of the Internet’s host computers, while other regions such as Eastern Europe, Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America possessed less than 6 percent (Herman and McChesney, 1997, p. 133).

In addition, based on the OECD’s report in October 2000, there were just over 94 million Internet hosts in the world. While some 95.6% of these hosts were in OECD countries, just 4.4% were outside the OECD area. The majority of Internet hosts in non-member countries have a relatively high GDP per capita. Taiwan, Singapore, Hong Kong (China) and Israel account for 52% of all Internet hosts outside the OECD area. The countries of Argentina, Brazil, Malaysia and South Africa account for a further
24% of Internet hosts outside the OECD area. On a regional basis, North America and Europe account for 89% of all Internet hosts. By contrast, the regional share of Internet hosts is very low in Central and South America and in Africa. As measured by Internet hosts, the global digital divide is enlarging (OECD, 2001, p. 8).

The number of websites is also an important indicator of the digital divide, because it is not only the ability to access Internet content and services but also to create services and content that can be accessed by others. By July 2000, there were 19.8 million websites in the world. Some 97% of these were hosted in OECD countries and just 3% were outside the OECD area (OECD, 2001, p. 15).

4.4 Cyberspace Communication and Culture

4.4.1 Cultural Globalization and Cyberspace Communication

What is the relationship between cultural globalization and Cyberspace communication?

Cyberspace communication is the central and driving force for globalization. Ali Mohammadi points out that “with the present rapid growth of communication sectors in the Western world, globalization is proceeding at an unprecedented speed” (Mohammadi, 1997, p. 71).

This globalization has a strong cultural dimension, as transnational corporations homogenize consumer goods and services all over the world. This process is being aided by Cyberspace communication.
Cultural homogenization raises the issue of the unequal information flow between and among countries. One example is the flow of information on the Internet. Is the one-way flow of information from advanced industrial countries to developing countries on the Internet the same as that of the traditional media -- television, radio and film?

According to Jon Stratton, the Internet promotes the globalization of particular cultures, especially the American culture (Stratton, 2001, p. 726). While information and communication technology advancement has benefited people in some parts of the world, this is not so for people in the vast majority of the developing world. Although a small number of people in the developing countries may have access to the Internet, the large majority of the population in these countries has no access to the Internet. As Cees Hamelink says, “In 1999 there are an estimated 170 million people with access to the Internet. This represents some 4 per cent of the world population. Over 80 per cent are in North America and Europe” (Hamelink, 2000, p. 81).

Thus, information and communication flows are “imbalanced and have been seen to follow a trajectory which takes cultural commodities from the more developed Western nations, especially the USA, to the developing countries” (Banerjee, 2003, p. 60).

4.4.2 Language in Cyberspace Communication

One of the most important issues in Cyberspace communication is the pervasiveness of the English language on the Internet. The pervasive use of English, which is probably spoken by only 15 percent of the world (Schiller, 2000, p. 53), in Cyberspace will destroy or diminish the use of native languages. The issue of language and its role in the maintenance of national identity is important in international relations. Daaim Shabazz
contends that “today’s use of the Internet, and its pervasive use of English, is often viewed as a vehicle for executing an electronic Pax Americana” (Shabazz, 1999, p. 31).

For instance, the Internet has been cited as an instrument for circulating English around the world. It is estimated that 80 percent of the information available on websites is written in English (Hamelink, 2000, p. 82).

In addition, “English is, overwhelmingly, the language of e-commerce.” In July 2000, English was the language of more than 94% of links to pages on secure servers (almost 2.9 million links). German (31,785 links) and French (30,954 links) accounted for more than 1% of detected links to secure servers (OECD, 2001, p. 23).

### 4.5 An Ethical Reflection

What is the ethical foundation of the problematics in Cyberspace?

According to Dan Schiller, instead of “delivering us into a high-tech Eden, in fact, Cyberspace itself is being rapidly colonized by the familiar workings of the market system.” He argues that “the Internet comprises nothing less than the central production and control apparatus of an increasingly supranational market system” (Schiller, 2000, p. xiv).

Today’s globalization is controlled by the world’s largest transnational corporations, the most powerful economic and political entities involved with the present rapid growth of Cyberspace communication. In fact, Cyberspace communication is a powerful tool in the globalization process.

Cees Hamelink points out that “the globalization of the new world order is
characterized by social Darwinism.” According to social Darwinism, he adds, “those who cannot make it in the marketplace are basically to blame themselves for their own inadequacies” (Hamelink, 2000, p. 173).

The term ‘Social Darwinism’ is an ethical theory proposed by the British sociologist and philosopher Herbert Spencer (1820 – 1903). He applied Darwinism and related biological concepts to his theory of Social Darwinism.

For example, the concept of ‘natural selection’ reasons that “struggle for survival is inevitable and whichever adaptations survive will be reproduced at a faster rate and will become dominant” (Hudson, 2000, p. 535). This concept allowed Spencer to argue that it is natural for the strong to thrive, leaving behind the weak. This shows the egoistic morality of Social Darwinism.

The core characteristic of Social Darwinism is ‘survival of the fittest’. It can be applied to globalization. Social Darwinist ethics give justification to neoliberal globalization in which poor countries, poor people and information have-nots are considered as weaker and more unfit to survive in the world as jungle. Therefore transnational corporations and media conglomerates have felt justified in dominating, excluding, exploiting and annihilating people and natural resources.

In fact, the early Social Darwinists applied Social Darwinist ethics to justify a laissez-faire economy. Spencer, a laissez-faire economist, advocated a laissez-faire economy, that is, the free enterprise system and less government regulation to support ‘survival of the fittest’ in business (Werhane, 2000, pp. 189-190).
4.6 Conclusion

Cyberspace communication is a key driving force of globalization. Although there are positive perspectives on Cyberspace communication and globalization, Cyberspace communication has played a crucial role in the domination of global markets by transnational corporations. In addition, it raises the critical issues of the digital divide and cultural homogenization.

Social Darwinism is an ethical foundation of globalization. Only the fittest people or countries can survive in this world as jungle. The others will be subjugated and cannot survive. The ideology of competition for survival as the fittest has spread all over the world in the process of globalization.

Notes

1 See: http://www.internetworldstats.com
2 A collaboration of the Berkman Center for Internet and Society at Harvard Law School, the Citizen Lab at the University of Toronto, the Oxford Internet Institute at Oxford University, and the University of Cambridge. See website: http://opennet.net
Chapter 5
A Christian Ethical Response on the Problematics of Cyberspace Communication

In the previous chapter, I asserted that Social Darwinism is the ethical foundation of the problematics in Cyberspace. Social Darwinist ethics creates ruthless competition and confrontation based on an egoistic morality. It ignores religious moral values such as compassion, cooperation, sharing, sympathy and love. Thus, the need is for an alternative ethics in which all living beings, not merely humans, live together in conviviality.

What is an alternative ethics from the Christian perspective to overcome Social Darwinist ethics?

The notion of love is the supreme principle of Christian ethics and should be the starting point of an alternative ethics. Thus, in this chapter I will examine the theory of Christian love by Paul Ramsey, one of the 20th century’s most important Christian ethicists. His ethical theory concentrates on Christian love or ‘agape’ (‘love’ in Greek). He points out that “Christian love formulates social policy by taking into account every concrete element in the situation which determines how in fact some actual good may be done” (Ramsey, 1951, p. 341). Thus, Ramsey’s ethical theory provides a proper ethical perspective for exploring the notion of Christian love as a Christian ethical response to the problematics of Cyberspace communication.

With respect to Ramsey’s account of Christian love, three major areas will be explored: first, Ramsey’s basic concept of obedient love, with three sources of obedient love; second, Ramsey’s ethical theory of agape in its relationship to rules and law; and
third, Ramsey’s understanding of “agape.”

Then, love will be examined from an Asian ethical perspective.

5.1 Paul Ramsey’s Basic Concepts of Obedient Love

5.1.1 Obedient Love

Ramsey maintains that the fundamental notion of Christian ethics is obedient or Christian love. He refers to this notion as “love of neighbor for his own sake” and “neighbor-regarding concern for others.” For instance, love for persons in general often means merely a “self-regarding concern for others.” But Ramsey asserts that Christian love means an entirely “neighbor-regarding concern for others” (Ramsey, 1951, p. 95).

Ramsey makes a contrast between selfish and unselfish, and between self-regarding and other-regarding. He argues that “Christian ethics is based on a radically unselfish love, but it is an enlightened unselfishness.” It is concerned with the needs of others and not with the needs of self. He asserts that “the ethics of enlightened unselfishness defines duties to the self vocationally in terms of duty to others” (Ramsey, 1951, p. 160).

In addition, Ramsey asserts that “a Christian man lives not in himself but in Christ and his neighbor. Otherwise he is not a Christian.” He explains that a Christian “lives in Christ through faith, in his neighbor through love” (Ramsey, 1951, p. 101).

Ramsey also points out that “love for neighbor comprises the full meaning of absolute, unhesitating obedience to God.” For instance, he states that “obedience means no more than love and love fulfills every legitimate obedience” (Ramsey, 1951, p. 34).
In terms of the sources of obedient love, Ramsey’s discussion begins in the first chapter, “The Two Sources of Christian Love,” of his book *Basic Christian Ethics*.

Ramsey identifies three sources as the basis for obedient love: God’s righteousness, the Kingdom of God, and the covenant. He states:

For a proper study of the origin and nature of Christian ethics, a distinction may be made between (1) God’s righteousness and love and (2) the reign of this righteousness in the Kingdom of God. These are two sources of ‘Christian love’. Never imagine you have rightly grasped a biblical ethical idea until you have succeeded in reducing it to a simple corollary of one or the other of these notions, or of the idea of covenant between God and man from which they both stem. (Ramsey, 1951, p. 2)

**5.1.2. God’s Righteousness**

The term ‘righteousness’ in the most general meaning is “uprightness, rectitude, or justice, and the word may be applied to God or to humans” (Childress and Macquarrie, 1986, p. 556).

Ramsey maintains that God’s righteousness is a source of obedient love. He characterizes God’s righteousness acting in judgment as concerned with salvation, and asserts that it is “normative for human justice.” With respect to “a consequence of linking God’s righteous judgments with his saving activity,” Ramsey asserts that there is no conflict between justice and love (Ramsey, 1951, pp. 4-5).

