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How Korean Christians and Korean Missionaries Understood the Boxer Uprising

LEE HYEWON HELEN

Abstract

This article is a historical research on the understanding of Korean Christians and Korea missionaries of the Boxer uprising. First, this article briefly illustrates the Boxer uprising's influence on Korean Christianity. From 1900 to 1901, anti-Christian movements happened more frequently than in the late 1800s in Korea. Korean Christians who immigrated and were living in Manchuria were attacked by the Boxers directly, and churches were destroyed. Furthermore, four Anglican missionaries in Korea were dispatched to the hospital in Shandong, China to treat foreign soldiers who had been wounded during the Boxer war, and as a result three out of four Anglican hospitals in Korea had to shut down. Many Korean churches provided shelters, food and travel expenses to Chinese Christian refugees who fled to Korea. Also Korean Christians gathered relief contributions for Chinese churches that were destroyed during the war. Next, this article describes Korean Christians' and Korea missionaries' understanding of the Boxers through Christian journals and personal reports. Christian journals focused more on the religious figures of the uprising than public mass media; they also emphasized the loss of Protestant property over the loss of Catholic property. Missionaries regarded the

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Boxer movement as an anti-imperial, anti-foreign movement rather than as an anti-Christian movement. Also they worried about an outbreak of a war between Russia and Japan after the Boxer war because the mission work in Korea would be directly affected.

1. INTRODUCTION

China, Korea and Japan have had close relationships politically, economically and sociologically throughout history; and in terms of Christian history, they have deeply affected each other's religious activities and developments. Many scholars of Christian history have tried to study the relationship among the three countries. However, those studies mostly focused on the relationship between Korea and Japan, or China and Japan.¹ Only a few studies examine the relationship between Chinese and Korean Christianity.²

Protestant missionaries landed in China approximately fifty and eighty years prior to their arrivals in Japan and Korea respectively. Chinese Christianity experienced strong social resistance and cultural adaptation in the Asian context before Korean and Japanese Christianity each underwent similar processes of their own. Chinese theological terminologies were made after going through severe theological de-

¹ The most important studies on Korean and Japanese Christian relations can be found in the following references: Yuntae Oh, *Nikkan kirisutokyō kōryū-shi* [History of Relations between Japanese and Korean Christianity] (Tokyo: Shinkyō-Shuppansha, 1968); Masahiko Kurata, *Ten'nōsei to Kankoku kirisutokyō* [Emperor System and Christianity in Korea] (Tokyo: Shinkyō-Shuppansha, 1991); Jeongmin Seo, *Ilbon Gidokgyo ui Hanguk insik* [Japanese Christians' understanding towards Korea] (Seoul: Hanul Academy, 2000); Jeongmin Seo, *Han Il Gidokgyo gwangyesa yeongu* [Historical Study of Relations between Korean and Japanese Christianity] (Seoul: Daehan gidokgyo seohoe, 2002); Hyeon-hye Yang, *Geundae Han-Il gwangyesa sokui gidokgyo* [Christianity in the Modern History of Korea-Japan Relations] (Seoul: Department of Publishing, Ewha Womans University, 2009), etc.

² Myongsuk Kang, "1920 nyeondae Jungguk Bangidokgyo undong-gwa Sikminji Choseon-ui Sahoeju-ui undong" [The Anti-Christian Movement in the 1920s China and the Socialist Movement in Colonial Korea], *Christianity and History in Korea* 8 (March 1998): 143–171; Deokju Lee, "1908 nyeon Manju Buheungundong-e gwanhan yeongu" [Study of Manchuria Revival Movement in 1908], *Christianity and History in Korea* 28 (March 2008): 123–161; Hyewon Lee, "Uihwadan undong-i hanguk gaesingyo hyeonjang-e michin yeonghyang" [The Impact of the Boxer Uprising on the Protestant Missions in Korean], *Christianity and History in Korea* 33 (September 2010): 215–251, etc.

bates between missionaries and Chinese Christians, and Korean and Japanese Christians use these terminologies after they simply change the pronunciation of the Chinese characters. Chinese Christianity has affected Korean churches in various ways. First, several of the first missionaries who came to Korea used to work in China, such as Horace N. Allen, who was the first Protestant missionary of Korea; Franklin Ohlinger, who led the Christian publication movement during the 1890s in Korea; and C. F. Ried, who was a pioneer of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South of Korea. Korean missionaries also studied Chinese mission strategies through Chinese mission magazines and journals. The first Korean version of the Bible was translated from the Chinese Bible, and several Korean Christian leaders went to China to study theology. These are only a few examples that demonstrate the close relationship between Chinese and Korean Christian communities. Nonetheless, scholars have not paid much attention to this historical relationship between the Christian communities in China and Korea.

Anti-Christian movements that had happened in China before the twentieth century and in the 1920s affected Korea directly. Catholic scholars have studied the relationship between anti-Christian movements under the late Ming and the early Qing dynasties and those of the Choseon dynasty. Also scholars have partially studied how Chinese anti-Christian movement led by the communists during the 1920s influenced the Korean anti-Christian movement.³ However, the influence of anti-Christian and anti-Western movements in late nineteenth century China on the Christian mission in Korea has not yet been studied.

Therefore, this article aims to show how the Korean Christians and Korea missionaries recognized and understood the Boxer uprising that happened in 1900. This paper is developed from a larger ongoing research study on the relationship between Chinese and Korean Christianity.

³ Kang, "1920 nyeondae Jungguk Bangidokgyo undong-gwa Sikminji Choseon-ui Sahoeju-ui undong," 143–171.

