

# **Varieties of Personal Religious Experience in Korean New Religious Movements**

**-A Jamesian Approach-**

**Chae Young Kim**  
Sogang University, Korea

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# Introduction

The purpose of this paper will outline psycho-spiritual features exposed in various personal religious experiences in Korean New Religious Movements. In each Korean NRM, like the case of the other region, those religious experience materials are dispersed from a key founder's through an ordinary participant's experiences but not yet collected or accumulated systematically. Nevertheless ordinary participant's experience materials are too numerous to handle them in a single paper.

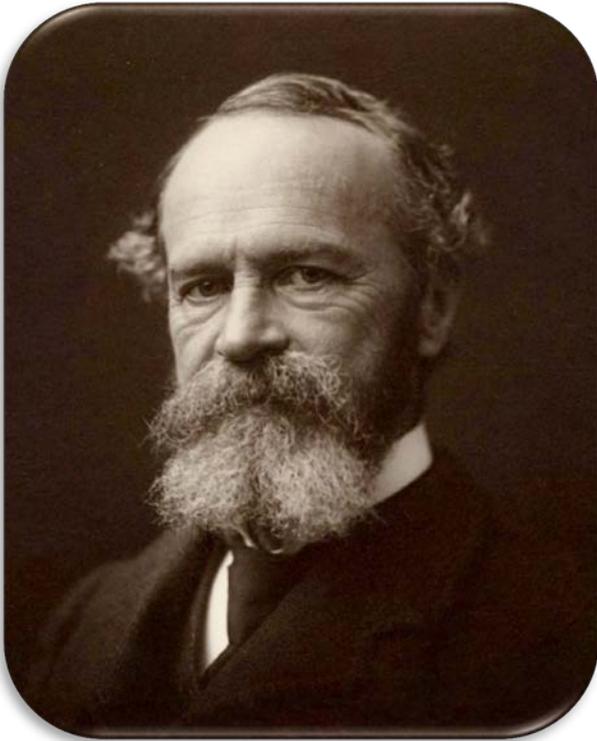
So in **this paper four key founder's religious experiences in Korean NRMs will be chosen for a comparative sketch.** They are Choe, Je-U(Suun1824-1864), Kang, Il-Sun(Jeungsan1871-1909), Kwon, Shin-Chan(1923-1996) and Yoon, Hong-Sun(Julia 1947-) For the development of this essay, William James' perspective of religious experience will be introduced to articulate psycho-spiritual features in the four key founders' religious experiences. First of all let's see what James' perspective would be materialized for the birth of the new discipline of religious matters, psychology of religion and how his religious experience materials would be related with our common concern of this conference, NRMs.

# **William James, Psychology of Religion, and New Religious Movements**

At fifty-five years of age, in January 1898, James was invited to give the Gifford Lectures at Edinburgh. He delivered the lectures from 1899-1900 and 1900-1901. After the lectures, they were immediately published as the book, *The Varieties of Religious Experience: A Study on Human Nature* (1902). The lectures and the book played a foundational role for the psychology of religion. He and his first disciple, Granville Stanley Hall(1844-1924) led the emerging psychological study on religious matter as an academic movement. Their approaches are still influencing the field in religious studies and beyond.

The two key issues in James' lectures could be appropriated for the understanding of the four key founders' religious experience in Korean NRMs. The first issue is on the psycho-spiritual "locus" of religious experience. It is about the place where religious experience originates or happens. The second issue is on the type of religious experience. Especially James articulated two types of religious experience. He named them as the healthy mind and the sick soul.

# 1. The Psycho-Spiritual “Locus” of Religious Experience



“...we cannot, I think, avoid the conclusion that in religion we have a department of human nature with unusually close relations to the transmarginal or subliminal region. If the word “subliminal” is offensive to any of you, as smelling too much of psychical research or other aberrations, call it by other name you please, to distinguish it from the level of full sunlit of consciousness. Call this latter the A-region of personality, if you care to, and call the other the B-region. The B-region, then, is obviously the larger part of each of us, for it is the abode of everything that is latent and the reservoir of everything that passes unrecorded or unobserved...It is also fountain-head of much that feeds our religion. In persons deep in the religious life, as we have now abundantly seen—and the is my conclusion—the door into this region seems unusually wide open; at any rate, experiences making their entrance through that door have had emphatic influence in shaping religious history.”(W. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, 473.)

“Let me then propose, as an hypothesis, that whatever it may be on its *farther* side, the “more” with which in religious experience we feel ourselves connected is on its *hither* side the subconscious continuation of our conscious life.”[W. James, 502.]

**In these citations we could think about the Psycho-Spiritual “locus” of religious experience as transmission influx. It is simply a place. Or we could think about the “locus “as the ultimate source or the ultimate reality. These points are still the most fundamental issue in the field of psychology of religion.**

## 2. Two Types of Religious Experience



### The Healthy Mind

“The systematic cultivation of healthy-mindedness as a religious attitude is therefore consonant with important currents in human nature, and is anything but absurd. In fact, we all do cultivate it more or less, even when our professed theology should in consistency forbid it. We divert our attention from disease and death as much as we can; and the slaughter-houses and indecencies without end on which our life is founded are huddled out of sight and never mentioned, so that the world we recognize officially in literature and in society is a poetic far handsomer and cleaner and better than the world that really is.” [W. James, 89.]

