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**The Martyrdom of Paul Yun: Western Religion and Eastern Ritual in Eighteenth Century Korea**

**by Donald L. Baker**

On December 8,1791, in front of the P’ungnam Gate in Chonju, the capital of Cholla Province, Paul Yun was beheaded for his destruction of his family’s ancestral tablets. King Chongjo had ordered the execution of this Catholic member of Korea’s yangban elite because of his obedience to a command from a European bishop in Peking to defy Korean law and custom requiring the use of ancestral tablets in Confucian mourning ritual. Paul Yun thus entered history as one of Korea’s earliest Christian martyrs, three years before the first Catholic priest arrived on the peninsula to preach the Gospel to the Korean people.

The story of Paul Yun, how he and his friends and relatives were converted to Catholicism and how their new faith led them into conflict with their Confucian government and society, can tell us much about the nature of Korean values and beliefs two centuries ago. An examination of this clash between Western religion and Eastern ritual may offer us some insight into fundamental differences between Confucian and Christian approaches to truth, morality, and the nature of man and society.

Paul Yun died because of his belief that men have a higher loyalty than that owed to their society and government. His conviction that men sometimes have to be willing to sacrifice even their lives if their integrity and conscience so demand makes the story of his execution more than just an interesting historical anecdote about a clash between Catholic doctrine and Confucian ceremony two hundred years ago. While the specific issue of ancestral tablets for which Paul Yun gave up his life in 1791 may no longer be relevant today,conflicts between the dictates of conscience and the demands of society still arise. A look at the dilemma faced by Paul Yun in 1791 can help us reflect on our moral priorities in 1980.

**I. THE EARLY REACTION TO CATHOLICISM: CURIOSITY AND CRITICISM**

Catholic ideas arrived in Korea long before the first missionaries. As early as the seventeenth century we find Korean writers such as Yu Mong-in (1559-1623) and Yi Su-gwang (1563-1628) discussing the Jesuit missionary [page 34] effort in China. In his *Ouyadam* (Random Scribblings, by Yu Mong-in) Yu noted, ‘‘Europe has its own peculiar way of serving Heaven that is different from Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism...Although the followers of that Western religion speak highly of our moral principles, they actually regard us as their enemy. There are deep, fundamental differences between their way and ours.”¹

Yu claimed that Ho Kyun (1569-1618), the author of the first original work of fiction written in Hangul, returned from a trip to Peking with some maps and prayer books he had received from European missionaries there. Ho Kyun is also described by the eighteenth century scholar An Chong-bok (1712-1791) as influenced by Catholicism. According to An, Ho had argued, ‘‘Heaven gives men and women their passions and desires. But the moral rules governing human behavior are derived from the teachings of the Sages. I would rather violate the teachings of the Sages than act contrary to the human nature Heaven has given me.”2 An and other Confucian critics of Catholicism believed that such an expression of respect for Heaven over the Sages showed that Ho Kyun was responsible for introducing the “Doctrine of Heaven” (Ch ‘onhak, as Catholicism was then known) into Korea.

Yi Su-gwang, a contemporary of Yu Mong-in and Ho Kyun, also revealed some familiarity with Catholic missionary writings in his *Chi- bong Yusol* (A Collection of Essays, by Yu Su-gwang).3 In his discussion of foreign countries, Yi briefly describes two major works by an Italian Jesuit missionary to China, Matteo Ricci (1552-1610). Yi mentions the *T’en-chu shih i* (The True Lord of Heaven) and the *Chiao Yu lun* (Discourse on Friendship) and refers to the Catholic doctrines of divine creation of the universe and of life after death in heaven or hell. He also cites the observation of the Chinese author Chiao Hung that Europeans such as Ricci place such a high value on friendship that they regard their friends as a part of themselves.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries Jesuit missionaries in Peking, with the help of their Chinese converts, published more than three hundred titles in Chinese introducing Western religion and science.4 Copies of some of these Catholic books were picked up by Koreans on tribute missions to Peking and brought back to the peninsula. In the early eighteenth century enough of these books on ‘‘Western Learning” (Sohak) had reached Korea that the Practical Learning scholar Yi Ik (1681-1763) was able to sprinkle his encyclopedic writings with information gleaned from Jesuit works on astronomy, geography, cartography, mathematics, and medicine as well as religion.5 [page 35]

Two books explaining Catholic religious doctrine and practice that particularly interested Yi Ik were *T’ien-chu shih i*, which Yi Su-gwang had mentioned a century earlier, and *Ch’i k’e* (Seven Victories). Ricci’s *T’ien-chu shih i* introduces the Natural Theology of Thomistic Catholic philosophy. It doesn’t discuss such Catholic doctrines grounded in divine revelation as the Trinity, the Virgin Birth, or the Seven Sacraments. Instead, it is limited to positions which Ricci believed could be supported by natural reason alone. As Ricci describes this work, “it treats of such truths as that there is in the universe a God, who has created all things and continually conserves them in being; that the soul of man is immortal, and will receive from God in the next life remuneration for its good and evil works.”6

*Ch’i k’e* is a moral exhortation in which the Spanish Jesuit Dedacus de Pantoja extols the seven virtues of humility, charity, patience, compassion, temperance, diligence, and self-restraint with which the vices common to all men can be controlled. De Pantoja’s picture of the moral man leading a simple and frugal life in which reason has firm control over passion was designed to appeal to men who had been taught to respect the Confucian ideal of the philosopher-scholar whose mind rules his body.7

In *Song-ho sasol* (Essays of Yi Ik), Yi discusses *Ch’i k’e*. He believes that what de Pantoja wrote about is no different from the Confucian spirit of self-control and self-denial. And he notes that the effectiveness of the rhetoric de Pantoja uses in his call to virtue sometimes surpasses that found in Confucian literature.

This book will be a great aid in our effort to re-establish proper moral behavior in our worlds. But, strange to say, this book has talk of God and spirits mixed up in it. lf we correct it and take out all such non-essentials, removing these grains of sand and pieces of grit, and pick out and copy down only those arguments that are sound, then this book can be regarded as orthodox Confucianism.8

In 1724, Shin Hu-dam (1702-1761), a young student of Yi Ik, composed a lengthy Confucian refutation of Catholic doctrine.9 Shin discusses three of the Jesuit works in great detail. He analyses and refutes Ricci’s arguments in *T’ien-chu shih i* one by one. In summarizing his criticism of this presentation of fundamental Catholic theology, he claims to find one common thread which runs through all the chapters of *T’ien-chu shih i*. In Shin’s judgment, despite the constant references to serving and honoring the Lord of Heaven, *T’ien-chu shih i* is primarily concerned with the promise of eternal reward and the threat of eternal punishment. [page 36] All Ricci is really doing is using his premise of heaven and hell and the survival of the soul after death to entice followers and to frighten people against spurning his religion. Shin dismisses as absurd the Catholic attempt to identify with Confucian attacks on Buddhism since, for Shin, the doctrines of heaven, hell, and immortality are clearly Buddhist ideas.

