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Otherisation and Polarisation in the Korean Peninsula: North Korean Defectors and Korean Protestant Churches

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Summary

This thesis deals with the relationship between North Korean defectors and the South Korean Protestant churches in light of Emmanuel Levinas' philosophy. In particular, this research focuses on analysing and criticising the otherisation and polarisation of the defectors that is a direct result of their interaction with the churches. The churches, as the second-largest resource provider after the government to the defectors, play an important role in helping them to escape from the North. The churches also aid them with both financial and psychological support after their arrival in the South. However, the churches' practice of hospitality towards the defectors amplifies the otherisation and polarisation of the defectors. In other words, the churches approach the defectors for proselytisation through hospitality. This mission-motivated hospitality means that the defectors are forced to convert to Christianity, and it inevitably creates a hierarchical and beneficiary-benefactor dynamic between the churches and the defectors. Furthermore, most of the Protestant churches which are rooted in anti-communist theology utilise the defectors as a propaganda tool to villainise the North and further engender anti-communist sentiments. To survive in the South, the defectors have to assimilate and reduce their own subjectivities and experiences into the logic of the churches.

In order to find the trajectory of the otherisation and polarisation, this thesis explores the interconnections between North Korean defectors, the Protestant churches, and hospitality through an interdisciplinary approach, involving socio-political, theological, and philosophical approach. Considering the complexity of the relationship between the defectors and the churches, the socio-political approach provides a more panoramic perspective of the geopolitical and historical context of the relationship. Theological approach helps the churches to realise their attitude towards the defectors, and to apply the Levinas' philosophical idea to the churches' work. Most of all, the relationship between the two groups is examined through the lens of Levinas' philosophy which acts as a theoretical framework. This lens helps to see the root cause of this otherisation and polarisation, and suggests means to an epistemological transformation of the churches. It leads to overcome such otherisation and polarisation, and establish a more ethical relationship between the churches and the defectors.

This thesis has several findings throughout the six chapters. Firstly, the key concepts of this thesis – defectors, the churches, and hospitality – are interlinked with each other. In particular, hospitality of the churches makes the relationship between the two parties ironically more vertical and hierarchical. Secondly, the philosophical concepts of Levinas help to face the churches’ self-centric attitude towards the defectors and to find an alternative relational model. Thirdly, the marginalised social position of the defectors is proved through the evolution of the defectors’ names. Fourthly, the defectors who are regarded as the second-class citizen in the South are seized into the sameness of the churches within the church-centred relation. Fifthly, the church-centred relation contributes to such otherisation and polarisation of the defectors. It accelerates a political tension between the two Koreas and has a detrimental effect on the peace process. Lastly, to overcome the phenomenon of the defectors, Levinas’ hospitality that seeks an ethical relation is proposed as the alternative model of the churches’ hospitality.

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INTRODUCTION: NORTH KOREAN DEFECTORS¹ AND KOREAN PROTESTANT CHURCHES

There are two extreme stories relating to North Koreans who defected from the North to the South. Near the end of July 2019, a North Korean mother and her son died in their small apartment (Bicker, 2019; Lee, 2019; Power, 2019). Police assumed that the cause of death was starvation. South Korean society including other defectors were shocked as to how they could die from starvation in Seoul which is one of the most economically developed cities in the world. The tragic event revealed that the defectors live in blind pockets of financial difficulty overlooked by an indifferent Korean society. Another story is that of Thae Yong-ho, a former North Korean ambassador to the UK, who defected in 2016 and became the first North Korean to win a parliamentary seat in the South (Bicker, 2020; Herskovitz, 2020). He was running on a conservative party ticket and was elected in the most affluent district of Seoul, *Gangnam*. He insisted that he changed his name to Ku-min, which means “saving people” in order to help North Koreans and the defectors fleeing from a miserable life (Bicker, 2020; Park, 2020). Criticising the policy of the government pertaining to North Korea, he said, “I plan to work to the best of my ability so that our parliament and government can face the reality, and implement sustainable and feasible policies on North Korea” (Herskovitz, 2020).

¹ North Koreans who flee from the North and move to the South have been given various names over time depending on the historical and political circumstances of South Korea, for instance, heroes, new settlers, asylum seekers, to name a few (The changing names of the defectors will be examined in Chapter 3). Now, the official term used for them is ‘Residents escaping from North Korea’ (*Bukanitaljumin* in Korean). But when the government translates ‘*Bukanitaljumin*’ to English, they use the word ‘defectors’. South Korean government regards the defectors not as refugees or migrants but residents. It is because the South constitution does not acknowledge the North Korean government as authentic, it means people in the Korean peninsula, including people in the North, are under the authority of the South constitution. Therefore, North Korean arrivals in South Korea cannot be refugees or migrants according to the South constitution. It might be true that there is an ambiguity to the word in the English translation, but considering this unique context, there is no other word in English to denote these people better. The word ‘defector’ is also used in the official government translation. However, the English translated term ‘defector’ cannot quite encompass the whole socio-political context and nuance of the word in Korean. The word defector in Korean does not necessarily reflect the economic migrant. In other words, the word does not mean their motivation to flee from the North is economical but political. In addition, the term leans to a conservative political perspective rather than neutral. Despite the limitation that the English translation of the term has, I still decided to use the term, as there is no better term to substitute for comprehending this certain context. This thesis only deals with the defectors who stay not in other countries but in South Korea.

The two stories represent how the defectors are treated in the South. To expand, the defectors are regarded as marginalised others who struggle to survive in a capitalist society or are exploited as propaganda tools to reveal the brutality of the North's regime in accordance with the South's political interests. The defectors as strangers in the South are defined as a collective or in a linear way from the South-centric perspective. Depending on the socio-political situation in the South, they experience otherisation and polarisation by mainstream South that views them in binaries. For instance, they are either ethnic brethren or spies, the poor who have to be helped or the economic burden of the South, those who need to the compassion of the South or those who cannot integrate, and so on.

Considering the process of defection from the North to the South, the otherisation and polarisation of the defectors is amplified by the way the Korean Protestant churches engage with them. The Christian missionaries play a vital role in helping the defectors to escape from the North. They also aid them by providing both financial and emotional support after their arrival in the South. However, intentionally or unintentionally, more often than not the churches demand conversion to Christianity or an exaggerated testimony from the defectors as conditions for receiving help from the churches. Paradoxically, the practice of hospitality of the churches stimulates the otherisation of the defectors by reducing them into objects of the churches' missional agenda. That is to say, the value of the uniqueness of their socio-cultural experiences and the dual identity of the defectors, which can lend diversity to the South, are seized into the Christian-centric narrative. Furthermore, the churches act as a catalyst to political polarisation between the two Koreas and within South Korean society itself by utilising the defectors to achieve the churches' politicised mission project.

Against this backdrop, this thesis analyses and critiques the relationship between the churches and the defectors by focusing on the defectors' experience of otherisation and polarisation. To do so, this study uses the philosophy of Emmanuel Levinas and his 'ethics of the Other' as a theoretical framework. This lens provides abundant insights to discover the hidden voice of the defectors in this relationship. In addition, it highlights for the churches ironical attitude towards the defectors; the more they welcome the defectors, the more the defectors lose their unique identity and are reduced to sameness. After criticising the churches' responses towards the defectors, this thesis will discuss an alternative relationship between the churches and the defectors using Levinas'

philosophical ideas that could possibly help the churches realise and live out the true mission of Jesus Christ on whose behalf they claim to operate.

Research Questions, Aims, Methodology

Previous studies have considered the relationship between Korean Protestant churches and North Korean defectors from the church-centric perspective. For instance, most of these studies which are relevant to the relationships between the churches and the defectors, are explained by emphasising on the missiological approach (Choi, 2017; Chung, 2004; Ha, 2012; Yu et al., 2012). In addition, these studies have usually examined the circumstances the defectors find themselves in, the financial and emotional hardships they have to face (Choi, 2017; Chung, 2016), and/or how the churches can help the defectors to integrate into the South society (Jeon, 2015; K. Kim, 2018; Song, 2016; Yi, 2014; Yoon, 2007). Most recent studies that define the defectors have focused on them, not as the subject who can overcome limitations of both South and North societies, but as the other who needs help to assimilate in the South.

Contrary to previous studies that merely focused on the defectors from the church-centric perspective, this research delves on the engagement of the churches with the defectors by criticising the churches' responses towards the defectors through Levinas' philosophical framework. More specifically, this study attempts to answer the problem of the defectors' otherisation and polarisation caused through the churches' hospitality. In this sense, the main research question is: How do North Korean defectors experience otherisation and polarisation from South Korean Protestant churches in the process of the latter trying to help them settle in the South and how can the churches, in the light of Levinas' philosophy, avoid such othering?

To deconstruct the central research question, the following questions will be answered in the subsequent chapters:

- How are North Korean defectors situated and regarded in the context of South Korean society, both historically and socio-politically? (Chapter 3)
- How do the Protestant churches establish a relationship with the defectors in accordance with the five denominations that have different theological and political spectrums? What is the impact of the relationship on the defectors? (Chapter 4)

- How do the Protestant churches othering the defectors and use them as propaganda tools that lead to polarisation? What are the main causes of the churches' responses towards the defectors? (Chapter 5)
- How can the churches eliminate such otherisation and polarisation of the defectors in light of Levinas' thoughts? (Chapter 6)

By attempting to answer these questions, this research will critically analyse the relationship between the churches and the defectors in the perspective of Levinas.

Firstly, the aim of this study is to examine how the defectors are marginalised depending on the socio-political situation of the South and are assimilated into the logic of the Protestant churches. Secondly, this thesis will explore the philosophical foundation upon which the relationship between the churches and the defectors is established through Levinas' lens. Thirdly, this research aims to find the root cause of otherisation and polarisation of the defectors that takes place through their engagement with the churches and critically examine the churches' role in the interaction based on the Levinas' subject-other framework. Finally, this research aims to criticise the practice of hospitality of the churches towards the defectors, and to suggest Levinas' hospitality as an alternative concept of hospitality that would transform this relation into an ethical one.

The complexity of the relationship between the churches and the defectors requires critical analysis based on an interdisciplinary approach, involving political science, sociology, philosophy, and theology. Political understanding is necessary to grasp the background of the relationship between the two parties which is rooted in essentially political phenomena like the division system, ideological confrontation, anti-communism, etc. The churches have stakes in geo-political relations and political interests as the following chapters explain. Considering this, the political approach provides the big picture to understand the features of the dynamic between the churches and the defectors. Concepts of assimilation and acculturation, central to the discussion in this thesis, fall under the purview of sociology. Philosophy, Levinas' philosophy in particular, is a useful methodological tool for analysing the root cause of the problem and suggesting epistemological transformation of the relation. Since this thesis is focused on criticising the churches' attitudes towards the defectors, Christian ethics can

be the hermeneutical lens through which this study is approached. This perspective provides a vital way to study this topic where it is argued how the churches can make their encounters with the defectors more ethical. The interdisciplinary approach delves into the details of the relationship between the two parties and derives an ethical way to reconstruct the alternative relation.

Structure of the Thesis

The first chapter, as literature review, considers key concepts of this thesis – North Korean defectors, Korean Protestant churches, and hospitality – and connects them with each other. In order to criticise the relationship between the churches and the defectors, in particular the otherisation and polarisation of the defectors from the churches, the three concepts are explored by interdisciplinary approach.

The second chapter introduces the philosophy of Emmanuel Levinas as a theoretical framework to examine the attitude of the churches towards the defectors. Through Levinas' 'Ethics of the Other' developed in lieu of Western philosophy that emphasises on the subject, this chapter reviews the relationships between the churches and the defectors to understand how the key thoughts of Levinas can be applied to the relationship.

In order to trace the trajectory of the relationship between the churches and the defectors in a historical way, the third chapter studies how the defectors have been treated in South Korean society by focusing on the evolution of the defectors' names. The changing names refer to the social position of the defectors in the South and to their identity that is shaped by the South-centred dominant narrative. The evolution of the defectors' name is analysed by dividing significant historical events into four periods. This includes the historical and theological contexts of the Korean churches that play an important role in the special relationship that they share with the defectors, in both positive and negative ways. In this regard, the responses of the churches in each of the historical periods are critically analysed.

In light of the historical context discussed in the preceding chapter, the fourth chapter deals with the relationship between the two parties in more detail. The Korean protestant churches are grouped by denominations into four types, based on their theological and political stance, and in particular, on their perspectives towards North

Korea. The chapter examines how the churches interact with the defectors and treat them in accordance with their denominational attitudes. Through Levinas' philosophy, the actions of each of the denominations towards the defectors are criticised.

The fifth chapter explores the phenomenon of the defectors' otherisation and polarisation in their relationship with the churches. This chapter attempts to find the main factors that contribute to such otherisation and polarisation, and to study the churches' role in the process. The findings of this study are then used to critically analyse the practice of hospitality of the churches towards the defectors.

In the sixth chapter, the churches' hospitality is readdressed with the Levinas' philosophical idea of hospitality. Levinas' hospitality discards the subject's desire to assimilate the others into the sameness, and by doing so, it welcomes the others by respecting their otherness and alterity. Levinas believes that hospitality stems from the Other-centredness can establish an ethical relationship. As the subject-centred relationship is considered to be the main root cause of the otherisation and polarisation of the defectors, the hospitality can provide a new way of overcoming the phenomenon through seeking an ethical relationship. Furthermore, the Levinas' hospitality can contribute to bringing reconciliation and Just Peace in the Korean peninsula.

CHAPTER ONE. UNDERSTANDING KEY CONCEPTS: NORTH KOREAN DEFECTORS, KOREAN PROTESTANT CHURCHES, AND HOSPITALITY

1.1 Introduction

For over 75 years, the division of the Korean peninsula has split the nation as well as the people into two. The division in the Korean context is an on-going process rather than a one-time event. The division has been vitiating people's hearts and creating an atmosphere of tension. Moreover, it leads to physical violence including armed conflict between the South and the North, and brutal encounters between people from the different ideological groups. It contributes to an environment of enmity, distrust, and hatred towards North Korea(n) and North Korean defectors in the South which encourages the dehumanisation of the defectors. It inevitably leads to discrimination and structural violence. The hard border drawn between the two Koreas since the division blocked almost all types of interactions and communication between them. Furthermore, the situation made anyone who crossed the border a defector, someone who moved to the other side by denying their own nationality. In this context, North Korean defectors in the South have been regarded as the others who cannot become genuine members of the society even after the South Korean citizenship is legally given to them. That is to say, the defectors' identity has been disregarded and they have been marginalised in the South's culture and society.

Korean Protestant churches, which are regarded as the most significant organisation besides the government in assisting the defectors, have a special relationship with the defectors. Specifically, the Christian missionaries play a vital role in helping the defectors to escape from the North. They also aid them with both financial and psychological support after their arrival in the South. However, the churches' politicised missional passion for converting the defectors, both to Christianity and to liberal democracy, is drastically embedded in their welcoming of the defectors which fosters the otherisation and polarisation of the defectors.

In order to explicitly criticise the relationship between the churches and the defectors, this chapter devotes substantial attention to seminal literature discussing North Korean defectors, Korean Protestant churches, and hospitality, the three key elements of the thesis.

In the first section, the notion of the Other is analysed as a philosophical concept and applied to the defectors to understand their othering in the South, especially through their interaction with the churches. The second part explores the concept of hospitality, and the third section elaborates and analyses the practice of hospitality by the churches towards the defectors. The final section considers a reformulation of the notion of hospitality that could overcome otherisation of the defectors.

1.2 The Other² and Otherness

In the context of the socio-political tensions in the divided Korean peninsula arising out of the division system, North Korean defectors are regarded as the others, people from the ‘enemy’ nation. This will be further elaborated upon in the following chapters. Even though nowadays the defectors arrive in the South not only for political exile but also in search of a better life, South Korean society views them through the narrow lens of inter-Korean politics. The identity of the defectors are perceived in polarities of ‘us and them’ or ‘those who convert to liberal democracy and spies/enemies’ in the South. In this context, the defectors’ subjectivity is captured by the South’s dominant narrative which is defined by anti-communism and the defectors experience otherisation whereby they have to abandon their own unique identity in hopes of getting the fullness of their humanity acknowledged, but the process of such assimilation required of the defectors to avoid otherisation is itself otherising and strips them of their full humanity.

² In this thesis, ‘other’ has been used in two forms: One is the capitalised Other, and the other is the uncapitalised one. Though there are no differences in the two others in the English translation of Levinas’ works, differentiating the capitalised Other from the uncapitalised other is essential to understand Levinas’ philosophy, as he used two different terms in the original French to describe the two different others. (*autrui* used for the capitalised Other, and *autre* used for the uncapitalised other). While the uncapitalised other is a general term to describe anyone other than ‘I’, the capitalised Other indicates the personalised other or the specific you. Levinas’ capitalisation made the other to become a singular and unique Other. In the relationship between the subject and the capitalised Other, priority lies on the Other rather than the subject, the subject is required to respond in the name of responsibility. See Gehrke, P. J. (2010). Being for the other-to-the-other: Justice and communication in Levinasian ethics. *Review of Communication*, 10(1), 5-19.

In order to see how the defectors are regarded as the others in the South, the philosophical notion of the Other is explained through the two approaches: the other who threatens the subject and supports the subject. Although the binary approach seems to be from the subject-centred perspective, it is necessary to understand the dual perspective of South society towards the defectors.

1.2.1 The Other who Threatens the Subject

In the context of the modern Western philosophical tradition, the Other has been regarded as an inferior or a being that needs to be assimilated into the Same. The otherness of the Other, the features that are particularly different from the subject, are addressed so that they may be categorised and thematised by the cognition of the subject. This is the philosophical and empirical root of dualism. The philosophy of dualism resulted in cruel historical events where the Other was identified and pitted against the subject to justify violence against the others: white versus black, man versus woman, West versus East, Gentile versus Jew, and so on. For instance, Zygmunt Bauman (2007) understood that the Holocaust was an exercise of social engineering as a rational action. For Bauman, the Holocaust is tied to not only racism or anti-Semitism but also to heterophobia which leads to generating antagonism by “human practices of identity-seeking and boundary-drawing” (p. 64). Nazi classified culture, religion, and language based on a standard called ‘normal’. The others, Jewish, gypsies, homosexuals, and the disabled were anomalous and abnormal beings in the perspective of the subject. In this regard, the alterity of the Other had to be removed or seized into the subjectivity of the ‘normal’.

Based on western ontological thinking, the perception of the Other as an inferior being gets ingrained and organised in the social structure/system level (Ahmed, 2000; Alexander, 2013; Said, 1979). In particular, during the colonial period, the colonised were socially posited and classified as the recessive species/groups by the dominant ruler. Edward Said, for example, argues that the discourse of orientalism supports the social definition of the East as the Other by the West. With this perspective, Asians were described as if they needed to be civilised by the Western society; “Orientals are inveterate liars, they are “lethargic and suspicious,” and in everything opposes the clarity, directness, and nobility of the Anglo-Saxon race” (Said, 1979, p. 39). Said

believes Orientalism as “a kind of Western projection and will govern over the Orient” inevitably led to justify the colonising of the East (p. 95).

The notion of the Other is made worse by the demonisation of the Other. Richard Kearney (2005) criticises the subject of the modern philosophy for his/her self-assertive attitude towards the otherness of the Other. For the subject, the heterogenous otherness of the Other is the object that needs to be excluded or removed. Even worse, this otherness has been projected as a form of evil or a monster. He writes,

Ever since early Western thought equated the Good with notions of self-identity and sameness, the experience of evil has often been linked with notions of exteriority. Almost invariably, otherness was considered in terms of an estrangement which contaminates the pure unity of the soul (p. 65).

The otherness of the Other was interpreted such that it could be reduced to the Same in order to prevent the ‘threatening outsider’s attack’ that disturbs the well-categorised logic of sameness. Whatever is beyond cognition is frightening. To make it less of a threat, it must be reduced or translated or smoothened around the edges to fit cognition. If it refuses, it must be obliterated.

The Other is also identified by various terms, all of which signify subject-centredness, such as the stranger, the marginal people, and those who need help. First of all, Georg Simmel (1950), defined the stranger in his predominant book *The Stranger* that “is thus being discussed here, not in the sense often touched upon in the past, as the wanderer who comes today and goes tomorrow, but rather as the person who comes today and stays tomorrow” (p. 402). The stranger who is considered as an outsider or alien has no relation to the ‘native’ group (Kristeva, 1991). In the same vein, S. Dale Mclemore (1970) states the stranger as “a person may be a member of a group in a *spatial* sense but still not be a member of the group in a *social* sense; that a person may be *in* the group but not *of* it” (p. 86). Even though the stranger occupies/shares the native place closely in a spatial dimension, they can still stay remote in a social relationship. The stranger is the being who encapsulates paradoxical concepts like near and far, friends and enemy, and freedom and fixation.

Secondly, the Other has been regarded as marginalised people. In general, marginalised people in contemporary society are classified to three ways: Those who have physical and mental disabilities, migrants or refugees who cross the national border, and the minority who are rejected by conventional social norms (Barany et al., 2002). The three kinds of marginalised people are identified by the boundary that is drawn by the subject. The boundary divides and distinguishes the inside as 'normal' and the outside as 'abnormal'. The Other, as a marginalised people, is posited either on the boundary or outside. When the otherness of the Other flows into the inside, the subject regards it as a disturbance to the system or as a threat to the subject him/herself. Robert Park defined those who are struggling between the two different realms as 'the Marginal Man'. Park describes them as "one whom fate has condemned to live in two societies and in two, not merely different but antagonistic cultures" (Stonequist, 1965, p. xiv). From the perspective of the native/subject, since marginal people bring confusion through concepts of their culture different than the 'norm', they must face antagonism in social relations as well as at an individual level. (Goldberg, 2012).

Lastly, the Other is easily understood as vulnerable people. The subject as a powerful being often considers helping the Other as the poor and the weak. The Other is often defined by concepts such as suffering, disorder, poverty, dependence, and so on. Alasdair MacIntyre (1999) criticises the subject for separating him/herself from the vulnerability and reducing the other into weakness. He writes,

[W]hen the ill, the injured and the otherwise disabled are presented in the pages of moral philosophy books, it is almost always exclusively as possible subjects of benevolence by moral agents who are themselves presented as though they were continuously rational, healthy and untroubled. So we are invited, when we do think of disability, to think of "the disabled" as "them," as other than "us," as a separate class, not as ourselves as we have been, sometimes are now and may well be in the future (p. 2).

In this regard, vulnerability, illness, weakness, etc., are understood as the features of the Other. The idea naturally justifies totalitarian violence towards the Other and the need

to control them by the subject who believes he/she is after all being beneficent to the 'wretched' Other.

1.2.2 The Other who Supports the Subject

While Other and otherness have been described as threats to certainty and sameness of the subjectivity of the subject, the alterity of the Other can be re-addressed by overcoming the 'us-them' structure. The otherness of the Other is regarded as an essential part to understand or sustain the subjectivity since the subject cannot exist in the world without interaction with the others. Although the Other still seems interpreted from the self-centered perspective in this approach, the Other is highlighted positively as a significant being beyond epistemological prejudice and violence.

Simmel (1950), concerned about the Other as the stranger, understands the otherness of the Other as "the unique ingredients and peculiar tendencies" (p. 404). Even though these features of the Other bring the tension between the subject and the Other, it stimulates the subject to have an attitude of objectivity about his/her subjectivity. He refers to the attitude of objectivity as "a particular structure composed of distance and nearness, indifference and involvement" (p. 404). In addition, he attempts to rectify the biased view of the Other/stranger by re-considering the Other. He writes,

Insofar as this is true, it is an exaggeration of the specific role of the stranger: he is freer, practically and theoretically; he surveys conditions with less prejudice; his criteria for them are more general and more objective ideals; he is not tied down in his action by habit, piety, and precedent (p. 405).

Jacques Derrida (2000b) believes that the attitude of objectivity of the Other questions the subjectivity of the self-interested subject. He describes the Other that is "being-in-question, the very question of being-in-question, the question-being or being-in-question of the question" (p. 3). The Other who has different experiences and perspective is the being who can awaken the subjectivity of the subject in order to break the boundaries between the inside and the outside or the definitions of normal and

abnormal. The being of the Other becomes the ethical question that stimulates the subject to respond.

The Other's questioning of the subject can be interpreted as "cognitive contamination" of the subject according to the idea of Peter Berger (2014), who is an American sociologist and theologian (p. 2). The term cognitive contamination indicates the experience of uncertainty of the subject through its interaction with the others in a pluralistic world. The plausibility context exposes the subject to the empirical diversity of cultures and worldviews. The subject is influenced by his/her encounter with the others and begins to undergo a revolution in cognition whose 'purity' and 'correctness' is shaken. Facing the challenges of identity, subjectivity, as a fundamental assurance of sameness, is interrupted. Through cognitive contamination by the Other, the subject redefines him/herself by reflecting on pluralistic aspects and attempts to avoid the cognitive compromise of the Other.

Isolde Charim (2018), an Austrian philosopher, also agrees with the significance of interaction with others in a pluralistic situation. She criticises the theory of homogenous society based on the idea of material unification and emotional harmonisation as an illusion. Historically, the idea of a homogenous society led to brutal political oppression and forced assimilation of those that were considered others. By focusing on pluralism, Charim believes the exterior (the Other) perspective is an essential factor for the constitution of every identity and culture nowadays. Encountering the alterity of the other/neighbours, the subject experiences expansion of his/her identity.

According to Han Byung-chul (2018), Korean-born German philosopher, the contemporary societal tendency of removal of the otherness of the Other or "the negativity of the Other" is defined as "the terror of the same". Even though people in the twenty first century seem to be digitally connected to followers and friends through various social-networking sites, they refrain from exposing themselves to the alterity or the 'negativity' of the Other. He believes the other can save us from the "hell of the sameness". For Han, the subject exists only in relation to the Other — "I touch myself, but I only feel myself through the Other's touch" (p. 24). Furthermore, if the subject adheres to narcissism and rejects the 'negativity' of the Other, the subject will experience self-alienation. That is to say, the subjectivity of the subject can be founded only in the otherness of the Other.

In a nutshell, the otherness of the Other leads to a new subjectivity of the subject that responds to the ethical calling of the Other. Furthermore, the Other can be considered absolutely essential for the constitution of subjectivity itself.

1.2.3 North Korean Defectors as the Other

The next section criticises the polarised perspective of South Korean society towards the defectors and attempt to readdress the identity of the defectors and the others in society.

Kim Sung-kyung (2014; 2015) defines the defectors as strangers who transcend the division mechanism/ideology as well as cross the physical border. To understand the defectors, the division situation of the Korean peninsula has to be taken into consideration. The Korean peninsula, torn by ideological confrontation and war, was divided into South and North, each different in political, economic, cultural ways. The boundary between the two has blocked interaction and communication. Furthermore, it inevitably made anyone who crossed the border a defector or someone who had moved to the other side by denying their own identity. In this context, North Korean defectors ostensibly seem to abandon and deny North Korea's system and life. However, they experience inner conflicts in trying to adjust to the social life of the South and also suffer stigma or discrimination as outsiders, especially due to their country of origin. More specifically, in a socio-cultural way, they have internalised dualism by which they exist in a no-man's land and belong to neither the North nor the South. The defectors are deeply aware of the fluctuating attitudes of South Korean society and government towards North Korea. This makes it difficult for the defectors to establish an identity for themselves. They experience the ontological stray with their "double consciousness" in the South (S. Kim, 2014, p. 44).

However, if the defectors are understood with the positive interpretation of their ambivalence, considering that they experience both the North and the South, they will play an important role in the conflicted Korean society. S. Kim (2014) claims the defectors are a point of contact between the South and the North, and therefore, they should be reconceptualised as beings with the possibility of overcoming the division system. She proposes the understanding of defectors, not as a 'boundary person' but a 'border person'. Citing a concept from Richard Sennett (2012), she explains that a

boundary is a relatively “inert edge” which separates things. However, a border is a more “active edge” which makes exchange and communication possible (p. 79). She insists that when the defectors are recognised as border people, they can provide discerning insights and an alternate way to solve South Korean social issues, in particular the limitations of the capitalist economic system. In addition, the defectors are a source of North Korean news in the South, and inversely, they convey South Korean news to the North through their network of acquaintances. In the dimension of social relation, the strangeness of the defectors can contribute to overcoming the ideological boundaries, and to developing diversity with the objective view of the defectors.

Sarah A. Son (2016) understands that the identity of the defectors is rooted in a dual perspective. The identity of the defectors is dependent on the spectrum of positive and negative narratives about them in the South. Against the backdrop of historical and ethnic oneness, the defectors are represented as brothers and/or compatriots. Alongside this positive approach, the defectors are also presented as potential spies or enemies who are regarded as socially inferior. In this context, the defectors coexist within both the positive and negative identity frames. The multiple identity narratives can help in re-thinking what the unification is how it can be connected achieved beyond an imagined pan-Korean nation.

Kim Se-ryoung (2013) researched the depiction of the defectors in Korean to understand their identity in the South. Since the inflation in the number of defectors in the South from the 1990s, the defectors have been an important subject in Korean fiction. She discovered that Korean novels describe the defectors as two kinds of others: a macroscopical and a microscopical type. The former approach shows the defectors as both marginal people and cosmopolitan, highlighting the division system of the peninsula (J. Kim, 2018; Mo & Lee, 2019). In fact, the defectors, as border riders, cannot belong to any side. In the division context, in particular, anti-communism contributes to the understanding of them as betrayers in the North and as social misfits in the South. In addition, the defectors form a part of the global Korean diaspora and share in cosmopolitanism. Inasmuch as the feature of the defection of North Koreans is related to global and multi-cultural issues, the identity of the defectors is not only a specific ethnic one but also a complex intercultural one. In the microscopical type, the defectors are seen as the minority, separated from family and entrenched in poverty in a capitalist system. In the real context, the defectors are one of the vulnerable social

groups that struggle with loneliness, alienation, and economic difficulties in the South. It is true that these novels about the North Korean defectors helps garner empathy for the defectors but their identity is still described from a South-centric perspective where they are passive others, not active subjects in the South.

The defectors are interpreted as others or second-class citizen in the South from the South-centric approach. According to Oh Won-hwan (2016), the defectors are discriminated against and identified constantly and symbolically through appellations as others. For instance, the defectors are called commies or the Red based on anti-communist ideology. The antagonistic signifier based on the Red-complex creates a strong repulsion in South Koreans against the defectors. Also, the defectors are recognised as '*Kotjebi*' which indicates the poor and homeless children who wander in the markets in the North. Since the severe famines in the 1990s, the meaning of the term expands to the poor illegal immigrants regardless of the age (McPhee, 2014). The defectors are symbolically identified with the poor when they arrive in the South. It inevitably leads to the identification of the defectors as second-class citizens at the mercy of the South. Besides, there are several cultural, political, and ideological definitions that categorise the defectors as inferior in the South Korean society.

Hence, North Korean defectors, as a political entity, are constantly denigrated through a dual perspective, and they experience otherisation that ignores their multi-layered identity which they are made to erase to survive in the South.

1.3 The Idea of Hospitality

“We do not know what hospitality is” (Thomassen, 2006, p. 220). French philosopher Jacques Derrida, who developed the radical notion of hospitality, explains the meaning of hospitality by mentioning this sentence. Derrida recognises hospitality as a complicated notion that has various layers which links to specific contexts and paradoxical situations. In other words, the exercise of hospitality is not a mere notion about welcoming people, but rather, it should consider socio-political issues in the real world, such as refugees, asylum-seekers, illegal immigrants, migrant workers, to name a few. As the complex situation of hospitality shows, it is difficult to figure out the true meaning of hospitality in the sophisticated socio-political dimension. Furthermore, it tends to be romanticised and often leads to a distorted understanding of the concrete

reality. Thus, the idea of hospitality, which is such a “contested, unstable, and even contradictory concept” (Balfour, 2017, p. xv), is discussed through three levels: Etymological, biblical, and philosophical.

1.3.1 Etymological Exploration

Etymological exploration contributes to figuring out not only the original definition of the term but also its meaning across historical and cultural processes. The notion of hospitality can be understood through the Latin term *hosti-pet*. The word *hosti-pet* is a combined word of *hostis* and *hospes*, which indicates the concept of the ‘guest’. *Hosti-pet* can be interpreted as *hosti*, hospitality itself. The Latin word *hospes* goes back to *hosti-pet*, and the *pet* means ‘master’ (Balfour, 2017; Benveniste, 1973; Kang, 2013; Skeat, 2005). In this sense, the literal sense of *hospes* seems to have a double meaning of ‘the guest-master’. In addition, Latin word *hostis*, which is in harmony with the Gothic word *gasts*, a guest or a stranger, signifies ‘enemy’. Emile Benveniste (1973), a French linguist, considers that the classical meaning of ‘enemy’ is evolved when the reciprocal relations between clans were succeeded by the exclusive relations between citizens. He claims that in order “to explain the connexion between ‘guest’ and ‘enemy’ it is usually supposed that both derived their meaning from ‘stranger’” (p. 75). In this sense, Derrida (2000a) notes that the notion of hospitality is “a word which carries its own contradiction incorporated into it, a Latin word which allows itself to be parasitised by its opposite, ‘hostility,’ the undesirable guest which it harbors as the self-contradiction in its own body” (p. 3). The notion of hospitality includes the three ironical concepts of guest, master, and enemy. More specifically, the favourable stranger becomes a ‘guest’ whereas the hostile stranger becomes an ‘enemy’ (Benveniste, 1973, pp. 71-80). That is to say, hospitality can be concurrently represented in both welcoming and hostile ways.

Etymologically speaking, the root of the Latin word hospitality distinguishes the realm of host and guest (Balfour 2017; Skeat 2005). Particularly, the historical and cultural background of the term supports the vivid boundary between the host and the guest. The subject has the power to indicate whom to welcome or whom to ignore in this definition. The subject has the key to the privilege of hospitality towards the Other. Hence, the etymological notion of hospitality had been developed in the context of the

‘structure of the sameness’ that easily leads to violence towards the Other, both as a guest and an enemy.

In contemporary society, hospitality, as implied in its linguistic evolution and definition, is revealed in a distorted way. Elizabeth Newman (2007) elaborates the distorted notion of hospitality in four ways. Firstly, “sentimental hospitality” which includes the action of drinking tea and having a conversation with others emphasises politeness and keeping a pleasant manner. By focusing on normative attitudes and appearances, it leads to superficial relationships rather than truthful relationships. The second is “privatised hospitality”. Like sentimental hospitality, the concept of hospitality is narrowed down to a personal level, such as hosting a party or inviting people to the dinner table, without considering others or societal issues. Thirdly, the sentimentalised and privatised hospitality is expanded to the public level to form a hospitality industry called “hospitality as a mode of marketing”. It is rooted in the exchange of value and consumerism. Only a guest who is able to spend money is regarded as worthy of by the market and modern society. This kind of hospitality is well represented in the hotel industry and the customer service industry as hospitality can be procured with money. Lastly, “hospitality as inclusivity” accepts diversity and difference by simply experiencing something different and trying something new. This hospitality treats different traditions, cultures, and ethnic groups in a conditional way. Furthermore, Newman defines this hospitality as a generic openness that superficially understands the uniqueness of the given pluralistic features.

These four misinterpreted hospitalities in contemporary society are fundamentally rooted in the egocentric idea. In other words, the host draws a vivid boundary that confines the role and position of the host and the guest. When the guest crosses over the boundary, the guest is regarded as an evil. Moreover, the host determines the degree of hospitality and the beneficiary of the hospitality without considering the situations or the demands of the guest. It is difficult to find a dynamic and harmonious relationship between the host and the guest in contemporary hospitality. To overcome this narrow meaning of hospitality, a paradigm shift from the host-centred to the guest-centred perspective is required.

1.3.2 Biblical Idea of Hospitality

The concept of hospitality, as one of the central ideas of Christianity, appears in various stories of Hebrew Bible and the New Testament.

In the socio-cultural context of Abrahamic religions, hospitality played a vital role in survival in the desert (Hallo & Clinton, 2004; Pohl, 1999; Reaves, 2017). The desert cultures created a practice by which shelter and food was given to the nomadic tribes or clans. In this situation, the acts of welcoming the travellers inevitably led to “the cultivation and growth of the virtues of hospitality, bravery, mutual assistance, neighbour protection, and magnanimity” (Hayka, 2008, p. 17). That is to say, hospitality was the foundational principle throughout the Near and Middle East.

The Hebrew Bible, which reflects the Abrahamic desert cultures, shows the story of Abrahamic hospitality. In particular, the biblical narratives portray hospitality in a double-edged way, containing the paradoxical idea of hostility. There are two examples of hospitality found in the Hebrew Bible. The first story is in Genesis 18. Abraham welcomed three strangers who visited him without an invitation. Abraham, the host, did not ask the identity of the guests. Instead, he served them by bowing down to the ground and calling himself a servant (Gen. 18:2-3). Abraham’s hospitality manifested itself in various action of welcoming following a certain protocol: seeing, running to meet, honouring, inviting, refreshing, preparing, and serving (Fretheim, 2007, p. 112). As an excellent example of unconditional hospitality (Derrida 2008), Abraham overcame the hierarchical relationship between host and guest, and more, he found the epiphany of God through the face of the strangers (Fotou, 2016; Fretheim, 2007; Kang, 2013; Pohl, 1999).

On the contrary, the story of Lot’s hospitality in Genesis 19 described the ironical side of the notion of hospitality. Lot showed the two strangers who visited him hospitality by offering his virgin daughters to be gangraped by a mob that had gathered to sexually violate the two strangers (Kang, 2013; Wyschogrod, 2003). Ironically, the act of hospitality towards the ‘male-guests’ by the ‘male-host’ translated into extreme hostility towards the ‘female’ daughters, who are exposed to a great degree of sexual violence even though the mob refuses Lot’s offer. Kang Nam-soon (2013) defined the negative side of hospitality as ‘a gender-troubling hospitality’ (pp. 161-65). In the hospitality found in this biblical narrative, female victims “can be spoken objects but never speaking subjects, not because they lack a physical voice, but because no one

would listen even if they” (p. 164). In a nutshell, hospitality has duplicity in the Hebrew Bible. Hospitality has been regarded as a cultural virtue and command of God. Simultaneously, hospitality has been used to engender hostility as well.

The concept of hospitality is also one of the core values found in various narratives in the New Testament. Jesus’ life and lessons are full of examples of hospitality. There are three features of hospitality in Jesus’ teachings. Firstly, Jesus identified with strangers. The Gospel of John portrayed Jesus as a stranger from heaven to the human world through incarnation (Jipp, 2017). John witnessed incarnated Jesus who welcomed “the least of these” — a widow, the poor, the orphan, and so on — by becoming the least. In this sense, the New Testament highlights the significance of hospitality through Jesus’ identification with the strangers; “For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in” (Mt. 25:35). Secondly, Jesus regarded hospitality as a vital factor for salvation. The event of Jesus’ washing of his disciples’ feet is not only an example of unconditional hospitality but also a soteriological act (Jipp, 2017; Kang, 2013). Regarding the socio-political convention of the time, it was difficult to accept the practice of a host washing the feet of the guest. Jipp (2017) notes that the act of washing feet is “the proleptic sign of divine hospitality that Jesus will enact at the cross, and this event is soteriologically necessary for the disciples, for Jesus tells them ‘unless you are washed you have no share with me’” (pp. 89-90). The story of the Samaritan also shows that practice of hospitality by loving God and one’s neighbours is the way to inherit eternal life (Kang, 2013). Jesus conveyed the way of salvation not through a religious doctrine but through hospitality towards the others beyond social, cultural, political, and economic boundaries. Lastly, Jesus emphasised hospitality through eating together. Various biblical stories in the New Testament introduced the practice of hospitality of Jesus in the sharing of a meal with strangers and marginalised people. Jesus’ act of eating together indicates the breaking of boundaries of religious and cultural conventions. Furthermore, it delivers a message about equality and respecting others (Pohl, 1999). In particular, Jesus represented the absolute hospitality by offering bread and wine as the symbol of his own body and blood in the Last supper. Jesus, as the host, lay down a table of unconditional welcome through offering up his body on the cross. At this table, there is no dominance of the host and the host does not expect anything

back from the guest. Rah Soong-chan (2010) claims the importance of the role of sharing meals by highlighting the hospitality in the Last Supper. He writes,

The power of table fellowship is the power of hospitality. An invitation to the table is an invitation to fellowship. Hospitality and community are central to our understanding of the Communion table, to which we are invited. I am called to participate with others in Jesus' hospitality. I am part of a larger community — one body, one loaf, one cup — in the Communion meal (pp. 168-69).

In this sense, biblical narratives of the New Testament draw example of unconditional hospitality through Jesus' life against the various religious and socio-cultural norms of the time.

1.3.3 Philosophical Idea of Hospitality

From a philosophical perspective, the concept of hospitality can be interpreted through the relationship between the subject and the Other. As aforementioned, the notion of hospitality, whether intentionally or unintentionally, splits the role of the host and the guest which results in a hierarchy. In other words, considering the relationship between the host and the guest as benefactor and beneficiary, the practice of hospitality easily leads to the 'othering' of the guest by totalising the otherness of the guest into the sameness of the host. The host-centric feature of hospitality is fundamentally rooted in the Western Philosophical tradition that regards the alterity of the Other as inferiority and a threat towards the subject.

The notion of hospitality superficially seems to welcome the Other and the differences between the subject and the Other. However, there is exclusion and hatred towards the guest in the exercise of hospitality if the Other refuses to assimilate with the logic of the host. According to Kearney (2005), in his book *Strangers, Gods and Monsters: Interpreting Otherness*, the Other is demonised in Western philosophy. He writes, "Ever since early Western thought equated the Good with notions of self-identity and sameness, the experience of evil has often been linked with notions of exteriority. Almost contaminates the pure unity of the soul" (P. 65). In this sense, when

hospitality is realised based on self-assertive thought, the act of hospitality becomes a tool to control the guest and to justify hostility towards the guest who is regarded as evil.

To overcome the limitation of hospitality that stems from the structural tension between the host and the guest, there are several thinkers who discuss the concept of hospitality from a philosophical approach. Immanuel Kant stipulates hospitality as a starting point to build a 'perpetual peace' in the world. That is to say, for Kant, the native/host and the stranger/guest establish a peaceful relationship through hospitality. Specifically, hospitality is not only the right of the guest but also the obligation of the host (Benhabib, 2004; Kant, 1991). According to Kant, hospitality is related to the agreement of reciprocity between the host and the guest. In other words, the Other has to be welcomed when he/she comes to the host's house as much as it is the right of the host to be welcomed when he/she visits a foreign country. For Kant, hospitality is not a practice of fantasy but a rational notion, and it is "a complement of the unwritten code of law — constitutional as well as international law — necessary for the public rights of mankind in general and thus for the realisation of perpetual peace" (Kant, 2010, p. 20). Although Kant's concept of hospitality emphasises the necessity of a cosmopolitan right, the quantitative gap between the right of the visitor and the host still exists (Brown, 2014; Deleixhe & Raillard, 2014). That is to say, the host holds the key to allowing someone to reside in his/her place and forces the guest to follow the rules of the realm in order to protect the host's realm, which is regarded as pure or superior.

In this regard, Kant's hospitality seems similar to the notion of tolerance that focuses on the host/subject. The practice of tolerance, as a moral value, indicates coexistence with the Other and acceptance of the Other. According to Peter Nicholson (2013), "The tolerator has the power to try to suppress or prevent (or at least to oppose or hinder) what is tolerated. None the less the tolerator does not exercise his power, thereby allowing the deviation to continue" (p. 160). Nevertheless, the idea of tolerance retains the power and control of the subject towards the Other by granting partial permission to the host's home or territory. In the disparity of power, the guest always exists at the beneficence of the host. Similarly, Jürgen Habermas notes the limitation of tolerance. He writes,

The act of toleration retains an element of an act of mercy or of “doing a favour.” One party allows the other a certain amount of deviation from “normality” under one condition: that the tolerated minority does not overstep the “threshold of tolerance.” Criticism has been aimed, and rightly so, against this authoritarian “conception of allowance,” for it is obvious that the threshold of tolerance, which separates what is still “acceptable” from what is not, is arbitrarily established by the existing authority (Borradori, 2013, p. 40).

Even though tolerance can be regarded as a part of hospitality, it has limitations that cannot overcome the hierarchical relationship between the host and the guest. According to Derrida, tolerance and Kant’s hospitality are defined as “conditional hospitality” or “politics of hospitality”. In contrast to this kind of hospitality, Derrida (1999), who was influenced by Levinas’ notion of hospitality, offers the radical hospitality called “unconditional hospitality” or “ethics of hospitality”. He writes,

It is necessary to welcome the other and his alterity, without waiting, and thus not to pause to recognise his real predicates. It is thus necessary, beyond all perception, to receive the other while running the risk, a risk that is always troubling, strangely troubling, like the stranger (*unheimlich*), of a hospitality offered to the guest as ghost or *Geist* or *Gast*. There would be no hospitality without the chance of spectrality (pp. 111-12).

For Derrida, hospitality has to be not a “hospitality of invitation” but a “hospitality of visitation” (Borradori, 2013; Shepherd, 2014). In the former hospitality, the subject as a master decides whom to offer hospitality to, initiates such hospitality, and decides how much hospitality is to be offered. For instance, “I invite you, I welcome you into my home, on the condition that you adapt to the laws and norms of my territory, according to my language, tradition, memory, and so on” (Borradori, 2013, p. 128). However, the latter hospitality, as an unexpected and unforeseeable visitation, welcomes the Other without any condition and expectation. Derrida upholds this Other-centred hospitality by breaking down totalitarianism, political norms, homogeneity, assimilation, and so on.

Thus, from a certain philosophical perspective, hospitality is welcoming the otherness of the Other without any imposition by sameness of the subject. This perspective on hospitality encourages an encounter with the alterity of the Other which is not an object that can be reduced into the cognition of the subject but a unique source of beauty recognisable only in its strangeness.

1.4 Hospitality of the Churches Towards the Defectors

In light of the analysis in the previous sections, this part explores the hospitality of Korean Protestant churches towards the defectors. Whilst it is difficult to deny the importance of the churches' hospitality towards the defectors, the church-centric attitude in the socio-political background of the division is regarded as an impediment to true hospitality. In this sense, both the positive and negative aspects of the Korean Protestant churches' hospitality towards North Korean defectors are examined, elaborating upon the role of the church as the catalyst for hospitality and as an impediment to hospitality.

1.4.1 Catalyst for Hospitality

There is a strong relationship between Christianity, mainly the Protestant churches, and North Korean defectors. Compared to other civic organisations, Christian organisations provide considerable help in settling North Korean defectors into life in the South. The Protestant churches influence the entire process of defection, from fleeing the North to settling in South Korea. The positive aspect of the Korean Protestant churches' hospitality towards the North Korean defectors can be witnessed in the different steps of the defection process.

1.4.1.1 Providing Support

In general, North Korean defectors cross the Tumen and Yalu rivers, which form a natural border between China and North Korea, to find political freedom and for economic reasons. Christian groups, mainly Protestant churches, support the North Korean defectors who have crossed the border. For this reason, there are many churches near this border. Christian churches are regarded as the second largest resource provider

to the defectors after the government. The churches play the vital role of caring for the defectors by providing clothes, food, and basic medical kits in defector settlements (Chung, 2016). The South's churches take the initiative in supplying goods and funds to the defectors who live near the Sino-Korean border through missionaries. Churches also support secret shelters where defectors hide from soldiers. These shelters provide political and cultural security, as well as an escape from physical suffering (Choi, 2017; Jung, 2013). Furthermore, the Protestant missionaries' network provides the escape route for the defectors to enter the South or a third-party country. For these reasons, the help of the churches are regarded as absolutely necessary among the defectors.