“At our last meeting, we considered the healthy-minded temperament, the temperament which has a constitutional incapacity for prolonged suffering, and in which the tendency to see things optimistically is like a water of crystallization in which the individual’s character is set. We saw how this temperament may become the basis for a peculiar type of religion, a religion in which good, even the good of this world’s life, is regarded as the essential thing for a rational being to attend to. This religion directs him to settle his scores with more evil aspects of the universe by systematically declining to lay them to heart or make much of them, by ignoring them in his reflective calculations, or even, on occasion, by denying outright that they exist. Evil is a disease; worry over disease is itself an additional form of disease, which only adds to the original complaint. Even repentance and remorse, affections which come in the character of ministers of good, may be but sickly and relaxing impulses. The best repentance is to up and act for righteousness, and forget that you ever had relations with sin.” [W. James, 125.]

**Walter Whitman’s [*Song of Myself*, 32.] and Spinoza’s thought which emphasizes that “knowledge of evil is an “inadequate” knowledge, fit only for slavish minds.” [W. James, 125.] Categorically they seem to reject and condemn “repentance” itself as a sort of evil.**

## 2. Two Types of Religious Experience

### The Sick Soul: Maximization of Evil

“But there are others for whom evil is no mere relation of the subject to particular outer things, but something more radical and general, a wrongness or vice in his essential nature, which no alteration of the environment, or any superficial rearrangement of the inner self, can cure, and which requires a supernatural remedy.” [W. James, 132.]

### Pathological Melancholy

“There is a pitch of unhappiness so great that the goods of nature maybe entirely forgotten, and all sentiment of their existence vanishes from the mental field...” [W. James, 144.] and “for this extremity of pessimism to be reached, something more is needed than observation of life and reflection upon death. The individual must in his own person become the prey of a pathological melancholy. As the healthy-minded enthusiast succeeds in ignoring evil’s very existence, so the subject of melancholy is forced in spite of himself to ignore that of all good whatever: for him it may no longer have the least reality. Such sensitiveness and susceptibility to mental pain is a rare occurrence where the nervous constitution is entirely normal; one seldom finds it in a healthy subject even where he is the victim of the atrocious cruelties of outward fortune.” [W. James, 145.]

### Religious Melancholy

“At about the age of fifty, Tolstoy relates that he began to have moments of perplexity, of what he calls arrest, as if he knew not “how to live,” or what to do. It is obvious that these were moments in which the excitement and interest which our functions naturally bring had ceased. Life had been enchanting, it was now flat sober, more than sober, dead. Things were meaningless whose meaning had always been self-evident. The questions, “Why?” and “What next?” began to beset him more and more frequently. At first it seemed as if such questions must be answerable, and as if he could easily find the answers if he would take the time; but as they ever became more urgent, he perceived that it was like those first discomforts of a sick man, to which he pays but little attention till they run into one continuing suffering, and then he realizes that what he took for a passing disorder means the most momentous thing in the world for him, means his death.” [W. James, 152-53.]

## 2. Two Types of Religious Experience



**The Sick  
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“But there are others for whom evil is no mere relation of the subject to particular outer things, but something more radical and general, a wrongness or vice in his essential nature, which no alteration of the environment, or any superficial rearrangement of the inner self, can cure, and which requires a supernatural remedy.” [W. James, 132.]

What Tolstoy was experiencing was “not the simple ignorance of ill, but something vastly more complex, including natural evil as one of its elements, but finding natural evil no such stumbling block and terror because it now sees it swallowed up in supernatural good. The process is one of redemption, not of mere reversion to natural health, and the sufferer, when saved, is saved by what seems to be a second birth, a deeper kind of conscious being than he could enjoy before.” [W. James, 156.]

### 3. James and New Religious Movements

William James is one of the key scholars who studied various new religious movements in late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. In that time he was seriously engaged with the study of religious experience in various new religious movements. In the field of the scientific study of religion or religious studies, his study could be counted as one of the first scholars of NRMs. In his Gifford lectures, he referred to more than 700 religious experiences materials across diverse religious participants. Among them he handled 150 testimonies.

In that time, NRMs were not yet academically concerned in the field of religious studies. Generally they were ignored in the field. But James was quite uniquely exceptional. His scholarly works of NRMs in relation to religious experience were “democratic”. He attempted to create a space of NRM equally with other religious materials for his study of religious experience. He handled several NRM cases in the testimonies such as mind cure movements, new thought, Joseph Smith and his followers, Emmanuel Swedenborg and his followers, Unitarianism and Ralph Waldo Emerson, psychical researchers, spiritualists, Annie Besant and theosophy, Mary Baker Eddy, and Christian Science and so on.