I’ve never seen such talk in any of our Confucian writings... These Catholics have simply lifted stray bits of Buddhist dogma and made them their own and then turned around and declared themselves the opponents of Buddhism. They have not only sinned against Confucianism, they are also traitors to Buddhism.10

Another work which Shin attacks is *Ling yen li shao* (The Nature of the Soul) by Francis Sambiasi (1592-1649). Sambiasi presents a Thomistic portrait of man’s soul as immortal, rational, and spiritual substance. Shin rejects this picture as incompatible with the Neo-Confucian vision of man as simply a transient condensation of cosmic forces. And he condemns the Catholic doctrine of the soul traveling to heaven or hell after the death of the body as absurd and immoral in its implications. For Shin, a true gentleman is only concerned with serving his parents and superiors properly. Virtue consists of nothing more than showing loyalty and filial piety in normal, everyday activities, with no thought of personal gain. The essence of Confucian philosophy,the standard by which a civilized man directs his behavior,is to do good for good’s sake.

The Catholic goal of a reward in heaven is not something that a true son should think about when serving his parents nor a true subject when serving his ruler... Catholic teachings threaten morality and pervert ethical principles with their selfish aim of personal reward. How can we not despise such ideas! It really is a pity that they give priority to selfish intentions instead of making sincerity the foundation of their doctrines. Those who follow their teachings can never be true gentlemen.11

The third Jesuit work which Shin criticizes is *Chih-fang wai chi* (World Geography) by Giulio Aleni (1582-1646). While Shin does find fault with Aleni’s cultural geography of the non-Confucian world for assuming that barbarian kingdoms can be compared with the civilized states of the Chinese cultural sphere,12 his main attack is against the Jesuit philosophy of education. The purpose of Confucian education is to inculcate moral principles and to train young men in proper moral behavior. Such skills as reading and arithmetic are of only secondary importance, [page 37] even in primary education, and should be treated merely as means to a higher ethical end. Shin notes with dismay that in the West skill,not virtue,is the goal of education. Reading and literature are taught before the ability to recognize the moral lessons in what is read is properly developed. And mathematics,the mere manipulation of numbers,is learned before a sufficient understanding of the purposes and use of such knowledge is reached. Shin warns that such a reversal of the proper priorities in education can only lead to distortion of mental and moral growth.13

**II. THE BIRTH OF THE KOREAN CATHOLIC CHURCH**

Shin’s strictures against Catholic thought were not enough to prevent a growing interest in Western ideas and Jesuit books among a younger generation of disciples of Yi Ik. In 1779 a small group of students of Yi Ik’s philosophy met in a Buddhist temple not far from Kwangju in Kyonggi province to study and discuss some of these Western writings. Chong Yak-chon (1754-1816), an older brother of the famous scholar Chong Yag-yong (1762-1836), was there along with his brothers-in-law Yi Pyok (1754-1786) and Yi Sung-hung (1756-1801), his teacher Kwon Ch’ol-sin (1736-1801), and several other members of Korea’s literati elite.14 For over ten days this group of eager Confucian scholars debated among themselves questions concerning heaven, this world,and the nature of man. Drawing on the works of scholars before them, and the writings of the ancient Chinese Sages,they found that they still did not have satisfactory answers to the questions which troubled them. So they turned to the books written by Catholic missionaries dealing with philosophy, mathematics, and religion.15 Lacking a Catholic priest or even a layman properly instructed in the faith, and not possessing a large library of Western books,many of the group at Chu-o temple felt that they did not have enough information about Catholicism to fully understand it. Their few days of reading and discussion in the winter of 1799 had only whetted their appetites. Their hunger for more knowledge remained unsatisfied.

In late 1783 Yi Pyok learned that the father of Yi Sung-hun had been named the Third Secretary of the Winter Solstice Tribute Mission to the Manchu court in Peking that year. Yi Sung-hun planned to accompany his father on that trip to the Chinese capital. This was the chance to learn more about Western mathematics, science, and religion that Yi Pyok had been waiting for. He went to Yi Sung-hun and told him that there was a Catholic church in the northern part of Peking staffed by Western [page 38] missionaries. Yi Pyok suggested to his friend that he go to that church and meet the missionaries there. He should show great interest in their religion, asking for copies of their books explaining Catholic doctrine and requesting to be baptized. ‘‘If you do that, those Westerners will be delighted with you and you will get a lot of interesting presents from them. Make sure you don’t come back empty-handed.”16

Yi Sung-hun followed his friend’s suggestion and sought out the European priests in Peking. At first his request for baptism was denied on the grounds that his knowledge of Catholic teachings was inadequate. However, impressed by Yi Sung-hun’s sincerity, Fr. Louis de Grammont finally agreed to accept him into the Church. After receiving further instruction in Catholic doctrine, Yi Sung-hun was baptized Peter with the hope that Peter Yi Sung-hun would become the cornerstone around which the Korean Catholic Church would be built.17

The news of this first conversion and baptism of a resident of Korea was reported by the missionary Father Jean-Matthieu de Ventavon in a letter to friends in Europe. He wrote that, before they admitted Peter Yi to Holy Baptism, they asked him many questions, all of which he answered satisfactorily. When he was asked what he would do if his king would try to force him to renounce his new faith, Yi Sung-hun ‘‘replied, without hesitation, that he would suffer every torment, and death, rather than give up the religion which he clearly recognized as true.”18 Peter Yi proved more faithful to his baptismal name than to his promise. Despite his later confession that he had originally approached the missionaries out of a desire to gain more knowledge of Western mathematics,19 his conversion seems to have been genuine. Yet three times in the sixteen years that followed he denied the faith which he had sworn to uphold. However, his three public denials were each followed by a secret return to the practice of Catholicism and Peter Yi Sung-hun died a martyr to his faith in 1801.

Yi Sung-hun returned from Peking in the early spring of 1784, bringing with him several Catholic books as well as various products of eighteenth century Western science and technology. He immediately visited Yi Pyok, told him of his conversion, and shared with him the treasures he had brought back from China. Yi Pyok eagerly pored over the books explaining Catholic doctrine and decided that this Catholicism was the truth he had been searching for.20 Apparently bolder and more fervent in his new faith than Yi Sung-hun, Yi Pyok began proselytizing his discovery among his friends and relatives right away.

The infant Korean Church was fortunate in having Yi Py6k as an early evangelist. He was an effective and enthusiastic propagator of his [page 39] faith. Fr. Dallet, in his pioneer history of the Catholic Church in Korea, tells us that Yi Pyok had an impressive physical appearance- ‘‘He was eight ch’ok tall and could lift over 100 kun with one hand. His commanding presence attracted everyone’s attention.”21 He also had a respectable family background. A member of the Kyongju Yi lineage, his immediate family had a record of distinguished service as high ranking military officers. His grandfather had been a Regional Army Commander as were his two brothers.22 His intelligence and character had won him respect from many influential followers of Yi Ik. Fr. Dallet reports that one contemporary Korean source said of him, ‘‘he showed penetrating insight into whatever problems he addressed. When he was studying the Confucian Classics, it was almost second nature for him from the time he was very young to look for the deeper meaning of the texts.”23

In April, 1784, Yi Pyok joined Chong Yak-chon, his brother-in-law and fellow participant in the discussions at Chu-o Temple five years earlier, on a boat trip up to Seoul from the Chong family home in rural Kyonggi province where they had just participated in a memorial service for Yi’s sister. Riding with them to Seoul were Chong Yak-chon’s two younger brothers, Chong Yak-chong (1760-1801) and Chong Yak-yong. After they reached Seoul, Yi showed the Chong brothers some of his Catholic books, including *T’ien-chu shih i* and *Ch’i k’e*. Chong Yag-yong tells us that it was at this time that he and his brothers began to be attracted by Western religion, not knowing then that Catholicism forbade proper performance of Confucian mourning ritual.24

Yi Pyok then turned his attention to his friends among the *chungin*, the hereditary government specialists in foreign languages, law, medicine, astronomy, and other skills important to the administration of the Yi dynasty government. Ch’oe Ch’ang-hyon, Ch’oe In-gil, Kim Pom-u, and Kim Chong-gyo were converted at this time and began to preach their new faith to their friends among the chungin, yangbany and commoners. Slowly the number of Koreans who accepted Catholic teachings was increasing.

