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A PROMINENT WOMAN IN EARLY KOREAN PENTECOSTAL MOVEMENT: GUI-IM PARK (1912-1994)

Ig-Jin Kim

1. Introduction

The role of women in spiritual awakenings is generally acknowledged in Christianity. Accordingly, it is no wonder that we hear the phenomenal contributions of Pentecostal women in its early stages.¹ The Korean Pentecostal movement itself displayed such significant activities of women as well. In relation to women's role in Korean Pentecostalism, we can see certain features shown by both missionary introduction from outside and the religio-social background of Korea from inside. For the former feature, Miss Mary Rumsay, who entered Korea in 1928² as a woman missionary from America, became the first Pentecostal messenger to Korea. Following her, until the end of the Second World War (1945), only nine female Pentecostal missionaries entered Korea from the western world as independent missionaries.³ That Korea had long been recognized as a nation of shamanism and *Han*

¹ R.M. Riss, "women. Role of," in *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements (DPCM)* ed. Stanley M. Burgess, Gary B. McGee, and Patrick H. Alexander, Grand Rapids, 1988/9ed., 1996, 893-899.

² Masakazu Suzuki, e-mail correspondence with Ig-Jin Kim (Feb.7, 2006). Suzuki, a lecturer at the Central Bible College in Tokyo, suggests that Mary's entry to Korea would be in 1930 rather than in 1928. He presents some reliable evidence. However, the Korea AOG takes this date 1928 from its traditional/official material "without original source." This study follows the Korean material.

³ Missionaries not sent by certain organizations. Nine of them had not been prepared by formal training, but all were known as called by God.

(resentment), both of which had to do mainly with women, is another feature. Woman's role in Korean Pentecostalism must have been correlated with this context.⁴

In such a context, Gui-Im Park (1912-1994) and the contemporary Ja-Sil Choe (1915-1989), the mother-in-law as well as the spiritual mother/partnership of Yonggi Cho, are the representatives of Korean Pentecostal women. While Choe has been known through her worldwide ministry and publications, Gui-Im Park was hardly known outside the Korean Assemblies of God and Jeolla Province, southwest Korea.⁵ Yeong Sam Choe outlined Park's ministry as this:

Gui-Im Park was a prominent woman minister who enthusiastically coped with her calling for the planting and spreading the Gospel of Christ in this land for 34 years. Her life and ministry reveal the feature of a female apostle that performed a part in modern Korean church history. She towers high at the center of the autogenous Pentecostal movement as an outstanding leader, conspicuous woman evangelist, successful shepherd and respected spiritual minister.⁶

Hence, it is worth studying Gui-Im Park as a prominent female leader in early Korean Pentecostalism. We honor her by comparing her to contemporary Pentecostal leaders and to the spiritual milieu of the period. First, we will briefly describe the development of Pentecostalism in/to Korea before Park in the first chapter. Then we will deal with her conversion and calling in chapter two and her ministry will be discussed

⁴ Ig-Jin Kim, *History and Theology of Korean Pentecostalism: Sunbogeun (Pure Gospel) Pentecostalism*, Boekencentrum, Zoetermeer (the Netherlands), 2003, pp.22-24, 113-114; Sang Chan Baek, *The Han and Korean Illness: Where We Stand and Where We Should Go*, Seoul, The Institute of Korean Social Pathology, 1993, pp.15-23. The "static Han" of Korean is different from the universal phenomenon of frustration-feeling or "conflict" of Western people. Baek defines it as certain accumulated dregs like fog, deep in Korean psychology, that was formed through continuous suppression on the fundamental human desire by socio-cultural structure. This *Han*, *Minjung* (grass-roots), women and shamanism are discussed by some modern Korean theologians because they believe that these elements are interwoven in functions.

⁵ Ibid., 80-81, 116-120.

⁶ Yeong-Sam Choe, "A Giant for Pentecostal Movement, Gui-Im Park," 1, unpublished paper. n.d.

in chapter three. We will finish by discussing the theological meaning of her ministry in chapter four.

2. Pentecostalism in Korea before Gui-Im Park (1928-1947)

The introduction of Pentecostalism to Korea was later than to China (1907) and Japan (1907). There were two routes through which Pentecostalism was introduced into Korea. The first was by the women missionaries. Mary Rumsay and nine other women entered/visited Korea (1928-1940). A group of Korean elites who had been converted to Pentecostalism in Japan opened up another road to Korea for Pentecostalism. This second channel was again divided by two groups according to the two mission organizations that trained them in Japan. The America AOG missionary John Juergenson in Nagoya, Japan, produced Seong-San Park (1908-1956) and Bu-Geun Bae (1906-1970) who served as the main characters for the first Pentecostal movement along with the women missionaries in Korea (1932-1940). Another private Pentecostal missionary, Leonard W. Coote in Osaka, Japan, who was later known as belonging to Oneness Pentecostalism, trained Bong-Jo Gwak (1908-) and four other leaders.⁷ This group with Gwak played the main role for the second Pentecostal movement in Korea after the Second World War (1945-1953).