# **The Four Korean NRM Founders’ Self-Perception on the “Locus” of Religious Experience: Is it a Place or the Ultimate Source/Reality?**

## **1. Choe, Je-U’s Dialectic Narrative of the “Locus”: Distinction? or Unity?**

Choe Je-U’s narratives about his experience exposed his pivotal religious experience at eleven o’clock on the morning of April 5, 1860. It is described in the first part of the *Dongggyeong Daejeon*. It tells distinctively the “locus” as that of the transmission influx concerning about God. In this sense, it tells the difference from the unity oriented interpretation between God and human being.

# 1. Choe, Je-U's Dialectic Narrative of the "Locus": Distinction? or Unity?



“Unexpectedly, in April, my mind felt chilled and my body shook. I felt ill but did not know exactly what was wrong and I could not describe the condition of my feeling. Then, suddenly, a mysterious voice came to my ear, and I was frightened and woke up and asked “Who are you?”

The voice said: “Do not fear and do not be afraid. Humankind calls me *Sangje*(God); don't you recognize *Sangje*?”

I asked, “Why do you reveal yourself to me?” God said: “I have not been able to find any one to teach the Truth. Thus I am sending you to the world to teach the Truth. Therefore, do not even doubt it.”

I asked God, “Shall I teach the Western (Christian) truth?” God said, “No, I have a talisman (spiritual symbol) which is called mystical medicine. Its shape is like the Great Ultimate and its form is also like *gung gung*. Receive this talisman and cure humankind's illness. Receive also my incantation and teach people to honor me. Then, you too shall become immortal and the Truth shall spread to all the world.” [ Choe Je-u, *Dongggyeong Daejeon*, 5.]

However, in his other experience materials, there are some unity features exposed. Nevertheless if they would be precisely read, they would not be different from the above narrative.

# 1. Choe, Je-U's Dialectic Narrative of the "Locus": Distinction? or Unity?



“My mind is your mind. How can Humankind know it? People know of Heaven and earth, but they do not know the Spirit. I am the Spirit. As I am giving you the eternal Truth, cultivate and refine it, write it down and teach it to the people. Establish the laws of practice and propagate the Truth (virtue). Then you will have eternal life and will brighten the world”  
[ Choe Je-u, *Donggyeong Daejeon*, 9.]

Most scholars of Choe, Je-U's experience seem to argue that human beings are God in the first sentence of the above quotation, “My mind is your mind.” But the remaining sentences tell about the difference of Choe, Je-U as listener and God as the speaker. Therefore it should not be confirmed that the sentence reveals the unity of God and human being. Still the delicate distinction of them is sustained in his self-perception of religious experience.

## 2. Kang, Jeung-san's radical proclamation of himself as Sangje



Both *Jeongyeong*, the scripture of Daesoonjinrihoe and *Dojeon*, the scripture of Jeung San Do proclaim Kang, Jeung-san as Sangje or God. He is not a human being to listen to or worship Sangje or God as to be seen in the case of Choe, Je-U's religious experience. In the history of Korean religions and further of world religions, this aspect is the most radical proclamation. Thus, Kang, Jeung-san's life prior to the birth, after the birth in this earth, departure to the Heaven and return plan to the earth is that of Sangje or God.

In this sense, Kang, Jeung-san is not simply a psycho-spiritual being as the carrier or "locus" of his religious experience but himself as the ultimate source or reality, Sangje or God. Furthermore he proclaims that he sent religious founders and finally sent also Choe, Je-U to the earth. Unfortunately Choe, Je-U could not fulfil his mission.

