[page 11**]**

**LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATION IN THE OLIVE TREE MOVEMENT**

**by Felix Moos**

The existence and activities of “New Religions” are matters that no treatment of present day Korea or Japan can ignore. These “New Religions” include in some aspects some of the most vital forces in modern Korean life. Their vitality has been especially evident in the postwar period during which many socio-religious movements have arisen, temporarily flourished, achieved considerable influence and power, and some quickly died.

The Korean terms *Shinhung Jonggyo* (신흥 종교) and *Sin Jonggyo* (신종교) “Newly Risen Religions” and “New Religions” are terms often used to describe these movements, and although their meaning and significance is quite generally understood, exact delimitation is not very frequently made clear.

The problem perhaps centers primarily around two fundamental concepts relating to the meaning of “new” which in itself is a relative term. At what point does the new become old, traditional or established as an institution? In terms of content, at what point does a body of doctrine of an organization become a “new religion” rather than another sect or faction within a larger religious tradition?

In the West, we have faced and are still facing a similar problem of terminology in regard to “cults,” “sects,” etc. In what precise classification do Shakers, Mennonites, or Unitarians belong?

For present analytical purposes the term *Shinhung Jonggyo* denotes movements having come into prominence after World War II. Whenever a culture faces periods of accelerated change, uncertainty and discontent, members of that culture are looking more intensely for a belief which will provide answers to their physical, mental, and spiritual aspirations. At such times of [page 12**]** often intense stress, i. e., war, foreign occupation, conditions become fertile for the emergence of new expressions of religious, economic and political feeling and aspirations.

Thus, under conditions of stress, for many the formal, established, traditional religions, for example, failed to provide answers to the problem of a modified more “modern” existence. New aspirations had to be satisfied, new answers were sought. In addition, in the case of Korea, religious freedom was granted to the Koreans, really for the first time at the close of World War II. Until 1945 religious activities other than those serving the interests of Japan during her 36-year occupation of Korea were discouraged, to say the least.

Although in recent years the term *Shinhung Jonggyo* has often tended to be an expression of contempt or scorn referring to “low-class” or eccentric religious groupings or movements led and organized by charlatans seeking to deceive the ignorant, increasingly the New Religions of Korea are making their influence felt and are becoming as well an economic and political factor to be reckoned with. Presentday membership in “New Religions in Korea may exceed ten percent of the total population of the Republic of Korea.

Although the “New Religions” of Korea, unlike those of Japan (e.g., *Soka Gakkai*) have not yet exerted their strength politically, the existence of such strength in certain areas, at least, is undeniable. Economically also, the New Religions are able to make their presence felt. In some areas, the religious affiliation of a shop owner can mean the difference between prosperity and adversity and poverty.

Increasing power, undeniable vitality and continued expansion of the “New Religions” is causing a new appraisal of them.

It holds true in Korea that the characteristic of the New Religions is to consider their particular teaching, ceremonies, emphases, and sacred writings to have been divinely revealed to the founder. This was true for *Tonghak* (Ch’ondogyo), and is [page 13**]** true for *Tobg-il gyo* and *Park Chang-no gyo*. Rather than being the creation of a teacher, sage, or man, there is considered to be a divine source of inspiration. It may be that some god possessed the founder and spoke or wrote through him, or that a dream or vision was given, indicating the divine will, or merely that the mind of the founder was divinely inspired to perceive and enunciate the divine truth. In any case, the truth of the religion is considered to have come by divine revelation, which ensures validity.

The typical founder of the New Religions is a person of great self-confidence. He often spent an unhappy youth in poverty and disease. At times he may show symptoms of paranoia with its concomitant megalomania, delusions and hallucinations. Then a divine being or beings are said to have taken possession of him and entrusted him with a saving mission. In addition, the founders of the “New Religions” do not seem to excel in humility. Some refer to themselves as Saviors of the present time or equate themselves with Christ, Buddha or Confucius.

Their deportment is folksy, their speech is direct and even perhaps uncouth. At all times they keep close to the common man whose ailments they transfer upon themselves, whose hidden aspirations they voice, whose yearnings for security, spiritual as well as economic, they incarnate. They travel much, they preach relentlessly, they often live luxuriously. They bask in adulation. Some are more, some are less modest. Mystical experiences are common with them, for they commune with gods, and often ancestral spirits. Their incantations remind one of a shaman or a mudang and the purposeful touch of their hand of an Indian medicine man. Many of them claim miraculous powers of healing. They can transmit those powers to the sick whether it be by having devotees drink carefully bottled water of their bath or by writing a character on a piece of paer.

