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What is so "Irregular" About it?

DAVID KWANG-SUN SUH

Paul S. Chung. *Constructing Irregular Theology: Bamboo and Minjung in East Asian Perspective*. Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2009. x + 226 pp., €93, US $132, ISBN 9789004174177.

THEOLOGICAL CONTEXT OF THE BOOK

It is no news that another book on inter-religious dialogue came out in the globalized, multi-cultural and religious world of ours. Since the ancient time of *Pax Romana*, St. Paul had to deal with other religions, struggling to articulate the Christian gospel to the Greco-Roman world. In the sixteenth-century China Matteo Ricci, a Jesuit missionary, had to learn the Chinese language and philosophy to communicate the Christian gospel. Since the time of Columbus and subsequent Western imperial expansion in Asia, Latin America, and Africa, Christian missionaries had to learn the native languages to preach the Christian gospel and translate the Bible, but did not know what to do with the local religions. In most cases, with only a few exceptions, missionaries ignored the local religions and religious practices, and ordered the native con-

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verts to destroy all pagan images and idols before coming to church for baptism.

This was not just a problem of missionaries, but also a troubling issue for the native converts. In most cases, the new believers of Christian faith followed the exclusive teachings. They were warned that all other religions are "idol" religions and therefore new Christian believers should not break the first three Commandments. In this kind of self-righteous, self-centred and religiously-chauvinistic cultural-religious-social context, Christian engagement with other native religions was condemned as heretical and anathema. In spite of this missionary relationship with other religions, a few notable Christian theologians raised dissenting voice against religious exclusivism of Christian fundamentalism.

Following the tradition of St. Paul in Rome and Matteo Ricci in China, some Western theologians, such as Paul Tillich, Hans Küng, John Macquarie, John Hick, John Cobb, and Paul Knitter, began proposing inter-religious dialogue and engagement. Some of them have been named as "inclusivists" and others "pluralists." Christian theologians who are "friendly" to other religions such as Buddhism, Confucianism, Daoism, Hinduism, and Shamanism in the East Asian world and Islam in the southern hemisphere belong to the school of "inclusivism" or "pluralism."

However, the perspective of Western Christian theologians is limited to that of "enlightened" missionaries—learning the other religions and religious others with awe and surprise. It could be a "Christian response" to other religions; it could be a critical engagement to show the uniqueness of Christian salvation; it could be an objective and comparative study of world religions to show the superiority of Western Christian belief system. But some of these theologians seriously and sincerely want to engage in dialogue with other religions and religious others with an open mind to transform and to be transformed. John Cobb, for example, wanted to go beyond dialogue. Paul Knitter confessed that he could not be a Christian without Buddha, calling himself either "a Christian Buddhist" or "a Buddhist Christian."

As the global village is becoming "smaller" with modern transportation and communication technology as well as greater mobility of population, the people in the Christian world cannot ignore the existence of other religions and different cultures. As the people in the Christian West learned how to use chopsticks to pick up *sushi* and *sashimi* raw fish, and how to enjoy Chinese *chowmein* and Korean *kimchi*, they cannot help but hear about Buddha, Confucius, and different

customs and rituals which are totally different from their own religion. The church goers in the Western world, as they notice faces of different colours among their congregations, might have felt that missionaries all around the world have been so successful that the entire world has been Christianized. However, they would also be puzzled by the fact that more and more Buddhist temples and Muslim mosques have been erected in the neighbourhood.

The reality that we are facing in today's globalized or globalizing world is that there are religions other than Christianity, and Christianity is not a dominant religion: it is only one among many religions. And the Christians are a small minority in Asia with the exception of Philippines and South Korea. The Christian theologians have to answer questions about other religions: the questions no longer come from the mission field, but from within the local congregations of missionary-sending churches in the West.

While articulating the relationship between Christianity and other religions, the Christian theologians recommended a double attitude of *commitment* and *openness*. That is, being faithful and loyal to one's own religion, Christian faith, while being open to learn other religions. Some of them suggested that learning other religions is like learning other languages. Learning a language other than your own makes it not only possible to communicate with other people, but to appreciate your own language and make good use of your own. Then what about evangelism and conversion? Do we, as Christians, not need to evangelize people of other faith? It is a hard and honest missionary question, as a Christian comes to recognize the integrity and truth in a neighbour's faith and belief. John Cobb's answer to this question is enlightening: He says that it is all right to talk about your own religion with those who are not too sure about their religious faith; it is all right to tell those struggling Buddhists about Christian faith for considering to convert to Christian faith; and it is good, too, to tell a Buddhist about the Buddhist truth, so that he or she could become a true Buddhist. Cobb goes even farther to tell the Christians that in the process of dialogue, one religion could transform and be transformed by other religions. This means that religions can change and develop by mutual respect, dialogue, and engagement.