## 2. Kang, Jeung-san's radical proclamation of himself as Sangje

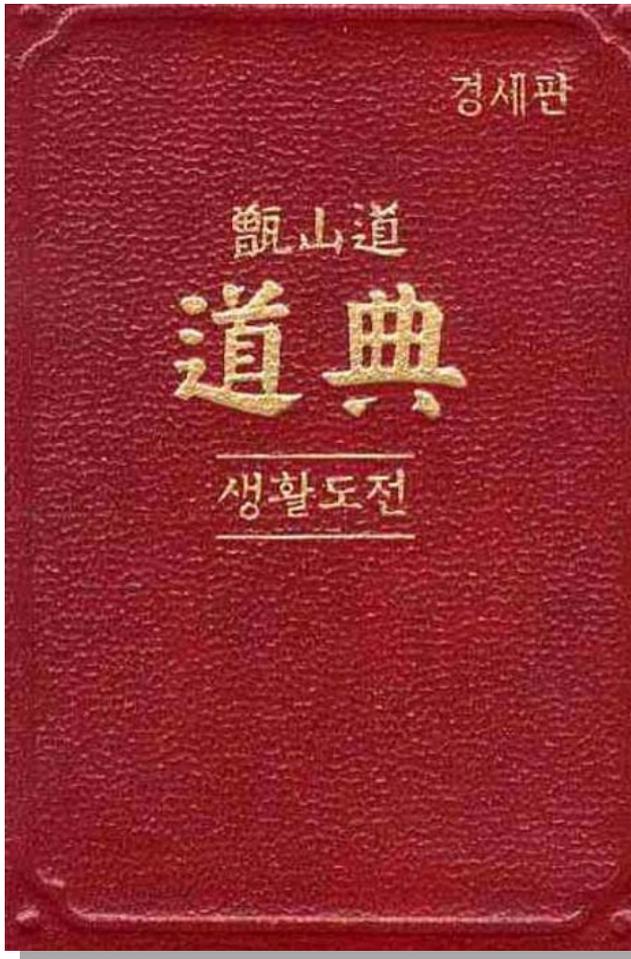


“Sangjenim one day said to the disciples, “Those who believe in Jesus await the second coming of Jesus, those who believe in Buddha await the coming Maitreya Buddha, and those who believe in Eastern Learning await the rebirth of Choe Su-un. But whomever comes, all will proclaim him their master and follow him.” Sangjenin then revealed, “It is I who sent Confucius, Shakyamuni, and Jesus to the world, to serve in my work.”[*Dojeon*, 120-21.]

“While at the Maitreya Shrine, I bestowed upon Choe Su-un a heavenly mandate and spiritual inspiration to enable him to establish My boundless dao. However, he failed to transcend the confines of Confucianism and reveal the true dharma, which would have laid a path to the way of spirits and a new civilization and eventually brought forth the true resplendence of My boundless dao. I therefore finally withdrew spiritual inspiration and the heavenly mandate from Choe Su-un in 1864, and in 1871, I incarnated into the world Myself. I am the ‘Sangje’ revealed in *Donggyeongaejeon* and in Su-un’s lyrics.”[*Dojeon*, 111.]

Furthermore, as Sangje, Kang, Jeung-san replaced the key founders of world religions to appoint the new heads for the unifying essence extracting from the key four religions: Immortalism, Buddhism, Confucianism and Christianity.

## 2. Kang, Jeung-san's radical proclamation of himself as Sangje



“The dao of Immortalism, the dao of Buddhism, the dao of Confucianism, and the dao of Christianity are the basis of many of the world cultures. I now appoint Choe Su-un as the head of the dao of Immortalism, Jin-muk as the head of the dao of Buddhism, Zhu Xi as the head of the dao of Confucianism, and Matteo Ricci as the head of the dao of Christianity. These new heads shall gather together the essence of each tradition and lead the preeminent spirits of all teachings and the spirits of all civilizations in extracting the essence of the many different cultures and uniting them into one. I now unite the three daos: Buddhism, which edifies about the substance of all forms; Confucianism, which edifies about decorum. I now extract the marrow of Buddhism, Immortalism, and Confucianism and infuse this marrow within Immortalism.” [*Dojeon*, 392-93.]

### 3. Kwon, Shin-Chan's Perception on the "Locus" of Religious Experience

In contrast to Choe, Je-U's and Kang, Jeung-san's perception of the "locus", Kwon, Shin-Chan does not show any phrase to reduce or unify the distance of God and creature in his description of his religious experience. Rather his interpretation of the experience confirms that God is totally different from creature. So human beings could not be liberated saved from the bondage of sin by themselves. They need fundamentally God's help. Thus in Kwon, Shin-Chan's discourse, the perception of the "locus" itself as the ultimate source or reality beyond the place of religious experience cannot be imagined. He maintained the impossible distance to be bridged between God and human beings.



"[...]on Saturday November 18<sup>th</sup>, 1961, I sat down early in the morning to prepare a sermon for the next morning's service of worship[...] I came to see that there was a difference between my righteousness and that of God[...] Man's righteousness is the righteousness of the law. I knew that I myself could not be righteous, but then I came to realize that Jesus Christ, the righteousness of God, had become my righteousness, and my conscience was from the terrible burden of the Law. Thus I came to realize the truth-I knew that I was now justified before God through Jesus Christ." [Kwon, Shin-Chan, *Conscience Freed*, 22]