1.4.1.2 A Church as a Key Factor for Settlement

Even after North Korean defectors arrive in South Korea, they experience physical and emotional difficulties in adjusting to a new life. For example, they experience hardship in finding an occupation, communication barriers, feelings of loneliness, alienation, prejudice, and so on. Yoon (2007) comprehensively describes the six major difficulties that arise in the social adjustments of the defectors; (1) political-ideological aspect: overflowing materialism and fierce competition to survive in the South society; (2) economical aspect: unstable job and low income; (3) cultural aspect: language difficulties and lack of leisure and cultural activities; (4) social relational aspect: absence of the social network; (5) psychological aspect: prejudice and discrimination from the society; and (6) health aspect: medical coverage problem and deterioration of health.

Several documents and surveys of South Korean government show that one of the biggest adjustment problems among the defectors is social deprivation. According to a 2017 survey by Korea Hana Foundation (2017a), the largest number of the defectors (31.6 percent) indicated that living away from their family is what is most dissatisfying about living in South Korea. The second reason is discrimination and prejudice from South Korea society. Kim and Jang (2007) also insist that the defectors almost have no social interaction with South Koreans or they maintain emotional distance and a superficial relationship between them. They point out that apathy of the South Korean society towards the defectors is a major reason why the defectors feel isolated in society.

Korean Churches seem to be a bridge between society and the defectors when it comes to adjustment. A Research on Social Integration of Residents from North Korea by Korea Hana Foundation (2017b) shows that only 20.6 percent of the defectors participate in social community and among the participants, the biggest portion (54.5 percent) of the response is an engagement with religious groups, particularly churches and Christian organisations. The Korean churches are understood as social capital among the defectors for self-realisation and an important tool to connect socially within the South society.

Most North Korean defectors suffer an identity crisis. Song (2016) argues that “North Korean defectors experience dual identity, which is neither South Korean nor North Korean, [...] from a social sense of alienation and cultural differences” (pp. 145-46). They have a political identity that is formed by the division as well as a sense of Korean ethnic homogeneity. He notes that Korean churches should become a diverse community for peaceful unification and be more inclusive towards the defectors who have experienced both South and North society.

On a practical level, there are a number of testimonies in relation to the role of the churches among the defectors for helping them with the identity issue. While the defectors stay in the *Hanawon*, where the South Korean government educates the new defectors in the ways of the South society, churches provide a variety of programmes and emotional support groups. Based on some testimonies³ of the defectors, they realise the value being oneself.

I learned Christian songs in *Hanawon* ‘You are born to be loved.’ I cannot control myself sobbing. I always lived for the country and party. There was no recognition for the very existence of myself (Yu et al., 2012, p. 74).

Furthermore, the defectors are often moved by the altruistic action of the churches and this changes their attitude towards life. One of the testimonies confess that “the attitude

³ When the testimony of the defectors is discussed, the complex socio-political situation must be acknowledged. In other words, the churches usually pick and show the positive reactions of the defectors about the churches’ programmes and their hospitality. Since the defectors depend of the churches and are put into a hierarchical structures within their relation with the churches, the defectors cannot speak criticise the churches openly. This section uses the testimonies keeping in mind this problematic aspect. The churches’ influence on defector testimony and the use of the latter as propaganda material is discussed in chapter five.

of Christians and churches show a different value system. I was very fascinated and their altruistic actions converted me into a Christian” (Yu et al., 2012, p. 80).

Many South Korean churches’ interest in North Korea and North Korean defector issues is the expansion of their mission. While some churches, especially conservative churches, have a mission policy based on the biased view of North Korea and their own anti-communist attitudes, there is also an effort to overcome the view by welcoming the defectors as ethnic brethren and/or a foundation stone for reunification of Korea. Ha Chung-yoube (2012) suggests an alternative way of mission for North Korea, for example, by using the concept of ‘embrace’⁴, which is founded in Miroslav Volf’s (2000) book entitled *Exclusion and Embrace*. Ha points out that if Korean churches rabidly adhere to anti-communism, they cannot provide a welcoming place for the defectors. In order to embrace the defectors, churches should recognise the mission for reconciliation with North Korea and try to act above its own anti-communism. Ha mentions the specific cases in *Youngnak Presbyterian Church*, which is one of the mega-churches in Korea, as an example of ‘embrace’. The church organised a group for the defectors called ‘Bible Study Class for the Free People’ (BSCFP), which focuses on reconciliation and forgiveness. Some participant interviews show how the defectors were able to forgive and free themselves from suppressed feelings and prejudices through the BSCFP.

In North Korea, I was educated by the principle of ‘Revenge is as good as your struggle,’ and had lived in accordance with it before I escaped from North Korea. ... True forgiveness gave me a sense of belonging and intimacy in relation to the community of the church (Ha, 2012, p. 184).

⁴ Miroslav Volf theologically attempts to overcome the conflict between perpetrators and victims and/or I and the others through the concept of ‘embrace’. He uses the metaphor of Triune God’s embrace on Christ’s cross towards people. In doing so, the theological reflection of embrace seeks reconciliation and justice beyond exclusion towards the others who are distinguished by the I. While the concept of embrace suggests the alternative way to build a relationship with the others, particularly enemies, the starting-point of embrace belongs to the subject’s will. In other words, the subject can draw a line the level of embrace or inclusion towards the others. The act that victims embrace the perpetrators seems ideal in a specific conflict situation without complex socio-political and psychological consideration. Moreover, the good-will of the victims can be rejected by others. Another limitation of the concept of embrace is that the parable of the prodigal son to elaborate on the concept evokes hierarchical relation between the I and the others. In the hermeneutical dimension, the parable can be interpreted as a theological metaphor to show the meaning of embrace. However, embrace can be also understood as not an ethical or mutual relationship but a lineal or hierarchical one because of the socio-cultural background of the story.

The churches's efforts to make space for the defectors can lead to reconciliation and forgiveness. According to some cases, churches become a reconciler among the defectors by setting an example of embracing one another.

Many scholars find that churches have a correlation with psychological resources in the context of the Korean peninsula. The Korean War and the division have repeatedly exposed Koreans to societal traumas. Jeon Woo-taek (2015) deems that the division of the Korean peninsula is mainly causing societal traumas and it is passed on from one generation to another. Focusing on the defectors, Kim Kyung-sook (2018), who is a pastoral counsellor as well as a North Korean defector herself, agrees that most defectors show PTSD symptoms, such as violent and aggressive personality coupled with unsocial behaviour. Even worse, they sometimes become dehumanised through constant self-deprecation and self-censure. Kim suggests that "Christian spiritual resources (for example, reading the Bible, worship, prayer, meditation, a faith community, etc.) can accelerate recovery among defectors" (K. Kim, 2018, pp. 99-100). According to some scholars (Yi et al., 2014; Yu, 2005), the defectors overcome anxiety and fear of life in South Korea by having faith. They demonstrate that Christianity provides religious transcendence and an overpowering feeling of mysticism through the worship and prayer. These factors help relieve stress, and to find a sense of belonging and stability.

1.4.2 Impediment to Hospitality

A variety of case studies show that hospitality of the churches is pivotal for North Korean defectors and the South Korean society. The churches provide the escape route, and support the defectors' physical and emotional adjustment in a new life. However, some cases show that the hospitality of the churches ironically becomes the cause of exacerbating conflict in the Korean peninsula as it often ends up promoting fundamentalism and anti-communism. Furthermore, the churches often use the defectors as tools of political propaganda in the name of welcoming them. There are two ways that the churches create obstacles to hospitality.

1.4.2.1 Anti-communist Attitude

As mentioned above, Korean society and churches are intertwined with anti-communism on account of historical and political background. Many scholars agree that anti-communism, as one of the major conflict factors in society, can trigger violence and justify discrimination against North Koreans as an axis of evil, especially against the defectors. Korean churches seem to deeply rely on anti-communist ideology. The phenomenon is revealed when the churches support the defectors. In other words, the churches' hospitality for the defectors is influenced by the intention to save their souls from *Juche* ideology or *Kimilsungism*, which is the national ruling idea and system of North Korea, through proselytisation. There are several reasons why the churches desire such an outcome which can be explained through a multifarious historical background.

Historically, anti-communism in Korean Protestant churches emerged along with the rise of socialism in the Soviet Union and Japan in the 1920s. The communist-socialists, who were atheists, criticised religions, particularly Christianity, and they were promoting an anti-Christian campaign. A few Protestant intellectuals interested in communism tried to find the common ground. After the Korean War, however, the communists in the Northwestern region repressed many Christians. That is the reason why Korean Protestant churches have firmly turned into an anti-communist fortress by harbouring a hostile attitude towards North Korea (Chung, 2015; J. Kim, 2018; Ryu, 2017). Ryu stresses that western missionaries' antipathy to Marxism is one of the factors that provoke anti-communism in Korean Protestant churches. Missionaries from the United States and Britain of the time, who were against atheism and materialism, spread the Gospel in Korea, and the Protestant churches became mainstream in Korean society (Ryu, 2017). The Protestant elites in Korea share the ideology of their American and British counterparts, and have a significant impact on politics.

The Korean Protestant churches have an inherent antagonistic attitude towards communism and North Korea. Kim Il-sung and communists threatened many Christians, especially Christians who lived in *Pyongan* Province (Northwestern region of the Korean peninsula). They were mostly the higher class, such as landlords, capitalists, rich farmers, intellectuals, to name a few. During 1945-48, these people carried out an exodus to the South to seek values of anti-communism and pro-Americanism in established churches (Ryu, 2017; Yim, 2015).

The churches, which are based on anti-communism, have two attitudes towards the defectors. The first one is unconcern or hostility. Although many Korean churches are involved in helping the defectors in different ways, there is still widespread apathy among the churches. Since the defectors are from the ‘enemy’ country, the churches even justify violations and discrimination against the defectors. According to Chung Won-bum (2015), “Korean churches should abnegate the theology of anti-communism, which is a threat to the human dignity” (p. 304). The theology of anti-communism constantly feeds the justification for the dehumanisation of the defectors. This theology is also not in keeping with the Christian idea that all human beings are created in God’s image.

The second attitude of the churches relegates the defectors to the position of objects that need to be at the receiving end of Christian charity. The churches have a dual perspective on the defectors, first as a person from an ‘enemy’ country, and second, as people who share their ethnicity. The defectors are suffering a political and national identity crisis between the contradictory attitudes of the churches. Korean churches force the defectors to deny North Korea, which was after all their motherland, instead of embracing them with their diversity, and otherness. Even more, some conservative churches and groups make denouncing North Korea a pre-requisite for receiving help. In other words, the defectors are required to convert to Christianity or participate in anti-communist movements before they can receive aid from the churches. These kinds of attitudes consistently intensify the ‘South-South conflict’, which cause severe strife within South Korean society. Furthermore, the anti-communism of the churches can make them forces of division and conflict in society instead of making them harbingers of peace and reconciliation in society. Therefore, Korean Protestant churches are required to defeat their inherent anti-communism and help the defectors by promoting human rights.

1.4.2.2 Instrumentalisation of North Korean Defectors

Whereas North Korea officially states that it guarantees religious freedom, the North Korean government strictly controls and discourages any religious worship and meeting, particularly Christianity (Kang, 2014). Several testimonies and international reports attest to the current situation in North Korea. For this reason, it is generally hard for North Korean defectors to accept the religion. In this context, the *2019 White Paper*

on Religious Freedom in North Korea (2019) report is interesting. According to the report, some of the defectors were interviewed after entering to the South after 2007. 61.2 percent of them stated that they have religion. At 41.1 percent, Protestantism was the dominant faith group followed by Buddhism in the second place with 10.4 percent, and Catholicism at the third with 9.7 percent. The extremely high percentage of adherence to Protestantism can be better explained under the situational context of the Christian missionaries providing significant aid to the defectors on their way from the North, and the churches in the South society providing support to settle the defectors. In other words, it can be assumed that the defectors choose to become Christians in order to get some help to establish the stability of mind and to integrate into South Korean society (Jeon et al., 2009). It seems to be hard for the defectors to deny the support of the churches which ultimately leads to their conversion.

The problem is that the churches use the vulnerable status of the defectors through their hierarchical power and position. The phenomenon can be called 'instrumentalisation of the defector'. Most of the evangelical conservative churches in Korea engage in enthusiastic mission work for North Korea. The obsessive mission policy of the churches causes them to have a distorted perspective on the defectors, and makes them impose upon the defectors uniform thought and ideology in the name of hospitality. In addition, the churches refuse to accept the hybrid identity of the defectors, which is rooted in various experiences from exodus to exile.

There are two features of the instrumentalisation of the defectors through the hospitality of the churches. The first is that the churches bring the defectors over to Christianity. In fact, it is difficult to find a stable occupation in South Korea as a defector. They generally depend on the funding of the South Korean government for their livelihood. Defectors consider the support fund from the Korean churches as one of their key financial resources. There is some testimony suggesting the fund is provided to the defectors on the condition that they attend the churches.

I was told to sign on an agreement letter of church attendance duty in order to receive 300,000 Won (around 230 Euro) monthly support fund. I was shocked and I never returned to church (Yoo, 2013).

Sometimes the churches ask the defectors for a testimony of faith which is related to the negation of the North Korean regime or an exaggerated story about the brutality of the North (Choi, 2017; Chung, 2004). In this sense, the churches are able to easily control the defectors by using their economic dominance.

Another way of instrumentalising the defectors is political restraint. Anti-communism and pro-Americanism oriented Korean churches take advantage of the defectors as a political propaganda tool. Yim (2015) criticises that most conservative Korean churches do mission work with an anti-communist missional perspective. They advocate the collapse of North Korea and absorption of the North as the only way to unification. Headed by Protestant mega churches, they held a mass prayer protest for national salvation, presenting itself as an anti-communist bulwark (Jung, 2016). In addition, the churches financially support some of the defectors' groups which launch balloons containing massive anti-Pyongyang leaflets across the border from the South. For instance, Lee Min-bok, who is a defector and head of the North Korea Balloon Group, has been flying leaflets into the North since 2003. He is both an anti-communist activist and is called a missionary since he studied theology in a conservative seminary in Korea. He and the group send propaganda leaflets with verses from the Bible, despite the Korean government's opposition (Min, 2015; Reuters News Agency, 2018). He is supported by the evangelical churches. He regards the action as mission work for North Korea. In this way, the churches come to pioneer a virulent anti-communist political movement, and strengthen their ideology by instrumentalising the defectors through hospitality.

1.5 Rethinking Hospitality of the Korean Protestant Churches

1.5.1 Hospitality as a Central Element of the Church

The concept of hospitality has been regarded as a unique practice in Christianity. Even though most ancient societies exercised hospitality as a fundamental moral value, Christian understanding of hospitality was distinct from the general practice of hospitality in the ancient socio-political context. Pohl (1999) claims that

Partly in continuity with Hebrew understanding of hospitality that associated it with God, covenant, and blessing, and partly in contrast to Hellenistic practices which associated it with benefit and reciprocity, Christian commitments pressed hospitality outward toward the weakest, those least likely to be able to reciprocate (p. 17).

The practice of hospitality by the early church welcomed people who could not bring any interest or benefit to the host. The church fundamentally identified itself with the “least of these” by following Jesus’ identification with the poor. The church’s attitude of embracing the strange originated in the Hebrew tradition: “Do not mistreat an alien or oppress him, for you were aliens in Egypt” (Ex 22:21). The new church, as a stranger itself, welcomed the stranger, such as the widow, the orphan, and the poor. In this sense, the hospitality of the church traditionally pursued ‘the Other/stranger-centred hospitality’ not as an optional act but an inevitable practice of the faith. For instance, the Greek term *philoxenia*, the profound of hospitality, is a compound word of ‘*Phileo*’ which means love, and ‘*Xenos*’ which means stranger/foreigner (De Shalit, 2018; Macris, 2012). Therefore, the Christian attitude on hospitality is oriented by the ‘love for the stranger’ which must be the motivation behind every act of hospitality.

The distinctive early Christian hospitality describes hospitality as an inextricable element of the identity of the church. Welcoming the stranger was “one of the distinguishing marks of the authenticity of the Christian Gospel and of the church” (Pohl, 1999, p. 33). In the same vein, the contemporary Christian church needs to recover the identity of the church through practicing its inheritance of Christian hospitality.

Focusing on the context of the Korean Protestant churches and their relationship with the North Korean defectors, Korean churches have to establish their identity by welcoming the defectors who some of the most vulnerable people in the South society. Although the churches have taken the initiative to practise hospitality towards the defectors, the welcoming of the churches stemmed was derived from the narrow meaning of hospitality based on church-centred perspective and intention. The churches have accepted only those defectors who satisfy the theological, political, and societal-cultural standards that the churches set. Such hospitality, which is basically “conditional

hospitality” or the “politics of hospitality” as explained by Derrida, definitely leads to the exclusion and otherisation of the defectors.

In order to embody traditional Christian hospitality, the Korean churches need to aim for a ‘paradigm shift’ in their perspective from subject to the Other. In other words, the defectors, as the infinite Other, have the “right of hospitality”. Hospitality is not charity given to the Other but is the right of the Other to have rights (H. Kim, 2017; Zavediuk, 2014). The centre or initiative of hospitality moves from the churches as the subject to the defectors as the Other. With this shift, the voice of the defectors will start being heard in the churches and the South society. The important thing to note is that it does not mean the distribution of power or a power-sharing with the defectors. This perspective still depends on the subject-centred framework, assuming that the churches hold a prevailing position. On the other hand, when the churches try to overcome the imperialism of the subject, the defectors can “participate in God’s eschatological hospitality and thus offer nourishing hope to the world” (Shepherd, 2014, p. 97). In other words, considering the “supreme performative action of divine hospitality” from Jesus’ life and lessons, the churches should enter into the middle of the defectors’ life, joyfully eat and drink with them, and finally attempt to emancipate them from the oppression which has been a result of the churches’ subjectivity and power.

1.5.2 Building an Ethical Relation through Hospitality

In the complex Korean conflict situation, Korean Protestant churches have a unique nexus with North Korean defectors. As mentioned above, North Korean Christian defectors who entered the South to protect their beliefs after the Korean War built churches in the South. These churches became the mainline and mega-churches in South Korea. Because of the historical background, most of the Korean Churches tend to promote anti-communism, and to overreact to the issues related to North Korea and the defectors. In this regard, the churches have the potential to promote physical and/or structural violence, such as discrimination against the defectors and anti-communist hatred. Anti-communism amplified by churches becomes a more potent phobia in the South society. Especially when the Christian fundamentalism encounters such rabid anti-communism, the thoughts and actions of the churches become more radicalised towards the defectors. The totalitarian attitude of the churches, at best, makes the defectors an ‘invisible being’ that can easily be ignored in the South and at its worst,

produces groundless suspicion and fear of the defectors. This inevitably leads to dehumanisation, hatred, and an escalation in the various acts of violence against the defectors.

The Korean churches have a dual perspective on the defectors. Hospitality and hostility are blended depending on the churches' own interests. In other words, the churches welcome the defectors cordially since the early founders of the churches were also defectors. Simultaneously, the churches ignore the defectors and treat them as targets for conversion and/or as political tools.

When Korean churches attempt to practice hospitality towards the defectors beyond the church-centric totalitarian attitude, constructing an ethical relationship between the churches and the defectors is essential. John Paul Lederach (1997), one of the prominent peace and conflict scholars, identifies that conflict stems from the “deep-rooted, intense animosity; fear; and severe stereotyping” of the Other (p. 23). Since most hatred starts from the egocentric interests of human needs, emotions, perceptions, and real-life experience, building an ethical relationship can promote mutual-understanding for both the churches and the defectors. The ethical relation can be achieved when the churches and the defectors try to understand and welcome each other despite the differences.

In order to establish the relationship between the two groups, the self-centred way of thinking must be first transformed into the Other-centred way. The epistemological transformation leads to an existential action of the subject towards the Other. The practice of hospitality allows the subject to start accepting the exterior being who has different experiences and identities than his/her own.

Embracing the Other as the ethical response to the Other is well represented in the action of hospitality, and it becomes the basis for the restoring the relationship. To build an ethical relationship, stakeholders should face each other and try to find what is different in their thoughts and identities. After that, building the relationship continues as the subject opens the hospitable space for the Other and embraces the Other without carelessly judging them.

Henri Nouwen (2013) explains the importance of the hospitable space, as it is the place where the relationship is built. He notes that

We cannot change the world by a new plan, project, or idea. We cannot even change people by our convictions, stories, advice and proposals, but we can offer a space where people are encouraged to disarm themselves, to lay aside their occupations and preoccupations, and to listen with attention and care to the voices speaking in their own center (p. 54).

For Nouwen, hospitality is the beginning of creating relationships, and it plays a key role in dissolving conflicts and extending reconciliation. He believes that hospitality creates a hospitable space and the generated space contributes to developing relationships. The hospitable space can be expanded as the attitude converted from *hostis* to *hospes*. Opening the hospitable space not only welcomes the guest but also allows the guest to become friends beyond fear and differences: “Hospitality means primarily the creation of free space where the stranger can enter and become a friend instead of an enemy. Hospitality is not to change people, but to offer them space where change can take place” (p. 51).

In the hospitable space, an attempt to break the hierarchical boundaries between the host and the guest can take place through the actions of respect. By doing hospitality, the guest crosses the boundary of the host and enters the space that the host prepared. In this space, people can express their own identity and share different experience, even though incomprehensible factors still exist. The stories of the Other are recognised as an important narrative to for the self-understanding of the host. The barrier of the host and the guest becomes faint, and both parties get influenced by each other. Crossing the hospitable space allows the dichotomous paradigm between the host and the guest to disappear. Hence, the hospitable space makes all participants eliminate their fear and encourages them to redirect the distorted perspective on each other, which definitely leads to building a new, more ethical relationship.

Considering the heritage of the early church in practicing hospitality, Korean churches have enough potential to play a vital role in becoming a hospitable space in the Korean society. Particularly contemplating the Korean conflict context, the defectors are desperately in need of a hospitable space where they can recover from various suspicions and stereotypes that the South society has inflicted on them, as well as from the traumas they faced in escaping the North. To make the hospitable space, the churches have to abandon the church-centric attitude and to seek a restoration of the

relationship with the defectors. The otherness of the defectors is not inferior or evil that needs to be removed, but rather, it is a distinctive voice that needs to be heard.

1.5.3 How Churches Can Do Hospitality

Taking the ironical relationship — the coexistence of hospitality and hostility — between the churches and the defectors into account, building an alternative ethical relationship is required for improving the defectors' rights and life in the South. The ethical relationship indicates taking responsibility for the Other's summons as well as switching to an Other-centric attitude. Thus, the Korean churches can contribute to developing an ethical engagement with the defectors by making the defectors their priority. The two groups can find a new subjectivity through interaction based on difference, and also construct an alternative relation for the emancipation of the defectors from multiple layers of discrimination and hatred.

To embody an ethical relationship, the Jewish-French philosopher Emmanuel Levinas provides a new way to develop an Other-centred relationship through hospitality. The key concept of Levinas' philosophy is the 'priority of the Other'. He insists that the Other as ontological transcendence brings out the infinite responsibility of the subject for the Other. The notion of the Other engenders human obligation to the Other, which is called 'unconditional hospitality'. He proposes the priority of the Other over the self for the restoration of relationships. In addition, he claims that the subject can be transformed into the ethical subject through the experience of ontological transcendence, where the Other demands ethical responsibility from the subject.

Emphasising on the welfare of the Other is an essential step to building a relationship, and therefore, it is what makes Levinas' philosophy pertinent in the hospitality discourse of the Korean churches in relation to the defectors. Since the Korean churches are one of the most important organisations in Korea when it comes to supporting the defectors, incorporating Levinas' thought in its own ideology is going to benefit the churches as they reach out to the most vulnerable group in society. In the context of the relationship between the churches and the defectors, Levinas' philosophy can promote a clearer vision on establishing an ethical relationship, as it emphasises on the otherness of the defectors instead of their political connotations. More specifically, the churches can build a relationship with the defectors by shouldering infinite and

ethical responsibility towards the Other. The inspiration from Levinas can enable the churches to see the defectors in light of ‘the transcendence of the Other’, and also to find ways to combat structural violence in South Korean society against the defectors. In doing so, the churches can support and help the defectors in the context of the defectors’ experiences and perspectives that they brought from their life in the North and also from their subsequent exile. By internalising Levinas’ philosophy of encountering the self in the infinite Other, the churches can turn to a hospitable community for the defectors.

1.6 Conclusion

This chapter sought to address the existing research about the three key concepts of this thesis — North Korean defectors, Korean Protestant churches, and hospitality — to take an innovative approach to fill the gaps in literature on the subject. The previous works usually focused on the missional approach of the church and were church-centredness in discussing the relationship between the churches and the defectors. On the other hand, this thesis attempts to analyse the relationship between the two parties through the subject-other philosophical lens to build an alternative relationship. This literature review was organised into four sections. The first section gave a general overview of the Other and otherness to emphasise the othering of the defectors in South Korean society and the churches. In the divided Korean context, it was seen that the otherness of the defectors is often misconstrued as a threat to the identity of the South in a socio-political and economic dimension as well as from the perspective of diversity and alterity.

The second section delved into the concept of hospitality in three ways — etymological, biblical, and philosophical approach. The origin of the word hospitality highlighted that the boundary between the host and the guest regards the guest as the one who has a potential to become an enemy at any time. The biblical hospitality in the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament was elaborated. In addition, by synthesising various philosophical arguments on hospitality, hospitality was defined as welcoming the otherness of the Other without any desire to assimilate the Other into the subject.

The third section looked at the hospitality of the churches towards the defectors in a positive and negative way through various cases. The churches support the

defectors through the process of their escape and during their rehabilitation in the South, even though the help from the churches, extended with ulterior motives only intensifies conflicts.

Recognising the interconnectedness between North Korean defectors, South Korean Protestant churches, and hospitality, it was found that the churches should rethink the practice of hospitality by focusing on building an ethical relationship with the defectors. To practice authentic hospitality, the churches should give up focusing on their church-centred self interests and make the defectors their priority.

The next chapter introduces the philosophy of Emmanuel Levinas which emphasises on the priority of the Other. His philosophy will become the theoretical framework and hermeneutical lens to criticise the church-centred hospitality and find ways to establish an ethical relationship between the churches and the defectors.

CHAPTER TWO. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: IN SEARCH FOR THE ETHICS OF THE OTHER

2.1 Introduction

This study seeks to understand how Korean Protestant churches interact with North Korean defectors by critically analysing the churches' practice of hospitality towards them. As it was discussed in the first chapter, the churches fail to live up to Christian ideals of hospitality due to their anti-communist attitude and Christian missional agendum. This chapter will explore the philosophy of Jewish-French philosopher Emmanuel Levinas as a hermeneutical lens for evaluating the church-defector relationship in order to overcome the faulty attitudes of the churches, embedded even in their extension of hospitality.

Emmanuel Levinas criticises what he calls the totalising nature of the Western philosophical tradition that puts inordinate weightage on the subject, and instead concentrates on the significance of the Other. He provides intellectual tools and interpretive lenses for solving the problem in the contexts of conflicts where the Other is dehumanised. His philosophy, which is referred to as the "Ethics of the Other", puts forward several epistemological turns from the 'I' to 'the Other'. Most of all, Levinas' philosophy is notable in the way of embracing the Other. Obviously, such philosophy which encourages compassion and understanding for the Other is an important tool when considering the improvement of the church-defector relationship as an ethical engagement from subject-centredness to Other-centredness.

This chapter pursues a conceptual framework based on Levinas' philosophy by following his key ideas. In order to identify the well-grounded theoretical considerations, this chapter has been divided into four parts. The first part gives a brief overview of Levinas' biography for a better understanding of his historical context, and of the influences that shaped his thought. The second part discusses the philosophy of Husserl and Heidegger that inspired Levinas' philosophy, and which he eventually criticised. The third part is concerned with the key theoretical concepts of Levinas, such as existence, the face of the Other, infinity, responsibility, to name a few. The final part

contextualises the key concepts by applying them to the relationship between the churches and the defectors. This chapter will play a pivotal role in explicating how the churches can establish a relationship with the defectors based on respecting the otherness of the defectors.

2.2 Levinas' Life and Times: Against the Subject-Centred Philosophy

It is important to study Emmanuel Levinas' life in order to clearly understand his philosophy. Levinas' biography contextualises his thoughts, influences, and subsequent evolution. According to Morgan (2011, p. 1-4), there are four features in Levinas' biography which pervaded his key ideas: (1) Historical experience of the Holocaust; (2) Association with Judaism and its religious texts, in particular, the Bible and the Talmud; (3) Criticism of Western Philosophy; and (4) Foundation of ethics as first philosophy. The biography of Levinas will be chronologically analysed in accordance to these four features.

2.2.1 A Brief Biography

Emmanuel Levinas was born in 1906 in Lithuania's Kovno (Kaunas), a town with a high Jewish population. He describes the country as a place where "Jewish culture was intellectually prized and fostered and where the interpretation of biblical texts was cultivated to a high degree" (Levinas & Kearney, 2012, p. 17). The Levinas family belonged to Kovno's large and important orthodox Jewish community. His family was influenced by the *Mitnagdim* group which focused on intellectual Judaism, stressing on the study of the Scripture and the Talmud. The *Mitnagdim* opposed the Jewish mystic movement called *Hasidism* in eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Hand 2001). Recalling his allegiance to the community, Levinas said that "to be Jewish was as natural as having eyes and ears" (Critchley, 2002a, p. XV). Being from an observant Jewish background, he obviously learnt to read the Hebrew Bible. He spoke Russian, which was his mother tongue, and enjoyed reading Russian novelists, such as Lermontov, Gogol, Turgenev, Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, and Pushkin. It is through reading that Levinas' interest in philosophy was awakened. During the First World War, in 1915, the Jews of Lithuania were banished from the country by the government, and the family had to migrate to Kharkov in Ukraine. Amidst rising anti-Semitism, Levinas

continued attending high school. Levinas and his family experienced the upheavals of the revolutions of 1917 and eventually returned to Lithuania in 1920.

In 1923, Levinas embarked on his philosophical journey at the University of Strasbourg in France. He studied a variety of subjects, including psychology, classics, and sociology. Levinas, however, devoted himself more to philosophy, particularly to the work of Edmund Husserl. He also established a good rapport with Maurice Blanchot, whose intellectual influence left an impression on him.

In 1928, Levinas decided to move to Freiburg University, Germany, in order to study Husserl's phenomenology. Whilst there, he met and studied with Martin Heidegger whose *Being and Time* (1927) had just been published. Levinas was fascinated by the philosophy of Heidegger at the time. He also taught and introduced *Being and Time* to philosophy students. In 1930, Levinas returned to Strasbourg and he completed his thesis on *The Theory of Intuition in the Phenomenology of Husserl* under the guidance of Jean Wahl. He had focused on the study of phenomenology. During the same year, he became a naturalised French citizen.

In 1935, Levinas published *On Escape* (1935) which is his first original thematic essay. He tried to break the ontological obsession of the Western philosophical tradition through this essay. More importantly, he found totalitarian dangers in the western obsession with ontology as it showed in Heidegger who was very much aligned with Nazi thought. Due to this reason, Levinas' philosophy shifted radically from Heideggerian ontology. In 1939, during the Second World War, he served in the military as an interpreter of Russian and German. In 1940, he was imprisoned in a labour camp for Jewish Prisoner-of-War (POW) in Germany where he spent five years in forced labour. Levinas' parents and his two brothers were murdered by the Nazis during the bloody pogroms. Such experiences clearly informed his thought about the ethical response towards the Other. During the war, he wrote the bulk of *Existence and Existents* (1947) which critiques ontology and the philosophy of sameness. When he was released from the prisoners' camp in 1947, he was appointed the director of the 'École Normale Israélite Orientale' (ENIO), which was a school for Jewish students in France. Levinas was invited by Jean Wahl, who was professor of philosophy at the Sorbonne and had supervised Levinas' doctoral thesis at Strasbourg, to give a series of lectures at the college. These lectures were published as the book *Time and the Other* (1948). Levinas was always interested in Jewish thought, in particular, Talmudic

commentaries. He became a professor at the University of Poitiers on the basis of his doctoral thesis that was published as *Totality and Infinity* (1961). He also taught at Nanterre from 1967 to 1973, and he was appointed a professor at Sorbonne. He published *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence* in 1974. He dedicated the book “to the memory of those who were closest among the six million assassinated by the National Socialists, and of the millions on millions of all confessions and all nations, victims of the same hatred of the other man, the same anti-Semitism” (Levinas, 2000, dedication page). He died on 25 December, 1995 after a long struggle with illness.

2.2.2 Pertinent Takeaways From Levinas’ Biography

Firstly, the experience of living through some of the most turbulent years in Europe significantly influenced Levinas’ life and perspective. His criticism of Western philosophy came as a reaction to the havoc wreaked by Nazism and anti-Semitism during the Second World War. Heidegger’s commitment to Nazism rattled Levinas who had been impressed with the former’s philosophy and much of Levinas’ post-Holocaust work focused on bringing out the ethical failures of Heidegger’s philosophy. Levinas explained that the Holocaust represents “the paradigm of gratuitous human suffering where evil appears in its diabolic horror” (Levinas, 1988, p. 162). Witnessing his family and numerous Jews fall victim to Nazi atrocities, Levinas found the origin of Hitlerism in Western philosophy’s undue focus on ontology. In other words, for Levinas, the Holocaust epitomised the trend of ‘human subjectivity’ in Western philosophy which is indifferent to the suffering of the Other. The phenomenon, he felt, fundamentally stemmed from the ‘totalising’ Western philosophy’ which has an anti-humanist tendency.

Moreover, the Holocaust was not a free-standing event when a fascist regime decided to annihilate an entire nation. It must be viewed as a culmination of centuries of anti-Semitism. Levinas, as a member of the Jewish community, was fully aware of the structural apartheid that had ultimately resulted in six million murders. The community, in the Western Christian world had been othered, ghettoised by papal bulls [Pope Paul IV, 1555], forced to wear clothes to set them apart [Council of Basel, 1434], banned from holding government office or land for almost 1800 years before the Nazis. Ironically, French Enlightenment’s criticism of Judaism’s exclusionist character completely ignored the ghettoisation based on papal orders. Nor did criticism of the

dearth of Jewish farmers before the Holocaust take into account the land-owning restrictions (Brustein 2003). As the German-Jewish philosopher and leading figure of the Jewish Enlightenment or *Haskalah* movement put it, ‘you tie our hands and then accuse us of not using them’ (Schama, 2017, p. 290).

Levinas, as a man of his times, understood the need for ethical responsibility towards the Other in order to avoid the catastrophe of war and genocide. He propounded a philosophical conversion from a preoccupation with sameness, which tends to reduce diverse beings into subjugation, to an emphasis on the “priority of the Other” is in keeping with the spirit of pluralism. It was a reply to not just those nations who wanted to expel Jews as the Other, but also to those countries that would not give refuge to Jews fleeing war just so that they could keep the Other out.

Secondly, Levinas highlighted the importance of the Judaic tradition and its texts, especially the Talmud and rabbinical commentary to his philosophy, which, under the influence of his religious upbringing, left an indelible mark on his mind. He brought attention to the Jewish tradition, comparing it to the Greek one, in his philosophical journey. He explained how “the split within the spirit between Jewish wisdom and Greek wisdom, the rift in a world which is both attached to its philosophers and to its prophets, puts its mark on the spiritual and intellectual history of Western culture” (Chalier, 1995, p. 4). He was mainly inspired by Judaic thought, and the key thought of Levinas was configured through his education in Talmudic writings. It is the Talmud and the way of the prophets that taught him ethical responsibility towards the Other, to the stranger, the widow, and the orphan. It is clear that Levinas’ philosophy of the Other is inseparable from the Jewish tradition.

Thirdly, Levinas developed his philosophy, affected by his experience as a Holocaust survivor and his Jewish education, as a criticism of Western philosophical tradition and its emphasis on ontology, which to Levinas (1991) “[is] a reduction of the other to the same by interposition of a middle and neutral term that ensures the comprehension of Being” (p. 43). Whereas ontology attempts to understand the essence of Being, it expanded upon the subject, and led to a reduction of selfhood to sameness. Levinas understood this phenomenon as the ‘egoism of ontology’.

He also traced this reduction of the Other to sameness derived from ontology to the time of Plato. This feature of ontology regarded particular beings as universal mediators, such as the “form or *eidos* in Plato, Spirit in Hegel or Being in Heidegger”

(Critchley, 2002b, p. 11). These concepts are limited when it comes to relating to the Other as ethical beings. Levinas criticised this subjectivity of the subject, which tries to subordinate the Other being as the same:

Western philosophy coincides with the unveiling of the other in which the Other, by manifesting itself as a being, loses its alterity. Philosophy is afflicted, from its childhood, with an insurmountable allergy: a horror of the Other which remains Other. It is for this reason that philosophy is essentially the philosophy of Being; the comprehension of Being is its final word and the fundamental structure of man (as cited in Davis, 1996, p. 32).

Undoubtedly, Levinas believed that Nazism and the Holocaust derived from Western philosophical tradition's ontology, which indirectly encourages epistemological violence against the Other.

This is the century that in thirty years has known two world wars, the totalitarianisms of right and left, Hitlerism and Stalinism, Hiroshima, the Gulag, and the genocides of Auschwitz and Cambodia. This is the century that is drawing to a close in the obsessive fear of the return of everything these barbaric names stood for: suffering and evil inflicted deliberately, but in a manner no reason set limits to, in the exasperation of a reason become political and detached from all ethics (Levinas, 2006, p. 83).

Levinas enumerated the limitations of this subject-centred philosophy while emphasising on ethics.

Finally, Levinas regarded ethics as first philosophy. Seeing the limitations of Western philosophy in the world around him, Levinas pursued ethics rather than metaphysical ontology. Ethics makes response to the Other an imperative. In this regard, ethics as first philosophy is well represented in the concept of the face, which demands infinite responsibility to the Other. Levinas argues that the face of the Other represents the prohibition against murder, and pushes to pursue justice. Thus, Levinas'

philosophy, with ethics at its crux, which seeks to prioritise the Other above all else, is based on his lived experience.

2.3 Ontological Adventure: Beyond Husserl and Heidegger

As discussed, the philosophy of Levinas, to a great degree, stems from the phenomenological thinking of Husserl and Heidegger. It is therefore necessary to sketch the thoughts of Husserl and Heidegger first in order to clearly understand Levinas. Levinas' attempts to move beyond the limitations of Western philosophy are based on his opposition to their ideas. Levinas figured that Western philosophy with its emphasis on subjectivity leads to the violence of totalisation towards the Other. In this context, Levinas embarks on an ontological adventure by considering ethics as first philosophy. This section sketches the two philosophers' ideas broadly to introduce Levinas' criticism of their philosophy.

2.3.1 Philosophy of Husserl and Heidegger

2.3.1.1 Husserl's Philosophy

Defining phenomenology is important to an understanding of the philosophy of Husserl. Etymologically speaking, the term phenomenology stems from the Greek words *phainomenon* and *logos*. The former means 'appearance' and the latter means 'reason' or 'study'. Hence, phenomenology is generally the study of experience or consciousness as 'lived experiences' from the subjective or the *first-person perspective*. Sokolowski (2000) describes phenomenology as that which "signifies the activity of giving an account, giving a *logos*, of various phenomena, of the various ways in which things can appear" (p. 13).

Husserl, who is regarded as the father of modern phenomenology, wanted to find the essence of the existence of things as it appears to us. In this context, the famous Husserlian motto, "back to the things themselves" is revealed. According to Barrett (2011), "for Husserl, phenomenology was a discipline that attempts to describe what is given to us in experience without obscuring preconceptions or hypothetical speculations" (p. 213).

Husserl emphasises on a ‘phenomenological’ or ‘transcendental’ attitude rather than a ‘natural’ attitude. In other words, he denies the common scientific or natural belief that “is the presumption that the world as we experience it exists outside and independently from consciousness” (Davis, 1996, p. 10). He also argues that “proceeding in a rigorous and truly radical manner, phenomenologists must suspend this set of judgments with all others and take as their task the illumination of its constitutive basis” (Heinämaa & Kaitaro, 2018, p. 37).

Phenomenological attitude neutralises and doubts the natural attitudes we have about all the things in the world. The attitude is called *epoché* or/and *bracketing*. The act of *epoché* or *bracketing* is not denying the existence of things around us, but merely suspending our judgments. These concepts help remove distortion or naive belief of existence and allow people to turn their attention to the structure of their own conscious experience.

The *epoché* is one of the significant parts of the reduction, which leads us back to find the original meaning of a thing, and the essence of its existence in the experienced world beyond positivism. There are three types of reduction; phenomenological reduction, transcendental reduction, and eidetic reduction. Phenomenological reduction is abstention from belief and affirmation in the existence of the world. Phenomenological reduction requests the change of attitude from natural and scientific attitude to philosophical attitude which can focus on the phenomena itself. This reduction appears to be the primary objective of phenomenology, and it makes the phenomenologist return to the things that are given meaning in experience. Husserl, in his book, *Ideas: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology* (1969), insisted that phenomenological reduction leads to transcendental reduction from the epistemological viewpoint. The transcendental reduction can expand the definition of how philosophy can be related to pre-philosophical life and experience (Sokolowski, 2000). The eidetic reduction concentrates on the essence of the objects or essential form of things rather than an individual physical object (Husserl, 1969). The eidetic reduction is considered a second reduction which pursues understanding of the structures of our own consciousness.

Husserl also paid attention to the idea of intentionality. Intentionality is an interaction between consciousness and its object. For Husserl, consciousness is consciousness of something and the object cannot exist independently. In other words,

intentional objects are related to the consciousness acting upon it. Zahavi (2003) illustrates that “when I am thinking about *absent* objects, *impossible* objects, *non-existing* objects, *future* objects, or *ideal* objects, my directedness towards these objects is obviously not brought about because I am causally influenced by the objects in question” (p. 13). Consciousness experiences the real world through the constitution of its object. Consciousness cannot be considered without its object and no object without consciousness. Husserl calls the acts of consciousness (the perceiving) the ‘noesis’, the intentional object (the object as perceived) the ‘noema’, and the raw sensuous elements ‘hyletic data’. Furthermore, ‘noesis’ represents the ‘way’ something is intended in conscious acts, and ‘noema’ shows the correlated object in the ‘how’ of its being-intended (Russell, 2006).

2.3.1.2 Heidegger’s Philosophy

The philosophy of Heidegger pertains to ontology. His philosophy was instrumental in the evolution of the definition of Being from phenomenological to ontological. Heidegger questioned traditional understanding of ontology. In his major work, *Being and Time* (1996), he defined traditional ontology as an epistemology which leads to the demolition of the Being in its sticking to beings. His phenomenological ontology attempts to allow the phenomena to reveal Being without preconception. Furthermore, he seeks to formulate the question of the meaning of Being by criticising the pre-existing ideas about the meaning of Being. Heidegger (1996) argues that the meaning of Being, as the mode of existence of beings, cannot separate with beings.

Being determines beings as beings, that in terms of which beings have always been understood no matter how they are discussed. The Being of beings “is” itself not a Being. ... What and how we ourselves are also in Being. Being is found in thatness and whatness, reality, the objective presence of things, subsistence, validity, existence, and in the “there is” (pp. 4-5).

Heidegger introduces the term ‘Dasein’ in order to describe the relationship between Being and beings. The term Dasein can be literally translated ‘there-being’, but basically refers to human being as well as to the type of Being that is distinctive of them

(Mulhall, 2013). Human is the unique being due to corresponding of the subject of a question (beings) and the object of a question (Being). In other words, “Dasein is ceaselessly taking a stand on who one is and on what is essential about one’s Being, and being defined by that stand” (p. 15). According to Heidegger (1996), “Dasein is a Being that does not simply occur among other beings. Rather it is ontically distinguished by the fact that in its Being this Being is concerned about its very Being” (p. 10). This concept seeks to explain what it is to be a human being. More specifically, it defines the essence of human existence. The essence of Dasein lies in existence. Heidegger notes “Dasein can relate in one way or another, and somehow always does relate, existence” (p. 10).

Taking the concept of human existence into account as the historicity or temporalising of a life course, Guignon (2006) identifies threefold structural features of Dasein: First, Dasein finds itself thrown into a certain cultural and historical context which lays a foundation of Dasein’s disposition, and makes up the Dasein’s “facticity”. In other words, it lends Dasein concrete background information that shapes its consciousness. Second, Dasein’s interactions with the world and expression of its experiences are limited by Dasein’s interpretations in keeping with that concrete “facticity”. Third, Dasein, in Heidegger’s words, is “understanding” which means that the Dasein takes stands with regards to choices in its life. Such stand taking automatically means imagining possibilities and meaning for oneself.

Heidegger demonstrates the being-in-the-world as an existential determination of Dasein. Dasein can exist in the middle of the world, and be encountered within the world through interaction with other beings. He notes that being-in-the-world is an essentially unitary or holistic phenomenon. Guignon (2006) analyses the being-in-the world as a phenomenon in two ways:

On the one hand, the being of everyday functional contexts is inseparable from the specific uses we put things to in the course of our shared practical involvements in the world. On the other hand, who I am as an agent is determined by the equipmental contexts and familiar forms of life that make up the worldly ‘dwelling’ in which I find myself (p. 11).

Dasein is thrown into the world and the existential reality of Dasein as being-in-the-world is a thrownness. What Heidegger considers primordial in the phenomenology of being-in-the-world are neither humans nor objects. Instead, what is primordial is the clearing in which “specific forms of human existence along with particular sorts of equipmental context emerge-into-presence in their reciprocal interdependence” (Guignon, 2006, p. 12). Heidegger (1996) argues, “it [Dasein] is thrown in such a way that it is there as being-in-the-world. The expression thrownness is meant to suggest the *facticity of its being delivered over*” (p. 127). For Heidegger, Dasein fundamentally is a being-in-the-world and its being has implications in a concrete world.

Heidegger also considered Dasein as being-towards-death. The temporality of Dasein is confirmed by the certainty that being is being-towards-death and the end of being-in-the-world is death. He defined death, which is an existential and ontological concept, as follows: “As the end of Dasein, death is the ownmost nonrelational, certain, and, as such, indefinite and not to be bypassed possibility of Dasein” (p. 239). Heidegger argues that the concept of death is a possibility of Being, but the Dasein is unable to bypass it. Dasein encounters its ownmost potentiality-of-being within a primordial anxiety (Angst). The phenomenon of Angst describes the Dasein existing existentially as being-in-the-world. In this sense, Heidegger described Dasein, full of anxiety for its Being, as the existential concept of care (Sorge). He defined the Being of Dasein as care for “*being-ahead-of-itself-in-already-being-in-a-world*” (p. 179). Thus, care is an ontological and existential definition of the Being of Dasein.

2.3.2 Levinas’ Criticism

2.3.2.1 A Critique of Husserl

Levinas acknowledged that his philosophical journey was deeply affected by Husserl’s idea, but he simultaneously criticises the philosophical concepts of Husserl.

The first objection he raises is that Husserl does not pay attention to the historicity of consciousness. Levinas, in his book *The Theory of Intuition in Husserl’s Phenomenology* (1995), insists that Husserl disregards “the relationship between the historicity of consciousness and its intentionality, its personality, its social character” (Levinas, 1995c, p. 156). The consciousness, which is revealed through phenomenological reduction, is considered to stand outside time and experience. In

addition, it seems that historicity and temporality are regarded, not as conditions of the transcendental Ego, but as secondary properties in Husserl's philosophy (Davis, 1996). Historicity and temporality are important to Levinas as the substantiality of the human's substance. Levinas argues that since Husserl's concept of time is irreconcilable with historicity, he only offers the possibility of a self-sufficient egological, ahistorical sphere of consciousness, even though he attempts to explain the existence of alter egos. He also notes that "the admission of representation as the basis of all acts of consciousness undermines the historicity of consciousness and gives intuition an intellectualist character" (Levinas, 1995c, p. 157).