Yi Ka-hwan (1742-1801), Yi Sung-hun’s uncle, a grandson of Yi Ik’s brother and later Minister of the Board of Works, heard that Yi Pyok had been promoting non-Confucian doctrine. Chong Yag-yong tells us that Yi Ka-hwan sighed and said, “What a pity! I’ve read *Tien-chu shih i* and *Ch’i k’e*, too. While they do contain some good points, in the final analysis they are not acceptable as orthodox scholarship. How can Pyok think he can replace our Confucianism with such things?’’

Yi Ka-hwan went to Yi Pyok’s home to try and convince him that he was committing a serious error. ‘‘But Yi Pyok argued his position with [page 40] rhetoric as powerful as a raging river and defended his beliefs with the strength of iron.” Yi Ka-hwan realized that he could not win in such an argument with Yi Pyok and so he gave up and left,never to visit him again.”25 Chong Yag-yong claims that Yi Ka-hwan, though impressed with the fervor of Yi Pyok’s convictions,was not converted by him. However, Hwang Sa-yong,a son-in-law of Chong Yag-chon, wrote in the midst of the 1801 persecution that Yi Ka-hwan had been converted by Yi Pyok although he was reluctant to be baptized by him,preferring to wait until he could go to Peking and be baptized by the Western priests there.26 The Yi dynasty court also believed that Yi Ka-hwan was a Catholic and executed him along with his nephew Yi Sung-hun and other prominent Catholic yangban in 1801.

In the fall of 1784 Yi Pyok visited Kwon Ch’ol-sin,of the Andong Kwon clan,who had been with him at Chu-o Temple in 1799. Yi converted both Kwon Ch’ol-shin an’d his brother Il-shin,adding another prestigious yangban scholar family to the roster of Catholic believers in Korea. Also introduced to Catholicism in those first few months after Yi Sung-hun returned from Peking were Yi Ki-yang, Yu Hang-gum, Hong Nang- min,and Paul Yun Chi-ch,ung,all representatives of recognized yangban lineages.

Paul Yun did not learn of Catholicism from Yi Pyok directly but through Yi’s friend, the *chungin* Kim Pom-u, a central figure in the birth of the Catholic Church on the peninsula. It was at Kim’s house that the first worship services were held. And it was at Kim’s house that Catholicism was first brought to the attention of the Yi authorities. According to a 1785 public letter signed by several students studying for their civil service examinations at the Songgyun’gwan in Seoul, in the spring of 1785, Yi Sung-hun, Chong Yak-chon, Chong Yag-yong, and several others met at the Myongdong home of Kim Pom-u to hold religious services.

Yi Pyok wore a dark cloth over his head from his forehead back to his shoulders and stood in the midst of the gathering, preaching to them. Yi Sung-hun, the three Chong brothers, and Kwon Il-sin and his son all called themselves his disciples. With books in their hands,they gave him their undiviaed attention. When Yi Pyok preached to them their demeanor was more solemn than that of Confucian students at the feet of their teacher.27

They met like this regularly for several months,with dozens of yangban and chungin in attendance. Then one day a Seoul city policeman [page 41] passed by and thought he heard the sound of drinking and gambling coming from Kim’s house. He rushed in to find out what was going on and discovered a crowd of worshippers with powder on their faces and dark pieces of cloth over their heads. Startled by this strange sight, the patrolman arrested those present and confiscated their portraits of Jesus, their books, and various other religious articles. The Minister of the Board of Punishments, Kim Hwa-jin, saddened that men from such distinguished families should be involved in such foolishness, lectured them on the proper behavior of a Confucian gentleman and then released them. The only person he kept in custody was Kim Pom-u.28 Kim was beaten severely, kept in confinement for ten days,and then sent into exile in Ch’ungch’ong province where he died of his wounds in the fall of 1786.29 Thomas Kim Pom-u thus became the first Catholic martyr on Korean soil.

The discovery of the meeting at Kim’s home was a severe blow to Catholicism on the peninsula. Not only did the struggling Church lose Kim Pom-u,but its two founding members Yi Sung-hun and Yi Pyok withdrew from further public involvement. The publicity given their participation in the Catholic services brought their unorthodox activities to the attention of their families. Yi Pyok’s father threatened to hang himself unless his son abandoned his practice of Catholicism. Torn between love for his father and respect for the teachings of his faith,Yi Pyok broke off all contact with the friends he had introduced to Catholic teachings. A year later, in 1786,Yi Pyok died of typhus at the age of 33, estranged from the Church that he had done so much to establish in Korea.30

Yi Sung-hun also came under pressure from his father and relatives to renounce his faith. His father called all the family and relatives together to burn the books Yi had brought back from Peking and smash the presents he had received from the missionaries. Yi was then forced to write a statement condemning Catholicism and send that statement to the Board of Punishments in Seoul.31 Yi Sung-hun’s apostasy appears to have been merely pro forma, however, as he continued to associate with his fellow Catholics, although he was more circumspect after 1785.

Despite the warnings of Kim Pom-u’s torture and the forced renunciations of Yi Pyok and Yi Sung-hun, the Korean Catholic Church continued to grow. Before Kim’s arrest, Yun Chi-ch,ung had borrowed T’ien-chu shih i and Ch’i k’e from him and made copies of those works for his own personal use before returning them. Yun had passed his chinsa examination in 1783 at the age of 23 and, no longer having to think only about [page 42] preparing for that literati qualification examination, was now free to pursue his interest in “studying ways to have a pure heart and live a conscientious life,” as he explained under interrogation in 1791.³²He left Seoul and returned to his home in a village in Chinsan county in North Cholla province. There he assiduously studied his two Jesuit books and discussed the doctrines they taught with his maternal cousin and neighbor Kwon Sang-yon. Only after three years of meditation and reflection on Catholic teachings was Yun Chi-ch’ung ready to accept Catholicism. In 1788, under the urging of his cousin, Chong Yak-chon, he was baptized as Paul- His cousin Kwon also became a Catholic with the new Christian name of James.