Mary Rumsay first came to Korea in 1928. Soon she won Mr. Hong Heo as her interpreter and co-worker. He was a member of the Central Salvation Army in Seoul and was converted to Pentecostalism by Rumsay. Then this team opened a congregation on the outskirts of Seoul in 1932. Around this time, Seong-San Park and Bu-Geun Bae came back from Japan. Other women missionaries arrived. Centering around Rumsay, Park, Bae and Heo, six congregations were founded in partnership with other women missionaries by 1938. In 1933, they formed an organization for fellowship, *Joseon* (Korea) Pentecostal Church. Because of Japanese imperialism, all the women missionaries were forced to leave Korea by 1940.⁸ These congregations scattered by

⁷ There was another leader Hong Heo (1907-1991). Pastor Heo worked with Seong-San Park and Bu-Geun Bae. Coote's students were Bong-Jo Gwak, Seong-Deok Yun (1894-1981), Seong-Hwan Kim (1916-1975), Gil-Yun Kim (1909-1968), and Heon-Geun Park (n.d. -1950). The last one became the first Korean Pentecostal martyr.

⁸ Ig-Jin Kim, *ibid.* There were a total of 173 devoted members and several hundred children in six churches.

1942 due to losing their financial resources (missionaries) and imperial persecution. The organization was also dissolved.

A remarkable Korean Pentecostal congregation was established by Bong-Jo Gwak in Osaka, Japan in 1933. It grew to about 100 adults and an equal number of children. It lasted for one decade due to Japanese oppression. Gwak and his church as well as those who were trained by missionary Coote in Osaka played a decisive role in starting the second Pentecostal movement in Korea after World War II. This new movement, which broke out in the southwest province of Korea, Jeolla Namdo, occurred without any relationship with the previous first movement in Seoul. Gui-Im Park received Pentecostalism by way of this second movement which was directly related to Gwak's church (1947). Soon she became the main character of the movement in that province.

This connection with Gwak's line must have exerted an effect upon her role with Korean Pentecostalism in a different way from Ja-Sil Choe who was directly trained by American AOG missionaries in Seoul (1956-1958). After all, Choe's ministry was fully developed in line with the main Korean Pentecostalism coupled with Yonggi Cho while Park moved aside from the main movement after her separation from the Korea AOG (1977).

3. Gui-Im Park's Conversion and Calling (1912-1947)

3.1 Her Family Background

Gui-Im Park was born in 1912⁹ as the first of 9 children, seven girls and two boys, in the port city of Mokpo located southwest of South Korea. The Japanese imperial government (1910-1945) ruled over the country at this time. Her father ran a rice polishing mill together with a large farm. She finished four years of primary school. Her parents passed away when she was 35 years old and she had to take care of her younger siblings even though she had married already. Her only daughter Jeong-Ja Mun says: "Mother's parents heard the Gospel through the

missionaries and sent their children to the church."¹⁰ Gui-Im attended the Sunday school when she was young. Her parents, especially her mother, remained a Buddhist until her "family" began to attend the Mokpo Holiness Church around 1930.¹¹ It is interesting to note that Pastor Seong-Bong Lee (1900-1965), who belonged to the Holiness denomination (cf. rebirth; sanctification; healing; second-coming), led this church in the period from 1931 to 1937. He became generally known as the greatest revivalist in Korea in the 1940s until his death. His revival meetings were characterized by physical healings and faith-evoking miracles through the Holy Spirit.¹² During his ministry in the Mokpo congregation, it experienced a notable revival.

It is possible that several members of her family, including two of her younger sisters, were blessed with living faith through his influence. Later they helped Gui-Im with her conversion. Strange as it may sound, Gui-Im could not have the opportunity to receive faith in God before she married Seong-Ho Mun in 1934. Her husband, who was engaged in trading-business was a non-Christian. She moved to his house in Nonsan, ca. 160 km. northeast in Chungcheong Province. She was 21 years old at that time. The next year she gave birth to her "only" daughter, Jeong-Ja Mun. It was a sign that Gui-Im Park was not entirely healthy around the time of Jeong-Ja's birth.

The family of Gui-Im Park especially rendered distinguished service to the Korean Pentecostal movement through their daughters. Compared to the seven prominent daughters in faith, only two younger brothers became believers. The first daughter Gui-Im, the second daughter Sun-

¹⁰ Jeong-Ja Mun, interview with the author in Gwangju (15.01.1998). She is the only child of Gui-Im Park.

¹¹ Jeong-Ja Mun, international telephone interview with the author (01.06.2006); Byeong-Kuk Kim, "Research Paper on an Elder Jeong-Rye Bag in Korea," 2004, 2. A paper submitted to Asia Pacific Theological Seminary as a part of a degree program; Yeong-Sam Choe, *ibid.*, 3. Byeong-Kuk Kim writes that Gui-Im's "family began to attend a church in Gwangju" when Jeong-Rye (5th younger sister of Gui-Im) was three years old (1929 or 1930). It seems that Kim made a mistake with the city. Gui-Im's parents lived in Mokpo and Lee took care of a Holiness church in Mokpo for 6 years (1931-1937), not in Gwangju at any time. According to Jeong-Ja Mun, Gui-Im's mother was a believer when Gui-Im was young. But "family" does not mean that all the family attended the church. Yeong-Sam Choe writes: "Six of Gui-Im's younger brothers and sisters who did not receive Jesus..." in 1947 when Gui-Im began to devote her life to preaching.

¹² Jin Hwan Kim, *The History of Korean Church Revival Movement*, (Seoul Book Publishing Company, 1993), 190.