BIOGRAPHICAL CONTEXT

In Asia, particularly among Asian theologians, there have been scholars and preachers who came from Buddhist or Confucian background but had to preach and teach the strange, new religion of Christianity. They had to translate the Christian Bible into Asian languages characterized by lots of Asian religious concepts, idioms, and meanings. For example, Matteo Ricci named the Christian God in Chinese as *Tien-tju* (天主 *Tianzhu*), which means "the Lord of Heaven," and later Chinese Christians used the term *Shian-te* (上帝 *Shangdi*) which means "High King." And St. John's "logos" or "Word" was translated into *Dao* 道 which means "the Way."

Newly ordained native preachers had to explain and teach Christian faith and doctrines using not only the native language and translated scriptures, but also native religious terms and concepts of Confucianism and Buddhism as well as Daoism. Christian love or agape may have to be translated and explained in terms of Buddhist compassion (*cibei* 慈悲) or Confucian humanity (*ren* 仁), just to give a few examples. This was not a strange way of doing theology in the Western world. The first Christians and evangelists had to use Jewish scriptures adopting the Hebrew Bible as Christian Bible and to use Greco-Roman philosophical terms and concepts to explain the incarnation of Jesus Christ. In the process, one cannot help but recognize the historical fact that Christian faith and belief system is a product of constant dialogue and engagement with the linguistic, philosophical as well as intellectual world. All belief systems of Christianity are products of cultural and intellectual context of the time. Therefore, all Christian theologies are *contextual* theologies. Furthermore, Christian religion is syncretic as all other religions are.

This is the biographical context in which Asian Christian theologians are doing theology with constant challenges and engagements with other religions, ideologies, and cultures. Asian Christian theologians are thrown into a situation where they have to engage with other religious believers and religious others, even when they present the uniqueness and superiority of Christianity. In this situation, since the 1960's a number of Asian theologians have engaged with Asian religions sometimes in the name of "theology of indigenization," or "theology of inculturization." "Indigenization" was expressed in Chinese as "putting into soil" (*tuzhehua* 土着化), that is, to put the seed of the

Christian gospel into a native cultural soil so as to cultivate a Christianity that fits the cultural climate. The final produce could be "Chinese Christianity" or "Korean Christianity," but not particularly "Christianity in China" or "Christianity in Korea."

Asian theologians of indigenization, particularly Korean theologians, began talking about a theology of indigenization by suggesting Korean Christians to study and being mindful of Korean traditional religions such as Shamanism, Buddhism, and Confucianism, in order to appreciate the uniqueness and finality of the Christian gospel. There was no seemingly radical attempt to raise an issue of syncretism or religious relativism on the part of early indigenization theologians such as Ryu Dong-shik and Yun Sung-bum of Methodist Theological Seminary. Their attempt was to tell Korean Christians that we should know something about the Korean religious soil in which the gospel seed has been planted. However, another Methodist theologian, Byun Sun-whan, who was president of the seminary and studied Korean and Japanese Buddhism in Basel, was condemned by the Methodist bishops as heretic when he only quoted Hans Küng: "There is room for salvation in other religions." Being "excommunicated" by Korean Methodist Church from his presidency and priesthood, Byun was condemned as postmodern, pluralist, and relativist denying the finality and uniqueness of Christianity.

Against this theological-intellectual background, a Korean American theologian, Paul S. Chung (middle initial stands for Seung-hoon), published this book on inter-religious and intercultural understanding and dialogue. The author was born in a Korean theological world where indigenization theology was vehemently debated and condemned by the mainline church authorities: He began his theological career in Han Shin Theological Seminary of which the theological orientation was known to be Barthian line of liberal theology. The founder of the seminary, Kim Jae-joon, was condemned as heretic by the Presbyterian Church as early as in 1953 because he, as an Old Testament scholar, had taught historical-critical method. While the author was a student there, he studied under Kim Kyung-jae, another notable indigenization theologian. After Basel, Swiss and GTU, Berkeley, California, where he met C. S. Song, he is now teaching theology as associate professor of global mission and world Christianity at Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota, USA.