2. THE BOXER MOVEMENT'S INFLUENCE ON KOREAN CHRISTIANITY

Before examining how Korean Christians understood the Boxer uprising, the direct influence of the Boxer uprising on Korean churches needs to be illustrated. First, in 1900 and 1901, anti-Christian movements happened more frequently than they did in the late 1800s and the early 1900s in Korea. Especially in the northern parts of the Korean Peninsula, in cities bordering China, such as Eui-ju 義州 and Yong-chun 龍川, the Dong-hak 東學 and the Hwalbin-dang 活貧黨 attacked churches and looted Christians, and anti-Christian and anti-foreign movements were organized. In the end, missionaries had to ask the US legation to help solve these problems.⁴ The cities in the southern part of the peninsula also underwent severe anti-foreign movements. The Dong-hak and the Hwalbin-dang recognized what the Boxers had done in China, and followed its model.⁵ Korean missionaries worried that a violent anti-Christian movement like that of the Boxers could happen in Korea. As feared, one of the leading religious masses in Korea plotted to massacre all of the missionaries and Korean Christians on December 6, 1900 following the Boxers' steps.⁶ They forged the Royal Edit to annihilate all local Christians and missionaries. While the attempt failed, the Korean missionary society and Korean Christians had to suffer intense fear and an anti-Christian

⁴ Refer to “Bu Moffett bogo (Gidok gyosa gyomin ui guryu mit hilnanpungmun)” [Attached Report of Moffett (News about Detention and Interrogation of Christian Preachers and Parishioners)], September 10, 1900, “Seongyosa mit gyomin-bohoyocheong” [Request to Protect Preachers and Parishioners], *Guhanguk oegyomunseo* [Official Documents of Foreign Affairs of Old Korea] 12, US File no. 3, September 14, 1900; “Migukgongsaga Pyongbukjiyeok Donghakgyoindulrobuteo Migukin Seongyosawa gyoyindelui Boho Yocheong” [American Legation's Request for Protecting American Missionaries and Korean Christians of Pyongbuk Province from the Dong-Hak], *Guhanmal oegyomunseo* [Official Documents of Foreign Affairs of Old Korea], Note no. 17, September 21, 1900; “Cheong-guk sabyeon-e gwanryeonhan pyeong-yang mit bukgyeong bukbang jeonghwang je o hoe bogo” [Report no. 5 on the Situation of Pyongyang and Northern Territory After the Qing Incident], *Juhan Ilbon gongsagwan munseo* [Official Documents of Japanese Office in Korea], Official Letters no. 14, September 22, 1900.

⁵ Mattie B. Ingold, Personal Report, October 18, 1900, in *Personal Reports of the Southern Presbyterian Missionaries in Korea* 1, no. 18.

⁶ Allen's letter to Ellinwood, December 17, 1900.

atmosphere after the event. In Jeju Island, a real massacre took place in May 1901, resulting in deaths of more than 300 Korean Catholic Christians.

Second, Korean Christian immigrants living in Manchuria were attacked by the Boxers directly, and churches were destroyed.⁷ There were more than 60,000 Koreans in Manchuria at the time, and two Scottish missionaries, John Ross 羅約翰 and John MacIntyre 馬勤泰, in Shenyang were interested in the Koreans since 1874.⁸ As a result, more than 100 Koreans received baptism and formed approximately 28 Christian villages in Manchuria.⁹ However, these churches and villages were totally destroyed by the Boxers and numerous Korean Christians were killed.¹⁰

Third, four Anglican medical missionaries working in Korea were dispatched to a hospital in Shandong, China to treat foreign soldiers who had been wounded during the Boxer war; as a result, three out of four Anglican hospitals in Korea had to shut down.¹¹ Also, some newly trained and appointed missionaries of different denominations who were waiting in America to leave for China had to change their mission field to Korea.¹²

Last, when the Boxer uprising and the Boxer war broke out, hundreds of Chinese Christians and dozens of missionaries fled to Korea. Many Korean churches provided shelters, food, and travel expenses to Chinese Christian refugees. Also Korean Christians gathered relief contributions for destroyed Chinese churches.¹³ Some Korean missionaries went to China to see the destroyed mission field in person and

⁷ *Gokyō* 護教 [Apologetics], September 22, 1900 / 明治三十三年, 7; *The Christian News*, July 18, 1901, 8; Bishop Gustave Charles Marie Muttel's Annual Report, 1901, *Myeongdong Cheonjugyohoe 200 nyeonsa jaryojib je il jib: Seoul gyogu yeonbo (il)* [Historical Data of 200 Years of Myeongdong Catholic Diocese, vol. 1, Annual Report of the Seoul Parish (1)] (Seoul: Myeongdong Catholic Church, 1984), 283–294.

⁸ J. Ross, "Visit to the Corean Gate," *The Chinese Recorder* 10, no. 6 (November–December 1874): 347–354; J. Ross, "China-Manchuria," *United Presbyterian Missionary Report* (October 1, 1880): 333–334.

⁹ J. Orr, "The Gospel in Corea," *United Presbyterian Missionary Report* (June 2, 1890): 188.

¹⁰ *The Christian News*, July 18, 1901, 8.

¹¹ Mark Napier Trollope, *The Church in Corea* (London: A. R. Mowbray & Co. Ltd., 1915), 37.

¹² Arthur J. Brown's letter to missionaries, July 21, 1900.

¹³ *Sinhak wolbo* 神學月報 [Theological Monthly Magazine] 1, no. 2 (January 1901): 78; 1, no. 3 (February 1901): 122; 1, no. 4 (March 1901): 166.

reported to the Korea mission society, and called for help to Korean churches.¹⁴

3. KOREA CHRISTIANS' UNDERSTANDING OF THE BOXER MOVEMENT

The year when the first Protestant missionary came to Korea was 1884; thus 1900 was only the sixteenth anniversary for Korean Christians. During that time, there was not a single Korean pastor or theologian. Hence, Korean Christians did not leave many written materials in 1900. Only one Christian leader, Yun Chi-ho 尹致昊 (1865–1945), and one pro-Christian leader, Jeong Gyo 鄭喬 (1856–1925), left diaries in which they mentioned the Boxer uprising. First, Yun Chi-ho, one of the most important politicians and Christian leaders of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, who studied in Zhongxi shuyuan 中西書院 of Shanghai, Vanderbilt University and Emory University, and who organized the Independent Association 獨立協會 and YMCA of Korea, wrote about the Boxer uprising in his diary in December 1900:

This has been a disastrous year for China. Empress Dowager and Prince Tuan encouraged and co-operated with the Boxers—a Chinese version of the Tong Haks 東學—to massacre missionaries, attack Legations and to clear China of foreigners in general. The hostility began as early as in May. The foreign powers sent an allied army which, after severe fights, took Peking. The old lady and her evil advisors had to clear out of the city double quick. So for the present, and for all practical purposes, China is going as an independent power. Thanks to the exclusive sway of Confucianism, China is a big Korea and Korea is a little China. The same religion, the same political system, the same moral standard, the same corruption, the same pig-headedness, the same aversion to improvement—the same end!¹⁵

¹⁴ Mattie Wilcox Noble, *The Journals of Mattie Wilcox Noble, 1892–1934* (Seoul: The Institute of the History of Christianity in Korea, 2009), 86.

