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**KOREA AS THE NATION CHOSEN TO REALIZE THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY**

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Table of contents

Introduction	1
Background to Korean national consciousness	3
Nationalism as a communist ploy	8
The election of Korea	11
The first Israel	13
Through the second to the third Israel	14
From Chosen Nation to Global Community	19
Conclusion	24
Notes	27
References	28
Appendix	30

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Korea as the Nation Chosen to Realize the Global Community

Both centripetal and centrifugal forces seem to be at work simultaneously in the formation of human societies. There are presently movements to transcend parochial barriers as well as nationalistic movements for the full emancipation of peoples from what is perceived as neo-colonialism or as technological and cultural imperialism. It appears that movements towards the realization of an international community are accompanied by movements of devolution resisting the formation of all-powerful hegemonies. There seems to be an irreconcilable contradiction between national identity and world unity, as if the values that make for the one are incompatible with those that make for the other. Is this tension between these two equally potent trends inimical or inherent to the creation of a functional global society? This question becomes more pertinent now that massive migrations and modern means of international communication bring together peoples of different cultural backgrounds into closer and closer relationship with one another.

This paper attempts to address the problem of nationalism from the perspective of a case study of Korea. Korea has been selected because of the ideological and political implications of its rise as a South East Asian economic power. Then there are the attempts to heal the division between North and South Korea and to create one proud nation to take its place in the international community. The Korean predicament challenges the researcher to unravel the complex relationship between

C3 L.R

nationalism and nation-building. Further, it calls for an examination of the impact of modernization and 40 years of Japanese occupation on Korean national consciousness. Equally significant are the claims of the Unification Church that Korea is invested with a special mandate in divine Providence to realize a global community. Thus Korea provides the student of nationalism with a special vantage point from which to look at some of the complexities accompanying the paradoxical movements towards nationhood and world unity.

The first part of the paper sketches the main historical and cultural factors that have shaped modern Korea. There is an attempt here to single out some of the most typical components of nation-building. The implicit assumption is that the achievement of nationhood is a legitimate and desirable state of affairs. This section will also seek to identify, however, the circumstances that transform nation-building into nationalism. A contrast is drawn between the programmes of North Korea and South Korea for the unification of Korea.

The next section looks at the paradigm of the chosen nation as proposed by Unificationism in the text the Divine Principle. The implications of the doctrine of the election of Korea are examined. It is argued that the Unification ideology for a global community is more compelling than the Unification doctrine of the election of Korea. This ideology claims to possess the authority of revealed knowledge, the medium of revelation being the Reverend Sun Myung Moon, who happens to be Korean.

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It is necessary to point out that the Unification doctrine of election is inscribed within a more comprehensive worldview which includes a theory of history. This theory is open-ended in the sense that it is not deterministic in the way, say, the Hegelian philosophy is with regards to the end of history. Our conclusion will therefore reflect the same openness concerning the election of Korea for, if there is a prophetic vision that seems to point to a predetermined manifest destiny, there is also ample room for human freedom and individual responsibility in the fulfilment of any mandate. A distinction therefore is made between the privilege of election and the responsibility of consecration.

#### Background to Korean national consciousness

In studying the emergence of the Korean nation, it is necessary to distinguish *ab initio* between nationalism and nation-building. The premise adopted here is that while nation-building is integral to the development of a people, rabid nationalism is a perversion generally arising when nationhood and statehood are achieved through the disparagement and at the detriment of other people. Only a summary sketch of the salient elements characterizing the formation of the Korean nation will be given here.

Some historians trace the root of Korean national consciousness back to the foundation myth of the third century B.C. The birth of Korea is attributed to the legendary Tangun

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who is said to have come down from Heaven in 2333 B.C for the express purpose of founding Korea. In addition to a supernatural origin, Korea takes pride in a singular cultural attribute: the promulgation of Hangul, the Korean alphabet, which seeks to distinguish itself from Chinese and be the medium for national literature, traditional fine arts and other related accomplishments. Furthermore, Korea prides itself also for its ethnic homogeneity, the Han 'minchok', <sup>1</sup> a *volk* descending from the Altaic people of north-east Asia that moved into the peninsula in the third millennium B.C and is characterised by its vitality and self-motivating nature.<sup>2</sup>

The existence of Korea as a geographical entity is generally traced back to the year 670 A.D., the time of the proto-Korean state of the unified Silla kingdom. It is from the succeeding Koryo dynasty (918-1392), however, that Korea derives its name. It was the army general Yi-T'aejo that put an end to chronic factious wars that rent the peninsula and founded the 550-year dynasty that was to bear his name from 1392 to 1910. The first political stirrings of national consciousness had to wait until as late as the 17th century. Then a form of national consciousness began to take shape among the educated elite in a protest movement against what was considered to be an oppressive hierarchical regime based on class and privileges. The Yi dynasty, according to Ho-min Yang, was "an absolute monarchy based on two hierarchical pyramids. One was the centralised political structure with the king placed on its top... The other was a feudal structure in which the traditional Confucian

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society was divided into a number of classes: the royal family, the yangban (gentry), the chungin and sori (a small number of middle class and petty officials), the yangmin (farmers, merchants and artisans) and the chonmin (slaves and other outcasts)."<sup>3</sup> The yangban was itself divided into two major ideological groups, the tongban (eastern learning group of civil officers) and soban (the western group dominated by the military).