THEOLOGICAL AUDACITY

In this book, he claims himself as a "contextual theologian," situating himself in East Asian multi-religious context with postmodern philosophical and postcolonial liberationist world views. This means that his construction of irregular Asian theology does not only aim at inter-religious dialogue and engagement with Asian religions, but also interpreting Asian, particularly Korean, socio-political context in which Korean *minjung* theology was born, although his book deals with it in only one short chapter (Chapter VII; he needs to write another book on this). In this book, which advocates mainly inter-religious understanding and engagement, it is interesting to see a chapter on the theory of evolution which was put in the context of the Christian creator God and Buddhist *Sunyata* (Chapter VI). He may have to expand this chapter in another book, and it may take another full review on this interesting chapter. But to put it rather simply and bravely, he argues that there is no conflict between evolution and Buddhism or Christian understanding of God the Creator. So the author is extending his hermeneutical horizon from Christian theology to socio-political issues of *minjung* (Korean word naming politically oppressed, economically exploited, and socially alienated people) and to modern scientific hypothesis of evolution.

The author is *first of all*, a contextual theologian who engages his theology with the contemporary intellectual, religious, cultural, political, and social context of Asia. *Secondly*, he is in company with other Asian theologians who have been grappling with doing "Asian theologies" rather than introducing and translating Western masters and theological teachers. "Consequently," he pronounces, "one must bid farewell to a Eurocentric or North American paradigm."[1] And "[i]n relationship with other religions the Eurocentric and/or North American character of Christian theology does not suffice for coping with the uniqueness and challenge of an emerging world Christianity and theology."[2] Therefore, *thirdly*, he is doing an Asian theology, using Asian paradigm of "a Christian irregular theology in the cross-cultural perspective of 'bamboo and *minjung*'" which "sounds strange, provoca-

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[1] Chung, *Constructing Irregular Theology*, 1.

[2] Ibid.

tive, and controversial to Western systematic and confessional theology."[3] And *fourthly*, he puts his irregular theology in an intellectual and philosophical world of postmodernism and post-colonialism, as he puts it: "A Postmodern suspicion of the universal narrative of human reason, or in other words 'incredulity toward meta-narratives' (Jean-Francois Lyotard) functions as a synchronic hermeneutic of doubt and refusal."[4]

In an Asian sense, as an Asian himself, he announces his constructive theology as "irregular" and "audacious." "In the framework of Asian irregular theology, hermeneutic of audacity, resistance, and retrieval for encounter, fusion and transformation among world religions is at play."[5] His theological task will contribute to the world peace, as he claims that "[i]ts task involves challenging a society haunted by religious violence, scientific empiricism and the colonization of our life-world."[6] His audience is not limited to Asian Christians situated in the multi-cultural and diverse religious traditions, but also includes Western Christians who must face the challenges of world religions and religious others who claim cultural as well as political independence and liberation "from the iron cage of global civilization and empire."[7]

"IRREGULAR" THEOLOGY IN THE "OTHER" LANGUAGES

Picking up this book for the first time, a reader would raise her/his eyebrows on the title: *Constructing Irregular Theology*. And one would question: What is so *irregular* about his theology? Or how can one do a theology of *irregularity*? Is he claiming that he is doing an "unorthodox" and even a "heretical theology"? Or at least is he doing an Asian theology of religions, not Eurocentric and/or North American "regular" theology? If "regular theology" is based on the biblical language, then his "irregular" theology may be framed in "extra-biblical" languages of Asian religions. The word "irregular" catches a theological attention.

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[3] Ibid., vii.
[4] Ibid., 1.
[5] Ibid., viii.
[6] Ibid.
[7] Ibid.