The second objection is neutralisation of the historicity through phenomenological reduction. Levinas explains "the reduction neutralises in himself the man living in the world, the man positing the world as existing, the man taking part in the world" (p. 157). The reduction may lead to discrepancies in embodiment and practice in history, as well as the real world. It also encapsulates the possibility where the other is reduced, and obliterated into the subject. The phenomenological reduction contributes to freedom from the naïve attitude or belief in universal truth in order to recognise the existential existence by neutralising certain values within oneself. Having said that phenomenological reduction is a revolutionary feature, Levinas criticises "the freedom and the impulse which lead us to reduction and philosophical intuition present, by themselves, nothing new with respect to the freedom and stimulation of theory" (p. 157). According to Bernet (2002), Husserl's understanding of historicity and temporality does not take sufficient account of novelty, unpredictability, and impossibility. In addition, this concept makes a mistake, which is "the role of alterity in the self-temporalisation of intentional consciousness" (pp. 87-88).

The third objection has to do with a key feature of the Husserlian concept of 'intentionality'. The idea of intentionality provided Levinas' insight about the exteriority or the place of encountering the other and contact with the world. Levinas believes consciousness *of* something ensures the self-transcendence of consciousness. Although he acknowledges the contribution of intentionality, he finds intentionality limiting. In other words, Levinas considers Husserl, who did overcome the natural scientific attitude, ended up returning to the subjectivism. Husserl thinks that the Other is also alter ego through the transcendental self-consciousness (Yang, 2011). Levinas calls this phenomenon 'egoism' and 'solipsism'. In the same vein, Davis (1996), in

keeping with Levinas' view, also criticises intentionality which seals the subject off from the external world.

What is at stake in Levinas' discussions of intentionality is the ability of consciousness to encounter something other than itself. If meaning is entirely given by the subject rather than found in the world, then consciousness cannot experience, perceive or learn anything that it did not already contain (p. 19).

Bernet (2002) argues that intentional consciousness makes the subject dominate the autonomy of the Other through the logic of power and assimilation. In this regard, Levinas attempts to newly understand the concept of intentionality as "an exit from oneself or the relationship with alterity" (Davis, 1996, p. 21).

2.3.2.2 A Critique of Heidegger

For Levinas, the influence of Heidegger's philosophy is hard to deny. Although he came to consider Heidegger as a great philosopher, he critically assessed Heidegger's ontology in order to develop his own ethical discourse for the Other.

First of all, Levinas disagrees with Heidegger's ontology, especially the relationship between Being and beings. Levinas insists that ontology still maintains the modern priority of epistemology. While Heidegger attempted to overcome neo-Kantianism, ontology actually comes closest to *metaphysica generalis* as distinguished from *metaphysica specialis* (Froman, 2011, p. 265). Heidegger's ontology neglects diversity and difference between other beings. It leads to the perusal of reduction of the Other to the same. As a result, ontology is still a feature of onto-theology and epistemological priority.

Furthermore, Levinas finds the origins of the philosophy of Nazism⁵ in Western philosophy's definition of ontology. He argues that "the source of the bloody barbarism

⁵ The philosophy of Heidegger was deeply influenced in creation of Nazism. Heidegger criticised the communist socialism and capitalism that treat a human as a component of the machine. In this context, he believed that the negative sides of industrialisation and technological totalitarianism could be overcome through Nazism. Although Heidegger's philosophy helps to think about the problems of modern society, Heidegger's relation to Nazism has been criticised. In particular, Emmanuel Faye, French Philosopher, wrote the book *Heidegger: The Introduction of Nazism into Philosophy* (2011, Yale University Press). He claimed Heidegger's thought as a soil of Nazism and also as a 'spiritual guide' of Hitler and his

of National Socialism stems from the essential possibility of *elemental* Evil. This possibility is inscribed within the ontology of a being concerned with being” (Levinas & Hand, 1990, p. 63). He opens a new horizon of Being and beings by overcoming Heidegger’s ontology which is regarded as the paucity of ethicality. Levinas in his book *Time and the Other* (2003b) notes that Heidegger merely distinguished between existing (Being) and existent (beings), but did not separate it. It is a fact that Heidegger’s ontology understood that “the existing is always grasped in the existent” (p. 45). Levinas explains that the existence exists as independently from existent and the existent never becomes a master of existence. Thus, existing is just ‘there is’ (*il y a*). In other words, existing precedes the existing of existents, which can be called “existing without existents”. According to Levinas (2003b), “it is never attached to an object [...] and because of this I call it anonymous” (p. 48). The place produces the ‘hypostasis’ in which the existent bears existing as an attribute. In this regard, beings cannot be the master of Being, but must attempt to consider the responsibility of Being as the infinite Other.

A second theory of Heidegger that Levinas critically analyses is the concept of death. According to Heidegger (1996), “death reveals itself as the *ownmost nonrelational possibility not to be bypassed*” (p. 232). The “utmost possibility of existence” through Dasein’s assumption “makes possible all other possibilities and consequently makes possible activity and freedom” (Levinas, 2003b, p. 70). However, according to Levinas, death is an experience of the passivity of the subject rather than the possibility of Dasein. Dasein, as its ownmost being-toward-death, cannot manage death itself.

Even though death announces an event over which the subject is not master, an event in relation to which the subject is no longer a subject. ... The subject loses its very mastery as a subject by realising the no longer able to be able (*nous ne pouvons plus pouvoir*) (p. 70; 74).

followers. In the same vein, Levinas considered that Heidegger’s political action was rooted in Heidegger’s ontological philosophy. Moreover, this being-centric idea stretched to the background of the Western philosophy that tends to seize the otherness into the subjectivity.

For Levinas, the notion of death is never now, and therefore cannot be understood. In addition, death represents the relationship with the absolute Other, and such existence is made of alterity itself. Thus, to Levinas, death is the absolute mysterious Other, which cannot be grasped by the subject.

2.4. Philosophy of Levinas: Towards the Other

2.4.1 Anonymous Being and the Other

2.4.1.1 Anonymous Being

In Levinas' early books, *Existence and Existents* and *Time and the Other*, he seeks a change of philosophical direction. In other words, Levinas broke with the Western traditional philosophy which emphasises on identities formed on sameness based on the ontology of Husserl and Heidegger. He claims that ontology attempts to reduce the Other into the sameness of a singular identity. Criticising ontology, which according to him inspires totalitarianism, Levinas reinterprets the relationship between existence and existents.

When Levinas describes existence and existents, he basically accepts Heidegger's distinction between Being and beings. Levinas, however, disagrees with Heidegger's definition of Being. More specifically, Levinas considers the existence as existing without existents, whereas Heidegger understood the existence as the existence of existents. Levinas (1995b) refutes Heidegger's understanding of Being saying "it is as though thought becomes dizzy poring over the emptiness of the verb to exist, which we seem not to be able to say anything about, which only becomes intelligible in its participle, the existent, that which exists" (p. 17).

Levinas (2003b) also insists that "in Heidegger, there is a distinction, not a separation. Existing is always grasped in the existent, and the fact that existing is always possessed by someone" (p. 45). According to Heidegger's analysis, Dasein's existence is understood as thrownness (*Geworfenheit*). Levinas extricates the existence from existents, which always try to expand their dominance, by describing the idea of thrownness as the "fact-of-being-thrown-in existence". Thus, existing is regarded as what "occurs without us, without a subject, an existing without existents" (pp. 45-46).

Moreover, existent for which existence is possible is not an ecstasy (*Ekstase*), but an instant. This is unlike Heidegger who insisted that existence is essentially ecstatic, or in other words, Dasein is always “being-outside-itself”. On the other hand, Levinas describes the subject “being-inside-itself” existing. According to Levinas (1995b), the instant has a unique relationship with existence which enables the accomplishment of existence. “The instant contains an act by which existence is acquired. Each instant is a beginning, a birth” (p. 76). Thus, the subjectivity of the existents exists within the instant.

2.4.1.2 *Il y a (There is)*

In order to explain existing without existents, Levinas introduces the idea of “*il y a*” or “there is”. By mentioning the *il y a* as the anonymous impersonal existence, Levinas (1995b) suggests imagining all beings reverting to nothingness: “Something would happen if only night and the silence of nothingness. The in-determinateness of this “something is happening” is not the indeterminateness of a subject and does not refer to a substantive” (p. 57). Likewise, the third person pronoun in the impersonal form of a verb indicates the features of the action itself, which has no author. Existence is “the impersonal, anonymous, and inextinguishable consummation” (p. 57). Furthermore, Levinas illustrates the anonymity of existence by illustrating the phenomena of *il y a*:

There is, in general, without it mattering there is, without our being able to fix a substantive to this term. *There is* is an impersonal form, like in it rains, or it is warm. Its anonymity is essential. What we call the I is itself submerged by the night, invaded, depersonalised, stifled by it. The disappearance of all things and of the I leaves what cannot disappear, the sheer fact of being in which one *participates* whether one wants to or not, without having taken the initiative, anonymously. Being remains, like a field of forces, like a heavy atmosphere belonging to no one (p. 58).

A nocturnal space is not empty space but is uninterrupted; “nothing approaches, nothing comes, nothing threatens; this silence, this tranquility, this void of sensations constitutes a mute, absolutely indeterminate menace” (p. 59). According to Levinas, the rustling of

the *il y a* is horror. Horror removes the consciousness of its subjectivity. It throws consciousness into “*impersonal vigilance, a participation*” (p. 60). In horror, the subject is removed from its subjectivity and loses power to have private existence. *Il y a* is impersonalised and there is no unique personality in it. By analysing anonymous existence through the concepts of night and horror, Levinas attempts to overcome the Heideggerian anxiety of being-toward-death. *Il y a* is “the impossibility of death, the universality of existence even in its annihilation” (p. 61). In this context, “the exiting without existents, which called the *there is*, is the place where ‘hypostasis’ will be produced” (Levinas, 2003b, p. 50).

2.4.1.3 Hypostasis

Levinas (2003b) illustrates how “hypostasis is a rupture of the anonymous vigilance of the *there is* and it refers to a situation where an existent is put in touch with its existing” (p. 51). This hypostasis or position as a “veritable inversion at the heart of anonymous being” is the “event by which the existent contracts its existing” (p. 43; 51). Existents capture existing as an attribute and existing exists on its own. Levinas notes that the existent is a monad and solitary.

The event of hypostasis happens in the present. In other words, departure from itself is the present. The present makes “a rip in the infinite beginningless and endless fabric of existing. The present rips apart and joins together again; it begins; it is beginning itself” (p. 52). Hypostasis as the function of the present rips the impersonal infinity of existing. In this sense, hypostasis does not regard to a something but an event. “It is an event of existing through which something comes to start out from itself” (p. 52). It is a pure event and should be elaborated by a verb.

Hypostasis has two aspects. On the one hand, hypostasis is pure beginning, pure coming-to-be without anything yet as an existent. On the other hand, an existent has already taken form in emergent becoming (Guenther, 2009). Guenther (2009) analyses these two aspects of hypostasis as “not separable; rather, they emphasise different sides of the same hinged process: *coming-to-be* and *coming-to-be*” (p. 173).

2.4.1.4 Here and Sleep

Levinas considers hypostasis as an appearance of a subject from anonymous and impersonal existence. He attempts to phenomenologically analyse hypostasis through the notions of 'here' and 'sleep'.

Levinas (1995b) describes hypostasis as a consciousness. Consciousness is posited through a locale. A present is "this coming out of a self, this appropriation of existence by an existent, which the "I" is" (p. 83). In other words, consciousness, position, the present, the 'I' are hypostasis. It is important for Levinas to establish the hypostasis as a consciousness from 'here'. Consciousness is here and it has a place. That consciousness is here indicates the positing of consciousness. The base or essential condition where consciousness has a position as consciousness itself is sleep. In particular, "consciousness is a commitment to being, which consists in maintaining itself in the uncommittedness of sleep" (p. 70). Levinas emphasises the 'here' by comparing it to Heidegger's 'there' (*Da*):

The here that belongs to consciousness, the place of its sleep and of its escape into itself, is radically different from the *Da* involved in Heidegger's Dasein. The latter already implies the world. The here we are starting with, the here of position, precedes every act of understanding, every horizon and all time. It is the very fact that consciousness is an origin, starts from itself, and that it is an existent (p. 71).

In contrast to Heidegger who understood human existence as being-toward-death, Levinas explains it in terms of sleep by regarding it as the localisation of consciousness which is the "subjectivation of the subject" (p. 69). Sleep is to suspend physical and psychological activity and it occurs in the act of lying down. The act of lying down has a place and position in existence. In this context, consciousness participates in sleep through position (pp. 66-72). Thus, the subject of existence and *cogito* are represented in sleep which is a suspended state of consciousness. Blanchot (2015) provides insight into how sleep brings about the localisation of consciousness: "Whoever does not sleep cannot stay awake. Vigilance consists in not always keeping watch, for it seeks *awakening* as its essence" (p. 264). An awake consciousness is the premise for

unconsciousness. Levinas (2003b) also notes the function of sleep by elaborating consciousness:

In fact, consciousness already participates in vigilance. But what characterises it particularly is its always retaining the possibility of withdrawing “behind” to sleep. Consciousness is the power to sleep. The leak within the plenum is the very paradox of consciousness (p. 51).

Hence, consciousness finally is able to birth as consciousness through sleep. In addition, sleep makes possible the obtaining of self-sameness through a departure from self and a return to self. For this reason, sleep is the place where appears the consciousness of the subject.

2.4.2 Totality and Infinity

2.4.2.1 The Same and The Other

Levinas, in his book *Totality and Infinity*, attempts to overcome the totalising aspect Western philosophy. According to Levinas, the Western philosophical tradition, which upholds ontology, has a propensity for reducing the Other to a conflating and subordinating position in terms of identity. Levinas believes that ontology, which put subjectivism before the Other, profoundly reductionist and justifies violence towards the Other. In order to overcome the idea of subjectivism, Levinas’ philosophical concerns move from totality to infinity by encountering the transcendence of the Other.

Levinas (1991) understands that subjectivity is based, not on a “purely egoist protestation against totality”, but “the idea of infinity” (p. 26). The subject is able to transform as the ethical subject while facing “the infinity [which] is the absolutely other” (p. 49). Basically, this idea of infinity is founded in Descartes’ views on the same subject. In his *Third Meditation*, Descartes asserts that “the subject is not able to be the source of the ideas which are greater or more perfect than itself since an effect cannot be greater than its cause” (Davis, 1996, 39). Applying Descartes’ notion of infinity divinity means that God’s existence goes beyond the subject’s thought. Levinas too clearly finds that the subject cannot be the source of an idea beyond itself. This

Cartesian idea of the subject is of significance to Levinas in terms that Descartes attempts to exceed the solipsism of the transcendental ego. The subject composes the new identity itself through the encounters with the infinite, which is considered as the Other. Levinas (1991) elaborates that “the Cartesian notion of the idea of the Infinite designates a relation with a being that maintains its total exteriority with respect to him who thinks it” (p. 50). For Levinas, total exteriority of the Other indicates that the Other cannot belong or be synthesised to the totality of sameness.

Levinas seeks infinity through an ethical interaction with the Other. In the same vein, Kearney (1995) asserts that infinity links to an ‘ethics of transcendence’: “Levinas’ phenomenological descriptions of our finite being-in-the-world led him, ultimately, beyond the limits of phenomenology, to an ethics of transcendence based on the primacy of the *other* over the *same*” (p. 178). Thus, Levinas emphasises the ethical response of the subject, considering the Other as infinity who is not pitted against the self but simply separate from it.

2.4.2.2 *Ethics Beyond Sameness*

By rejecting reductionism which reduces beings to sameness, Levinas apprehends the ethical interaction between the self and the Other through the idea of desire. The finite self who experiences epistemic contradiction desires infinity and the exteriority of the Other in an asymmetrical stance. Levinas refers to this desire as “metaphysical desire”. The metaphysical desire is distinct from need. Need is situated in a deficiency and absence in the self. In contrast, metaphysical desire, as something the self does not possess or have, cannot be satisfied, completed, or satiated. The desire is desire for transcendence of the subject. Levinas (1991) insists that “metaphysical desire does not long to return [to the subject], for it is desire for a land not of our birth, for a land foreign to every nature, which has not been our fatherland and to which we shall never betake ourselves” (pp. 33-34).

Metaphysical desire opens to a dimension of height, the alterity of the Other, and Most-High in contrast with the dimension of sameness (pp. 34-35). In other words, this desire evokes an ethical response to the Other. When the direction of the desire starts from I and moves to the Other, the ethical I is able to understand the primordial moral obligation to the Other as well as realise a new subjectivity as a being-for-the-

Other. In non-reciprocity, inequality, and within an asymmetrical relationship between the subject and the Other, the metaphysical desire moves towards the exteriority of the Other where a heteronomous responsibility is experienced rather than expansion of sovereign sameness. In this dynamic, the desire, which is transcendence of the self to the Other, can result in an ethical interaction between the self and the Other.

By pursuing metaphysical desire, Levinas also considers “ethics as first philosophy” as the means to overcome the totalising ontology of Western philosophy. This powerful and clear change in philosophical priority is demonstrative of Levinas’ ethics of the Other. Levinas focuses on ethics by criticising ontology as the first philosophy in Western philosophical thought which reduces the Other being’s identity to sameness. More specifically, ethics newly appears as the substitute for the self-centred comprehension of being which had previously been regarded as the source of understanding for the otherness of the Other. Levinas (1991) argues that it is only possible to surmount the limitations of ontology through ethics derived from the Other: “A calling into question of the same – which cannot occur within the egoist spontaneity of the same – is brought about by the other. We name this calling into question of my spontaneity by the presence of the Other ethics” (p. 43). The idea of ethics as first philosophy signifies approaching of the Other by the self beyond essences as metaphysical exteriority towards infinity. Levinas declares that “the ethical, beyond vision and certitude, delineates the structure of exteriority as such. Morality is not a branch of philosophy, but first philosophy” (p. 304). In order to engage the infinite responsibility to the absolute Other, Levinas propounds the concept of the face.

2.4.2.3 The Face of the Other

Levinas declares ethics as first philosophy while proposing the concept of the face. The ethical notion of the face opposes the symmetrical relationship between the self and the Other which leads to the system of totality. In this sense, Levinas believes that the face of the Other, by overcoming the identity of sameness, represents the infinity of the Other.

According to Levinas, the face is not merely one part of our physical body, for instance, the constitution of features like nose, eyes, skin, chin, etc. In other words, the face of the Other is an ethical form through which an interaction with the Other takes

place, and leads to a transcendental encounter. For Levinas, the face cannot be comprehended, grasped, and encompassed by the subject. The face of the Other is not an object that can be reduced by prejudice that comes from following the ideology of sameness and neglecting the alterity of the Other. It can be described as an area of *epoché* where the subject moves beyond the boundaries of totality into infinity. Levinas (1991) writes,

The way in which the other presents him[her]self, exceeding *the idea of the other in me*, we here name face. ... The face of the Other at each moment destroys and overflows the plastic image it leaves me, the idea existing to my own measure and to the measure of its *ideatum* - the adequate idea (pp. 50-51).

In conversations with Philippe Nemo, Levinas develops the definition of the concept of the face in several ways. Levinas (1995a) explains that: (1) We access the face rather than look at the face; (2) The face cannot be controlled by perception; (3) The face is upright and bears an essential nakedness and poverty; (4) The face is signification without context; (5) The face is meaning all by itself; and (6) The relation to the face is ethical (pp. 85-87). According to the definitions, the face epitomises the ethical demands and obligations of the subject towards the Other. In particular, the subject encounters the absolute exteriority of the Other through the face. Considering the face shows itself regardless of consciousness, Levinas refers to the concept of the face as ‘epiphany’ and ‘revelation’.

The Other is revealed in a face as an epiphany. The face of the Other appears as an exteriority without depending on the subject. Levinas (1991) asserts that,

The Other remains infinitely transcendent, infinitely foreign; his face in which his epiphany is produced and which appeals to me breaks with the world that can be common to us, whose virtualities are inscribed in our *nature* and developed by our existence (p. 194).

The face of the Other operates as an epiphany and it brings the signification of infinity. The existence of the Other in the face does not vie to become the same but overflows sameness, deciding its status as infinite. For Levinas, encountering the manifestation of the Other's face is "the absolute experience [which] is not disclosure but revelation" (pp. 65-66).

Levinas emphasises the absoluteness of this epiphany of the face by using a religious term, revelation. The subject who experiences the epiphany of the face encounters the Other as infinity. Through the gaze, the face of the Other, as revelation, commands ethical supplications from the subject towards the Other. The revelation calls one to engage and take responsibility by abandoning his/her power over the Other. Levinas (1991) writes,

The relation with the Other, discourse, is not only putting in question of my freedom, the appeal coming from the other to call me to responsibility, is not only the speech by which I divest myself of the possession that encircles me by setting forth an objective and common world, but is also sermon, exhortation, the prophetic word (p. 213).

Thus, the revelation of the face has ethical meaning. In other words, when the Other being appears as epiphany of the face, it reveals itself, not through a strong and powerful face, but in a weak and powerless one, such as that of the stranger, the widow, the destitute, to name a few. Levinas notes that the weakness the Other's face represents to the subject an ethical obligation. The Other being to whom the subject is obligated and that "presents himself in the face comes from a dimension of height, a dimension of transcendence whereby he can present himself as a stranger without opposing me as obstacle or enemy" (p. 215).

The face of the Other is disclosed as naked or open to the possibility of violence, and even death. The Other, who is the most miserable and poor of beings, summons, "you shall not commit murder" (p. 199). This revelation of the face actively requests the responsibility of the subject for the Other. The command is that "thou shalt do everything in order that the other may live" (Levinas & Robbins, 2001, p. 272). Ironically, the weakest of the faces of the Other has the most ability to make the subject

resist murder. The face, in its nudity or vulnerability, is able to open up to transcendence. Levinas (1991) calls it “the ethical resistance, which is the resistance of what has no resistance” (p. 199). The ethical resistance stems from infinity which is stronger than murder. Levinas argues that “the epiphany of the face brings forth the possibility of gauging the infinity of the temptation to murder, not only as temptation to total destruction but also as the purely ethical impossibility of this temptation and attempt” (p. 199).

For Levinas, the dynamic of this resistance operates in dissymmetrical or asymmetrical relationships. The transcendental Other Being as a master reprimands and commands through the face of the poor. In this regard, the epiphany of the face leads the subject to act as an ethical being. The ethical summons from the face of the Other invokes the infinite responsibility of the subject towards the Other. The self can respond to the call of the Other and declare, “Here I am”. The revelation of the infinite occurs through this declaration of the subject (Levinas, 1995a). Thus, when the subject encounters the face of the Being, he/she recognises their responsibility towards the Other and finds the meaning of the ontological I.

2.4.3 Responsibility and Substitution

2.4.3.1 Responsibility

When the subject encounters the face of the Other, he/she is able to experience the epiphany and revelation of the face. The Other’s face reveals itself in nudity and weakness, such as in the faces of widows, orphans, and the powerless, thus summoning the subject to ethical behaviour. By experiencing the epiphany of the face, the subject gives over his/her own intention against the Other, and the subjectivity of the subject is dissolved. This experience transforms the solipsistic subject to an ethical one by recognising the root of ontological and original responsibility. The face of the Other helps the subject to find responsibility. More specifically, it gives the subject the ability to respond to the Other’s demands and requirements. In this regard, the face is the place where appears the “infinite responsibility” of the subject to the Other, and the ethical subject develops by responding to the Other’s summons.

Responsibility to the Other, which is revealed through the face of the Other, does not consider the decision of the subject. It means that responsibility of the subject

is prior to freedom and/or intentionality (Levinas, 2003a, p. 52). For Levinas, the responsibility of the subject is regarded as the essence of being. Levinas (2000) asserts that “responsibility for others could never mean altruistic will, instinct of natural benevolence or love” (pp. 111-12). In addition, “responsibility for another is not an accident that happens to a subject” (p. 114). In this sense, the praxis of responsibility rejects the traditional and modern philosophical way which insists on the ability of the subject’s altruistic nature and sensibility for practicing responsibility.

For Levinas, the subject-centred perspective naturally leads to a hierarchical relationship between the subject and the Other. By denying elitism and special ability of the subject to practice responsibility, Levinas emphasises the justification of the responsibility towards the Other in inter-subjectivity rooted in pre-origin of a human being. Furthermore, he considers such responsibility as the condition that makes a human being human. Levinas (2003a) elaborates,

No one can stay in himself; the humanity of man, subjectivity, is a responsibility for others, an extreme vulnerability. The return to self becomes interminable detour. Prior to consciousness and choice, before the creature collects himself in present and representation to make himself essence, man approaches man. He is stitched of responsibilities (p. 67).

Levinas believes that when human beings acknowledge their obligation to respond to the Other’s demands, they realise their true subjectivity. The summons of the Other invites the subject to be “the hemorrhage of the for-the-other” and it leads the subject to offer to the Other “the bread from one’s mouth, of one’s own mouthful of bread” (Levinas, 2000, p. 74; 77). The subject should respond, “Here I am” rather than avoid the Other’s voice. Levinas expands on the ethical subject by citing Dostoyevsky in *Brothers Karamazov*: “Each of us is guilty before everyone for everyone, and I more than the others” (p. 146).

Levinas’ awareness of responsibility is one of infinite responsibility towards the Other beyond freedom and free engagement of the subject. In particular, the responsibility stems from the Other and the subject recognises the responsibility for the Other by the Other. Levinas (2000) describes this dynamic as the “the condition (or the

uncondition) of being hostage” (p. 6). The Other engages the subject through the face of the Other and the subject radically loses his/her own subjectivity. In this sense, the subject encounters an alternate subjectivity as *the other in the same* and “the subjectivity of a subject is responsibility of being-in-question in the form of the total exposure to offence in the cheek offered to the smiter” (p. 111).

Considering this feature of responsibility, it can be regarded as ‘ethical responsibility’ since the responsibility is definitely formed by the Other even as it concerns the Other. The ethical responsibility stresses, not sameness, but the differences between the subject and the Other. Basically, this responsibility towards the Other, who is different from the ‘I’, seeks an asymmetrical or dissymmetrical relationship. Levinas believes that a symmetrical relationship between the Other and the subject leads to the logic of power and totalitarianism. For overcoming the limitation of mutual equality, Levinas emphasises on “asymmetrical reciprocity”. The asymmetrical relationship breaks the dichotomised paradigm between them and makes place for the possibility of an ethical response to the transcendental Other (Park, 2009). Asymmetrical reciprocity does not make reciprocal demands or claim rewards, but rather, the calling of the Other encourages the subject to participate in the passivity of responsibility.

2.4.3.2 The Passivity of the Subject

The subject who is held hostage to the Other becomes a passive being by encountering the infinity and transcendence of the Other. According to Adrian Peperzak (1997), the passivity of the subject in relation with his/her responsibility to the Other is beyond the choice of the subject. He notes that the passivity mentioned by Levinas does not denote neglect, anti-moralistic attitude, and indifference, which is what one generally understands by passivity, but is a pre-voluntary, pre-virtuous, pre-conscious, and pre-moral passivity from the transcendental Other.

The passivity of the subject makes the subject respond to the Other’s requirements regardless of the intention of the subject. Levinas (2000) illustrates the passivity of the subject as the response to the Other as “more passive still than any passivity” (p. 50). The passivity of responsibility as a response to the Other’s summons in an asymmetrical relationship evolves the subject’s ego into the ethical subject. The passivity ironically links the subject and the Other while sustaining this newly

interpreted subjectivity. Moreover, Levinas describes that “the passivity proper to patience, more passive thus than any passivity that is correlative to the voluntary, signifies in the “passive” synthesis of its temporality” (p. 51).

2.4.3.3 *Substitution*

Levinas’ understanding of the passivity of the subject and responsibility extends to the notion of substitution. “Substitution is not an act,” Levinas (2000) writes, “it is a passivity inconvertible into an act” (p. 117). The substitutional subject is heteronomous rather than autonomous, and is formed by the Other who is not *being otherwise* but *otherwise than being*. The ‘I’ constituted by the Other is a radically changed ‘I’, ‘from the other’ into a ‘for the other’, in order to suffer on behalf of the Other.

For Levinas, substitution is the ethic. Substitution refers to the subject who is accused of the Other’s suffering, actions, and problems within the asymmetrical relationship even though the subject may not have done anything wrong to incur the accusations. The subject who is incarnated passivity becomes the substitutional subject by practicing infinite responsibility. Infinite responsibility indicates that it transcends the subject’s choice and freedom. The subject obsessed by the Other is chosen as a substitute for the Other in order to assume the responsibility for the Other. Levinas (2000) notes that “the self is a substitution for the other, subjectivity as a subjection to everything, as a supporting everything and supporting the whole” (p. 164). The subject undertakes the Other’s faults as his/her own, and the expiation for the Other appears within the responding. Furthermore, Levinas calls the substitutional subject as messiah (Levinas, 1997, p. 129). Thus, as aforementioned, the substitutional subject, who is a hostage to the Other, should participate in the fundamental obligation towards the Other by giving to the Other the bread from one’s own mouth. This irreducible substitution represents an archetypal infinite responsibility which leads to extending hospitality towards the Other.

2.5 Through the Lens of Levinas’ Philosophy

In order to view the philosophy of Levinas as an abstract theory but as a concrete practical idea, it needs to be applied to specific cases. In this sense, the practice of

hospitality by Korean Protestant churches towards North Korean defectors can be newly studied through the concepts of Levinas discussed in the preceding sections.

2.5.1 Hospitality of the Churches as Responsibility of the Churches

Korean Protestant churches play a significant role in the South society in welcoming and supporting strangers and marginalised people including foreign workers, multicultural families, the homeless, the defectors, and so on, even though their acts of hospitality are often criticised for being thinly-veiled attempts at proselytisation. As the churches follow the teachings of Jesus Christ, their public role and identity is rooted in the practice of hospitality. Hospitality towards the others is considered to be the responsibility of the churches, and therefore, it becomes an important part of their ministry. In this sense, the concept of responsibility, which is one of the key components in Levinas' philosophy, brings great insight into the hospitality of the Korean churches by providing a new paradigm.

As mentioned earlier, most of the evangelical churches use hospitality to convert people to Christianity. The churches regard hospitality as an exchange value or conditional acts. In this give-and-take dynamic, the churches as a master select the people who can meet the church's expectation. Even worse, they refuse to feel obliged to do hospitality and disconnect their public responsibility from their faith. This perspective is rooted in the distorted understanding of the sole purpose of the Church being private salvation. It inevitably makes the churches confine their actions in the private and religious sphere by neglecting the responsibility of the churches in the public issues (Kim 2014).

Scholars like Kang (2013) and Derrida (1995) agree that responsibility is the most important characteristic of the Church, and broadly of religion. According to Kang, the message of the Church and the meaning of the Church's existence can be confirmed not from their doctrines or traditional rituals but from how their belief is incarnated in a complicated context. More specifically, it is important to see how the Church members could contribute to expanding the 'circle of inclusion' in their daily life by using the truth of Christianity. Derrida, the eminent Algerian-French philosopher, also touched upon the meaning of religion. Derrida pointed out that "religion is responsibility or it is nothing at all". Derrida (1995) mentioned that the

'demonic' is to be associated with responsibility by saying that "the demonic is originally defined as irresponsibility, or if one wishes, as non-responsibility" (p. 5). Thus, the authenticity of the Church has to be evaluated by its attitude on responsibility towards the Other and its implications in the real world. In addition, the Church should try to transform from privatised doctrine and abstracted belief to ethical other-centred responsibility.

For Levinas, responsibility, which is a response to the Other's summons, is an important factor in finding the authentic subjectivity of a human being. In other words, when the subject, who is a hostage of the Other, encounters the transcendence of the Other, he/she transforms into the ethical being who is involved in the passivity of responsibility. The relationship between the subject and the Other is asymmetrical and is beyond reciprocity, and the subject who recognises the new subjectivity has infinite responsibility towards the Other.

The notion of the subjectivity of the subject, which experiences the asymmetrical self-emptying by responding to the Other's demands, can be applied to the identity and the public role of Korean Protestant churches. According to Levinas, responsibility towards the Other is not the mere rational responsibility of consciousness, but a divine responsibility in response to the epiphany and revelation of God revealed in the face of the Other. In this sense, hospitality, as the foremost expression of responsibility of the churches towards the Other, is the calling of God. To respond to the ethical summons of the Other, the churches should attempt to transform their subjectivity to passivity which would lead them to abandon their power and right. It is associated with the *kenosis* of Jesus and incarnation. When the churches, as disciples of Jesus, follow the Truth, they can realise incarnation in the real world by responding to the Other's requests.

Therefore, it is the churches' responsibility to expand their definition of hospitality from 'one of our kind' to strangers, and even to enemies. When applying this principle onto the divided society of Korea, North Korean defectors who encounter discrimination and exclusion from the South society can be the others towards whom the churches must be responsible.

2.5.2 North Korean Defectors: The Face of the Other

Levinas' concept of the face of the Other discusses how the Other gazes at the 'I' and how the 'I' can respond to their asking. The face of the Other, in particular, inspires epiphany and revelation. The Other, as the transcendental one, captures the subject by demanding ethical responsibility towards the Other. In addition, the face reveals itself as the infinite being and absoluteness which cannot be comprehended through the consciousness of the subject. When the subject encounters the face of the Other, he/she recognises the face which reminds the subject of suffering and death. In other words, the face of the Other reveals itself in weakness and nakedness, through orphans, widows, and strangers and in their supplications and demands. The face summons the self to be ethically responsible towards the Other.

In the context of the divided Korean peninsula, the face of the defectors indicates the defencelessness and destitution. Their existence in society is almost 'nude', since they are extremely vulnerable, politically, economically, and socio-culturally.

First of all, the defectors face social stigma due to their political identity. More specifically, the divided Korean peninsula engenders totalitarianism by oppressing the Other being who is different from the 'I'. People who advocate democracy reduce and demolish the others who support communism over historical and political reasons, especially based on experiences of the Korean War and/or conservative political stance. Those who disagree with the democratic form of government are considered as annihilated beings in the name of national security. Such actions are enacted where the authoritarian government attempts to assimilate and incorporate the Other into itself. In this totalising background of Korea, the defectors, who are still assimilated into the South voluntarily or forcibly, are censured and excluded since they are from the 'enemy country' even though they are legally Korean citizens. Therefore, they experience a social identity crisis and feel they do not belong anywhere.

In addition, prejudices harboured by South Koreans makes it difficult for the defectors to find an occupation. Another reason is that the defectors who had lived under a communist system have trouble accepting and adapting to the capitalist system. Lastly, the defectors seem to struggle to overcome 'the division ideology'. Even after the Korean War, the clash of ideology between democracy and communism is constantly reproduced in various forms in different arenas. This symptom is called the

division ideology. The ideology ignores the defectors' gaze and infinite responsibility towards the Other. Moreover, the division ideology brings direct and indirect violence to people who are defined as the enemy and justifies hostilities and hatred.

Following Levinas' philosophy, the request of the defectors can be summarised in one sentence, "Do not kill me". The defectors ask us to stop killing them through political, economic, psychological, and social violence. The face of the defector summons us with their poverty and nudity in South Korean society. Their demand, represented as "Do not kill me", is not to arouse sympathy, but is the ethical command. According to Levinas, the Other's demands made of the subject, which makes the subject realise the power of morality, ironically stems from the face which is powerless and vulnerable. The insights provided by Levinas can be employed, especially by the churches, to encounter the face of the defectors and respond to them in an ethical, responsible manner.

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter set out to find a theoretical framework for critically analysing the relationship between the Korean Protestant churches and North Korean defectors in order to build an alternative relationship between them. As a lens for interpreting the attitudes of the churches towards the defectors, this theoretical framework will be applied to the following chapters. Levinas' 'ethics of the Other' reveals the root cause of the problems in the relationship between the two groups from the perspective of the subject-the Other. Furthermore, the theological consideration for hospitality that is found in Levinas' thought will be applied to the church-defector relationship.

Levinas' philosophy for analysing the relationship between the subject and the Other is perhaps the most apt for the Korean churches' engagement with the defectors. To begin with, Levinas' ontological adventure starts with rejecting the Western philosophical tradition. Levinas was influenced by the philosophy of Husserl and Heidegger. However, he was confronted with the limitations of ontological phenomenology as solipsistic egology. Levinas attempted to overcome these thoughts by formulating his own philosophy of the Other. Levinas believed that Nazism, which led to a brutal genocide, ideologically derived from Western philosophy that reduces the Other to the subject and alterity to sameness. In order to break the inherent violence of

ontology, Levinas newly comprehends subjectivity as ethical behaviour towards the Other with the ability to respond, 'respons-ability'.

In addition, Levinas' philosophical subversion finds representation in the concept of the face of the Other. The nudity of the face of the Other summons the 'I' and the 'I' cannot help but respond. This radical non-reciprocity makes a human being have the infinite responsibility towards the Other and to say to the Other, "Here I am". The ethical relationship blooms as the subject acts as a substitute for the Other.

While Levinas tries to overcome Western traditional philosophy, he also has some limitations. First of all, Levinas highly emphasises the Other as infinity or transcendent being. This highlighting raises the questions; is the Other always good and the subject is bad? Secondly, the more the Other is focused, the more the subject is highlighted simultaneously. Paradoxically, while Levinas seeks to exile from the ego-centric but the boundaries between the subject and the Other becomes more vivid. Lastly, Levinas' philosophy seems difficult to be realised in the actual political context. The relationship between the subject and the Other in Levinas' philosophy indicates the individual level, not the community or political level. Thus, beyond the philosophical theory, Levinas' thoughts have to be considered in a complex context.

Levinas' philosophical findings provide important insights into the relationship between the churches and the defectors. First of all, a re-interpreted identity of the subject requires Korean churches to change their attitude towards the defectors. This means that the churches should consider their ethical responsibility towards the defectors. The defectors are vulnerable in society, and the churches should shoulder their primordial obligation by encountering the defectors' gaze. The epiphany of the defectors' face offers the evocative image of Jesus Christ to the churches. In other words, Jesus who went through *kenosis*, or self-emptying, to save humanity can be revealed through the response of the churches to the defectors in terms of the infinite Other.

The ethics of the Other introduces the concrete and practical way for the churches to carry out their responsibility towards the defectors. Taking the asymmetrical relationship based on Other-centredness into account, the churches can find transcendence in the Other. This transcendence makes the churches open their space and hospitality towards the defectors without any conditions and/or ulterior intentions. Hence, Levinas provides to the churches the possibility of a new subjectivity

which is formed by the ethical interaction with the Other. The new subjectivity is not denying the subject but constructing an ethical subject. In this sense, the churches which reject the self-centred theology are able to embark on the ontological adventure of hospitality towards the defectors.

From the next chapter, the relationship between the churches and the defectors will be analysed in light of Levinas' ideas in pursuing an ethical relationship between them through hospitality.

CHAPTER THREE. OTHERISATION OF THE DEFECTORS AND THE CHANGING NAMES: A HISTORICAL CONTEXT

3.1 Introduction

Since the time North Korean defectors started moving to the South after the national division, the South Korean government and societal atmosphere about the North prevalent in the South have defined their subjectivity. In particular, the defectors' identity has been shaped through the evolving appellations formulated by South Korean society's dominant discourse without regard for the opinion of the defectors. Considering the socio-political function of the name that represents identity and/or subjectivity of oneself, the defectors have had their identity described depending on the socio-political situation in the South. For instance, they were regarded, from an inclusive perspective, as ethnic brethren and compatriot. In contrast, they were also regarded, from an exclusivist's perspective, as spies and burdens to the South's economy. Furthermore, they were used to preserve the political power of the South government by treating them as propaganda tools, victims of Kim's regime, survivors of the North's violation of human rights, to name a few. So, the subjectivity of the defectors fluctuated depending on historical stages while they experienced 'otherisation' through these ever-changing names imposed upon them.

In the same vein, Korean Protestant churches, the second-largest support group to the defectors after the state, have also attempted to project 'politicised evangelicalism' on to the defectors as the condition for helping them. Most of the defectors have a relationship with missionaries in trying to flee from the North. This benefactor-beneficiary and hierarchical relationship setting contributes to justifying the churches' actions towards the defectors that directly or indirectly requests conversion to Christianity along with a change in politico-theological perspective as cultural assimilation.

In this sense, this chapter entails exploring how North Korean defectors are otherised through constant alteration in the given name by the South Korean

government and societal discourse. Following historical stages, the evolution of the defectors' names and reaction of the churches will be elaborated. The changing names will be deconstructed to understand ideology and social intention and then reconstructed to evaluate the value of the defectors' identity and experience in the Korean peninsula.

In this context, the ecclesiastical perspective on the defectors' changing name will be also considered to analyse the churches' attitude towards the defectors. This will inquire into the ways in which theological considerations and backgrounds contribute to the actions of two different Christian groups; conservative/evangelical and progressive/ecumenical churches. The investigation will pay attention to how the different theological perspectives influence the ways in which the defectors are perceived.

3.2 Names of the Defectors and the Responses of the Churches

From the Korean War period to the present, the name of North Korean defectors in South Korea has continuously changed depending on the time period and the political circumstances. For example, during the Cold War era, the action of the defectors who crossed the border to the South was regarded as a symbolically significant act which showed the superiority of the democracy over communism. In this context, the defectors were often called a hero or a veteran. However, after the Cold War, defectors started to be perceived as refugees and even migrants among South Koreans.

This constant alteration in the way defectors are identified indicates how South Korean society and the churches recognise the defectors based on their own interest and convenience. In order to comprehend the defectors within different perceptions of the Korean context, it is necessary to explore the historical stages that represent the inter-Korean relationship and policy. To that end, this section follows the trajectory of the evolution of names of the defectors by identifying four historical periods based on political events. In addition, the responses of the churches towards the defectors in each period are also studied.

3.2.1 The Korean War Period: 1945–1950s

The history of the defectors who crossed the border into the South began after the liberation from Japanese occupation in 1945. Although the Korean peninsula regained independence in 1945, it was divided by into two military occupations; the Soviet Union in the North and the United States in the South. The ideological and political conflicts in the Korean peninsula ultimately led to the division of the North and South by the 38th Parallel (M. Kim, 2019). The situation triggered migration, either for the sake of finding freedom or for ideological reasons that increased political antagonism between the two divided halves.

In this period, the group of people who stood to lose because of communism, like landlords, capitalists, Christians, to name a few, moved to the South to escape political oppression of the communist government. They were called “border crosser to the South”, or *Wollamin*. In particular, some of them formed anti-communist and rightwing extremist groups, such as “the Northwest Youth League”. They had animosity towards the communist group that murdered and imprisoned members of their families and had forced them to abandon their homes. For this reason, they carried out ruthless violent massacres (such as April 3 Jeju Uprising) in order to defeat communism in the Korean peninsula (Flenniken, 2011). The border crossers to the South, who moved due to political reasons, took the initiative of spreading anti-communist sentiments in the South in order to establish a democratic government in the Korean peninsula that would ultimately defeat the communists in the North. In the aftermath of the Korean War, the crossers were also regarded as “war refugees”, or *pinanmin*, and some of them settled in the South. In this sense, South Koreans considered people who moved from the North as “those who leave home”, or *silhyangmin* and/or “divided families”, or *isangajok* (Choi, 2018; Chung, 2008).

During this period, the Korean churches had positive responses towards the people from the North. At that time, North Korean arrivals in the South were mostly Christians who sought freedom of faith. They were considered significant members of the churches since the organisers of the mainline churches in the South came from amidst them (Kang, 2007). For this reason, they were inevitably welcomed into the South Korean Christian groups.

In addition, not surprisingly, most South Korean Protestant churches, which have a tendency to be pro-American and anti-communist, actively embraced the

defectors in order to support the belligerent policy which was “reunification by conquering North Korea” (Ahn, 2018, p. 119). According to Chung (2008), in the socio-political context, South Korean society understood the defectors as synonymous with anti-communists and Christians. The Korean churches and the defectors had the same purpose, that is to defeat communism and the North by constructing a democratic nation-state. The defectors who left home and their families because of reasons of politics and faith served as a huge inspiration for reunification, and it led to them supporting the first South Korea president Rhee Syng-man’s “March North reunification policy” along with the churches of the South. In 1953, Korean churches rejected the ceasefire agreement by following Rhee’s policy referred to as the ‘armed reunification’. The churches in Korea issued a statement to churches across the world opposing armistice on June 15th, 1953. The statement made clear that “the unification of the Korean peninsula can only be achieved through, not appeasement of the Communist regime, but by reducing them to submission by force” (Lim, 2014). In this context, the defectors were adopted into the South society and the churches as both torch bearers of anti-communism and true Christians.

The identity of North Korean arrivals in the South during the Korean War period is related to the war and family. In particular, the names include the situation of geopolitical division and state of separation from family due to the war. For these reasons, they had two conflicting perceptions of the North; on one hand, the idea of ethnic oneness, or *hanminjok*; and on the other, political enemy who ought to be defeated. Furthermore, the defectors as anti-communists were welcomed by the churches, and the two parties worked together for bringing an end to communism in the Korean Peninsula. Therefore, during this period, North Korean defectors and their status can be understood within the context of the ethnic issue and political confrontation in the divided Korean peninsula.

3.2.2 The Cold War Period: 1960–Mid-1980s

After the Korean War, the Korean peninsula was divided into South and North based on distinct political ideology, and the border was created as a boundary between the two areas. In this respect, crossing the heavy armistice line represents not only moving to another region but also shifting the political identity and was viewed upholding the

superiority of one system over the other. In the Cold War period, as ideological confrontation increased, both South and North used the defectors as a propaganda tool.

There was no official name and or provision for North Korean arrivals to the South in the South Korean government's policy and perception until 1962. In 1962, the government legislated the law, 'Special Relief Act for Patriots and Heroes Who Returned to the State' and the defectors began to be named legally.

Considering the defectors' political value in the South during the Cold War period, the 1962 law providing institutionalised support for the defectors for the first time was established in order to prove the excellence of South's system in comparison to its 'inferior' communist counterpart (Choi, 2018). The government treated and financially assisted the defectors on equal terms with patriots of independence movements. This act described the defectors as 'people who return to South Korea', or *wollnam gwisunja*, and their acts of defection were viewed as sufficient proof of the superiority of the South. In the same vein, the defectors were defined as people – soldiers, officers or executives – who resist the North Korea regime or anti-South Korea puppet groups (S. Kim, 2012). In addition, they were considered good sources of important confidential information and even combat supplies from the North. Due to the government's emphasis on national security and the militaristic aspect of the defectors, the Ministry of Defense directly managed the 1962 law and the defectors.

In the anti-communist context, escape from the North had been politically regarded as almost the same as military service to the South, and the government provided the defectors with special dispensations, such as settlement allowance, job placement, education expenses, and housing. At that time, the South Korean government used the term *gwisunja*, or those who fled North Korea, for the defectors. The term literally means "a person who used to be an enemy, who voluntarily surrenders and defects, and obeys his new country" (Heller, 2011, p. 15). Hence, this name of the defectors can be understood in the political tension of the Cold War era. Moreover, the very definition of the name encapsulates the true perspective of the South Korean government towards the defectors, regardless of the 1962 law, by referring to them as an "enemy" who has turned.