The Yi dynasty was ideologically grounded in Confucianism as expounded by Chu Hsi (1130-1200). Traditional Confucianism upholds the principle of the innate goodness of human nature and the establishment of a stable system through education and the moral perfection of the individual. It tends to be elitist, however, in its delineation of the social and political order. The political order corresponded to a moral order based on five fundamental relationships: father-son, husband-wife, ruler-subject, elder-younger, friend-friend. The patriarchal authority of the king was identified with that of the father. The highest virtues were those of loyalty and obedience: a crime of lèse-majesté was in effect a form of parricide. However, Chu Hsi-ism degenerated in due course into a rigid, formalistic structure, a closed system stifling creativity and blocking social mobility.

The first meaningful intellectual challenge to the Yi dynasty was to come in the 17th and 18th centuries with the Sirhak (or Silhak) movement. This was a group of out-of-office Confucian scholars driven to the countryside by court intrigue

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and who drew their inspiration from one of Korea's great philosophers, Yi Hwang (T'oegye, 1501-1570). They constituted the *School of Practical Learning* and advocated political and social reform. They were critical of the irrational structure of the yangban system as well as of formalistic debate. While agitating for the study of ancient classical works, they also argued for the rationalisation of the administration, for the opening of the country to the sciences and to economic development through trade. Their thought was to be a major inspiration to the leaders of national independence in the 20th century.

It took the neo-confucianism of the Silhak movement to sow the seeds of democratic consciousness in the minds of the population at large and this in turn gave rise to the Donghak (also called Chondogyo) movement initiated by Se-un Choi Je-Woo. Donghak philosophy promotes the revolutionary principle that everyone can receive Hanulnim (God) and that every person must be respected as Heaven. The people are the guardians and protectors of the Fatherland. The principle of an ideal state based on the moral elevation of the populace at large and not on the elite alone was eventually to lead to the Donghak rebellion of 1894-1895, breaking down the old society in an attempt to initiate a new age of equity and justice. The Donghak rebellion, also called the Eastern Learning movement as opposed to the movement of Western Learning that sought to integrate western influences for modernisation, was, paradoxically, conservative in its attempt to guard the national heritage from foreign invasion.<sup>4</sup>



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It was essentially external political considerations, however, that were to transform this movement and give it its nationalistic character. The rivalry between Russia and Japan for the control of Korea led to the occupation of Korea by Japan after the defeat of Russia in the war of 1905. The Yi dynasty came to an end in 1910 and Korea was to remain a Japanese colony until the end of World War II in 1945.

But Korea did not draw from its own native Confucian or neo-Confucian heritage the ideological ammunition for its Samil (Independence) Movement of March 1, 1919. For the concept of the nation is absent in Confucian ideology.<sup>5</sup> Korea had to move away from the traditional policy of vassalage to China, a policy that had been a tactical mechanism to safeguard Korean independence and protect it from domination by imperialistic Japan. The March 1 Independence Movement, while capitalising on the embryonic democratic spirit of Chongdogyo (Donghak rebellion), drew its inspiration from Christianity which had reached Korea at the end of the 18th century through Catholic missionaries based in China. It made effective use more particularly of the Protestant emphasis on the innate freedom of each individual as it is found in the Lutheran tradition and in the spirit of the American Constitution. The influence of western thought on Korean independence movement can be illustrated by the formation of the Independence Club in 1896 and the publication of the first bilingual newspaper, the Independent, published in both Hangul and English by So Chae-p'il, who adopted the westernised name Philip Jaisohn.<sup>6</sup> As a natural political corollary to this

C.L.R

spiritual premise inherited from western Christianity, the Independence Movement of 1919 included in its manifesto the Wilsonian principles of national self-determination.<sup>7</sup>

Thus Korean nationalism is, like the nationalism of former European colonies, what has been described as a nationalism of resistance or of liberation,<sup>8</sup> with the difference that instead of being a former European colony, Korea was colonised by another oriental power, Japan, with which it has ambiguous relationships to this day.<sup>9</sup> There are rumblings of anti-American feelings as Korea strives to broaden democratic rights on the strength of its economic performance. This anti-americanism is to be seen, however, within the larger context of the division and reunification of Korea, and as part of the process of national emancipation and nation-building.