The author answers this question in his introduction and throughout the book:

> It is certain that extra-biblical words of God and intra-textuality are not in contradiction, rather complementarity. Interpretive theory in an Asian Christian sense is grounded on dynamic irregularity of God's act of speech which is heard in classics of East Asian philosophy and religions as well as from the reality of those who are marginalized and voiceless in the world of religions.[8]

This methodological announcement can be read as saying that God's speech act is not limited to the Christian canons: If God speaks to all the people around the world, and incarnates and manifests Godself in the world, God's speech acts and politics are not limited in the Jewish books of the Hebrew Bible and the Christian writings of the Greek scriptures. Rather, God's speech acts are revealed in the Confucian and Buddhist writings and practices as well as in the oppressed people's struggles against powers and principalities.

To be sure, it is Christian God whose speech acts are "irregular," which are heard in classics of East Asian philosophy and religions. What about in reverse? Would the author say also that Buddha's speech acts may be heard as Christian God's Word and speech acts? His answer is "yes," but analogically and metaphorically. He says:

> Non-biblical religions or languages may serve as metaphors or parables, in a hermeneutical sense, to analogically give an account of the mystery of God's universal reign. If all creatures are masks of God, God certainly speaks to us through the wisdom of other religions and cultures.[9]

This means that even through the Buddhist scriptures Christian God speaks to us. Therefore, wisdoms of other religions and cultures are as valuable and respectable as the Word of God in the Old and New Testaments, Jesus Christ as Word of God (John), and the gospel preached every Sunday from the church pulpit (Karl Barth).

The author goes even further to say that "[h]uman language may correspond to the speech event of God because God comes to us as the

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[8] Ibid., 3.

[9] Ibid., 153.

Word. All human words have a hermeneutical character in serving as a mundane analogy of God's reign."[10] He is saying that linguistically and hermeneutically human mind is mind of God (人心天心), and that humanity and religion cannot be separated. According to Hans Küng, "there is a dialectical and mutual understanding between religion and humanity. If true humanity is the presupposition for true religion, then true religion is the fulfilment of true humanity."[11] This understanding of the relation between humanity and religion can be a ground for religious ethics and morality: For instance, Christian agape encompasses God and humanity, Buddhist ethic of compassion and Boddhisattva, and Confucian teaching of *ren*. All of them can contribute to inter-religious understanding and cooperation for the emancipation of all humanity.

FUTURE OF INTER-RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

Putting two chapters (Chapter 6 and 7) on *minjung* theology and evolution aside, the first five chapters have to do with Christian theological dialogue with Buddhism, Daoism, Confucianism mostly in Chinese context, Christian notion of Trinity, and a chapter on religious pluralism. Among these five chapters, Chapter 5: "Religious Pluralism: Asian Christianity and Life Horizon of World Religions" is important because it sketches the history of inter-religious dialogue and puts down author's standpoint which goes beyond other dialogue theologians such as Cobb, Hick, Hans Küng, Moltmann, and Knitter.

The author introduces Moltmann's recommendation of "commitment" and "openness," that is, firstly, "to bear witness to the truth of one's own religion, without falling victim to the relativism of a multi-cultural society." But secondly, dialogue is needed to proceed "from anathema to dialogue—from dialogue to co-existence—from co-existence to convivence—from convivence to cooperation."[12] The author also introduces Paul Knitter's three bridges to cross over the Rubicon: "*The first* is a 'historico-cultural' bridge in the name of his-

[10] Ibid.
[11] Ibid., 147.
[12] Ibid., 146.

torical relativity."[13] But his bridge was not adequate for religious pluralism, for it attaches too much to the truth claims of Christian absoluteness and uniqueness."[14] *The second* is the "theologico-mystical" bridge, "in which the divine mystery exceeds human linguistic and conceptual formulation."[15] *The third* is "the 'ethico-practical' bridge in the name of justice and peace."[16] The author's project of inter-religious dialogue seems to pick up all of Moltmann's proposal and the second and the third parts of Knitters adding his post-foundational philosophy of language, that is, "irregularity of God's mystical speech acts."