In the 1970s, the term for the defectors, *gwisunja*, changed to heroes who return to the South, or *walnam gwisunyonga*, by expanding the military meaning of crossing the border. The South Korean societal climate was well represented in the 1978 law, the

‘Special Compensation Act for Heroes’. Contrary to the previous law, this act independently signified the value of the defectors by separating them from other types of patriots in the South Korean legal system. More specifically, this act provided for more special benefits than the 1962 law, such as employee incentives, pension, medical treatment, etc., and reward for bringing military secrets and weapons from the North (1978 Article 5-14). The government attempted to guarantee the defectors an average middle-class lifestyle. It was possible to actively support the defectors in various ways since the number of North Korean arrivals was less than 10 annually. The government utilised the defectors as anti-communist tools without much of a financial burden.

During this period, most Korean churches had a pro-government stance which sought to emphasise the ideological confrontation between the South and the North (Jung, 2015; Kang, 2007). They sustained the ideology of anti-communism, and echoed the government policy towards the defectors without theological reflection and consideration. In the 1970s or military dictatorship period, the government controlled the discourse of unification and monopolised it. In this situation, most of the churches too followed the same perspective of the government, and they also regarded the defectors as heroes who are a testament to the superiority of the South Korea system.

However, after the democratic movement against military dictatorship called “May 18 Gwangju People’s uprising” in 1980, progressive ecumenical churches demanded for the abolition of the anti-communist attitude of the regime. The government oppressed democratic movements and groups in the name of national security using the ideology of anti-communism. The ecumenical churches, including democratic groups, realised that the ideology as a political tool in the divided context was being used for justifying the ruling military administration. In order to overcome the division structure and achieve democracy, they started to make an alternative peace discourse that is beyond the exclusivist government’s opinion about North Korea and unification (D. Kim, 2019).

Even though democratic movements by progressive groups arose, the trend of politicisation of the defectors based on anti-communism still continued in the Chun Doo-hwan military regime (1980-1988). The defectors as heroes and/or guardians of freedom played an important role in justifying the dictatorship as well as acts done in the name of national security by the government.

3.2.3 The Post-Cold War and Sunshine Policy⁶ Period: Late-1980s–Early 2000s

As South Korea entered the period of the late-1980s, the South public's perceptions towards North Korean defectors changed from its previous attitudes. The Cold War era had begun to phase out. In addition, the east European countries of the socialist bloc had collapsed and the Soviet Union had also fallen. East and West German reunification took place in 1990. These geopolitical changes led to the dissolution of ideological confrontations and led to an end of the Cold War era.

National Council of Churches in Korea (NCCCK) proposed the vision of a peaceful Korean peninsula, called the 'Declaration of the Churches of Korea on National Reunification and Peace' (the 88 Declaration) on 29 February 1988. The 88 Declaration re-interpreted the negative narratives of the Korean conflict. According to Kim Dong-jin, the Declaration insisted, "the true enemy is not as each, but as the ideologies of the division-system" (D. Kim, 2019, p. 132). Transforming the definition of the enemy, from the North or the South depending on the side of the border one was to the division structure itself, was a significant change in Korean society.

The importance of the 88 Declaration was twofold: A missional task, and a confession of the sins of division and hatred. First, the Declaration understood that overcoming the division structure and building peace in divided Korea are mission work and not separate from the Christian faith.

"We are commanded by God to overcome today's reality of confrontation between our divided people – who share the same blood but who are separated into south and north; and that our mission task is to work for the realisation of unification and peace (Matthew 5:23-24)" (NCCCK, 2000, p. 102).

Second, a confession of the sins of division and hatred is theologically the most important part of the whole Declaration. By using the Bible passage in this part, it urged Korean Christians to recognise the essential teachings of Christianity (D. Kim, 2019).

⁶ The idea of "Sunshine policy" is derived from an Aesop's Fables tale. According to the story, 'Sunshine' defeats the 'Wind' in a contest to see who can make a traveller take off his thick coat. The policy seeks to embrace North Korea by changing the attitude of South Korea towards denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula. Although the policy is criticised for its lack of consideration for national security, the policy has positive outcomes, like integration or unification with the North, engagement, and an atmosphere of peace. See Son, K.Y. (2006). *South Korean engagement policies and North Korea: Identities, norms and the sunshine policy*. Routledge.

Firstly, the Declaration referred to North Koreans as neighbours through Matthew 22:39, “Love your neighbour as yourself”. They confessed that they hated, deceived and murdered their compatriots due to the division. Secondly, according to the Declaration, the Korean churches believed the political ideologies were as absolute as God and therefore worshipped “false idols”. The Declaration used Exodus 20:3-5 and Acts 4:19 to point out how the churches’ action followed political regimes rather than God’s will.

Since the Declaration, South Korean churches, mainly ecumenical churches, initiated the movement for peace and unification and promoted the peace discourse in civil society. Practically, the 88 Declaration, directly or indirectly, affected the government’s declaration (The July 7 Declaration in 1988), and several peace movements between the two Koreas (D. Kim, 2019; J. H. Kim, 2015; Jung, 2015a).

In the same vein, North Korean defectors were newly described in, no longer military, but predominantly in terms of ethnic brethren or compatriots by the government. In 1993, the ‘Act to Protect North Korean Brethren Who Returned to the State’ was legislated. The name of the defectors was changed from ‘heroes’ to ‘compatriots’. The government referred to them as ‘*gwisun bukandongpo*’ in Korean meaning the ‘ethnic North Korean who returned to the South’. They did not abandon the word ‘*gwisun*’ — which encapsulates the idea of one who comes back from the enemy’s country — in the official term, but added the word ‘brethren’ to highlight the idea of one ethnic nation. It indicates that South Korea had begun to treat the defectors more as economic refugees as well as a part of the one ethnic nation while keeping in mind national security and maintaining its anti-communist stance. According to Kwon, North Korean defectors were no longer to have value as heroes or brave defectors but rather were regarded as deprived brothers who lack the ability to sustain life in the South. With this consideration, responsibility for the defectors was shifted from the shoulders of the Ministry of Defense to the Ministry of Health and Welfare.

South Korean government’s perception of the defectors again changed from the mid-1990s. North Korea was having a hard time politically and economically during that period; Kim Il-sung died in 1994, and the heavy flood and famine began in 1995 (WFP, 2019). In particular, economic difficulties and massive food shortages led many to migrate to China and South Korea. Due to economic considerations at least, the number of North Korean arrivals in the South significantly increased during the period 1994-1998 (Chung, 2016; Jung, 2015a; S. Kim, 2010; Son, 2016). Before 1994, less

than 10 North Korean defectors annually migrated to the South. However, in 1994 alone, 54 defectors moved to the South, and the number of defectors almost doubled with every passing year. In order to prevent massive migration from the North, the government enacted the 1997 law, the ‘Act on the Protection and Settlement Support of the Residents Escaping from North Korea’. The legal term formerly used for the defectors was replaced by ‘residents escaping from North Korea’, or *bukanitaljumin*. The name focused on the act of escaping the North rather than on their origin from the enemy nation. It also reflected the government’s view towards the defectors as those entitled to social integration assistance for moving towards the reunification of the two Koreas (Choi, 2018). The defectors were no longer heroes and high-level elites but the most vulnerable members in South Korean society who needed support from the government and the society.

In this period, South Korean society began to understand the defectors as refugees, or *Nanmin* in Korean. Considering the humanitarian crisis in North Korea, many international organisations, including the U.N., recognised the defectors as refugees. During the Kim Dae-jung regime (1998-2002), which implemented the ‘Sunshine Policy’, the term refugee was widely used in the South society to denote the defectors (S. Kim, 2012). Even though the South Korean society continued to have anti-communist sentiments and ideological confrontations with the North, the government officially attempted to understand the defectors from the perspective of humanitarian aid so that they could overcome starvation and financial struggles.

Following the government’s policy, ecumenical parts of the Korean churches supported North Korea and the defectors. However, after the North Korean nuclear issue surfaced in the early-2000s, both the liberal churches and the policy of engagement with North Korea were criticised by conservative groups. Even worse, since South Korean society experienced a financial crisis from 1997, the humanitarian economic assistant project for North Korea was also paused. In this socio-political context, the conservative church groups’ opinion pertaining to the defectors gained power over those of the liberal church groups. More specifically, during the early-2000s, many Christian organisations, which only highlighted the problem of North Korea’s human rights violation through the defectors, were created with the support of the mainline churches (D. Kim, 2012). These organisations and the evangelical churches were identified as one of the representative conservative groups within the

political sector. Furthermore, the ideological confrontations within South Korean society called “South-South conflicts” became more severe because of the actions of these groups including the churches.

3.2.4 The Post-Sunshine Policy Period: Mid-2000s–Present

Although conservative groups denounced Kim Dae-jung’s Sunshine Policy, this policy created a peaceful atmosphere between the two Koreas, and melted away the ideological residues of the Cold War within the South. This trend continued into Roh Moo-hyun’s tenure as his presidential administration adopted a peace-oriented policy towards North Korean defectors by amending the legal term for the defectors.

In 2005, the government introduced a new term, ‘new settlers’, or *saeteomin* indicating North Koreans as people searching for new life and hope (Choi, 2018; Jung, 2015a). The previously used name, ‘residents escaping from North Korea’, contained political connotations of having escaped the ‘enemy’ and left the North for various reasons, many of which were related to communism. In order to remove all political polarities and ideological implications in regard to the North Korean arrivals, the government proposed an alternative neutral name. In addition, the term ‘new settlers’ focuses on settlement and assimilation in South Korean society rather than on any negative political image.

However, in 2007, some North Korean defector groups resisted the official use of the new term. They insisted that the term ‘new settlers’, which excluded political meaning, strongly evoked the purely economic migrant image and overlooked the political reasons behind fleeing the North. Moreover, they argued that the term did not involve the ethnic nation or brethren perspective. In other words, the term can be applied to general migrants from anywhere else in the world (Kang, 2007; Yoon, 2007). They suggested the name ‘free migrants from North Korea’ (*Bukhan Chayu Ijumin* in Korean) that emphasises both the movement for freedom to South Korea and their act against Kim’s regime⁷.

⁷ The defectors’ argument is exactly the same as that of the conservative political parties and the evangelical churches. For the political groups and the churches that seek to criticise and collapse the North regime, eliminating the political aspect of the defectors’ identity means that they cannot be used to achieve political and missional goals. I consider this incident of some defectors resisting the neutral name as one of the cases where the otherisation and polarisation of the defectors through the defectors themselves by the state and the churches. In order to survive in the South, the defectors have to emulate

In this regard, the next conservative Lee Myung-bak administration brought back the name, ‘residents escaping from North Korea’ as a legal term for the defectors in 2008 (Chung, 2016). Furthermore, the term ‘North Korean defector’⁸ (*Talbukja* or *Talbukmin* in Korean) is also concurrently used in South Korean society up till now even though it is not the official name. They are also called ‘North Korean asylum seekers’, or *mangmyungja*, which focuses on their political identity. Hence, this clearly demonstrates that the name of the defectors and their position in the South are interpreted depending on both local and international political situations.

From the mid-2000s, the churches began to use the defectors as a way of mobilising for the proselytisation mission in earnest (Ahn, 2018; Jung, 2015a). More specifically, the churches treated the defectors as a target group for their evangelical missions in order to break North Korea’s regime and communism. As mentioned above, a massive number of North Korean defectors have rapidly entered the South for economic reasons since the mid-1990s. This phenomenon gave the Korean churches a new perspective on their evangelical mission, in particular, with regard to the defectors.

When the churches do mission work amidst North Korean defectors, they adopt an by which they separate the defectors into two groups; defectors in the Sino-North Korean border areas, and those who live in South Korea. The churches send missionaries who are regarded as an “emblem of South Korean churches’ North Korea mission” to the border areas (Jung, 2013, p. 148; Jung, 2015a). In fact, the whole escape process of the defectors, from beginning to end, falls under the purview of South Korean Protestant churches’ mission work towards North Korea. To understand their role in the defectors’ escape, the process can be divided into three phases: (1) At the Sino-North Korean border, (2) In *Hanawon*, at the settlement support centre for the defectors, and (3) In local churches in South Korea to facilitate assimilation.

First, North Koreans attempting to flee the North consider the help of the missionaries an absolute necessity. Missionaries as “core contact zone” provide the secret routes and supply items of daily needs in the border areas. In this situation, the defectors are required to convert to Christianity to receive the care and help (Cho, 2007;

the South’s dominant narrative to form their socio-political identity. In addition, they have to actively participate in anti-communism movements. This otherisation and polarisation by the churches will be examined elaborately in chapter 5.

⁸ It is not clear who created the term North Korean defector or *Talbukja* or when or why. But Lee Min-bok, who is the representative one of the defectors’ groups, insists that the term defector was first used by him in Monthly *Chosun* magazine in 1994. <https://shindonga.donga.com/3/home/13/1839418/1>

Jung, 2013). Second, the influence of the churches continues in the settlement centre. The defectors who arrive in South Korea try to adjust to society as soon as possible. The churches are regarded as one of the many friendly private organisations that work with defectors. Some of the defectors convert to Christianity without any religious conviction but simply to receive the help and benefits that come from being associated with the churches (Choi, 2017; J. G. Kim, 2015, Lee et al., 2015). Third, after the education at *Hanawon*, the defectors inevitably find themselves depending on the evangelical local churches' supports in order to assimilate, adopt capitalist ways, and find their identity in the community.

The attitude of the Korean churches towards the defectors is basically associated with proselytisation as well as humanitarian aid. Even though the churches are concerned about the North Korean defectors' human rights, their intentions tend to be easily lost in their aggressive mission policy and conservative political anti-communism. This turns the defectors into objectified-beings that need to be changed and controlled, both spiritually and socio-politically. In addition, the intertwined theological and political perspective of the churches makes the defectors mere welfare recipients by ignoring their individual subjectivity. It naturally creates a hierarchical relationship between the churches and the defectors, and the defectors become subservient to the logic of the churches.

3.2.5 Analysis and Critique: From Heroes to Migrants

Considering the socio-political context of Korea, the issue of the North Korean arrivals in South Korea is complex and multi-layered. They have been regarded in various ways as evident in the different definitions and names that have existed in society to refer to them depending on domestic and international political environments and inter-Korean relations. It is necessary to analyse and interpret features of the defectors' names and the responses of the churches within the political and theological context of Korea.

3.2.5.1 Evolution of North Korean Defectors' Name

The official name for North Korean defectors in South Korean society was revised in accordance with each administration's political stance.

During the Korean War period, North Koreans, who escape to South Korea to avoid persecution from communists, were called ‘war refugees’ or ‘people who lost/left their home and family’. Contrary to this emphasis on mere geographical relocation during war, ideological factors were inserted in their name after confirmation of the armistice line. In addition, the government began to recognise the defectors as a propaganda tool and controlled them by enacting the special law. In the 1990s, after dramatic changes in both North Korea and at the international level (collapse of the North’s economy and the Soviet Union), the perception of the defectors shifted from political confrontations to nationalism. From the mid-1990s, the number of North Korean defectors rapidly increased due to economic reasons, and their social status shifted from soldiers and/or elite to labour groups. In this situation, they were regarded as the object needing economic support like any other foreign migrants. Even though the defectors were given a depoliticised name, ‘new settlers’, or ‘*saeteomin*’, the North Korean arrivals themselves used the old name again to denote the political reason for their leaving the North. This process has been represented in table 1.

3.2.5.2 Otherisation of the Defectors through Their Changing Names

It is difficult to understand the identity of North Korean defectors separately from the division history of Korea. For this reason, the early naming of defectors always emphasised the South-North conflict situation. For example, as mentioned earlier, in the Korean War period, the disastrous effects of the war on the lives of defectors, such as the loss of family and hometown, are revealed in their names. South Koreans regarded North Korean arrivals in the South within the military context. Whilst some South Korean administrations have attempted to remove the inter-Koreas conflict from the name of the defectors, South-North tensions are still reflected in the names; for example, the defectors are referred to as people who return to the South, heroes, war refugees, and fugitives. The names which articulate the conflict situation defined the North Korean defectors in two ways: on the one hand as heroes who have military secrets of value, and on the other hand, as enemies who should be attacked. The given names highlight the superiority of the South’s political system, and justify the ideological vilification of North Koreans and/or the defectors.

Table 1

The Changing Name of the North Korean Defectors

	The Korean War Period	The Cold War Period	The Post-Cold War And Sunshine Policy Period	The Post-Sunshine Policy Period
Year	1945-1950s	1960-mid-1980s	Late 1980s-Early 2000s	Mid 2000s-Present
Name	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Border-crosser to the South (<i>Wollamin</i>) • War refugee (<i>Pinanmin</i>) • Those who leave home (<i>Silhyangmin</i>) • Divided Families (<i>Isangajok</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People who return to South Korea (<i>Wollnam gwisunja</i>) / 1960s ↓ • Heroes who return to the South (<i>Walnam gwisunyonga</i>) / 1970-1980s 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethnic North Korean who returned to the South (<i>Gwisun bukandongpo</i>) / 1993 ↓ • North Korean defector (<i>Talbukja</i>) / 1994 ↓ • Residents escaping from North Korea (<i>Bukanitaljumin</i>) / 1997 ↓ • North Korean refugee (<i>Bukan nanmin</i>) / Early 2000s 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New settlers (<i>Saeteomin</i>) / 2005 ↓ • Free migrants (<i>Chayu Ijumin</i>) / 2007 ↓ • Residents escaping from North Korea (<i>Bukanitaljumin</i>) / 2008 ↓ • North Korean Migrant (<i>Bukan Iminja</i>) and North Korean asylum seekers (<i>Mangmyungja</i>) / After Mid 2000s
Law	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Relief Act for Patriots and Heroes Who Returned to the State (1962) • Special Compensation Act for Heroes (1978) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act to Protect North Korean Brethren Who Returned to the State (1993) • Act on the Protection and Settlement Support of the Residents Escaping from North Korea (1997) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using the 1997 law by amending until now
Department in Charge	None	The Ministry of Defense	The Ministry of Health and Society → The Ministry of Unification (From 1997)	The Ministry of Unification

Note

- Gothic type represents the government official name of the defectors. There was no official term to denote the defectors between 1945 and 1953. A number of unofficial names were in use during this time that, even though lacking in political considerations, do reflect societal attitude.
- The term ‘North Korean defector’ (*Talbukja* in Korean) is an unofficial one, but it is widely used for North Korean arrivals in South Korea, in the media, and the public sphere since 1994 till date.

The terminologies used for the defectors turned them into victims of direct and structural violence. Barring the name ‘new settler’, all the official names indicate the place of origin of the defectors which is obviously loaded with ideological and political meaning. Due to the uniqueness of North Korea within the inter-Korean relationship, compared to migrants from other regions, North Korean defectors are treated as second-class citizens in the South and often face various physical and verbal abuse. According to S. Kim (2014), many North Korean defectors complain of discrimination and economic difficulties in South Korean society because of their country of origin. They try to break away from the defined identity and political demeanour imposed on them by the name decided for them by the government. For instance, some defectors deny his/her origin as an ethnic Koreans and claim to be Koreans from China to avoid disadvantages. In this way, the name as an ideological mechanism, channels violence towards the defectors by making it difficult for them to stay true to their roots as well as identify as South Koreans.

From the late-1990s, North Korean defectors became for the government people who merely need economic support. The government ceased to consider the social value of the defectors for reunification, and started to name the defectors from a beneficiary perspective. More specifically, with the rapid increase in the number of North Korean migrants to the South for economic reasons, in particular as a result of the famine that hit the North in 1997, as well as political reasons, the South government began to recognise the defectors as economic refugees. Since that period, the South Korean liberal administrations, such as Kim Dae-jung and Roh Moo-hyun’s period, emphasised more on their human rights to live in the South and the financial support required for them to do so. From 1997, the defectors got a new status as ‘residents escaping from North Korea’, or beings who needed care and aid (Kim, 2016).

Even though the name reflects humanitarianism, it also implied the ulterior intention of the government which is to control and manage the defectors for its own interests. In order to sustain social stability after the mass migration of North Koreans escaping from the North to the South, the government financially supported them to adjust and assimilate into the South Korean society. However, the other difficulties of the defectors in the South are underestimated by an inordinate focus on financial aid. For instance, the ideological discrimination, limitation to freedom of expression, and

individual inspection by the National Intelligence Service (NIS) in the name of national security are invariably ignored.

Most of the Korean churches also otherise the defectors within the ideology of anti-communism, and utilise them as the mission tools for North Korea. The defectors cannot break the paradigm of anti-communist sentiments of the churches, and are instead used by the churches to forward such hatred. In other words, the subjectivity of the defectors is demolished and they remain as just propaganda or missional objects in the division structure where hatred for North Korea and/or political groups which support improving relations with the North becomes an imperative.

The analysis of the names of the defectors reveals that the defectors in the South experience otherisation at the hands of the government and society that redefines their identity for them depending on the historical and political context, as well as from the churches whose self-centred approach reduces them to objects for proselytisation.

3.3 Deconstructing the Names: Reconstruction of the Defectors'

Identity

Since the name denotes identity, it is necessary to deconstruct the background and meaning of the North Korean defectors' names in order to newly understand their identity. This process provides insight into recognising them as members of South Korean society by eliminating the distorted lenses through which they are often viewed. This analysis will contribute to reconstruction of the defectors' subjectivity beyond the politicised ontological hues, which is tinted by discrimination based on the dichotomy of the division system.

3.3.1 Dual Identity Frames

In each historical stage, the unique migration experiences and narratives of the defectors have been ignored. Their experiences were misused politically and ideologically. The changing of names exemplifies how the defectors have to play a specific role determined by South Korean society in order to settle and assimilate in society. Furthermore, given names by the government required the defectors to perform as the face of anti-communism intentionally or unintentionally. Some of them also tended to

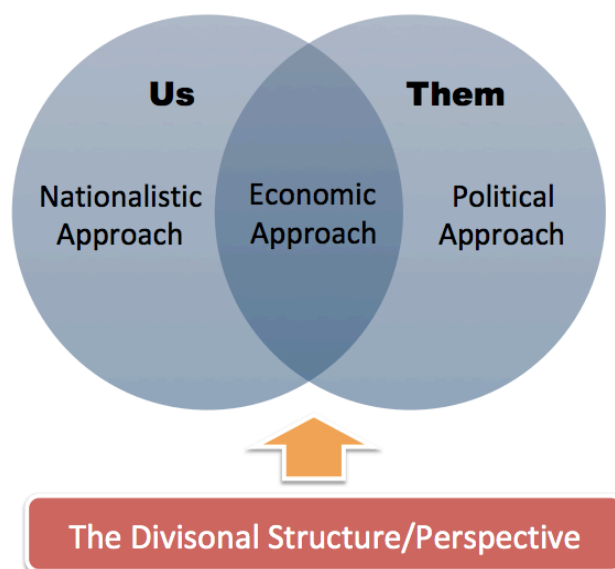
act more aggressively anti-communist to avoid being mistaken as spies or have their country of origin revealed.

According to S. Kim (2012), North Korean defectors exist in South Korean society as a “between being”. She notes that they are members of South Korean society legally, but they face limitations in becoming completely South Korean. As a “between being”, they experience an identity tension between the boundary of ‘us’ and ‘them’.

Since the legal name of the defectors is considered one of the factors that make up his/her identity, the evolution of the names can be understood through their positioning within society. In other words, the defector’s name is reflected in their dual positioning in South Korea. The dual positioning or perspective, which is the background for the changing names, can be elaborated as ‘us’ and ‘them’ socially, and in the ‘nationalistic approach’ and ‘political approach’ ideologically. Both perspectives are rooted in the structure of division while the economic approach falls at the convergence of the nationalistic and the political approaches. Figure 1 demonstrates the analysis of the changing names based on dual positioning.

Figure 1

The Dual Perspective and the Evolving Name of the North Korean Defectors

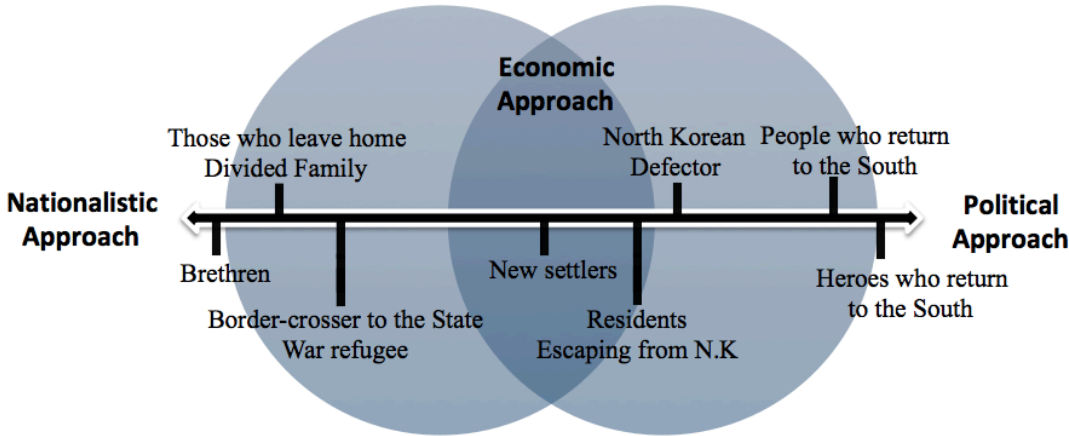


As aforementioned, South Korean society viewed North Korean arrivals through dual lenses. When the ‘Us-oriented discourses’ were predominant in the South, they were defined as brothers and compatriots, or *dongpo* and *hanminjok*. It was definitely linked to nationalism in its emphasis on homogeneity and sharing in one ethnic identity. In particular, after recent political events, such as the April 2018 inter-Korean summit at the Demarcation Line, the North Korean defectors are regarded again as a touchstone and bridge for reconciliation between the two Koreas.

In contrast, the legal names of the defectors have still kept ideological terminologies within the ‘Them-oriented discourse’, such as emphasising the escape from the North, or *bukanital*. These names are given from a political approach, which is related to national security and suspicion towards the defectors. Since the last decade, North Korean arrivals tend to move to the South not only for political and economic considerations but also to seek a better life as general migrants (S. Kim, 2015). For this reason, the defectors are sometimes called ‘migrants’ or ‘settlers’ which has a neutral meaning beyond the dual perspective on North Korean defectors in South Korea. The various names of the defectors can be applied in the spectrum between ‘Us and Them discourse’ and ‘nationalistic and political approach’, as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2

Between ‘Us and Them’: The Position of the Defectors’ Names in Southern Society



In this regard, their given name is influenced by domestic constraints and international political climates, and it is reconstructed and reinterpreted depending on ever-changing socio-political situations without any consistent policy and vision. A more serious problem is that the name imposed upon the defectors limits them in terms of the political climate and inter-Korean relations. The complex and contradictory rhetoric surrounding the ever-changing name of the North Korean defectors defines and controls them as a purely passive other that has to assimilate into the South rather than having the right to define their identity through their own experiences and background.

3.3.2 Dual Exclusion

North Korean defectors experience “dual exclusion” in the South. When the dual exclusion of the defectors is discussed, the philosophical concept of the “*homo sacer*” by the Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben, can be used in describing this situation.

Before this concept is briefly introduced, it must be mentioned that Agamben’s research interests lie in the concentration camps, the very existence of which is a violation of human rights. The “bare life” of the concentration camps where human beings are “stripped of legal status and transformed in relation to the sovereign power” is expressed through the concept of the *homo sacer*. *Homo sacer* (literally a sacred man), a paradoxical concept from Roman Law, indicates a person trapped in what Agamben (1998) calls the “sovereign ban” where the person is tied to the sovereign order through his/her exclusion and “who may be killed and yet not sacrificed” (p. 8). In this sense, *homo sacer*, as a bare life, can be killed by anyone “without committing homicide and without celebrating a sacrifice” (p. 83). They are excluded from the jurisdiction of both human law and divine law. Since the *homo sacer* is excluded from the political community and outside all jurisdictions, he/she is always exposed to violence and threats. This dual exclusion feature of the *homo sacer* can be applied to the lives of North Korean defectors who are the *homo sacer* in South Korean society.

As the defector’s official name emphasises the political region of their origin ‘the North’ and their political action of ‘escape or defection’ itself, the defectors inevitably experience stigma attached to their identity of being from the ‘enemy’ territory. Along with this, North Korean defectors experience dual exclusion, a result of

the exceptional situation created by the division system. On one hand, the defectors face dual exclusion from the law, and on the other hand, the socio-cultural dual exclusion.

The defectors encounter dual exclusion from the law when they first enter South Korea. They have to spend time in mandatory detention at the “North Korean defectors protection centre” which is co-founded by army, police, and NIS. In the protection centre, the defectors are interrogated in order to find the motives behind their escape, for information about North Korea, and most of all to weed out spies. During this process, the defectors have to prove the purity of their intentions and their identity by denying their motherland and ideology. In addition, they cannot contact anyone and are censored all day under the surveillance of the NIS during this period (S. Kim, 2018). From an ethical perspective, they can easily be exposed to human rights abuse because they are under the “state of exception” defined by the sovereign power. For example, in 2013, NIS fabricated an espionage case for political reasons in the protection centre and justified it by using the “exception place” clause (Jeon, 2018).

After finishing the detention, people who pass the interrogation in the centre then move to *Hanawon* for 12 weeks which is an education facility to help in settlement. Similar to the protection centre, their freedom of movement, association, and conscience are restricted although the *Hanawon* aspires to humanitarianism (Southcott, 2011). Even after this they are supervised for 5 years more by the police. In this context, depending on the political regime in power, the defectors, as *homo sacer*, exist in the periphery of the law, excluded from human rights protection as “exceptional beings” but simultaneously controlled by the law in the name of national security.

The defectors become legal South Korean citizens, and they ceaselessly wander to feel connected to the Southern society. In other words, due to socio-cultural exclusion, such as discrimination, economic difficulties, and political oppression, they become “forever strangers” who cannot belong to either the South or the North. Their national origin justifies the state of exception that they are forced to exist in, and it makes it difficult for them to adapt to life in the South. They are treated with contempt as incompetent labour in a free-market economy (McCurry, 2014), and even worse, are considered as “perpetual social outcasts” (Ryall, 2018). According to Haas (2018), half the North Korean defectors have faced harassment in workplaces and from strangers on the streets. They live in the South as *homo sacer* amidst constant antagonism and discrimination from South Koreans. This abysmal situation of the defectors leads to an

increase in the number of double defectors or those who return to North Korea. The defectors speak out about their struggles in the South as second-class citizens. One defector confessed, “even though North Korea is poorer, I felt more free there. Neighbours and people help each other and depend on each other ... My body is in here [the South] but my mind is living in my home [the North]” (Carney, 2017). In this sense, the lives of the defectors in a limbo between exclusion and inclusion at the behest of the sovereign power can be viewed through Agamben’s notion of the “bare life”.

3.3.3 Marginality

3.3.3.1 Types of Marginality

The identity of the defectors has usually been defined by the powerful in South Korea, such as the state and the churches. In particular, the government as the sovereign power sought to control and monitor the defectors whose identity, they defined in paradoxical terms; enemy or spy and ethnic brethren. This contradictory view is reflected in the naming of the defectors and the official policy towards them. This has led the defectors to experience dual exclusion as *homo sacer*.

Usual discourse on the defectors follows from the perspective of the South Korean and government. However, it is through the defectors’ lens as the marginalised that the issue needs to be approached. This shifting of perspective is created within the ‘theology of marginality’.

Lee Jung-young, a Korean-American theologian, contributes to expanding the meaning of marginality in his book *Marginality: The Key to Multicultural Theology* (1995) where he introduces the definition of marginality in three ways: in-between, in-both, and in-beyond.

First of all, following the classical definition of marginality, which is negative, ‘in-between’ marginality is formed when two or several dominant groups start viewing the same group as marginal. The view emerges from the centre and considers the marginal group ‘in-between’. Lee criticises this as a “self-negating definition” which alienates and victimises the marginal persons by considering them as people that belong to none of the dominant groups but as people torn between them.

The in-between becomes 'in-both' by transforming the margin into another core. The persons on the margin – no longer marginal people as defined by the centre – now define themselves based on their own experience as people who share in two or more dominant groups. He called the situation “self-affirming definition of marginality”.

Lastly, Lee attempted to include both negative and positive definitions in order to explain that the experience of being in-between can also be comprehended as a positive experience. In this respect, he suggests a new marginality or the 'in-beyond'. There is no longer a specific centre. Rather, “the core or new centre is also the margin at the same time” in a holistic definition of marginality (Lee, 1995, p. 60). Moreover, he argues that “the conflict between the margin and the centre disappears, and reconciliation between marginality and centrality takes place” (p. 61). From this perspective, which highlights the reconciliatory value of marginality, the identity of North Korean defectors in South Korea can be reinterpreted as marginal people who are beyond the concept of centres and margins in the interaction between the two Koreas.

3.3.3.2 North Korean Defectors as Marginal People

Applying the three definitions of marginality, it becomes clear why the North Korean defectors must be valued for their unique experiences and marginal position instead of forcing acculturation and assimilation upon them.

Following the first definition, as a prevalent perception in South Korean society, the defectors exist 'in between' the South and North (see Figure 3 which has been adapted from Lee's book on marginality to the Korean context). This place of the defectors as marginal people is defined by the dominant South society. The defectors are forced to integrate into South society by denying their experience and identity as North Koreans or have to suffer discrimination and oppression. They are not accepted from either side. Moreover, they are almost invisible to the centre.

Going by the second definition of marginality, the defectors become the new core from which to understand them as beings who are both the South and the North (see Figure 4). Although the defectors still stand in the margin, a transformation in the marginality of the defectors can help them embrace both Koreas without giving up either one. Applying Lee's ideas of marginality to the Korean context, one can understand how the defectors are more than North Koreans because they are South

Korean citizens, and the defectors are more than South Koreans because they are North Koreans. In other words, the defectors encompass both sides.

Figure 3

North Korean Defectors as 'In-between' Being

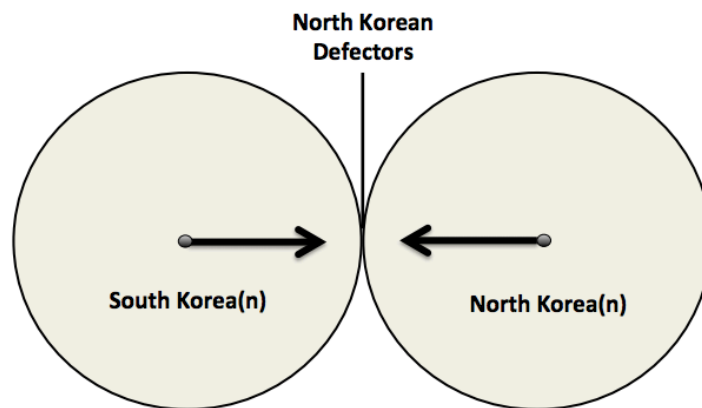
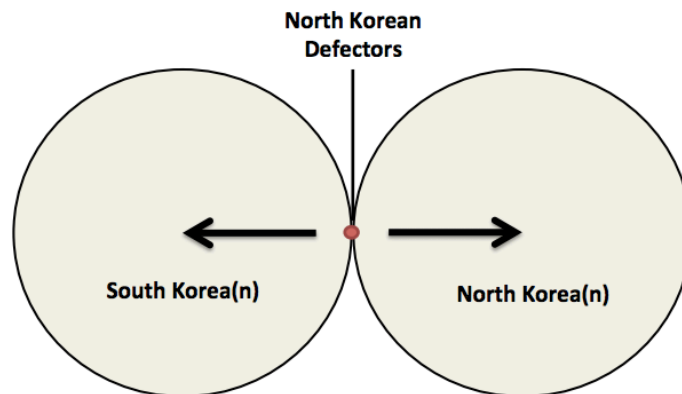


Figure 4

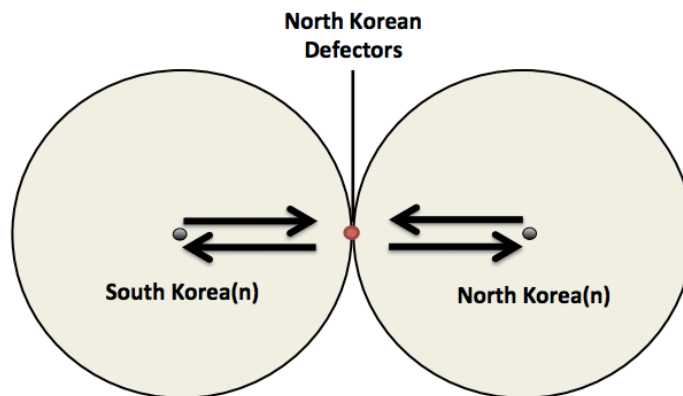
North Korean Defectors as 'In-both' Being



As seen in Figure 5, the defectors are 'in between' and 'in both'. Simultaneously, they are "dependent neither on the dominant group nor on the marginal group, but on both" (Lee, 1995, p. 65). From this definition, centrality no longer has meaning in this dynamic.

Figure 5

North Korean Defectors as 'In-beyond' Being



In fact, numerous policies and laws for North Korean defectors which are enacted by the centre are formulated from the perspective of the dominant South Korean government rather than from the defectors' perspective. They are only treated as passive others who need to be supported financially. The special value and unique experiences of the defectors are neglected, and they are denigrated to the margins of South Korean society. By respecting the marginality of North Korean defectors in the South Korean context, they become a freely expressed and truly liberated group, and can contribute to building peace. Newly defined, the defectors can harmonise two opposite groups. The marginal defectors are a “reconciler and a wounded healer to the two-category system” (p. 63). When the identity of the defectors is re-evaluated, they can transform into a creative nexus that connects the Koreas and inspires reconciliation in the divided Korean peninsula.

3.4 Theological Roots

To concisely summarise the historical reactions of the South Korean Protestant churches in the previous sections, they actively engaged with defectors who escaped North Korea over political and religious reasons during the Cold War period, and welcomed them. In particular, North Korean Christian defectors were supported by South Korean churches, and they became the majority of Korean Christians and built mainline Protestant churches. The churches, which are rooted in anti-communist

theology, supported and impacted the government's anti-communist policy towards North Korea. From the late-1980s, some liberal church groups started to speak a different voice by criticising anti-communism. Yet, evangelical churches still sustained anti-communist perspectives which inadvertently affected their behaviour towards the defectors. Furthermore, from the mid-1990s, the defectors were utilised for the proselytising mission and political interest of the churches.

Basically, the difference in attitude of the different Korean churches towards the defectors is the result of their own theological differences, mostly between conservative/evangelical and progressive/ecumenical church. The dichotomous theological positions both strengthened the divisional system and influenced government policy. Considering the influence of the churches on South Korean society, this section searches the theological and ideological origin of the churches' attitude towards the defectors.

3.4.1 Conservative and Evangelical Church

3.4.1.1 Fundamentalist Theology

In South Korean society, where the evangelical churches are regarded as one of the most influential institutions in matters relating to the defectors' such as economic, spiritual, and emotional, it is necessary to analyse the evangelical fundamentalist perspective.

First of all, fundamentalist theology pursues to biblical inerrancy. Fundamentalists argue that the Bible, as revealed text, has no error and fault, and "every word of the Bible was literally true" (Stott, 2015, p. 19). Park Hyung-ryong, an authority on fundamentalist theology of Korea, also insists on the bible as divinely inspired and accepts its literal interpretation (Ahn, 2006; Kim, 2003; Park, 1960). The fundamentalist churches tend towards anti-intellectualism, and even obscurantism. Following the perspective of the Bible, the fundamentalist churches regard North Korea as Satan and evil by interpreting the "red dragon" metaphor in the Book of Revelation literally to mean North Korea (Lee et al., 1995, p. 19). In this view, the fundamentalist churches understand the defectors as fleeing from the evil regime to the Kingdom of God. The churches attempt to reveal the brutality and inhumanity of the North Korea situation through the testimony of those who defected and were 'saved' by Christianity.

But once the defectors lose their political or missional value, the churches show extreme indifference, and even justify discrimination towards them.

At the beginning of Korean Christianity in the late-19th century, the churches were built by U.S. fundamentalist missionaries. When they spread the Gospel in Korea, they insisted on the separation of church and state, as mentioned in the U.S. Constitution. However, the separation principle in application was distorted by fundamentalist theology in Korea (M. Kim, 2013). The conservative churches avoided any intervention in politics, and followed the government's policies without criticism based on the distorted separation principle by which the church became complicit to even the government's misdeeds in the name of non-interference. Ironically, the churches explicitly opined in favour of the military regime and conservative administration. Moreover, it has often criticised liberal policies and administrations. The distorted separation of the church and the state, as interpreted by fundamentalism, has become an obstacle to the prophetic view the churches can adopt towards the defectors, one of social change and struggle on the side of the oppressed.

This feature of separatist ecclesiology in fundamentalist theology leads to withdrawal from social participation. Churches ignore public issues as unnecessary or marginal over the spread of the gospel since they are "not of this world". The Korean fundamentalist churches only focus on the salvation of the individual soul (Ahn, 1999; Stott, 2015). The churches have understood the vocation of the Church to be simply the proclamation of the Gospel. The defectors are used by the churches as mission-objects in their efforts to collapse Kim's regime and this often fosters ideological conflicts within South Korean society.

Lastly, fundamentalist theology engenders separatism and makes it difficult to have a dialogue with the liberal churches. It hinders ecumenism for pursuing peace among the defectors. Rather, the fundamentalist churches tend to adhere to the conservative political opinion.

In this regard, fundamentalist theology deeply affects the Korean churches and makes them have a somewhat aggressive attitude towards North Korea and the defectors, and a passive one when it comes to concretely helping the latter. In the special societal context of the divided Korea, fundamentalist theology grew even more rooted when it joined anti-communism.

3.4.1.2 Anti-Communist Theology

In the Korean peninsula, during the Cold War era, anti-communism had a synergistic interaction with fundamentalist theology. The conservative Protestant churches of Korea that were influenced by fundamentalist missionaries hostile to Marxism became the representative of the anti-communist fight in South Korean society (Haga, 2012). The anti-communist action of the churches was based on a unique dualism. The dualism, which came from the American Christian fundamentalist Manichaeism, shows that the universe is divided into light and dark or good and evil (Kirby, 2018). With this view, the fundamental churches attempted to fight North Korea, a representative of Satan and all that is bad and diametrically opposite of the 'democratic' America, the upholder of all that is noble and good. From the perspective of fundamentalist theology, the churches regarded communism and North Korea as the 'axis of evil', and they believed anti-communism was being on the 'right' side. Moreover, the anti-communist ideology was turned into an integral part of religious belief in South Korea by the churches (Chung, 2016; Jung, 2015a; Kang, 2007). The fundamentalist churches claimed anti-communism as one of their core values. In addition, these rapidly expanding churches played a significant role in the production of anti-communist sentiments since the 1950s (Shin, 2017). *A History of Korean Christianity: Ten Years of Emancipation* (Kim, 1956 as cited in Yoon, 2015) gives six reasons as to why Korean churches reject communism:

- a) Communism advocates atheism.
- b) Communism has a materialistic view of humanity.
- c) Communism is anti-religion and anti-Christianity.
- d) Communism often leads to violent revolution and dictatorship.
- e) Communism restrains people's liberty and seizes the world.
- f) If communism becomes the first rule in Korea, the Korean peninsula will be governed by the Soviet Union. This is the biggest reason that Korean churches mobilised church members to fight communism. When all Koreans become Christians, communism will naturally be exiled from the country (Yoon, 2015, pp. 62-3).

Anti-communism in religious belief creates hostility and hatred for North Korea and the defectors, intensifying the division system in the name of a ‘righteous fight’. It justifies direct and cultural violence against the defectors, and the defectors are dehumanised to achieve the North Korean mission or for defeating the North. The churches mobilise the defectors to reveal the brutal situation of North Korea in an exaggerated way. Conversely, some defectors who want to avoid being suspected as spies make an anti-communist organisation in the South, and actively spread anti-North Korean sentiments in association with the conservative churches.

During the Korean War period, the aggressive dualism of anti-communist theology contributed to the expansion of Just War theory in society. The churches advocated unification by force and were against the ceasefire agreement protest in 1953 (M. Kim, 2013). In recent times, this attitude does not find expression outside of the churches, but it still remains a part of their ideology and actions against the North.

In conclusion, anti-communist theology has played a role in shaping the narrow perspective of the churches through which they deal with the defectors, and the defectors have degenerated into second-class citizens who are regarded as spies, or else as propaganda tools, or nothing.

3.4.2 Progressive and Ecumenical Church

3.4.2.1 Minjung Theology

Minjung theology or Korean liberation theology inspired progressive churches of Korea to have an alternative perspective towards North Korea, in particular, North Korean defectors.

Minjung theology emerged in the 1970s in order to resist several things: fundamentalist theology, socio-political conditions such as the dictatorship, and systematic injustice in the economic structure (Kim, 2008; Kim, 2011). *Minjung*, in Korean, means the masses or people. *Minjung* theology is literally people’s theology and concerns those who are “oppressed politically, exploited economically, alienated socially, and kept uneducated in cultural and intellectual matters” (Moon, 1985, p. 1). *Minjung* theology pays more attention to the suffering of Korean people and their struggle to achieve emancipation. Suh Nam-dong, who is one of the most well-known *Minjung* theologians, insists that Jesus, as the poor, sick, and oppressed himself spread

the liberation gospel to people. In the same vein, he believes that “liberation is not individual or spiritual but rather communal and political” (Kim, 2011, p. 117). *Minjung* theology considers its task to address Korean people’s sadness, resentment, anguish, and agony, collectively referred to as “*Han*” which is a unique inner dynamic of the Korean (A. Kim, 2018).

From the 1980s, *Minjung* theologians expanded the concept of *minjung* (suffering people) to North Koreans and North Korean defectors (Chung, 2003; Kim & Kim, 2015). Progressive Korean churches began to understand the division system as a structural evil that created conflicts and oppressed the two Korea’s peoples, physically and mentally. Following *Minjung* theology’s theory, the churches believed that it is the first goal to break the division structure. To this end, ecumenical churches began to see North Koreans from an alternative perspective, as compatriots, and not enemies. As noted above, the 88 Declaration, where the churches decided to build peace with North Koreans and the defectors, was inspired by the *Minjung* theology. *Minjung* theology played an important role in Korean society by starting a discussion on the non-governmental sectors’ unification even when the government had monopolised it (A. Kim, 2018; Jung, 2015). Furthermore, it affected the government and society by transforming their attitude.

In the 1990s, the spirit of the emancipation inspired by *Minjung* theology appears as the Jubilee principle in the “Declaration of the Korea National Council of Churches towards the Unification and Peace of the Korean People” (the 1995 Declaration). The idea of Jubilee comes from the biblical practice of setting slaves free and the return of land to the original landholders every 50 years. The Jubilee is the year of liberation and restoration from the structure of oppression. With this meaning of the Jubilee in mind, the NCCCK issued the 1995 Declaration among Korean churches. The year 1995 as the Jubilee year was chosen for its significance, since it was 50 years after both the independence and the division, to try and overcome the ideological confrontations and form the agenda of unification of Korea. The Jubilee movement inspired by *Minjung* theology contributed to the reconciliation between the South and North. In addition, it also helped to acknowledge the defectors who were in need of freedom and emancipation from the South’s socio-political oppression and prejudice.

3.4.2.2 *Just Peace Theology*

In the 1980s, the peace and unification movements of progressive Korean churches were influenced by the World Council of Churches' (WCC) theology, in particular, Just Peace theology. Peace movements of the churches, the first such movements for peace and unification among private sectors in Korea, were rooted in the idea of Just Peace.