These men and women are masters of human psychology and often possess remarkable talents of suggestion, reinforced by auto-suggestion on the Dart of the masses. The ordinary man, in turn, down-trodden by the unremitting struggle for life, is [page 14**]** fascinated by the often primitive and occult power which they exude. He feels secure in an atmosphere of community worship near a god tailored to his size and his culture.

The candidness and earthy manners of these founders never stand in the way of a sound business sense and more than ordinary organizational talent. It should be noted by the Christian leaders in this country that they are quick to learn from one another and keep an ear to the popular mood so as to remain in tunc with the latest religious fads. They are convinced that poverty is an evil which it behooves them to eradicate from their own lives. They know that in many instances their poor followers demand from them such a vicarious display of wealth and power as from a model of perfection which is now within everybody’s reach.

The majority of the “New Religions” here, as in Japan, are syncretistic to a greater or lesser degree. Teachings and practices from various other religions or philosphical systems are freely incorporated into their scheme. Doctrinally and ceremonially the “New Religions” tend to be quite simple, almost superficial, at times. Related to doctrinal simplicity is the primary emphasis upon “this wordly” benefits. The New Religions are often more concerned with meeting man’s physical, material needs in the present than giving hope for the future or engaging in speculative reasoning about the nature of another world. Physical healing plays an important and almost indispensable part. They are for the most part truly *DIESSEITSRELIGIONEN,* religions of this world and in this world and for this world.

The enthusiasm and individualism of the New Religions, in contrast with the established faiths, may also be considered characteristic. Upon individual faith, rather than upon a family or geographical basis, one enters the “New Religion.” Having become a believer, it is normal for one to become an enthusiastic proponent of his faith.

And lastly, for introductory purposes one could mention that along with a tendency towards shamanism and superstition, [page 15**]** there are other elements in the “New Religions” which evidence a more modern outlook. An obviously new respect for women is seen both in the number of women founders (this is particularly true in Japan and less so in Korea), and the large proportion of women preachers, teachers, and believers.

An attempt to analyze a localized, specific phenomenon often suffers from a lack of perspective. This malaise is not confined to present-day Korea where chronic economic instability is coupled with a high degree of social unrest. Some nations, especially those which had relatively advanced traditional social structures and value systems, find that cataclysmic changes have taken place in their societies in the wake of developments and independence after World War II. Nascent industrialism, urbanization, alteration in family pattersn, in short, a to-be-expected reformulation of ethos and worldview is in process throughout much of the world and especially in Asia. In such a situation, for example, the traditional values of the “old” Asian society are constantly, and often in seemingly contradictory ways, being modified by the new values coming primarily from the complex, industrially more advanced Western societies. Until the newly introduced values do in fact become a functional part of the fabric (in this case, Korean society), one may anticipate not only evidences of turbulence, friction, and socio-political disorders, but also an often surprising degree of cultural revitalization. This process may well be viewed as one in which hitherto untapped human resources, unproductive in the face of drastic social change, may be channeled into both productive and personally still rewarding avenues of activity.

In the descriptive paragraphs which follow, in which one of the most widespread socio-religious movements of post-1945 Korea will be discussed despite what, to the Western scholar, may often seem to be unusual and even amusing manifestations, one should keep in mind that the over-riding premise of this discussion is that such movements have shown a unique and significant capacity for arousing sincere public enthusiasm and consequent civic action in a period when both traditional values [page 16**]** are discredited and new values have not yet been functionally assimilated.

While postwar Korea has not given rise to as variegated a spectrum of “New Religions” as has postwar Japan (*Shinko shu kyo*), nevertheless there is clear evidence of a parallel emergence in Korea of vital, dynamic and popularly appealing religious movements.1 These new religious cults in Korea have not only helped to fill the psychological vacuum resulting from the end of the Japanese occupation and the subsequent liberation of Korea in 1945, but also have succeeded in providing a seemingly hopeful and more secure psycho-economic future to many hitherto economically depressed and hopeless individuals.

Achieving a satisfactory understanding of these movements is not an easy task. There still exists a definite lack of adequate field work-based source material. This is not only true in the sense that we lack data for a comprehensive study of Asian New Religions but also, and perhaps even more important, we lack data for any cross-cultural studies involving Korea. Certainly it could be said that among East Asian cultures Korea is and has been the stepchild of ethnologists interested in that particular area of the world.