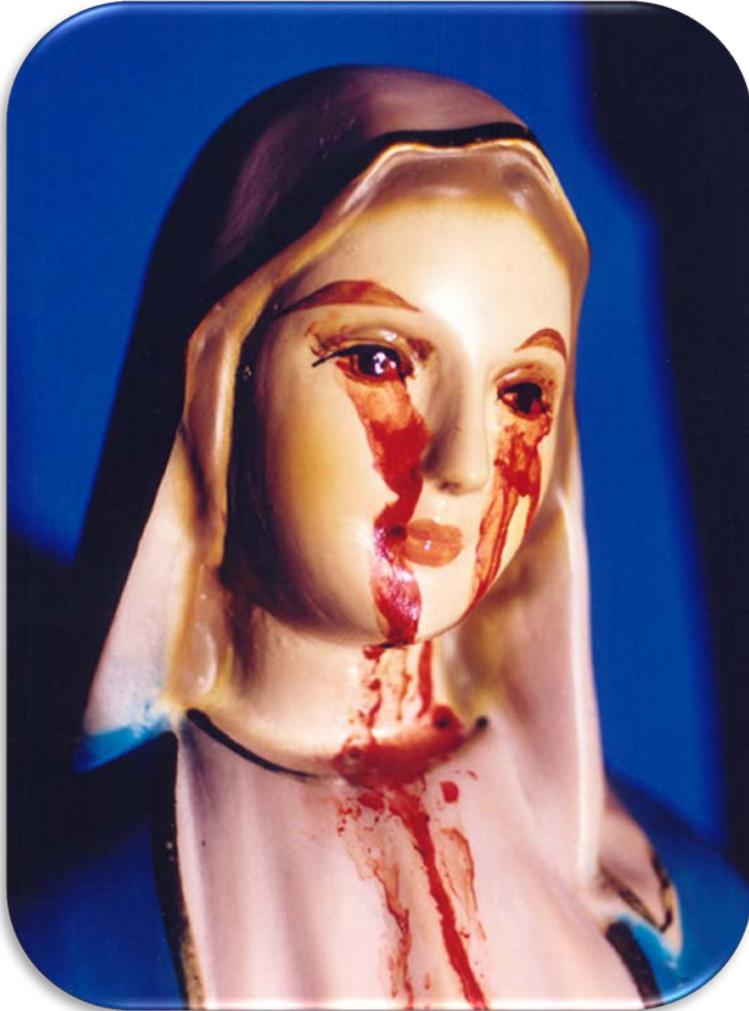
## 4. Yun, Julia's Perception of the "Locus" for her Religious Experience



Yun, Julia founded a new religious organization called as "Mary's Ark of Salvation" in Naju, Southern part of Korea. She started it as a Catholic organization but now rejected by Church. Actually the Korean Catholic Church issued "Automatic Excommunication" in 1998. It was the first announcement in Korean Catholic Church's history over 200 years. Yun, Julia and participants in her organization do not accept the Korean Church's judgement. The core issue is two things.

The first one is about the miraculous signs: intermittently weeping tears and tears of blood from the Blessed Mother statue in Julia's room since June 30, 1985 through 1992 and also exuding fragrant oil from the Blessed Mother statue since 1992 through 1994, Eucharistic miracles which the Eucharist Julia received changed into visible Flesh and Blood in her mouth, 1991, a body fluid from Julia's kidney, 2000, and Blessed Mother's Milk, 2005, and so on. The other one is about Julia's religious experience, her "private revelations".

## 4. Yun, Julia's Perception of the "Locus" for her Religious Experience



Though Julia had religious experience before she became to become a catholic Christian, here two religious experiences in relation to her private revelations would be introduced. Julia's most experiences are related to the dialogue of the Blessed Mary and Julia except for a few case of her dialogue with Jesus. In the early dialogue with the Blessed Mary, Julia is described as the servant for the mission given by the Blessed Mary but in the very recent dialogue, criticizing the Catholic Church's wrong judgement, Julia's work is seemingly more emphasized than before as a coworker for the salvation of the world.

## 4. Yun, Julia's Perception of the "Locus" for her Religious Experience



“My beloved children whom I can put in my eyes without feeling any pain! The world endlessly slanders and speaks ill of my daughter whom I have chosen and judges the mysteries of the Heavenly Kingdom which she makes known, but my Son Jeus, who withdraws wisdom from those who think they are wise and repels knowledge from those who think they are intelligent, has personally her spiritual director and has brought and raised her up to save the world. I have also put my heart and soul into refining her so that her soul which is like the Morning Star sparkling beautifully even at daybreak, may become purer.

In spite of that, the numerous priests and religious continue judging my daughter and thus committing offences against God which they should not. Shouldn't you, called to his place because I love you so dearly, be united and become interpreters who console her and care for her life?

Even at this time, my daughter whom I chose is offering up endless sacrifices and penances and offering up the sacrifice of atonement before God's royal palace for the salvation of this world.”[Jun, Julia, “Message from the Blessed Mother of Naju, Korea on January 1, 2015.]

## 4. Yun, Julia's Perception of the "Locus" for her Religious Experience

Furthermore Yun, Julia was specially chosen for the salvation of the children in the world by the Blessed Mother and her son, Jesus Christ in the message from the Blessed Mother. Even Julia's penance is described to be more painful than her previous suffering on the cross in the message.



“But the little soul whom I and my Son Jesus have chosen; my little soul who gladly offers up the pains which are more severe than the suffering and death on the cross for the repentance and salvation of the children in the world, having lost the sense of direction, wandering, and having human faces[...][The Mary's Ark Salvation Report, 2016, 5.]