The discourse of WCC's Just Peace theology began in response to the tragedy of the two world wars. In order to overcome direct and structural violence, they realised it was necessary to seek Just Peace. Thus, the WCC was established in 1948 (D. Kim, 2013) to pursue Just Peace achieved and upheld through non-violent resistance, the opposite concept of Just War. According to *An Ecumenical Call to Just Peace* (2011), an important document of the WCC, Just Peace is "much more than criteria for protecting people from the unjust use of force; in addition to silencing weapons it embraces social justice, the rule of law, respect for human rights and shared human security" (WCC, 2011, p. 5). Just Peace advocates reconciliation with the enemy without using violence, especially physical force. Regarding the central the non-violent way of Just Peace, WCC defined it:

Just Peace may be comprehended as a collective and dynamic yet grounded process of freeing human beings from fear and want, of overcoming enmity, discrimination and oppression, and of establishing conditions for just relationships that privilege the experience of the most vulnerable and respect the integrity of creation (p. 5).

The notion of WCC's Just Peace has played an important role in creating peace movements of the ecumenical churches. In the representative fruit of the liberal churches of Korea, the 88 Declaration, the churches recognised Just Peace as the basic principle of the churches for unification following the WCC peace theology; "[To] God's Kingdom of justice and peace may come, we Christians must practice the Gospel of peace and reconciliation (Ephesians 2:14-17) by sharing in the life of suffering of our own people" (NCCCK, 2000, p. 105). The ecumenical churches also suggested the promotion of peace education rather than anti-communist education. The efforts of the

churches based on Just Peace initiated a new perception of the defectors and made possible an atmosphere of reconciliation in the Korean peninsula.

Missio Dei is another significant factor that influences the ecumenical churches' peace movements. Considering the role of the churches for Just Peace, *Missio Dei*, as the mission of God, declares that the Church is an instrument of God's work, rather than the main subject of it. *Missio Dei* pursues, not private salvation or aggrandising the Church's numbers, but embodies the spirit of the Kingdom of God, such as justice and peace by participating in social issues. The liberal church groups emphasised *Missio Dei* as a principal mission policy.

In addition, they recognised that the reunification of Korea is an urgent missional task for all Korean churches. Contrary to the North Korea mission of conservative churches, the ecumenical churches have attempted to accept the defectors' value and experiences, and develop their potential from the *Missio Dei* perspective rather than treating them as a mission target who must be converted to Christianity. In the conflict-torn political context of the Korean peninsula, the ecumenical churches paved a new way for peacebuilding by creating and adopting a theology based on Just Peace.

3.4.3 Different Theological Roots, Different Attitudinal Shoots

The theological roots of the Korean Protestant churches have been deeply affected by the political climate of the country, in particular, the view on North Korea. The churches have different perspectives and attitudes towards the defectors according to their politico-theological backgrounds.

Using financial strength and networking, numerous conservative and evangelical churches and organisations in the South have been involved in fulfilling the defectors' needs and upholding their rights. In fact, the works of the churches towards the defectors are regarded as important pillars for sustaining the defectors' lives in the South. Despite the positive role of the churches, the intention and practice of the conservative churches towards the defectors can be criticised in some ways.

Firstly, the conservative churches club together the variety of experiences and individual identities of the defectors in support of their anti-communist discourse. Through the anti-communist theology lens, the defectors are viewed as a single group

saved from the evil regime. Their different voices and understandings of North Korea as their motherland are ignored in lieu of anti-communism. The churches perceive the defectors, not as human beings whose uniqueness must be respected, but as others who must be seized, homogenised, and put into controllable categories. In other words, the special experiences and identities of the defectors that can be channelised to promote peace in the conflict situation become a fragmented story for the political purpose of spreading anti-communism. This perception makes the conservative churches send missionaries to underground churches in the China-North Korea border for fleeing North Koreans.

Secondly, the churches force the defectors to erase cultural habits and ideologies that they bring from the North, intentionally or unintentionally. Fundamentalist theology erects the boundaries between 'us and them' or 'compatriot and enemy'. These distinctions inevitably provoke confrontation and instigate violence. The churches, as the powerful subject, tend to generate an environment where the defectors have to accept Christianity and capitalism. To survive in the South and to get support from the churches, the defectors try to erase their identity that has been formed in the North even though they might disagree with the churches' opinion. This attitude of the churches leads to control of thought and behaviour of the defectors as cultural violence, and results in discrimination and exclusion. Even worse, it has the possibility to lead to physical violence.

Thirdly, the churches usually face the defectors from a functional approach, which involves proselytisation. As aforementioned, financial and emotional support of the defectors by the evangelical churches is associated with conversion to Christianity. Since the churches focus a lot on this purpose, their relationship with the defectors is rooted in the dimension of usefulness rather than spirituality or ethics. In this relationship, the reconciliatory aspect of the defectors' identity to solve the conflict between the South and the North is underestimated or ignored.

Progressive and ecumenical churches interpret the defectors' issues through the peace movement in the national and international arena. NCKK and progressive denominations, as one of the organisations in the public sphere, played a key role in de-escalating inter-Koreas tensions through the 88 Declaration. In this context, the ecumenical churches attempt to comprehensively understand the defectors within the peace discourse. In other words, these churches have been more interested in the

emancipation of the people from the structural violence of the division system rather than any direct concern for defectors' issues. So, although the faith-based peace movement of the ecumenical churches made a positive impact on conflict resolution in Korean society, the churches have not been paying attention to the defectors as a vital group relatively. While the ecumenical churches led and supported the defectors' issues in the late-1980s to 1990s, the evangelical churches, because of their passion for the mission amongst the defectors, continue to have more political and missional influence, and try to win over the defectors by providing them with humanitarian aid.

The other point of criticism is that the ecumenical churches perceive the defectors on an intellectual and cognitive level rather than a practical one. The biggest reason for the passive attitude of the churches towards the defectors is that the churches try to maintain a cordial relationship with the Korean Christian Federation (KCF), which is the official Protestant institute in North Korea and therefore obviously do not support defection. The ecumenical churches seek peaceful reunification by cooperating with the KCF even though sincerity of the federation is doubted. In light of this relationship with the KCF, the ecumenical churches tend to not address the defectors' issues in any practical way but only make declarations in principle (Choi & Jeong, 2017). Thus, it makes the ecumenical churches engage with the defectors' discourse on an elite level rather than at the grassroots.

Both the evangelical and ecumenical churches can be criticised for their perspective and attitude towards the North Korean defectors. More specifically, the Korean churches, as the powerful subject in Korean society, dominate their relationship with the defectors and reduce them to sameness. Evangelical churches attempt to identify the defectors as Christians without consideration for ontological alterity. Ecumenical churches also tend to participate in the defectors' discourse without interaction with them thus ignoring their actual personhood. The two church groups, in their own ways, still adhere to the position of self-centredness when it comes to the defectors who are subjected to generalisations without any regard for individual identities and experiences. This relationship is critiqued through Levinas' philosophy in the next section.

3.5 Critique Based on Levinas' Philosophy: Distancing and Identification

North Korean defectors have been interpreted through multiple lenses in correspondence with different historical periods in South Korean society. Especially, considering the relationships between Korean churches and the defectors, the former has often imposed oppressive religious requirements on the latter even though the churches could be regarded as an important system of support among the defectors.

As previously mentioned, the defectors have a distorted relationship with the churches depending upon the church's theological background as well as the socio-political context. In this sense, the philosophy of Levinas can provide the critical perspective to study this relationship leading to an alternative interpretation of it.

3.5.1 The Otherisation of the Defectors

Following the philosophical lens of Levinas who criticises the ego-centred Western epistemology and ontology, the relationship between the churches and the defectors can be analysed through the philosophical concepts of 'Distancing' and 'Identification'.

3.5.1.1 Distancing: The Relationship of Uni-directionality

North Korean defectors are positioned in South Korean society as the excluded Other. They are identified and seized through the process of "distancing". The idea of distancing is the opposite philosophical concept of Levinas' "proximity". Proximity, as represented through the face of the Other, emphasises the closeness of distance between the subject and the Other. The distance is negligible, so the suffering of the Other is directly conveyed to the subject. Levinas (2000) writes,

Proximity, immediacy, is to enjoy and to suffer by the other. But I can enjoy and suffer by the other only because I am-for-the-other, am signification, because the contact with skin is still a proximity of a face, a responsibility, an obsession with the other, being-one-for-the-other (p. 90).

Proximity creates responsibility towards the Other which comes prior to the freedom of the subject. On the other hand, distancing creates the gap between the subject and the Other. In the process of distancing, the decision and/or consciousness of the subject assumes priority is the creation of the distance. The subject attempts to understand the Other in its own way and discern commonalities or differences. The subject objectifies the Other through distancing.

Significant philosophical concepts of Husserl and Heidegger, such as *epoché*, intentionality, Dasein, to name a few, all started from the concept of this self-centred distancing, even though they attempted to overcome this ontological limitation. More specifically, the exterior of the 'I', which is defined by the subject, can only exist and be recognised through the consciousness of 'I'. The Other is reduced and made subservient to the subject, and the Being is always captured in the existent. The Other is understood and treated by the consciousness where the subject has dominance.

When the subject and the Other of philosophical notions is extended to the relationship between the churches and the defectors, it can be observed that the mechanism of Western traditional philosophy, which ignored the otherness of the Other, is the main principle in this relationship. The most important feature of the distancing with regard to the defectors is that the churches, as the subject, control and seize the defectors as the Other. More specifically, the defectors cannot be the subject or even participate in the discussions regarding their own fates within this relationship. They have always been viewed as beings that need the help of the churches. In return for the support, they must follow the logic of the churches in order to live in the South.

When the idea of distancing is extended to the society, the changing names of the defectors can be seen as one of the many ways in which the defectors are oppressed and distanced from the mainstream. After the Korean War, the defectors have been called various official and unofficial names in the South that reflect the hegemony of the government and its political purpose regardless of the defectors' opinion. The defectors are not considered the 'subject' or equals who can possibly suggest and share in the political discourse about the North. On the contrary, they have to prove their political conversion from communism to a liberal democracy through constant confession and action, such as participation in anti-communist movements.

Within society, the relationship between the defectors and the churches is not a two-way interaction but is characterised by one-way dominance. While Levinas seeks to

establish asymmetrical relationships that highlight the Other rather than the 'I', the relationship of the defectors with the churches is not even a symmetrical one, i.e., where there is mutual profiting and exchange. Furthermore, the distancing of the defectors by the subject leads to them being identified as the other that triggers discrimination in the name of the philosophy of sameness.

3.5.1.2 Identification: The Relationship of Exclusion and Assimilation

The subject, who creates distance between him/herself and the Other, begins to reduce the Other to sameness. The subject constitutes the Other being as an alter ego. The Other can only exist when the subject begins to figure out the Other through his/her frame of consciousness. The Other is regarded as an object which has to be captured by the subject. The subject treats the Other by instrumental cognition and the Other becomes 'it' rather than an infinite being. The distance between the subject and the Other is used to justify discrimination and oppression towards the Other. When this ontological limitation meets totalitarianism, it leads inevitably "to imperialist domination and to tyranny" (Levinas, 2003b, p. 47). This epistemological structure, which expands self-cognition towards the Other, plays a key role in North Korean defectors' discourse in South Korean society in two ways: exclusion and/or assimilation.

In a self-centred Western philosophical system, the Other has been regarded as an obstacle. The otherness of the Other has to be controlled in order to preserve the freedom of the subject. This philosophical cognition operates in Korean society as a part of the social structure towards the defectors. The government, as the subject with power, understands the defectors as suspicious and threatening. The government considers that the otherness of the defectors should be captured or eliminated and uses national security as a reason to justify its prejudices. The defectors face difficulty in finding a place in society if they refuse to obliterate their own otherness and reduce themselves to sameness.

According to Levinas, the philosophy of sameness contains the pre-original violence and it definitely leads to totalising philosophy which tends to exhibit anti-humanist tendencies and indifference to the Other. The exclusion of the defectors reaches culmination when it encounters anti-communism and concerns over national

security. In the relationship between the subject and the Other, the defectors suffer structural/cultural violence, such as surveillance and human rights abuse in the name of national security, as well as random physical violence. In this context, the defectors attempt to assimilate themselves into the South Korean society by denying their own subjectivity, such as experience, political background, and identity as North Koreans. In an economic way, they try to adapt to the capitalist system as low-paid workers. In a political way, they become leaders of anti-communist movements by exaggeratedly revealing the brutal North Korean situation. Only when the defectors fit into the limited frame drawn up by South Korean society for them, can they become members of South Korean society. Unfortunately, the problematic situation is that even if they are assimilated in the South, they still exist as second-class citizens within the cultural context.

The mechanism of exclusion and assimilation can be found in Korean churches too. With the modern theological background of Korean churches, the churches consider the otherness of the defectors as demonic and them as beings that need to be converted to Christianity. Although the support of the evangelical churches towards the defectors deserves to be recognised, they try to understand the defectors from missionary perspectives. Ecumenical churches also regard the defectors as the Other who need help but still maintain their own dominant subjectivity within the relationship. There is no ethical interaction between them and no responsibility for the defectors. The defectors as the Other are seized and captured by the subject who wants to expand self-centred power.

According to Levinas, the fundamental problem of ontology as a philosophy of domination is the self-centred subjectivity that pursues totalitarianism. Considering the problematic nature of modern philosophical structure in the engagement of the churches with the defectors, the need for ethical subjectivity as an alternative, *as per* Levinas' insights, is of utmost importance.

3.5.2 Transforming to the Ethical Subjectivity of the Churches

3.5.2.1 Recognising the Otherness of the Other

In the philosophical perspective of Levinas, the relationship between the Korean churches and the North Korean defectors is a hierarchical structure where the subject

reduces the Other into his/her consciousness. The root of the relationship is the emphasis on subjectivity that relies on authority of the self and sameness. According to Levinas, the self-centred subjectivity contributes to massive violence and repression of the Other without consideration for the otherness of the Other. Korean churches, as the powerful subject that has self-centred subjectivity, have defined and segregated the defectors who are different, and therefore the Other, following the logic of modern Western philosophy. Furthermore, the defectors gets even more othered in the context of national homogeneous discourse and anti-communism. As a result, the defectors become one of the most vulnerable people in both economic and socio-political aspects.

To overcome the distorted relationship with the defectors, the transformation of the subjectivity of the churches is the first task. For Levinas, the ethical subject can be constructed through the transformation of the subjectivity of the subject from the self-centred perspective to Other-centeredness. But the most important thing is that the subject *per se* cannot change and replace him/herself with the ethical one. The subject is not self-sufficient to build an ethical identity. Instead, for Levinas, the subject can only find its ethical identity by the intervention of the Other. It means that the subjectivity of the subject is determined by not the subject but the infinite Other. Levinas' ethical subject, as a totally passive being, is based on heteronomy rather autonomy that is emphasised in Western philosophy. Levinas notes, "My ethical relation of love of the other stems from the fact that the self cannot survive by itself alone, cannot find meaning within its own being-in-the-world, within the ontology of sameness" (Kearney & Levinas, 1984, p. 60). In other words, the subject becomes an authentic subject when he/she derives its subjectivity from the otherness of the Other. It is evidence of the asymmetrical relationship between the subject and the Other, emphasising alterity.

Applying this philosophical insight on to the Korean context, the churches should attempt to comprehend the defectors, who are the absolute Other, within a non-reciprocal relationship rather than seek equality which can totalise the Other by translating into a desire for sameness. Through this paradoxical relationship, the churches can transform into the ethical subject, and the defectors, as the transcendental Other in the face of the weak and poor, can become an active subject.

Hence, in order to move from oppressive subjectivity to ethical subjectivity, the otherness of the defectors should be newly recognised. Even though the defectors are regarded as the weakest in South Korean society, Levinas' philosophy shows, through

alterity, that they too can contribute to the prophetic vision of the peaceful Korean peninsula. The defectors blur the division boundaries between the North and the South by crossing the border. Considering the strictly prohibited interaction between the two Koreas, the defectors can provide recent information about the North to the South and they become a bridge to promote peace. However, a careful consideration is required as the defectors should not be treated as a tool to imply the South-centric political idea on the peaceful peninsula. The defectors as a peacebuilder have to be respected in their different ideas and opinions beyond the unified thinking.

3.5.2.2 *Towards the Ethical Subjectivity*

Levinas seeks the reconstruction of the subject as an ethical one. The newly interpreted subjectivity that comes from the ethical relationship between the subject and the Other opens the possibility for responding to the Other's summons in an ethical and practical way.

In attempting to conceive their ethical subjectivity, the churches can interpret their innate ethical tendencies in the light of Levinas' suggestions. Levinas proposes his philosophical concept of 'responsibility' to achieve ethical subjectivity. This is not a metaphysical way, but a concrete way. The churches can transform into the ethical subject by following the precepts of Levinas' philosophy.

As mentioned in the theoretical framework, for Levinas, responsibility is the foremost thing for the subject, more than any consciousness or action. Levinas (2000) argues,

Responsibility for the Other is not an accident that happens to a subject, but precedes essence in it, has not awaited freedom, in which a commitment to another would have been made. I have not done anything and I have always been under accusation – persecuted. The *ipseity*, in the passivity without *arche* characteristic of identity, is hostage. The word I means here I am, answering for everything and for everyone (p. 114).

Levinas notes that the 'I' has a responsibility towards the Other through, not a voluntary decision, but as a being who is elected by the Other. The 'I' who is being held hostage by the Other has no choice but to respond to the infinite Other with a, "Here I am".

Paradoxically, the subject finds ultimate freedom, not based on autonomy but heteronomy. Considering that the essential meaning of the "subject" is derived from "I am subjection to the Other" (Levinas, 1995a, p. 98), the subject finds oneself as the passive subject through the asymmetrical relationship. This is an echo of the New Testament verse; "Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all" (Mark 10:43-44).

The Korean churches should try to achieve epistemological transformation by following Levinas' philosophical insights as well as biblical injunctions. More concretely, the churches have to attempt to respond to the summons of the defectors by becoming the 'servant' rather than the high-position subject who gives charity to the defectors in a top-down way. Furthermore, "being the Church", the Church can realise its own essence by acknowledging and accepting the otherness of the defectors beyond the cliché of theological definition. In this context, the Korean churches can find the identity and purpose of being by practising responsibility towards the defectors. The responsibility is not confined to missional work alone but support for universal values; for examples, it can champion humanitarian aid and movements for eliminating several forms of discriminations rampant in society.

Additionally, the churches can seek the "mystical union" which pursues the conjugation of the subject and the Other beyond their separate lines (U. Kim, 2012). By doing self-emptying (*kenosis*), the churches can become incarnate among the defectors and can practice the ethical imperative of the Bible, "Love your neighbour as yourself". Hence, the responsibility of the churches, theologically, manifests in the abandonment of their power and self-centred subjectivity.

3.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, the othering of North Korean defectors and the responses of the churches have been analysed based on the evolution of the names that Korean society has used for the defectors. This analysis has three key features.

First, North Korean defectors have always been considered as the others who should be controlled and oppressed by the law or the system. The defectors have been conceptualised in correspondence with the historical changes in Korean society. The names used, varied and fluctuating, range from hero to spy.

Second, the defectors mainly have been considered in South Korean society as ‘exchangeable value’, in particular, in a political way (S. Kim, 2018). Since the military regime from the 1960s to 1980s, the defectors have been made use of as propaganda tools for the purposes of the government and conservative church groups. They are usually utilised in a way that reveals the violation of human rights in North Korea and the brutality of Kim’s dictatorship. Depending on their political value at a given time, the defectors have experienced reward or exclusion.

Third, Korean churches put inordinate focus on the proselytisation of the defectors. Although the churches take efforts to support the defectors in many ways, such as financial aid and emotional support, they treat them as mere mission targets or objects that need help. The historical responses of the churches show the limitations to most of the Korean churches that collaborated with the government’s perspective towards North Korea without any theological consideration by blindly supporting anti-communism. In addition, the attitude of the churches is split in two, conservative/evangelical and progressive/ecumenical, depending on the political and theological stance of the churches. Such contradictory responses towards North Korea and the defectors provoke the ‘South-South conflict’ within the churches and Southern society. This situation inevitably justifies and creates hate-speech and discrimination towards the defectors through the churches’ actions.

Through the historical context that has been discussed in this chapter, it has become evident that the defectors are treated as second-class citizens, and still otherised in South Korea. Even worse, the churches encourage the state’s assimilation policy and anti-communism to use the defectors to serve their own interests by producing theological mechanisms and narratives.

Narrowing down to the relationship between the churches and the defectors, the next chapter will analyse how the churches imitate and develop the logic of the government’s structure of identifying and categorising the defectors. To do so, the churches will be divided by denomination and their features elaborated upon.

CHAPTER FOUR. THE OTHER AND THE SUBJECT: ANALYSIS OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE DEFECTORS AND THE CHURCHES

4.1 Introduction

Modern western philosophy understands and interprets exterior beings from a self-centred perspective. The Other is inevitably assimilated into the self's consciousness and its alterity ignored, including its uniqueness and its otherness. Even though the self attempts to establish a relationship with the others, the intentional others are totalised into the sameness of the Same. Contrary to this idea, Levinas emphasises the subjectivity of the subject/self based on its relationship with the Other. More precisely, the subjectivity of the subject forms and transforms only as it encounters the face of the Other. The relationship is based on the response to the demands of the Other, and creates an ethical responsibility towards the Other. In light of Levinas' thoughts, the relationship between the subject and the Other should be established, not by ontological intentionality but through the gaze of the Other.

Korean Protestant churches have encountered the defectors since the beginning when they started migrating to the South after national division. In Levinas' perspective, however, the churches still adhere to the ontological structure in their relationship with the defectors. The churches contribute not only financially to the defectors' welfare but also help them settle down in the South through emotionally and socially supporting them in the community. Although it is difficult to deny their positive role, the engagement of the churches with the defectors is complicated by the interplay of many factors. In other words, as the previous chapter mentioned, the churches have been playing a role in the lives of the defectors, not only as an active group providing humanitarian aid to the defectors, but also as an empowered conservative group that uses the defectors to criticise the North's regime. In this sense, depending on their politico-theological context, the churches have used their relationship with the defectors for their own sake.

The Protestant churches are roughly divided into two factions, conservative/evangelical and progressive/ecumenical church. But specifically, the churches are split into various denominations according to their theological and political orientations. In the Korean context, the North Korean issues and the defectors are regarded as some of the main causes of the rift between the churches. So, this is a vital section that examines the response of each denomination towards the defectors in order to analyse the relationship that each denomination shares with the defectors.

In this chapter, five major Protestant denominations, which have an influence on South Korean society, have been selected. Their political and theological ideologies are explored through their actions, statements, and documents. This comparative analysis of the five denominations' opinions studies how the churches, depending on their respective orientations, treat the defectors and how that colours the relationship the churches have with them. The attitude of each denomination towards the defectors is examined by finding the commonalities and the differences, and in particular, the relationships are categorised according to their features. Lastly, the relationship between the churches and the defectors is analysed through the philosophy of Levinas.

4.2 The Korean Protestant Churches and the North Korean Issue

4.2.1 Context to the Split between the Korean Protestant Churches

It is necessary to briefly explore the historical context that has led to division within the Korean Protestant churches in order to understand the reasons behind their different opinions about peace, unification, and North Korean defector's issues.

The schism within Korean churches is closely related to the division of the Korean peninsula. In other words, the Korean Protestant plurality stems from, not only theological diversity, but also the same contemporary historical experience (Kim & Kim, 2014). During the period from the 1930s to 1950s, the Korean peninsula was the arena of the struggle for hegemony of world powers, such as Japan, U.S., China, and the Soviet Union. At that time, the Korean churches developed Korean theology which was inevitably influenced by historical events — colonisation and liberation from Japan, and the Korean War. In this context, the churches divided into several denominations over theological and political differences.

The causes of the splits between the Protestant churches, especially Presbyterian churches, can be elaborated under three heads: (1) Resistance to Shrine worship; (2) Different perspectives on the Bible; and (3) The issue of affiliation to the WCC (Lim, 2011).

Firstly, the argument over Shrine worship caused rifts within the Korean Protestant churches. In the colonial period, Japan forced the Korean people into Shrine worship. However, many churches and missionary schools opposed the worship since it was diametrically opposite to Christianity doctrine. Most churches could not resist the oppression of Japan and accepted the worship. The people at the helm of the resistance, such as Reverends Han Sang-dong and Joo Nam-sun, were imprisoned. After liberation from Japan in 1945, Reverends Han and Joo were released and they decided to establish the 'pure faith' and conservative Presbyterian seminary called Koryeo theological seminary against liberal theology and theological leftism (Kim & Kim, 2014). However, when the Presbyterian assembly refused to recognise this seminary, they started a new denomination known as Koshin Presbyterian Church in Korea in 1952.

Secondly, confrontation between fundamentalist and progressive interpretations of the Bible contributed to the split. When the Pyongyang seminary, which upheld fundamentalist and conservative theology, was forced to close down by Japan in 1938, some church leaders built the Chosun seminary based on liberal and progressive theology in 1940. In 1947, 51 students who transferred from Pyongyang seminary to Chosun seminary complained to the Presbyterian General Assembly about the teachings of Kim Jae-joon. In 1952, the assembly decided to cancel the approval of the seminary and reject Dr. Kim because apparently, the seminary and Dr. Kim had denied the doctrine of verbal inspiration and biblical inerrancy. People who supported progressive theology established a new denomination called Kijang (Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea) in 1953 (Kim, 2010).

Thirdly, the relationship with the WCC produced division in mainline churches. In 1959, the Presbyterian Church of Korea, which had experienced two earlier divisions into Koshin and Kijang, was split in two again. At the 44th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Daejeon, some people raised issue with the WCC. They complained about the fact that the WCC was too inclined towards pluralistic theology and was pro-communism. In the context of anti-communist sentiment in post-War Korea, association with the WCC was easily regarded as being pro-North Korea. The

Presbyterian Church again split into two denominations: One is Tonghap (Presbyterian Church of Korea) that supports association with the WCC, and the other one is Hapdong (Presbyterian Church in Korea) that supports joining the ultra-conservative organisation called National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) (S. Hong, 2015). In 1955, the Korean Evangelical Holiness churches also divided into Kiseong and Yesong denominations on account of controversy over joining international Christian organisations (Kim & Kim 2014).

Taking this background into consideration, the Korean churches cover a wide spectrum of political and theological beliefs, and are split into denominations based on them. According to Kim and Kim (2014), the Korean Protestant churches can be identified in five strands as per their ideological tendencies. The first group, Koshin and the Baptists, are rooted in fundamentalism which is influenced by the U.S. The second group consists of the conservative evangelists, including Hapdong and the Holiness churches. The third involves mainstream evangelicalism, represented by Tonghap and the Methodists. They follow a conservative theology but are also open to the ecumenical movement. Fourth are the progressive churches such as Kijang, and the final group comprises of those that subscribe to liberal existential thought represented mainly by Methodist intellectuals.

4.2.2. The Peace Movement among the Five Protestant Denominations for Unification

The differences between the Korean Protestant churches makes the churches have different understandings of the defectors based on their own ideologies. To comprehend how each denomination sustains a relationship with the defectors, the first task is to examine their attitude towards the peace and unification discourse in the Korean conflict context which is regarded as one of the main factors in their relationship with the defectors.

4.2.2.1 Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea (Kijang, PROK)

Kijang led the peace and unification discourse of the Korean peninsula in civil society as well as within Korean Christianity from the 1970s. There are several features of Kijang's peace movements. Firstly, Kijang recognises the unification issue as one of the

foremost tasks of the churches. In the 57th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in 1972, they issued the 'Statement of the Confession of Faith' declaring the problematic division of the Korean peninsula as the hardship of the nation. In addition, in 1978, they declared that preparing for the unification is the vital mission of the churches and denied forced unification mentioned in the 'Mission Policy'. In the 68th General Assembly (1983), Kijang founded the Unification Research Committee, and declared their missional goal as, not proselytisation, but peaceful unification.

Secondly, Kijang supported the democratisation movement as a theological response to the unification movement. During the period of the 1980s, the movement for democracy and human rights for the working class picked momentum in the South against the dictatorial government. Kijang realised that the issue of injustices against the working class and the cruel dictatorship are both rooted in the structural evil of the division. In this context, destroying the division structure was regarded as the only way to democratisation. They also attempted to link the unification movement with the movement for human rights and democracy. Kijang criticised the essential cause of the conflict situation in South Korean society and suggested overcoming the division system in the resolution of the 69th General Assembly in 1984:

Peace in this land is under significant threat. The biggest societal reasons for the threat are the division of the peninsula and the divide within the Korean ethnic fabric. The division of the Korean peninsula brought the tragedy of the Korean War. The threat of nuclear war is in front of us. The dictatorial regime, which uses the conflicts between South and North as a ruling tool in the name of the division, was established. Hence, we believe that the movement for overcoming the division against the nuclear war, against the violence of the dictatorship, and against the inhumanity of poverty is the specific practice of faith (Kwon, 2000, p. 120).

Thirdly, although the South government severely controls the unification movements at the civil society level, Kijang attempts to extend the unification discourse to the civil society. Kijang is based on *Minjung* Theology (Korean liberation theology). So, Kijang is interested in cooperating with *Minjung* (people) as the as main participants in the

unification discourse. According to “the Fifth Document” (1987), Kijang claimed that the prerogative of overcoming the division system does not belong to the ruling class or elite but should be achieved through gathering the wisdom of the people in a peaceful way. The denomination also set the three principles — reconciliation, peace, and independence — of the people’s unification movement in the 1998 Document of National Unification.

Lastly, Kijang understands that the Korean peace process is not only a narrow regional issue but one with international ramifications. Through the Sixth Document (2003), Kijang sought to cooperate with numerous world church organisations in order to promote peace, both in Korea and the world. In particular, Kijang actively engages with WCC for instituting faith-based peaceful movements. They also have been holding prayer meetings every Monday from 2013 for peace as a faith activity. Its model stems from the prayer meetings of the Nikolai Church in Leipzig that helped bring down the Berlin Wall. Through weekly prayer, Kijang attempts to build peace in Korea and the world.

4.2.2.2 The Korean Methodist Church (KMC)

The mission policy of the Methodist Church towards North Korea is basically based on the ‘7.4 South and North Korea Joint Statement’ in 1972. By accepting the three principles for reunification as mentioned in the statement, which are independence, peace, and national unity, KMC attempts to maintain the consistency of their policies regardless of historical and political situation (Kwon, 2000). The Seobu (Western) Conference, which was originally located in the region that became North Korea after the division, was turned into the centre for KMC’s mission of North Korean activities from 1994. The Seobu Conference has three principles for the peaceful unification of Korea: (1) Mind-unification or unity among people for reconciliation; (2) Movement for mind-unification through sharing and cultural exchange; and (3) Repentance for past resentments to make such sharing possible (Eun, 1998). When the Conference tries to build a peaceful unification movement, they adopt a two-track policy; firstly, they support the peace movement of NCKK by having a relationship with the ‘Korean Christian Federation’ (KCF) of North Korea, and secondly, they take efforts to restore the church in North Korea, an initiative usually taken by evangelical churches.

In its efforts for peaceful reunification, the KMC joins the peace movement of NCCCK. They draw a vision of reunified Korea and try to keep it separate from both left-wing and right-wing ideologies since the left versus right debate is the very cause of the division. The group seeks demilitarisation and dialogue to break the tension of the Cold War by restoring the relationship with North Korean churches. More specifically, whilst most of the conservative churches deny the public church of North Korea since it exists under the communist regime, KMC accepts the church as the official route for reunification.

They make an effort to aid North Korea in order to promote peace with the KCF in several ways. For instance, from 2001, KMC received South Korean government's approval, as one of the South-North cooperation project organisers. They have supported the Pyongyang Theological Seminary, which is the official educational institution for the study of theology, through the Seobu Conference. In addition, the denomination, as the foremost aid group among Korean churches, annually supplies significant amounts of wheat flour and milk powder to North Korea. During the period (the mid-1990s) of the economic crisis in North Korea, also known as the March of Suffering, KMC organised the 'One Person One Life movement' (1997). Korean church members sent the money saved from a meal that they each skipped to support North Koreans (Lee, 2009). This movement is considered one of the earliest aid projects where the civil society, encouraged by the Korean churches, joined in to help out with a social cause.

The second track of KMC's policy for reunification is that it helps rebuild churches in North Korea. By following the evangelical mission project, KMC tries to re-establish churches in North Korea. In particular, they plan to build 388 churches in 22 districts of the North (M. Kim, 2017), but on the principle that none of these churches will belong to a particular denomination. They also spread the gospel at the mission centres located on the border between North Korea and China (Lee, 2009). Many missionaries belonging to KMC teach the Bible, and meet North Korean defectors in order to support them, and convert them to Christianity.

KMC introduces their mission policy for North Korea as the 'Small Road Principle'. They consider that reunification is possible through the collective efforts of the church, NGO, and government, and their small contributions will finally all lead to

the big road of reunification (D. Kim, 2002). KMC expects to achieve unification of the peninsula both in a societal and missional way.

4.2.2.3 Presbyterian Church of Korea (Tonghap, PCK)

Much like the Methodists, Tonghap, as the mainline church group in South Korea, also sticks to the two-track approach towards North Korea. Since the mission committee for North Korea was established in 1971, they have tried to both promote peace movements and re-establish churches in North Korea. For instance, in order to heal the strained relationships between the South and North, Tonghap has constantly supported humanitarian aid through the official North Korean organisation (KCF) from the mid-1990s. Simultaneously, they have a passion for building churches in North Korea. In 2005, the association of four presbyteries, which were originally located in the North, rebuilt the ‘Pyongyang First Church’ for the first time after division. In addition, Tonghap financially supported the renovation of the Bongsu Church which was the first church to be built in North Korea after the Korean War (PCK, 2016, p. 639).

During the period of the 1980s, when there was an upsurge of reunification movements in the churches, Tonghap declared the ‘PCK Confession of Faith’ in 1986. They set the ecclesiastical stand on unification issues along the lines of the Westminster Confession and the Apostles’ Creed. In the PCK Confession, they insisted, “It is not by God’s will that the division of Korean peninsula happened. We believe God wants to unify us ... We have to accomplish the mission of reunification which reconciles the nation on the ground of faith and freedom, and attempts to establish peace in the land in imitation of the Peace of Christ” (PCK Constitution, 2015).

In the 2000s, amidst sentiments for reconciliation between the two Koreas, Tonghap developed its own official perspective towards North Korea in 89th General Assembly of 2004. They sought to integrate evangelicalism with ecumenism in what they called the ‘holistic mission’. Tonghap regards the gospel of Jesus as the gospel of peace. They believe that the gospel can play a significant role in, not only personal salvation, but also make possible a peaceful reunification in the divided Korean context. By recognising the KCF as the official route to restoring relationships with North Korean churches, Tonghap tries to spread the gospel for salvation of the soul and peace to the North.

In 2015, after 70 years of the division, Tonghap proposed a specific guide for the North Korean mission and peaceful reunification. The most significant thing Tonghap suggested is a partnership model with North Korea called the ‘Diakonia Theology’. More specifically, they pursue rebuilding relationships, not as hierarchies, but as those of interdependence by restoring rapport. They established the principle of proselytisation that is rooted in the context of peaceful reunification.

4.2.2.4 Presbyterian Church in Korea (Hapdong)

Hapdong, as the biggest evangelical denomination in Korea, has the unification at its core but only from a missional perspective so that it can rebuild churches in North Korea. They have started to take a stand on North Korean issues at the denominational level since the 1990s. Hapdong’s perspective towards North Korea has changed considerably over time.

During the 1990s, Hapdong was passionate about spreading the Gospel among North Koreans in the name of the national evangelical movement. They established the Committee for re-establishing Churches in North Korea, and set the goal to build 610 churches after reunification (D. Kim, 2002). At that time, they refused to acknowledge the KCF as the official Christian representative in North Korea. Rather, Hapdong tried to contact the underground and private churches in people’s houses by regarding them as the true Christians groups. They supported the underground churches at the border between China and the North in order to grow missionaries who could be sent to North Korea. The denomination desired to directly contact North Koreans through, not the KCF, but their own missionary network of underground churches.

However, when the restive Korean peninsula suddenly shifted towards peace through the 15 June Joint Declaration in 2000, Hapdong also turned the direction of its mission policy (Yoon, 2015). First of all, in 2001, they changed the committee’s official name to the Committee for Exchange and Cooperation of South-North Church. They decided not to highlight the strategy of rebuilding churches in the North in their name. Furthermore, the denomination started to accept the KCF as a partner despite its controversial nature. After peace meeting between South-North church leaders in July 2002 at Tozanso, Japan, Hapdong built the Bongsu bread factory in Pyeongyang in

October 2002 through the KCF (Lee, 2002). Since the 2000s, they have been financially supporting North Korea in the dimension of humanitarian aid through the KCF.

In 2014, Hapdong attempted another leap change in its attitude towards North Korea and more broadly, the unification. They revised the committee's name again as the Committee for Unification Preparation in the 99th General Assembly of Hapdong (Lee, 2014). The committee's name changing is a significant alteration and shows that Hapdong tries to consider the North Korean issue not only as a missional task, but also as a part of the movement towards peace in the Korean peninsula. In 2018, they declared the Statement of Unification Vision during the Pyeongchang 2018 Winter Olympic Games. In the statement, Hapdong decided to support the improved inter-Korean relationships through the Winter Olympics, and to develop the 'evangelical peace movement' by encouraging the reunion of separated families and cooperation with the North. In addition, in May 2018, they presented the whole picture of the denomination's policy for unification in Berlin. Applying the experience of German churches' efforts for unification to their own context, Hapdong established the plan for interaction between North Korea and its churches through humanitarian aid and fundraising for unification (Yang, 2018). Whilst Hapdong sticks to the missional purpose of rebuilding churches in the North, they attempt to develop a progressive perspective and attitude towards North Korea at the public level.

4.2.2.5 The Korea Evangelical Holiness Church (KEHC)

The Holiness church began to take interest in the North Korean issue belatedly in comparison to other denominations. During the 1980s, KEHC had a lukewarm attitude towards North Korea. However, when Evangelical Christian organisation, Christian Council of Korea (CCK), started a movement for mission in North Korea in opposition to NCKK's stand, KEHC set down its agenda on North Korea based on the CCK's policy.

The first purpose of KEHC towards North Korea is re-establishing the Holiness churches in North Korea (Jung, 2019). They have been conducting the North Korea mission through the temporary committee since 1997. The committee joined several activities to spread the gospel among North Koreans. KEHC keeps record of the number of Holiness churches that existed in North Korea before the Korean war, operates the

mission centre at China-North Korea border, sends missionaries to the border, and holds the mission convention for North Korea, among other things (Cho, 2019). In particular, KEHC attempts to develop a network with various conservative North Korea mission organisations, such as OMS (One Mission Society) and PN4N (Prayer meeting group).

In 1994, the Holiness church established the Policy of Mission for North Korea. According to the mission sourcebook, they focus on researching the current societal and religious situation of North Korea in order to make a plan for rebuilding churches in the North. More specifically, the denomination examined the administrative districts and population of North Korea, and the state of churches in the North based on which it formulated a mission policy for North Korea, a five-year plan for planting new churches in the North, and the CCK mission statement for rebuilding churches in North Korea (Cho, 2019). In the Second Domestic Mission White Book (1996), even though they seemed to expand the unification movement from the personal salvation of North Koreans to conflict issues between the North and the South by re-defining the definition of mission, the Holiness church still kept to the narrow meaning of mission in North Korea.

Since 1994's Mission Policy, they have been sticking to a five-year plan for re-establishing churches in North Korea. The plan is that, during the first year of reunification, as the first part of the process, the denomination will rebuild 82 of the Holiness churches that existed in North Korea before the Korean War. The second part includes trying to plant 211 churches in every district of North Korea after 3 years of reunification. In the 5 years after reunification, 214 more churches will be planted that would be financially and administratively independent (Cho, 2019; Jung, 2019).

Basically, KEHC conducts its mission for North Korea without a relationship with the KCF. In addition, they seem to hope the reunification to be South Korea-centred, giving South Korea the power to exercise its will over the North. With that idea in mind, the Holiness churches expect to actively develop many churches in the North.

4.3 Theological and Political Attitudes of the Korean Protestant Churches

The varying perspectives of the denominations are formed, not only by theological differences, but also by historical contexts of ideological confrontations. These views

inevitably lead to different understandings of North Korean defectors. There are epistemic frames of the five denominations that make each of them have a different perspective towards the defectors: (1) The definition of mission; (2) A viewpoint on North Korea; and (3) An understanding of unification and peace. In this section, these three factors that divide the Korean churches into several denominations, and determine their various actions towards the defectors are analysed comparing each denominations' features with the others'.

4.3.1 Mission Theology

An understanding of mission, as the root of the behavioural patterns of the churches, is influenced by their theological aim and tendency. In the Korean conflict context, it can be seen that the Korean churches have different attitudes towards the defectors that determine their responses depending on their understanding of mission. The mission theology of the five denominations has changed and developed according to inner and external factors, such as the evolution of theology itself, and the socio-political and historical context. The churches' understanding of mission can be grouped into two: Evangelical mission and *Missio Dei*.

Basically, most Korean Protestant churches stick to evangelical mission. The mission policy seeks to preach the Gospel to non-Christians to convert them. The conservative Korean churches focus on personal salvation and growing and planting of churches following the principle of the evangelism. This paradigm of the evangelical mission is revealed in the churches' attitude towards the defectors. Hapdong and the Holiness churches (KEHC) particularly, which stand in opposition to ecumenical theology, pursue the evangelical mission. These two denominations seek to rebuild the churches in North Korea by using the defectors to achieve their missional goal. The main purpose of KEHC is the restoration of the Holiness churches by searching for sites in the North where such churches existed before division. Hapdong also has a passion for rebuilding the churches in the North and spreading the Gospel directly. Although Hapdong financially supports North Korea, they use the aid as a route for spreading the Gospel and the Christian idea of salvation in North Korea. However, from the mid-2010s, Hapdong has been attempting to expand the evangelical mission towards North Korea by actively paying heed to peace movements and social issues, such as the declaration of the peace statement, and the tree planting movement in the North in

collaboration with NGOs. Through various actions and plans, the final goal of the two denominations is proselytisation of the North and the whole peninsula.

The other denominations, including Kijang, Methodists, and Tonghap, tend to have an ecumenical mission perspective or '*Missio Dei*'. *Missio Dei*, as mentioned in previous chapters, regards the work of the churches as a subset of the work of God. This mission policy is to reject the expansion of the church or denomination-based mission work. They understand the church as the tool of God for carrying God's purpose. *Missio Dei* aspires to, not a church-centric, but a God-centric mission: "Church-centric missionary thinking is bound to go astray because it revolves around an illegitimate centre" (Englesviken, 2003, p. 488).

From this perspective, these three denominations see reunification as mission work itself. Kijang disagrees with the conservative groups' movement of rebuilding churches and sending missionaries to the North. Instead, they strive to remove the division system, and increase democratisation as a part of the peace movements. Whilst Methodists and Tonghap are engaged with the ecumenical mission movement, they also pursue the preaching of the Gospel, and the building of the churches in the name of the 'Great Commission', "Go and make disciples". Even though they have a two-track strategy, the ecumenical denominations attempt to achieve Shalom in the Korean peninsula through the emancipation of the Koreans from the oppressed structure.

4.3.2 Viewpoint on North Korea

The churches' viewpoint on North Korea is formed, not only by their understanding of mission, but also their individual political and ideological stance. In the Korean conflict context, the stand on North Korea is what divides society into conservative and progressive. More specifically, anti-communism is one of the factors for discerning political tendency of Korean society (Han & Jang, 2012; Kang, 2007). By this theory, the attitude of the Korean Protestant churches towards the defectors is determined by their level of tolerance of communism.

The Korean churches' perspective on North Korea was entirely based on anti-communism until the 1970s without any regard for a different political and theological understanding. As aforementioned, after the Korean War, the North Korean Christian defectors escaped from the North's oppressive environment to the South in order to find

freedom of faith. The Christians from North Korea established many churches in the South, and the churches became the mainline churches that have considerable influence on society and politics in Korea. According to Kim (1956), 90 per cent of near-about 2,000 churches founded until 1956 were established by North Korean Christians (Kim, 1956, as cited in Yoon, 2015). This is why the churches in the South inevitably are ingrained with anti-communist sentiments and this colours their theological interpretations. This is also why they supported the policy of the military regime that used anti-communism to gain and retain power. During the period of the 1950s, Korean Protestant churches split into several denominations over the issue of joining the WCC that is believed to be a pro-communist organisation. Considering this historical background of the denominations' division, anti-communism, as the cornerstone of the identity of the denominations, is still the hermeneutical lens of the churches through which they understand North Korea.

However, after the 1980s, Kijang played a key role in overcoming the perspective of anti-communism in order to foster the peace movement. Kijang contributed to writing the 88 Declaration of NCKK. It criticised the churches for their support of anti-communism, and urged repentance. At that time, the other denominations and major churches, including Tonghap and Hapdong, opposed the 88 Declaration because of its stand against anti-communism. Those who opposed NCKK began to establish the conservative Christian organisation called CCK in 1989 that pursues unification and mission for North Korea based on anti-communist ideology (S. Kim, 2002, p. 51). From that time, the unification discourse of the Korean Protestant churches split into two sides — NCKK and CCK — based on the position on anti-communism. However, after inter-Korean relationships improved in the 2000s in Kim Dae-jung's regime, most denominations also changed their attitude towards North Korea in keeping with the peaceful atmosphere in the peninsula. Kijang kept adopting a peace-centred lens towards North Korea and the defectors rather than pursuing proselytisation. Methodists and Tonghap set the integrated strategy depending on necessity. Hapdong and KEHC did not put anti-communism ahead of their mission policy. Nevertheless, the project of rebuilding churches in North Korea is based on the premise of anti-communism which aims to conquer and break down the North regime by the Gospel.

The denominations' viewpoints on North Korea also have an effect on their relationships with the KCF. KCF, as the official Christian organisation of North Korea, cooperates with South Korean churches on matters such as humanitarian aid and mutual exchange for peacebuilding in the Korean peninsula. Whilst ecumenical groups, including Kijang, Methodist, and Tonghap, regard the KCF as an organisation for cooperation, evangelical groups, including Hapdong and KEHC, deny the veracity of the KCF's Christianity. Rather, they attempt to have relationships with the underground and house churches in the North or directly send missionaries to the North. Although Hapdong and KEHC try to establish a relationship with the KCF nowadays, they use it only to send aid as an indirect mission strategy.

In this regard, the denominations' perspective on North Korea is created by both mission theology and anti-communism, and it definitely influences the actions and attitudes of the denominations towards the defectors.

4.3.3 An Understanding of Unification and Peace

The different perspectives of the Korean Protestant churches towards North Korea consisting of complex factors make the churches understand unification and peace differently. And it leads to form the different attitudes of the churches towards the defectors.

Firstly, Kijang developed its perspective of unification through important statements. First of all, they planned a direction for the unification through the three points of the 7.4 South-North Joint Statement: Independence, peace, and national unity. Second, Kijang incorporated the suggestion of the 88 Declaration of NCKK of upholding humanitarian principles and the people (*Minjung*) above all else. Kijang tried to achieve unification through the movement of democratisation at the grass-root level. Third, they agreed with the WCC's confession of faith and values, such as justice, peace, and reconciliation. Reflecting the values in the Korean conflict context, Kijang led the peaceful unification movement (Kwon, 2000). They understood that peace could only be achieved when the division system is overcome. Moreover, Kijang approached the peace of Korea, not on a narrow region level, but as a wide Asian issue.

Secondly, Methodist denomination, like Kijang, established their perspective of unification based on the principles of the 7.4 Joint Statement. They basically followed

the values of the NCCCK's Jubilee Movement that seeks to emancipate the people from the structural evil of division. They believe that unification will be accomplished when both South and North people are free from oppression, poverty, and exploitation (Kwon, 2000). Recently, Methodists have started focusing on preparations for post-unification issues, for instance, searching the way churches can contribute to social integration and solve social conflict issues. From the beginning of the North Korean mission, Methodists have made an effort to restore the relationship with the North through material support and cultural exchange with the KCF. They seek to promote peace by mutual exchange and communication between South and North.