In 1787 Catholicism again became the target of heated criticism among the students of the Songgyun’gwan. Yi Sung-hun and Chong Yag-yong were both students at the Songgyun’gwan, supposedly engaged in the study of Confucian philosophy and ethics in order to prepare for gov-ernment service. A fellow student, Yi Ki-gyong, discovered that Yi Sung-hun and Chong Yag-yong had instead been meeting at a house outside the school grounds under the pretext of engaging in some friendly poetry writing competition. Rather than writing poetry, however, they had been reading more Catholic books and preaching Catholic doctrine to their fellow students. Yi Ki-gyong had read some of those Catholic books and had decided that, while they appeared to have some good points when given a cursory reading, a careful examination of their contents revealed that they contained ideas that were a threat to the Confucian moral order.34

Yi Ki-gyong tried at first to talk his friends out of their dangerous interest in Catholicism. When they failed to heed his advice, he turned to another student at the Songgyun’gwan, Hong Nag-an, and told him about his concern over the spread of Western ideas among their fellow students. Hong wanted to inform the government immediately and ask that these heretics be severely punished. Yi Ki-gyong did not want his friends to suffer public disgrace. He argued instead for quiet attempts to reason with those who had been seduced away from Confucian morality by alien books. He believed that logical persuasion and moral example would be more effective in fighting heresy than force.35

As rumors spread of heterodox practices among some Songgyun’gwan students, Chong Yag-yong wrote an angry letter to Yi Ki-gyong, blaming Yi for being behind those rumors and linking Ch6ng and his associates to heresy. Chong wrote that he had made a serious mistake in trusting Yi. He said that Yi had made an even graver error in judging others too [page 43] quickly. ‘‘Without even a full day’s reflection, you decided that we were miles apart from you in matters of principle and morality.”36

Yi responded with a letter in which he tried to convince Chong of the dangers of Catholicism. He argued that the Ten Commandments don’t say anything about serving one’s ruler, and list the command to honor one’s father and mother in fourth place instead of at the top of the list. Such blindness to the proper moral priorities is not something that a true gentleman could accept. Moreover, he notes some of those who were studying those Catholics books were hiding that fact from their fathers and older brothers, and that is not the way a true gentleman should behave. He summed up his objections to.Catholicism by declaring,’’it perverts the moral rules governing human relationships and doesn’t make any sense at all.”37

Yi Ki-gyong’s letter to Chong Yag-yong is important because it is representative of the Confucian reaction to Catholicism. Yi did not show much concern for arguing the truth or falsity of Catholic statements about the existence of God, Jesus Christ, or man’s immortal soul. He was more concerned with the moral consequences of those beliefs. Catholicism, he argued, led men to slight their responsibilities to their parents and superiors. That reason alone made it unacceptable to a Confucian moralist.

Korea’s early Catholics were to suffer more shocks than just the criticism of their friends. In 1786 they had established their own ecclesiastical hierarchy, appointing Yi Sung-hun as the head of their church and choosing ten of their number, both *chungin* and *yangban*, to serve as priests. Not having a duly ordained priest among them, they did not realize at first that the sacraments they administered among themselves were considered by the Church to be invalid. In 1787 they began to have doubts about the propriety of their self-ordained ministries. They ceased administering sacraments other than baptism until they could receive clarification from Peking.38

In the spring of 1790 the answer came. They were ordered by Bishop Alexandre de Gouvea to refrain from the illicit performance of priestly duties but were encouraged to continue in their work of introducing more Koreans to the Gospels.39 This command left the infant Korean Catholic Church in a quandary. Peking was not able to send them a true priest for another four yeais,40 yet they had come to believe that the sacraments which only priests could administer were essential to their spiritual health. In 1788 the Korean Church suffered another setback when King Chongjo ordered the destruction of all Western books in private hands.41 [page 44] Paul Yun immediately destroyed his copies of *T’ien-chu shih i* and *Ch’i k’e*, having already memorized them. Other Catholics throughout Korea did the same, although some moved their illicit libraries to secret hiding places rather than destroying them.

Then, in 1790 a second letter arrived from Bishop Gouvea which shook the Korean Church to its foundation. For the first time, Korean Catholics were officially informed of the papal ban on participation in ancestor memorial services. Yi Sung-hun withdrew from active leadership of the Church upon hearing this news, turning his responsibilities over to Kwon Il-shin.42 Chong Yag-yong and one of his brothers, Yak-chon, also withdrew from further participation in Church activities after the announcement of the ban on ancestor rites, although their brother Yak-chong remained an active Catholic until his execution in the 1801 persecution.

The Catholics in Korea had been converted primarily by books written by Jesuit missionaries in the seventeenth century who stressed compatibility rather than conflict between Confucian society and the Catholic faith. The books the Koreans had read did not tell them that the Pope in Rome had ruled against the Jesuit policy of accomodation in 1704, demanding instead that Asian Catholics make a complete break with their non-Christian culture. Rejecting the Jesuit argument for toleration of cultural diversity, the Pope demanded that all members in good standing of the Catholic Church in East Asia desist from participation in the Confucian ritual of offering bowls of food and wine to tablets on which are inscribed the names of ancestors.43

**III. THE ANCESTOR MEMORIAL SERVICE**

What is the nature of this rite which caused so much difficulty for the Catholic Church, both in Korea and in China? It is often referred to as “ancestor worship,” but that translation of the Korean word chesa is misleading. No worship of ancestors is involved in this Confucian ritual. Family members and descendants of the deceased simply gather together in remembrance of their ancestors as an expression of filial piety and family unity. The ancestor memorial service might be called, with little fear of exaggeration, the glue that held Confucian society together. It was this ritual that reinforced the recognition that men are not individuals living isolated and alone on this planet but are members of a family and a community, with all the duties, responsibilities, benefits, and rewards that entails. [page 45]

In Confucian thought, society was viewed as an extension of the family. Filial sons in the families of the nation meant subjects loyal to the throne. To reject the ritual honoring of one’s ancestors, as Korean Catholics were now ordered to do, meant to challenge the core of the Confucian political,moral, and social order. To be moral and loyal in eighteenth century Korea meant, above all, to show your filial piety by serving, honoring,and obeying your parents faithfully. The refusal to perform these rites meant a refusal to show proper respect for your parents, a refusal to carry out the duties that showed that you were a loyal subject of your sovereign, and a refusal to act in a manner befitting a respectable member of society.

Perhaps the element in the ancestor memorial service that most offended the Pope in Rome was the ancestral tablet. In the Yi dynasty,we are told in Fr. Dallet’s introduction to Korean culture written over a century ago,

Those tablets are generally made of chestnut wood... The tablet is a little flat board painted with white lead, on which the name of the deceased is inscribed in Chinese characters.

Holes are bored in the edge through which the soul is supposed to enter. The tablet is placed in a square box and is kept by the wealthy in a special chamber or hall and by the common people in a kind of niche in the corner of the house. Poor people make their tablets out of paper.44

During the mourning period and on the anniversary of the death, direct descendants and relatives of the deceased to the fourth generation were supposed to perform the ancestral memorial service, led by the eldest surviving direct male descendant. The service essentially consisted of placing the tablet on a low table,arranging bowls of food and drink on the table in front of the tablet,and bowing several times to show respect for the person the tablet represents while offering the food and drink to the spirit of the ancestor being remembered.45 The Catholic Church in the eighteenth century chose to interpret this service as a religious ritual that assumed the actual presence of the soul of the dead in the wooden tablet. This interpretation made this ritual appear to be a form of idolatry, forbidden to all Catholics. The early Jesuits in China had recognized the importance of this rite in family-oriented Confucian society and had realized that,viewed symbolically, the ritual did not offend against any points of Catholic doctrine. Later missionaries were under orders from Rome to construe the ritual literally, as though the bowing to the ancestral [page 46] tablet and the offerings of food necessarily implied the assertion that a soul actually was present within the wood tablet.