In these two quotations, we could read that though Yun, Julia's religious experience would be different from Kang, Jeung-san's perception in terms of the maintenance of the dialogic relation with the Blessed Mary, it psycho-spiritually shows a resemblance to Choe, Je-U's dialogue with Sangje or Hanulnim. In relation to Kwon, Shin-Chan's case, Yun, Julia would show some similarities due to the Christian context but reveals the key difference. Kwon, Shin-Chan's description on religious experience is mainly focused on his own personal sins but Julia's case more on sins beyond her personal life in the world.

# **The Four Korean NRM Founders’ Temperamental Type in their Religious Experience: Is it the Healthy Mind Type or the Sick Soul Type?**

## **1. Choe, Je-U’s Temperamental Type**

The context of Choe, Je-U’s religious experience was something which can only be understood if one attends to the unique circumstances of his personal life. He was born to a widowed mother. His father had already lost his first wife and so Choe Je-U was born of a second wife who was herself soon widowed. However, according to the Yi dynasty as this was understood within Confucian ideology, while the children of a widower were to be accepted as legitimate in a yangban (양반, aristocratic) family, the children of a widow could not be so accepted. They were to be treated as illegitimate. They could not live as legitimate children in a limitation and determination which cast a shadow in his own life. It is an evil to him. For this, he suffered humiliations which marked the course of his life and which limited and determined what kind of future was truly possible for him.

## 1. Choe, Je-U's Temperamental Type

Through his experience of exclusion, he came to discover the demonic injustice, the evil of Korean society. Initially, to overcome these trials, he left home to seek “the Way” for almost ten years. But, he failed and returned home. He had a religious melancholy. Then, near his home, he found a quiet place and built a hut for meditation “in the nearby mountains and the river banks.” [ Choe Je-U, *Dongggyeong Daejeon*, 7.] In 1855, after he met a strange Buddhist monk, he cultivated meditation more deeply and then, in 1860, after about 20 years of searching and looking, he had a pivotal religious experience which has become known as the Great Awakening of Realization.[ Choe Je-U, *Dongggyeong Daejeon*, 8.]

The religious experience was like a second birth experience delineated in the sick soul type. In so doing Choe, Je-U had more confidence in himself and so could begin to walk his own path. He would not simply walk in the way of a deteriorated form of Confucian collective life nor would he walk in the way of a new answer of life that was being presented by Christian missionaries. He was not satisfied by either tradition and so he aggressively resisted them. Further he would no longer go away for the search as he did. He stopped doing so.

Instead, he realized strongly that Korea needed a new life, something which realized that all human beings should be treated equally. He proclaimed a new way of life recovering humanity rooted in divinity. In the Yi dynasty of Confucian ideology, Choe Je-U's religious experience and thought, which cut qualitatively the distance of God and human being, was very revolutionary in its social implications. They are a sort of proclamation which broke through the stable socio-political hierarchical order of things which then existed in Korean society.

## 2. Kang, Jeungsan's Temperamental Type

According to the two scriptures, Jeonkyung and Dojeon, Kang, Jeungsan's temperamental type is more related to the sick soul rather than the healthy mind. He did not think of the world lightly. He seriously thought that still various evils such as human suffering, demonic works, social inequality matter, various diseases, hatreds, vengeance and so on would function in our human life. For the resolution of the conflicts and the fundamental grief, he sent many religious figures to the earth but they did not fulfil completely the mission. In the last time, he sent Che Je-U to the earth but he also failed to do so. So Kang Jeungsan came to the earth directly by himself to resolve the fundamental problem of the human life.

Kang Jeungsan is very sympathetic to the human suffering. As a human being he was not born in a rich and aristocratic family but a poor family. He even should stop attending the school in the age of fifteen years due to the poverty, wondered in all directions, and also labored as woodcutter, sellers of straw sandals. [Dojeon, 47] Poverty made him experience all kinds of human hardships and also observe all aspects of human life. Even during the initial the renewal work of the earth and heaven, he frequently suffered from hunger. [Dojeon, 263.]

## 2. Kang, Jeung-san's Temperamental Type

“During His journeys, Jeung-san walked along distances barefoot, slept on the ground, begged for food when near villages, and often went hungry. He plowed fields for farmers, helped merchants in markets, and worked alongside craftsmen. He watched performances of traditional music and dance, spoke with the elderly about bygone times, and met with government officials and listened to them expound upon political affairs. He experienced every form of hardship and observed all aspects of life.” [*Dojeon*, 74-5.]

Through his poverty life, he engaged himself sympathetically to the humble human beings' life. He had a deep compassion for humanity in various ways. Especially he had a deep sympathy for the disease and the suffering of the ordinary human beings. The scriptures tells many examples that Kang, Jeung-san healed the sick persons such as a leper [*Dojeon*, 131], a son's tuberculosis [*Dojeon*, 277], a dying son [*Dojeon*, 235], and revived a dead child [*Dojeon*, 155]. He proclaimed that the human problems would be fundamentally derived from the destiny of the world afflicted by a monstrous disease, *sanggeuk*. This ultimate disease should be healed through his Cheonjigongsa (the work of healing heaven and earth).