⁹ The Korean Assemblies of God (KAOG), ed., *Korea Assemblies of God 30 Years History*, Seoul, 1981, 56, 74, 124-125; Yeong Sam Choe, *ibid.*, 1. Several facts on Gui-Im's biography of these two sources differ: the year of birth; the year of marriage; the first conversion etc. This study sometimes selects which one would better fit the context. Another point to be considered is that attending church and real conversion are different dimensions in the spiritual realm.

Im,¹³ and the third daughter Sun-Deok¹⁴ all served the Lord as women evangelists and pastors. According to Byeong-Kuk Kim, the sixth daughter Jeong-Rye (1927-) was appointed by Jesus as an elder. She founded six congregations and looked after them during the pioneering stages for a given period of time. A number of miracles came about through her ministry. She “has been unknown to the world because God’s plan for her was to use her secretly.”¹⁵

3.2 Her Conversion through Healing Experience (1946)

After the first Pentecostal movement in Seoul was dissolved in 1942, God awoke a woman at the end of the southwest area in Mokpo city after the liberation from Japan.¹⁶ Gui-Im Park was saved at her parents’ house in 1946. There are two different versions about her conversion. According to the history of the Korea AOG, “she was chained in bed for four years since February 1940 by suffering of an outgrowth in her belly. During this time she was led to the Nonsan First Methodist Church by a daughter of her friend.”¹⁷ Then it further says that she deeply repented at a revival meeting and in May she was healed through the prayer of her third sister Sun-Deok. We prefer to follow two interviews with her daughter Jeong-Ja Mun. She introduced her mother’s life and healing experience as follows according to her memory:

When I was young, my mother was always in ill health. I began to attend the church from the lower grades at the primary school, but mother did not have any religion. On

¹³ She pioneered and pastored a congregation at Abhae Island, Sinan-Gun, Jeolla Namdo.

¹⁴ She became the first devoted Christian in this family. She helped Gui-Im in many ways.

¹⁵ Byeong-Kuk Kim, *ibid.*, 4-5 & *passim*. He says Jeong-Rye was cured from her fatal disease through Jesus. Even though nobody can deny her excellent service to God, further study is needed for Jeong-Rye. She has not been even recognized properly by the Korean AOG yet. One reason for this may be that she was not recognized by the denomination as a minister.

¹⁶ Jeong-Ja Mun, interview (01.06.2006). She does not remember which year her mother had the healing experience. She could only tell that the liberation was in her 4th grade and it happened when she was at 5th or 6th grade of the primary school. Considering other circumstances we can take 1946 as her conversion.

¹⁷ KAOG, *ibid.*, 124.

account of her own weakness, she used to visit Buddhist temple to offer a Buddhist mass or goes to the mountain to offer sacrifices to spirits. Mother’s health became worse. She was diagnosed as having a malignant ovarian tumor. She had other diseases as well. Because mother’s sisters were living in Mokpo, she was going to be operated there. At that time, such an operation had little possibility of success. I still remember how my father and I saw her off at the station with tears thinking it would be the last time with her.¹⁸

At her parents’ house in Mokpo, her younger sisters persuaded her to ask God to be healed rather than to be operated. The two sisters, Sun-Im and Sun-Deok, were enthusiastic “Pentecostals.”¹⁹ They and some other Spirit-filled saints had a worship meeting for Gui-Im everyday. They all repented in-depth and sought the filling of the Holy Spirit. They devoted their lives to intercessory prayer for Gui-Im with giving up eating and drinking. Gui-Im also fasted three days and prayed by her sisters’ help. Gui-Im herself told her experience of conversion and healing as this: “I took nothing for three days in the attic to pray and repent. On the fourth day, I felt my body becoming lighter and like afloat. But it was not only my feeling but my body was actually floating in the air.”²⁰ Her daughter told the same event in a slightly different way: “My mother could see all her sins. She repented thoroughly. In three days she felt as if she were afloat in the air and she was entirely healed.”²¹

We can estimate through these testimonies that Gui-Im had an extraordinary healing experience. Not only was the painful lump in her abdomen gone, but she was filled with indescribable heavenly peace and joy that she never had before. She couldn’t restrain her burning desire to give this news to others. It is generally known that she began to minister God immediately. Jeong-Ja reported what her mother said at that time as: “Because God saved me I should serve Him.”²²

¹⁸ Yeong Sam Choe, *ibid.*, 1; Jeong-Ja Mun, *ibid.* (01.06.2006). Jeong-Ja cannot remember all the details but she confirmed that her mother did not attend church until she was healed.

¹⁹ Choe, *ibid.*, 2. They were not Pentecostal yet. They were following the Holiness faith. They did not know about baptism in the Holy Spirit with speaking in tongues. But they were on fire in believing God.

²⁰ *ibid.*

²¹ Jeong-Ja Mun, *ibid.* (15.01.1998).