Looking at the New Testament, Ramsey refers to several of Jesus’ teachings in support of his assertion, including Matt. 5:44, 45, 48: “… I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father
who is in heaven, for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust … You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect” (Ramsey, 1951, p. 16). With respect to the first Christians, Ramsey maintains that “Jesus became ‘the righteousness of God’ for them” (Ramsey, 1951, p. 16).

Ramsey affirms two aspects of Jesus: firstly, he is Lord (Phil. 2:10) and, therefore the scope of his rule has no limitation (Ramsey, 1951, p. 17); and secondly, his incarnation is “the divine condescension toward men” and therefore we are to love one another as God has loved us (John 13:34) (Ramsey, 1951, p. 20).

5.1.3. The Kingdom of God

Ramsey argues that the Kingdom of God is the second source of Christian love. He maintains that “the Kingdom of God and the love of God are not ultimately separable.” He states that “the teachings of Jesus have reference mainly to God’s love, others to God’s kingdom” (Ramsey, 1951, p. 25).

Ramsey affirms the validity of Jesus’ eschatological teaching. He notes that Jesus’ eschatological teachings are “divided into two groups” (Ramsey, 1951, p. 32). The first group is his teachings with urgency and intensity, and the second is his teachings with content and meaning. For Ramsey, both groups of teachings are affected by Jesus’ kingdom-expectation.

He maintains that the first group of eschatological teachings “in which the effect of Jesus’ kingdom-expectation”, such as Jesus’ requirement of radical separation between a man and his possessions (Mark 10:21), and also Jesus’ requirement of a disciple’s release from bondage to ordinary family responsibilities (Luke 9:60, 62) gain “urgency
and intensity from their eschatological background” (Ramsey, 1951, p. 32).

The second group of eschatological teachings, Ramsey maintains, the content and meaning of Jesus’ strenuous teachings such as “non-resisting, unclaiming love, overflowing good even for an enemy, unlimited forgiveness for every offense, giving to every need, unconditional lending to him who would borrow” also show his apocalyptic expectation of the imminent arrival of the Kingdom of God (Ramsey, 1951, pp. 34-35).

In examining the validity of Jesus’ kingdom-expectation teachings, as the first step, Ramsey argues that “an understanding of the validity of Jesus’ strenuous teachings must involve putting a limitation upon the area of their intended application” (Ramsey, 1951, p. 39). Besides the first step, Ramsey argues, “Jesus’ ethic gained an absolute validity transcending limitation to this or that place or time or civilization” (Ramsey, 1951, p. 41).

In short, Ramsey claims that God’s righteousness and the kingdom of God are one source. He maintains that the righteousness of God was revealed by apocalypticism (Ramsey, 1951, pp. 44-45). Without the righteousness of God, Ramsey asserts, apocalypticism would have brought a quite different ethic, such as “Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die” (Ramsey, 1951: 45). However, according to Ramsey, Jesus’ apocalypticism teaches “within the context of biblical faith in God’s saving love.” It produced Jesus’ teaching of the righteousness of God as “the measure and meaning of human obligation” (Ramsey, 1951: 45). In other words, the notion of kingdom of God in Jesus’ teachings is apocalyptic eschatology which contains God’s righteousness and love.
5.1.4. Covenant

Ramsey argues that the covenant is a third source of Christian love. The term ‘covenant’ is translated from the Hebrew *berith*, which may be related to Akkadian terms meaning ‘to bind’ and ‘bond’. Covenants in the Old Testament between God and the people are initiated by God, not negotiated, and are expressions of God’s power and grace (Childress and Macquarrie, 1986: 136).

Ramsey asserts, “In the Bible, God appears as a covenant-making, covenant-restoring and covenant-fulfilling God” (Ramsey, 1951, p. 367). According to Ramsey, there is difference between this covenant and an ordinary civil contract or agreement. He notes, “covenant without commandments would have been empty, laws without the covenant are meaningless” (Ramsey, 1951, p. 368).

What is the nature of the covenant?

Ramsey argues, “Obedience to the covenant was thought of as ‘commanded’ on account of God’s firmness, and God was firm on account of his trustworthy character and his unswerving faithfulness to the covenant” (Ramsey, 1951, p. 370).

Ramsey’s main conclusion is that “the covenant means unconditional obedience,” and “man’s ultimate loyalty transcends every earthly system or center of human power” (Ramsey, 1951, pp. 386-387).

Why does Ramsey contend that the basic norm for Christian ethics is obedient love? Because “the covenant means unconditional obedience,” which means unclaiming love (Ramsey, 1951, p. 388). He states that “obeying the covenant and doing justice, love for neighbor and fulfilling the law” are the same thing (Ramsey, 1951, p. 388).
5.2. Paul Ramsey’s Ethical Theory of Agape

Having demonstrated that obedient love is the primary moral norm of Christian ethics, Ramsey analyzes the relationship between love and law, or rules.

In his book *Basic Christian Ethics*, Ramsey argues that only love liberates the Christian from bondage to the laws and conventions of society. In contrast, in his book *War and the Christian Conscience*, Ramsey maintains that love often acts within the law.

5.2.1. Basic Christian Ethics: An Ethic without Rules

Ramsey raises a question: “Did Jesus simply recodify code morality, setting rule against rule?” He answers, “In the strict sense of the word, he had no new principle for selecting among the laws. His was a greater freedom from the law, he lived more without the law than any procedure of this sort implies” (Ramsey, 1951, pp. 52-53).

Ramsey maintains that Jesus ‘fulfills’ the law and ‘finishes’ “any ethic of conventional respectability, any customary code of conduct” (Ramsey, 1951, p. 54).

He develops his argument by examining Jesus’ teaching about the Sabbath laws. For instance, Jesus heals the woman who for eighteen years has been bent over and cannot straighten herself on the Sabbath (Luke 13:10-17). While a faithful Jew who was the ruler of the synagogue stayed as close as possible to observance of the law, Jesus “stayed as close as possible to fulfillment of human need.” Ramsey notes that Jesus “quite spontaneously left the rules behind in order quickly to take maximum care of those in need” (Ramsey, 1951, p. 56).
Ramsey’s next discussion is Paul’s principle and again it emphasizes freedom from the law. He formulates Paul’s principle as “Love and do as you then please” (Ramsey, 1951, p. 77). He says Christian love is “pleased only by doing what the neighbor needs” (Ramsey, 1951, p. 78).

In addition, Ramsey asserts that Paul “went beyond any form of law,” declaring that “in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is of any avail, but faith working through love” (Gal. 5:6) (Ramsey, 1951, p. 75).

In short, Ramsey maintains, “Only love, and not special knowledge, inspiration or clear conscience, liberates the Christian from bondage to the laws and conventions of society” (Ramsey, 1951, p. 88).

5.2.2 War and the Christian Conscience: In-principled Love

In War and the Christian Conscience, Ramsey revises his understanding of the role of principles or rules. In this book, he examines the morality of war, in particular, the morality of the use of nuclear weapons. He maintains that any use of nuclear weapons is immoral.

In the introduction to War and the Christian Conscience Ramsey acknowledges the positive role of rules or principles:

It is true that Christian love continues to exert a free and sovereign pressure toward fresh determination of what should be done in situations not covered by the law, natural justice, or its own former articulation in principle. But it is also the case that love often acts within the law and it is always at work laying down rules or principles for the guidance of action. (Ramsey, 1961, p. xx)
In addition, in Chapter One, Ramsey maintains that what is required is “an agape-ethic precipitating some principled judgment about means that are permitted or prohibited.” He describes such Christian morality as “faith effective through in-principled love” (Ramsey, 1961, p. 14).

In short, in contrast to Basic Christian Ethics, Ramsey maintains the positive role of law and rules, and the restriction of the scope of Christian love’s liberty.

5.3. Paul Ramsey’s Agapism

In his essay An Unfinished Agenda (Ramsey, 1967), Ramsey draws upon a typology of agape developed by Professor William K. Frankena. He believes that Frankena’s types may assist in “identifying or projecting an unfinished agenda for Christian normative ethics” (Ramsey, 1967, p. 105). Professor William K. Frankena characterizes his typology in his essay Love and Principle in Christian Ethics (Frankena, 1964).

Frankena’s typology classifies ethical theories according to both their basic ethical principles and their understanding of the role of rules. First of all, he classifies his typology as pure or mixed agapism according to whether there is one or more than one basic ethical principle. While pure agapism “allows no basic ethical principles other than or independent of ‘the law of love’ (Ramsey, 1967, p. 105)”, mixed agapism “not be restricted to theories that combine agapism with natural or rational morality” (Ramsey, 1967, p. 117). A third generic type is non-agapism, that is, “not to use the term ‘love’ at all, or at all significantly” (Ramsey, 1967, p. 120). In other words, Frankena elaborates the following generic typology: pure agapism, mixed agapism, and non-
agapism.

With respect to the generic typology, Ramsey argues that Christian ethics is either pure agapism or pure deontology. He states:

If agapism is not a third and a distinctive type of normative theory which is neither *teleology* (goal-seeking) nor *deontology* (an ethics of duty), then it seems to me more true to say that it is a type of *deontology* than to say that it is a type of *teleology* (Ramsey, 1967, p. 108).

According to the role played by rules, Frankena maintains that pure agapism takes four forms: pure act, summary rule or modified act, or pure rule, or combinations of act and rule (Ramsey, 1967, pp. 106-107).

Pure-act agapism excludes the rules of conduct and acts based solely on one’s loving. Summary-rule agapism or modified-act agapism holds that there are rules of conduct which summarize past experience. But it denies that these rules have general validity. Pure-rule agapism follows a set of rules. These three types of pure agapism add a fourth pure agapism that is a combination of pure act and pure rule, or combinations of pure act, summary rule, and pure rule.

What, then, is Ramsey’s proper type among the four forms of pure agapism?

Ramsey contends that it is “some combination of pure-act agapism, summary-rule, and pure-rule agapism” (Ramsey, 1967, p. 121). He takes “this fourth possibility to be the most fruitful one and most in accord with the freedom of agape both to act through the firmest principles and to act, if need be, without them” (Ramsey, 1967, p. 107).
5.4 An Asian Ethical Perspective on Love

What is an East Asian traditional perspective on love? What is an Asian ethical reflection on Christian love?