¹⁵ Chi-ho Yun, *Yunchiho ilgi (o)* 尹致昊日記(五) [*Diary of Yun Chi-ho*], vol. 5, December 1900 (Seoul: Gugga pyeonchan wiwonhoe, 1975), 252. He wrote diary in English since December 1889.

Even though it is a very short record, we can see how Yun understood the Boxer movement. First, Yun recognized the Boxer uprising as an anti-Christian movement rather than as an anti-foreign movement. Second, he saw the Boxers as a religious mass with similarities to the Dong-Hak in Korea. Third, he believed that the Chinese society and its government showed their incompetence and corruption by supporting the Boxers, and he thought the Korean society and its government were following the same steps.

Next, Jeong Gyo, who was a member of the Independent Association and had a close relationship with a Methodist missionary Henry G. Appenzeller, wrote about the Boxer uprising in his chronology, *Daehan gyenyeonsa* 大韓季年史, in April 1900 as follows:

Uprising of the Boxer's movement in April: The Boxers rose up in Shandong province and expanded to Zhili. They are regarded as a branch of the White Lotus Association, and their leader Mr. Li Lai-zhong is also from Laishui district, Zhili province. Lawsuits for property between martial arts masters and Christians led to conflict. Three martial arts masters and some followers in Shandong attacked Christians, and Christians fought back. Angry boxers recruited followers; burned Christians' houses and churches; and killed missionaries and Christians. The official military could not control the boxers, so they kept growing rapidly. They adopted a slogan of "support the *Qing*, destroy the foreigners," and were supported by Prince Duan, who was closely connected with Empress Dowager Cixi, and high officials like Gang Yi.¹⁶

In 1908, he mentioned the Boxers one more time in his chronology as he illustrated Empress Dowager. Here, Jeong uses the word *danbi* 團匪 (group of bandits) when he describes the Boxers.¹⁷ First, Jeong defined the Boxers as a branch of the White Lotus and secret mass; second, he thought the reason the Boxers attacked Christians was because missionaries frequently intervened in lawsuits between Christians and non-Christians; and third, he thought the Boxer movement began as an anti-Christian movement but changed into an anti-foreign movement.

While Yun, a Christian leader, recognized the Boxer movement as

¹⁶ Gyo Jeong, *Daehan gyenyeonsa* [Chronology of Korea], vol. 5 (Seoul: Somyong, 2004), 170–171.

¹⁷ Jeong, *Daehan gyenyeonsa*, vol. 9 (Seoul: Somyong, 2004), 30.

an anti-Christian movement, Jeong thought it was an anti-foreign movement, which is in line with how other daily newspapers in Korea at the time viewed the Boxers.

As for Christian newspapers, there were two weekly Christian newspapers written in Korean: the *Korean Christian Advocate* (KCA), and its editor-in-chief was Henry G. Appenzeller of the Methodist Church; and the *Christian News* (CN), of which the editor-in-chief was Horace G. Underwood of the Presbyterian Church. The CN covered a wider variety of topics (including agriculture, manufacturing and general foreign news) than the KCA. Unfortunately, however, all the issues of the CN from the year 1899 to 1900 are currently missing and so it is impossible to see how the paper described the Boxer movement in 1900. For this reason, I use the KCA to explore how Korean Christians understood the Boxer movement when it first arose. Then, the CN is studied to examine the opinions of Korean Christians in 1901.

It was on June 20, 1900 when the first report of the Boxer uprising appeared in the KCA. It seemed a bit late compared to coverage by other newspapers, such as *North China Daily News*, a western press, which reported on the Boxer uprising for the first time in early October 1899. The newspaper stated that an accident happened on September 21, 1899 between the Chinese mass and Christians.¹⁸ Since December 1899, Chinese missionaries began reporting on the anti-Christian atmosphere that had spread throughout the Shandong province,¹⁹ and Korean mass media, such as *Hwangseong sinmun* (皇城新聞 Imperial City Newspaper) and *Jeguk sinmun* (帝國新聞 Empire Newspaper), started covering the Boxer uprising since April 14, 1900. Thus, it appears that Christian newspapers were late in delivering the news of the Boxers to Korean Christians as the first coverage was in June 1900. However, if we take into consideration that the KCA was a Christian newspaper that only dealt with commentaries of the Bible, theology, and news of Korean churches, and before the outbreak of the Boxer uprising, had hardly any coverage on foreign events, it was not so delayed in its reports of the Boxer uprising especially since the most crucial massacres of Protestant missionaries and Christians happened in June.

On June 20, 1900, news of the Boxer uprising was reported on page six of the KCA:

¹⁸ Victor Purcell, *The Boxer Uprising: A Background Study* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963), 242.

¹⁹ Paul A. Cohen, *History in Three Keys: The Boxers as Event, Experience, and Myth* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 44.

Rampant Boxer 義和團猖獗: We heard news that the Boxers arose in Shandong province and they continue to move towards the north. They are now in Baodingfu and some other places in Hubei. They destroy Christian churches, and have already killed nine Catholic Christians. Many people in Shandong province and the cities of the northern part are supporting and following the Boxers, and it is hard for the Chinese soldiers to suppress the movement on their own. As the Boxers keep getting crueler and larger, several foreign countries united and dispatched their allied armies to Tianjin and Taigu, and some foreign soldiers went to Beijing.²⁰

A week after its first report, the newspaper spent the whole front and second pages to introduce the Boxers in detail. Every week after that, the newspaper reported on the Boxer war and the movement.