Summarizing the theological project of inter-religious dialogue and engagement, the author discerns that there are still excessive attachments to Christian uniqueness in two forms: *The first* is exclusivism plus pluralism: In his words, "an emphasis on respecting the incommensurability of other religious traditions, and at the same time concentrating upon one's own."[17] *The second* is inclusivism plus pluralism, "stressing the value and richness of other religious ways while insisting on the hermeneutical necessity of one's own limitations."[18] The author seems to take the second option. He has to speak from his particular Christian context when he approaches other religious traditions in Asia. He confesses that

> Although we do not recognize the privilege of Christianity in any absolute sense, we are bound to encounter other religions from our own perspective. A theological approach to other religions poses the question of how to encounter and recognize the different as different.[19]

Originality of this book is the author's methodological proposal articulated in the conclusion of Chapter 5 titled "An Asian Irregular, Post-foundational Perspective on Religious Pluralism."[20] For him, "post-foundational perspective" is different from postmodern perspective of relativism or a sheer celebration of difference. In his words,

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[13] Ibid., 147.
[14] Ibid.
[15] Ibid.
[16] Ibid.
[17] Ibid., 148.
[18] Ibid.
[19] Ibid.
[20] Ibid., 149f.

> Post-foundational in the sense of *a post-ecclesial character* of the divine speech act is different from a sheer relativism of postmodernism, or the totalizing pluralism found in the circle of theology of religion.[21]

And further, what is common between his post-foundational hermeneutics and postmodern theory is the recognition of the difference, rejecting "Western metaphysics of sameness."[22] His Asian irregular, post-foundational perspective on religious pluralism is different in that there is an ethical and liberative component: "the articulation and accentuation of a Christian solidarity with the voiceless members of society in the political, socioeconomic, and cultural spheres."[23] Therefore, he combines *bamboo and minjung* in the subtitle of the book: religious sages in the bamboo grove who will be involved in the world of struggling *minjung* for liberation.

While the author, whose theological background is Korean, does not talk about Asian and Korean theologians' struggles in pursuit of interfaith and interreligious dialogue and engagement such as Yun Sung-bum, Byun Sun-whan and Ryu Dong-shik, and contemporary Lee Jung-bae, all Methodists and Kim Kyung-jae, who influenced the author's inculturation theology, the last chapter of this book introduces *minjung* theology which can be said to be a liberation theology born out of Korean socio-political context of the 1970's and 80's. *Minjung* theology, as the author correctly "defines" as "a political theology of solidarity with the *massa perditionis* (the public lost multitude) in our contemporary context."[24]

In the biblical language, *minjung* refers to *Apiru*, *am haaretz* in the Hebrew Bible and *ochlos* in the New Testament, particularly in the Gospel of Mark. Although *minjung* theologians do not want to put *minjung* into any sociological or political categories, such as proletariat or working class, they point to the people who are politically oppressed, economically exploited, and socially and culturally alienated. They are social victims: the sick and poor, marginalized, migrant workers, "under dogs," people in the underside of history, etc. Collectively speaking, Koreans as well as Asians under the Japanese and

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[21] Ibid., 149, italics mine.
[22] Ibid.
[23] Ibid.
[24] Ibid., 190.

Western colonial domination were *minjung*, and in a male dominating society, all women are *minjung*.

What is audacious and provocative about this book is that it combines intercultural theology and *minjung* theology, that is, bamboo and *minjung*.

For interculturation and emancipation, the author seems to argue that in constructing an Asian irregular theology, intercultural engagement with Asian cultures and religions is not enough. God's irregular speech acts are not only in the religious spheres, but also in the socio-political world for liberation. The end of interreligious engagement is emancipation of the world, not just intellectual exchanges in temples and churches, or in academia.

However, his last chapter on Korean *minjung* theology is least adequate: The author introduces only one first-generation *minjung* theologian, Ahn Byung-mu, in whose study on the Gospel of Mark discovered Jesus' *minjung*, *ochlos*, in the political reality of South Korea in the 1970's. The author should be reminded of the historical-theological fact that *minjung* theology was born in the political actions of Christians and theologians in solidarity with the struggle of South Korean workers, students, university professors against the oppressive military and development dictatorship for human rights and democracy. Out of this action, taking side of the oppressed and exploited, theologians reflected on their action in the light of the Old and New Testament, and began talking about a theology of *minjung*. Participating in the political struggles of Korean *minjung*, Korean theologians re-read the Bible from the eyes of the oppressed and exploited, and interpreted the political and social reality. A hermeneutical spiral between action and reflection has been dynamically continued.

One ought to be reminded of again that the so-called progressive theologians in Korea in the 1960's and 1970's were divided into two camps: one was and still is the camp of "indigenization theology" which may be called the "cultural-religious camp" and the other is "*minjung*" or "political theology" camp. It was rare to have occasions for theologians from both camps to come together to debate on mutual cooperation or initiating dialogue, even though they respected each other because they were both alienated and even persecuted by the church and government authorities.