#### Nationalism as a communist ploy

Just as it served the cause of nation-building in South Korea, the principle of self-determination has proven to be a convenient ideological weapon for Kim Il Sung, the leader of North Korea. Kim Il Sung integrated nationalism in his "Juche" theory -- which is mainly the revolutionary doctrine of self-reliance -- and exploited the nationalistic sentiment in an attempt to create an homogeneous nation state under communism. While courting both the USSR and communist China,<sup>10</sup> Soviet-trained Kim Il Sung adapted Marxism-Leninism to Korea by advocating the more Trotskyite notion of revolution in each country. "Revolution in each country is a link of the world

(3) L.R.

revolutionary forces. It is the internationalist duty of the communists of each country to fight energetically for the triumph of world revolution." <sup>11</sup> He developed this thought further and, more in the spirit of Lenin than that of Marx, argued that nationalism and the formation of the nation state are necessary stages in the advent of world revolution. <sup>12</sup> Nation-building and nationalism become closely identified. Thus in the introduction to the works of the "great leader" the "Juche" ideology is portrayed as containing "the original policy and concrete tasks of launching a general ideological mobilisation movement for nation-building on a wide scale, a revolutionary movement to rid the working people of the virus of outdated imperialist ideology, imbue them with the spirit of national independence and rouse them powerfully for nation-building." <sup>13</sup>

At first, as a tactical move, the feeling of patriotism, which is taken to be identical to nationalism, is to be co-opted and used for a general mobilisation of as broad a spectrum of the population as possible: "Only when all fellow countrymen who love their country and people unite firmly in a body and set out to build the country, irrespective of political views, religious beliefs, property status and standards of learning, will the complete independence and sovereignty of the country be achieved." <sup>14</sup> From 1927 to 1931, says C.S. Lee, "nationalists and communists were united under the banner of 'Shinganhoe'." <sup>15</sup> In May 1936 Kim Il Sung founded the Association for the Restoration of the Fatherland. But the apparent democratic base of Kim Il Sung is only a tactical ploy; his totalitarian ideology

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in effect demands that "the working class have no other idea than Marxist-Leninist ideology." <sup>16</sup>

This ideology, as is characteristic of all Leninist revolutionary movements, strives to achieve national liberation through armed struggle. <sup>17</sup> North Korean communism also co-opted in 1928 the ideology of Eyuldan, according to which "the methods to achieve independence in Korea lie neither in the war nor in the diplomacy, but in the incessant terrorism, destruction, strangling and riots... by the 'do-or-die' spirit and power of bombs." <sup>18</sup> Il-Chul contends that the Korean communists jettisoned the anarchistic propensity of the Eyuldan ideology in their revolutionary strategy. Events have proven since that terrorism has not been ruled out as a revolutionary option in the armed struggle against what Kim Il Sung calls "imperialist lackeys."

The surrender of Japan in 1945, while ending the occupation of Korea, did not, however, terminate the inimical positions of the People's Republic of North Korea vis-a-vis the Republic of Korea in the South. It would appear that North Korea has not quite given up the prospect of uniting Korea by the force of arms, as it tried to do during the Korean War of 1950-1953. The situation in Korea remains polarised, with seemingly irreconcilable ideologies competing for the reunification of Korea. At the 38th parallel that divides North from South Korea is to be found, next to the forces mobilized for the Gulf War, one of the largest concentration of military forces in the world (1.7 million soldiers). To Il-Chul Shin, Korea, after being

subjugated for full 40 years by Japanese imperialism, is presently caught in the last but dangerous trammels of the ideological confrontation of the Cold War. "Korea is forced... by the world powers to comply to their policy of putting cold war ideology ahead of nationalism ideology and unexpectedly to stand as the vanguard of international cold war confrontation." 19

The election of Korea

"God will guide and shield our country  
For ten thousand years." (Korean hymn)

Korea's recent history, particularly the traumas of the Japanese occupation, of the Second World War, the Korean War and the constant threat under which the population live may have contributed to the eschatological climate and chiliastic psyche of millennialist Koreans. The official Handbook of Korea notes the emergence of new religions in times of social instability and remarks that some of them espouse the veneration of a divine leader or savior.

Some of these persons are still alive and active; some are legendary figures such as Tan-gun; and others have been martyred, like Ch'oe; or have left this world, at least, after delivering their revelation. A few of the sects are ultra-nationalistic and proclaim that Korea will be the next great world empire, that Korean is the coming world language, and that a Korean will be sent as the divinely appointed savior of all mankind.

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The new religions have gradually become accepted, with some becoming well-established (Ch'ondogyo, Wŏnbulgyo, Taejongyo, the Unification Church, etc.)

It would appear that the Unification Church is one of the more prominent present-day millennial movements with a specific

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doctrine of election, more specifically of Korea as the nation chosen by God to realize world unity.