Several features can be found in the newspaper reports of the Boxer movement. First, the *KCA* was much more interested in the Boxers' religious figures than were other newspapers. For example, when it analyzed the Boxers' origin and characteristics for the first time on June 27, 1900, it focused on the Boxers' shamanistic character and occult culture:

When we hear the news of what happened in the Qing dynasty, there are many things which make people worried. It is impossible to write down all the details which show the Boxers' chaotic cruelty, so we are going to roughly summarize. . . . About fifteen months ago, the Boxers gathered together in Shandong province and practiced martial art. One day, they began to argue that some of them had received the spirit of god inside their bodies and thus had immortal powers. Members were given charms that were believed to protect the bodies from guns and swords.²¹

A month later, the *KCA* remarked on the Boxers' religious figures as it reported on the Boxer war. It stated, "[Boxers] argued they could control ghosts by spells and magical tricks so that they are not harmed even in water or in fire."²² The *KCA* continued to be interested in the Boxers' religious characteristics. Other Korean newspapers, *Hwangseong sinmun* and *Jeguk sinmun*, did not pay much attention to the religious figures of the Boxers; rather, they focused more on the

²⁰ *The Korean Christian Advocate*, June 20, 1900, 6.

²¹ *Ibid.*, June 27, 1900, 1.

²² *Ibid.*, July 25, 1900, 1.

realignment of political powers and argued that “stupid Boxers broke out the rebellion so that foreign armies could invade China formally.” The *KCA*, on the other hand, spent many pages and energy to explain how the Boxers performed their religious rituals. It can be understood that the *KCA* tried to analyze the Boxer uprising as a persecution of one religion, Christianity, by another religion, the Boxers.

Second, the newspaper focused much more on the losses of the Protestant churches than those of the Catholic Church.²³ Catholic missionaries and Christians were the main targets of the initial attack, thus the damage and losses of the Catholic Church were greater than those of the Protestant churches. However, it is hard to find any news reporting the loss of the Catholic Church. Instead, the *KCA* pointed out that the Boxers attacked Christianity, including both Catholic and Protestant, because of the following reason: “Two years ago, the Catholic Church bought a village shrine and built a church on it. As a result, the people hated the Catholic Church and gathered to destroy the newly built church.”²⁴ “After that, the Boxers held placards opposing Christianity and attacked not only Catholic churches but also Protestant churches in every Shandong province.”²⁵ That is, the Protestant newspaper tried to blame the Catholic Church for the attack and the whole occurrence. At the time, the relationship between the Protestant churches and the Catholic Church was worse than ever in Korea. Dozens of missionary letters written around 1900 can be found, which insist that Catholic Christians beat Protestant Christians, or Catholic missionaries disturbed Protestant missionaries when they tried to buy land or a house. They were rivals rather than friends, or co-workers in the Korean mission field, especially for the first few decades since the Protestant mission work started in Korea. The newspaper shows this hostility towards the Catholic Church in the Korean historical context.

Third, the *KCA* carefully observed the Korean government’s reaction. When the war between the Qing dynasty and the allied forces broke out, King Gojong 高宗 sent consolatory letters to every legation which participated in the war, both the Qing and the eight allied countries.²⁶ If there was any meeting or gathering of government officials and consuls, the *KCA* reported it. Also, when the allied forces won the war, King Gojong sent presents, such as rice, wheat flour and tobacco,

²³ Ibid., June 27, 1900, 1–2; July 18, 1900, 1, 6; August 8, 1900, 1.

²⁴ Ibid., June 27, 1900, 1–2.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid., 6.

to the allied soldiers in China, to which the *KCA* paid much attention.²⁷ Other Korean newspapers focused on the possible political influence of the war which could affect the Korean Peninsula. The *KCA*, however, did not show any interest in that kind of influence. Instead, it was mainly concerned about the relationship between the Korean government and the foreign legations which could directly affect the mission work.

Fourth, Korean newspapers, such as *Hwangseong sinmun*, worried about the Boxer war because they thought the eight allied forces could make certain diplomatic changes that could affect Korea and her independence. However, the *KCA* affirmed that there would be no direct influence on Korea.²⁸ Although the *KCA* reported that the Japanese and the Russian armies had passed through the Korean Peninsula to participate in the war,²⁹ it did not think this would influence Korea diplomatically. *Hwangseong sinmun* felt uneasy about the dispatch of Japanese and Russian soldiers because it thought another war could break out after the Boxer war; in contrast, the *KCA* welcomed the Japanese and the Russian armies because they were heading to China to suppress the Boxers and save Christians.³⁰ The *KCA* was a Christian newspaper which mostly paid attention to the massacre and relief of Christians. Thus, its prime concern was saving Christians, not a war that did not happen yet.

Fifth, the *KCA* asked the Koreans to pray for the Chinese Christians:

We are not related to the occurrence happening in China, and we do not know what will happen in the future, but one thing we have to do is believe in God and do what we have to do.³¹

We do not know what will happen in China in the future; the thing we need to do now is pray to God for help for our Chinese Christian friends.³²

Korean Christians worried that the same kind of massacre could also happen in Korea. So the *KCA* needed to calm the Koreans down by

²⁷ Ibid., August 8, 1900, 6.

²⁸ Ibid., June 27, 1900, 1–2.

²⁹ Ibid., July 4, 1900, 6; July 11, 1900, 6.

³⁰ Ibid., July 4, 1900, 6.

³¹ Ibid., June 27, 1900, 2.

³² Ibid., July 18, 1900, 1.

assuring that “We are not related to the occurrence happening in China.” They also asked the Koreans to pray for the Chinese people, as the bishop of the Korea Mission of the Methodist Episcopal Church of the USA, North, was also in charge of the North China Mission. Hence, the *KCA* reflected the bishop’s anxiety.

On a different note, the *KCA* generally reported one or two days earlier than *Hwangseong sinmun* or *Jeguk sinmun*.³³ An American missionary, Henry G. Appenzeller, was in charge of the *KCA*. Thus, the newspaper was able to obtain information directly from various foreign sources, including foreign newspapers and telegrams from legations, whereas other Korean newspapers were limited to using Chinese and Japanese newspapers. The *KCA* did not report on any foreign news before the Boxer uprising. Since the event, however, the *KCA* delivered news of the Boxers every week, which shows the degree to which Korean Christians and missionaries were shocked and worried.

As for the *CN*, Horace G. Underwood was the editor-in-chief in 1900. As a weekly Presbyterian newspaper, the *CN* was interested in a wider variety of issues and topics, including Christian and non-Christian news, and had more pages than the *KCA*. This caused Underwood to face severe opposition by other missionaries of the Northern provinces, who did not understand why a Korea Mission-sponsored Presbyterian newspaper had to include secular news, including agricultural, manufacturing and foreign news. Underwood, however, insisted on covering secular topics, and the *CN* became the only Korean newspaper at the time that provided and directly translated Western news.³⁴ The newspaper had a “Foreign News” section, and articles were translated from the Shanghai English Newspaper, the Beijing English Newspaper, and telegrams from Europe, America, China and Japan to the American legation or the Korea Mission of Seoul.