In Buddhism, compassion is the central philosophical principle. The term compassion is originally a compound word of *maitra* (Sanskrit), meaning ‘friendship’ in English, and *karuna* (Sanskrit), meaning ‘compassion’ in English. Compassion is defined as wanting to help others to be happy and to be free from suffering (Park Kyusang, 1993, p. 142). In other words, compassion is an unselfish love which gives everything for others’ happiness. In this sentence, ‘others’ means humans as well as all living beings. According to the teaching of compassion, thus, people should live together in peace through compassion (love) with all living beings on the earth.

In Confucianism, the concept of *jen* (‘benevolence’, ‘kindness’, ‘humanity’, ‘love’ in English) is the core principle. *Jen* is an altruistic concern or love for others. In his *Analects*, Confucius said that *jen* is to love humans (Chan, 1963, p. 40). In other words, for Confucius, *jen* is a way of being between humans through love.

In addition, the concept of *jen* is expanded and embraces all living beings as a metaphysical concept. For example, Chu Hsi (1130-1200), a great Confucian philosopher, describes *jen* as the “the mind of Heaven and Earth to create things.” In his “A Treatise on *jen,*” he states:

“The mind of Heaven and Earth is to produce things.” In the production of man and things, they receive the mind of Heaven and Earth as their mind. Therefore, with reference to the character of the mind, although it embraces and penetrates all and leaves nothing to be desired, nevertheless, one word will cover all of it, namely, *jen* (Chan, 1963, pp. 593-594).
In other words, Chu Hsi connects the notion of *Jen* with Heaven and Earth which produce all things without ceasing.

He also defines *Jen* as “the character of man’s mind and the principle of love” (Chan, 1963, p. 591). For Chu Hsi, *Jen* is the resource and principle of love.

This metaphysical concept of *Jen* originated from the *Book of Changes*. The *Book of Changes* states, “It is the great virtue of heaven and earth to bestow life” (Wilhelm and Baynes, 1967, p. 328). The phrase ‘bestow life’ in this sentence means *Jen* as the principle of the universe (Kim Kyo-bin, 2007, pp. 5-6).

Furthermore, the notion of the heart-mind of compassion (ce yin zhi xin), which is Mencius’ ethical theory, has the same origin. Mencius, the most famous Confucian following Confucius, states:

> Now, when men suddenly see a child about to fall into a well, they all have a feeling of alarm and distress, not to gain friendship with the child’s parents, nor to seek the praise of their neighbors and friends, nor because they dislike the reputation [of lack of humanity if they did not secure the child] (Chan, 1963, p. 65).

In this sentence, the ‘feeling’ is the heart-mind of compassion. According to Mencius, this heart-mind of compassion is the beginning of *Jen* or universal love (Chan, 1963, p. 65). He notes that “He who exerts his mind to the utmost knows his nature. He who knows his nature knows Heaven.” (Chan, 1963, p. 78) In other words, he who has the heart-mind of compassion could know his nature and even Heaven. This shows the heart-mind of compassion is not just a human’s moral sympathy but expands to the universe.
Additionally, the Korean expression of love is ‘jung’ (or ‘jeong’ in Korean pronunciation). The notion of jung can not simply define. It is a consolidated concept of “emotion (jung-suh), affection (ae-jung), passion (yul-jung), sentiment (jung-cho), human-heartedness (ihn-jung), and sympathy (dong-jung)” (Park, A.S., 2003, pp. 24-25).

However, it can be defined as two ways: firstly, jung is ‘mutual love’ in the Western sense (Kwon Soo-young, 2001, p. 45), and secondly, jung is a compassionate passion (Park, A.S., 2003, p. 25).

The Korean concept of jung is a word that describes not “a certain cognitive state” but “an emotional state” (Chung and Cho, 2006, p. 47). This jung not only feels with other people (such as family, friends or neighbors) but also with things (such as a house, a car, a tree, or a mountain), with animals (for example, a dog, a cat or a bird), and with places (ex. hometown, city or home country). In this sense, the Korean concept of jung also expands to all things in the universe.

In summary, in Buddhism, the notion of love is perceived as compassion. In Confucianism, Jen is the principle of love and the heart-mind of compassion is the beginning of love. In Korean ethos, the concept of jung is mutual love or a compassionate passion. Above all, these concepts of love from the East Asian tradition embrace all living beings, including human beings, in the cosmos.

Then, what is the relationship between Christian love and East Asian traditions of love?

They are of different origins. Christian love is rooted in God’s creation and grace, while East Asian traditions of love originate from humanity. In other words, the concept of Christian love is wholly related to God while East Asian traditions of love are a humanistic concept.
However, they also are significantly similar, as they focus on unselfish love. That is, all these concepts of love—Christian love, Buddhist compassion, Confucian Jen, and Korean jung—are altruistic, not egoistic, love. They teach us to be kind and to love others.

The next question, then, is: What would be an Asian ethical reflection on Ramsey’s ethical theory of Christian love?

Ramsey’s ethical theory of Christian love is focused mainly on human beings. God’s love for the world, however, is not only for human beings but for all living beings. Christian love therefore must go beyond humans to include all living beings, building up an inclusive, cosmic framework of love. In the East Asian traditions, their concepts of love are expanded to the well being of all life, not just human beings.

According to K.H. Ting, Jesus is the cosmic Christ. He asserts that the realm of Christ’s redemptive work is not only Christian communities but “humankind as a whole and, indeed, the whole cosmos” (Ting, 2004, p. 112). Thus he maintains that the notion of cosmic Christ “gives us assurance that God is the cosmic lover, not any cosmic tyrant or punisher” (Ting, 2004, p. 116).

Kim Yong-bock also maintains that God is the giver of life to all living beings in the cosmos. He associates Jesus’ movement of love with the Asian traditions of love of life among all living beings. For instance, he maintains that the compassion of Buddha and the Benevolence of Confucius have “converged with Jesus’ love movement in the contours of Asian history of people on earth, under heaven” (Kim Yong-bock, 2009).
5.5 Love in Cyberspace: An Application

How can we apply Ramsey’s ethical theory of Christian love and East Asian traditions of love in Cyberspace? Do they provide an alternative ethics to overcome ethical problematics in Cyberspace?

For example, Ramsey searches for the implications of Christian love for human rights, because he maintains that Christian love is always “in search of a social policy” (Ramsey, 1951, p. 327). He argues that “human rights are derived from love” (Casey, 2008, p. 175). Cees Hamelink also argues that compassion is “the most powerful affective motive for the protection of human rights.” He says that compassion motivates people to care for others rather than merely pursuing self-interest (Hamelink, 2000, p. 75).

Thus, through the ethic of unselfish love, we can overcome the egoistic behavior of humans and the greedy structure of human society based on Social Darwinist ethics. In other words, what we really need is to cultivate love for others so that we become capable of understanding people and nature with compassion.

There are two aspects of the meaning of love in Cyberspace.

First of all, today’s Cyberspace communication has a fundamental role to play in globalization, which is characterized by social Darwinism through the survival of the fittest. According to social Darwinism, only the fittest people or countries can survive in this world. This is a selfish or self-regarding system of ethics.

In contrast, Christian love and East Asian traditions of love are an unselfish or other-regarding love. For example, Ramsey maintains that Christian love is neighbor-regarding concern for others. It is concerned with the needs of others and not with the
needs of self. Thus, Cyberspace communication has to be based on the ethic of unselfish or other-regarding love for life together with other people.

Second, Cyberspace communication is a powerful tool of domination by the global market as well as of cultural domination by the transnational corporations. Ramsey maintains, however, that “the sovereignty of God manifestly means acknowledging his righteousness or justice to be the sovereign rule of life” (Ramsey, 1951, p. 388). Thus, the ethic of love in Cyberspace means establishing justice to overcome the injustice of domination in Cyberspace.

5.6 Conclusion

In dealing with the problematics of Cyberspace communication, Christian love and East Asian traditions of love, which are based on unselfish love, provide a proper ethical perspective against the Social Darwinist ethics based on egoistic morality.

According to Ramsey, a Christian lives not in himself but in his neighbor through Christian love. It is the full meaning of obedience to God because God is love. He maintains that such obedient love is associated with the idea of covenant. Since the covenant means unconditional obedience, obedient love means unclaiming love.

Moreover, according to East Asian traditions of love, Buddhist compassion (love) is to help others to be happy and to be free from suffering. It is an unselfish love. In Confucian tradition, Jen is an altruistic love for others and the heart-mind of compassion is the beginning of such altruistic love.

In conclusion, we need to recover and revitalize Christian love, in association with
East Asian traditions of love, to overcome the ethical problematics of Cyberspace communication.

Communication for life fosters values such as justice, participation, and mutual life to overcome Social Darwinism in Cyberspace. Thus, communication for life in Cyberspace means to support people’s life together in love through Cyberspace communication.
Chapter 6
Case Study of Cyberspace Communication in Korea

In the previous chapter, I have asserted that Christian love, in association with East Asian traditions of love, is an alternative ethic in Cyberspace, and that it seeks to establish justice to overcome the injustice of domination in Cyberspace.

What, then, are some practical cases of the application of such an alternative ethic in Cyberspace? This chapter attempts to analyze the positive role of Cyberspace communication in Korea through close examination of two prominent cases. The questions we will ask are: How can Cyberspace communication encourage people’s participation and provide an alternative voice for people? How can Cyberspace communication support people in building community and expanding their human relationships?

Korea is one of the most digitally advanced countries in the world. The rapid diffusion of Cyberspace communication provided a crucial opportunity for citizen participatory online journalism such as OhmyNews to be established in Korea. In addition, it also facilitated the establishment of Cyworld, which is Korea’s largest online social network site. Through Cyworld, people have built a large web community to expand their human relationships. Exploring these two cases will help in responding to the research questions.

This chapter will examine the general situation of Cyberspace communication in Korea. It will then examine two prominent cases in Korea, OhmyNews and Cyworld.
6.1 General Situation of Cyberspace Communication in Korea

6.1.1 Development of Information Infrastructure in Korea

Korea is a world leader in the area of “informatization.” Korea has one of the highest rates of Internet connectivity among OECD nations.