The election of Korea is derived from the interpretation and application of the theology of the Divine Principle (DP), the essential scripture of the Unification Church. The doctrine of election does not seem to constitute as central a part of the belief system as, for example, the Principle of Creation, which is the core of the "revealed truth." It does not appear to be a prominent article of faith as say, the Unification christology. It seems to be rather a logical culmination of the Unification theory of history and a corollary to the fact that the prophetic figure and truth-bearer of the Unification movement, the Reverend Sun Myung Moon, happens to be Korean. Nowhere is there, as in the covenantal sayings of the Old Testament, specific record that God said He had chosen Korea the way He chose Israel. It would appear that the election of Korea is conditional upon its fulfilling certain prophetic, messianic expectations.

The Unification Ideology, as expressed in the Divine Principle, contends that Korea has become the chosen nation partly by default. Building on the foundation of Christianity, Korea has in effect inherited the providential mandate of ancient Israel, the nation chosen at the beginning of human history to be the central instrument of God's Providence. To properly understand the election of Korea, it is necessary to grasp the Unification interpretation of the circumstances that led to the election Israel.

## The first Israel

The election of Israel is seen within the larger context of Providential History which posits that there was a falling away from God by the original parents of humankind, the Adam and Eve of the Old Testament. Prompted by compassion, God began His work of Restoration in Adam's family through Adam's progeny, Cain and Abel. God called a people from among the descendants of Noah and Abraham and sealed a covenant with them. Thus with Jacob, Israel was born. The status of chosen people is accorded conditionally to Israel out of gratuitous love. It is worthy of note that God condescended to a Covenant with His people not because of a special distinction that set the nation apart.<sup>21</sup> The primary considerations seem to be those of lineage and a condition of absolute devotion and obedience to the monotheistic God.

Tribulations and trials -- indemnity in Unification theology -- have since become an integral component of the privilege of being chosen and explain the theology of suffering, exile and return to a promised land. Other considerations are a sense of manifest destiny, respect for the Law and tradition, homogeneity of race, a proclivity towards apartheid, a special history, a singular cultural heritage deriving from religious rituals handed down as hallowed traditions, the inexorable struggle for deliverance from bondage and exile led by a prophetic or messianic figure, the quest for a promised land.

Furthermore, in the case of ancient Israel, the preservation



of racial purity made of intermarriage with heathens an abomination, an act of immorality as well as one of idolatry. A moral restriction was extended to become a racial law. But the triumphant nationalism of ancient Israel is transformed with defeat and the *Galut* (Diaspora).

The demise of ancient Israel is essentially due to the fact that the holy nation set aside to receive the Christ failed to recognise the time of the visitation of the Messiah in the person of Jesus. Unificationism uses a particular exegesis of Matthew 21:33-43 to bolster this argument: the landlord of the vineyard in the passage mentioned is God Himself, the Son finally sent as the last messenger is Jesus and the tenants who kill him are the Jews (DP, 517). There are passages in the Divine Principle to which Jews have taken exception because of their anti-Semitic flavor. Without stigmatising Jews as deicides and discriminating against them, the Divine Principle does indicate that the diaspora and the subsequent tribulations of the Jews are forms of "indemnity" for the sin of not accepting Jesus as the Christ.

Through the Second to the Third Israel

The failure of ancient Israel caused the Providence to shift westward through Christianity, building upon the geopolitical structures of the Roman Empire (DP, 407, 518-519). Several nations in the modern era have vied for the claim to inherit the mandate of ancient Israel. The more important ones are France, which aspires to be "la fille aînée de l'Eglise" (the eldest daughter of the Church), England, heir to the Reformation,



the United States, nation which claims a manifest destiny too. It would appear that, notwithstanding the claim of Mazzini about his own nation,<sup>22</sup> Germany rather than Italy, partly because of the corruption of the medieval church and of the papal institution in Rome, became the "new people of God's elect in Western Europe" (DP, 411). The failure of Italy also goes back, according to the Divine Principle, to the disunity between the temporal and the spiritual orders, the division between Pope Leo and Charlemagne at the beginning of the 9th century. This had been foreordained by the failure of Cain and Abel to unite in Adam's family and later in the Old Testament, because of the separation of the Kingdom of Israel and the Kingdom of Judah due to idolatry. Something of the Germanic mandate was salvaged at the Protestant Reformation when Martin Luther challenged the monopoly of the Catholic Church on God's Word and placed the vernacular Bible in the hands of the laity. Christianity continued its westward movement from mainland Europe, through England to the United States of America, and from America missionaries took protestant Christianity to Korea at the end of the 18th century (See above page 4).

The chosen nation had to be a Christian nation from the East (DP, 519) to fulfil the biblical prophecy (Rev. 5:1, 7; 6:1) that it is from the land of the rising sun that would arise the supernatural power to open the seal of the Book of Life (Rev. 7:2-4). The nation from the East is Korea because China disqualifies itself for being a communist country (since communism denies the existence of God) and because Japan

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disqualified herself for 3 reasons: firstly for the worship of Amaterasuomikami, which is a form of idolatry, secondly for having been a totalitarian nation and thirdly for having persecuted Korea, especially during the 40 years from 1905-1945.