The somewhat stormy movement of the “Olive Tree,” as *Park Changno-kyo* is also sometimes known, has built a boom town (Christian Town I) at Sosa for more than 20,000 of its followers, and has established a heavy industrial complex some ten miles from Seoul in a relatively short time.2 On July 20, 1952, a second “Christian Town” was begun on a 100-acre territory at Tokso by the Zion Foundation, a name which

1 On January 15, 1964, the Korean Ministry of Education assailed *Soka Gakkai*, one of the most powerful and widespread Japanese “New Regions” as illegal under South Korea’s domestic laws. Soka Gakkai advanced to Korea in 1963 and had by the end of the same year established at least eight branches in major cities throughout South Korea. In Taegu, South Korea’s third largest city, *Soka Gakkai* claimed a mebership of some 1,000.

2 For example, the military government approved on May 24, 1962 an additional housing project on some 100 acres acquired by the movement for this purpose.

[page17**]** the movement adopted for its “external” relations. This foundation with its far-reaching implications is organized as follows:

****

This foundation and its organizational network is the core of the movement begun by Park Tae-son which, amid great political movement, now claims an estimated membership of over 1,800,000 throughout the Republic of Korea.

Without foreign aid or government subsidy, a practice not usual to present-day Korea, the movement was able to build the first town in some eight months beginning in November 1957 when the first housing project comprising some 70 units was completed.

Government reaction under former President Rhee was swift and severe almost from the beginning of the movement. Park was jailed repeatedly on diverse charges, from “murder” [page 18**]** to “communism”. The second Republic under Chang Myun also looked with great disfavor on any expansion of the movement because of increased power of National Assemblymen associated with it. Park Chung Hee, leader of the May 1961 military revolution and the current Third Republic President, on the other hand has given the movement a rather free reign in the development of “Olive Treeism”.

“Christian Town I” in Pumbak-ni some ten miles from Seoul was built soon after the local Presbyterian authorities had expelled Park Tae-sun as a heretic. It was at that time that Presbyterian Park became Elder Park around whom devout followers started gathering from all part of South Korea.

By 1962, the “Olive Tree” was blossoming in Christian Town I to the extent of some 50 large (by Korean standards) factories, six modern apartment house complexes, schools ranging from Kindergarten to High School, and over two thousand modern housing units. The movement also provided its believers with a post office, a police station, a motor pool and a fire station, all manned by government personnel who were at the same time members of the “Olive Tree”. Each of the six apartment buildings houses 120 families which rent space on a money deposit basis (key money).

The factories managed by the Zion Foundation produced by 1962 some 50 items ranging from a special brand of “Christian” caramels and cake to pianos and engines. Other products include fluorescent lamps, soft drinks, artificial flowers, underwear, toys, soy sauce, cosmetics and soap, all marketed under the brand name “Zion” and often sold by saleswomen who live in the town. Daily output amounted in 1962 to some 500,000 won ($1 = 130 won) worth of underwear and 700,000 won worth of confectionary goods. It is interesting to note that a considerable amount of underwear and soy sauce required by the Korean Armed Forces was or still is supplied by “Zion” factories. “Zion” brand underwear has long since made its debut in Southeast Asia, and the artificial flowers manufactured by the believers are now reaching the United States in increasing quantities. The economic future for the movement [page 19**]** looks even brighter. Industry is becoming more diversifed and large-scale developments are nearing completion in the new industrial complex which the Foundation is constructing on the bank of the Han River some fifteen miles east of Seoul at Tokso. While light industrial plants have become operational there, the Foundation continues to build factories for the production of cement, glass and steel. An 85-foot steel boat was completed at one of the plants to facilitate “Zion”-sponsored transport of passengers and cargo between the industrial complex and the mother town. A railway siding is also now becoming operational. This particular 30-acre site was chosen by Elder Park personally while he was flying over the area on his way to Pusan on a missionary trip.

Unskilled workers at the “Zion” plants were paid 1,200 won per month in 1962 for a twelve-hour day six days a week, and though skilled labor is paid somewhat more, these figures were far less than standard wages on the Korean labor market. The believer-workers explain that the extra four hours, above the standard eight-hour day, represent purely voluntary sercice. A woman worker remarked: “We built this town, and thus we are employees and employers at the same time. We are happy to work overtime for ourselves.”

Apparently such devotion stems from an unquestioning faith in the foresight and leadership of Elder Park. His followers claim that he has worked more miracles than all the saints of Christendom together.