Korea has rapidly developed its economy over recent decades and joined the OECD in 1996. Traditionally, Korea’s economic growth was based on manufacturing industries. At the moment, however, the information technology (IT) industry -- such as semiconductors, mobile phones, displays and Personal Computers -- plays an important role in the Korean economy.

According to a ‘Survey on Computer and Internet Usage’ by the National Internet Development Agency of Korea (NIDA), as of December 2007, the number of Internet users who have used the Internet at least once in the last one month is estimated at 34,820,000 or 76.3 percent of the population of age 6 and over in Korea (NIDA, 2008b).

The survey states that most persons aged 10-19 (99.8 percent), in their twenties (99.3 percent) and in their thirties (96.5 percent) use the Internet. The Internet usage rate of those aged 3-9 and in their forties is 79.5 percent and 79.2 percent respectively, while the rate for those in their fifties and sixties or older is 46.5 percent and 17.6 percent, respectively. The survey found that about 80.8 percent of the male population and more than 70 percent of the female population use the Internet.

The survey also found that over 80 percent of Korean Internet users access the Internet for information searches (87.5 percent), or leisure activities such as music, games, movies (86.1 percent), or communicating by e-mail and chatting (83 percent).
Meanwhile 50.5 percent use the Internet for shopping and selling, and 47.9 percent of Internet users are found to access the Internet for education.

In addition, Korea has one of the highest rates of broadband penetration in the world. Korea ranked at the top among OECD nations in terms of the percentage of all households with broadband access from 2004 to 2007. As of December 2007, 79.8 percent of households have access to the Internet. Most households connect to the Internet by broadband, with 82.9% of households with Internet accessibility connecting to the Internet through xDSL and others through cable modem (21.4%), Apartment LAN (14.3%), Fixed Wireless LAN (7.4%), and FTTH (Fiber To The Home, 2.2%) (NIDA, 2008a).

Korea's broadband network is well used by Internet users. A third of Korean Internet users regularly enjoy broadband entertainment such as network games, videos on demand and movies on demand. Korea has the world's highest rate of video-on-demand and movie-on-demand downloads.

Furthermore, Korea has a higher penetration of users of high-speed mobile Internet service than any other country in the world. According to the ‘Survey on Wireless Internet Use’ by the National Internet Development Agency of Korea, as of September 2008, 52.5 percent of the population aged 12-59 are ‘wireless Internet users’, who have used at least one of the wireless Internet services among mobile phone wireless Internet, wireless LAN, and broadband wireless Internet (NIDA, 2008c). The usage rate of wireless Internet through mobile phone ranks highest at 50.6 percent, followed by 7.7 percent through wireless LAN and 2.6 percent through broadband wireless Internet. The main reasons for using wireless Internet through the mobile phone are ‘availability of Internet access from anywhere’ (77.1 percent) or ‘immediate availability of Internet

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access when needed’ (63.4 percent).

According to *Electronic Engineering Times*, “Korea first turned its attention to broadband access in the early 1990s. Since then, it has emerged as one of the most connected nations on earth - in both the wired and wireless realms” (Clendenin, 2004).

### 6.1.2 Key Factors for Achievement of High Broadband Penetration in Korea

According to the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), Korea’s high broadband penetration can be attributed to five key factors which are described here (ITU, 2003a).

First, geography: Korea has the ideal geography for broadband network deployment. 80 percent of Korea’s population lives in urban areas and 40 percent of Koreans live in large apartment complexes where it is possible to install broadband network cost-effectively.

Second, government support: The high broadband penetration is partly the result of the Korean government’s Information and Communication Technology (ICT) policy. The government has facilitated broadband development through specific programs with a clear vision and strategy. For instance, since the mid 1990s, the Korean government has established three master plans for the development of information infrastructure. The first plan (1996 to 2000) aimed at implementing basic “informatization” promotion, and the second plan (1999 to 2002), called ‘Cyber Korea 21’ intended to build a leading knowledge-based society. The third plan (2002 to 2007), called ‘e-Korea Vision 2007,’ had the objective of building e-Korea as a global leader (KISDI, 2006). As the result of such governmental support, Korea has rapidly developed an ICT infrastructure.
Third, competition: The Korean broadband market is characterized by high competition among the telecom companies. As a result, Korea has among the lowest broadband Internet prices in the world. Broadband pricing is a flat rate. Therefore, unlimited Internet access is available for around US$ 25 per month in every household. In addition, the variations depend on the amount of bandwidth.

Fourth, equipment: Korea’s ICT industry has given local suppliers an advantage in getting into the broadband market. It has helped keep equipment prices low.

Fifth, rapid broadband Internet diffusion in Korea is attributed to certain characteristics of Korean culture or mentality. The unique Korean cultural pattern of bbali-bbali (meaning ‘quickly, quickly’ in English) is a key factor. Perhaps the first Korean word many foreigners learn in Korea is bbali-bbali. Korean people like everything to move very fast. This has both negative and positive sides. In the case of the Internet, most Korean Internet users want quick access to the Internet, quick communication, quick download and quick contact. Thus Koreans quickly adopted the broadband Internet access, which has been ideally suited to the bbali-bbali Korean culture.

There is also another special Korean cultural pattern, a ‘copycat’ syndrome. The copycat syndrome means that once one person gets something everyone else also wants to get it. It originated from the homogeneity of Korean society. Korea is ethnically homogenous and there is only one language. For instance, once one household subscribes to broadband Internet service, other households in the neighborhood also subscribe to the same service. They want to be equal with others and not be different. This Korean cultural pattern is a key factor explaining why broadband Internet access could diffuse so rapidly, especially in large apartment complexes.
In addition, the ‘PC bang’ (bang means ‘room’ in Korean) phenomenon is also a key factor. PC bangs offer high-speed access to the Internet with multimedia computers at less than one dollar per hour. For Koreans, the PC bang is a social space that is associated with the phenomenon of on-line gaming. More than half of all Korean Internet users play online games, and PC bangs enable them to play games with high-speed access with their friends. Korea has about 21,000 Internet PC bangs.

*Fortune* magazine reported that PC bangs were “the locus of especially young Koreans' social lives—places where they could play games, check e-mail, update their personal websites, smoke with friends, drink sodas and beer, and flirt for the equivalent of less than $1 an hour” (Lewis, 2004).

Furthermore, PC bangs played an important role in generating a high-speed access boom in the early phase of broadband deployment. Many Koreans were first exposed to high-speed access to the Internet at PC bangs and subsequently wanted such high-speed access at home (Yun Kyoung-lim, Lee Hee-jin and Lim So-hye, 2002, p. 18). Although popularity of broadband access is in the home nowadays, PC bangs still play a significant role in facilitating online game culture in Korea as a social space.

### 6.1.3 The Internet and Participatory Democracy in Korea

Korea was ruled by authoritarian military regimes from the 1960s to 1987. During that period, government-led industrialization developed rapidly while the authoritarian military government oppressed the people’s demand for democratization.

The national civil uprising in 1987 led to the breakdown of the long-lasting authoritarian regime and restored basic civil rights. Such social change has also brought
about freedom of speech along with democratization. During the authoritarian military regimes, the Korean media fell under political control.

Since 1987, a few media companies, particularly some highly influential newspaper companies, have become quasi-political powers. After 1987, Korean media themselves became ‘king makers’ during presidential elections through the restoration of their independence from the state and the centralization of capital (Kim Eun-gyoo, 2005a: 332). In particular, the three major newspapers (Chosun Ilbo, Joongang Ilbo, Donga Ilbo) have monopolized the newspaper market and blocked the expression of diverse opinions. They represent their own interests and the interests of older conservative people. In opposition to such conservative mainstream media, Korean civil society has demanded media reform and alternative media.

In Korea, online media have emerged as a result of the growth of civil society following democratization after 1987 and the rapid “informatization” which began in the mid-1990s. Korea has a rich technological infrastructure that provides citizens with fast access to the Internet. According to Fortune magazine, it “goes far beyond entertainment and convenience, changing not just the way people interact with their friends and their things but also the course of national politics” (Lewis, 2004).

By utilizing the advantages of the Internet, Korean online media were able to create a public sphere in Cyberspace. The most important advantage of the Internet is its interactivity. The one-way, one-to-many communication is less applicable to the Internet. Instead, multi-directional communication is more applicable. For instance, everyone involved in the communication flow can be sender, channel, or receiver. In other words, Internet is decentralizing communication power and giving it to everyone.

In addition, the Internet has also influenced the Korean culture. Confucianism and
its modern variant have strongly influenced Korean society. In fact, Confucianism emphasizes hierarchical norms and somehow limits expression. Korea’s young generation has taken advantage of the Internet to overcome the hierarchical norms of the cultural environment, and has “begun to transmit opinions that would be less freely expressed in the real world” (Chang Woo-young, 2005, p. 929).

There are two cases in which Cyberspace communication influences Korean politics and civil movement.

The first case is the Presidential election in 2002, which was an important event for the online media as powerful alternative journalism. Chang Woo-young points out that “since the election, ‘citizen e-participation’ and ‘online interaction’ have become two keywords for understanding the political influence of the online media” (Chang Woo-young, 2005, p. 925).

In the Presidential election, Mr. Roh Moo-hyun’s victory was possible because of grassroots campaigning by young Koreans through the Internet. Mr. Roh’s political fan club and support movement, called Rohsamo (meaning ‘people who love Roh’ in Korean), played a key role in this campaign in particular. Rohsamo formed as a result of his loss in the National Assembly election campaign in 2000. It started as a simple forum discussion supporting Mr. Roh, but soon grew into an independent organization with the aim of supporting Roh’s political vision for a participatory democracy.

Rohsamo’s inaugural meeting was held in June 2000 in a PC bang. One hundred members attended the meeting, which was broadcast live over the Internet on OhmyNews (Shin Eui-hang, 2005, p. 35).

From its initial membership base of about 7000, the number of members increased to 49,000 by July 2002 (Kim Hee-kyung H., Moon Jae-yun and Yang Shin-kyu, 2004).
Rohsamo utilized the Internet and the group’s forum as an online community, but members also met face-to-face frequently. They wrote and sent letters supporting Roh and coordinated campaign fundraising activities both online and offline.