The Divine Principle ideology of the chosen nation also capitalises on the feelings of resentment that domination by Japan has generated:

Under what circumstances did the Korean people come to suffer the 40-year slavery under the Japanese Empire? Japan's imperialistic and aggressive control of Korea was extended according to the "Eul-sa treaty of Protection," which was a treaty committing Korea's entire diplomatic rights to the care of the Foreign Affairs Ministry of the Japanese Empire, and which was concluded in 1905 between Hiro-humi of Japan and Wan Yong Lee of Korea, a pro-Japanese Minister of Education at that time. Japan, in fact, deprived Korea of rights in all fields, such as politics, diplomacy and economics, by interfering with the entire domestic administration, through the governor and secretaries whom the Japanese placed in every district (DP, 522).

Japan is further blamed for the killing of Queen Min, for the massacre of Koreans in Tokyo in 1923, and for blaming resident Koreans for the Kanto earthquake of that year, thus forcing many Koreans to migrate to Manchuria (DP, 522).

The Unification theory of the chosen nation, inscribed as it is in a comprehensive theory of history, possesses a sophisticated numerology that allows a realistic as well as a symbolic interpretation of events. One example is the significance of the number 40. The number 40 here is significant in that it contains the number 4, which is the 4-position foundation constituting the four members of the family paradigm of human society and ultimately of the Kingdom of Heaven: God,

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father, mother and child. This number was lost to Satan, the rival of God, at the fall of Man, when, the Divine Principle contends, the original family unit was perverted. The number 40 in Unification ideology is associated with the cosmic confrontation between good and evil, with the condition of indemnity to separate individuals and societies from Satan. Just as ancient Israel spent 400 years of slavery in Egypt, just as Christians were persecuted for 400 years under Rome, so Korea endured vicarious suffering under Japanese rule for 40 years to establish a world-wide foundation of indemnity (DP, 521).

Further, the reader is reminded that the ideology of Korea being the chosen nation is inscribed within the much larger context of a comprehensive worldview claiming to be grounded in divine Revelation. Thus the election of Korea is approximated to the covenantal principle governing the supernatural election of Israel through Abraham, confirmed by Moses and the prophets of the Old Testament. Under these circumstances, the events associated with the chosen nation acquire, in addition to their immediate worldly relevance, a significance of supernatural dimension. The division of Korea into North and South at the 38th parallel -- repeating the vertical division of ancient Israel between North and South and the horizontal division of Germany between East and West -- transcends the purely geopolitical consideration to attain a symbolic and providential meaning: beyond the confrontation of the two systems of democracy and communism, there is the spiritual battle between eternal life and death, the culmination of the archetypal

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Abel/Cain struggle of the Old Testament; we are at the frontline of the cosmic, almost manichaen conflict between God and Satan (DP, 524-525).

The paradox here is that the tribulation of the chosen nation is at the same time deplorable indemnity as well as the necessary condition for the nation to be the chosen object of God's heart.

How can we expect to be comfortable and complacent as children walking the path of filial piety and loyalty as the object of the parental heart in such grief? The nation that can receive the Messiah must walk the way of blood, sweat and tears, because its people must become children of filial piety by standing as the object of God's sorrowful heart. Since the First Israel walked the path of tribulation, the Second Israel did the same. The Korean people also, as the Third Israel, must necessarily walk the same path. The historical course of untold misery, which the Korean people have gone through, was the necessary way for them to walk as the people of God's elect. As a result, the path of affliction has led the Korean people to a great blessedness (DP, 526).

For this providential mandate then, the argument goes, the Korean people, like the Jews of ancient Israel, have been prepared historically, as a foreordained alternative should the originally chosen nation of Israel fail in its mandate. The Koreans constitute a "people of homogeneous lineage," (DP, 526), peace-loving, of a strong religious disposition. There is in their national character, partly because of their Confucian heritage, a high regard for such values as loyalty, filial piety and virtue, characteristics predisposing them to singular obedience to the will of God.

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Furthermore, this is a nation with prophecies concerning the advent of the Millennium through the king of Righteousness, Chung-Do Ryung, as is explained in the book of prophecy Chung Gam Nok. The Divine Principle claims that "countless men of religion are receiving very clear revelations concerning the Lord's Second Coming in Korea" (DP, 529). And by a complex interpretation of the historical movement of cultures, it is argued that after moving from continental Egypt to the peninsular countries of Greece, Rome and Iberia, civilisation moved through the insular country of England to the continent of America. Civilisation then moved eastward to the island of Japan and now is finally destined to bear fruit at the consummation of history in the peninsular culture of Korea, the nation called to initiate the New Age. There are further explanations about the movement of civilisation along rivers and seas, as well as parallels between the succession of seasons and that of cultures and civilisations (See DP, pp.531-532). It suffices that we summarize here the main points advanced by the Divine Principle to make of Korea the chosen nation of this age.

