

**Rev. Dr. Joomee Hur, Presbyterian Church of Korea**

**For keynote inputs**

My input is devoted to the stories about people of faith in action in my context, South Korea. It informs you how people of faith in action have responded to the missiological calls related to the global issues of human rights, gender, migration, democracy, postcolonialism, etc. First, a small but dedicated number of Catholic, Methodist, and Presbyterian clergy including foreign missionaries have stood in solidarity with young female workers under poor working conditions in the 1960s and 70s, by following the steps of worker-priest tradition in Western Europe. The influential labor conflicts have been conducted by the resisting workers, who have been educated by the worker priests. Second, in response to the irruption of the sexually oppressed women, Christian women in their faith based organizations initiated and carried the struggle against sex tourism since the 1970s. The academic discussion on it led them to raise the issue of the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan. Last, in reply to the cries of migrant workers with their experience of oppression, Christian women in their faith based organizations have faced the difficult situation of migrant women under oppression including migrant women workers and female marriage migrants, and have started to empower them. The oppressed have groaned and cried out, and Christians who put faith in action have been in solidarity with them. People of faith in action and the oppressed have built an equal relationship not as donor and recipient, but as co-agents through their interaction with each other. As people of faith in action have communicated with the oppressed, the oppressed have been transformed from being powerless into subjects who are gaining their own agency. As the faces of the oppressed have been changed over time, the solidarity of people of faith in action is not limited to a certain group at a certain time. Since the 1970s, the enthusiastic support from feminist activists as descendants of the former colonizers has led to an acceleration of decolonization, working together with the former colonized in a postcolonial era. The struggle against neocolonialism has been fueled by the conscientious members of the neocolonizing nation, together with the members of the neocolonized nation, since the 1980s. At the same time, the formerly- or neo- colonized should consider themselves with critical and postcolonial eyes if they have the double positions not only of the formerly- or neo-colonized in a relationship with other developed countries but also of the neo-colonizer of cultural, political, and economic imperialism in a relationship with other developing countries in a new world order. It is, of course, a small number of people of faith in action as missionaries, pastors, activists, laypeople, etc. but God-praxis is still being carried out through their commitments.

**You will find the detail of this keynote input in my paper,**

Faith, Action and Subjectivity: The Social Engagement of Christian Women in South Korea, in: Joerg Rieger(ed.), *Theologies on the Move: Religion, Migration, and Pilgrimage in the World of Neoliberal Capital*, Lexington books/Fortress Academic, London 2020, 73-89.

**For Parallel Workshops**

An Indonesian scholar J. B Banawiratma has coined the new term *Non-Korean Minjung*, “who are being oppressed, especially by Korean corporations and Korean economic politics” “outside South Korea” “in the context of Indonesian-Korean relations (Banawiratma, 2018, 195-197).” And he also includes the migrant workers who are working in South Korea with their short-term contracts under this category (Banawiratma, 2018, 197). Minjung theologians have claimed to be sided with the powerless in the past Korean history of minjung movements. For your reference, minjung theology is the Korean version of Liberation Theology and minjung indicates the oppressed. However, the rise of

non-Korean minjung shows Koreans unwanted position, to side with the Korean market powers by enjoying the benefit directly or indirectly. The concept of neocolonialism used to explain postcolonial relations between former colonies and “more often than not” former colonizers (Brown-Forster, 2012, 332). Yet the irruption of the exploited in Indonesia informs us about the possibility of the use of the concept of neocolonialism between nations whether they have colonial history to share or not. Prof. Musa W. Dube, the postcolonial feminist theologian from Botswana, points out the double standards, which the Israelites adapted in the Exodus narrative (Exodus and Joshua 1-12): the hermeneutics of liberation with relation to the empire of Egypt and the hermeneutics of colonization with relation to the land of Canaan (Dube, 2000, 58-70). Not only in the Exodus narrative, but also in the story of non-Korean Minjung at present, Koreans cannot avoid our double identities as the victimized and the victimizer. In a postcolonial context, Asia faces the more complicated situation to struggle not only against the former colonizers, mainly the West but also against the newly emerged internal opponents, as new neocolonial powers emerging from the grounds of its own house. This double identity also can be found in any countries which are in trouble with their neighboring countries or with their domestic minority groups.

### **References**

- Banawiratma, J. B. (2018). The Powerless and the Powerful for Common - an Indonesian Liberation Perspective. In Volker Küster and Jin-Kwan Kwon(Eds.), *Minjung Theology Today*. Evangelische Verlanganstalt GmbH.
- Brown-Forster, Walton. (2012). Neocolonialism. In Edward Ramsamy (Ed.), *Cultural Sociology of the Middle East, Asia and Africa: An encyclopedia: v. 2. Africa*. SAGE Publications.
- Dube, Musa W. (2000). *Postcolonial Feminist Interpretation of the Bible*, Chalice Press.

**You will find details of this workshop input in my unpublished dissertation, *Inheriting the Mother's Name. Intercultural Theology, Women's Subjectivity and the Arts*, under contract.**