One of the most dramatic events of the 2002 presidential election was the breakdown of the alliance between Roh and Jeong Mong-joon, another prominent candidate. Jeong Mong-joon allied with Roh on 15th November 2002 and withdrew his support for Roh on the night before Election Day on 18th December 2002.

On Election Day when early returns showed Roh behind his conservative opponent, Rohsamo and other Roh supporters connected to key websites in large numbers and organized a movement to encourage many young people to visit polling stations and vote. They used every means of communication such as message boards, email, computer instant-messaging and Internet news sites, and sent thousands of Short Message Service (SMS) text messages (Joyce, 2007, p. 12). It turned an apparent Roh defeat into victory in the course of a few hours.

The second case is the candlelight demonstrations in 2008.

From May 2, 2008, large protests in the form of candlelight demonstrations took place in Korea, lasting more than two months. The demonstrations started with opposition to the government's American beef import policy.

Internet and Internet users played an important role in organizing the demonstrations. Through the extensive wireless Internet connections, numerous Internet users were able to broadcast the candlelight demonstrations on the web in real time using their laptops and Webcams. Through these live broadcasts, Internet users in other parts of Korea and abroad came to know what was happening and found ways to contribute to the development of the candlelight demonstrations (Hauben, 2008).
Oh Yeon-ho, the founder and CEO of OhmyNews, noted,

“For the past 10 years, we have tried to use internet technology to promote the development of democracy. And the fruit of our efforts have been Candlelight 2008. These ordinary citizens, who held the media leadership role in Candlelight 2008, did not merely represent the power of the crowds. These hundreds of thousands of participants challenged traditional media logic…… Who is a journalist?”

He also pointed out that the conservative media had tried to portray demonstrators as misguided or emotional. But people no longer depended on traditional media and they acted as media themselves.

In short, Korea has both highly advanced ICT infrastructure and experience of political democratization. Under such circumstances, technological and socio-political resources made “the Internet an effective tool for civic participation” (Kim Yong-chan and Kim Kyun-soo, 2006, pp. 13-14). It also provided an important opportunity for alternative online citizen journalism such as OhmyNews to be established in Korea.

6.2 Case I: OhmyNews: Citizen Journalism Site

6.2.1 Establishment of OhmyNews

OhmyNews is one of the most successful online news sites in the world in the field of citizen journalism. The term citizen journalism (also known as ‘participatory’ journalism) has become widely accepted to refer to “the act of a citizen, or group of
citizens, playing an active role in the process of collecting, reporting, analyzing and disseminating news and information” (Bowman and Willis, 2003, p. 9).

OhmyNews was founded by Oh Yeon-ho, a progressive journalist. After graduating from Yonsei University in Seoul, he worked for a progressive monthly magazine called *Mal* (‘word’ or ‘speech’ in English).

OhmyNews was launched on “February 22, 2000 at 2:22 p.m., a date meant to signify OhmyNews’s break with traditional twentieth-century journalism” (Joyce, 2007, p. 7). Its main feature is that ‘Every citizen is a reporter’. OhmyNews was established with 4 professional staff members and 727 ‘citizen reporters’. Its name, OhmyNews, was taken from the comedic catch phrase ‘Oh my God!’ which was popular around the time the online service was founded in 2000.

In an address at the 2004 World Association of Newspapers Conference in Istanbul, Turkey, Oh Yeon-ho commented on his vision for OhmyNews: “20th century journalism is one-way. Professional reporters write, and readers read. The traditional newspaper inherently has two limits: time and space. That's why only professional journalists can write articles for the papers.” He continued, “With its main concept, born in the spring of the new millennium, OhmyNews changed how news is produced, distributed and consumed.”

In addition, OhmyNews launched OhmyTV, a webcasting news service, on November 2002 to strengthen the multimedia function. OhmyTV is anchored by a citizen journalist. The civil news anchor is selected from a pool of civil applicants and anchors the news once a week.
6.2.2 The Main Feature: Every Citizen is a Reporter

The most important characteristic of OhmyNews is a citizen reporter system which allows anyone to submit a news article. It has “blurred the boundaries between news sources, news writers, and news consumers” (Kim Yong-chan and Kim Kyun-soo, 2006, p. 12).

OhmyNews tried to change traditional journalism and create a new type of journalism. Unlike traditional newspapers, any individual is free to register as a citizen reporter and contribute news stories. People who wish to become citizen reporters provide an individual profile and agree to abide by the reporters’ provisions. About 70 percent of the stories on OhmyNews are the work of citizen reporters and the rest come from in-house staff reporters. It was “the first of its kind in the world to accept and publish articles from its readers, who are mostly ordinary citizens” (Kim Byoung-cheol, 2006, p. 61).

According to OhmyNews, as of April 2009, it has 60 staff reporters and over 57,958 civil reporters. The constitution of the citizen reporters is as follows:

The gender ratio is 74% male to 25% female and 1% organization. The age ratio is 1.8% teens, 24.4% in their 20’s, 36% in their 30’s, 24.6% in their 40’s, 9.8% in their 50’s and 3.4% in their 60’s. Their occupations are: 19.7% university students, 18.6% white-collar workers, 7.0% self-employed, 5.7% journalists, 4.9% freelancers, 3.8% school teachers, 3.4% postgraduate students, 3.2% government employees, 2.7% NGO activists and 2.5% artists.

As an example of citizen reporter, Kim Hye-Won, a 45-year-old housewife, was named one of Time magazine’s ‘People of the Year’ in 2006. One of her most popular
pieces was entitled ‘Daddy’s Depressed, Son’s Taking Tests, and I’m Worried’. It was about her son, who was studying for exams, and her husband, who was dealing with corporate burnout (Grossman, 2006).

Meanwhile, OhmyNews is developing a model for news production through cooperation between citizen reporters and in-house staff reporters. Citizen reporters write various stories about the happenings in their lives. By contrast, professional staff reporters write in-depth stories and also review and select stories written by civil reporters (Kim Eun-gyoo and Hamilton, 2006, p. 545).

Initially, stories written by civil reporters are registered under the name of *Saengnamu* (meaning ‘live tree’ in Korean) in OhmyNews and reviewed by professional staff reporters. Then reviewed stories are registered as formal articles under the name of *Ingeol* (meaning ‘lively burning fire tree’ in Korean) news. *Ingeol* news is published on the main or section page according to its news value. For *Saengnamu* stories, it is clearly stated that the writer bears all responsibility for the story. The professional staff reporters review the stories and about 70 percent of them are published in the *Ingeol* section, and the remaining 30 percent in the *Saengnamu* section (Oh Yeon-ho, 2004, p. 51).

In addition, Ohmynews has been cultivating the professionalism of civil reporters. OhmyNews Journalism School has been training citizen reporters, focusing on basic news coverage and news article writing. Numerous courses on journalism for citizens and OhmyNews readers are also offered.

Furthermore, citizen reporters are minimally paid for an article. If a reporter’s article is registered as *Ingeol* news, the reporter can receive US $2. In addition, citizen reporters can receive up to $50 per article, depending on whether the *Ingeol* news is
published on the main page or section page.

Readers also can give a ‘tip’ to reporters up to US$ 30 for writing particularly good articles. This is a patent system of OhmyNews. Readers can send the money by credit card, online or by mobile phone. Although there are some cases of reporters receiving thousands of dollars in tips, “the tips and payments serve more as encouragement than income” (Joyce, 2007, p. 7). Oh Yeon-ho asserts that citizen reporters are writing articles to change the world, not to earn money.4

6.2.3 OhmyNews and Political Empowerment

OhmyNews has influenced Korean politics in several ways. OhmyNews has emerged as successful alternative journalism. It has provided an alternative news source for the younger generations who were disillusioned with conservative media and sought alternative sources of information. OhmyNews, through its citizen reporters, was also able to report on issues which the mainstream media largely ignored.

For instance, OhmyNews reported the killing of two schoolgirls by a U.S. Army vehicle in June 2002, which was downplayed by the mainstream media. It led to the biggest anti-American protest and candlelight vigil, attended by more than 10,000 people (Cheon Young-cheol, 2004, p. 31).

The power of OhmyNews demonstrated itself on 2002 Presidential Election Day. During the Presidential election, mainstream conservative newspapers supported a conservative party’s candidate and opposed liberal and minority parties. This made huge difficulties for Roh Moo-hyun’s Presidential campaign.

According to the New York Times, “as the elections were approaching, more and
more people were getting their information and political analysis from spunky news services on the Internet instead of from the country’s overwhelmingly conservative newspapers” (French, 2003). It wrote that the most influential online newspaper was OhmyNews.

When Jeong Mong-joon withdrew his support for Roh, the major newspapers used the news to support the conservative candidate. In contrast, OhmyNews was the center for the last minute mobilization to vote for Roh. OhmyNews provided nonstop video and text reports, and its readers closely monitored the election results and promptly acted on them. When the conservative candidate started getting ahead, they mustered last minute mobilization using email and text messages encouraging friends to go to the polls (Cliffford and Moon Ihl-Wan, 2003).

When Roh was elected as President, he showed his gratitude by giving his first post-election interview to OhmyNews, which had backed him.

According to The Guardian, Roh was “the first leader fully in tune with the Internet” and “the world’s first president to understand HTML website coding” (Watts, 2003).

In addition, during the candlelight demonstrations in 2008, OhmyNews was reporting news and broadcasting live images. In a single day, a record 1.2 million viewers watched OhmyTV live coverage. To support this live broadcast on the web, some 34,000 viewers have contributed US$ 130,000 as spontaneous and unsolicited payments (OhmyNews International, 2008).

6.2.4 Lessons from OhmyNews Case
OhmyNews “has shaken up journalism and political establishments” (Gillmor, 2006, p. 125). While journalism tells the audience “what the news is and the audience either buys it or doesn’t,” OhmyNews is “bottom-up, interactive, and democratic” journalism (Gillmor, 2006, p. 126). It has contributed to the development of democracy in Korean society.

What are the elements that have brought about the success of OhmyNews in Korea? There are three elements, as follows: first, the Korean socio-political situation has demanded media reform. People distrusted the conservative mainstream media and desired alternative media; second, Korea has a high-tech information and communications environment; and third, OhmyNews provided a platform on which citizens could participate.