Thirdly, Tonghap aims for unification that is rooted in the principles of the 6.15 South-North Joint Declaration. More specifically, Tonghap set their unification policy that involves resolving the question of unification independently, and agrees on the common element of both the South's concept of a confederation and the North's formula for a loose form of the federation (PCK, 2016). Tonghap tries to establish a peaceful relationship with the KCF through humanitarian aid.

Lastly, Hapdong and the Holiness churches agree with the unification through absorption of the North by the South government. These two denominations, passionate to rebuild churches in North Korea, hope to collapse the North regime to develop and execute their plan for rebuilding churches. During Rhee's regime, Hapdong and KEHC advocated the 'marching North unification policy' that supports forced unification. In the same vein, they send the missionaries to the North by using diaspora Christians, and support networking of the underground and churches rather than reaching out through a formal organisation. Their mission policy is still based on anti-communism, directly and indirectly. After 2014, Hapdong tried to change its concept of peace. More specifically, in the 2018 Berlin Statement, they proclaimed their belief in the peaceful unification without war (Yang, 2018). In comparison to their past perspective, this opened a space for collaboration with the KCF and North Korean government.

4.4 Types of Relationships between the Defectors and the Churches

The division background of the Korean Protestant denominations and their various stances on North Korea impact the configuration of the relationship between the defectors and the churches. The churches understand and treat the defectors depending

on their own theological and political views as well as the identity of their denominations. For instance, mission theology of the churches decides their behaviour towards the defectors and their attitude towards the latter's conversion. Views on North Korea, based on anti-communism, create an outline for the way in which they perceive the defectors. The mix of the two factors establishes the understanding of unification and peace in the Korean peninsula as the vision or direction of the churches. This also helps in understanding the approach of the churches towards the defectors.

Based on the three factors mentioned above, the engagement of the churches with the defectors can be categorised into four types.

4.4.1 Type A: Focused on Peace and Unification Movement

Most of the liberal churches and Christian organisations, including NCKK and Kijang denomination, belong to Type A. They seek to unite the churches for promoting peace in the Korean peninsula, and aspire to restore the relationship with North Korea and the churches of North. As mentioned above, Kijang commenced a peaceful unification movement in both civil society and Korean churches. They especially stressed on solving of the division system through upholding the rights of the working class and supporting the democratisation movement. Furthermore, by raising the question of anti-communism in the 88 Declaration, they inaugurated a new era of peacebuilding in the peninsula. They connected democracy, division, and peaceful unification based on ecumenical theology and liberal perspectives on the North.

Type A tends to focus on the conflict issues at the macro level which involves criticising the social structure, pursuing inter-Korean relations, and interaction of the South-North churches, cooperation with international Christian organisations, etc. In this sense, Type A approaches the defectors in accordance with their political and theological interests. Contrary to most evangelical churches in the South that have a zealous proselytisation programme for the defectors and North Korean, the defector issue is not a foremost topic for Type A. The group is more interested in solving the root cause of the conflict rather than convert the defectors to Christianity. In addition, Type A expects to achieve peace and unification, not through their relationship with the defectors as missional or propaganda tool, but through cooperation with North Korean Christian organisations directly.

Nevertheless, rather than using the defectors as an object that needs to be converted to Christianity, they have expressed their concern for the defectors by helping them with financial support, education, and settlement in the South from the early 1990s. For example, Kyoungdong Church, one of the representative churches of Kijang denomination, established an alternative school for the adolescents of defectors for the first time in South Korean society (Han, 2004). This school provides learning opportunities to defector students and spearhead a movement for the education of defectors.

Hence, although the groups of Type A seem to have a passive relationship with the defectors compared to the other churches, they believe that the defectors' issues will be resolved simultaneously if the division structure is broken.

4.4.2 Type B: The Two-Track Strategy

Theologically, Methodist and Tonghap denominations lean more towards the ecumenical stance, and politically they are placed between progressive and conservative views on North Korea. In other words, they have a relationship with the defectors based on ecumenical theology and a mixed political perspective on North Korea. They view North Korea and the defectors through a dual lens coloured by their anti-communism. Especially, even though both KMC and Tonghap attempted to overcome their anti-communism by repenting for the actions of the past through their statements (PCK, 2004), conservative church leaders and groups within the denominations have aggressive views towards the North. Besides, the representative mainline churches of the two denominations, such as *Yongnak* Presbyterian church, *Somang* Presbyterian church, *Kumnan* Methodist Church, *Kwanglim* Methodist church, to name a few, were established by the early defectors from the North after the Korean War. In the early stages of the churches, they inevitably emphasised anti-communism as a key value of faith and advocated the military regime that put up an anti-North flag. With this background, they have formed a double perspective towards North Korea that not only seeks peace by cooperation with the North but also tries to accomplish proselytisation of North Korea or supports the movement for establishing North Korean churches while ignoring the North.

The mix of ecumenical theology and loose anti-communism is reflected in the two denominations' relationship with the defectors. The actions of the Methodist Churches towards the defectors can roughly be split into two kinds: firstly, they pay attention to the training of the defectors as missionaries. In order to achieve the reconstruction of 338 churches in North Korea after unification, they support building churches for the Christian defectors and provide scholarship to defector seminary students (Jung, 2019). In 2004, KMC established the *Saeteo* Church as the first church founded by a defector minister for the defectors who live in the South (The Christian World, 2006). The church pursues the spread of the gospel among the defectors, and prepares the Christian defectors to be sent to North Korea for mission work when the border is opened. Secondly, KMC has a relationship with the defectors through relief work. For instance, Methodist Churches established a social enterprise called Baekdu Food Company with the defectors to encourage self-sufficiency among the defectors (Eum, 2005). This company provides opportunities for defectors having trouble finding a job in the South. In this way, KMC has a two-track policy based on mixed theological views and political perspectives on North Korea.

Tonghap denomination strategically aims to integrate both evangelical and ecumenical theology, and conservative and liberal perspectives of North Korea. For example, Tonghap churches cooperate with evangelical groups for the movement for reconstruction of churches in North Korea in an ecumenical way that establishes a single denomination in the North against the denominationalism of the South. In addition, they try to supply aid to North Korea by having a close relationship with the official North Korean church, the KCF, rather than pursuing its own monopoly by using unofficial networks. By encompassing both the mission and peace discourse, Tonghap declared the peaceful unification principles of the denomination in 2016 at its 101st General Assembly. In particular, the principles propose coexistence with the defectors. They emphasise upon the dignity and equality of the defectors and their human rights. More importantly, Tonghap have begun to recognise the value of the defectors by criticising the evangelical missional attitude towards the defectors. They write,

We should treat the defectors as our brothers and sisters rather than using them as tools for increasing the number of Christians. In fact, the defectors are experts on the socialism of North Korea, a system that South Korea has not experienced.

Moreover, the defectors are those who have experienced the capitalism of the South that North Korea has not experienced. Hence, we attempt to live together with the defectors in order to prepare for the reunification (PCK, 2016, p. 650).

Although the groups of Type B try to understand the defectors beyond their mission agenda, the gaps between theological expectations and the pastoral practices still exist. Whilst theoretically the two-track strategy of Type B seems to aspire for a balance, their actions incline towards assigning more importance to their missional agenda.

4.4.3 Type C: Humanitarian Aid for Mission

Hapdong denomination's stance towards North Korea primarily stems from evangelical theology and its conservative political perspective. However, according to change in historical and political situation, Hapdong started to shift their viewpoint on North Korea to the progressive side.

From the mid-1990s, they began to draw attention to North Korean issues when the conservative Christian organisation, CCK, was established for the mission in North Korea. Many North Koreans migrated to the South due to economic reasons during this period. At that time, Korean churches, including Hapdong, contacted the defectors to spread the Gospel. They also sent missionaries to the China-North Korea border in order to provide the defection route and support the defectors by giving them food and living necessities. Some mission organisations that are supported by Hapdong operate mission-training centres called the Mission Home along the border. For instance, Golden Bell Church led by Reverend Choi Kwang who studied at the Chongsin Seminary of Hapdong is one of the representative evangelical mission groups for North Korean defectors. Rev. Choi trained the defectors in reading the Bible at the Mission Home and re-sent them to the North as missionaries (Ryu, 2014). To achieve national evangelisation, the church regarded the defectors as a tool for proselytisation. Similarly, *Yeolbangaem* Presbyterian Church (Hapdong) is also passionate about spreading the Gospel among the defectors. The church leader Reverend Lee Philip, who defected from the North in 1999, stated, "the defectors are the target for salvation rather than the object of helping" in the conference for formulating Hapdong's mission strategy (Lee, 2015). Rev. Lee developed the escape route from North Korea to China,

and supported the underground churches in the North through the converted defectors. In this way, Hapdong adhered to the relationship with the defectors defined by its missional view and conservative theological perspective.

Even though Hapdong still focuses on the missional approach when it comes to the defectors, their view on the North has started leaning towards the progressive perspective as they now send humanitarian aid to the defectors. Hapdong, as the largest denomination in Korea, has social and material resources to support the defectors. When inter-Korean relationships improved through fluctuating situations, Hapdong started to use their resources to aid North Korea and the defectors regardless of their existing conservative political stance. In 2018, as aforementioned, they declared the plan to support North Korea and the defectors in alignment with the unification policy of the progressive administration. Nevertheless, Hapdong supports the defectors with humanitarian aid with the purpose of proselytisation.

4.4.4 Type D: Rebuilding Churches in the North

The Holiness Churches' actions are rooted in its evangelical theology and conservative perspective on North Korea. There is anti-communist sentiment and hostility towards North Korea embedded in the KEHC's mission policy. They regard North Korea as the idolatrous regime that should be dismantled and made a part of the South. Moreover, KEHC fundamentally questions the credibility of official North Korean churches. In this context, they engage with the underground churches and the house churches in North Korea independently without interaction with the North's Christian organisation. Following this stance, KEHC has a relationship with the defectors as a part of its evangelical mission strategy that focuses on the reconstruction of churches in North Korea.

The document of the KEHC committee for the North Korean Mission that outlined its ministry for the North and its direction in 2019 identified the defectors as the mission objective. More specifically, it mentioned, "North Korean defectors are mission candidates of North Korea" (Cho, 2019, p. 67). It shows that the KEHC understands the defectors through the narrow lens of the missional purpose and therefore follow an aggressive conversion plan. In the 4th North Korean mission forum of KEHC, Reverend Ku Yun-hoe, representative of *Sarang Naru* Mission, made a

presentation about ‘back-door North Korean mission strategy’. Back-door mission indicates the unofficial approach for spreading the Gospel in North Korea. By introducing the back-door mission for the defectors, Rev. Ku insisted that Korean churches can send the defectors who converted to Christianity to the North in order to build the churches in North Korea (Hong, 2017). Considering the North Korean political context, the churches’ action of making the defectors re-enter the North for mission pushes them into an extremely dangerous situation. This impacts the relationship between South and North Korean churches negatively. In this regard, KEHC has only limited interaction with the defectors because they only care for the proselytisation of the defectors.

4.4.5 Critique of the Four Types

These four kinds of relationships that the different churches share with the defectors can be criticised in three ways.

Firstly, most of the Protestant churches of Korea treat the defectors based on the theology of anti-communism. As aforementioned, anti-communism in Korean churches is treated as another theology or doctrine by viewing the historical conflict with the North through the lens of fundamentalist theology. The Korean churches have been trying to eradicate the social ill of anti-communism since the 88 Declaration by repenting. However, with the evangelical mission desire, the churches started coercing the defectors into conversion with the view that the North’s conversion to Christianity would dismantle the communist regime and defeat the ideology in the peninsula. In this sense, not only do the churches expect the defectors to convert to Christianity but also to liberal democracy by blaming their own unique subjectivity stems from their association with the North.

Secondly, the Korean Protestant churches are roughly split into two groups — evangelical and ecumenical groups — over the North Korean issue. The dichotomy easily creates another conflict within South Korean society called the South-South Conflict. It means that the churches can no longer focus on the common ground for peaceful unification such as the Just Peace movement. According to Jang (2013), the opposite notion of ecumenical is not evangelical but factionalism or exclusivism. Jang insisted that Korean churches should overcome the distorted binary by emphasising on

Just Peace that is the common value of both ecumenical and evangelical groups. The churches should regard the defectors as a partner for promoting Just Peace in the Korean peninsula.

Lastly, the relationship of the churches with the defectors has primarily been church-centred or mission-centred. Regardless of the denomination, the churches deem the defectors as either the mission targets or as those who need help. This attitude unavoidably creates a hierarchical relationship. In this relationship, it is hard to find the unique value of the defectors and the defectors are easily otherised or forced to assimilate.

The philosophy of Levinas, which seeks to build an ethical relationship with the Other, can show the churches how they can redefine their own subjectivity and how they can act more ethically towards the defectors. The next section criticises the relationship between the churches and the defectors through the Levinas' philosophy.

4.5 Critique the Church-Defector Relationship Based on Levinas' Philosophy

4.5.1 Type A: Face-to-Face and Response

Type A, as a discourse-centred relationship, has a weak ethical encounter with the defectors. Kijang is prone to merge the North Korean issue, including the defectors, with the social structure issues that grew from the division, i.e., like it did in the democratic movement of the 1980s. Their relationship with the defectors has formed depending on the ways in which Kijang has approached view of peace and unification. In other words, the relationship with defectors was comprehended as just another aspect of the conflict with Korea. It brought a broad understanding of the defectors, that they are one of the vital parts of the Korean conflict. Kijang, however, could not make a place of interaction with the defectors or their lived experience. They are aware of the defectors through the consciousness of the church-centred subject, i.e. themselves, rather than in a dialogical sense.

According to Levinas, unless the subject encounters the Other, its own subjectivity cannot be formed. The life of the subject starts with its relationship with the Other, and the relationship begins with the appearance of the Other, especially with the

face of the Other. Levinas mentions this process as 'epiphany'. When the face of the Other turns towards the 'I', the subject undergoes epiphany inspired by the absolute exteriority of the Other being that cannot be captured into sameness. The face of the Other discloses itself beyond normal understanding, particularly to the consciousness of the subject. He insists, "The face is present in its refusal to be contained. In this sense it cannot be comprehended, that is encompassed. It is neither seen nor touched — for in visual or tactile sensation the identity of the I envelops the alterity of the object, which becomes precisely a content" (Levinas, 1991, p. 194). The Other, as not an alter ego, cannot be recognised through the framework of the 'I', and does not have common things to be figured out and reduced to the Same.

For Levinas, ethics is the breaking away from the sameness of the Same through a face-to-face encounter with the Other to overcome the frame of self-consciousness. Considering the meaning of ethics, the relationship of Kijang with the defectors lacks ethical interaction to change the pool of homogeneity that the churches try making the defectors a part of. Levinas writes, "A calling into question of the same — which cannot occur within the egoist spontaneity of the same — is brought about by the other. We name this calling into question of my spontaneity by the presence of the Other ethics" (p. 43). Through encountering the Other, the subject can become an ethical subject by overcoming self-centred cognition which seeks to dominate the Other. Thus, to achieve this, the subject should be exposed to the face of the Other and respond to the invitation of the Other as an ethical demand. Kijang, however, has not made an effort to disclose themselves to the face of the defectors. They treat the defectors within the traditional frame of their own denominational theological and political stance rather than transcend their own ideologies and reach out to the defectors. It inevitably reduces the possibility of transformation of these churches into the ethical subject that accepts various experiences and opinions of the defectors. Even though Kijang attempts to emancipate the defectors from the evil structure, they still keep understanding and comprehending the defectors based on their own institutional position. Levinas notes,

The being that presents himself in the face comes from a dimension of height, a dimension of transcendence whereby he can present himself as a stranger without opposing me as obstacle or enemy. More, for my position as *I* consists

in being able to respond to this essential destitution of the Other, finding resources for myself (p. 215).

Thus, focusing on the peaceful unification movement as a meta-narrative, Kijang overlooks the transcendental subjectivity that overcomes inaction and totalising tendencies through an encounter with the face of the defectors.

4.5.2 Type B: Saying and the Said

When studied through the lens of Levinas' philosophy, Type B seems to have a rather paradoxical attitude towards the defectors. Even though Methodist and Tonghap denominations abandon their dominant power as subjects and welcome the defectors within their churches, it is only an attempt to capture the defectors' subjectivity and reduce them to sameness. This can be criticised through Levinas' notion of the Saying and the Said.

For Levinas, the passivity of the subject derives from the responsibility with which responds to the Other's voice, and is especially associated with the linguistic system. In other words, processing summons from the Other and responding to the Other makes ethical communication possible. The response of the subject to the face of the Other is not merely gazing or looking, but communication which shapes the responsibility for another. In this context, Levinas attempts to analyse the ethical passivity of the subject through his notion of the Saying and the Said.

Considering the Saying as communication, Levinas notes that "communication [with the Other] is not reducible to the phenomenon of truth and the circulation of information" (Levinas, 2000, p. 48). This communication rejects any intention and subjectification that could lead to control by the subject. Levinas insists, "the responsibility for another is precisely a saying prior to anything said" (p. 43). He understands such communication as a part of the responsibility in the relationship with the Other. Levinas writes:

To maintain the relationship with a neighbour, incontestably set up in saying, is a responsibility for the neighbour, that saying is to respond to another, is to find

no longer any limit or measure for this responsibility ... It is to catch sight of an extreme passivity, a passivity that is not assumed, in the relationship with the other, and, paradoxically, in pure saying itself (p. 47).

According to Thomas Busch (1992), the Saying is “the performative act of ‘exposure’ and ‘approach’ at the basis of all communication”, whereas the Said seeks the signification of the Other (p. 197). The subject, who is obsessed with the Other and being held a hostage to the Other, is exposed to the Other through the Saying. Exposure to the Other is the core of the condition of subjectivity. For Levinas, “the subject is constituted *by* and *as* its exposure to the Other” (Davis, 1996, p. 78). The Saying is “in the risky uncovering of oneself, in sincerity, the breaking up of inwardness and the abandon of all shelter, exposure to traumas, vulnerability” (Levinas, 2000, p. 48). Levinas notes “saying, the most passive passivity, is inseparable from patience and pain” (p. 50). Furthermore, the subject approaches the Other, not to categorise the Other into its own consciousness, but to establish a face-to-face relationship through the Saying. In the process of approaching the Other, the subject encounters its infinite responsibility to the Other’s face that says “Do not kill me”, and experiences transcendental reversing of the relationship. In other words, the relationship, as not reciprocity, posits the priority of the Other over the subject.

In *Otherwise than Being* or *Beyond Essence*, Levinas attempts to distinguish between the notion of the Saying and the Said. He writes, “the otherwise than being is stated in a Saying that must also be unsaid in order to thus extract the otherwise than being from the Said in which it already comes to signify but a being otherwise” (p. 7). First of all, he separates ‘otherwise than being’ and ‘being otherwise’. Being otherwise is captured in the Said, such as “the world, truth, Being, personal identity, which are susceptible to established protocols of dispute, verification or disproof” (Davis, 1996, p. 75). Levinas argues that “to enter into being and truth is to enter into the Said; being is inseparable from its meaning” (Levinas, 2000, p. 45). Otherwise than being, however, seeks alterity beyond the logos and essence. The Saying towards the otherwise than being is pre-original, pre-conscious, and a primordial enigma (pp. 6-10). The Saying presupposes the Said. The Saying has priority than the Said since “it constitutes its condition of possibility” (Davis, 1996, p. 75). Through the Saying, the subject realises the Other as otherwise than being and gives up his/her colonising intention towards the

Other. In this sense, in order to pursue the otherwise than being, Levinas emphasises “the Saying without the Said”.

In light of Levinas’ notion, there is self-collision between the Saying and the Said in Type B. When the Saying is the ethical action of the subject in exposing itself to the Other and approaching the Other, and the Said signifies the meaning of the Other in the consciousness of the subject phenomenologically, the churches of Type B are simultaneously deposed from the subjectivity of the churches, and they also try to capture the subjectivity of the defectors into the sameness of the churches. In other words, they attempt to see the defectors as ‘otherwise than being’ while their intertwined theological and political perspective on North Korea and the defectors recognises the defectors as ‘being otherwise’.

Type B, which is rooted in the two-track policy, can be discerned through the notion of the Saying and the Said. As the most significant aspect of the Saying, the groups of Type B decided to change their church-centric attitude towards the defectors based on anti-communism through various documents. Contrary to their declarations and theoretical expectations, in practice they attempt to capture the subjectivity of the defectors into the logic of the churches in order to promote mission in North Korea. This can be understood within the notion of the Said. Since the two denominations use the defectors to promote peaceful coexistence as well as for their mission policy of spreading Gospel, they cannot reach ethical transformation. As the subject, they continue to seize the defectors and reduce them to sameness ontologically. There is no transcendental encounter with the Other that leads to a transformation of the subject into its ethical self.

When the Korean Protestant churches try to establish a relationship with the defectors, they can emphasise the ‘practice of the Saying’. The Saying, as theological transformation, indicates subduing the self-centric power of the subject. In the engagement of the churches with the defectors, the churches should form the ethical relationship through the Saying as ‘trans-division language’ beyond the Said as ‘division language’ that oppresses and controls the defectors. In the Korean conflict context, the Saying as trans-division language focuses on differences and dynamics of the defectors in lieu of assimilation. According to Simon Critchley, “the Saying is ethical and the Said is ontological” (Critchley, 2002b, p. 17). Korean churches should

create a defector-centric relationship and respond to the ethical demands of the defectors by pursuing the Saying without the Said.

4.5.3 Type C: Intentionality and Desire

The relation of Type C with the defectors pays particular attention to the mission for proselytising North Korea and the defectors. While they treated the defectors as mission target by following a conservative view on North Korea based on anti-communism in the 1980-90s, they shifted their attitudes towards the defectors based on a progressive view of the North after the inter-Korean relationship started being improved through several summits in the 2000s. The churches of Type C started to extend humanitarian aid towards the defectors in the name of restoring universal human dignity. They, however, still stick to the missional approach and support the defectors with the intention to make them Christians. This relationship type is defined through ‘the concept of intentionality’ as propounded by Husserl.

Intentionality, as the consciousness *of* something, indicates the relationship between the ego and an external object. In particular, this relation starts from the consciousness of the subject to the intentional object with the belief that the object can be figured out as an objectivistic being by this action. For Levinas, however, Husserl’s directedness towards the object seems to be a paradoxical action. It means that the infinite Other cannot be captured or identified by reducing them into the consciousness of the subject. Levinas criticises the concept of intentionality saying that even if intentionality seeks to understand what is exterior to the subject’s consciousness, the idea still exists within the subject since the external object is interpreted through the meaning of the ‘I’. In this sense, Levinas regards intentionality as the action of identifying the Other as the Same. He writes,

The intention is itself an identification; the intentional order is, for Husserl, a series of confirmations that tell me; This is the same object, it is the same, it is the same, it is the same. ... And Husserl’s thought searches every horizon in which the Other who would escape the Same might be hiding (Levinas, 1993, p. 134).

So, interpreting the Other through the intentional consciousness of the subject is not an ethical relationship. It makes the Other an alter ego or the-other-in-the Same. Responsibility towards the Other cannot appear in this ontological attitude.

Type C can be critiqued based on Levinas' ideas about intentionality. First of all, the churches of Type C have a relationship with the defectors based on the church-centred approach. In light of Levinas' analysis of intentionality, Hapdong denomination, as an ego, encounters the defectors as the external or intentional object by seizing them into the sphere of sameness. Even though the churches of Type C seem to have a dialogical interaction with the defectors through humanitarian aid, the churches try to perceive the defectors within their own fixed consciousness. For instance, the churches identify the defectors as missionaries for North Korea in a reunified Korea of the future. The intentional defectors are educated and trained to be sent to the North for mission with the help of the churches (J. Kim, 2015).

Second, the intentional relationship between the churches and the defectors inevitably leads to the process of identification. In this intentionality, the churches control the dynamics of the relationship. In other words, the churches have a voice and right to objectify the defectors. So, the defectors become a fixed object without a voice and are only comprehended through the consciousness of the churches. The defectors are only interpreted through the lens of the churches rooted in the churches' own theological and political perspective. Following the idea of Levinas, the intentional defectors are destroyed to strengthen the subjectivism of the churches. This destruction aids the churches to interpret the defectors in whatever way they find conducive to their own interests.

Third, the directedness of the churches towards the defectors does not provide room for transformation of the churches' attitudes and thoughts through an encounter with the defectors. Since the churches assimilate the defectors into their own purpose, they do not discover the 'enigmatic' Other in the defectors. More specifically, although the churches face the exteriority of the others, there is no inversion of the subject's pre-consciousness or freedom. Rather, through the act of intentionality, the defectors become thematised and totalised, and their alterity is ignored. Hapdong is regarded as one of the most passionate Christian groups in Korea when it comes to the North Korean issue. But they try to perceive the defectors based on their own interests. According to Levinas' theory, mission-focused intentionality prevents the appearance of

the transcendental Other. It blocks the possibility of an ethical relationship and the responsibility towards the defectors that comes with it. In this ontological structure, the churches come to have a limited perceptual interpretation of the defectors without undergoing any transformation themselves.

Levinas points out the idea of intentionality as not merely the consciousness of something but ““an exit from oneself” or more fundamentally ‘the relationship with alterity’” (Davis, 1996, p. 21). According to this argument, the churches of Type C should modify their intentionality towards the defectors from the church-centric view to a defector-centric view by seeking a relationship. Most of the humanitarian aid of Type C derives from the intentionality of the missional approach along with compassion for the same ethnic group. Both approaches — mission and compassion — pursue identification of the defectors as Christians. Through the intentional approach, the churches grow in numbers by absorbing the subjectivity of the defectors into their sameness rather than pay attention to the voice of the defectors as the face of the Other. Ironically, the closer they get to the defectors with the intention of helping them, the more the defectors are seized and reduced into the churches within this intentional relationship.

The intentional relationship of Type C needs to evolve into an ethical relationship. Levinas defines the way for the ethical relationship as metaphysical desire. Desire towards the Other does not indicate the action to fill a lack or deficiency felt by the subject. In lieu of that, desire means a longing for the absolute exteriority of the Other to find transcendental-subjectivity. Metaphysical desire does not expect reward from the Other since it does not engage with intention. Hapdong should try to face the features of the defectors — alterity, exteriority, infinity, etc. — by desiring them in order to escape from subjectivism. Since the way of escape from sameness is through a relation with alterity, the churches have to make an effort to accept the different identities, perspectives, and experiences of the defectors.

Type C features a one-way interaction that starts from the churches with strong intentions, not from the defectors’ side. Even if the intentionality of the churches contribute to the improvement of the life of the defectors, the efforts are still used to force the defectors to submit to the logic of the churches. In this sense, according to the perspective of Levinas, the programme and support for the defectors can be regarded as ontological tools to capture them into sameness. The ethical relationship, on the other

hand, starts from the open attitude of the subject to remove the dominant power of the self through its ethical response to the Other. The churches should avoid humanitarian aid with the intention of mission that often leads to those being helped be seized by the churches for their own interests. Rather, the churches should welcome the defectors in the dimension of infinite responsibility that makes the subject respond to the ethical demands of the defectors by desiring the alterity of the defectors.

4.5.4 Type D: Compassion and Substitution

Following its strategy for the mission in North Korea, Type D tends to use the defectors as missionaries. In particular, the churches of Type D have a distinctive passion for rebuilding their denominations' churches in various North Korean provinces. They approach the defectors in terms of rebuilding churches in the North and expect the defectors to become future church builders or bridges between the South and the North churches. Under the circumstances, compared to the other Protestant denominations, the Korean Evangelical Holiness Churches (KEHC) have a relatively low contribution to public issues relating to North Korea, such as the peace movement, humanitarian aid, to name a few. Although they also try to shift their conservative perspective on North Korea and to support the North financially according to the political mood of recent times, the motivation of their actions is deeply rooted in the rebuilding of churches by proselytising (Nam, 2018). The purpose of the churches for conversion is seen as the archetypal privatisation of the church regardless of publicness of the Gospel.

In light of Levinas' philosophy, the subject does not hold up his/her responsibility towards the Other which appears from the face of the Other. In addition, considering the subjectivity of the subject is established through the disclosure of the self to the Other, there is no place to create the ethical subjectivity in this attitude. In other words, Type D can be criticised for not responding to their responsibility towards the defectors, and failing to reveal their essence of 'Being the Church' in the public sphere by only focusing on their own interests.

For Levinas, the subject recognises their own responsibility towards the Other through the epiphany of the Other's face in which is revealed the naked, the weak, the poor, the stranger, etc. The most vital point is that responsibility of the subject to the Other does not begin from the decision or will of the subject but from the exteriority of

the Other's summons. Levinas highlights the relationship between the subject and the Other as a heteronomous and asymmetrical relationship. Responsibility, which is based on the heteronomy between them, is against Western traditional philosophy that focuses on subjectivity and autonomy. Contrary to ontological comprehension of subjectivity, Levinas argues "the self is a *subjectum*" that takes responsibility carrying the gravity of the whole universe and existence (Levinas, 2000, p. 111).

The 'responsible subject', who experiences an ontological adventure in the relationship with the Other, advances to the 'substitutional subject'. Substitution is not reciprocal trade between two beings but the self becomes singular and irreplaceable Other. Substitution is "an intertwining of the Other-in-the-same which does not begin with myself but affects me from the side of the Other" (Guenther, 2009, p. 176). The subject starts to expand its own concern to the Other's suffering and summons through the pre-original 'susceptibility'.

In this context, Levinas sharply distinguishes between substitution and compassion. Levinas writes, "Substitution is not the psychological event of compassion or introopathy in general, but makes possible the paradoxical psychological possibilities of putting oneself in the place of another" (Levinas, 2000, p. 140). The act of compassion, which stands for the ontological understanding of the Other, begins from the consciousness and intentionality of the subject. Those who deserve to get compassion from the subject are discerned depending on the decision of subject. The Other is seized into the self. In substitution, however, the self becomes a hostage of the Other as well as flees from the 'I'. Levinas believes that the escape of the self brings justice. He notes, "justice can be established only if I, always evaded from the concept of the ego, always desituated and divested of being, always in non-reciprocable relationship with the other, always for the other, can become an other like the others" (p. 154).

In this sense, the churches of Type D that did not deviate from their own intentionality and expose their subjectivity to the defectors have stayed in the compassion level rather than becoming the embodiments of justice by substituting for the defectors. The churches did not achieve self-reflection that breaks the parochial church-centric view. In addition, they ignore the public role of the church by concerning themselves only with church building and missionary work. They have only emphasised the zeal of proselytisation by forcing their logic and beliefs on the defectors regardless

of other social issues. They consider re-construction of churches in the North more important than promotion of common good through justice and peace. They do not respond to the calling of the defectors to take on the infinite responsibility of ethical actions towards the latter.

Through the lens of Levinas, there are three points of on which the project of rebuilding the churches in the North by Type D can be criticised. Firstly, this mission project highlights the role of the churches in the South rather than the North. In other words, it is designed and planned with the South Korean churches at the centre. As encouragement of subjectification of the churches, North Koreans are easily excluded in the plan. Furthermore, the defectors are employed to develop the churches in the North as a mission tool. Secondly, in the same vein, there is a lack of consideration for the North. KEHC seek to build the churches without an understanding of the political and cultural difference between South and North. They try to transplant the capitalistic and pro-America evangelical church of South Korea in the communist soil of the North. The churches should expose themselves to the defectors to figure out their language and ethical demands. Lastly, in rebuilding the churches, the focus is only on tangible buildings rather than on the spread of the Gospel. Gospel should be delivered as the message of peace, reconciliation, and forgiveness in the Korean conflict situation. The plan of the churches, however, never contains these values. Moreover, it is difficult to find sacrifice or self-emptying among the churches as substitutional subjects towards the North and the defectors in this project. Thus, Type D has to abandon the idea of Christendom in the Korean peninsula, and respond as a substitutional subject in the public arena to the ethical demands of the defectors.

Table 2*The Relationship between the Defectors and the Churches*

Denominations of Korean Protestant Churches	Features of the Denominations towards the Defectors	Types of Relationship between the Defectors and the Churches	Critique of the Types in Levinas' Perspective
Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea (Kijang, PROK)	<p>Mission Theology (M): Ecumenical mission. The goal of mission work is to remove the division system of the peninsula.</p> <p>Viewpoint on NK (V): Overcoming anti-communism.</p> <p>Unification and Peace (U/P): 7.4 South- North Joint Statement</p>	Type A: Type A seeks to promote peace and solve the conflict between two Koreas rather than convert the defectors to Christianity. Relatively, the defectors is not the foremost topic in Type A.	Type A: Type A lacks in an ethical interaction with the defectors as it focuses on its denominational agenda. In the philosophical concept of Levinas, Type A does not expose to face-to-face relation to transform Type A's subjectivity.
The Korean Methodist Church (KMC)	<p>M: Ecumenical mission. Supporting the North and the defectors not only to promote peace and but also to proselytise.</p> <p>V: Cooperation with KCF (NK's official Christian organisation)</p> <p>U/P: NCKK's Jubilee Movement</p>	Type B: Type B has the 'Two-Track Strategy' based on ecumenical theology and a mixed political perspective of the North. Type B understands the defectors both as a missional target and people who needs financial and psychological supports.	Type B: The Two-Track Strategy of Type B is self-collision according to Levinas' idea 'Saying' and 'Said'. The denomination seeks to respect the defectors' alterity and diversity (Saying). Simultaneously, they promote mission towards North by utilising the defectors (Said).
Presbyterian Church of Korea (Tonghap, PCK)	<p>M: Ecumenical mission. Reconciliation between two Koreas based on proselytisation.</p> <p>V: Recognising the KCF as the official route to restoring relationship with North.</p> <p>U/P: 6.15 South-North Joint Declaration</p>		
Presbyterian Church in Korea (Hapdong)	<p>M: Evangelical mission. Spreading the gospel towards the North and the defectors through financial support.</p> <p>V: Trying to make a</p>	Type C: Comparing to Type A and B, Type C establishes the encounter with the defectors based on CCK's (the conservative Christian	Type C: Although Type C contributes to financially support the defectors, the aid contains intention and desire to seize the defectors into the church-

	relationship with the North and the defectors within the anti-communism U/P: 2018 Berlin Statement	organization in Korea) mission and political policy. After the 15 June Joint Declaration in 2000, Type C changed the direction of its mission policy from passionate mission to humanitarian aid for mission.	centric missional agenda. Through the mission-focused intentionality, the defectors are thematised and categorised by ignoring their own unique identity.
The Korean Evangelical Holiness Church (KEHC)	M: Evangelical mission. Rebuilding the churches in the North through the defectors. V: The defectors as someone who fled from the enemy and evil country. U/P: Achieving unification through the church/South-centredness.	Type D: Type D highly focuses on rebuilding the churches in the North. Type D regards the North as the country which has to be collapsed by the South Korean government and in the name of gospel. Type D tends to contact the defectors to make them missionaries and to re-send to the North, not considering a dangerous situation that they may be involved.	Type D: Type D mainly highlights on reconstructing the churches in North rather than taking responsibility towards the defectors.

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter has analysed the relationship between the Korean Protestant churches and North Korean defectors. Firstly, to understand the historical and political backgrounds of the Korean Protestant churches' perspective on the defectors, this chapter delved into the cause and process of what led to the formation of the different denominations. Secondly, since the engagement of the churches with the defectors has to be discussed in the peace and unification discourse, the representative five denominations' roles in the peace and unification movements were elaborated. Thirdly, vital factors that determine the nature of the relationship between the churches and the defectors — mission theology, opinion of the North, and peace/unification perspective — have been explained. Fourthly, integrating all analytical findings, the relationships were categorised into four types. Lastly, in light of the philosophy of Levinas, these types were critically analysed.

Korean Protestant churches are roughly divided into two groups, evangelical and ecumenical churches. And specifically, they are split into various denominations according to their theological and political stance, especially pertaining to the North Korean issue. Considering the evangelical and conservative churches of Korea are deeply rooted in church-initiated mission theology and anti-communism, these theological and political backgrounds tend to justify the aggressive proselytisation and the use of defectors to blame the North. Although the defectors usually experience otherisation and polarisation in the evangelical churches, the phenomenon of otherisation and polarisation is not entirely absent within the ecumenical churches.

In the perspective of Levinas' philosophy, regardless of denominations, the relationship between the churches and the defectors is all deeply rooted in the ontological structure that upholds self-centredness. In other words, even humanitarian aid and support of the ecumenical churches are operated with their own interests in mind. Within this relationship, the defectors, as the intentional object, are used for the sake of the churches. For Levinas, there is no ethical encounter through the 'face' of the defectors in this relationship. The churches cannot find the opportunity to transform from the subjectivity of the same into ethical subjectivity by responding to the defectors' summons. These findings demonstrate that the churches must abandon their dominant position in the relationship and disclose themselves to the defectors to shoulder infinite responsibility.

The next chapter criticises the way the defectors are treated by the churches in the church-centred relationship.

CHAPTER FIVE. OTHERISATION AND POLARISATION: A CRITIQUE OF THE CHURCHES' RESPONSES TO THE DEFECTORS

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter proved that both ecumenical and evangelical churches in the five denominations of Korean Protestant churches adhere to the logic of the church when they engage with the defectors, though the degree may differ depending on the denomination. From the perspective of Levinas' philosophy which seeks to destroy the Western traditional philosophy of the self-interested, the defectors as the others are seized and controlled by the churches who are the dominant subject in the relationship.

This chapter deals with how Levinas' philosophical analysis manifests in the context of the Korean Protestant churches. Most of the Protestant churches engage with the defectors from a church-centred approach. The church-oriented relation creates 'otherisation' of the defectors and accelerates 'polarisation' between the two Koreas as well within South society. To survive in the South politically and financially, the defectors have to be assimilated into the churches' intention. The defectors erase their unique subjectivity and mould their identity in accordance with the churches. The defectors who experience otherisation by the churches are then used for the process of polarisation. Their being and actions are captured into the churches' hegemony. The defectors, as a propaganda tool, are utilised not only to blame the North for human rights abuses but also to execute the churches' missional goal in the North.

The responses of the churches towards the defectors have been criticised in into two parts: Otherisation and polarisation. After doing so, the clue for countering such church-centric attitude is proposed based on Levinas' thoughts.

5.2 Otherisation: Towards the Promise Land?

5.2.1 Otherness and Otherisation

The otherness of the Other is constructed by the difference of the subjectivity of the subject from the Other. The difference inevitably creates categories such as ‘I’ and ‘You’, ‘Us’ and ‘Them’, and ‘Self’ and ‘Other’ (Udah & Singh, 2019). The differences of the Other, which is defined by the centrality of the subject, is often regarded by the subject as inferior or negative features. Otherness has been exposed to ontological violence. The subject tries to assimilate otherness into his/her own subjectivity, or even tries to obliterate it. In the name of civilisation, religion, national security, and even justice, the otherness of the Other has been suppressed and forcefully modified depending on the purpose of the subject. As mentioned earlier, Levinas also criticises the intention and desire of the subject that seizes the otherness and reduces it to sameness of the self. He asserts that alterity and otherness are vital elements in forming the subjectivity of the subject. It means that the subject cannot survive or exist alone without the Other. In the same vein, Simone de Beauvoir (1997), the eminent French philosopher, notes that “Otherness is a fundamental category of human thought. Thus, it is that no group ever sets itself up as the One without at once setting up the Other over against itself” (p. 14). Corresponding to the idea, the Korean word ‘InGan’, which means a human being, holds the intrinsic meaning of relational existence.

A Korean-Chinese etymology of being human figuratively illustrates this point well. A person “인간,” “人間” (pronounced as InGan in Korean) consists of two words, “人(in)” meaning “a person” and “間”(gan) means “between.” The character “人,” by depicting two lines leaning on one another, suggests that we are persons by virtue of the fact that we lean on each other. It may be interpreted to mean that people cannot stand alone; we need another to rely on. When we put the two characters, “人,” (in) and “間” (gan) together we get “person-between” suggesting that what makes us human are the relationships between us (Kim-Cragg, 2012, p. 268).

A relational human being needs to interact with the Other and to respect the alterity of the Other. However, otherisation, as the act of ignoring another's essential features, attempts to paint over the otherness and alterity with the colour of sameness. Otherisation is a process by which the subject ingests otherness into the subject's subjectivity or excludes the otherness that is outside of the subjectivity. The otherised being can only find their identity and meaning of existence in the categories of the subject's consciousness. Or, the others who refuse reduction by the subject or assimilation into the subject's consciousness then become the 'invisible being' in mainstream society.

North Korean defectors experience otherisation through demands of assimilation that are laid upon them or face exclusion from the mainstream narrative of the South. In particular, Korean Protestant churches lead this othering of the defectors. While the churches ostensibly welcome and embrace the defectors, the churches control and confine the defectors' identity and role in the churches as well as in the South. According to Levinas' thought, the defectors as the infinite Other question the totalised subjectivity of the subject. Contrary to the ontological understanding of the notion of the Other, the otherness of the defectors can play a significant role in awakening the subjects' responsibility towards the Other. In this regard, the churches' othering of the defectors has to be criticised.

5.2.2. The Process of Otherisation

The othering of the defectors as a direct result of churches' engagement with them takes place in the complex theological and political context of South Korea. The defectors are othered by the churches not only for their religious missions but also for the reinforcement of socio-political purpose linked with anti-communism and fundamentalist theology. This practice manifests itself in the process of conversion. Conversion to Christianity has multi-layered meaning for the defectors. In other words, becoming a Christian for the defectors in South Korean society indicates not only the personal religious decision but also a political action to guarantee their ideological conversion. On the one hand, some of the defectors confess that in becoming Christian they found the meaning of life and also felt connected to South Korean society depending on the individual situations of the defectors. On the other hand, becoming a Christian is an assured escape from the North and is seen as proving the defectors'

ideological transition into the South. However, the churches heavily influence the defectors and take the position of power intentionally or unintentionally to become a Christian. The project of converting defectors to Christianity becomes the churches' *modus operandi* of otherisation as it establishes church-centred power relations.

According to Ju Hui Judy Han, the conversion of the defectors entails religious, ideological, and socio-political conversion (Han, 2013). In lights of this transformative process, the resultant otherisation is examined.

5.2.2.1 Religious Conversion: Path to Heaven

The otherisation of the defectors starts from their escape journey. Almost all defectors arrive in the South through the Sino (China)-North Korea border area under the support and advocacy of missionary centres that belong to Korean Protestant churches (Han, 2013; Jung, 2015b). Considering this process of the defectors' exodus to the South or other countries, it is almost impossible to flee from the North without any help from the missionaries. A journalist describes the hard process of going into exile as follows:

Leaving the highly fortified country is notoriously difficult. North Koreans climb mountains, trudge through rugged terrain and cross rivers in their bids to escape. Even if they elude border agents and make it into China, the most common escape route, they risk being apprehended and repatriated by Chinese authorities. In recent years, the vast majority of escapees have been women, often sold into forced marriages in China. Others are trafficked for sex or cheap labour (Jordan, 2018).

To ease this complicated escape, some defectors find brokers who can guide them into China or South Korea. However, the defectors have to pay to the brokers up to 20,000 USD, which is far beyond the ability of most defectors. Although defectors who cannot afford brokers try to cross the border by themselves, it is difficult to defect from the North because of the strong border security of North Korea (RFA, 2018). In this sense, contacting Christian missionaries is regarded as the fastest and safest way to flee from the North.

Thus, defectors have no choice but to rely on the missionaries. The churches are too aware about the defectors' situation and take advantage of this to make the defectors subservient to the power of the churches by taking hostage their rights, intentionally or unintentionally.

The hospitality of the missionaries towards the defectors is operated with ambivalence. In other words, the missionaries "as custodians and spiritual brokers" work to guard the defectors in the border between confinement and freedom (Han, 2013). Meanwhile, the custodial power of the missionaries means that they not only preserve the defectors but also to change their identity through conversion in the name of training for adjustment in the South. Due to this paradoxical attitude of the missionaries, the defectors have to adapt their religious beliefs to that of the churches in order to live up to the expectations of the missionaries and the churches of their sponsors. By following the Korean Protestant churches' conventions, such as praying the *Tongsung* way, together and in loud cries, and memorising bible verses, the defectors try to shape themselves as "proper Christians." Becoming a proper Christian, in this context, means abandoning North Korea, or even working against it and embracing the anti-communist ideology. This is more than church-centric. This is having to work against one's origins and identity for the sake of assimilation or obliteration of one's identity.

The Protestant evangelical churches regard conversion as acceptance of Jesus Christ as a personal saviour who can bring our soul to heaven after we die. This notion of conversion goes beyond mere changing of religion for the defectors. In the North, North Koreans are taught that Christianity, as a symbol of Western imperialism, is an evil that is destroying their regime (Jung, 2015b). To become a Christian, they have to transform their standard of good and evil, to reconfigure their attitude towards Western society, and to change their thought system by ignoring the experiences and cultural habits that come from the North. The missionaries and the churches deliver their missional agenda and narrative to the defectors without this contextual consideration. That is to say, the churches interpret the meaning of conversion as the best way to move from the evil of communism and poverty to the good of capitalism and prosperity through Christianity. The churches force the defectors to erase and deny their life in the North and the thoughts they held in order to receive salvation spiritually and physically. The work of the churches, therefore, reinforces the North Korean narrative about

Christianity, that it is against communism and North Korea and acts as an instrument of colonialism. In this way, the role of the churches contributes to polarisation between the South and the North through the defectors. The space for understanding between the two Koreas is blocked by such church work.

As the gateway to the South, the churches exercise power over the defectors' whole lives. The defectors are strongly encouraged to convert to Christianity by the churches when they arrive at *Hanawon* in the South, which is the settlement centre for the defectors. Supporting the assimilation programmes of the state, the churches approach the defectors to help them settle into their South Korean capitalistic life with zealous proselytisation. After becoming a South Korean citizen, the defectors remain under the power of the evangelical mega-churches which have enormous financial and human resources. The defectors who face difficulties in the highly competitive South's system find it hard to decline the churches' persuasion to convert.

5.2.2.2 Ideological Conversion: God's Warrior Against Communism

In order to escape from the North, the defectors have to rebuild their identity through religious conversion. Conversion to Christianity, as a condition to receive the missionaries' welcome and support, is rooted in the church-centric structure. The structure strengthens the othering of the defectors by reducing them into the sameness of the churches. Now, the churches that other the defectors through proselytisation move to 'ideological conversion'.

In the Korean conflict context, evangelical missionaries regard the ideological conversion of the defectors as a significant missional agenda almost at par with religious conversion. As mentioned earlier, Korean Protestant churches were established and influenced by the American evangelical missionaries and fundamentalist theology that fights the religious battle against communism. In addition, North Koreans who moved to the South for religious and political freedom before and after the Korean War (*Pinanmin* in Korean) built the evangelical churches for those who lost their hometowns in the North. The churches took initiative in the anti-communist movement and grew into the mainline churches of the South. This theological and historical background created anti-communist sentiments in the churches along with a support for conservative political regimes, national security

concerns, and a view of the South-North conflict in a good-evil binary. In this sense, becoming a Christian implicitly indicates becoming “God’s warrior” for evangelical anti-communist propaganda (Jung, 2015b).

The foremost ideological conversion that defectors undergo is that of their North Korean *Juche* ideology to liberal democracy. The churches deem *Juche* ideology as not only the political system of North Korea but also a false religion that worships Kim Il-sung. Since idolatry is against Christian belief, the churches attempt to carry out both spiritual and bodily transformation of the defectors.