In retrospect,the Jesuit understanding of the actual significance of the ancestor memorial service appears to have been more accurate. K’ang-hsi,the Manchu Emperor of China from 1661 to 1722, declared in 1700 that worship of ancestors was an expression of love and filial remembrance, not intended to bring protection to the worshipper. Furthermore, there was no idea, when an ancestral tablet was erected, that the soul of the ancestor dwelt in that tablet.46 Emperor K’ang-hsi was not placing a new, rationalistic interpretation on an old superstitious Chinese practice with his statement. Almost two thousand years earlier the *Li chi* (Book of Rites) had declared, ‘‘the idea of sacrifice is not something that comes from without. It issues from within, being born in the heart. When the heart is deeply moved, expression is given to it in ceremonies.”47 The ancestor memorial ritual was described even in early Confucian classics as more an expression of the filial piety of the living than an assertion of the presence of the soul of the dead in a wood tablet. As the sociologist C.K. Yang notes of the early rationalist tradition in Confucian philosophy, ‘‘All the ritual behavior and offerings made to the spirits were to be interpreted as an expression of longing for the continued existence of the dead without belief in the actual existence of the soul.”48

Korean Confucians also understood the symbolic nature of the an-cestor memorial rite. They knew the motive and state of mind of the person performing the ritual were more important than any belief or skepticism about the survival of the soul. Yi Ik discusses chesa in a short eighteenth century essay entitled ‘‘The Reason for Ancestral Rites” (*Chesaji i*). Denying the vulgar belief that the ritual offerings of food were necessary for the continued existence of the ancestor in the after-life, Yi argues that the frequency of sacrificial offerings, as determined by the Sages, is much less than the frequency with which the living need to eat and drink. If the spirits of the dead need food as they did when they were alive, then all spirits must be hungry indeed.50

For Yi Ik, the ancestor memorial ceremony is more for the living than for the dead. He argues that the Sages established this ritual for the sake of humanity and morality. Through proper performance of the ancestor memorial rite a filial son is able to express the depth of the gratitude he feels towards the parents who gave him life. It is this sincere expression of filial sentiments that provides the foundation of morality and social order in the Confucian world.51 Whether or not a soul exists to accept the offering is of secondary importance. [page 47]

Yi Ki’s disciple, An Chong-bok, showed a similar concern for the sincerity with which the ancestor rites are performed in his criticism of Catholic doctrine and practices. Writing before the Catholics in Korea had been informed that they could not offer food before any ancestral tablets, An reported that Catholics had been telling their friends that it was absurd to think that ancestors could actually enjoy the food placed before their memorial tablets. And the Catholics advised their friends to take part in such superstitious Confucian ceremonies only under silent protest,inwardly turning toward heaven and asking God’s forgiveness for not being able to resist the social pressure to participate in this Confucian ritual. Calling such advice ‘‘a perversion of our rituals and a slander against Confucianism, ‘ An declares that the Catholics do not understand the moral principles by which the Sages in ancient China established ancestor memorial rites to show respect for forefathers.52 For An, the ritual is only meaningful if the participants sincerely desire to show through their performance of the traditional ceremonies their filial gratitude to the ancestors who gave them life. To participate reluctantly, as the Catholics were advising men to do,was to reveal an immoral lack of respect for ancestors and contempt for time-honored tradition.

The papal interpretation of the significance of the Confucian ancestor memorial service appears to have been based on a two-fold misunderstanding. First of all the Papacy, disregarding the learned opinions of the Jesuits who had decades of experience among the scholarly community of China, confused the Confucian philosophical explanation of the significance of ancestor rites with the superstition of the masses. As early as the third century before Christ,the Confucian philosopher Hsun Tzu had explained,

Sacrifice is to express a person’s feeling of remembrance and longing... Among gentlemen it is considered the way of man; among the common people it is considered as having to do with the spirits.53

From the time of Confucius on,scholars saw the traditional rituals of sacrifice as important for the moral and social functions they served. Sacrifice of food and drink to the ancestors was cultivated as a way of encouraging the virtues of filial piety and loyalty. As Hsun Tzu noted,the importance of the ritual lay in the effect it had on men rather than spirits. However, the uneducated masses were allowed to hold their belief that rituals were necessary to serve the spirits of the dead. Scholars recognized the value of such myths in supporting the people’s adherance to traditional Confucian values.54 [page 48]

The mistake made by Rome was to assume that the popular interpretation of the ancestor memorial service was the orthodox Confucian interpretation. The Church failed to realize that educated Asian Catholics could, without contradicting Catholic doctrine, participate in rites honoring their ancestors,since for them and the rest of the scholarly Confucian world the rites did not necessarily have any superstitious significance. By insisting on viewing the ritual as implying the actual presence of spirits in the ancestral tablets,the Catholic Church aligned itself with the ignorant masses and seriously damaged its claim to be worthy of the attention of the intellectual elite of China and Korea.

A second,more serious, error made by the papal authorities in the eighteenth century was to view Confucian custom and practice through Western categories. Instead of listening to Chinese arguments on the salutary effect of Confucian ritual on the promotion of virtue and morality, Rome insisted on examining the existential claims the ritual seemed to imply. In Rome’s eyes, ancestor memorial ceremonies were based on a belief in the existence of the souls of ancestors in wooden memorial tablets. For Confucians, the question of whether or not the souls of the ancestors actually dwelled in those tablets was of secondary importance. More important was the role the ritual played in preserving the social order,promoting family unity, and fostering the practice of virtue. As one Western student of Confucian thought has noted, East Asia did not share the Western concern for the truth or falsity of a statement. In determining whctner or not to accept a given belief or proposition, a Confucian was more likely to examine the behavioral implications of’ the belief or proposition in question.55 When the Catholic Church condemned the ancestor memorial service as false,it ignored the Confucian claim that the ritual was good. The Western preoccupation with truth clashed with the Confucian interest in morality. And the victims of that clash were the Chinese and Korean Catholics who had tried to live as good citizens of a Confucian society while following Catholic claims to religious truth.

**IV. THE ARREST AND MARTYRDOM OF PAUL YUN AND JAMES KWON**

In 1790 Korean Catholics had to decide whether or not to continue to practice their religion even though they now knew faithful adherence to the directives of the Church would necessarily lead to conflict with their society, with their family, friends, and neighbors. Two who made the [page 49] decision to risk that confrontation were Paul Yun and James Kwon. In the spring of 1791 Paul Yun’s mother died. He and his cousin James decided that they would follow all the customary Confucian mourning rituals except the rites involving the ancestral tablets. Going beyond the instructions from Bishop Gouvea in Peking, they not only did not make a tablet for Yun’s mother, they burnt all the ancestral tablets in their possession and buried the ashes. Given the central role of the tablets in the mourning ceremonies, their absence could not go unnoticed by relatives who came to the village in Chinsan to join Yun in mourning the loss of his mother.56

Soon rumors spread of Yun and Kwon’s violation of Confucian tradition by refusing to show respect for Yun’s dead mother in the usual manner. These rumors reached the ears of Hong Nag-an, Yi Ki-gyong’s friend who earlier had wanted to punish Yi Sung-hun and Chong Yag-yong for their 1787 Catholic study group at the Songgyun’gwan. Hong was now a minor official in the Royal Secretariat and he apparently felt that his post gave him the authority and responsibility to demand strict adherence to Confucian orthodoxy from the members of Korea’s literati elite. He sent a long letter to Ch’oe Che-gong, the leader of the Namin political faction to which Hong and Yun both belonged and a top official in King Chongjo’s court. In that letter Hong demanded that drastic action be taken against Yun and Kwon before the Catholic cancer could spread further and threaten both the Namin faction and the entire society and government of Korea.