6.3. Case II: Cyworld: Social Network Site

6.3.1 Establishment of Cyworld

Social network sites (SNSs) have become a cultural phenomenon in Korea. According to Boyd and Ellison, social network sites are defined as “web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system” (Boyd and Ellison, 2008, p. 211).
How has Cyworld become so popular in Korea? What features of Cyworld make it different compared with other existing social network sites globally? How does Cyworld support people to build a community in Cyberspace?

Cyworld® is the largest online social network site in Korea. It provides a platform from which people can expand their relationships and build a community in Cyberspace. Cyworld originated from the EC-Club (Electronic Commerce Club), a student club at the Korea Advanced Institute for Standard and Technology (KAIST). Five doctoral students of KAIST established a venture company, Cyworld, in 1999, years before the better known U.S.-based SNSs, including MySpace (2002) and Facebook (2003).

In 2001, it was reconfigured as a full-scale social network site with minihompy (or mini-homepage). Two years later, in 2003, Cyworld was bought by SK Communications, a leading mobile service provider in Korea. As of April 2009, the number of Cyworld users surpassed 24 million, nearly 50% of the total population in South Korea (population of South Korea: about 48 million, 2005) and more than 90% of those aged 24-29. Cyworld users upload about 45,000 videos every day and 30 million photos every week.

Literally translated, ‘Cy’ can mean ‘cyber’, but it also means ‘between’ or ‘relationship’ in Korean (Hjorth, 2008, p. 96). Korean culture plays a significant role in the rapid growth of Cyworld users. Cyworld extends the Korean cultural concept of blood ties to virtual relationships.
6.3.2 Main Features of Cyworld

6.3.2.1 Ilchon: Family-like Relationship

In Cyworld, a user can invite other users to establish a relationship called *ilchon* between them simply by clicking the ‘add a friend’ button. Then, if the invited user accepts it, an *ilchon* relationship is established. The *ilchon* system plays a significant role in promoting Cyworld in Korea. It allows users to share more information making family-like relationships.

In the Korean culture, the term *ilchon* (1-*chon*) refers to the relationship between parents and children, while 2-*chon* refers to the relationship between grandparents and children, 3-*chon*, to the relationship between aunts/uncles and nephews/nieces, and no *chon* to the relationship between husbands and wives (Kim Kyung-hee and Yun Hae-jin, 2008, p. 304). In *Cyworld*, however, users could extend *chon* relationships in Cyberspace with close friends and relatives, hobbyists of an interest, colleagues, etc. In the real world, people cannot choose to make or terminate kinship relationships. But in Cyworld, “users have the option to start and stop *Cy-ilchon* relationships at will” (Kim Kyung-hee and Yun Hae-jin, 2008, p. 310).

There are two important *ilchon*-related functions in Cyworld.

The first one is the ‘*padotagi*’ (‘surfing’ in English) function, which links for surfing the *minihompies* of *ilchons*. By *padotagi*, users can meet friends of their *ilchons*, and sometimes find out their other friends know each other. It allows users to expand their social relationships.
Another *ilchon*-related function is the limit access. According to the degrees of relationship closeness, users can limit the access level of their documents, photos, and private diaries. For instance, Cyworld’s users can choose to disclose a certain area and posting to *ilchon* or to the public-at-large, or they may choose to keep them completely private.

In addition, Cyworld offers real-name user service. Thus, Cyworld users can easily find their friends who graduated from the same school, who were born in the same region, and who are in the same field of work, on the web. When a new user subscribes to Cyworld, he or she is required to give all relevant information, which is stored in the database of Cyworld. Then, the new user can find people through a classified search engine.

### 6.3.2.2 Minihomphy: a Personal Homepage

Cyworld uses an interaction design that encourages the e-community to co-create personal content. Cyworld users inhabit a *minihompy*, a small pop-up window for each user where they can upload photos and music to share with *ilchons*. The *minihompy* enables Cyworld users to manage not only their ‘profile’, but also their ‘identity’. It is represented by an empty *miniroom* (virtual room) that users can decorate with digital furniture, household items, wallpaper and other objects, just as they would decorate real rooms. A *minime* (avatar) is also in the virtual room, and the user “can change *minime*’s clothes, hair and facial expression” (Shih, 2006).

These customizations of virtual rooms and avatars are significant differences compared to the U.S.-based social network sites Facebook and MySpace.
The minihompy also offers common social network site features such as bulletin board, personal photo gallery, personal video clips, diary, guestbook, etc. In addition to decorating the minihompy, Cyworld users use the minihompy to publish their own creative efforts. They regularly update the content (pictures, messages, diaries, music, etc.) of their minihompy and visit their ilchon's minihompies.

In addition, Cyworld provides the scraping function. If a user finds some interesting content on an ilchon's minihompy, he or she can ‘scrape’ it from ilchon's minihompy onto his or her own minihompy. The scraping function has the effect of sharing information with all ilchons and increasing the value of the network for all users.

Furthermore, Cyworld is connected with the user’s mobile phone. By mobile phone, Cyworld users can log onto their minihompy. Every day, Cyworld users upload an average of 6.2 million photos, many of them directly from their cell phones” (Moon Ihlwan, 2005).

The high popularity of digital devices in Korea, such as digital cameras, camera phones and webcams, is changing the expression medium from text base to visual base. Unlike many blogs, Cyworld minihompies are filled with lots of digital images uploaded by users, and this is “the main attraction for South Korea's digital-camera-toting young people” (Lee Su-hyun, 2004). Through proliferation of camera phones and digital cameras in Korea, the number of Cyworld users has increased rapidly.

South Korea’s mobile penetration rate is one of the highest in the world with over 80% of the country’s population owning at least one mobile phone. The functions of mobile phones have gone beyond making calls and Short Message Services (SMS). Korea is the first country to launch mobile digital TV broadcasts in 2005. Korean young people use their mobile phone to watch live TV, surf the Internet, listen to music, snap
pictures, play online games, and pay for goods using digital money (Moon Ihl-wan, 2007).

6.3.2.3 Dotori: A Cyber-Currency

The basics of the Cyworld minihompy service are provided for free. But users can personalize their minihompy through digital goods purchased from Cyworld such as background music, avatars, and page backgrounds with dotori (‘acorn’ in Korean) which cost about 10 cents each. For instance, decorative items like ‘furniture’, banners, or stylized cursors cost 5 to 15 acorns. As of 2007, Cyworld users were daily spending US$ 300,000 worth of dotori, according to SK Communications (Kim Se-young, 2007).

In addition, the so-called BGM (background music) downloads cost 5 acorns. As of 2008, Cyworld “has sold 300 million songs, adding 100 million in only one year.” It shows that “music has become an inseparable part of young Koreans’ online life” (Cho Jin-seo, 2008).

Furthermore, Cyworld users can also give dotori as a virtual gift to others. It is one of the favorite gifts among the younger generation in Korea. They can purchase dotori on Cyworld’s gift shop page as well as in off-line stores such as bookstores and stationary stores. In Cyworld, “users can click on ‘plead’ to ask an individual friend to buy them decorative items for their mini home pages” (Lee Su-hyun, 2004).

6.3.3. Lessons from Cyworld Case

Cyworld is a social networking phenomenon in Korea. More than 90% of those in
their 20s and nearly 50% of the total Korean population subscribe to Cyworld.

The success of Cyworld can be attributed to the following three elements.

First, Korea has a rich technological infrastructure, and digital devices enjoy high popularity. Cyworld supports its users’ building of technologically advanced blogs with abundant photos, videos, and music.

Second, Cyworld fully considers the *chon* relationships in Korean culture. Cyworld has a deep understanding of Korean cultural factors and applies them to *ilchon*-related functions.

Third, Cyworld provides its users a platform to build community in Cyberspace. In most cases, Cyworld’s web community reflects the user’s off-line relationships such as close friends and relatives, colleagues, etc. Through Cyworld, users easily build or join the human network to share useful and secret information.

6.4 Conclusion

Communication for life supports people’s life together in justice and love through Cyberspace communication.

The first case, OhmyNews, is the most successful example of citizen participatory journalism in Korea. It was established as the result of both specific socio-political conditions and the rich technological infrastructure in Korea. OhmyNews has challenged traditional journalism by promoting civil participation in production, distribution and consumption of the news all at one time through Cyberspace communication. It has blurred the boundaries between news sources, news writers, and news consumers. OhmyNews has influenced the development of democracy in Korea.
with its significant features.

The other case, Cyworld, is the largest social network site in Korea. It supports people in building and managing human relationships and expands their human network through Cyberspace communication.

In conclusion, communication for life promotes people’s participation, builds community and strengthens relationships, rather than promoting exclusion, domination, isolation, division and broken community in Cyberspace.

Notes

1 Address at the 30th Anniversary Conference of the Korean American Communication Association in Chicago, 5 August, 2008.
2 See: http://www.ohmynews.com
4 Address at the Conference of the Berkman Center for Internet & Society at Harvard University in Massachusetts, 11 December, 2004.
5 See: http://www.cyworld.com
Conclusion

This study is an interdisciplinary study of communication and theology, and simultaneously an integrated study of the West and Asia to explore answers to the research question: ‘What is the meaning of communication for life in Cyberspace? - A Christian ethical quest in reference to the Korean situation.’

In this section, first of all I will highlight the main points of each of the six chapters; then I will describe the possible contributions of the study. Lastly I will suggest three areas for future research on communication for life.

In Chapter 1, I proposed that the world has become one global market due to neoliberal globalization. In the process of neoliberal globalization, not only humans but all living beings are under crisis in the economic, ecological and cultural dimensions. This process of neoliberal globalization is strongly supported by cultural globalization through the global media system. The global media system plays a central and decisive role in economic and cultural globalization to promote and control global markets.

Currently, the global media system has come to be dominated by Western media and this causes the homogenizing of culture, in particular Americanization of culture in Asia.

In Chapter 2, I examined the ecumenical discussion on theology of life as a theological response to the global crisis. Theology of life extends the theological subject beyond human beings to include all living beings. Similarly, we have to be freed from an anthropocentric perspective on communication because all living beings are communicating subjects, not objects to be communicated to.
In Chapter 3, I investigated East Asian traditional perspectives such as Taoism, Buddhism, Confucianism and Tonghak, on life and its relationship with communication. The main characteristic of the traditional worldviews in East Asia is an organic holism, which means the universe is viewed as a vast integrated unit. Due to this characteristic, language, which is based on human senses, has limits in communicating. In summary, East Asian traditional perspectives on communication overcome the anthropocentric perspective.