²² *ibid.*

Yeong-Sam Choe claims that both healing and calling from God occurred simultaneously. Choe even mentioned God's endowment of the gift of healing concurrently with them. The KAOG source says that she prayed to be a minister to God.²³ But there is no direct quotation from Gui-Im herself about her calling and receiving this gift at that time.²⁴ She soon came back to her family in Nonsan. She was a new creature. She confessed her state of mind as this: "I could think hell in connection with heaven. My mind which had been like hell worn with diseases and overpowered by circumstances has been changed to a bright spirit which is looking up to heaven."²⁵

3.3 Her Training and Spirit Baptism with Calling (1946-1947)

She began to attend the Nonsan First Methodist Church. She had to wait and train herself for some time to prepare for the future ministry. Her zeal to serve God in the church surpassed others, her daughter said. She did not miss any opportunity for Bible teaching and prayer: attending daily morning prayer, various kinds of believers' gatherings, and revival meetings. In her leisure hours, she read the Bible. She volunteered to clean the church building everyday. Her life at this time was as follows:

All creatures looked like new. Not once or twice, looking at a grass on the roadside I held it in my hand and prayed with tears of thanksgiving to God as I felt the recondite dexterity and love of God on it. Reading the Bible, I used to be moved to tears when the phrases and passages inspired me as if I were reading my loving father's letter.²⁶

Considering the fact that Gui-Im was only able to attend four years of primary school, her ability of competent preaching in the future seemed to have been developed by her own faithful efforts in God's grace.

There is another event in this period that would strengthen her faith. It was the "fire baptism." Once she attended Seong-Bong Lee's revival meeting. There she experienced like "falling in a fire pot" through his prayer with laying on of hands. This experience reaffirmed her sense of

²³ KAOG, *ibid.*

²⁴ Choe, *ibid.*

²⁵ *ibid.*, pp.2-3.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p.3

calling as an "apostle."²⁷ Nevertheless, she had to grow and wait for another baptism with the Holy Spirit.²⁸

At last, she was baptized in the Holy Spirit at a house meeting in 1947. We follow the route of Pentecostalism that reached Gui-Im Park. A Korean Mrs. Ja-Sin Park was converted at the Osaka Korean Pentecostal Church in Japan (Pastor Bong-Jo Gwak). She wrote to her mother-in-law (Bok-Deok Lee) in Haenam, Jeolla Namdo, and "constantly begged her to receive the Pentecostal faith until she finally accepted it."²⁹ Bok-Deok Lee, a faithful Presbyterian, having experienced the various gifts of the Spirit, started preaching about the miracles of the gifts. Many interested people followed her. Having been a wealthy lady and an influential person in the church, her circulation of Pentecostalism caused a disturbance. Then she and her followers were expelled from the Presbyterian Church. They continued exercising the gifts through house meetings. But the persecution of other churches increased and the movement began to decrease until the liberation from Japan in 1945.³⁰ But this latent fire began to kindle after the liberation. A lady called Mrs. Pyo from Mokpo, which is located in the same district with Haenam and home city of Gui-Im, was blessed at Lee's house meeting. Then Mrs. Pyo opened her own house meeting at her house in Mokpo. Gui-Im attended this meeting and received the baptism in the Holy Spirit in July 1947. Even though there is no reference if she spoke in tongues at this time, we estimate that she did because they said she spoke in tongues in her ministry in the following year.³¹

Gui-Im Park's receiving the Holy Spirit means that she arrived at the transitional stage of her calling. Her zeal for evangelization led her to bring the Gospel to her relatives and everybody that she met. She decided

²⁷ KAOG, *ibid.*

²⁸ This separation of healing experience, fire baptism, and baptism by the Holy Spirit falls under the reasoning of Pentecostal theology. It can be understood as gradual progress in the Christian faith, too.

²⁹ Jong-Ho Byeon, *The History of Korean Pentecostal Movement*, Seoul, Sinsaeng-Gwan, 1972, 98-100; Ig-Jin Kim, *ibid.*, 80-81.

³⁰ *ibid.*, 100; Ig-Jin Kim, *ibid.*, 81. We cannot locate the time when these happened. But considering the related situations, we assume that these series of events occurred around the latter part of the colonial period and the following time. "It seems that women's prayer meetings were more tolerated than organized ecclesiastical activities," writes Ig-Jin Kim.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 102.

to evangelize her younger siblings who did not accept Jesus yet.³² The first person she aimed at was her brother and the first son of this family Yong-Deok Park (5th child) in Suncheon.³³ He took a leading position at the Suncheon railway station and his younger sister Jeong-Deok and her husband, who worked at the railway station as well, lived there, too. Gui-Im revealed her heart at this time:

I was too anxious to sit still at home. In the same way as the Samaritan woman who met Christ, whenever I opened my mouth, I couldn't help but saying "have faith in Jesus." My life was like what Paul writes in Romans 8:26: "And in the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words." I should live according to what Paul here said.³⁴

Her daughter Jeong-Ja says that "her mother left the house to serve God and she did not come back home. My father and mother lived separately ever since. I only remember, my father visited mother once in a while."³⁵

4. Her Ministry (1948-1984)

This chapter will deal with two parts: her church-planting ministry (4.1) and her assistant and intercessory ministry (4.2).

4.1 Her Church-Planting Ministry (1948-1962)

During this period of one and a half decades her ministry reached the climax. She pioneered four congregations. Through exercising spiritual gifts she paved the second Pentecostal movement in Korea in the

³² Ibid., 3. Choe writes there were six younger siblings of Park (among 8 siblings) who did not accept Jesus in 1947. It means only three including herself were Christians. Others might have attended church without real conversion...nominal Christians (?).

³³ Remember, she was the first daughter of 9 children. Her parents passed away around that time and she as the oldest of a family had to think of her younger brothers and sisters, especially first son Yong-Deok.