³³ For example, when the Russian army occupied Hunchun, Manchuria, Koreans who were living there urgently crossed the Yalu River and came to Hamkyong province, North Korea. The *KCA* wrote about the news on August 22; whereas *Hwangseong sinmun* reported on August 23. The expressions and words of *Hwangseong sinmun* are very similar to those of the *KCA*, written a day earlier. This shows that *Hwangseong sinmun* referred to the *KCA*’s news report.

³⁴ J. H. Wells’ letter to Dr. A. J. Brown, December 10, 1900, 8, Document no. 102, *Report and Letters from Korea Mission, PCUSA*, vol. 27, 37. For H. G. Underwood’s argument on this opposition, refer to H. G. Underwood’s letter to Ellinwood, January 8, 1901, *Underwood Material*, vol. 3 (Seoul: Yonsei University Press, 2007), 3–8.

News coverage of the Boxer movement in the *CN* in 1901 was more specific and detailed than any other report on the Boxers at the time. The *CN*'s report of the Boxers can be analyzed as follows: First, it contained a much wider variety of detailed foreign news compared to other mass media which merely stated summarized information. The *CN* chose to show full translated texts of reports from Western mass media, and even occasionally translated full versions of editorial comments or articles on the Boxer war and on the treaty process of the Qing dynasty and the eight Western powers. For example, the *CN* translated the full text of the announcement by the secretary of the American delegation of the allied armies on page four of two issues released on January 31 and February 7, 1901. The *CN* was a door that introduced the Boxers and Western news to the Koreans. Not only did it report on the timelines and procedures of the treaty, but also wrote about each country's demands and needs in detail.

Second, when it wrote about the treaty, the *CN* showed deep interest in the clauses that were related to Christianity. On February 28, 1900, the newspaper published an article titled "Gun-Il Yoo and the Conditions of the Treaty," where it emphasized supplementary clauses over the main agreements:

The clause indicates that churches should not interfere in lawsuits between Christians and non-Christians according to the current rule; to settle down a peaceful atmosphere, there should be a particular rule between Christians and non-Christians, and between missionaries and local officials.³⁵

Also, when it introduced the Royal Edit of Emperor Guangxu 光緒帝, the *CN* stated the parts most relevant to Christians first:

The Emperor explained the importance of the protection of foreigners in inland China, and ordered to punish local officials who supported the Boxers, and commanded that the official civil service examinations be suspended for five years in regions where the Boxers killed foreigners.³⁶

As a Christian newspaper, the *CN* showed deep interest in news relevant to Christians.

³⁵ *The Christian News*, February 28, 1901, 5.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, March 7, 1901, 4.

Third, the *CN* showed deep insight into international relations, especially with regard to the tensions surrounding the Korean Peninsula. In the editorial comment of March 14, 1901, the *CN* stated its concerns about the awkward relationship and tensions between Russia and Japan after the Boxer war. Japan tried to seize Manchuria after the Sino-Japanese War, but Russia mediated between the two and stopped Japan from taking the land. After this event, the relationship between Russia and China went well, resulting in a secret comity treaty. However, after the Boxer war, Russia tried to seize Manchuria, and Japan intervened to stop Russia. The *CN* stated, "Every country wants a quiet and stable relationship between Russia and Japan; otherwise there should be big trouble in the near future."³⁷ The *CN* worried that a war would break out between Japan and Russia, and that Korea would be stuck between the two powers. It warned that "If the Koreans think and act like what they have had till now, the future will not be optimistic," and argued that the Koreans should be enlightened by Christianity to break through this difficult situation. As we see here, the *CN* anticipated the outbreak of the Russian-Japanese War, and also thought if a war were to start, the Korean Peninsula could be occupied by one of the two countries. As the relationship between Russia and Japan deteriorated, the *CN* tried to calm Korean Christians by asking "Korean Christians to keep praying to God sincerely, although we do not know the ending of the secular situation."³⁸

Fourth, the *CN* was only interested in the loss experienced by Protestants due to the Boxer movement. After the Boxer war, eight countries who dispatched their armies into China claimed indemnity from the Qing dynasty. In calculating the exact amount of loss, each country estimated its loss by including both people's lives and properties. The *CN* only showed interest in the loss and casualties of missionaries. The *CN* repeatedly wrote about the casualties of missionaries from different countries. For instance, on April 4, 1901, it stated, "last year, the total number of missionaries and their families who were killed by the Boxers was 134 adults and 52 children: 98 from England, 56 from Sweden, and 32 from America."³⁹ The *CN* did not pay any attention to the loss suffered by Catholics or other people. Five months later, in September 1901, it mentioned the loss of missionaries again,

³⁷ Ibid., March 14, 1901, 10.

³⁸ Ibid., May 2, 1901, 7.

³⁹ Ibid., April 4, 1901, 8.

but still there was not a single word about the Catholic Church.⁴⁰ After the war, missionaries who had fled to Shanghai, Korea and Japan returned to their mission fields. The *CN* introduced the resuming of mission work and gatherings of Christians, especially in Baodingfu city, but still reported nothing on the Catholic Church.⁴¹

Fifth, the *CN* introduced stories of Chinese Christians and missionaries who the Boxers persecuted, and tried to make Korean Christians learn of their faith. The *CN* translated numerous news and minutes from the Chinese Bible Society. One missionary from the Society was caught by the Boxers, but “she said that she was not sorry to die here after suffering a lot of difficulties in China and for China,” and “lots of local Christians who were killed by the Boxers also said the same thing before being executed.”⁴² The *CN* also carried news about the Christians of Shenyang, Manchuria:

The Boxers came to this city and hunted, looted, and killed Christians. Some Christians shaved their hair and pretended to be Buddhist monks, some ran away to a millet farm, and some were caught and killed without any resistance. The Boxers said to Christians that if they betray Jesus and become Buddhists, they will not be persecuted. But they did not betray Jesus and were killed. One Christian said, “I can’t do that because I’m a Christian” and he was beheaded as he prayed with his head down. A deaf Christian was also beheaded like that. More than half of the Christians suffered and many of them were killed, but because of the Christians’ blood, the church of Manchuria got glory. Even though the Boxers rose, it was just a temporary event and did not last long. Christians are, however, still alive.⁴³

In November 1901, the *CN* introduced a story on a Christian couple and their little child to show the family’s strong faith in God. The parents were killed because they had cross marks on their foreheads, but the son could survive because he did not. Watching his parents beheaded before his own eyes, the son, however, tried to follow their faith.⁴⁴ Through its reports on the Boxers and their persecution of

⁴⁰ Ibid., September 21, 1901, 5.