#### From Chosen Nation to Global Community

In the Unification doctrine of chosenness, a significant distinction is made between pre-ordained election and actual consecration. Ancient Israel was chosen but was not consecrated because it failed to recognize and accept the Messiah in the person of Jesus. In the same way, Korea as the chosen nation has to realize its providential mandate in order to pass from the realm of being the potential chosen nation to actually being the

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chosen nation. Two considerations stand out in assessing the validity of the claims of chosenness for Korea. Firstly, as intimated above, the chosen nation is the one God uses at the consummation of human history to save the whole world and realize His original ideal to build the unified human family. But God can achieve this aim only through the Messiah. It follows as a corollary -- and this is the second consideration in determining the election of a nation -- that the primary criterion, from the Unification perspective at least, that determines the chosen nation is the acceptance of the Messiah. It is outside the scope of this paper to verify the claims concerning the messiahship of the Reverend Sun Myung Moon and assess the degree to which he is now being accepted as the Lord of the Second Advent in Korea and elsewhere. However, if the claim of Korean chosenness cannot be satisfactorily verified on the basis of acceptance of the Reverend Moon as the Messiah, it is possible to examine objectively the principle and strategy by which the global community is to be realized, starting with Korea as the chosen nation.

The first key principle Unificationism advances as a foundation for unity is the commonalty of origin of humankind. It is imperative that God be recognized as the common universal parent and all human beings as His children. The Unification doctrine of resemblance ascribes to each and every single individual the dignity of being a child of God, especially created in God's image and likeness to be the object of His love. Our human nature is ontologically one. We are all human beings



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with mind and body, created for the same purpose and thus with the same ultimate destiny. However, each one of us is uniquely endowed by God with individual characteristics, allowing for the richness of diversity, multiplying in this way the joy each of us can give to God and to each other. Every single person is called to realize his/her individual purpose within the larger context of the purpose of the whole.

The first strategic task, then, is the unremitting proclamation of the Word of God as embodied in the Divine Principle and its complement Unification Thought which are the essential Unification Scriptures delineating the fundamental and comprehensive ideology for the creation of the world community. It would appear that the initial main thrust of the Unification strategy is the raising of consciousness through ideological conversion. Its epistemology is here of crucial importance because it advocates that revealed knowledge has the power to transform human nature and enlist militant commitment.

The word of God thus inspires a powerful vision of the future society and there is a universal call to participate in the creation of the global community -- which is often understood in Unificationism as the Kingdom of God. The overt and unabashed goal is to mobilize, transform, restore and recreate the whole of society, the people as well as the institutions that compose it. There are, understandably, different degrees of commitment: from radical conversion leading to core membership of the Unification Church to the academic or professional support of individuals who

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share in the vision and the goals of the Unification Movement. The academic community, for example, is perceived as already constituting an international community transcendent of parochial loyalties, a scientific "brotherhood" committed to truth that can therefore be solicited to apply knowledge for the resolution of problems and the betterment of the human condition. Science is thus re-invested with the moral purpose it ought always to have as another privileged instrument for kingdom-building.

It is the contention of Unificationism that the undertaking to build this new society is inherent in the movement of History. History is moving simultaneously towards cultural pluralism and cultural unity. The principle of Give and Take, which is another central principle in Unification teaching, suggests a dialectical relationship running through all existing entities, a relationship that also governs the movement of cultures. In the marxist interpretation of Hegelian dialectics, conflict is axiomatic to all forms of existence; conflict is permanent and unity is a temporary moment in human affairs. Unificationism, for its part, argues that both competition and co-operation are at work in the shaping of history and that, co-operation, in fact, is a more fundamental condition for progress than conflict. So, out of the natural competition of cultures, a synthesis of the most viable elements will emerge, a process of mutual enrichment entailing both differentiation and integration.

Beyond a simplistic synthesis, however, one discerns a process of reconception that builds on the absolute values inherent in different cultures.<sup>23</sup> All cultures are perceived as



(322)

having a religious foundation containing to different degrees the absolute values of God's Love, Truth, Beauty and Goodness. Thus Unificationism, as the ideology of the new age, claims to embody and transcend the values contained in the individual cultures that have shaped human civilization. Cultural unity is to be achieved therefore not by displacement, or by synthesis or integration alone but by a process of reconception based on God's revealed Truth and the practice of agape love.