³⁴ Choe, *ibid.*, 3-4.

³⁵ Jeong-Ja Mun, *ibid.* (01.06.2006). It seems that she was driven out of her ordinary household.

province of Jeolla Namdo area. Moreover, until the establishment of the denomination in April 1953, her ministry surpassed any other contemporary Pentecostals in Korea when we consider manifestations of various gifts in the Holy Spirit in connection with souls saved.³⁶

Let us look at the circumstances in which she served God in such a way. The freedom from Japan (15.8.1945) brought to Koreans freedom as well as a turbulent situation. "The first phase (1945-1950) was the period of jubilation, confusion and pain for Koreans."³⁷ The division of the north (occupied by Russian communism) and south (governed by American military administration) and the Korean War (1950-1953 - a fratricidal all-out war) characterized this time. Under such a situation, Pentecostalism awoke rather slowly. Old leaders, Seong-San Park, Hong Heo and Bu-Geun Bae were too deeply involved in earning their living to embark on a new work at once after the liberation. No foreign Pentecostal missionaries entered Korea until 1952. This was the time for rehabilitation of Pentecostalism by Koreans themselves through the channel of Korean Pentecostals from Japan. Geographically, a new movement might easily start in a rural province far from the turbulent capital city, Seoul. Two former students of Coote in Japan set about evangelization in Jeolla Namdo. Seong-Deok Yun, a man of principle and a teacher, started a congregation in May 1945 at a small farming village near Gwangju. He baptized 25 people in 1948 and founded two more congregations in that district. Seong-Hwan Kim, who had received spiritual gifts, founded a congregation in Mokpo (Gui-Im's hometown) in 1948 and three more congregations were founded by him in this region soon after the armistice in 1953. Other leaders began to evangelize with Pentecostal zeal around the time of the Korean War (1950). These male leaders worked hard. But the Pentecostal distinctiveness more greatly accompanied Gui-Im. Granting that the disorder in Korea at that time might have provided a favorable occasion for a Spirit-filled woman to serve God than a man, nonetheless, her ministry showed her distinguished calling by God.

In late autumn of 1947, Gui-Im Park went to Suncheon city to evangelize as well as to see his brother's safety under communist activities. She opened a house meeting³⁸ at her brother's house, an

³⁶ Among various gifts of the Spirit, Gui Im was especially endowed with gifts related to saving souls.

³⁷ Ig-Jin Kim, *ibid.*, 14.

³⁸ Gui-Im and followers attended the Presbyterian church. She did not have any idea to start a church.

official residence of the railway station. Before long a Mrs. Yang, who was the wife of Presbyterian elder, received the Pentecostal baptism of the Holy Spirit. she won a Spirit-filled Having started with her kinsfolk and Mrs. Yang, this meeting was constantly growing. Signs and wonders by the Spirit like healings, speaking in tongues and revelation of hearts were manifested by her prayer. "It is reported that evil spirits were driven out; that diseases like paralysis, mental disease, heart disease, gastroenteric disorder, neurosis etc. were healed; and that guidance of the Spirit through visions or dreams was with her."³⁹ Such spiritual manifestations raised both reproach and attraction. Christians questioned that this group had neither denominational background nor an ordinary pastor. Finally, Gui-Im and her followers were excommunicated from the Central Presbyterian Church to which they belonged. It happened just as the room was too crowded to fit all attendants. Her mind was further convicted that her Pentecostal movement was following the truth after the Pentecostal thought of the Acts of the Apostles.

Then she decided to open a congregation at the center of the city. They rented a house and founded a congregation in March 1948. This Suncheon congregation was called *Suncheon Osunjeol Gyohoe* (Suncheon Pentecostal Church). This designation "*Osunjeol*" (Pentecostal) was used for an individual congregation for the first time in Korea.⁴⁰ In spring 1949, the congregation grew to about 200 adults and 150 children. In November 1949, she invited Heon-Geon Park, the former student of Coote in Japan, for the pastor of this church while she wanted to devote herself to visiting people and evangelizing.⁴¹ After one year, in April 1950, the first Korean Pentecostal Convention was held at this church. Then the second (May 1952) and the third (October 1952)

³⁹ Ibid., 82-83; Yeon-Hui Kim, interview with the author in Suncheon (17.01.1998). She, as an eye-witness, told how her mother Ae-Sun Park was healed of an incurable growth on her neck. When Gui-Im met her mother for the first time, she told her directly: "Your well-being is due to the grace of your father. You were taken ill because you bore a grudge against God." Her mother repented and was healed through Gui-Im's prayer. Her mother opened her room for the house meeting as well, she said.

⁴⁰ Yeong Sam Choe, 5. She saw the church signboard of the church in her dream. The title "Pentecostal" was already used for the designation of the organization and for the church in Japan, but not in Korea for an individual congregation yet.