Hong charged that Catholics treated their fathers and their rulers as no different from strangers they might happen to pass on the street. “They’ve thrown away their moral principles as if they were worth nothing more than a pair of old shoes.” Asserting that moral principles are eternal and unalterable and that Korea had taken ritual and righteousness as the foundation of the nation for thousands of years, he wrote, ‘‘Even the most perverse and immoral haven’t dared to violate the rules of propriety that require them to serve their parents while they are alive and to bury them properly when they die.”

Yun and Kwon had lowered themselves to the level of beasts and barbarians. They had let their belief in their “strange and monstrous God” deceive them into refusing to follow the proper burial and mourning procedures. Not only had they refused to make an ancestral tablet for Yun’s mother, they had gone even further and burnt the ancestral tablets they already had.57

What a tragedy! Nothing this bizarre has happened since time began. The laws of our land declare that the crime of [page 50] destroying an ancestral tablet is as serious an offense as murder. The laws also say that anyone who destroys his father’s ancestral tablet with his own hands should be treated exactly the same as someone who rebels against the throne. Even if Yun and Kwon were shown to be insane, we couldn’t let them escape the full’penalty the law demands. They openly condemn the Way of our ancestors and embrace perversion without hesitation or restraint. Look closely at the evil nature of their crime. It’s one hundred times worse than rebellion. If we don’t exterminate them now,then the moral bonds among men will be destroyed everywhere and this land where ritual and righteousness have prevailed for 4,000 years will fall into ruin and become fit only for savages and wild animnals.58

Hong’s charges were too serious to be ignored. An official search was made of Yun’s and Kwon,s homes and no ancestral tablets were found. Immediately warrants for their arrest were issued. Near the end of November,Yun and Kwon were taken into custody by the magistrate of Chinsan county. That magistrate, Shin Sa-won, had reluctantly arrested Yun and Kwon, doing so only after receiving explicit instructions from Seoul. He obviously did not want the embarrassment of having heresy appear in the county under his jurisdiction.

In the notes taken by Paul Yun of his interrogation by Magistrate Shin, the magistrate appears to be trying to save his prisoners’ and his own reputation by having them renounce their more extreme actions and provide an interpretation of their Catholic beliefs that would make this Western religion appear to be completely compatible with Confucian orthodoxy. But Paul Yun held fast to his convictions. Shin reminded him of the Confucian injunction to filial sons to protect the body which their parents had given them. To allow himself to suffer torture and death, argued the magistrate, would bring ruin and disgrace on his family and show a lack of proper filial respect for the life which he had received from his parents. Unmoved, Yun countered with his belief that filial piety meant always acting in accordance with what was right, even at the cost of torture and death. Magistrate Shin, seeing that he could not convince Yun or Kwon to abandon their religion, placed cangues around his prisoners’ necks and sent them to Chonju where they were turned over to the provincial governor.59

In Chonju, Paul Yun continued to deny any wrongdoing in his adherence to Catholic doctrine. And he attempted to justify the destruction [page 51] of ancestral tablets by using logic and reason to show the absurdity of the ancestor memorial service. Yun’s defense,based on the Western insistence on the irrational and superstitious character of Confucian ritual, clashed with the Confucian concern for the symbolic and ethical significance of the rite. The account of the interrogation in Chonju shows Yun and his interrogator talking past each other rather than to each other. Yun kept insisting that he had done what he had done in order to ensure that his actions were in accordance with truth. The governor kept insisting that Yun admit that what he had done and what his Catholic books taught were immoral. Yun could not understand how actions which offended against logic and reason could be moral. And the governor could not understand how considerations of truth or falsity could affect a person’s performance of his social obligations.60

Yun first argued that it was an affront to the dignity due his father and mother to treat pieces of wood as though they held their souls. He noted that the Fourth Commandment ordered Catholics to honor their fathers and mothers. If their parents were actually present in those wooden ancestral tablets,then Catholics would be obligated to show respect for the tablets. But those tablets are made of wood. “They have no flesh and blood relationship with me. They did not give me life nor educate me... How can I dare to treat these man-made pieces of wood as though they were actually my mother and father?”61

And Yun argued that it was foolish to place food and drink before a block of wood, even if a soul were present in it. Yun pointed out that the soul is not a material object and can get no nourishment from material goods. No matter how delicious the wine and nutritious the meat,the soul can get no benefit from the offering. Furthermore,even the most filial son does not try to serve his parents food and drink when they are asleep. ‘‘If people can’t eat while they sleep,how much more foolish is it to offer food to our parents when they are dead? How can anyone who is sincere in his filial piety try to honor his parents with such an absurd practice?”62 This Catholic Korean even dared to challenge the fundamental assumption of Confucian morality which made filial piety and loyalty the absolutes from which all other value and virtue is derived. He denied that those two virtues were complete and axiomatic in themselves but instead argued that “the basis of loyalty to the ruler is the laws of God, and the basis of filial piety toward one’s parents is also the laws of God.”6³ This was a radical contradiction of the core of Confucian thought. Rather than accepting the virtues of filial piety and loyalty as the standards by which all else was to be judged,Yun claimed that filial piety and loyalty were [page 52] themselves only conditional obligations, binding on man only because God,the source of all value,had so willed.

Paul Yun did not completely escape the behavioral orientation of the Confucian world which placed concern for what should be done ahead of concern for what should be believed. When told to provide a short summary of Catholic teachings, he replied, not with an account of the divinity of Jesus Christ and his power to redeem men from their sins, but with the statement that ‘‘What we practice can be reduced to the Ten Commandments and the Seven Virtues.”64 Catholicism is thus reduced by Yun to its moral commands and is presented as essentially a collection of guidelines for ethical behavior.