## 2. Kang, Jeung-san's Temperamental Type

“Jeung-san Sangjenim resolves the bitterness and grief of all beings, who have been trapped under the reign of sanggeuk since the Early Heaven Gaebyeok, and He leads humanity to the path of new life in the Later Heaven's fifty-thousand-year Paradise Immortality on earth. To bring all of this to pass, Sangjenim conducted His nine-year Cheonjigongsa-the work of renewing heaven and earth-during His human life in the Eastern land of Joseon.

In His work, Sangjenim corrected the order of heaven and earth, thus harmonizing the dao of spirits with human affairs, and He employed the precepts of seeking out the beginning and returning to the origin, requital of benevolence, resolution of bitterness and grief, and sangsaeng to bring to and end the Early Heaven's destiny of sangeuk and usher in the Later Heaven's destiny of sangsaeng.

Assembling all the spirits filled with unresolved bitterness, all the spirits of failed revolutionaries, all the spirits of the world's civilizations, all the world's regional spirits, and all family lineages' ancestral spirits. Sangjenim brought into being the government of spirits and decreed the timetable of humanity's journey to the coming world. To ensure that His profound vision would unfold through both the destiny of the dao and the destiny of the world and raise up the Paradise of Immortality, Sangjenim preordained a grand destiny seamless in its design.”[Dojeon, 472-73.]

## 2. Kang, Jeung-san's Temperamental Type

Kang, Jeung-san, for the healing and the renewal of all beings in the heaven and the earth, had meditations diligently and unceasingly. Frequently he did it alone in temples [Dojeon, 93, 361] mountains [Dojeon, 78], even islands (maljemdo, 末店島)[Jeonkyeong, 23] and other places. In these places, he frequently revealed his deeper grief and bitterness on the loss of order in the heaven and the earth. Especially he showed his feeling with “crying” and “sadness” against the disorder of the heaven and the earth as sangeuk. He proclaimed that this disorder should be healed and renewed freshly.

“In the period after Jeung-san returned home from His travel. He often climbed to the peak of Sirusan Mountain, let down His long hair, and immersed Himself in meditation. The country was in a tragic state, and as He meditated to bring forth the supreme dao of the new heaven and earth, He sometimes wailed with intense sorrow in the pasture at the foot of the mountain.”[Dojeon, 78.]

“One day, Hwang Eung-jong's son, Nae-ja, and Mun Gong-sin's son, Gwang-ok, were playing together in the yard, when they noticed Sangjenim in the house, lying on His side alone in a room. Throughout the whole day Sangjenim loudly wailed, resting His head on a chest and hitting His head against it. The sound of His hand striking the chest resembled the beating of drum.”[Dojeon, 540.]

## 2. Kang, Jeung-san's Temperamental Type

Kang, Jeung-san's bitterness and grief are quite similar to the feature of the religious melancholy in the sick soul type. As James mentioned in the lecture on the sick soul, the religious melancholy should not be healed in the natural state of birth but fundamentally needs the second birth for the resolution of the divided self. Similarly Kang, Jeung-san proclaims the "second birth" of not only human beings but also all beings as Cheonjigongsa (the work of healing heaven and earth). He did it for nine years in this earth. His works can be interpreted as the new birth or conversion process of the heaven and earth.

### 3. Kwon, Shin-Chan's Temperamental Type

Though Kwon, Shin-Chan did not proclaim any point of the “locus” as the ultimate source, in relation to the temperamental type, he showed a resemblance with Choe, Je-U’ and Kang, Jeung-san’s type. His life was continuously with torment and sadness until he had the religious experience in November 18<sup>th</sup>, 1961. Even after he had been ordained as Presbyterian pastor in one of the big Christian denominations in Korea, his torment did not go away. He was so severely troubled in his conscience. However it could be settled when he had a religious experience as that of “born again”.

“[...] the constant torment in my conscience had come to an end, and my problem was solved. The chain of sin that had fettered my conscience for over ten years was suddenly broken and my conscience was set free. Now I could no longer find a single doubt, question, or problem in my conscience no matter how earnestly I looked. I could not concentrate on my sermon preparations any more. From deep down in my heart a hymn of praise and thanksgiving burst from my lips.” [Kwon, Shin-Chan, *Conscience Freed*, 23]

### 3. Kwon, Shin-Chan's Temperamental Type

Kwon, Shin-Chan's ceasing less torment process resembled with that of James' description of religious melancholy. According to James' description in his Gifford Lecture on that, it can be continuously troubled until the time of second birth experience, conversion. Kwon, Shin-Chan's process proves James' religious melancholy. In this sense, his temperamental type like those of Choe, Je-U and Kang, Jeungsan could be identified similarly as the sick soul.