⁴¹ Ibid.; Ig-Jin Kim, *ibid.*, 83. There are two reasons that she invited him: first, even though she was accepted as an "evangelist pastor" she still thought the congregation needed a theologically trained pastor for a better organized church; second, her calling was more to an "apostolic" and evangelistic ministry.

were also hosted by this congregation. These events are significant for Gui-Im in relation to the Korean Pentecostal movement. First, these gatherings became the matrix from which the Korean Assemblies of God denomination (April 1953) was developed. Second, the main role of the Suncheon congregation, which was founded and nurtured by Gui-Im, implies that she contributed most to thrusting forward the second Pentecostal movement in Korea.⁴²

She suffered during the Korean War when the communists took over Suncheon. Her pastor Heon-Geon Park became the first martyr of Korean Pentecostals in September 1950.⁴³ For about one year she took care of the church by herself. In March 1952, she invited Bong-Jo Gwak, the former pastor of the Osaka Korean Pentecostal church in Japan, to be the pastor. As the battle line settled along the 38th parallel from April 1952, she left Suncheon in June of that year and founded a second congregation in the main city in Jeolla Province, Gwangju in October 1952 "as she was called to a more apostolic and evangelistic ministry."⁴⁴ Hindrances by the existing churches and residents followed. They accused her of heresy or weeping church. While she took the pastorate of this Gwangju church, she founded a third congregation in 1954 and at last the fourth in 1962 in a different part of this city. Her younger sisters, Sun-Deok and Jeong-Rye helped her. These congregations were well established until now and the Gwangju church became the largest congregation in the Jeolla province even to today.⁴⁵

⁴² Choe, *ibid.*, Other congregations founded by male Pentecostal leaders maintained their status quo; leading roles for organizational matters was naturally taken by male leader like Seong-San Park.

⁴³ Ig-Jin Kim, *ibid.*, pp.85-86. He continued pastoring during their occupation. He was shot by communist soldiers.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p.83.

⁴⁵ KAOG, *Denomination Yearbook*, 1997, 724ff. She took charge of the second and third churches together with Gwangju Church for one year and passed them to another pastors. Gwangju church had 14,158 adult members with 4-5 acres of ground in 1997 and the fourth one had 800 adult members in that year. The third one was transferred to the Presbyterian Church. The Suncheon congregation was split into two in 1957 according to the schism of the denomination but today both congregations are stable medium-sized congregations. Other congregations founded by Coote's students (from Japan) in Jeolla province have not grown into stabilized congregations except the *Jinwol* congregation, the first congregation Seong-Deok Yun established.

Another important ministry for her in this decade since 1953 was to lead revival meetings. Two or three times each month, she was invited by churches or families inter-denominationally. Most conservative Ye-Jang Presbyterian congregation also invited her. Having preached in Jeolla province mainly, she even took meetings in Chungcheong Province and Seoul. Jeong-Ryeol Park, who was a favorite of her and became the president of the denominational university of the Korea AOG, estimated that she was a prominent evangelist.⁴⁶

We describe her ministry during this period(1948-1962):

Many days she did not sleep in bed but stayed all night in the church to pray. She fasted very often (all the time). She was very annoyed with sick people, maybe because she herself tasted the deadly malady. Then there occurred miracles. Sometimes she brought and kept demon-possessed and sick people in the church for one or two months and prayed. When they are healed she sent them back.⁴⁷

Her daughter Jeong-Ja once attended her mother's revival meeting in Seoul and she remembered it as: "My mother used to be a mild lady but she preached awfully."⁴⁸ People called her *Wubak* which means "hail" because when she preached in an evangelistic meeting, her preaching fell on people as if it thundered or was like hailstorm pouring down on the attendants.⁴⁹ She did not write down her sermon before she preached. Her daughter heard her mother say: "It is difficult to preach if there is no anointing."⁵⁰ Sometimes she poured out God's word for several hours. Except the manifestations of gifts of tongues, prophecy, healings and expulsions of evil spirits, she especially exercised discernment to point

out hidden sins of people, which eventually led them to repent.⁵¹ Her preaching was like "piercing fire" which resulted in real changes in the lives of Korean-grass-roots. Jeong-Ja says her mother was purely burning with saving souls. Therefore, she always emphasized repentance. Her congregations got the reputation of "weeping churches." She often took meetings more than ten times a day.⁵² One eye-witness said: "Sometimes she danced during her preaching."⁵³

As a Korean woman, who had been abandoned herself to despair from the fatal disease in her ovary, being able to identify herself with the sufferings and hopelessness of Korean *Minjung* (grass-roots) in the bitter course of colonial oppression, postliberation confusion, the fratricidal all-out war and the poverty of the postwar life, she devoted herself to saving them by the love and power of God. Therefore, her ministry created a "movement" for the people through the solving of Korean *Han* (resentment). Healings and repentance with weeping/crying were the typical marks of *Han*-possessed Korean women. In this regard, "her influence was greater than that of Rumsey and Bok-Deok Lee but less than that of Ja-Sil Choe, the mother-in-law of Yonggi Cho."⁵⁴

Her ministry for organizational spheres discloses both positive and negative sides. In 1952, during the Korean War, first American missionary, Arthur B. Chestnut, was sent by the American A/G. Then leaders of both routes (Juergensen's students in Nagoya, Japan and Cootes students in Osaka, Japan), who had been preparing for forming an organization through conventions since 1950, decided to establish a denomination under Chestnut's leadership. Other congregations were set up in the meantime.⁵⁵ With the eight congregations and seven leaders the

⁵¹ Choe., *ibid.*, p.13; Jeong-Ja Mun, *ibid.* (15.01.1998& 01.06.2006). "Sometimes people were afraid of my mother because she was aware of the secrets in their hearts."

⁵² Mun, *ibid.* (01.06.2006). Even her father told her: "Be careful..." (you may destroy yourself). She says that might be the reason that her mother was exhausted when she was over 70 years old.