Nonetheless, one should remember the exciting development in the Korean Buddhist community which was called "*minjung* Buddhism," a movement by young Buddhist monks working towards the reformation of Buddhism. The movement also developed into a political struggle

against the repressive military regime, in solidarity with Korean people and in dialogue with Christian theologians at the time.

Against this historical background, the author could have included other first-generation *minjung* theologians and political activist preachers who were watched, arrested, put into torture chambers, court marshalled, and imprisoned by the military regime. And the majority of theological colleagues took on the side of the military regime and condemned the *minjung* theologians heretics with the accusation that they violated the iron principle of separation of church and state, or religion and politics. In this light, the reader may be able to appreciate the last chapter on *minjung* theology where the author expounded on the relation among Luther, Barth, and Bonhoeffer on the one hand, and Ahn Byung-mu, C. S. Song, and *minjung* theology on the other. In spite of the fact that most of the first-generation *minjung* theologians were heavily influenced by the twentieth century Western theologians such as Karl Barth, Paul Tillich, Karl Rahner, Reinhold Niebuhr, or Bonhoeffer, this is the first time Korean *minjung* theology was introduced in light of the theologies of Luther, Barth, and Bonhoeffer. The Korean theological students have felt the deepest affinity with Bonhoeffer who was hanged by Hitler towards the end of Second World War because Korean Christians have had so many martyrs who resisted against the Japanese imperial powers and against North Korean communist regime. Korean *minjung*'s political resistance against the military dictatorship was legitimized and energized by Karl Barth's *Barmen Declaration* and *The Letters from Prison* by Dietrich Bonhoeffer. One must underline the fact that Korean Christian action against the power in solidarity with *minjung* was not particularly connected or inspired by German theologians, but by the struggle of God's people for humanity and liberation.

In light of the author's efforts to put his irregular theology in making connection between Western or German and Asian-Korean theologians in the pursuit of human liberation, it is perfectly legitimate to put his irregular theology in the *regular* theology, if not orthodox theology, but "neo-orthodox" or a theology of *orthopraxis*. But certainly his theological contribution is in articulating orthopraxis or theology of action-reflection in the context of and in the extension of interreligious dialogue and inculturation. While the author is talking about inculturation, he holds firm the global need for emancipation of the people of God. The religious sages in the bamboo grove and the religious activists among the struggling *minjung* in the world come together for the eschatological vision of the reign of God.

FOR THE FUTURE OF ASIAN THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

As the author acknowledges at the beginning of this book, a portion of this book comes from his lectures given to the students at Zhejiang University, in his words, "Cambridge of the East"—in Hangzhou, China, in five days in May 2007. The cultural and intellectual context of this book, therefore, is Asia and China, where Christian biblical fundamentalism denies the truth and the salvific and liberative power of classical Chinese religions including Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism. His contribution is enormous in challenging the newly emerging Chinese Christian theological community to engage with their own cultural and religious tradition, to become not particularly "Christians in China," but "Chinese Christians," mobilizing all the Asian and Chinese spiritual and intellectual resources.

This reviewer examined rather closely the first four chapters of this book, where the author engages in Christian-Asian dialogues, with conclusion that his understanding of Asian-Chinese religious traditions are accurate; his presentation is eloquent; and that the outcome of his engagement with the core of Asian religious insights and teachings is a vision for sound and strong religious syncretism and hybridity, not only in words but in action.

Reading this book which is a product of lecture dialogue with Chinese theological students at the Centre for Christianity and Cross-Cultural Studies in a university setting, I envision with hope to see all other theological schools in Asia, particularly in China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Korea and Japan, reframe and reform their teaching curriculum to include Asian religions and cultures alongside with Western philosophy, the Christian Bible, German and American theologians, and Christian liturgies. If we push this theological agenda even further, we could envision an Asian school of theology where Buddhist monk scholars, as well as Daoist practitioners and Confucian classical teachers are mingling with Christian theologians for mutual understanding and engagement. Hope that Professor Paul S. Chung, the author of this book, will join me and other dialogue theologians in Asia in the creation of an Asian centre for Christianity and cross-cultural studies, to do a full brown theology of irregularity.