⁴¹ Ibid., May 2, 1901, 7.

⁴² Ibid., April 4, 1901, 8.

⁴³ Ibid., May 16, 1901, 6.

⁴⁴ Ibid., November 14, 1901, 4.

Christians, the *CN* tried to strengthen the faith of Korean Christians, who also occasionally suffered minor persecutions.

4. KOREAN MISSIONARIES' UNDERSTANDING OF THE BOXER MOVEMENT

James S. Gale, a missionary of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, described the Boxers as “the dark cruel demon[s] of the Far East who rules many hearts and has no ear open to any cry of mercy.”⁴⁵ This might be the first impression missionaries in Korea, who were also working in a pagan country, had had in their minds of the Boxers.

In 1900, among the denominations working in Korea, only the Anglican Church published a missionary journal, titled the *Morning Calm* (MC). This journal was issued in July 1890 in London by Charles John Corfe, the first bishop of Korea Anglican Church. It aimed to introduce the Anglican missionary's work in Korea to the British people.⁴⁶ Although it was published in England, all contents were filled with missionary reports and letters, in which many mentioned the Boxer uprising.

At the time of the Boxer uprising, the Anglican Church had six dioceses in China and Korea altogether. Of the six dioceses, the British Anglican Church was taking care of five, and the American Anglican Church was taking care of one.⁴⁷ Three Anglican missionaries were killed by the Boxers: Sydney Malcolm Brooks on December 30, 1899; Charles Robinson on June 1, 1900; and Harry Vine Norman on June 2, 1900.⁴⁸ Hence, the Anglican Church was extremely worried about the overall security in the Far East. At that time, the British Anglican Church was publishing a small quarterly magazine called the *Quarterly Paper of Intercession and Thanksgiving for the Church's Work Abroad*

⁴⁵ J. S. Gale's letter to Ellinwood, Document no. 100, *Report and Letters from Korea Mission, PCUSA*, vol. 27 (December 1, 1900): 23.

⁴⁶ Jaejeong Lee, *Daehan seong-gonghoe baeknyeonsa* (1890–1990) [A Century History of the Korea Anglican Church] (Seoul: Korea Anglican Church Press), 230–232.

⁴⁷ C. J. Corfe, “The Bishop's Letters 2,” *The Morning Calm* 11, no. 83 (February 1900): 4.

⁴⁸ *Quarterly Paper of Intercession and Thanksgiving for the Church's Work Abroad*, no. 2 (July 1900): 4; “China,” *Report of the Year 1901* (London: The Society by Spottiswoode & Co. Ltd, 1902), 105.

(Intercession), which contained prayer titles and brief news about mission work in the world. In July 1900, the first and main prayer title for the “Daily prayer” was:

For the Church in South Africa and in China during this time of anxiety and distress. For a speedy return of peace, safety and good will. To crown with Thy blessing the efforts to form new bishopric for North China.⁴⁹

This quarterly paper contained a daily prayer title that needed to be prayed every day and seven prayer titles that needed to be prayed on each day of the week. The prayer for North China was located in the daily part, which shows how much the Anglican Church was concerned about the safety of the North China Mission at the time.

It was in August 1900 when the *MC* first mentioned the Boxer uprising. Given that the Boxer war was already coming to a close in August 1900, the first report of the *MC* on the Boxer war seems to have come rather late in the year. However, we need to take into account that the mission journal was published quarterly—that is, in February, May, August, and November—and that the reports and letters contained in August were sent between February and May from Korea.

The *MC* first mentioned the Boxers while introducing a petition sent by the China diocese. Before the petition appears, the editor of the *MC* commented on the Boxers as follows:

The sad events in China have been moving on so rapidly that we hardly dare think what tragedies and brave martyrdoms may have taken place between the time of writing these lines and the date when they reach our readers in print. Last year, towards its end, the Rev. Sydney Brooks was murdered in North China by the cruel “Big Sword Society,” which we call the “Boxers”; and at the beginning of the present trouble two more missionaries were massacred, the Rev. H. V. Norman and the Rev. C. Robinson. Both were stationed at Yung-Ching; and both had been students at St. Boniface, Warminster. . . . Rather than repeating news that appears from day to day in our morning papers, we venture to quote a portion of a strong letter

⁴⁹ *Quarterly Paper of Intercession and Thanksgiving for the Church's Work Abroad*, no. 2 (July 1900): 2.

of appeal which has been put forward by the authorities of the North China Diocese.⁵⁰

From the petition, we see that the Anglican Church recognized the Boxers as a violent mass rather than as a religious group. Following this brief comment, the *MC* introduced the petition letter from the North China Mission, which argued that more missionaries needed to be sent to China.

When the August issue was being edited and published, Bishop Corfe of the Korea Mission, who was in Niu Chwang, North China to attend the celebration of the completion of a new cathedral, went missing. The Board and the Korea Mission had not heard from him for several months after the Boxers headed to North China. The Board heard tragic rumors and news that the Boxers seized North China, including Niu Chwang. There were also rumors about the Boxers invading Korea and attacking Korea missionaries and Christians. Thus, the editor of the *MC* treated Korea as an endangered mission field; in its editorial comments, the *MC* states, “The present danger to missionaries in China and Corea.”⁵¹ After all, the *MC*’s understanding of the Boxers and the situation depended wholly on the understanding of Western mass media.