⁵³ Hun-Ha Jo, interview with the author at Suncheon (16.01.1998).

⁵⁴ Ig-Jin Kim, *ibid.*, pp.81, 160. She served the Lord until her death while Gui-Im began to rest after age 70.

⁵⁵ One in Seoul (1952 by Hong Heo), one in Busan (1952 by Seong-San Park), one in Dae-Gu (1952 by Bu-Geun Bae), one at Geoje Island (1953 by Gil-Yun Kim) after two from Gui-Im Park (1948 in Suncheon and 1952 in Gwangju), one at Jinwol (1945 by Seong-Deok Yun), and one at Mokpo (1948 by Seong-Hwan

⁴⁶ Jeong-Ryeol Park, interview with the author at Yoido Full Gospel Church (05.03.1996).

⁴⁷ Mun, *ibid.* (01.06.2006 & 15.01.1998). Some diseases were healed at once by her prayer, but more often people were healed through her constant prayer for one or two months.

⁴⁸ Mun, *ibid.* (01.06.2006).

⁴⁹ Choe., *ibid.*, p.4; Mun, *ibid.* (15.01.1998). This name was called by people who heard her sermon; Ig-Jin Kim, *ibid.*, 87. Jeong-Ja said that this name was imparted to her mother in a dream.

⁵⁰ Mun, *ibid.* (15.01.1998).

Korea Assemblies of God was organized.⁵⁶ Gui-Im was the only woman participant. At the same time, her two congregations were the strongest of Korean Pentecostal churches at that time. The fourth convention by the Korea Pentecostal movement (KAOG) again was hosted by Gwangju church by Gui-Im in October 1953.⁵⁷

This formal organization, which included positive involvement of American missionaries, establishment of constitution and theological institute, did not well harmonize with her spiritual flavor, let alone with her background. Having done well with the missionaries and participated the denominational matters, she, nevertheless, began to settle her ministry centering around Jeolla province. When Hong Heo left the denomination in 1957 with six (seven) congregations, Gui-Im Park also sided with him.⁵⁸

4.2 Her Assistant and Intercessory Ministry (1963-1982)

A new Korean *Sunbogeum* (Full Gospel) Pentecostalism began to rise at the denominational seminary from 1956 by Ja-Sil Choe (with

Kim). It counted eight congregations; the two most flourishing were founded by Gui-Im Park.

⁵⁶ KAOG, *Minutes*. About ten more congregations but not yet established. Gil-Yun Kim was missing at the Inaugural General Meeting on April 8, 1953 at Yongsan-Gu, Seoul.

⁵⁷ Choe, 15. A large military tent was borrowed for this and it lasted for two nights and three days. More than 500 people were gathered. Missionary Chestnut preached. This Holy Spirit convention provided people from other denominations to experience spiritual gifts and to understand Pentecostalism more. The total man-days reached about 3,000. This meeting gave Korean Pentecostals more confidence in the Pentecostal faith.

⁵⁸ Ig-Jin Kim, *ibid.*, 104-109. The Korean AOG encountered three schisms (separations) in its early stage. The first separation was with Gwak who had been trained under Coote (cf. chap. 1) and he left the denomination in 1956. "His old associates from Japan, Seong-Deok Yun, Seong-Hwan Kim, and Gil-Yun Kim became estranged from the denomination little by little even though they remained." Gwak insisted he believed the doctrine of the Trinity, only baptized in the name of Jesus Christ according to Acts 2:38. Second one was with Hong Heo in 1957. He wanted to set up his own Korean denomination separating from the missionaries. Jeolla Province, where the second Pentecostal movement started, sided with these two separations. This group rejoined in 1972 to KAOG. Gui-Im followed her heart after this trend and her role in the denomination began to decrease until she left the denomination in 1977 following after her daughter.

triple prayer: tongues, overnight, and fasting) and Yonggi Cho. Having pioneered a tent church in 1958 in the suburbs of Seoul with various manifestations of the gifts of the Spirit and rapid church growth,⁵⁹ they moved into Seoul city in 1961. This church was called "Revival Center," supported by the American AOG.

While this sweeping movement rose in Seoul in combination with the Korean AOG and American AOG, the center of the second movement, Jeolla area, began to fall under this shadow. Gui-Im Park also began to degrade her role as a leading Pentecostal figure in Korea. She entrusted Gwangju church to her son-in-law, Pastor Seong-Suk Kang⁶⁰ in September 1963. The congregation was the size of 200-300 adult members at this time.⁶¹ Then she helped him as an assistant pastor. Her main ministry was to evangelize unbelievers, to take care of the church members and to lead the early morning prayer meeting.⁶² Jeong-Ja says, "Because Pastor Kang had studied at a different institute and his mind always sought the social ethics as well, his pastoral mode was different from Park's and he had difficulties during his 11 years' ministry."⁶³ In May 1974, Pastor Kang passed away. Then, her daughter Jeong-Ja, who studied also at the Full Gospel Theological Seminary (KAOG), took over as pastor for one year. Gui-Im also helped her daughter pastor during this period. After one year (1976), another Korean AOG pastor was invited to pastor this church.⁶⁴ For one year, Gui-Im and Jeong-Ja stayed together

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, pp.134. In three years this congregation counted 300 adults and 350 Sunday school children.