Yun’s view of Catholic morality placed him in fatal conflict with his Confucian society,since he placed man’s obligations to his God ahead of his duties to his fellow man. Yun was asked by his interrogator to state the Ten Commandments by which Catholics regulated their conduct. The governor immediately noticed that there was no specific mention of the relationship between subjects and their rulers and demanded an explanation of this lack from Yun, who replied that the king was the father of his realm and his subjects owed him and his officials the same respect and loyalty they owed their parents as enjoined by the Fourth Commandment. Yun was ordered to write down in greater detail the Catholic principles of morality and was warned to “emphasize the principles of loyalty to the king and filial piety so that you might be able to save your life.”65

Yun responded with a written statement in which he declared that the Lord of Heaven was the Creator and Father of all men. Since he recognized God as his Father, he could not disobey any of his orders. God had forbidden his children to have ancestral tablets in their homes or to offer meat and wine to the spirits of the dead as represented by such tablets. He could do nothing but obey.66

Yun also explained that the difference between Confucian and Catholic expressions of loyalty and filial piety is that Catholics emphasize diligent application to the practice of virtue instead of participation in rituals of doubtful merit. This Catholic interest in the sincere practice of virtue should be seen as the expression of loyalty and filial piety that it is, not as rebellious and immoral. After all,Yun notes, commoners and poor yangban are not severely punished if they do not carry out the mourning ritual strictly according to the regulations. Why should those who are only obeying the commands of their God in the privacy of their own homes be threatened with capital punishment and charged with defying the laws of the land?67 [page 53]

While the arguments of Paul Yun might seem reasonable to us in 1980, they appeared irrelevant to Confucian officials in 1791. Few intelligent scholars then needed to be convinced that the souls of the dead were not actually present in the wooden ancestral tablets. They had long been following the injunction of Confucius to show respect for spirits as if they were present.68

The West, particularly as represented by Christianity,has been primarily concerned with matters of knowledge, belief, and fact. Right knowledge has been considered an essential prerequisite to correct behavior, with the highest expression of morality only possible with the recognition of the existence of God as the Father, Creator, and Savior of mankind. Paul Yun, accepting this Western approach, insisted that loyalty and filial piety only have value in so far as they derive from the commands of the Supreme Being who is the source of all truth and good.

Confucianism, on the other hand,was more concerned with what men did than with that they believed or knew. What was important was that men were loyal to their rulers and showed proper respect for their parents,no matter what their personal beliefs. The good rather than the true was the focus of Confucian concern. Paul Yun, in grounding virtue on the fact of God’s existence,had reversed the traditional Confucian order. He had truth determine the good rather than the good determine what was true.

Yun made the mistake,in the Confucian perspective, of allowing his beliefs. to prevent him from discharging his moral obligations to his parents and to his society. Any beliefs,any statements of religious or metaphysical fact,which interfered with the performance of ethical duties should have been immediately rejected as immoral and therefore untrue. He erred in his failure to recognize the primacy of loyalty and filial piety.

The governor of Chonju reported to Seoul that Paul Yun Chi-ch,ung and James Kwon Sang-yon had indeed destroyed their ancestral tablets and had abandoned the Confucian path of their fathers. On December 3, 1791, King Chongjo commanded that Paul Yun and James Kwon be beheaded without delay. On December 8th,the thirty-three-year-old Yun and the forty-one-year-old Kwon were martyred for their faith. Their belief that truth determined morality rather than moral presuppositions determining what could and could not be believed cost them their lives.69

The presecution of Catholics did not end there. Kwon Il-sin, who had taken over leadership of the Church from Yi Sung-hun, was brought in for interrogation under torture. He made a faint and ambiguous renunciation of his faith after several days of torture and then died of his wounds [page 54] while traveling into exile in the countryside.70 A chungin Catholic, Ch’oe P’il-gong, suffered imprisonment and torture for a full month before he finally relented and made a formal statement condemning Catholicism, although he later returned to his faith and was martyred in 1801.71 Several other Catholics were also tortured into at least temporarily abandoning Catholicism in the immediate aftermath of the Yun-Kwon incident.72

The 1791 persecution was only the beginning of the bloody confrontation between Catholicism and Confucianism in Korea. In 1801, 1839, 1846, and 1866 hundreds of Korean Catholics died for their faith. It has been suggested that, if Rome had not ordered Asian Catholics to repudiate the ancestor memorial service, an accommodation between Confucianism and Catholicism could have been reached and the martyrdom of so many might not have been necessary. I do not agree. The conflict over the proper performance of mourning ritual was more a symptom than a cause of the rift between the Confucians and the Catholics. Paul Yun and his associates were abandoning the basic assumptions of their civilization when they stressed the priority of truth over morality.

Confucians traditionally were concerned with the creation of a stable and harmonious moral community on this earth. They gave primary attention to the maintenance of the proper relationships among human beings. The ancestor memorial service was essential because of its function in promoting family unity and social stability. The Catholics, on the other hand,saw the individual,s relationship with God as more important than his relationship with his fellow man. When the demands of society conflicted with the demands of God, man had to follow God. No matter how beneficial to society the ancestor memorial service might have been, it violated God’s command to refrain from idolatry and therefore could not be tolerated.

In this conflict between Confucianism and Catholicism,we have two radically different views of what it means for a person to be moral. The Confucian picture of virtue meant being a good member of society: serving your parents faithfully while they are alive, honoring them properly after their death, obeying the dictates of your superiors, and living in peaceful harmony with your neighbors. The Catholic Church, on the other hand, taught that virtue meant obedience to God’s commands as interpreted by his Church. Your king and your parents were to be obeyed only insofar as their commands did not conflict with the laws of God. God was Truth and Goodness and his demands were superior to those of a man-centered moral philosophy. [page 55]

This was a challenge to the social morality of Confucianism that could not have been hidden by a Catholic toleration of the ancestor memorial service. Catholic doctrine denied the Confucian emphasis on human relationships as the proper determinant of moral behavior. Confucianism taught what men should do to create a better world in this life. This goal, in Catholic eyes, was superficial and shallow. Catholicism taught what men should believe in order to win eternal life in a better world after death. This aim,to Confucians,was immoral and absurd.

As long as Catholicism emphasized the supernatural and life after death over the human community,conflict was unavoidable. Truth and Morality cannot both claim supreme authority. Confucians charged that the Catholic insistence on man’s obedience to God forced believers to slight their responsibilities to the society in which they lived. And Catholics countered that the Confucian stress on social obligations ignored the larger question of who created society and for what purpose He did so.

Such radically different views of the meaning and purpose of human existence can never be reconciled. Toleration of each other’s differences may be possible for a time but conflict will eventually erupt. Such an eruption cost the lives of Paul Yun and James Kwon in 1791. They were casualties in a war between the forces of transcendental Truth and the advocates of terrestrial Morality. It would be naive to expect that there will be no more such casualties in man’s future, for the final boundaries delineating the regions where individual conscience rules and where society reigns have not yet been—and may never be—determined. The potential for conflict between man’s obligation to follow his personal vision of truth and his duty to live in harmony with his fellow human beings will remain as long as there is more than one person fiving on this planet Earth.

**NOTES**

1. A modern Korean translation by Yi Min-su was published by Chong-um Sa in Seoul in 1974. The section on Catholicism, entitled ‘‘Sogyo’’ (Western religion), can be found on page s 92-93 of that translation.

2. Sunam sonsaeng munjip (The collected works of An Chong-bok),vol. 17, p. 12.

3. A modern Korean translation by Nam Man-song was published by Ul-yu Sa in Seoul in 1975. The section on Catholicism is found in volume 1 on page s 90-91 in Korean translation and on page 515 in the original Chinese. [page 56]

4. Yi Won-sun, ‘‘Catholic books in classical Chinese and their influence on traditional Korean society” (Myong-ch,ong’nae Sohakso ui Han’guk Sasangsa ui uiui) in Essays on the history of Korean Catholicism (Han-guk Ch’on jugyohoesa nonmunsonjip), Seoul, 1976. Page s 135-156.