In this chapter, I suggested three dimensions of communication for life: first, communication for life is to overcome anthropocentrism in communication; second, communication for life is to overcome communication for death and to bring mutual life to human society and the entire cosmos; and third, communication for life is to converge Eastern and Western ways of communication. Eastern and Western ways of communication are converged into communication for life and create a new way of communication.

In Chapter 4, I provided a critical analysis of ethical problematics in Cyberspace communication. I concluded that Cyberspace communication plays a decisive role in neoliberal globalization. It is characterized by social Darwinism, which means only the fittest people or countries can survive. However, communication for life fosters values such as justice, participation, and mutual life to overcome social Darwinism in Cyberspace.

In Chapter 5, I examined Paul Ramsey’s account of Christian love and East Asian traditions of love. These are alternative ethics based on unselfish love in Cyberspace, against the Social Darwinist ethics based on egoistic morality.

In Chapter 6, I analyzed Cyberspace communication’s positive roles in Korea.
through close examination of two prominent cases: the highly successful citizen participatory journalism of ‘OhmyNews’ and the largest social network site ‘Cyworld’. These case studies support the value of communication for life which promotes people’s participation, builds community and strengthens relationships, instead of promoting exclusion, domination, isolation, division and broken community, in Cyberspace.

What are the possible contributions of this study?

It can make three possible contributions to the development of studies on theology and communication.

First, this is one of the few integrated studies on theology, communication and Asian traditions. Communication does not play a key role in contemporary theological studies. Moreover, most studies on theology and communication have an instrumental perspective on communication. In other words, there is little development of theoretical and ethical studies on communication from various theological perspectives. This study could encourage further exploration by theological studies on communication.

Second, this study has attempted to extend communication subjects beyond human beings to include all living beings. Since communication theory traditionally has been based on the anthropocentric worldview of the West, contemporary communication theories mainly focus on human beings and their society. However, this study has attempted to overcome such an anthropocentric perspective of communication, based on Asian traditional perspectives of life and communication. It has raised awareness that all living beings are the communicating subjects, not objects to be communicated to.

Third, this study has attempted to establish a communication value named ‘communication for life’. Its purpose is to bring conviviality among all living beings. It can give a new perspective on communication for study of the relationship between
humans and nature.

Lastly, what are some areas for future research on communication for life?

There are three possible areas.

First, there needs to be examination of other Asian traditional perspectives on life and communication. This study has focused mainly on traditional perspectives from East Asia. Thus, other Asian traditional perspectives, such as Hinduism from South Asia and Islam from West Asia, have to be investigated. This could provide more insights for further study on communication for life.

Second, there needs to be investigation of various indigenous perspectives on life and their relationship with communication, from Asia, Africa, South America, North America, Oceania, and Europe. In the various indigenous traditions, humans and other living beings in the universe exist not in isolation but co-dependently. This could also provide new ideas and contents to overcome the limitations of the anthropocentric perspective on communication. It would be an intercultural communication study with the perspective of communication for life.

Third, there needs to be an application of the framework of communication for life to the analysis of various communication contexts. In this study, I applied the framework of communication for life to analyze Cyberspace communication. It could be applied to analyze other communication contexts.

Above all, these three areas of study should be converged and integrated into communication for life.
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Summary

*Communication for Life in Cyberspace: a Christian Ethical Quest in Reference to the Korean Situation*

This study is an interdisciplinary study of communication and theology, and at the same time an integrated study of the West and Asia. This study is based on an Asian mode of thinking to explore answers to the research question: ‘What is the meaning of communication for life in Cyberspace? - A Christian ethical quest in reference to the Korean situation.’

The term ‘life’ is a key concept of this study. What is the meaning of life? It is not merely a biological notion. We cannot simply define what life is and the boundary between life and non-life. In Korean it is *SaengMyong*, which means the whole life of all living entities.

What, then, is the ecumenical discussion on life?

As a subject of theology, ‘Life’ was initiated in the World Council of Churches’ Sixth Assembly in Vancouver, 1983. The theme for Vancouver was ‘Jesus Christ – the Life of the World’.

Since the Vancouver Assembly, the theology of life has been a concern within ecumenical discussions. The main contribution of theology of life is extending the theological focus beyond human beings to include all living beings.

As a theological answer to the question of ‘What is life?’ life is a gift of God. This was the first sub-theme of the Vancouver Assembly. In addition, from an African perspective, social, economic, political and family life are closely interconnected.

This discussion on theology of life continued to the WCC’s World Convocation on Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation (JPIC) in Seoul in 1990 and the WCC’s
Seventh Assembly in Canberra in 1991. The theme for Canberra was 'Come Holy Spirit – Renew the Whole Creation' which linked the two themes ‘Holy Spirit’ and ‘creation’. Just as was done at the Canberra Assembly, Moltmann also has developed pneumatological creation theology. Moltmann’s creation theology is a form of panentheism which means God is transcendent and immanent in the world at the same time through the Spirit.

When we consider life, we have to recognize the threats to life. In fact, we live in a world where all life is threatened by the power of death. The Accra Confession of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC) declares that the signs of the times challenge us to recognize that the life of human beings and the rest of creatures and the earth are under serious crisis. Moreover, it states the cause of crisis is related to the development of neoliberal economic globalization.

According to analysis of this study on the Asian context with regard to neoliberal globalization, all life on earth, not only human beings but also nature, is under crisis in the economic, ecological and cultural dimensions.

Then, what are Asian traditional perspectives on life? This study examines East Asian traditional perspectives on life and its relationship with communication, such as Taoism, Buddhism, Confucianism and Tonghak.

The Eastern traditional worldview is organic holism while the Western one is largely anthropocentric and dualistic. It looks at the universe as an organism. Thus human beings are organically connected with other living beings as an integral part of the cosmos. This organic holism provides a basis for reciprocity and relationship between humans and all forms of life. Compared with the Western worldview, this shows the different ideas of value and the different cultural backgrounds to understand the
meaning of life.

How, then, does the Eastern traditional worldview affect the communication perspective?

In Asia, communication thought has developed since ancient times because communication itself was considered to be the philosophical subject. For instance, according to Taoism, *Tao* is the ultimate beginning of all forms of life and cosmic substance. In other words, human beings and all other beings are produced by *Tao*. Thus, it cannot be understood by human media such as language but it can be understood through our mind beyond language. This means Eastern traditional perspectives on communication have a negative response to language. They consider that language, which is based on human senses, cannot express the world completely.

Then, what is the relationship between life and communication?

Communication is the essence of life. Without communication, no living being can exist. Thus, it can be said that communication is a synonym for life.

Since all living beings are communicating subjects, not objects to be communicated to, we have to overcome the anthropocentric perspective on communication. In this way, we human beings may build a community with all living beings and develop harmonious relationships with them to live together on the earth.

For this reason, I suggest a communication value named ‘communication for life’. The notion of ‘communication for life’ cannot be simply defined. Just as the notion of life is integral and holistic, communication for life is not fragmented communication but holistic, integral communication among humans and other living beings.

In this study, I suggest three basic dimensions of communication for life. Firstly, communication for life is to overcome anthropocentrism in communication because all
living beings are communicating entities. Secondly, communication for life is a value-based communication. The core value of communication for life is to overcome communication for death and to bring mutual living to the human society and the entire cosmos. Lastly, communication for life is converging Eastern and Western ways of communication. It is not an issue of which one is superior, between them. They have to complement each other to create new ways of communicating. Communication for life is not fragmentary. In linking up human beings and other living beings, as well as the East and the West, it is holistic, integral communication.

This study applies this value of communication for life to analyze the ethical problematics in Cyberspace communication with the economic, political and cultural dimensions.

Cyberspace communication is a key driving force of neoliberal globalization which causes the crisis of all life on earth. Although there are positive perspectives on Cyberspace communication and globalization, Cyberspace communication has played a crucial role in the domination of global markets by transnational corporations. In addition, it raises the critical issues of the digital divide and cultural homogenization.

The ethical foundation of the problematics of Cyberspace communication is Social Darwinism. Social Darwinist ethics creates ruthless competition and confrontation based on an egoistic morality. For instance, Social Darwinist ethics give justification to neoliberal globalization in which poor countries, poor people and information have-nots are considered as weaker and more unfit to survive in the ruthless world.

The notion of Christian love, the supreme principle of Christian ethics, is an alternative ethics to overcome Social Darwinist ethics.

According to the theory of Christian love by Paul Ramsey, Christian love means an
entirely unselfish love for others. Similarly, East Asian traditions on love, such as Buddhist compassion, Confucian Jen, and Korean jung, also focus on unselfish love. That is, all these concepts of love are altruistic, not egoistic, love.

Compared with Ramsey’s ethical theory of Christian love, East Asian traditions on love go beyond humans to include all living beings, building up an inclusive, cosmic framework of love.

In short, through the ethic of unselfish love, we can overcome the egoistic behavior of humans and the greedy structure of human society based on Social Darwinist ethics. In other words, what we really need is to cultivate love for others so that we become capable of understanding people and nature with compassion.

Thus, communication for life in Cyberspace means to bring mutual living to the human society and the entire cosmos in love through Cyberspace communication.

In addition, this study analyzes the positive role of Cyberspace communication through close examination of two prominent cases in South Korea.

The first case ‘OhmyNews’ is one of the most successful online news sites in the world in the field of citizen journalism. The second case ‘Cyworld’ is the largest online social network site in Korea. These case studies support the value of communication for life which promotes people’s life together through Cyberspace communication.

In conclusion, this study can make three possible contributions: first, this is one of the few integrated studies on theology, communication and Asian traditions. Thus, this study could encourage further exploration by theological studies on communication; second, this study has attempted to extend communication subjects beyond human beings to include all living beings. It has raised awareness that all living beings are the communicating subjects, not objects to be communicated to; and third, this study has
attempted to establish a communication value named ‘communication for life’. It can provide a new perspective on communication for study.
Samenvatting

‘Communicatie voor het leven’ in cyberspace: een christelijk-ethische zoektocht, vanuit de Koreaanse context

Dit proefschrift is een interdisciplinair onderzoek op het gebied van de communicatie en theologie, en het is tegelijkertijd een geïntegreerde studie van de westere wereld en Azië. Het is gebaseerd op een Aziatische manier van denken om tot antwoord te komen op de onderzoeksvraag: “Wat is de betekenis van ‘communicatie voor het leven’ in cyberspace? Een christelijk-ethische zoektocht vanuit de Koreaanse context.”