Park Tae-son was born in Yop nam ri, Dok Chon, Pyon An Buk Province, North Korea. Not much is known about his early life except what he himself tells in an Horatio Alger-like autobiographical sketch: “My home life was anything but blessed from the very beginning of my life. From the time of my birth my father did not return home except when he needed money. My mother died when I was 9, and I had no one left. I then decided to turn to the Presbyterian church, and I started to attend the Dok Chon Sunday School. I graduated from Elementary School. However, due to the lack of money I had to wait to attend High School. I thereupon made up [page 20**]** my mind to go to Tokyo and to continue my studies in Japan. While in Japan, I worked as a milkman and newsboy, was treated very badly but did manage to graduate from Technical High School alter attending it at night. I was often hungry and repeatedly contemplated suicide. However, adversity made me wise, helped my future, and was most profitable for me. After graduation I was even able to operate a small precision tool company at Kurata.” It is perhaps interesting to note some of his more personal anti-Japanese sentiments which are quite obviously very much in tune with the post-1945 emotional nationalism of his Korean compatriots.

He says, for example: “I never committed adultery, even in that obscene city of Tokyo, though I was single and all alone.

“Japanese women are generally ladies of easy virtue3, and furthermore in the year of Showa 19 (1944) there were abundant young ladies in Tokyo since most of the young men had been drafted. Once when I was taking a bath by myself at a hot spring, a young Japanese girl joined me. Being very afraid of her and shocked by her boldness, I ran away. It was easy to commit sin in Japan but I never did.”

The shock of this experience apparently remained with him for some time, as witness his own account of the overabundance of modesty with which he faced his bride-to-be for the first time: “My character was such that I could not talk to women. When I had an interview with a prospective bride (who is now my wife), I was too shy to speak to her at all.”

Park Tae-Son returned to Korea in 1944, became a regular attendant of the Namade Mun Presbyterian Church, and started the “Korea Precision Machine Company” at Su Saek (Seoul), employing at one time some 340 workers, which apparently prepared him more than adequately for his later managerial responsibilities in the “Olive Tree” movement. In 1954 Park became an elder in the Chang-Done Presbyterian Church in Seoul. About the same time he began to be seen

3 This stereotype of the “easy virtued” Japanese female in contrast to the high moraled and well-disciplined Korean is still quite widely accepted by Koreans today.

[page 21**]**

frequently in the retinue of a Korean woman evangelist in her fifties who was known for her faith healing of the insane, blind, and mute. Apparently pressed by these more important activities he transferred title to his company to his elder brother.

He states of this period: “After having been a faithful church-goer for over twenty years I began to feel that the sermons which I was hearing were not fit to God’s will. I asked many questions, but none of the ministers could give me a satisfactory anwer. I thus came to believe that I should receive God’s power from him directly.”

In April 1955, a big revival meeting was held for ten days at Namsan Park in Seoul under the auspices of the Korean Revival Association, Park being one of the main speakers. It was an eventful meeting attended by some 20,000. During this meeting, Park claims he received a vision of what he terms the “holy fire” and the “fresh water” both coming directly from heaven. One individual who attended, Yim Young Shin or Louise Yim, a former Minister of Commerce and Industry and President of Chungang University, is cited in an article by Kim Kyung Rai4 to have actually smelled a strange “sin-burning odor” during one of Park’s revival sermons.

Kim Kyung Rai describes one of the meetings as follows: “The meeting began at 4:00 a.m., the crowds having come from far and near and having spent the whole night sitting on the ground waiting. After Parks’ arrival, the crowd sang hymns for an hour while clapping their hands violently. When Park descended from the platform in shirtsleeves, the multitides bowed and pressed forward to greet him. ‘Now get up. Stand in the name of Jesus Christ!’ shouted Park while at the same time massaging a man’s head whom Park’s helpers had singled out for him as a cripple. One moment later, the same shouted, ‘Here stands a cripple who has not stood for thirty years.’ Hundreds of people hearing this began to applaud. Park continued to walk among the crowd massaging heads and limbs. When the sun rose he returned to the platform and one of his helpers announced, ‘One thousand were healed this morning by Elder Park,’ and again the crowd applauded.”

4 “The Drama and Uproar of Elder Park’s Healing” *Ya Dam & Shil Wha* September 1958, pp. 53-55.