When defectors enter the South, the government extensively checks and monitors their motivation behind defection, family background, occupation in the North, political activity, and so on. The defectors as a ‘suspect group’ have to accept the condition of changing their ideological tendency and deeming North Korea an enemy country. This surveillance dynamic of the state appears in the relationship with the churches too. The relationship between the churches and the defectors as the watcher and the watched encourages the defectors to assimilate into the South’s system through self-regulation or self-censorship. Through the churches’ special programmes for the defectors, the churches reinforce the defectors to continually internalise self-censorship by questioning what ‘North Korean defector-ness’ is. The mega-churches, which have negative memories about the North, usually run the programmes for the defectors. The programmes emphasise the superiority of capitalism and criticise communism. The churches tend to consider North Korean cultures, habits, and life as infected with communism. This idea justifies erasing and opposing everything from the North. Furthermore, the churches intensify the ideological conversion by using the biblical metaphor of salvation from Satan. In this context, the defectors can no longer care for their own value system or language from the North if they want to adjust in the South. Even though they think that there are good things in North Korean culture, they avoid talking about their opinion publicly. One female defector said,

Adults are respected. The food culture is really developed. People love each other; they go on dates. There are childhood memories, beautiful married life ... there is all of this, because this is a world in which people live. But they don’t recognise it here [in South Korea]. And if you said this, they would call you a *chongbuk* (Hough & Bell, 2020, p. 175).

The defectors fear being stigmatised as *ppalgaengi* or commies and *chongbuk* or North Korea sympathisers by South Korean society (Hough & Bell, 2020; Jung, 2015b). To avoid being suspected as defector-spies, they have to project the churches' logic on to their own subjectivity.

5.2.2.3 Socio-Political Conversion: *The Prodigal Son*

Socio-political conversion is the final step for defectors to become South Korean citizens. In the socio-political context of South Korea, North Korean cultures, norms, and values cannot be accepted in the South as diversity or multi-cultural features. For most South Koreans, these cultures from the North are a reminder of hostile or painful experiences suffered by themselves, their families, and their country. In addition, the cultures of the North are regarded as contaminated by communism and *Juche* ideology. Thus, these cultures have to be eliminated and disparaged along with the North Korean regime. The defectors who formed their identities within the North Korean cultures and values are required to change their subjectivity to a new identity based on the norms of South Korean society. To survive in the South, the defectors continually must prove their purity of intent in moving to the South and blame their homeland as they shed its influences on their lives through the various processes of conversion.

The churches support the assimilation policy of the South's government by drawing and defining the ideal citizen model. The churches project their missional desire in shaping the defectors' identity. The churches understand the defectors as a 'chosen people' to spread the Gospel to the North, and use them as a 'witness' to show the backwardness of communism. In addition, the evangelical churches praise material prosperity as God's grace and ask the defectors to adapt to the capitalistic system by becoming labourers to develop the free market economy. The defectors construct their subjectivity within a specific frame that is proposed by the churches. The defectors, as subordinate others, are deprived of the opportunity to create their identity themselves, to find themselves in their new environment. They have to internalise the otherised identity dictated by the churches to become 'acceptable' citizens of South Korea.

The biggest limitation of otherisation is that even though the defectors embrace this otherised identity through socio-political conversion, they cannot be truly accepted as members of Korean society. In other words, they still exist as second-class citizens in

the South and suffer social stigma and ostracisation. Most defectors believe that arrival in the South would guarantee them a better life politically and financially. The defectors hope for the 'Korean Dream' and expect to adjust well in the South's system because of shared ethnicity and language. Contrary to the defectors' expectations, they suffer social prejudice and discrimination because of their appearance and Northern dialect. They experience emotional and financial frustration in South society and remain vulnerable, socially and economically. In this situation, the defectors unavoidably expose themselves to severe otherisation to survive in the South. In other words, the defectors erase and deny their roots in the North, overtly blaming the North as an overcompensation for being from there. North Korea is a closed society about which there is a lack of reliable information. Using this, the defectors often lie about their life and North Korea's situation to suit the expectations South Korea has about the North. Indeed, many of the defectors want to hide their identity by pretending to be *Chosonjok*, ethnic Korean-Chinese who live in North-east China (Hough & Bell, 2020; Kim, 2014). A male defector confesses why he hides his identity:

The daily wage is the same for both North Korean defectors and the Chinese. But the way South Korean employers treat the two are not quite the same. Because the defectors are from the occlusive and underdeveloped North Korea, the employers mistreat them and look upon them with disdain. Such experience of mistreatment makes North Korean defectors lie that they are Chinese (Jang, 2019).

This confession shows that there is ranked otherness in the South, and the otherness of the defectors is positioned the lowest compared to other migrants. The churches support and justify the phenomenon of otherisation of the defectors through theological interpretation and biblical narrative. The binary of good and evil is applied to the South and North. The churches use the salvation metaphor to describe the act of escape. The defectors saved from the North are bound for heaven. In the same token, blaming and denying the experiences of the North is equal to fighting to protect the good. The churches encourage the otherised identity of the defectors as "the prodigal son" who returns to the South from the city of Satan. The defectors have to become missionaries to awaken the poor North Koreans who do not know the truth and superiority of the

South. This kind of spirituality promoted by the churches is driven by their anti-North Korea ideology and supports the narrative of South Korean hegemony. The churches' ontological comprehension is projected on to the defectors' identity and the latter are assimilated into the logic of the churches.

5.2.3 The Defectors as a Politicised Monolithic Group

The otherisation of the defectors is achieved by the churches through three kinds of conversions aimed to make them South Korean citizens. These conversions drive the defectors to form their new identity by integrating the churches' intentions into their subjectivity. There is no alterity and diversity of 'defector-ness' in the process of conversion as otherisation. Rather, it regards the defectors as a monolithic group that has to assimilate into the sameness of the churches' logic. The churches deem defector-ness as inferior otherness that has to be captured and controlled by the churches who are a superior subject.

The churches categorise the complex defectors' identity according to political factors. Although the ecumenical churches try to overcome the enemy frame and atmosphere that are rooted in anti-communism, these churches still treat the defectors as a certain political group who need help rather than individual beings. The evangelical churches also have a monolithic understanding of the defectors as those from 'the enemy country'. Based on this approach, the defectors are interpreted within the context of political tension and conflict. In other words, although the churches seem to recognise and treat the defectors as various types, these understandings are all reduced to the South-North ideological confrontation. For instance, the churches see the defectors as ethnic siblings from 'the enemy country', political asylum seekers from 'the enemy country', economic migrants from 'the enemy country', missional targets from 'the enemy country', etc. The churches put the multifarious characteristics and features of defectors into a singular frame of the political system.

The churches believe that the North and the Korean peninsula must be redeemed from the evil clutches of communism. Both the North Korean regime and North Korean-ness cannot be accepted and cannot coexist with the South in the context of the division situation. In fact, while the defectors arrive in the South by opposing the North's system and/or economic situation, it is difficult for them to immediately

distance themselves from their North Korean cultures, experiences, and norms. Without considering the complexity of the defectors' identities, however, churches with their South-centric lens basically overlook and disregard both North Korean-ness and the subjectivity of the defectors. Moreover, the churches consider, consciously and unconsciously, the being of the defectors as a threat and burden to the South.

The politicised monolithic understanding of the churches, which stems from the gaze of exclusion and discrimination, leads to the thematisation and categorisation of the defectors into the totality of the churches. The defectors have to otherise themselves in the churches and society to survive in the context that hates the North and denounces those who criticise South society (Kim, 2014). The defectors who cross over from the opposite ideological system with the help of the churches feel the pressure to be subordinated to the churches. This creates an atmosphere where defectors actively get involved in anti-North Korean and anti-communist movements by exaggerating their experiences in the North in public. The defectors realise that the more they deny the homeland, the more they vindicate their own value and meaning in the South (Kim 2014). At the end, they become part of an imperialist ploy. In this situation, the defectors find that othering themselves is paradoxically the way to survive and be recognised in the South. The churches compensate and justify the othering of the defectors through financial and psychological support. The defectors trade their otherised identity with the churches for the means to exist in the South.

In the polarised Korean context divided between the left and the right, the churches otherise the defectors even more by using them as a propaganda tool. It evokes the conflict between the South and the North as well as the South-South conflict. The next criticises the actions of the churches that create such polarities to serve their own interests.

5.3 Polarisation: God's Warrior Against North Korea

5.3.1 Division System and North Korean Defectors

Korean Protestant churches reduce North Korean defectors into their own subjectivity by othering the defectors. While migrants who come from other countries also experience otherisation by the churches, the churches' otherisation of the defectors adds to the polarisation between the South and the North as well as within South society. In

order to understand the connection between otherisation and polarisation of the defectors, the division system has to be understood.

Since the Korean War, the division has created the border between the South and the North with opposite political systems. In addition, the division has made a psychological border among Koreans by stimulating hostility towards one other. The division, as a system or mechanism, has become the epicentre for conflicts between individuals, groups, and states. Paik Nak-Chung (2011) who was the first expert to identify the two divided states within one nation refers to it as a “division system”. He explains that the division operates within everyday life by maintaining the status quo, and is further developed by the ruling powers in a systematic way. Portraying the greatest modern political events in Korea — the Korean War, the Gwangju Rebellion, the 1987 people’s movement for democracy, and the North Korean nuclear test — Paik deems them all derived from the division system. He also points out that even long after the collapse of the Cold War world-system, the bloc division ideology still remains embedded in the Korean peninsula as a systematic framework within which the division operates. The division system naturally provides a place for justifying military dictatorship and structural violence by using anti-communist phobia and nationalistic rhetoric. Even worse, this mechanism still operates by reinforcing ideological confrontation based on the intertwined historical, geopolitical, and socio-cultural factors of the Korean peninsula.

To find the specific harmful consequences of the division, the division system as a macro discourse needs to be discussed as the micro discourse by focusing on the phenomenon of division in the real context. In other words, the division system should be examined by the ways in which it oppresses people and how it plays out in their daily lives. Especially, considering North Koreans who live in the South are criminalised in the division context, their voices need to be highlighted.

The defectors show the reality of the strong division system in the Korean peninsula. The defectors are situated on the borderlines of various divisions in the South, such as geopolitical, cultural, ideological, value boundaries, and so on. By crossing the physical and socio-political borderlines, the defectors create complex identities that cannot be captured under one system and the South-centric perspective. However, the churches attempt to seize the defectors into the division structure that is full of abhorrence for the North and stereotypes North Koreans in order to achieve a

missional goal, the gospelisation of the peninsula. Within the division structure, the defectors are regarded as crossing over from the enemy system and are therefore excluded by both the South and the North systems. It leads the defectors to view their identity-forming in the South as otherised subjectivity designed by the churches.

The churches approach the defectors with an ideologically biased understanding of division and use them to solidify the polarisation between the two Koreas by reinforcing a permanent state of warfare. The defectors' multi-layered identities which stem from both the North and their existence in the South are overlooked. The churches treat the defectors as a monolithic group that is witness to the brutality of the North Korean regime and its rampant poverty and human rights' violations. Moreover, the churches add theological dimensions to the defectors' being, about how they are saved from the evil of communism, and are chosen by the heaven of the South to spread the Gospel to the North in the future. The defectors shape their identity as leaders of anti-communism and find the meaning of their being in ideological confrontation. Now, the otherised defectors propagate and reinforce the division system by following the churches' proselytisation agenda.

The othering of the defectors by the churches operates within the division ideology that supports militarisation and hatred towards North Koreans/the defectors to maintain the vested interests of the churches. The churches utilise the defectors as a group to criticise the North in the name of human rights and deem themselves the saviours freeing people from the evil communist regime.

The next section criticises the churches' human rights framework embedded in the division system and their actions that otherise the defectors in order to blame the North in the name of defending those human rights issues.

5.3.2 Vilifying North Korea for Human Rights Abuses

The churches comprehend the defectors through their own language alone and through their ideological lens on the division by using their unequal power in the relationship. The defectors are subordinated into the logic of the churches. Their own subjectivity is eliminated as inferior and/or evil. The defectors' otherisation by the churches encourages polarisation in the division system. The otherised defectors, who are treated as a monolithic group within the division structure, are used to perpetuate and maintain

the divided situation as per the churches' intentions. The churches, having inherited their anti-communist hatred in their identity, sustain the division system by using theological interpretations, such as their 'anti-communist theology'. The anti-communist theology embedded in the dichotomised perspective of fundamental right-wing parties creates polarisation through the defectors. The churches justify otherisation and polarisation that expose the defectors to physical and cultural violence in the conflict situation under the name of dealing with human rights abuses committed by North Korea.

As aforementioned, the churches capture the defectors within the frame of the division structure and utilise the defectors to promote the system. In the 1970-80s, the defectors who arrived in the South were mostly soldiers or high-level elites who were regarded as heroes to show the superiority of the South's political system. While the defectors are still understood within the context of the ideological confrontation, the meaning of the defectors has now transformed. They are now seen as victims of the North's regime and witnesses who can reveal the abuse of human rights under the communist regime in the North. The churches attempt to achieve gospelisation of the Korean peninsula by breaking down communism and the North Korean regime through firm polarisation between the two Koreas as well as polarisation within the South itself.

To execute their plans, the churches form a 'polarisation circle' which seeks to forward the missional agenda and sustain the division situation through the othering of the defectors. The polarisation circle is established by following several steps:

(1) **Otherisation of defectors:** The churches' anti-communist identity based on the division system sees the defectors as a political group against the North rather than respecting the defectors' individual desires or alterity. Within the hierarchical and beneficiary-benefactor dynamic between the churches and the defectors, the defectors have to absorb the churches' anti-communist identity as their own subjectivity without critical consideration. The otherised defectors start to join the churches' purpose.

(2) **Criticising human rights in North Korea:** The churches move to the next step to attack the human rights violations of North Korea by exploiting the defectors. The defectors who are categorised and thematised by the churches speak of their experiences exaggeratedly under the churches' hegemony. Although the churches seem to have a passion for resolving the North Korean human rights issues, actually they utilise the human rights issues to enhance their anti-communist identity (Jung, 2015a).

(3) **International sanctions (embargoes):** The polarisation circle moves to international sanctions against North Korea. The anti-communist identity of the churches meets with the geopolitical interests of the U.S. The U.S. regional strategy encourages the training of defectors to pressurise the North Korean regime using human rights issues as a trojan horse. The defectors exist in the division structure, further entrenched by the geopolitical power relations, against their will (Song & Hong, 2014). The involvement of the defectors in the geopolitical game inevitably leads to strong embargoes against North Korea in the name of international human rights advocacy. The churches and Christian organisations, which are pro-U.S. and anti-communism, encourage the continuous and solid sanctions against the North.

(4) **Increasing human rights abuse:** The North Korean regime justifies human rights violations and nuclear armament as means to protect their regime from the U.S. and the South which they consider enemy countries (Fernando, 2019). In doing so, it faces isolation as international bodies like the U.N., under the control of a major world power like the U.S., levies sanctions upon it. As a result, the ordinary North Koreans' struggle with economic difficulties gets more severe. More specifically, sanctions prohibit the import of daily necessities, such as rice and medical supplies, which are urgently needed for sustaining the daily lives of common people (Wenner, 2020). In this situation, it is difficult to protect people in the North or reform human rights situation there. The sanctions originally seek the improvement of human rights situation in the North. Contrary to the intention of these sanctions, it only deprives people of the essentials for sustaining life. Ironically the sanctions are facilitating the human rights abuses and are threatening North Koreans' lives by creating a situation that can lead to the starvation of millions of North Koreans.

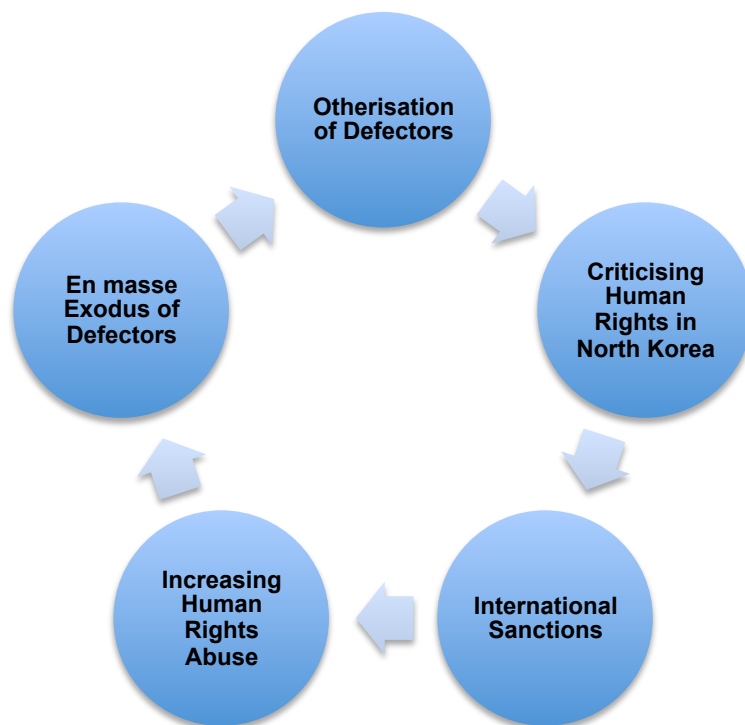
(5) **En masse exodus of defectors:** International sanctions are an act of war that deprives millions of North Korean of their basic human rights. The more the conditions in North Korea become unbearable due to the lack of basic needs, the more there is a chance for people to cross the border into the South. In addition, the sanctions inevitably raise political tensions and lead to more defectors who escape from the North en masse just to survive political oppression. Like previous defectors, these North Koreans contact the Protestant missionaries near the border and they are controlled by the missionaries spiritually and ideologically from that point onwards. Then, the

otherised defectors are used by the churches to attack the human rights issues of the North. Through this repeated process, the polarisation circle is ever-expanding.

Through this polarisation circle, defectors are endlessly produced. In order to survive, the North Koreans who arrive in the South have to deny the North Korean subjectivity and assimilate in the South Korean subjectivity. It means that the defectors have to express about the North only that which the South wants to hear about the North and themselves. In addition, the defectors have to overtly blame North Korea even against their own opinion and judgement. The polarisation circle forces the defectors to lie or take recourse in hyperbole whilst talking about North Korea in the atmosphere of the South where North Korea, northern culture, norms, and experiences are regarded as contaminated by communism.

Figure 6

The Polarisation Circle



By utilising the defectors as a propaganda tool, the churches solidify and expand the polarisation circle by making use of two methods: Public testimony and sending

propaganda balloon. The next part criticises how the churches blame the North through these two polarisation methods.

5.3.3 Polarisation Method (1): Public Testimony

The churches strengthen and expand the polarisation circle through the defectors' testimony. The churches invite the defectors to speak about North Korea during worship and at several other religious meetings. In the Korean geopolitical context, which is torn into extreme left and right, the defectors are easily exposed to polarisation through the sharing of their experience. Although the defectors recognise that their testimony about their lives in the North inevitably makes place for polarisation, the defectors find it hard to resist the invitation of the churches. There are two reasons why the defectors have to accept the churches' requirement for providing testimony.

One of the main reasons why defectors give their testimony is 'socio-political survival'. Although the defectors are put through severe interrogation at *Hanawon* centre for 12 weeks to check their real motivation for escape, they are received with an endless suspicious gaze by South Korean society that suspects them as spies. Unless the division structure is broken, the defectors have to survive in this struggle of ideology between the South and the North. Surveillance system for national security creates a vertical, hierarchical dynamic between the defectors and the state. That is to say, the defectors need to show how they comply with the dominant narrative of the South through "particular forms of political performance" (Hough & Bell, 2020, p. 163). In this situation, testimony becomes not just personal storytelling but a political expression to declare their commitment to the state. The churches mirror the hierarchical dynamic between the defectors and the state. For the defectors, the churches are the hosts who welcome and guide them into the South. The defectors, as the guests, are asked to commit to their ideological conversion as well as religious conversion. The churches want to show that the conversion to Christianity contributes to adjustment and assimilation of the defectors in the South as 'good' citizens, anti-communists, and participants in the free economy. The defectors respond to the hosts' demand through their testimony which includes this well-combined religious and political narrative.

The other reason for the defectors to provide testimony is 'economic survival'. The defectors who figure out the needs of the churches begin to use their otherised and

marginalised status ironically. The defectors fabricate their experiences with political and religious rhetoric by choice and/or under pressure from the churches. Then, they sell their narrative which now has an ‘exchange value’ to the churches. According to Hough and Bell, the evangelical churches such as the Manmin Church, Yaksu Church, and Sarang Presbyterian Church pay the defectors up to 200,000 won (approximately 170 USD) on the condition that they attend the service and demonstrate their faith (p. 167). The defectors are usually invited to describe their life in the North and the abysmal situation in North Korea. In particular, the churches require the defectors to describe their journeys of religious conversion, how they are saved from the damnation of the North by their conversion to Christianity. In addition, their human rights abuse and traumatic escape experiences are used to show how brutal executions are committed by the North Korean regime and how it starves its people. In order to make more money and be selected by the churches, the defectors speak about their homeland in a provocative and/or exaggerated way. The financial difficulties of the defectors drive them to allow themselves to be used as a propaganda tool in the “North Korean storytelling market” of the churches (Jung, 2015a, p. 91). The churches’ demand for testimony creates extremely violent stories, even worse, it makes the defectors embellish and fabricate the truth. A defector journalist criticises the churches’ competitive storytelling market.

At first, the Korean church asked for a testimony when someone said he or she came to Christ in China. But now, even “God talked to me in my dream” is not satisfying them. They ask for testimony when someone at least says “I was a member of the underground church in North Korea” or “I was an underground church missionary” (Y. Choi, 2017).

The testimony of the defectors reinforces the churches’ division ideology and makes the defectors subservient to the churches’ hegemony.

In this sense, this act of the churches that encourages the defectors to reinforce polarisation by using their testimony can be criticised for three reasons: Firstly, the churches provoke the defectors to lie intentionally or unintentionally. Missionaries and the churches desire to utilise the defectors’ testimonies for mission in North Korea. In

the perspective of the churches who financially support both missionaries and the defectors, dramatic religious conversion narratives and ideological changes make sponsorship worthwhile. In addition, the churches interpret the defectors' personal experiences of suffering through the evangelical language. The defectors' pain is reconsidered as God's calling for a mission to save North Korea. Moreover, their psychological trauma becomes a righteous scar for proselytisation of the peninsula. In this atmosphere and due to such expectations of the churches, the defectors feel the pressure to satisfy the audiences who have already have a certain stereotype about North Korea and its people in their heads. It inevitably leads the defectors to speak more unrealistically and give implausible testimonies by taking advantage of the difficulty of fact-checking.

Secondly, the churches reduce the defectors into a monolithic group through these testimonies. The testimony is constructed within the simplistic binary frame of good and evil. In general, North Korea and/or the regime are described as the "perpetrator" and the defectors and ordinary North Koreans are elaborated as the "victims" (Hough & Bell, 2020, p. 171). In this framework, the defectors' testimony has the power to reveal the tragic situation of the North and to emphasise the tough life experiences in the North. A hegemonic narrative — starvation, political prison camp, atrocities against human rights, etc. — is delivered and discussed in the churches. However, the diversity of the defectors' stories and behaviours are excluded and not delivered to the churches. The complex experiences of defectors are distilled only for the purpose of attacking the North with the offender-victim dynamic.

Lastly, the churches' polarisation circle has a detrimental effect on the peace process between the South and the North. The testimony of the defectors is the key factor in the polarisation circle as mentioned above. The defectors speak of exaggerated human right violations relying on their memories. The defectors as whistle-blowers believe that hopeless situations, such as torture, imprisonment, religious suppression, hard labour, etc., have to be disclosed to the public. They consider that the injustices of the North Korean regime have to be criticised. However, the testimony which only emphasises on the human rights issues to achieve ideological interests of both the churches and the defectors evokes anger from the local and international community towards the North. By justifying the 'divine anger', the churches demand strong sanctions against North Korea, and then the polarisation circle paradoxically makes the

lives of ordinary North Koreans miserable instead of improving them. The churches utilise the defectors' testimony to further reinforce the division system instead of putting an end to it. Moreover, it creates obstacles to the establishment of a peaceful relationship between the two Koreas.

5.3.4 Polarisation Method (2): Sending Propaganda Balloon

The churches support defector-led groups to launch Anti-North Korea propaganda balloon to the North in order to blame the North Korean regime for its human rights violations in the North.

North Korea blew up the liaison office on 16 June, 2020, which was used for communication between the South and the North. The office was built in 2018 as a symbol of the peace and reconciliation between two Koreas based on the *Panmunjom* Declaration. Although there are complex reasons behind North Korea's blowing up of the building, the anti-regime leafleting by the defectors became a 'trigger' to the raised tensions and the explosion (Aljazeera, 2020a; Bicker, 2020). Several defector-led groups and activists have been launching propaganda balloons over the inter-Korean border towards the North under the name of protecting human rights. Despite increasing cross-border tensions, the defectors who are involved in the campaign believe that sending a critical message of the North regime through the balloon is the best and fastest way to save ordinary North Koreans from the avowed country. Contrary to their hope, however, the defectors' anti-communist propaganda act contributes to polarisation not only between the two Koreas but within the South.

In fact, the anti-Pyongyang leaflet movement was started with the evangelical Korean churches' support. Lee Min-bok, a defector who became a Christian missionary and a godfather of the defector-led groups, started the movement in October 2003. He states that he decided to escape from the North because of a propaganda leaflet came from the South. Due to this personal experience, he emphasises the sending of leaflets in what he calls the 'Balloon Mission'. He insists that "South Korea leaflet (*ppira*) is a means for opening the eyes and ears of the ordinary North Koreans, and letting them know of their own right of religious freedom" (Shim, 2008). Lee believes that the main cause of North Koreans' hopelessness, starvation, degeneration, and non-democracy is that they have never heard of the Christian Gospel (Sung, 2019, p. 360). He mainly

seeks to convert North Koreans to Christianity through leaflets which contain bible messages in the vernacular language of the North, CDs, radio sets, USB, and so on (Choe, 2016). For him, the Gospel indicates escaping from the atheist communist country to a liberal democracy. He believes that the ‘balloon mission’ helps North Koreans who are deceived by the false ideology to find the ‘truth’ in Jesus Christ and as well as in democracy. In this sense, sending the balloon is treated as a humanitarian activity based on Christian mission agenda among anti-communists, conservative political parties, and Christian organisations. The *Kookmin Ilbo*, which is a conservative Christian foundation-based newspaper, evaluates his activism as one that opens the door of the closed country. The balloon with leaflets of anti-communist and biblical messages can be valued as “a pure and essential human rights movement to open the eyes and ears of North Korean people. Furthermore, it is the pure mission movement to spread the Gospel to the non-religious land” (Yoo, 2014).

After Lee, massive balloon leaflet movements have been carried out by several defector activists with support from the evangelical churches. For instance, Park Sang-hak, the leader of the Fighters for Free North Korea, got much attention from local and international media by leading a radical campaign of balloon leaflets. His younger brother Park Jung-oh, the head of the *KeunSam*, started the rice-sending campaign by floating plastic bottles stuffed with rice and medicines in the river near the North border (Aljazeera, 2020b). The Voice of Martyrs (VOM), a Christian NGO, sends Bibles to the North by balloon. They launch balloons with Christian messages without any political agenda, and attach GPS technology to the balloon to confirm its arrival.

From the perspective of geopolitical relations, the U.S. National Endowment for Democracy (NED) supports the defectors’ network to target the North regime. According to Christine Hong, “NED has cultivated defectors as the visible forefront of North Korean human rights critique” (C. Hong, 2015, p. 760). NED expects to foster the defectors’ capacity to organise movements against the North on the ground of human rights issues. In this context, the launching of propaganda balloon sponsored by the NED is to achieve U.S. political strategies, i.e., bringing the North under American hegemony.

In the same vein, the evangelical churches are tied to the U.S. political stance towards North Korea. The defector-led groups have received advocates and funds from evangelical churches and the U.S. based Christian human rights organisations (Sung,

2019). Through the pro-American politicised interpretation of theology, the churches support and justify the defector-led group for launching balloons. The churches blindly believe that the balloon campaign is an efficient and strong way to critique North Korean human rights. To serve the purpose of the sponsors and the churches, the defectors become ‘spiritual warriors’ who provoke the wrath of the North Korean regime.

The churches use the defectors for their own politicised missional agenda for the North. The unilateral church-centric missional acts that exploit the defectors raise tensions between two Koreas and reinforce the division structure. Although sending rice and bibles to the North can be understood as humanitarian aid or an act of spreading the Gospel without any political motives, these actions, including the sending of propaganda leaflets, totally seek to collapse the North in keeping with the purpose of the conservative South Korean and the American political intentions. The approach of the churches on North Korea intensifies polarisation between the two Koreas and within the South society. Moreover, it inevitably leads to hostility towards the North regime. The hostility expands to ordinary North Koreans and to the defectors in the South. To survive in the abhorrent atmosphere in the South, the defectors transform their identity and ideology and become strong critics of communions in compliance with the dominant narrative of the South. In this sense, the radical act, such as launching propaganda balloons, can prove their ideological conversion and loyalty to the South. In addition, such radical acts allow them to escape from the false charge of being spies in the South.

The churches use the otherised defectors to achieve their politicised mission and hegemony through the two methods, testimony and propaganda balloon. The purpose of the two methods is the same: Criticising the human rights violations in North Korea to villainise the North. In addition, the churches seek to collapse the North regime through the Gospel as well as through the South-centred political system. To do so, the churches would focus on the ideological confrontation in the past. Nowadays they bring up the human rights issues in the North to achieve their goal.

The problem is that the human rights framework the churches use is too narrow as it lacks the synthetic understanding of the North and consideration of peace. In other words, the human rights issues raised to improve the lives of North Koreans become a tool to attack and drive the ordinary North Koreans into another difficult situation

through strong international embargoes. In addition, the churches fail to see the complex geopolitical structure of the peninsula while over-emphasising the faults of the North. The human rights issues of the North have to be understood as not only the human rights violations on part of North Koreans itself, but also in context of the international power structure, including the inter-relation of the South and the North, peace process of the peninsula, etc. However, the churches overlook the complex human rights feature and make the defectors become not ‘the human rights guardians’ but ‘the human rights violators’. Paul Liem (2014) insists that

[A] human rights framework that overlooks peace as a fundamental human right contributes little to understanding the North Korean people and their plight today and what is needed to restore their security going forward. How their social development would fare under conditions of peace, conditions that would allow for the redirection of resources away from military expenditures and access to development assistance from the international community, is not even a consideration of the “human rights” advocates of regime change (p. 124).

The narrow human rights framework, as the narrative tool of the churches, encourages the polarisation circle to increase conflicts between the South and the North. The churches have to recognise that their actions could create obstacles to the peace process in the peninsula.

5.4 Critique the Otherisation and Polarisation in Levinas’ Idea

In the geopolitical context of the Korean peninsula, the phenomenon of otherisation and polarisation is developed through the division situation. The division creates the hard border and also the defectors who cross the border. The division increases ideological confrontation between the totally different political systems, and engenders violence against both sides as well as the defectors from the North.

From the perspective of Levinas’ philosophy, the division situation, which stimulates otherisation and polarisation of the defectors, is strengthened through the subject-centred philosophical understanding of the churches. More specifically, the

subject-centredness of Western traditional philosophy becomes a ‘philosophical system’ which oppresses the different and discriminates against the Other. The philosophical system supports ‘socio-political and cultural system’ that justifies violations and the very structure that facilitates assimilation of the Other into the Same. This philosophical system endows the churches with modern missional-colonialism. This produces a ‘theological system’ of totality and thematisation. If interpreted according to Levinas’ thoughts, it becomes apparent that in the current relationship that the churches share with the defectors, the latter, as the Other, are seized and controlled by the churches who are the dominant subject. Hence, it is an essential task to transform the philosophical system to suspend and overcome the otherisation and polarisation.

The alterity of the defectors or North Korean defector-ness has to be understood beyond the linear or homogenised political entity created by the churches and the South Korean state since their identity is not a one-dimensional one that can be completely understood through a narrow political approach. The unique subjectivity of the defectors stems from their ‘hybrid identities’ that they gain when they cross the border. The defectors evolved in a closed North Korean society which was ideologically communist. Before arriving in the South, they experienced and accumulated the various norms and cultures in North Korea and another countries. After arriving in the South, they face a competitive capitalistic system and struggle with adjusting to a system that is diametrically opposite to the one they grew up in. Unlike the identities of other migrants, the multi-layered identities of the defectors are unfamiliar features in South Korean society and therefore face exclusion in the dominant narrative of the society.

In fact, the churches have otherised the defectors in relation to the otherisation of the North. The more North Korea is treated as an enemy, the more the defectors will be used to confront that enemy. To stop otherisation of the defectors, this otherised relation with North Korea has to be overcome first. That is how artificial boundaries can be transcended. The defectors neither fully hate the North nor do they fully love the South. They do not decide to come to the South as one block of resisting people. They are driven by individual material needs. They do not represent the full reality of the North. North Korea may see them as betrayers. South Korea may see them as a tool to discredit the North. It is only by penetrating through these complexities that alterity of the defectors can be understood. To do that the churches need to overcome their own ideological and political binary positions with regard to the North and take the creative

risk of embracing the complexity of the situation. True hospitality can emerge only in that context. In the search of the defectors who need material benefits, the churches have to self-examine and ask how affluent they are compared with the defectors. Should their need for material sustenance be used as a political tool against North Korea? Feeding the defectors is one thing since it is a basic human right. Feeding them to use them to attack the North is unethical. Moreover, it is a collective violation of the human rights of other people.

Following Levinas' idea, the alterity and identity of the defectors cannot be understood through any efforts to assimilate the latter into the sameness of the South and the churches' logic. The society and the churches should pay more attention to the defectors' individual experiences and voices rather than treat them as a politicised-monolithic group. The churches have to abandon their ontological desire that comprehends the defectors through their own understanding. The churches should have an open-minded attitude to differences, even though it may shake their own subjectivity. The churches must try to interact with the defectors without letting church-centred intentions get in the way, such as seeking proselytisation and approaching the defectors to get information about the North.

Levinas invites the churches to transform their consciousness from self-dominant perspective to Other-centredness in order to minimise otherisation and polarisation. The churches can 'deconstruct' the self-oriented subjectivity and 'reconstruct' their ethical subjectivity. In other words, the churches have to seek a relationship of peace and reconciliation with the defectors. To do so, the defectors have to be newly regarded as the infinite Other or the transcendental Other in the language of Levinas. When the defectors are understood as the Other, it does not indicate the ontological concept of the other who can be subordinated or thematised into the sameness system. Rather, the Other is the being who has diversity and multi-layered identity. The alterity and identity of the defectors can show how the churches miss the value of community, how they are blinded by anti-communist arguments, and how they encounter the defectors with an ironical perspective which is a mixture of hospitality and hostility.

For Levinas, the practice of 'hospitality' is the way to overcome the problems of subject-centredness and to build an ethical relationship. Hospitality, as the act of ethical encounter, with the Other starts from, not the subject but the Other, especially the face

of the Other. Levinasian hospitality pursues this encounter and the acceptance of the Other beyond the subject's reason and consciousness. However, the churches' practice of hospitality towards the defectors leads not to the Other (defector)-centric attitude but to reinforce the subject (church)-centredness by creating otherisation and polarisation.

The next section criticises the hospitality of the churches that creates otherisation and polarisation in light of Levinas' thoughts.

5.5 Hospitality or Imperial Ploy: Rethinking Church-Centred Hospitality

Although Korean churches seem to have more passion to welcome and serve the defectors than any other organisation in the South, the defectors are facing cultural discrimination even within the churches and struggling to survive in a capitalist society. This section will rethink the hospitality of the churches towards the defectors and criticise the essential root of what makes their hospitality otherise the defectors in the lens of Levinas' thought.

5.5.1 Hospitality for Mission: Features of Hospitality in the Churches

Even though the notion of hospitality has many socio-political, philosophical, and theological ramifications, hospitality simply means welcoming the stranger. In this sense, Korean Protestant churches, as some of the main institutions predominantly involved with the defectors, play a significant role in welcoming them. Regardless of denomination and their theological perspective, most Korean churches agree to the practice of hospitality towards the defectors as a vital task of the church. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Korean churches welcome the defectors in various ways depending on the political situation in the South and changes in the reasons for defection.

Korean churches engaged with the defectors are divided into the three different groups: (1) The group of the South church-initiative, mostly mega-churches that run special programmes for the defectors; (2) churches led by the defectors as ordained pastors; and (3) the collaborative group involving both churches of the South and the defectors (Chung, 2016). Most hospitality is extended by the first group, where the

defectors are welcomed through the North Korea mission departments of mega-churches. The churches justify their ‘hospitality for mission’ programmes to convert the defectors through posting the positive reactions of the defectors on their website, information brochures, church newspapers, books, and so on. There are three different features of hospitality within the programmes of the first group depending on the direction of the ministry; faith-based, social welfare-based, and proselytisation-based hospitality.

Firstly, the reason for the churches practicing hospitality towards the defectors is to help the defectors find their footing in the Christian faith. For instance, *Youngnak* Presbyterian Church introduces the defectors to Christianity by providing a worship service for the defectors, and having a prayer meeting for North Koreans and for the unification. The church established the *Hanawon* church for helping the defectors attend Christian worship. *Hanawon* church is located in the settlement centre, the place where the defectors are sent when they first arrive in the South. The *Hanawon* church supports the defectors emotionally as they settle in the South through faith-based actions, such as Christian counselling, praying, connecting them to the local social network, etc. In addition, the *Youngnak* church focuses on spreading the Gospel to the defectors by organising a bible study group called “Bible Study Class for the Free People (BSCFP)” (Ha 2012). One defector who attended the bible group said “They always warmly embrace me whenever I go to the church to join the BSCFP. ... Nobody else inquired of my welfare. However, whenever I met them in the church they not only inquired of my welfare but also embraced me and consoled me” (Ha, 2012, pp. 181-82).

Similar to this experience, one female defector said how she felt comforted after regularly attending Christian prayer meetings.

For about two weeks, I went to the church every evening. I was overwhelmed with joy. I was shouting, praying, and praising until midnight. I think I finally met God at that time. God told me, “I will take care of you.” It was not the actual voice, but I knew that it was God’s message for me. “I will take care of you.” After I hear the voice, my tears were dried up. “Oh, I am not alone anymore.” I felt fine, and I started going to school again. (Jun et al., 2019, p. 190).

Secondly, the hospitality of the churches is operated within a social welfare aspect. *Onnuri* Church established a social welfare centre for the defectors called Common Ground, *Hanteo* in Korean. Although the church is located in Southern Seoul, the centre is in the North-west of Seoul because many defectors live in the area. The centre provides the defectors help to settle in the South. In addition, the centre provides for student accommodations and study groups for young defectors who struggle to catch up with public education in the South. Some of the female defectors, who are considered to be at a disadvantage than the male defectors when it comes to making a living, are given a chance to work in the craft workshop within the centre (Kwon, 2018). Huh Yoon-hee, a pastor for the defectors in *Onnuri* church, insists that “As the welfare service plays a significant role in connecting the churches and the defectors, the ministry for the defectors should be carried out with the welfare service” (Y. Kim, 2017). A female defector testifies her experience of hospitality in the centre. She says,

As I look back on myself, I see many changes in my life since I came to *Hanteo* (Common Ground). I was exhausted and my whole body was covered with cuts and bruises My experiences of meeting many friends, teachers, and pastors through *Hanteo* allowed me to have some space in my mind for others (Cho, 2012).

Thirdly, the defectors are welcomed for the purpose of conversion to Christianity. Most of the conservative Korean churches aim for the proselytisation of defectors as they develop the relationship with the defectors. For instance, Sarang Community Church that is known for its Discipleship Training (DT), meets the defectors within the frame of its ministry goal. With the spirit of DT “Let us know Christ and make Him known”, the church trains the church members to live a life of evangelists to spread the gospel to non-Christians. The church vigorously trains the defectors to accomplish their goal which is to convert them into Christianity. The passion for conversion also makes the churches help defectors fleeing the North, support the underground churches, manage shelters for the defectors, and so on. One of the defectors who became a Christian confessed that he experienced hospitality from the missionaries he met on the his way out of the North.

About six cops came into the room. I do not speak Chinese, but I knew that they were threatening the pastor. They already knew what they came for. But the pastor bravely said, “I do not know what you are talking about. It is correct that the person you are looking for was here, but all he wanted was a meal because he was starving. I offered a meal and he left after the meal”. It could have been a great danger for the church and for the pastor, as helping the defectors at that time was a serious crime. He could have just said, “Here is the North Korean you are looking for, just take him” and escape from the situation. But he took the risk of his own life to save me. I was very touched. After that, I became a stepson of the pastor (Jun et al., 2019, pp. 193-94).

Another case is that of the Seoul *Bansuk* church which proclaims that the main purpose of the hospitality towards the defectors is to proselytise them by making contacts with them at various points. The church desires for the defectors to become warriors to evangelise Korea. To do so, the church encourages its members to have a relationship with the defectors in their daily lives for spreading the Gospel. Moreover, the church provides various voluntary services and financial support for the mission work to assist the defectors and the North. As a result, some of the defectors in the South share the perspective of the church’s missional desire towards the North. One of the defectors stated,

Before he knew church, North Korea only meant the cursed land full of agonies. But he met Jesus Christ. As his faith grew, he started seeing North Korea not as a cursed place but the place in need of blessings. He said, “In the past, North Korea was only full of painful memories to me. But now, it became the reason and the dream [to bring the Gospel to the North] of my life” (Kang, 2018).

These three different features of the hospitality of Korean churches help the defectors settle in the South better. The welcoming of the churches plays a role in the defectors’ lives to help them overcome their loneliness and financial difficulties. However, the hospitality programmes of the churches are heavily influenced and sometimes radically changed depending on the South’s political priority. Also, the hospitality often becomes

a tool to forcefully assimilate the defectors into the sameness of the churches (Torrey, 2018). That is to say, the defectors' experience of otherisation and is utilised to promote anti-communism in the South society. The churches' missional agenda and hegemony are masqueraded as kindness and hospitality. The hidden intentions of the churches in the practice of hospitality need to be revealed.

5.5.2 Critique the Churches' Hospitality for Proselytisation from Levinas' Perspective

5.5.2.1 Faith-Based Hospitality: Hospitality of Invitation

The faith-based hospitality is practiced by the members of the church communities. When the defectors convert to Christianity and/or regularly attend the worship and bible/prayer meetings, they are be welcomed and supported by the churches. From Levinas' view, the faith-based welcoming of the defectors does not have features of authentic hospitality. In other words, the churches welcome and accept the defectors within an implicit mutual contract which is not well revealed. Roughly speaking, the defectors are only welcomed and rewarded when they become the objects the churches can use for mission in North Korea or write themselves into the theological narrative of the churches. In terms of Levinas' language of hospitality, while the defectors seemingly enjoy the hospitality in the host's house or the churches without any conditions, the defectors as guests, are only welcomed when they follow the rules and intentions of the host. The hospitality clearly relies on the host or the subject who has the upper hand over the guest. The guest can only be recognised and can stay in the host's house within the area that is designated by the host. The guest faces the possibility of being expelled anytime depending on the host's will.

The faith-based hospitality is close to the notion of 'tolerance'. Hospitality is Other-centredness while tolerance is the self-centredness even when it allows coexistence with the others' alterity and identity. That is to say, within the relationship between the subject and the Other, tolerance is rooted in the power of the subject over the Other. Contrary to this, hospitality indicates the abandon of the self's will which is then handed over to the Other as a result of the self's unavoidably infinite responsibility. Jacques Derrida, who develops Levinas' idea of hospitality, mentioned the limits of tolerance. He writes,

Tolerance is always on the side of the “reason of the strongest,” where “might is right”; it is a supplementary mark of sovereignty, the good face of sovereignty, which says to the other from its elevated position, I am letting you be, you are not insufferable, I am leaving you a place in my home, but do not forget that this is my home (Borradori, 2013, p. 127).

Faith-based hospitality, akin to tolerance, creates the vertical dynamic, which puts pressure on the defectors to accept the churches’ needs and purposes regardless of their own opinion and preference.

5.5.2.2 Social Welfare-Based Hospitality: Instrumental Hospitality

The social welfare-based hospitality pursues to create a link between the churches and the defectors, in the hope that the churches will be able to utilise this relationship for further proselytisation. After the relationship between South and North marginally improved in the 2000s, numbers of evangelical churches began to get actively involved in humanitarian aid towards North Korea, such as food donations and building schools or hospitals in the North. Even though the churches’ help is useful to avoid utter impoverishment of the North, they attempted to enter and approach North Korea with the intention of converting people through humanitarian aid. In the same vein, the churches welcomed the defectors who live in the South for achieving their mission purpose. The churches, because of the unique political context of Korea, justified using the defectors as anti-communist leaders in the name of God through the defectors’ exaggerated testimony about North Korean society. That is to say, only those defectors who abandon their own experiences and identity as people from the North, are welcomed by the churches. In terms of Levinas’ philosophy, the defectors are reduced and seized into the churches as their alterity is stamped out by the violence of sameness.

While hospitality is “concretely produced as the calling into question of the same by the Other” (Levinas, 1991, p. 43), the churches reduces the defectors into sameness through the pretence of hospitality. Social welfare-based hospitality tries to grasp the defectors as ontological cognition. It means that strangeness or alterity of the defectors has to be assimilated into the churches as alter ego. However, Levinas claims the self’s identity is constituted not by him/herself but the otherness of the Other. In

particular, encountering the face of the Other is the only way to meet the alterity of the Other. In this face-to-face encounter, hospitality is aroused between them, beyond the roles of host and guest. Contrary to this, the social welfare-based hospitality interprets the defectors materially and absorbs them into the capitalistic logic of the churches instead of facing the defectors as unique beings. The church-centred economic approach subordinates the defectors as beneficiaries of the churches' power. The churches' power over the defectors forces them to become missional objects and leads to "the suppression of the Other [defectors] by the grasp, by the hold, or by the vision that grasps before grasp" (p. 302). Although social welfare-based hospitality has contributed to improving the defectors' lives, it is still locked in the logic of the churches.

5.5.2.3 Proselytisation-Based Hospitality: Hostipitality

Proselytisation-based hospitality encounters the defectors for the purpose of mission in the North, in particular, rebuilding the churches in the North. The hospitality regards re-establishing the churches in the North as the urgent and foremost task for the gospelisation of Korea. The defectors as missionaries are trained to work according to the churches' agenda. To achieve this, all defectors who live in the South are not welcomed by the churches, but only those who change their ideology from communism to liberal democracy and, convert to Christianity. Since the defectors are from the enemy country, the evangelical churches, which are rooted in strong anti-communism and support a conservative political stance, see the defectors through a lens of suspicion and make sure that they abandon their values and experiences of the North. In other words, if the defectors raise a question about Christianity or the problem of a democratic society, the attitude of the churches will immediately change from hospitality to hostility.

Proselytisation-based hospitality, which is conditional and host-centred hospitality, depends on the guest and their willingness to let go of their own identity and past. Considering the extreme opposite positions between which the churches' treatment of defectors swings, Derrida coined the portmanteau, 'hostipitality' which combines hospitality and hostility (Derrida, 2013; Kang, 2013). Within the ironic dual meaning of hostipitality, the defectors not only become favourable strangers, but may sometimes also be considered hostile strangers by the churches. The churches welcome the defectors as strangers and there is tension in their relationship which can easily move

from hospitality to hostility. The defectors are forced to change their unique alterity and allow themselves to be seized into the churches to be accepted by the churches. There is no responsibility that the subject feels towards the Other or openness for breaking the boundary between the host and the guest. Rather, within the relationship, the churches conquer the defectors by categorising them in binaries, and highlighting the hierarchical engagement with them which is far from real hospitality.