Kwon, Shin-Chon's religious experience does not tell us any distinct difference from the general Christian religious experience as conversion story. However, in terms of the interpretation of the sins and repentance matter, two things are different from other Christian teachings. Kwon, Shin-Chan and his followers and after his death the leader of the group (officially named as the Evangelical Baptist Church or nicknamed pejoratively as Salvation sect/guwonpa), Yoo, Byung-Eun differentiated themselves from the mainline Korean Christian groups. Through Jesus Christ's sacrifice on the cross, Christians are all forgiven to be saved and so they do not need any more repentance. In this sense they do not recognize the efficacy of the following sentence of Lord's Prayer: "...forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." They think that Jesus Christ had already forgiven "our debts (sins)" in the cross and so Christians, for salvation if they are born again, do not need the repetitive prayer for repentance including Lord's Prayer. They think that the activity of repentance is the proof that sins exist not yet to be saved. [Tak, Ji-Il, Saegajeung(2009), 89.]

### 3. Kwon, Shin-Chan's Temperamental Type

Kwon, Shin-Chan's son-in-law, Yoo, Byung-Eun emphasized this point in his sermon, *The Anchor of the Soul*.



“Since sin was forgiven eternally two thousand years ago, a believer is already without sin [...] Even people who believe in Jesus may be enticed to commit sins, but they will not end up in hell. This is because a person who is forgiven has already been designated as a son of God. If your son made a mistake, you might scold him harshly, or spank him, but you could not cut him off from the blood lineage of the family, could you? God had established a covenant with us through the blood of Christ. So once you have come to believe in Jesus, the sins you commit are the sins of children of God, not the sins of unbelievers. The judgement for sin and condemnation to hell is already over. All that remains is the judgement for receiving rewards.” [ Yoo, Byung-Eun, *The Anchor of Soul*, 53.]

## 4. Yun, Julia's Temperamental Type



Yun, Julia's life is the journey of suffering since her father's sudden disappearance in her childhood. She had unimaginable painful life since her childhood. She had not only painful trauma due to various sexual violence s, social discrimination due to the gaze on the fatherless daughter, extreme poverty, unfortunate married life, miscarriage trauma, cancer operation and so on. [Yun, Julia, *Autobiography*(주님께서 예비하신 삶)] She could not stand her painful complex life situation. She could not find any possibility to be medically healed on her cancer. Eventually she decided to suicide herself after writing seven final letters. At the moment that she was going out for suicide, her husband strangely asked her to go to a parish church together.

So they began to go to the church. After three days, Yun, Julia had a tremendous experience to meet Jesus directly and hear his voice to tell her that her cancer would be healed. After that experience, her cancer would go away. [Yun, Julia, *Autobiography*(주님께서 예비하신 삶), 133-36.]

## 4. Yun, Julia's Temperamental Type

After the first religious experience, she continuously had several more experiences in the Holy Spirit renewal services and got baptism in 1980. Since that time, she began to pray and touch sick persons. Many sick persons have been healed by her prayer and touch. This is the first occasion for the start of the Mary's Ark of Salvation. The more she prayed and touched on those sick persons in her meeting, the more the pain and suffering came back to her. This time is not for her salvation and repentance but for others. [Yun, Julia, *Autobiography*(주님께서 예비하신 삶)], 138.] She tried to avoid this suffering and pain but she could not do so. Also in the rosary prayer time in her room, she began to have a message from the Blessed Mary through Her tears and tears of Blood. Since that time on, her bodily pain and suffering has been strengthened with several miraculous signs in her body. Especially she described that she has had an extreme suffering on her womb and anal area. At the same time she also found the spring water of graces to heal these problems. She and her followers believe that the water would have healing power.

Prior to the conversion experience and after the experience, there would not be difference that she would be in the continuous state of suffering, religious melancholy. However the direction of the suffering seems to be different. The suffering prior to the conversion would be intending for herself but the suffering after the conversion for the others. Thus You, Julia's temperamental type could be identified as the sick soul.

# Conclusive Remarks

Until now, in terms of William James' perspective, we have seen the four key founders' religious experiences focusing on their self-observation of "themselves" and their temperamental type in Korean NRMs: Choe, Je-U(Suun1824-1864), Kang, Il-Sun(Jeungsan1871-1909), Kwon, Shin-Chan(1923-1996), and Yoon, Hong-Sun(Julia 1947-).

## **Conclusively we could say two things.**

**1** At least, there are three spectrums on the four founders' description of "themselves" as the "locus" of religious experience: transmitter within, source, and receiver without. Choe, Je-U's and Yun, Hong Sun's descriptions are closer to the transmitter within. Kang, Il-Sun's description is almost telling that he is the source of all religious experiences. Kwon, Shin-Chan's description is closer to receiver without. Due to these differences, the founders' followers would interpret their religious founders with different emphasis.

**2** Concerning about the founders' temperamental type, they all are closer to the sick soul rather than the healthy mind. Their type is thickly colored with uncontrolled sadness. They all seem to have some period to pass the stage of strong religious melancholy. In so doing, they all seem to participate in growing their strong sympathetic capacity to engage with the world of suffering. They are really debunking "the me-happiness/the me-wellbeing movement" which is now spreading the peninsula of South Korea and even invading into the established religious world.

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