[page 22**]**

Park’s own particular methods of faith healing and accompanying prayer developed during this period are referred to as “Anch’al” (laying on of hands), involving a vigorous massage by Park by which he is said to transmit his divine power to the afflicted individual. Water with which Park washed his feet came to be a cure-all which would lead whoever drank it to “eternal life.” It was during this initial period of the movement that Park’s followers started to call him “Olive Tree,” Spiritual “Mother,” and the “Righteous Man of the East.” He himself declared in some of his sermons that : he is the “one from the East” of whom already Isaiah had spoken.5 Park himself interprets this to mean that the “East” is Korea, and the “coast lands” of the same Bible passage refer to Japan. He explains that the “two Olive Trees” and “the two lampstands” refer to himself. As a result the hymn “Joy to the World! The Lord is Come!” was changed by his followers to “The Olive is Come!”

The complete verse6 “Listen to me in silence, O coast lands; let the peoples renew their strength; let them approach, then let them speak; let us together draw near for judgment. Who stirred up one from the East whom victory meets at every step? He gives up nations before him, so that he tramples kings under foot; he makes them like dust with his sword...”

Park’s interpretation does not only mean that he is the “one from the East” but also implies that since Japan was defeated in WWII it is now “in silence.” He argues that “After all, a righteous one must appear in Korea,” a pronouncement well in concert with the latent nationalism in the movement coupled to Park’s previously referred to anti-Japanese feelings.

The verse “These are the two olive trees and the two lamp-stands which stand before the Lord of the earth. And if any one would harm them, fire pours form their mouth and consumes

5 “Who stirred up one from the East whom victory meets at every step?” Isaiah 41:2

6 “Listen to me in silence, O coast lands ...” *Isaiah* 41:1 translated in the Korean bible simple simply as “islands” (Japan).

[page 23**]**

their foes...”7 in Park’s interpretation further assumes added implications by inferring from the commonly accepted interpretation of this passage in which one of the two olive trees refers to Moses representing the Law ; and the other represent- ing Elijah... the representative of the prophets. Park believes that he is not only representing the “true” law but that he is at the same time the one and only prophet and interpreter of this law.

In 1956 while Park’s following grew in direct proportion to his ability to hold revival services, the Presbyterian church (Kyoggi Province Assembly) formally expelled him as a heretic. Since then the movement professes a superdenominational Christianity, and Park himself maintains that he is in fact a truer Christian than the Christians who denounce me.” Park since then has lived in the center of controversy. He has been accused of being a charlatan, a heretic, a swindler, and a murderer. In 1959, Park was sentenced to two and a half years in prison for injuring sick followers in the process of Ach’al in addition to defrauding them of “offerings.” However, perhaps due to his increasing political power. Syngman Rhee’s Liberal regime pardoned him shortly before the later proven rigged electons of 1960 which led to the downfall of Syngman Rhee and his regime. Park’s difficulties were not over. He was jailed by Chang Myun’s government, which followed Syngman Rhee’s, a few months later on a charge of inducing his followers to vote for Liberal (followers of deposed President Rhee) candidates. Convicted, he served six months in prison on that charge. During one of the Elder’s trials, the National Police revealed that followers of the movement were organizing a special group to rescue their leader either by force or money, and to retaliate against officials who dared to prosecute “the Righteous Man of the East.”8

The charges bought against Park during his fourth trial (January, 1958). for example, give an indication of his alleged activities.

7 *Rev*. 11:4

8 According to the *Jookan-Hyimang* (Weekly Hope) of April 2, 1956 Park had collected, to the end of March 1956, some 7,000,000 won ($140,000).

[page24**]**

The government charged Park at the time with:

1. Evading taxes.

2. Excess profit making on “Zion” produced merchandise.

3. Obtaining “offerings” by fraudulent means.

4. Secretly burying deceased believers.

5. Promiscuity with female believers.

6. Causing death and injury with “An Ch’al.”

7. Violation of the Education Laws.

8. Fostering evasion of Military Service.

9. Fostering domestic troubles and destruction of family relations.

10. Building churches without building permits.

Open violence in the end did follow. In December, 1960 some 2,000 believers, mostly female, stormed the daily Dong-A newspaper offices in downtown Seoul after the newspaper carried an article calling the photographs of Park’s “holy fires”, which show streaks of fire descending on the assembled believers, fakes. Overwhelming a 400-man police detachment the raiders ransacked the building. At the time, leaders of the movement stated that they had asked LIFE Magazine to authenticate the pictures in question and that they had received from LIFE an answer stating: “There are some things that cannot be forged by human skill”.