Fortunately, Bishop Corfe was safe under the Russian army’s protection, who tried to protect the railroads that Russia built near Niu Chwang. He was able to send a letter for the November issue. Bishop Corfe wrote about the situation of Niu Chwang and some news he heard while in China. He described the characteristics of the Boxers and their attacks as follows:

It is a melancholy satisfaction for us [as] missionaries to reflect that the world at last knows—what is of course well known in China—that the root objection of the Chinese is not to Christianity, but to foreigners—no matter whence they come or why. But even this objection is not shared by the masses of the people. It is, almost exclusively, the attitude of the official and graduate class.⁵²

He believed that the main target of the Boxers’ attack was not Christians but foreigners. He also thought that only official groups and elites

⁵⁰ “Spirit of Missions: China,” *The Morning Calm* 11, no. 85 (August 1900): 77–78.

⁵¹ “Intercession,” *ibid.*, 81.

⁵² C. J. Corfe, “The Bishop’s Letters, 1. Niu Chwang, June 1900,” *The Morning Calm* 11, no. 86 (November 1900): 86.

shared the Boxers' point. This argument was very popular among China missionaries: The Boxers were not an anti-Christian movement but an anti-foreign movement. Corfe states, "What an apple of discord has thus been thrown by China amongst nations already so filled with discordant elements as the Governments of Europe."

On the other hand, the Korea Mission of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the USA made a statement about the Boxer uprising in an annual conference in 1901:

That we express to the members of the North China Conference our heart-felt sympathy in the trials they have been called upon to pass through in the endangering of their lives, the interruption of their work and the loss of their homes and possessions; and we extend our sympathy to those who have suffered the loss of dear ones; also that we record our admiration of their heroic conduct in great peril, and appreciation of their example of Christian fortitude and faithfulness which is an encouragement to us and will remain a precious legacy to the church to the end of time.⁵³

The Methodist missionaries regarded the Boxer uprising as an "inscrutable providence of God," but they did not show any kind of political opinion because this was an official announcement of the annual meeting. William B. Scranton, superintendent of the Korea Methodist Episcopal Church, North, wrote about the Boxers in a letter to the Mission Board on July 26, 1900, which states as follows:

We are all well in the Mission. Chinese affairs do not in the least affect our quick as yet. Brother Fallwell in Pyeng Yang writes hoping Chinese disturbances will not hinder Brother Morris in coming out to us as was planned. . . . I cannot tell you anything about China which you [have not yet] learned. We only receive the same telegrams which you have. . . . This terrible war in China will cause our Missionary Society many an anxious moment.⁵⁴

In addressing the security situation of Korea, Scranton emphasized that "Chinese affairs do not in the least affect our quick" because he

⁵³ Official Minutes of the Seventeenth Annual Meeting, Korea Mission, Methodist Episcopal Church, 1901, 66.

⁵⁴ Wm. B. Scranton's letter to Dr. Leonard, July 26, 1900, in *Letters of William B. Scranton, 1883-1907* (Seoul: The Institute of the History of Christianity in Korea, 2010), 307-308.

wanted to eliminate popular misconceptions and rumors about Korea in Western society that Korea was also in danger and Korea missionaries were beheaded like their China counterparts. The Board asked Scranton to provide further information about the Chinese situation as all telegram cables in Manchuria were cut by the Boxers on July 8, and Incheon became the center for gathering information about the war since July 10. Reporters in Shandong sailed to Incheon to send telegrams about the Chinese situation to Western countries. The Mission Board in America also tried to get information from the Korea Mission.

Eugene Bell—a missionary of the Presbyterian Church in the USA who worked in Mokpo, southern part of Korea—left the largest amount of letters, which he wrote to relatives, friends and the Mission Board almost every week. His descendants gathered and carefully preserved the letters. In his letters written between May and October 1900, Bell talked about the Boxers and the Korean situation. He wrote to his mother on June 19, 1900:

Since the trouble in China began we have not had as many steamers as usual. One of the boats that was to come here was taken by the Japanese government to take away the wounded soldiers after the first engagement at Taiku, China. . . . It seems the regular soldiers and the insurgents have united to make war on all foreigners. One telegram said the American Consul at Chefoo had chartered a steamer to send up the Yangtze after the missionaries. Even at Shanghai they were fearing trouble and had asked for war ships.⁵⁵

When Western mass media began reporting rumors that Korea was also in danger, relatives of Korea missionaries worried about their safety and tried to get in touch with them. Eugene Bell tried to reply to those anxious relatives by sending letters or postcards more often. He repeatedly emphasized the safe and stable situation of Mokpo, Korea in his letters. He seems to have obtained news and information about the Boxer war very promptly and accurately. For instance, on June 16 the allied army sent an ultimatum to the Chinese government that they would attack Taigu 太沽 if the government did not stop supporting the Boxers. Three days later, Eugene Bell got this information and he even knew what the America legation in China tried to do to bring missionaries to inland China safely.

⁵⁵ Eugene Bell's letter to his mother, June 19, 1900, in *Personal Reports of the Southern Presbyterian Missionaries in Korea* 1, no. 5.

Eugene Bell did not seem interested in the Boxers' characteristics; rather, he paid more attention to the attitudes of American politicians toward the Boxer war, and to the possibility of an outbreak of the Russian-Japanese war.⁵⁶ At the time, the Democratic Party argued for an anti-imperialistic policy, which Eugene Bell supported. Bell believed the Boxer uprising occurred because of the imperialist pillage of China by Western countries. He thought the Boxer movement was an anti-imperialist movement rather than an anti-Christian movement. He argued that the seven Western countries and Japan dispatched their armies to China because they all wanted to divide China and occupy parts of her. In the same letter, he criticized the Chinese government for supporting the Boxers, and hoped the government would reform and become civilized.