Another major practice that assists in the cultural unity of the global community is the deliberate Unification promotion of international intermarriages. These marriages have given rise to a lot of controversy because they are arranged marriages. They do, however, have the potential to foster cultural unity. There is no doubt that they also have far-reaching political, ethnic and sociological implications. The main goal is that couples of different nationalities transcend in mixed marriages the historical differences that have divided their nations and their races. What generally binds such a family together is a common commitment to serve God as understood through the Divine Principle, and loyalty to the Reverend Moon and Mrs. Moon accepted as the common spiritual parents. The implicit assumption is that children born of international and interracial marriages are more likely to overcome racial barriers when brought up by God-centered parents of international backgrounds. There are deeper spiritual and providential dimensions to these marriages that lie outside the scope of this paper. Suffice it to provide the reader with some of the major ideological and

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strategic premises undergirding the Unification claim that Korea is the nation chosen by God to take society beyond nationalism and chauvinism to the cosmopolitanism of the future global community.

### Conclusion

The notion of being a chosen nation is eminently a religious one and is grounded in a broader ideology that generally draws from the scriptures shaping the worldview of the nation concerned as well as from its cultural and historical tradition. As such, the claims made by the chosen nation are simultaneously rational and empirical, suprarational and mythical. The conviction of being chosen can become the equivalent of an article of faith and serve to strengthen the spirit of a people and enable them to endure great hardships in the course of nation-building. The idea of being chosen can also give rise to a form of apartheid, an elitism that may have tragic consequences when nations compete for limited space and resources.

The idea of being chosen by divine covenant in the recorded scriptures, the Torah in the case of ancient Israel, seems to lend greater credibility to the religious dimension of chosenness. The Jews are assigned a mandate in the world while constantly being reminded of the transcendent, supernatural origin of that mandate. The Jews were the chosen people because Jehovah so decided. It would appear, however, that, from the Unification perspective, Israel adopted too narrow an

interpretation of the idea of chosenness. Separatedness became as a consequence a doctrine that has determined ever since the relationship of Jews with other peoples of the world. Hence the paradox of having as a holy nation to bear witness to the world but not to mix with the world; hence the restrictions about intermarriage and the hesitation about proselytising. Unificationism contends that when nationhood degenerated into xenophobic nationalism, Israel missed its providential mandate.

In the case of Korea, the present writer has found scant evidence, outside the scripture and the doctrine of the Unification Church, that the land of the morning calm is the chosen nation. The election of Korea has grounding, it is true, in mythical, cultural, historical and ethnic considerations. The actual process of nation-building is as recent as the end of the 19th century. The three main components in operation initially are: 1) the need to change the corrupt and decadent Yi dynasty, 2) modernisation due to contact with western powers and Japanese colonisation, 3) a politics of resistance to colonial power. An important later factor is Communism in North Korea which seeks to co-opt nationalism and integrate it into the Marxist-Leninist strategy for hegemony over the whole peninsula.

The case for the election of Korea, while remaining more a matter of faith for the members of the Unification Church, rests more convincingly in the ideological content of the Unification teaching. There is no serious indication as yet that the Korean population at large, let alone the other peoples of the world,

L.R.

subscribe to the belief that Korea is God's chosen nation for this age. It will require more than the doctrinal statements contained in the book the Divine Principle to make of Korea the chosen and consecrated nation. As the saying goes, we recognise the goodness of a tree by its fruits.

The onus of making of Korea the chosen nation seems to lie to a large extent, therefore, with the core elite of the Unification Church and with the second generation who have indicated in the questionnaire submitted to them (See the Appendix attached) that they do possess a sense of divine mission. There remains the formidable task of converting the whole Korean people -- presently so keen on ethnic homogeneity, with a propensity towards xenophobic nationalism, and also prone to materialism -- that it has indeed a providential world-wide mandate. There is also the vexing question of the reunification of North and South Korea, to which Unificationism may bring novel propositions transcending the seemingly stalemated negotiations between the rival contenders and their outdated ideologies. After all, the reunification of Korea is a decisive factor in determining the consecration of Korea as stipulated in the Divine Principle itself. Perhaps these very challenges are integral to the making of the chosen nation.

It would appear that, in its cunning, or in accord with providential plan, history has once again brought together in modern Korea all the essential ingredients of millennial, messianic expectations. Will the "chosen nation" fulfil these expectations this time around or are we witnessing yet another

instance of the tragic paradox that has marked the birth and growth of nationalism elsewhere throughout the course of history? This drama, fraught with many a pitfall and with many vicissitudes, is being acted out right now. The final word is best left to the verdict of events at the bar of history.

#### Notes

1. Il-chul Shin, "National Views of March 1 Independence Movement," in Nationalism in Korea, p. 275.

2. Ibid., pp. 232-233.

See also Encyclopaedia Britannica, Vol. 10, 1974, p. 531.

3. Ho-min Yang, "Interplay of Nationalism and Socialism in Korea," in Nationalism in Korea, op. cit., p. 82.

4. Lee Ki-Baek, "Dialogue, the Development Process of Korean National Thoughts," Korean Thought, pp. 143-144.

5. Ibid., p. 146.

6. Chong-sik Lee, The Politics of Korean Nationalism, p. 125.

7. Il-chul Shin, op. cit., 252.

8. Woo-Keun Han, "Perspective of Korean History," in Nationalism in Korea, op. cit., p. 76.

9. Duk-yu Chin, "Nationalistic Understanding of Legitimacy in the Political system," Nationalism in Korea, op. cit., p. 201.