This newspaper-sacking incident soon became a fullblown politicalt issue. The House of Councilors created a special seven- man committee to investigate the incident. The Republic’s Ministry of Education also, at the same time, proceeded with an investigation of the movement, charging a panel of scholars, religious leaders and government officials with the task. Both investigations after months of bickering got nowhere.

Against charges of heresy and criminal prosection, leaders of the movement consistently maintain that theirs is the sole way to eternal life, pointing out that after all Protestantism had been branded, at one time, as heretical by “corrupt” Roman Catholic officials. Korea’s Roman Catholic Church is somewhat less harsh, stating that whether the movement is heretical or not [page 25**]** “cannot be determined without a thorough study of its doctrine and practices.”

Heretical or not, the movement by 1964 had from 1,800,000 to 2,000,000 followers in some 303 congregations (*Chondo Kwan*), against some 97,306 Presbyterians after more than half a century of intense missionary efforts. This perhaps suggests that Park Tae-son himself is in his own way a more reliable interpreter in Korea of the Protestant “ethic” than the Western Presbyterian missionaries have been. Not only do the statistics cited here support this contention, but further evidence is provided by Park’s zealous aversion to sin on the one hand and his highly successful economic ventures on the other.

Followers of Park range from illiterates to college graduates, the majority of “Christian Town I” residents having completed at least primary school,9 from peasants to retired generals, from simple artisans to college professors and practicing M.D’.s. It even boasts the perennial American “smuggler” who lives in “Chrisitan Town” with his Korean wife, participating in the management of the movement after having left the Presbyterian Church himself. Women followers were observed to be especially eager to offer whatever possessions they had―rings, waches, clothing, and some ardent believers were even seen shedding their skirts during revival services since they had nothing else to give. Housewives left their families for good, husbands deserted their wives and children, donating in the process all their worldy possessions to gain “eternal life from sin.” To this, a movement leader remarked: “Of course there is no extortion involved, we just accept what they offer voluntarily”.

The movement’s services are conducted much like Presbyterian ones. However, they are characterized by rapid hymn-chanting accompanied by frenzied hand-clapping that

9 The educational background of “Christian Town 1” residents in 1965 was as follows: College or University graduate 209; Attended University but not graduated 408; Attended but not graduated 85 ; Junior High School graduate 800; Attended but not graduated 217; Primary School graduates 3,173.

[page 26**]**

continues for hours. One observer describes it as follows: “They used drums, and even beat them at midnight. The neighbors were disturbed in their sleep. They clapped their hands whenever they sang hymns; the sounds could be heard from miles away”. Like some other Korean Protestant groups, the movement bans tobacco and alcohol.

It also prohibits the eating of pork and peaches “for the pig is an animal of greed and the peach is the fruit with which the serpent tempted Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden.” (It could not have been the apple since that is a valuable cash crop for the movement.)

As to the future of the movement after the death of Park, the writer was informed: The Olive Tree is immortal, the last day of the world will come within his lifetime. Park in his sermons is careful not to distinguish between mortality and immortality, except when he deals with “non-believers” who are not worthy of immortality”. In a sense, Park’s followers cannot lose, since for them, unlike for most other Koreans, “the Elder” is creating a modernized but still Korean paradise only some ten miles from Seoul.

As in Japan in such movement as *Soka Gakkai*, the Korean long accustomed to communal patterns coupled to a tightly knit family system finds in his increasing loneliness and misery hope in this “New Religion”. The believer is provided with a faith to persevere, and what is most important, his new activistic approach to religion means not only prized economic security but less time for morbid introspection. Movements in Korea such as “Olive Tree” or Tong-Il gyo serve as deliberate, organized and conscious efforts to integrate traditional patterns with the plethora of outside influence unleashed by sudden socioeconomic changes in a given situation of a given society. Such traumatic shifts may not only include war, revolution, liberation from colonialism and occupation, but also any enforced acculturation in general.

It is in this light that one must therefore examine these phenomena which may provide a most useful scholarly insight [page 27**]** into the process of culture change, especially in the vigorous activism and the remarkable totality of commitment which adherents of “Olive Tree,” “Tong-Il gyo”, and *Soka Gakkai* exhibit.

From the standpoint of the anthropological observer, while these features which are readily characterized as “aberrational” often seem most attractive for description, what may be far more significant is the role of movements such as Park Changno-gyo in providing an indigenous source through which the multiple effects of the western impact can be focused to the overall and necessarily desirable aim of cultural revitalization.