Gustave Charles Marie Muttel, the Bishop of the Catholic Church in Korea, left a diary and a personal report that discuss the Boxer uprising. It was June 17, 1900 when he first wrote about the Boxer in his diary. However, at this time, he simply reported that "The situation of China is getting worse. Rebels sieged Beijing, so foreign troops who are anchoring in Taigu 太沽 harbor should have to land their soldiers to prevent this." Bishop Muttel called the Boxers "rebels" and occasionally wrote about the news and rumors that reached him.⁵⁷

After several days, on June 20, he heard the news that a real war had broken out between the Chinese government and Western forces, which greatly concerned him. Since then, he wrote every day about the news on the war in his diary. Since July 3, he began actively searching for Chinese news by visiting legations in person after he got a telegram saying that the pontifical building of Fengtian (奉天, nowadays 瀋陽) was burned. The bishop of Fengtian, a city located near Korea, was missionary Guillon. When Muttel heard the news that the Boxers were moving toward the Northeast, which is close to Korea, and a massacre began in cities in this area, he strived to get more information. He fell into deep sadness on July 10, 1900 when he learned the news that missionary Guillon, two other fathers, two sisters, and hundreds of local Christians were killed by the Boxers. In Muttel's case, he was more interested in the loss of Christians than in the characteristics of the Boxers. He was also not interested in the losses experienced by regions that did not involve the Catholic Church. For example, one day the le-

⁵⁶ Eugene Bell's letter to his mother, July 28, 1900, in *ibid.*

⁵⁷ Bishop Muttel's diary, vol. 2, 475 (June 17, 1900).

gation of Russia in Korea asked Bishop Muttel to send a representative to the Duman River so that they could watch out for the Boxers together. Muttel refused, stating, "I do not have interest in getting information of that area, because there is no Catholic Church and our Christians at all."⁵⁸ He was only concerned with the safety of regions with Catholic Christians, and he recorded everything he heard, especially information about the damages and losses suffered by the Catholic community. While Muttel showed interest in Yuan Shikai's 袁世凱 attitude toward the Boxers, this interest did not originate from a political concern; rather, he simply hoped that Yuan Shikai could save the lives of Christians and missionaries.⁵⁹

5. CONCLUSION

Generally, Korea missionaries regarded the Boxer movement as an anti-foreign, anti-imperialist movement rather than as an anti-Christian movement. Some were interested in the political aspects of the movement; while others were more concerned with the damages suffered by the Christian community and the safety of their people. Their interests in the Boxer movement, as a whole, were affected by their political stands.

Korea missionaries argued over why the Boxer movement broke out. This was a very important issue for missionaries personally and as a whole to sustain the overall foreign mission society. Who was to blame? The Mission Board of America had varied opinions on the Boxer movement coming from diverse strata of society, including the former president of the USA, ministers, legations and pastors; they also collected missionaries' opinions.⁶⁰

American mass media blamed the politics of China missionaries for the Boxer uprising. They criticized the missionaries' close connections with the legations and the power of warship. Horace N. Allen, who was the first Protestant missionary in Korea and who later became the lega-

⁵⁸ Ibid., 479 (July 4, 1900).

⁵⁹ Ibid., 479 (July 7, 19 and 24, 1900).

⁶⁰ Allen's letter to Ellinwood, *Report and Letters from Korea Mission, PCUSA*, vol. 27, Document no. 108 (December 17, 1900): 59-77.

tion of America, stood on this side. He once expressed his opinion of the Boxer uprising in his letter to Dr. Ellinwood, secretary of the Mission Board of the Presbyterian Church in the USA. In this letter, he argued that the Boxer uprising would have not broken out, if the missionaries had not depended on warship. He also pointed out that the mission strategy needed to be reconsidered as a whole.⁶¹ In China, as well as in Korea, missionaries tried to initiate lawsuits according to the treaty when problems arose between Christians or missionaries and the local people. Allen believed that this type of legal interference and lawsuit involvement brought the Boxer uprising.⁶²

On the other hand, missionaries such as Homer H. Hulbert and James S. Gale found fault with the attitude of missionaries, not with the politics. Homer H. Hulbert, a missionary of the Methodist Church who later became a secret envoy of King Gojong, contributed an article, titled “Missionaries and Chinese,” to the *Independent* arguing that

China has always been generous to other religions in history, but Christianity showed enmity toward Confucianism much more than other religions did which came to China before. Christian missionaries were attacked not because of their propagation work of a religion, but because they are foreigners who showed hostility toward Chinese culture.⁶³

James S. Gale, a missionary of the PCUSA, wrote a novel titled *The Vanguard: A Tale of Korea* and published it in 1904. While the book is classified as a novel, Gale tried to illustrate the Korea missionaries and their mission work in this book. The novel reflects real-life situations of the Korean mission society at the time. Gale severely criticized Western attitudes toward the Korean people via Mr. Wintershine, a character in the novel. One day, Mr. Wintershine pitched his tent on the grassy lawn by one of the ancestral graves of the local people, driving pegs around the sacred place and setting fires when he ought not. This was an insult to the village, and a squire came and roared with anger.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² H. N. Allen, *Things Korean: A Collection of Sketches and Anecdotes, Missionary and Diplomatic*, trans. Shin Bokryong (Seoul: Jipmoondang, 1999), 168.

⁶³ Homer H. Hulbert's letter to parents (August 12, 1900), Dokripundong-ga jaryo Hulbert Seosinryu, Hanguk-dokripsa Jeongbo Siseutem [Materials of Independence Activists, Letters of Hulbert, History of Korean Independent Movement Online Data System], accessed on April 2, 2012, <https://search.i815.or.kr/OrgData/OrgList.jsp?id=do&id=3-008785-230>.

Instead of apologizing, Wintershine took the squire by the back of his neck, and kicked him over the embankment. Gale commented, "It was another case of brutality such as he had seen more than once, and which in the Far East brings on Boxer trouble."⁶⁴

Lastly, the *CN*, which Horace G. Underwood was the editor-in-chief, participated in the argument and introduced foreign news on the same issue. The *CN* thought that Empress Dowager and the imperialistic foreigners should be the ones to blame rather than the missionaries for the Boxer uprising. The newspaper pointed out that "Chinese people got into a rage and killed the German legation because the German soldiers killed an innocent Chinese first; and the Boxers rose and spread out because the European governments were bad for China."⁶⁵ The foreign news section introduced the minutes from the Bible Society of China, and there the Society argued that,

People are saying that this Beijing uprising was caused by our Christian's attitude; however, the real reason came from Empress Dowager. The Chinese Emperor tried to reform old politics, but Empress Dowager and her supporters were so jealous of this that they agitated the Boxers and made them persecute Christians and destroy churches.⁶⁶

While Western mass media criticized China missionaries for their attitudes and their close connections with political powers, Korea missionaries argued that Western warships and Chinese politicians were responsible for the Boxers, not China missionaries. This shows that Korea missionaries, who were working in a pagan country with similar cultural and philosophical characteristics, had a close mental connection to their China counterparts.

⁶⁴ James S. Gale, *The Vanguard: A Tale of Korea* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1904), 187.

⁶⁵ *The Christian News*, February 7, 1901, 5.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, April 11, 1901, 7.