5. Yi Nung-hwa, Choson kidokkyo kup woegyo sa (The history of Christianity and foreign relations in Yi dynasty Korea), Seoul, 1977, pp. 9-21.

6. Ricci’s statement is found in George Dunne’s Generation of Giants, Notre Dame, 1962, p. 93. Tien-chu shih-i can be found in the 1968 collection entitled T’ien-hsueh ch’u- han (An introduction to Catholicism). Recent reproductions of the T’ien-hsueh ch’u-han have appeared in both Taiwan and Korea. In the Korean edition, T’ien-chu shih-i can be found on page s 103-177.

7. Ch’i K’e is also in the Tien-hsueh ch ‘u-han, page s 192-309 of the Korean edition.

8. Sdng-ho sasdl, Volume XI, p. 2. See the recent edition with accompanying Korean translation published in Seoul in 1977 by Minjok munhwa ch’ujinhoe.

9. ‘‘Sohak py’on” (A discussion of Western learning) in Pyogmpy’on (Attacks on heterodoxy in defense of orthodoxy), Yi Man-ch’ae, editor, Seoul reprint, 1971, pp. 38-103.

10. Ibid., pp. 74-75.

11. Ibid., p- 39.

12. Ibid., pp. 89-90.

13. Ibid., pp. 95-97.

14. Chong Ta-san chonso (The complete works of Ch5ng Yag-yong), Volume I, chapter 15, pp. 352, 39a.

15. Charles Dallet, Historie de l’eglise de Coree (The history of the Catholic Church in Korea), Paris, 1874, pp. 15-16.

16. Hwang Sa-yong paekso (The Silk Letter of Hwang Sa-yong), translated by Yun Chae-yong, Seoul, 1975, p. 55.

17. Ibid.

18. Catholic Korea: Yesterday and Today, edited by Joseph Chang-mun Kim and John Jae-sun Chung, Seoul, 1964, page 25.

19. Yi Sung-hun’s letter to the French missionaries in Peking, written in 1789, is found in French translation in Fr. Andrew Ch’oe’s L ‘Erection du Premier Vicariate Apostolique et les Origines du Catholicism en Coree, 1592-1837. Switzerland, 1961, pp. 90-93.

20. Hwang Sa-yong paekso, p. 55.

21. Dallet, p. 13. Obviously the ch’ok Dallet mentions must be shorter than the current ch ‘ok of 30 centimeters and the kun must be lighter than the current kun of 600 grams. However, Yi Pyok was undoubtedly a tall and strong man by the standards of his day.

22. Kim Ok-hui, Kwang-am Yi Pyok ui Sohaksasang (The Catholic thought of Yi Pyok), Weoul, 1979, p. 22.

23. Dallet, p. 14.

24. Chong Ta-san chonso, Volume I, chapter 15, p. 42a.

25. Ibid., p. 24.

26. Hwang Sa-yong paekso, pp. 58-59.

27. Pyogwipy’on, pp. 105-106.

28. Ibid.

29. Sahak ching’ui (A warning against Catholicism), reprinted in Seoul, 1977, pp, 82,278.

30. Dallet, pp. 28-29. [page 57]

31. Yi Ki-gyong Pyongwipy’on, Seoul reprint, 1978, p. 80. This appears to be the original Pyogwipy’on compiled shortly after 1801 on which the Pyogwipy’on of Yi Man- ch’ae cited in footnote 9 was partially based.

32. Dallet, p. 43.

33. Ibid., pp. 37-38.

34. Pyogwipy’on, pp. 113-114, Yi Ki-gyong Pyogwipy’on, pp. 139-147.

35. Pyogwipy’on, pp. 114-117.

36. Ibid., pp. 117-118.

37. Yi Ki-gyong Pyogwipy’on, pp. 7-13.

38. Andrew Ch’oe, op. cit., and Chu Chae-yong, Han’guk Katollik sa ui ong’ui (A correction of histories of the Catholic Church in Korea), Seoul, 1970, pp. 60-65.

39. Dallet, pp. 32-33.

40. Fr. Chou Wen-mo, a Chinese priest, arrived in Korea in 1794 and served as the spiritual leader of Korea’s Catholics until his execution in the persecution of 1801.

41. Akaki Jinbee, ‘‘Chosen ni okeru Tenshukyo ryunyu to sono tenrei mondai ni tsuite” (The introduction of Catholicism into Korea and the Rites Controversy),as translated into Korean, Han’guk Ch’on jugyohoesa nonmunsonjip, Vol. II,Seoul, 1977,pp. 129-130.

42. Dallet, pp. 34-35.

43. Kenneth S. Latourette, A History of Christian Missions in China, London, 1929,pp. 140-141.

44. Dallet, p. CXLIII. Here I’m relying on the English translation by the Human Relations Area Files entitled Traditional Korea, New Haven, 1954, p. 154. 丁his is a translation of Dallet’s introduction only.

45. For a detailed description of a contemporary chesa, see Griffin Dix, ‘‘How to do things, with ritual: The logic of Ancestor Worship and other offerings in rural Korea,” in Studies on Korea in Transition, edited by David McCann, John Middleton, and Edward Shultz, Hawaii, 1979, pp. 57-88.

46. Jonathan D. Spence, Emperor of China: Self-Portrait of K’ang-hsi. New York, 1974, p. 79.

47. Li chi, as translated by Derk Bodde in A History of Chinese Philosophy by Feng Yu- lan, Princeton, 1952, Vol. I, p. 350.

48. C.K. Yang, Religion in Chinese Society, Berkeley, 1961, p. 48.

49. Yi Ik, Song-ho sasol, Volume 16, p. 28b-30a.

50. Ibid., 28b.

51. Ibid.

52. An Chong-bok, ‘‘Ch’onhak mundap,, (A conversation on Catholicism), Sunam sonsaeng munjip, volume 17, pp. 134b-35a.

53. Hsun Tzu, as translated in Sources of Chinese Tradition, edited by De Bary, Chan, and Watson, New York, 1960, p. 110.

54. Yang, op. cit.,pp. 28-53, and 253-55.

55. Donald Munro, The Concept of Man in Early China, Stanford, 1969, p. 55.

56. Dallet, pp. 37-38.

57. Yi Ki-gyong Pyogwipy’on, pp. 27-29.

58. Ibid., pp. 29-30.

59. Ibid., pp. 39-42.

60. Dallet, pp. 42-53. An English translation of Yun’s account of his interrogation in Chinsan and Chonju and of his and Kwon’s final statement is available in Catholic Korea, [page 58] op, cit., pp. 32-40.

61. Dallet, p. 48.

62. Ibid., p. 49.

63. Ibid., p. 47.

64. Ibid., p. 43.

65. Ibid., p. 47.

66. Ibid., pp. 47-48. A version of Yun’s statement similar to that found in Dallet can be seen in the Chongjo sillok, 15th year, 11th month;7th day.

67. Dallet, p. 49.

68. Analects, Book III, chapter 12.

69. Dallet, pp. 53-54.

70. Ibid., pp. 57-59. The offical account of Kwon Il-sin’s interrogation can be found in Yi Ki-gyong Pyogwipy’on, pp. 110-118.

71. Dallet, pp. 60-61. Yi Ki-gyong Pyogwipy’on, pp. 128-134.

72. Dallet, p. 61.