⁶⁰ Mun, *ibid.* (01.06.2006). Having married Jeong-Ja in 1955, he studied theology at the Full Gospel Theological Seminary in the same class with Yonggi Cho from 1956-1958. After this, he further studied at the Hansin Seminary (more liberal Presbyterian denomination). After this, he took over the pastorate of his mother-in-law. Then he further studied at the graduate theological school of Yonsei University. He sought social righteousness in connection with his Pentecostal faith.

⁶¹ *Ibid.* She said that there were not many churches of this size in Gwangju at that time.

⁶² In Korea we have daily early morning prayer meetings from 4:30 to 6:00 a.m.

⁶³ Mun, *ibid.* Could this dissonance between Gui-Im and her son in law/pastor disturb God's anointing on her? It could be.

⁶⁴ Mun, *ibid.* (18.01.1998). For Jeong-Ja Mun, to be a pastor for that church was too much work for her as she had five children.

in this church under his leadership. But they were out of tune with him.⁶⁵ In the course of this period, there is no report of any outstanding manifestations of spiritual gifts.

Then Jeong-Ja began to help a small Gi-Jang Presbyterian church⁶⁶ grow in 1977. She left Gwangju church (KAOG). She moved to the Gi-Jang Presbyterian denomination as a pastor. Gui-Im followed her to this Gi-Jang church, which is called "Mudol." She left the Korean AOG and stayed in that denomination. In this Gi-Jang church, she again helped her daughter pastor and served the Lord with prayer and leading house cell groups until she reached 72 years old. Her role as a Pentecostal leader slowly subsided. She has hardly been heard in the Korean AOG since then.

Then she retired from her ministry in 1984. She constantly attended the early morning prayer meeting and read the Bible. She was exhausted through hard labor, and rested after her retirement. The last two years of her earthly life, she almost remained in bed and sometimes had headaches without any disease. On July 1, 1994, when her daughter Jeong-Ja came back from a visiting tour of her congregation she found her mother had been called to God as if she were just sleeping, with her old Bible opened beside her. Her daughter retired from her pastorate of the Mudol congregation since 1998. She attends this church to today and says: "I cannot do as my mother did. I think it is good to serve Him according to what we have received from Him."⁶⁷

5. Theological Meaning of Her Ministry

We are closing this study by appraising the theological meaning of Gui-Im Park's ministry in the Korean Pentecostal movement.

⁶⁵ Mun, *ibid.* (01.06.2006 & 15.01.1998). She did not say why they were disagreeable.

⁶⁶ Her son-in-law studied at the seminary of this denomination. Jeong-Ja did not give the reason why she moved to this denomination and this church. Her husband Kang once told her that at the AOG seminary he could not grasp what Christianity was but at this liberal denominational seminary he could learn Christianity. May this was the reason that she (maybe Gui-Im, too) recognized that the Korean Pentecostal denomination/church did not appropriately value the ethical side of Christianity?

⁶⁷ Mun, *ibid.* (01.06.2006).

First, her calling by God was clear. It is related to her healing experience from an incurable disease. The heartfelt intercession of her sisters and saints as well as her own thorough repentance through fasting were also a necessary means for this process of calling.

Second, as a woman, her ministry reveals the characteristics of apostolic-evangelistic ministry. Regarding this, she had a burning desire to save souls and delivered powerful messages, through which multitudes repented and were saved and their problems in life were solved by God's power.

Third, various gifts of the Spirit were manifested through her ministry: healings, prophecy, faith, speaking in tongues, effecting of miracles, the word of wisdom and discernment of spirits, etc. This fact provides evidence that spiritual gifts are fully available today.

Fourth, her calling and ministry were related to the context: connected with Korean *Han* during the hard time of Japanese imperialism, confusion after liberation, the Korean War, postwar poverty as well as disorder in the society – situation which especially provided favorable circumstances for mutual interaction with women. Gradual subsidence of her exercising spiritual gifts after her drift to the "liberal" Gi-Jang Presbyterian church can also be understood in the light of the mutual relation between the work of the Holy Spirit and the context (cf. Mark 6:1-6).

Fifth, God calls His servants according to His own purpose and gives corresponding gifts of the Spirit. Rumsay, male leaders of the first and second Pentecostal movements, Gui-Im Park, Jeong-Ja Mun and Ja-Sil Choe each fulfilled his or her calling through God-given grace according to the measure of faith.

Sixth, Acknowledging a regularity in God's calling for His certain offices for male only -- priests in the Old Testament and apostles of Christ -- there is no functional differences between gender in exercising spiritual gifts in the New Testament time.

Seventh, Pentecostal faith must be delivered further in horizontal dimension before God vertically pours His Spirit. Simply said, baptism with the Holy Spirit takes place when we preach/teach proper doctrine from the Scriptures. The truth that Spirit baptism, though it is given as a gift from God (Acts 2:38), premises the collaboration between human mission and divine work, calls Pentecostals' attention to contend for it.

Lastly, for her part, Gui-Im Park could fulfill her calling through devoting herself to God with her sincere decision to follow God. She learned the Bible, received training by the Spirit, gave up even family life and kept her life-long faithful prayer.

Gui-Im Park, who lived up to God's calling in the period of modern Korean afflictions through Pentecostal faith, demonstrates how God works through His servants whom He calls and equips according to His own will irrespective of gender.