See also Chong-sik Lee, The Politics of Korean Nationalism, p. 278.

10. Kim Il Sung, Works, Vol. I, p. 159, p. 257.

11. Ibid., p. 166.

12. Ibid., p. 296.

13. Frontispiece introduction to the Works of Kim Il Sung, Vol. II.

14. Kim Il Sung, Works, Vol. I, p. 256.

15. Chong-sik Lee, The Politics of Korean Nationalism, op. cit.,

p. 250.

16. Kim Il Sung, Works, Vol. I., p. 279.

17. Ibid., p. 149.

18. Il-chul Shin, op. cit., p. 290.

19. Ibid., p. 290.

20. A Handbook of Korea, p. 142.

21. The ethnologist Heymann Steinthall is reported to have remarked, on the chosenness of Israel: " We call ourselves the chosen people, not in order to indicate the height on which we stand or ever stood, not in order to appear superior to our fellow men, but in order constantly to visualise the chasm separating our reality from the ideal tasks of our morality." quoted in Salo Wittmayer Baron, Modern Nationalism and Religion, p. 222.

22. "Italy is the chosen nation," Mazzini is reported to have said, "the typical people, the creative people, the Israel of the modern age." Quoted in the article on "Nationalism," in Dictionary of Modern Political Ideologies, p. 157.

23. See the chapter on "Axiology" in S.H. Lee's Explaining Unification Thought, pp. 199-212.

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Encyclopedia Britannica, Vol. 10, Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica Inc., 1974, p. 531.

C9 L.R

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## Appendix

A survey among a pilot group of 175 students of the Unification Church' Sung Hwa University reveals the paradox surrounding the question of chosenness and nationalism. While 66% declare themselves to be nationalistic, 85% describe themselves as patriotic. It is also significant that a good 56% say that nationalism should not be encouraged. The suggestion is that it is necessary and legitimate to love one's country (patriotism) while aspiring to go beyond xenophobic nationalism. Korea is in a stage of transition and ought to get its own house in order first (say 46% of the students), before helping other countries (41%).

The nationalism demonstrated is still colored by feelings of resentment against Japanese occupation of the fatherland (81%). The possible inferiority complex that may linger from having been dominated by the Japanese is balanced with the strong conviction that Korea is an emerging world power, with a significant contribution to make to world civilisation (81.7%). North Koreans are considered as fellow Koreans, borders should be opened between the two countries and reunification take place soon with liberal democracy as the political system and "Godism" (another term for Divine Principle) as ideology. The traditional privileged relationship with China ought to be maintained, despite the fact that China is still a communist country. This is possibly because of the cultural affinity that has characterised the historical relationship between China and Korea. The evidence suggests an emerging geopolitical and economic configuration of interests among Korea, China and Japan, with America being a partner of lesser influence as the movement of civilisation shifts from West to East to shape a new Pacific civilisation.

The reader is reminded that these are the sentiments of a select group of young Koreans, the second generation of the elite constituting the core of the "chosen nation." What is also significant here, however, is that, more in accord with chosen Germany than chosen ancient Israel, the nationalism of the "chosen" Koreans seems to be a stage in global internationalism, built around the race, culture and tradition of historical Korea and the new ideology of "Godism." It aims at reconciling and transcending the East/West axial confrontation in the resolution of the North Korea/South Korea division. If the Korean race is chosen, it is only in order to constitute the foundation of the new society from which, through intermarriage and ideological conversion, the privileges of the chosen are extended to the human family at large. In this, the group studied goes against the prevailing ethnocentrism of the Korean community: 54.1% say they are for intermarriage, 37.6% are against; 68.8% of the group declare that their parents are likely to agree to their marrying a foreigner while 65.3% affirm that the community will disapprove of such marriages.



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There is a sense in which the group ascribes to itself a pioneering mandate: the most popular career envisaged is that of missionary (33), with educator (20) being second, college professor (14) third and religious minister (12) fourth. This is no inwardlooking sect but a religious group with a proselytising mandate quite different from orthodox Judaism which does not actively seek converts or from hitlerite Germany's forceful expansionism. The group aspires to recuperate the same missionary zeal of the early Christians, appropriating to itself the Great Commission given the disciples of Jesus to take the gospel to the whole world (Matt. 28:19-20).

In the group studied, all except 2 have a favourite hero or heroine whose qualities they want to emulate. Predominant among the virtues listed are: patriotism, a capacity for sacrifice or self-sacrifice, and altruistic love. The immediate model is, not surprisingly, the charismatic figure of the Reverend Moon himself who is also father figure and Mosaic leader, displacing all other pretenders to the title of founding father of the nation, to which, of course, Kim Il Sung, the North Korean leader, is totally disqualified.