De term ‘het leven’ is een kernbegrip in dit onderzoek. Wat is de betekenis van leven? Het gaat hier om meer dan het biologische begrip. We kunnen niet eenvoudig definiëren wat het leven is en waar de grens tussen leven en niet-leven ligt. In het Koreaans heet dit SaengMyong: het volle leven van alle levende wezens.

Waarover gaat de oecumenische discussie over het leven?

‘Het leven’ werd als theologisch onderwerp geïntroduceerd tijdens de zesde Assemblée van de Wereldraad van Kerken in Vancouver, in 1983. Het thema van die vergadering was: ‘Jesus Christ – the Life of the World’ (Jezus Christus – het leven der wereld).

Sinds de Assemblée van Vancouver is de theologie van het leven een onderwerp in oecumenische discussies gebleven. De belangrijkste bijdrage van de theologie van het leven is het uitbreiden van de theologische focus naar alle levende wezens, dus verder dan alleen de mens.

Als theologisch antwoord op de vraag ‘Wat is het leven?’ kunnen we zeggen: het leven is een geschenk van God. ‘Het leven, een geschenk van God’ was het eerste
subthema van de Assemblée van Vancouver. Daarnaast werd vanuit het Afrikaanse perspectief duidelijk dat de sociale, economische, politieke en gezinsaspecten van het leven onderling sterk zijn verbonden.

De discussie over de theologie van het leven werd voortgezet tijdens de wereldconferentie van de Wereldraad van Kerken in Seoel in 1990 over Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation (Gerechtigheid, vrede en de heelheid van de schepping) en de zevende Assemblée in Canberra in 1991. Het thema voor Canberra was: ‘Come Holy Spirit – Renew the Whole Creation’ (Kom, Heilige Geest, vernieuw de gehele schepping), waarin de thema’s Heilige Geest en schepping samenkwamen. Net als tijdens de Assemblée van Canberra, zette Moltmann hier zijn pneumatologische scheppingstheologie uiteen. Deze scheppingstheologie is een vorm van panentheïsme, wat inhoudt dat God zowel transcendent en immanent is in het universum, door de Geest.

Wanneer we het leven bezien, moeten we de bedreigingen aan het leven ook erkennen. Feitelijk leven we in een wereld waar alle leven bedreigd wordt door de macht van de dood. De Accra-verklaring van de World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC) verklaart dat de tekenen van de tijd ons uitdagen om in te zien dat de levens van mensen, andere schepsels en de aarde onder grote dreiging staan. Als oorzaak van deze crisis wordt de voortschrijdende neoliberale economische globalisatie aangewezen.

Uit de analyse van dit onderzoek naar de Aziatische context met betrekking tot neoliberale globalisatie blijkt dat alle leven op aarde, niet alleen mensen maar ook de natuur, bedreigd wordt door de economische, ecologische en culturele dimensies.

Wat zijn dan de traditionele Aziatische perspectieven op het leven? Deze studie onderzoekt Oost-Aziatische traditionele perspectieven op het leven, bijvoorbeeld in het
Taoïsme, Boeddhisme, Confucianisme en Tonghak, en de relatie van deze perspectieven met communicatie.

Het traditionele oosterse wereldbeeld is dat van organisch holisme, terwijl het westerse vooral antropocentrisch en dualistisch is. Dit oosterse wereldbeeld beziert de wereld als een organisme. Daarin staat de mens in organische verbinding met andere levende wezens, als integraal onderdeel van de kosmos. Dit organische holisme levert een basis voor wederkerigheid en de relatie tussen mensen en iedere vorm van leven. Vergeleken met het westerse wereldbeeld levert dit andere ideeën op over waarde en de verschillende culturele achtergronden om de betekenis van het leven te begrijpen.

Hoe beïnvloedt het traditionele oosterse wereldbeeld dan het communicatieve perspectief?

Omdat in Azië communicatie altijd al als filosofisch onderwerp werd beschouwd, is het denken over en doordenken van communicatie sinds oudsher in ontwikkeling. Bijvoorbeeld, in Taoïsme is Tao de oorsprong van alle vormen van leven en kosmische substantie. Met andere woorden, de mens en alle andere wezens zijn geschapen door Tao. Dit kan niet bevat worden met menselijke middelen zoals taal, maar het kan wel worden begrepen door onze geest die verder reikt dan taal. Traditioneel oosterse perspectieven op communicatie reageren hiermee negatief op taal. Zij gaan ervan uit dat taal, omdat het gebaseerd is op menselijke zintuigen, de wereld niet volledig kunnen uitdrukken.

Wat is de relatie tussen leven en communicatie?

Communicatie is de essentie van het leven. Zonder communicatie kan geen levend wezen bestaan. We kunnen dus zeggen dat communicatie synoniem is aan het leven.

Aangezien ieder levend wezen een communicatief subject is, in plaats van een
object waar communicatie op gericht is, moeten wij het antropocentrische perspectief op communicatie afleren. Op deze manier kunnen wij – menselijke wezens – een gemeenschap bouwen met ieder ander levend wezen en harmonieuze relaties met hen ontwikkelen om zo samen op aarde te leven.

Daarom introduceer ik een communicatieve waarde genaamd ‘communication for life’ (‘communicatie voor het leven’). Dit begrip is niet eenvoudig te definiëren. Net zoals het begrip ‘leven’ integraal en holistisch is, zo is ‘communicatie voor het leven’ niet een gefragmenteerde communicatie maar een holistische, integrale communicatie tussen mensen onderling en met andere levende wezens.

In dit onderzoek werk ik drie basisdimensies van ‘communicatie voor het leven’ uit. Allereerst is communicatie voor het leven bedoeld als tegengas tegen antropocentrisme in communicatie, want ieder levend wezen is communicatief. Ten tweede is ‘communicatie voor het leven’ een op waarden gebaseerde communicatie: de kernwaarde van ‘communicatie voor het leven’ is dat communicatie ten behoeve van de dood overwonnen wordt door de introductie van wederzijds leven. Dit voor zowel de samenleving als het gehele universum. En ten derde is ‘communicatie voor het leven’ het samengaan van oosterse en westerse manieren van communicatie. Het gaat er niet om welke van de twee manieren van communicatie superieur is; de twee moeten elkaar aanvullen om nieuwe manieren van communicatie te creëren. ‘Communicatie voor het leven’ is niet fragmentarisch. Door mensen en andere levende wezens samen te brengen, evenals oost en west, is het holistische en integrale communicatie.

Dit onderzoek past deze waarde van ‘communicatie voor het leven’ toe op de analyse van de ethische kwestie van communicatie in cyberspace met de economische, politieke en culturele dimensies.
Communicatie in cyberspace is een basale drijvende kracht achter de neoliberale globalisatie die de bedreiging van alle leven op aarde veroorzaakt. Hoewel communicatie in cyberspace en globalisatie ook positieve kanten hebben, speelt cyberspace-communicatie een cruciale rol in de dominantie van wereldmarkten door transnationale ondernemingen. Daarnaast roept het kritieke problemen op, die van de digitale kloof (digital divide) en van culturele uniformiteit.

Het ethische fundament van de problematiek van cyberspace-communicatie is sociaal darwinisme. De sociaal-darwinistische ethiek leidt tot meedogenloze concurrentie en confrontatie op grond van een egocentrische moraal. Sociaaldarwinistische ethiek rechtvaardigt bijvoorbeeld neoliberale globalisatie waarbij arme landen, arme mensen en mensen die verstoken zijn van informatie beschouwd worden als zwakker en minder geschikt om in deze meedogenloze wereld te overleven.

Het inzicht van christelijke liefde, het eerste beginsel van de christelijke ethiek, is een alternatief tegen deze sociaal-darwinistische ethiek.


Vergeleken met de ethische theorie over christelijke liefde van Ramsey gaan de Oost-Aziatische tradities over liefde verder. Ze omvatten niet alleen de mens maar alle levende wezens en bouwen een allesomvattend kosmisch kader van liefde op.

Kortom, aan de hand van de ethiek van belangeloze liefde kunnen we het egocentrische gedrag van mensen overwinnen, en ook de hebzucht in de samenleving
die is gebaseerd op het sociaal-darwinistische beginsel. Met andere woorden, wat wij echt nodig hebben is het cultiveren van liefde voor anderen zodat we in staat zijn om mensen en de natuur met medeleven te begrijpen.

‘Communicatie voor het leven’ in de cyberspace wil een kruisbestuiving bewerkstelligen in het leven, leven zoals bedoeld in de Koreaanse context. Zowel in de samenleving als de gehele kosmos in de Christelijke liefde, door cyberspace-communicatie.

Daarnaast wordt in dit onderzoek de positieve rol van elektronische communicatie geanalyseerd via een gedetailleerde studie van twee prominente cases in Zuid-Korea. De eerste case – OhmyNews – is een van de meest succesvolle elektronische nieuwsites wereldwijd op het terrein van burgerjournalistiek. De tweede case – Cyworld – is de grootste sociale-mediasite in Zuid-Korea. Deze casestudy’s bevestigen het nut van ‘communicatie voor het leven’ via elektronische middelen, door versterking van het samen leven van mensen.

Deze studie kan tot drie mogelijke bijdragen leiden. Allereerst is dit een van de weinige onderzoeken waarbij theologie, communicatie en Aziatische tradities zijn geïntegreerd; aldus kan het stimuleren tot verder theologisch onderzoek over communicatie. Ten tweede wordt getracht de inhoud van communicatie hier uit te breiden van mensen naar alle levende wezens; het stimuleert het bewustzijn dat alle levende wezens communicatieve subjecten zijn en niet objecten waarnaar gecommuniceerd wordt. En ten derde is met deze studie getracht een communicatieve invalshoek genaamd ‘communicatie voor het leven’ in te stellen; deze waarde kan een nieuw perspectief bieden voor onderzoeken op het gebied van communicatie.