According to Levinas (1991), the engagement with the Other needs to be “fundamentally pacific” (p. 171). However, “totality absorbs the multiplicity of beings, which peace implies. Only beings capable of war can rise to peace” (p. 222). The defectors’ alterity is seized into the totality of the churches and they are exposed to ontological violence. As the otherness of the defectors is absorbed into the churches, the defectors experience hospitality and hostile simultaneously.

5.5.3 The Traces of Colonialism⁹

As analysed in the earlier parts, the Korean Protestant churches’ hospitality towards the defectors has been affected by the historical and political situation in South Korea. The churches sorted the defectors based on the government’s anti-communist policy to determine who deserves hospitality in the South society. Fundamentalist theology and conservative biblical interpretation justified and assisted the actions. The seriousness of the problem is that regardless of the historical, political, and theological background, the churches’ act of hospitality towards the defectors has been rooted in their self-centredness. The defectors are welcomed by the churches under the condition that they have to be assimilated and thematised into the sameness of the churches. Ironically, their hospitality brings ontological violence that forces the defectors to be trapped in the logic of the churches. Therefore, when the Korean churches’ practice of hospitality is

⁹ The term colonialism can be variously defined in multidisciplinary perspectives including history, socio-cultural studies, economy, politics, anthropology, philosophy, and so on. According to Jürgen Osterhammel (2005), colonialism basically indicates that the powerful subjects (people or countries) impose their dominant rule and system upon the others who differ from the I. He defines the term that “Colonialism is a relationship between an indigenous (or forcibly imported) majority and a minority of foreign invaders. The fundamental decisions affecting the lives of the colonised people are made and implemented by the colonial rulers in pursuit of interests that are often defined in a distant metropolis. Rejecting cultural compromises with the colonised population, the colonisers are convinced of their own superiority and their ordained mandate to rule” (p. 16). In the same vein, the hospitality of the Korean churches towards the defectors that is used to force religious and political conversion will be interpreted as the act of colonialism. See Osterhammel, Jürgen(2005). *Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview*. Markus Weiner.

interpreted through the lens of Levinas' ethics of the Other, it becomes clear that the hospitality has been formed by colonial and imperial frameworks, whether intentionally or unintentionally.

According to Ngugi Wa Thiong'o (2009), a Kenyan writer and scholar, the biggest problem of colonialism is an elimination of the otherness of the Other. He writes,

Colonialism imposed its control of the social production of wealth through military conquest and subsequent political dictatorship. But its most important area of domination was the mental universe of the colonised, the control, through culture, of how people perceived themselves and their relationship to the world. To control a people's culture is to control their tools of self-definition in relationship to others (p. 16).

In the same token, Letty Russel (2009) asserts that hospitality is still discussed in the church from the 'imperial perspective' by "examining the otherness of those who are not Eurocentric white males" (p. 23). She claims that imperialism, as interconnected oppression of gender, economy, and politics, makes the others subordinate to the dominate culture by disregarding the uniqueness of the others.

In this sense, Korean Protestant churches should feel the needs to criticise their own imperial actions against the defectors in the name of hospitality. More specifically, despite the Korean churches' good intentions, the churches perpetrated "colonisation of consciousness" which eliminates self-identity, social norms, language, and familial ties of the defectors through arbitrary positions and powers of the churches (Kang, 2016). In particular, the hospitality of the churches, as an imperial ploy, has been used for forcing conversion on to the defectors. For the defectors, becoming Christian can be an 'exchange value' as it is an essential route to receiving the welcome of the churches. It also has clear economic and social currency. Therefore, they may have to pretend to be converted from time to time if necessary, even if they do not feel any religious conviction. In such a relationship, it is hard to find alterity and diversity. The mixed role of the churches as providers of humanitarian aid as well as evangelists turns them into colonisers when it comes to the defectors who are exploited in the name of Christian

faith. Their attitude towards the defectors reflects what is known as the white man's burden, the responsibility felt by European colonisers to "save the souls" of the indigenous peoples of their colonies for which Christianity was often the instrument of choice. In the name of spreading the Gospel and "civilising" the indigenous peoples, the latter were often tempted with financial and social gains which they would enjoy only if they altered their subjectivity, abandoned their identities, and converted to Christianity. Thus, the colonial heritage, which highlights the subjectivity of the church as a superior one, still impacts the relationship between the Korean churches and the defectors.

There are three imperial features in the hospitality of Korean churches towards the defectors. Firstly, the Korean churches' hospitality which is expressed through their financial support of the defectors highlights their hierarchical relation as benefactors and beneficiaries. As aforementioned, the churches approach the defectors who are in needs by providing them with subsistence through the churches' power. Conversion to Christianity is implicitly embedded in their support as a condition to receive the aid. One defector questioned the hospitality of the churches.

Even though no one forced me into Christianity, I definitely had internal pressure: If I didn't believe in God, would they still be helping me? ... One thing Christianity could do to help address the question is to say to North Korean defectors, 'It's totally up to you — whether you join the religion or not — we're going to help you regardless.' I think that could be helpful, but I don't know whether South Korean missionaries are prepared to do that (Pilkington, 2015).

In addition, the vivid boundary between the giver and taker leads to building a superficial relationship between them.

I went to the church that is known for helping the defectors. In the chapel, there was a seat designated for the 'defectors' and 'Koreans.' The segregation continued at meal time. When the service is over, there was a meal. But about 30 of the defectors had to eat in a separate room from the Koreans (Chung, 2016, p. 240).

Mega church provided 100,000 Won [about 80 Euros] per month, which was a great help. However, I could not develop a single friendship with any of the other believers in the church for the four years of the time I attended, apart from one pastor who was assigned to me. I felt sorry to lose the 100,000 Won, but I moved to a different church where only the defectors attend to free myself (Chung, 2016, p. 245).

That is to say, the hospitality of the churches based on financial aid tends to regard the defectors as the Other who can be assimilated into Christianity but still cannot become a 'one of us'.

Secondly, the hospitality of Korean churches requests the defectors to deny their alterity they brought from the North. When the defectors enter South Korea, they have to remove the socio-cultural and political experiences of North Korea in order to stay in the South. In particular, the defectors are censored by both the government and him/herself which makes their whole life in the North to be seen as inferior and evil. For instance, when a male defector called Kim Kwang-jin contacted a Christian missionary in China, the missionary demanded he change his North Korean name to the biblical name, Joseph Kim. He described that

It was a mixture of anger plus sadness. I literally gave up everything I had to survive. I gave up my personality. I gave up the pride of being human. I had nothing to tie me to my parents and my past life. The only thing that identified me was my name — and now I was being told to give that up too (Pilkington, 2015).

The action of Korean churches demanding the defectors to change their name approximates to colonialism which ignores the others' own identity and heritage. This is also worked into the programmes of the churches for the defectors. It is difficult to find the willingness to hear the voice from the defectors within the programmes that are managed by mega-churches. Rather, the churches try to reduce them to fit into the South and churches' system as a condition of support.

I like some of the programmes for the defectors that churches provide as it helps me to settle in the South. But some of the programmes imply that the South system is more developed therefore is superior to the North. The history class that I attended at *Hanawon* was completely different from what I learnt from the North. The class required me to turn over the perspectives I had on the ethnic authenticity or the Korean War. Now I have been educated from the North and the South both, so my vision has become clearer. With the clearer vision, I think the authenticity lies more on the North-side... (Han, 2016, p. 145).

This indicates that there is a disregardful gaze towards the defectors in the churches' hospitality whereby the churches are put in a higher position over the defectors in their engagement. Rather than opening the defectors' mind, paradoxically, the hospitality of the churches makes the defectors, who are asked to erase their identity, to close their mind by hiding their origin and experiences including the diversity that they may bring to the churches.

Thirdly, the churches seek to make passionate Christian defectors for the North Korea mission by using hospitality. Financially and politically imbalanced relationship between the two parties leads the churches to teach the Christian faith and demand fidelity towards it from the defectors unilaterally. Considering that the hospitality of the churches is usually practised in the faith-based meetings such as bible studies or prayer meetings, the defectors have no choice but to follow the indoctrination of the churches.

A catch phrase "Jesus=Heaven, No Jesus=Hell" seems self-righteous to me. It sometimes feels worse than the *Juche* ideology. They say all the problems can be solved by meeting God, but I think the Christian cultures are too overheated. I was once fooled by Kim Il-Sung, and now Christianity is insisting that it is the one and only truth. It seems too narrow-minded to me (Han, 2016, p. 145).

There is no free discussion in bible study meetings. The pastor gives unilateral exposition, and sometimes I have questions because I do not know much. It seems similar to the ideology control in the North. They measure the amount of

faith and there are ranks of faith based on the measurement, which is similar to the North hierarchy system (Han, 2016, p. 146).

Inasmuch as these three features of the hospitality of the churches, the churches exert control over the life of the defectors, in physical, psychological, and intellectual dimensions (Kang, 2016). The churches have to be aware of the imperial paradigm of their hospitality which brings oppression and assimilation. According to Levinas' philosophy, the Korean Protestant churches should disregard the self-centred imperial frame rooted in Western modern philosophy and theology in order to practice true hospitality. The authentic hospitality can be achieved not from the intention of the host but from the ethical demand of the guest, the face of the guest.

5.6 Conclusion

The hospitality of the Korean Protestant churches' towards the defectors has been affected by the historical and political situation in South Korea. Furthermore, fundamentalist theology and conservative biblical interpretation justify their actions. Regardless of the historical, political, and theological background, the key problem in the churches' act of hospitality towards the defectors is their 'self-centredness'. The defectors are designated as the others/objects in the South and they are welcomed and allowed to enjoy life in a specific space under a given name determined by the churches. The relationship between the churches and the defectors brings about ontological violence that captures the defectors within the world of the churches. It inevitably leads to othering of the defectors and acceleration of polarisation by using the defectors. In order to overcome the otherisation and polarisation, the church-centred relation has to be changed by respecting the defectors' subjectivity. In particular, the churches have to abandon the zeal for politicised proselytisation towards the defectors in the name of hospitality that manipulates the defectors, using them against the North, and forcing religious/ideological conversions.

The next chapter suggests Levinas' hospitality as the alternative to the self-centric hospitality of the churches in order to overcome the otherisation and polarisation of the defectors.

CHAPTER SIX. OVERCOMING OTHERISATION AND POLARISATION THROUGH LEVINAS' HOSPITALITY

6.1 Introduction

In the previous chapters, it became evident that North Korean defectors exist as the others or second-class citizens in South Korean society due to complex socio-political and historical factors. In addition, the marginalised defectors experience otherisation and polarisation in their encounter with the churches. Intentionally or unintentionally, the churches attempt to assimilate and capture the defectors into the churches' mission agenda in the name of hospitality. The defectors, who need financial and emotional help to survive in the South, cannot reject the churches' hospitality which has implicit religious and political intentions. In other words, the defectors have to comply with the churches' requirements to receive their support, such as deny their subjectivity which stems from the North, blame the homeland, and join a propaganda campaign, and so on. Paradoxically, it is the hospitality of the churches that is used as a tool to seize to the defectors into the churches' own subjectivity. This results in the defectors staying in the South as not being unique individual subjects but a political entity that can be used to serve political interests.

This chapter proposes Levinas' philosophical concept of hospitality as the way to overcome otherisation and polarisation of the defectors within the engagement of the churches. More specifically, this chapter tries to answer the following questions: Why is Levinas' hospitality important to overcome the phenomenon of otherisation and polarisation of defectors, what this hospitality is, and how can it be achieved and applied to the relationship between the two groups.

6.2 Levinas' Hospitality: A Journey Towards an Ethical Relation

6.2.1 Levinas' Hospitality as the Key to Overcome Othersation and Polarisation

Deconstructing Western modern philosophy that seeks self-centric subjectivity and a metaphysic of transcendental ontology is the vital point of Levinas' philosophy. Levinas

contends that the Other has experienced exclusion, inhospitality, and violence within the Western philosophical structure through the subject's totalisation. In this perspective, otherisation and polarisation of the defectors in the engagement of the churches stem from church-centred subjectivity based on Western traditional philosophy and theology.

In light of Levinas' philosophical lens, although the phenomenon of otherisation and polarisation of the defectors are furthered through the churches' intended hospitality for proselytisation, it is through hospitality that this situation can be changed. Before examining Levinas' hospitality, it is necessary to understand why Levinas' hospitality is important to avoid the distorted situation of the defectors.

Korean Protestant churches as the powerful subject in the South attempt to reduce and control the defectors into the sameness of the churches. The churches in their self-oriented interests thematise and categorise the defectors through the politicised missional agenda in the name of hospitality. In this sense, the churches' hospitality towards the defectors, which starts from the church-centredness, inevitably leads to a stark distinction between the role of the host and the guest. As conditional hospitality, the defectors can receive the churches' supports when the defectors accept the churches' logic and requirements. Considering the conflict context of the peninsula, the churches' hospitality requires the defectors to critique the North's regime by using their experiences in order to serve the anti-communist agenda of the churches. This kind of hospitality creates the vertical and hierarchical dynamic between the two parties. Within this relation, the defectors have to abandon their subjectivity and fit into the idea of the churches that utilise the defectors for the mission in North Korea. Furthermore, the defectors must prove their conversion to liberal democracy as well as Christianity by actively getting involved in anti-communist movements.

That is to say, otherisation and polarisation are created by the process in the following way: The church-centric identity of the churches encourages conditional hospitality towards the defectors for the sake of mission. This hospitality develops an unequal power relation between the two groups. In the inclined relation, the defectors inevitably are exposed the otherisation and polarisation by the churches.

Inasmuch as the otherisation and polarisation of the defectors arise from the church-centric relationship, from the perspective of Levinas' philosophy, building an 'ethical relation' between the two groups plays a significant role in overcoming the

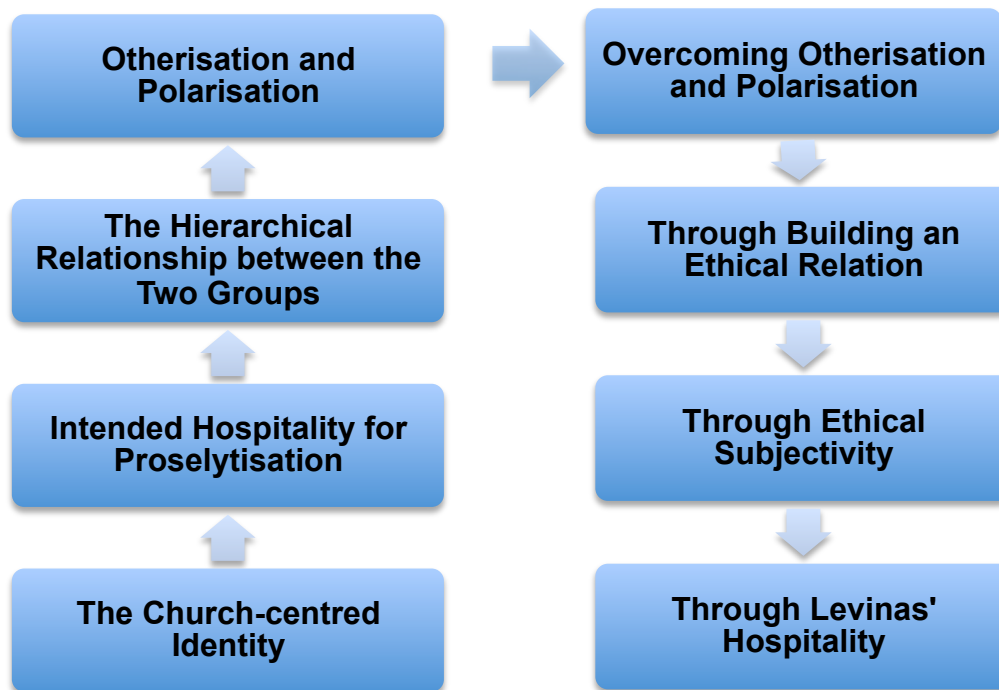
situation. As aforementioned, an ethical relation seeks to highlight the alterity of the Other not by capturing it within the consciousness of the self, but through taking responsibility towards the Other. The Western modern philosophical subjectivity is rooted in a consciousness that understands the object/other as an alter ego. Self-consciousness has attempted to grasp the others through rational knowledge in order to reduce and control them according to ontological understanding. Contrary to this totalising violence of the consciousness towards the Other, Levinas highlights an ethical relation that can be established when the subject abandons his/her need to categorise the Other into their own comprehension. In other words, the ethical relationship between the churches and the defectors can be achieved through changing the subjectivity of the churches to 'ethical subjectivity'. Ethical subjectivity means the subject finds his/her identity from the otherness of the Other. Levinas regards the otherness of the Other as not inferior but full of energy and vitality that evokes ethical subjectivity. Levinas (2000) writes,

It is not because the other is new, an unheard of quiddity, that he signifies transcendence, or, more exactly, signifies, purely and simply; it is because newness comes from the other that there is in newness transcendence and signification. It is through the other that newness signifies in being the otherwise than being (p. 174).

In this sense, the ethical subjectivity of the subject that is formed through the Other starts from 'welcoming the Other' or hospitality. Levinas regarded hospitality as the most significant way of transforming the subject-centric subjectivity to the other-centric one to reconcile between the subject and the others. In *Totality and Infinity*, Levinas (1991) writes, "this book will present subjectivity as welcoming the Other, as hospitality; in it the idea of infinity is consummated" (p. 27). Through hospitality, the subject who gazes into the face of the Other can discover him/herself and can respond to the Other's ethical command, in particular to, "do not kill me". In this sense, for Levinas, the notion of hospitality does not indicate the kindness or mercy of a host (subject) to a guest (Other). On the contrary, hospitality is the political struggle against the church-centric relation that brings otherisation and polarisation of the defectors. Hospitality for overcoming the phenomenon can be understood through this flow chart.

Figure 7

The Flow to Overcome Otherisation and Polarisation through Levinas' Hospitality



The following section examines Levinas' hospitality which can overcome the otherisation and polarisation of defectors.

6.2.2 Levinas' Hospitality

6.2.2.1 Responsibility of the Subject

In order to overcome the ontological violence inherent in the relationship between the subject and the other, Levinas seeks to build an ethical relation. For Levinas, the relation can be established through Other-centredness, in particular, through hospitality. Although Levinas focuses on the Other's perspective rather than the subject's, he does not overlook the subjectivity of the subject. On the contrary, Levinas suggests the expansion of the alternative self of the subject that realises his/her responsibility towards the Other. As aforementioned, the new subjectivity of the subject can be presented by welcoming the Other, as hospitality. That is to say, hospitality as the key

to building an ethical relationship between the subject and the Other provides new identity to the subject that is concerned with the Other's suffering and ethical demands.

As the foundation of the ethical relation, hospitality throws questions to the subjectivity of the subject. Levinas (1991) notes, "the welcoming of the other by the same, of the other by me, is concretely produced as the calling into question of the same by the other" (p. 43). For Levinas, hospitality creates the conjuncture of the same and the Other, which cannot be reduced into totality, through "the *direct* and *full-face* welcome of the other by me" (p. 80). This conjuncture makes the subject recognise the nakedness of the face of the Other and it inevitably leads to the "question of my joyous possession of the world" (p. 76). Furthermore, the welcoming of the Other awakens the subject's freedom that "discovers itself murderous in its very exercise" through accomplished shame (p. 84). Shame, which comes from encountering the Other, makes the subject confess "I am not innocent spontaneity but usurper and murderer" (p. 84).

Hospitality, as a welcoming of the face of the Other by the subject, creates the responsible subject who cannot exist without the Other. That is to say, the subject can only realise him/herself as "an existence already obligated" (p. 183) through its responsibility towards the Other. Responsibility towards the Other through hospitality "places the centre of gravitation of a being outside of that being" (p. 183). Levinas (2000) claims that "it [responsibility] inverts relationship and principles, reverses the order of interest" (p. 12). Through hospitality, the substitution becomes the very subjectivity of the subject. In addition, the identity of the self cannot ignore the responsibility for the Other and takes charge of alleviating the Other's suffering.

In this sense, for Levinas, hospitality provides the movement from the self to the Other that faces the alterity of the Other by confronting the subject's egoism (Levinas, 1991, p. 121). The subject, who realises self-for-the-Other through the welcoming of the Other, embarks on the ethical journey by turning itself into self-for-the-Other. Levinas writes, the welcoming of the Other "is already my responsibility in his regard, and where accordingly he approaches me from a dimension of height and dominates me" (p. 214). In other words, the self, who is seized by the otherness of the Other, takes charge of the Other through hospitality. The otherness of the Other or alterity represents itself as "not conqueror, but teachers" (p. 171). Teaching by the Other does not indicate dominance or control but "breaks the ceiling of the totality" that evokes ontological violence. Rather, it leads the subject to have a relationship of peace with the Other

devoid of ontological violence. For Levinas (2000), “peace with the Other is first of all my business. The non-indifference, the saying, the responsibility, the approach, is the disengaging of the unique one responsible, me” (p. 139). In a nutshell, hospitality makes the subjectivity of the subject responsible towards the Other’s demands and helps build peace within the relationship with others that starts from the I and is extended to the others.

For the subject, hospitality is the obligation he/she has for the others as well as the vital factor for transformation of the self to a responsible subject. The self cannot avoid the obligation of hospitality towards the Other since “the Other faces me and puts me in question and *oblige*s me by his essence qua infinity” (Levinas, 1991, p. 207). Levinas contends that “the Other who dominates me in his transcendence is thus the stranger, the widow, and the orphan, to whom I am obligated” (p. 215). In addition, the subject through hospitality does not neglect the ego but creates a new identity through the otherness of the Other.

The most important thing is that hospitality is rooted in the affirmation of the embodiment. For Levinas, cognition or consciousness of the self makes the Other an object or thematises it. He insists that cognition reduces the Other into nothing by removing its alterity. In contrast, the awakening of existence comes from the Other, beyond the knowledge of the *cogito* (pp. 85-86). More specifically, incarnate consciousness offers “powers of welcome, of gift, of full hands, of hospitality” (p. 205). The relationship with the Other is enhanced within the body where is “to be *me* though living in the *other*” (p. 117) and is accomplished as hospitality (p. 300) which is derived from the embodiment. The incarnate subject, whose existence is for the Other through hospitality, takes care of the Other’s needs and has “meaning only among beings of flesh and blood” (Levinas, 2000, p. 74). Levinas writes, “a subject is of flesh and blood, a man that is hungry and eats, entrails in a skin, and thus capable of giving the bread out of his mouth, or giving his skin” (p. 77). In this sense, the body is the place of the for-the-other and becomes the locus of hospitality that can be articulated as the-one-for-the-other in subjectivity. Hence, the subjectivity of flesh and blood surrenders his/her subjectivity to the Other by welcoming the Other.

6.2.2.2 *Ethical Interruption of the Other*

While hospitality seems to be the subject's mercy and active action towards the Other, for Levinas, it comes from the Other. It means that the subject does not get the upper hand within the relationship with the Other in doing hospitality. Instead, the Other summons and imposes his/her ethical demands onto the subject. According to Levinas (1991), "a meaningful world is a world in which there is the Other through whom the world of my enjoyment becomes a theme having a signification" (p. 209). That is to say, the subject can only find his/her subjectivity through association with the Other in hospitality. The Other, as the being who can affect the transformation to hospitable subjectivity, has the right to enjoy the hospitality and becomes the centre of the relationship as well.

Immanuel Kant is the first philosopher who defined hospitality as the right of the Other. In *Perpetual Peace*, Kant comments, "we are here concerned not with philanthropy, but with *right*. In this context, hospitality means the right of a stranger not to be treated with hostility when he arrives on someone else's territory" (Kant, 1991, p. 105). The Kantian idea, the right of hospitality, is innovative since it highlights not the host but the guest within the relationship that they share. However, if we follow the idea, such hospitality can only be understood within a conditional relationship which is based on a reciprocal agreement. In other words, Kantian hospitality is not the right of the other as premised hospitality of the obligation of the subject but a host-centric dispensation that can control and assimilate the guest into the host's logic or power. The hospitality inevitably leads to a limitation within the realm of the self. Contrary to this, Levinas sought to replace self-centred conditional hospitality with Other-centred unconditional hospitality by welcoming the Other who has alterity beyond perception and cognitive categories of the subject.

In Levinas, hospitality starts from, not the subject who accepts the Other in terms of the self, but the Other who reveals him/herself to the subject. As mentioned above, the Other brings its alterity and various experiences to the subject by throwing questions to the subject that the latter could not have thought of. This process reveals a new, ethical subjectivity of the subject. That is to say, welcoming the otherness of the Other is the first task for building an ethical relation and transforming the subjectivity of the subject responsible towards the Other.

According to Levinas, the Other, as an absolute being, is prior to the subject's freedom. Levinas (1991) writes, "He [the Other] is not under a category. He is the one to whom I speak — he has only a reference to himself; he has no quiddity" (p. 69). The Other reveals him/herself as a transcendental being through the poor, widow, and stranger over whom the self cannot exercise his/her power or kill them. The transcendence of the Other includes "his destitution, his exile, and his rights [of hospitality] as a stranger" (pp. 76-77). Through the action of hospitality towards the Other, the self realises his/her true freedom; "It is from the welcoming of the infinity of the other that it receives the freedom with regard to itself" (p. 210). In addition, the freedom makes the self a hostage of the Other; "This condition (or uncondition) of hostage is an essential modality of freedom — its primary modality — and not an empirical accident of a freedom always remaining above it all" (Levinas, 2019, p. 70).

For Levinas (1991), the subject's freedom presents itself as the Other (p. 75) and it leads to recognising the Other through a face-to-face encounter. In particular, Levinas insists that "to recognise the Other is to recognise a hunger. To recognise the Other is to give" (p. 75). Welcoming of the being that presents itself in the face of the Other as the "ethical event of sociality" (p. 207) puts the self into the relationship with the Other by giving the self's own possession and power to the others, so the self can respond to its infinite responsibility towards them. That is to say, the face of the Other, for Levinas, presents itself by "exceeding *the idea of the Other in me*" (p. 50) and invites one to do hospitality that is a dimension of transcendence, totally bereft of egoism. Since a relationship with the Other is established through a face-to-face encounter, ethical relation can be accomplished "as service and as hospitality" (p. 300). Moreover, as aforementioned, the Other introduces the subject to exile away from self-centredness and dominance over the face of the poor and the stranger.

The face in its nakedness as a face presents to me the destitution of the poor one and the stranger; but this poverty and exile which appeal to my powers, address me, do not deliver themselves to these powers as givens, remain the expression of the face (p. 213).

According to Abi Doukhan (2014), “the experience of exile [of the self] paves the way to an ethics understood as a relationship with an Other which welcomes this Other’s alterity and transcendence” (p. 22). The face of the Other as the poor and the stranger builds an ethical relation beyond the cognitive comprehension of the self and it addresses the self to open a space for the another as a response to the Other’s summons. For Levinas, although the face of the Other is revealed in frailty, the frailty does not mean inferiority or deficiency but qualifies alterity of the Other. Levinas defines the feature as ‘phenomenology of eros’. Levinas (1991) writes, “it [love] aims at him [the Other] in his frailty. ... To love is to fear for another, to come to the assistance of his frailty” (p. 256). Thus, the Other approaches the subject to awaken in the subject exile from his/her selfish prerogatives and encourage it to leap to the dimension of welcoming the Other.

6.2.2.3 Subject and the Other: Crossing Boundaries through Hospitality

Levinas’ hospitality can be newly understood in the context of the relationship between the subject and the Other. Hospitality to establish an ethical relationship is not, for Levinas, one where the hierarchical role of host and guest is fixed but rather overcomes the ontological relationship between the subject and the Other by encountering the face of the Other. Through the asymmetrical relationship which focuses on the Other’s perspective, the identity and power of the host is broken, and the host, who realises his/her own ethical responsibility, attempts to open his/her space for the guest.

Inasmuch as hospitality is inviting the Other to a home (Levinas, 1991, p. 172), genuine hospitality is the dwelling of the Other within the world of the self. Levinas writes, “it [dwelling] is a recollection, a coming to oneself, a retreat home with oneself as in a land of refuge, which answers to a hospitality, an expectancy, a human welcome” (p. 156). In other words, Levinas believes that hospitality can only be accomplished by encountering the Other through opening the space; “I welcome the Other who presents himself in my home by opening my home to him” (p. 171). In this sense, hospitality makes the subject open his/her space to the Other, and the Other who is different from the I lives within the subject’s existence. Considering “life is body” (p. 164), life can exist through an embodied relation with “contents that are not my being but more dear than my being” (p. 112) even though the otherness of the Other encumbers the self.

Generosity occurs in hospitality where boundaries between host and guest are blurred. The ability to be generous or hospitable emerges from the summons of the Other at which the subject relinquishes his/her possessions. It makes one “incapable of approaching the Other with empty hands” (p. 50). The self gives space for the Other at home through the “ethical movement of generosity”. That is to say, according to Doukhan (2014), “the exile of the other with regard to the intentional grasp of consciousness, and the exile of the self — through generosity — which permits an approach of the other as *exiled*, yet as capable of receiving the hospitality of the self” (p. 35). The ethical relationship between the self and the Other can be established through the movement of generosity that welcomes Otherness.

The engagement with the Other who lives in hospitality through generosity can be understood in the sense of the publicness of hospitality rather than merely in terms of hospitality in the private realm. According to Levinas, “a relation with the Transcendent free from all captivation by the Transcendent is a social relation” (p. 78). In addition, he writes,

Things acquire a rational signification, and not only one of simple usage, because an other is associated with my relations with them. In designating a thing I designate it to the Other. The act of designating modifies my relation of enjoyment and possession with things, place things in the perspective of the Other (p. 209).

By allowing the perspective of the Other in the realm of the self, the place of welcoming becomes public space as the “ethical event of sociality” (p. 207).

Moreover, the self’s responsibility as a result of hospitality summons it to get involved in justice beyond “the straight line of justice” (p. 245). In other words, the ethical relationship between the subject and the Other is related to the realm of politics. Even though the practice of unconditional hospitality seems to be impossible in *realpolitik*, “I am therefore necessary for justice, as responsible beyond every limit fixed by an objective law” (p. 245). That is to say, “to be unable to shirk: this is the I” (p. 245). In the relationship between the churches and the defectors, Levinas’ hospitality, as the articulated place of politics, seeks justice and peace in the peninsula

by avoiding the otherisation and polarisation of the defectors. Levinas' hospitality is not only about welcoming the defectors to stay in the South through financial and psychological support but also fighting for change in the structural problems that make the defectors' identities subservient to the missional and anti-communist narrative of the churches. Levinas' hospitality pursues emancipation of the defectors from the relationship of oppression. In doing so, the identity of the defectors, as a rouser of the conscience of the egoistic churches, will encourage the transformation of the churches' thinking and actual practice towards the defectors. Hence, it will lead to an end of the totalitarian results of the churches' actions, i.e., otherisation and polarisation.

The next part looks at how Levinas' concept of hospitality can be interpreted and practiced within a theological idea in order to apply it in the relationship between the churches and the defectors.

6.3 Building Levinas' Hospitality: The ABC Process

Putting aside the self-centred hospitality which comes with the implicit intention of proselytisation, the churches have practice of Levinas' hospitality in the engagement with the defectors to serve their true function as emissaries of Christ on earth. For achieving this, Levinas' philosophical concept of hospitality needs to be translated into the language of theology/pastoral care. Once interpreted within the frame of theology, the churches can use this philosophical concept of hospital in their actual practice.

To do so, the next part draws on the idea of incarnation to interpret the Levinas' hospitality in the churches' theological context. Incarnation can encourage the churches to practice Levinas' hospitality. However, it is not an easy task to convince the churches to adopt this philosophical concept of hospitality in their ministries. Since the churches are divided into several denominations depending on theological and political tendency, it is difficult to find a common ground. Thus, finding a theological metaphor or idea that can be shared by all the churches is an important task. The idea must not only respect the tradition and identity of the churches but also must challenge them to transform in their perspective from church-centredness to Other-centredness. In this sense, this section proposes the idea of incarnation, a Christian doctrine central to all Korean Protestant denominations' regardless of political inclinations. The churches confess God's incarnation as a core doctrine.

The concept of incarnation also has abundant theological insights to enhance Levinas' philosophy, particularly to overcome otherisation and polarisation. Christological incarnation can be expanded in meaning from an exclusive salvific realm of doctrine to ethics of being-for-the others. In other words, Christ's incarnation is not a mere individual phenomenon but it has implications on a political and community level. The idea of incarnation upset the existing dualism of platonic philosophy by focusing on the body, and moreover, as God became a human being, God revealed Godself in human history through knowledge and language of the world. God established a dynamic relationship with the oppressed Other by becoming a human body. This interpretation of incarnation can contribute to realising Levinas' hospitality in the relationship between the churches and the defectors to overcome the otherisation and polarisation.

To make Levinas' hospitality uses for the churches in their ministry, it will be elaborated in the context of incarnation in three steps, called 'The ABC Process': (1) Approaching the Other; (2) becoming-the-Other; and (3) cell division for engagement.

6.3.1 Step One: Approaching the Other

Approaching the Other is the first step towards practicing hospitality. For Levinas, as mentioned above, an encounter with the Other makes the subject question his/her intentions of reducing the Other to the sameness of the self. In other words, the subject realises the evil of self-oriented desire that causes ontological violence against the Other. Moreover, the subject finds his/her ethical responsibility by welcoming the Other. The important fact is that the ethical subject in the encounter with the Other, or in approaching the Other. While the general notion of hospitality involves scenarios where the host is approached by the guest, Levinas' definition of hospitality involves the host taking the first step. The subject's approaching of the Other as an ethical action indicates the abandon of power of the subject for the welcoming of the Other. Levinas (1991) writes,

To approach the Other is to put into question my freedom, my spontaneity as a living being, my emprise over the things, this freedom of a "moving force," this impetuosity of the current to which everything is permitted, even murder. The

“You shall not commit murder” which delineates the face in which the Other is produced submits my freedom to judgment (p. 303).

For Levinas, approaching the Other means that “I attend to myself” as a responsible being towards the Other (p. 178). Superficially, approaching the Other seems to emphasise the activity or motivation of the subject to move towards the Other. According to Levinas, however, the face of the Other pulls the subject to respond to the summons of the Other. It does not require active movement on the part of the subject. More specifically, the frailty of the Other makes the subject move towards the Other: “Frailty does not here figure the inferior degree of any attribute, the relative deficiency of a determination common to me and the other. Prior to the manifestation of attributes, it qualifies alterity itself” (p. 256). Through the naked face of the Other, the subject in his/her passive passivity approaches the Other, drawn like a moth to a flame.

The notion of approach as the first step of Levinas’ hospitality can also be illustrated through a more theological interpretation. Incarnation, which was the event where infinity approached the finite first, provides productive insight into how the churches can begin to practice such hospitality. According to the doctrine of incarnation, although Jesus Christ is Godself, He approaches creation by becoming a human body Himself without any conditions. As the radical event whereby transcendence penetrates human historical context, Christ’s incarnation proves the asymmetrical relation of Levinas’ philosophy. Levinas (2000) writes,

The knot of subjectivity consists in going to the other without concerning oneself with his movement toward me. Or, more exactly, it consists in approaching in such a way that, over and beyond all the reciprocal relations that do not fail to get set up between me and the neighbour, I have always taken one step more towards him (p. 84).

The approach of the incarnate God towards creation based on non-reciprocal relation emphasises the ethical interaction with the Other that overthrows the logic of self-centred ontological relationship. This core principle of incarnation leads one to open

his/her place for others out of responsibility for the Other without asking for any compensation or reciprocity.

Also, the idea of incarnation in the context of hospitality takes the expression of 'exposure' to 'the pain of the Other'. In other words, 'exposure' as a method indicates how the subject approaches the Other. 'The pain of the Other' directs the subject towards the Other. Exposure, as an affirmation of created subjectivity by the body, is related to one giving up his/her enjoyment and intention to assimilate others as a response to the Other's summons. Exposure does not involve approaching the Other to reduce the Other to the sameness of the self but is meant as a response to the Other's suffering. Levinas defines exposure as "disinterestedness, proximity, obsession by the neighbour, and an obsession despite oneself, that is, a pain" (p. 55). For Levinas, exposure to the Other leads to a state where the subject's body in its entirety "is offered to another, expressed or opened up" (p. 70) as fully responsible for the Other, particularly for the Other's pain. Levinas claims ethical subjectivity is sensibility born of "an exposure to others, a vulnerability and a responsibility in the proximity of the others, the-one-for-the-other" (p. 77). The subjectivity cannot be separated from the corporeality of the subject. The exposed subjectivity to the Other makes the ethical subject a responsible entity who is "being torn from oneself for another in giving to the other the bread from one's mouth" so as to perform incarnational hospitality (pp. 78-79).

Jesus Christ, as God's incarnation, becomes the epitome of Levinas' notion of exposure. Through God's approach to human beings, the incarnate God participates in human suffering. God identifies with the pain of humanity as God suffers on the cross in bodily form. According to Kazoh Kitamori, Japanese theologian who highlights the theology of pain, pain is the essential character of God. He writes, "The God of the Gospel causes his Son to die and suffers pain in that act" (Kitamori, 2005, p. 47). Following the doctrine of atonement, "The Lord was unable to resolve our death without putting himself to death. God himself was broken, was wounded, and suffered, because he embraced those who should not be embraced" (p. 22). The pain, God suffered on the cross to reconcile all of humanity to God's Self, becomes a motivation for one to reconcile oneself with the pain of others. Foremost, Kitamori regards the pain of God as "ethical mysticism" because "mysticism insists that self-seeking must be negated by being 'put off'" (p. 77). In other words, the pain of the Other brings the

subject to shoulder ethical responsibility towards the Other by abandoning self-centredness. Moreover, the “ethical mysticism” as the participation of the subject in the Other’s suffering is revealed through a love of neighbour, which begins from the summons of the Other’s pain.

As previously discussed, Levinas points out that human suffering appears in the face of the Other. The face of the Other, particularly the face of the stranger, the widow, and the orphan, is the trace of God since Jesus identified with “the least of these” in the Gospel of Matthew Chapter 25. Furthermore, from a Christian perspective, the face of the Other as *Imago Dei* is the place to meet God’s epiphany or absolute alterity, as Levinas put it. The Other’s suffering in the face appeals to the subject and inspires infinite responsibility towards the Other beyond one’s will and freedom. Therefore, inasmuch as incarnate God, as the subject of responsibility, reveals Godself to the humble by exposing Godself to human pain, Levinas’ hospitality is achieved through the subject approaching the Other and exposing him/herself to the Other’s suffering.

Levinas (2000) believes that transcendence and signification exist in newness, and this newness comes from the Other (p. 182). The subjectivity of the subject becomes the ethical subjectivity not by the efforts of the subject him/herself but from the newness of the Other. Levinas’ hospitality as infinite responsibility is the practice of the ethical subject which cannot reject the epiphany of the Other. God’s incarnation, as the ideal example of ethical interaction with humanity, represents the paradoxical mystery where although God is transcendence, God humbles Himself, although God is infinite, God chooses to become finite. Through this idea of ethical subjectivity, Levinas’ hospitality seeks to perform ethical and unconditional/radical hospitality that is Other-centred, beyond ontological and conditional hospitality of the self-centredness.

6.3.2 Step Two: Becoming-the-Other

As mentioned above, in contrast to the general notion of hospitality, Levinas’ hospitality is the welcoming of the Other beyond the limitation of ego-centric systems of consciousness. Through the first step of Levinas’ hospitality, ‘approaching the Other’, the subject’s subjectivity becomes responsible. The ethical subjectivity which is created by in the first step of hospitality starts to move further towards the building of an ethical relationship with the Other. That is to say, the ethical subject whose

subjectivity is constituted through of his/her suffering for the Other, reaches radical embodied ethical action by 'becoming-the-Other'. As becoming-the-Other is the union of the subject and the Other, the subject becomes the locus for responding to the ethical call of the Other, and then the entire being of the subject is fully opened to the Other beyond one's freedom and comprehension. In the place of the subject, becoming-the-Other provides an indistinct boundary between the host and the guest within the relationship of hospitality. In other words, becoming-the-Other does not indicate assimilation or thematisation of the power of the subject. Rather, self-centredness has no meaning in this situation. It is not only deviation from the centredness of the self but also the creation of multiplicity and uniqueness.

The process of becoming-the-Other can be interpreted through the theological idea of incarnation through four features of subjectivity: Relational, substitutional, alterity, and public subjectivity.

First of all, in becoming-the-Other, the subject pursues 'relational subjectivity-based hospitality'. God's becoming-the-human shows relational subjectivity with the others. In particular, self-emptying of Jesus, *kenosis*, is achieved in order to establish a relationship with the creation. God as infinity expanded God's subjectivity into the world which is finite. Incarnation shows that the subject breaks the circle of the self to open his/her space for welcoming the Other without imposing any self-benefitting conditions. In this sense, although the subject as the host can insist on his/her right and voice, Levinas' hospitality seeks to transform the subject ethically to build a relationship with the Other by regarding the pain of the Other as one's own. Jesus' self-emptying invites the Other into the subject's space and the proximity of the Other makes the subject love the neighbours as him/herself. In this relationship, the division of the position of the self and the Other becomes an unnecessary boundary. Disregarding order, power, and ability, the self and the Other can form a 'mystical union' that mutually respects the unique identities of each other rather than force them to merge into a singularity.

Secondly, becoming-the-Other contributes to 'substitutional subjectivity-based hospitality'. In the perspective of Christian faith, the climax of incarnation is that Jesus sacrificed His life on the cross for others. The ethical impact of the incarnation is that God becoming human is not only for the salvation of the soul but for embracing the whole creation into God's body through the cross. The substitution of Christ as the

radical bodily action of ethical responsibility leads to the practice of hospitality by highlighting the self-sacrifice.

Following the incarnational idea, becoming-the-Other as a substitution for the Other makes the subject realise that its subjectivity is derived from “the impossibility of escaping responsibility, from the taking charge of the other” (Levinas, 2000, p. 14). The subject’s substitution for the Other is achieved by regarding the Other as “being-in-one’s-skin, having-the-other-in-one’s-skin”, becoming-the-Other (p. 115). Levinas emphasises the kind of substitution which tears the subject’s flesh and blood for the Other as hospitality. Levinas explains how to achieve such substitution. He writes, “The I approached in responsibility is for-the-other, is a denuding, an exposure to being affected, a pure susceptiveness. It does not posit itself, possessing itself and recognising itself” (p. 138). The self by way of “a pure withdrawal from oneself” can him/herself substitute for the Other, and the substituted subject attempts to give his/her own skin as a gift to the Other (p. 138). Being torn of his/her skin for the sake of the Other, the subject now can confess “I am an Other” (p. 118). The ‘I’ who becomes the Other is no longer affected by the hierarchy of host and guest that sustains the ontological territory in relations. Substitution of the subject unites the identity of the self with the alterity of the Other (p. 118). Therefore, becoming-the-Other of the subject by “putting oneself in the place of another” moves towards hospitality with the incarnate passivity of obsession with the Other (p. 146).

Thirdly, becoming-the-Other creates an ‘alternative to subject-centred hospitality’. Becoming-the-Other, as mentioned above, does not demonstrate a return to the ontological system. It means that becoming-the-Other is not a merger or an integration with the Same by ignoring the uniqueness of the Other, but appears in the encounter of inhomogeneity rather than any attempt of making an alter ego based on the desire for sameness. In this sense, becoming-the-Other is the movement to flee from the way of defining being based on self-centredness (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004). The movement, as turning the perspective from the self to the Other, is the starting point for establishing an ethical relationship between the subject and the Other. By way of transformation to ethical subjectivity, the subject becomes an open-being for welcoming the Other’s alterity into his/her place. As God’s incarnation, albeit the subject becomes the Other being him/herself, the subject cannot assimilate the Other into his/her categories. Rather, the relations of becoming which comes from diversity and

multiplicity create a dynamic alternative through welcoming the Other. With this perspective, Letty Russell (2009) stresses that it is “Unity-in-Hospitality” that creates the community, not from sameness but difference, rather than “Unity-in-Tension” that is rooted in dichotomy and a structure of dominance and subservience (pp. 63-69).

Levinas (2000) insists that “welcome is equal to the measure I have of a neighbour. Adequation is impossible” (p. 88). The hospitality which has an intention of identification and categorisation is a conditional one. Criticising conditional hospitality, Levinas’ hospitality interrupts the unitary-centredness system that converges the others’ infinite alterity into generalisation; ‘like the self’. The reduction of the Other into sameness in the name of hospitality inevitably leads to violence, such as pressure, subordination, exclusion, and so on. Becoming-the-Other by the subject guards the uniqueness of the ‘otherwise than being’ which seeks to depart from totalitarian language through hospitality.

Lastly, becoming-the-Other supports a ‘public subjectivity-based hospitality’. For Levinas, whilst the subject is the rich and powerful being, the Other always exists as the stranger, the widow, and the poor. Since the Other summons the subject with the Other’s needs, it reconstitutes the subjectivity of the subject as rich and powerful regardless of the subject’s empirical social status (Bernasconi, 2005, p. 7). In this regard, considering Levinas’ philosophy, becoming-the-Other is becoming-the-minority. Paradoxically, the weakness of the Other creates the movement from the self to the Other by revealing the transcendence of the Other in the nakedness of the Other’s face. For this reason, becoming-the-Other is different from compassion. Compassion is still rooted in the self’s initiative. Becoming-the-Other, on the other hand, is obedience to the voice which comes from the margin, saying to it, “Here I am”.

Becoming-the-Other, precisely becoming-the-minority, practices responding to the ethical call of the Other by welcoming them. Beyond compassion and empathy, the subject who becomes a minority throws off the order of the majority in a political way. The new responsible being attempts to resist the social system that oppresses the minority since the minority’s suffering becomes the self’s suffering. In the perspective of incarnation, Jesus’ self-identification with ‘the least of these’ achieves justice and peace of the ‘Kin-dom of God’¹⁰ through welcoming the marginalised. For Christians,

¹⁰ The meaning of the word ‘Kingdom’ as a religio-political term is rooted in the male-oriented and imperialistic attitude. The word ‘Kin-dom’ well reflects the diversity, solidarity, and equal community

accepting the marginalised is the same action as welcoming Jesus. In this perspective, seeking justice for the marginalised is the core value of Levinas' hospitality (Russell, 2009, p. 106). The movement as an ethical imperative from the Other is tied to political solidarity to reform the life of the minorities and the marginalised. Thus, through becoming-the-minority, hospitality, as one of the radical public actions, plays a significant role in the real world.

6.3.3 Step Three: Cell Division for Entanglement

To sum up the process of Levinas' hospitality that has been elaborated through the idea of incarnation until now, the subject transforms into the ethical subject as he/she encounters the Other, in particular through responding to the summons of the Other, and welcoming the Other. Hospitality contributes to the movement of the subject which approaches the Other, is held by the gaze of the Other, and finds him/herself, in a state of passivity, responding to the Other's summons and embracing the Other's pain. According to Levinas (2000), the action of hospitality shakes the self to its very foundation, called "fission of the nucleus" (p. 49). The subjectivity of the subject penetrates the Other through hospitality by splitting from the nucleus of the Same. That is becoming-the-Other. The explosion of the boundaries of the subject does end with deconstruction. Now, the subject reconstructs the subjectivity of flesh and blood or incarnate identity. In other words, the subject, who is obsessed with the Other's ethical call, regains and restores the self through hospitality.

Now, the subject, who achieves the 'Unity-in-Hospitality' through becoming-the-Other, attempts to divide him/herself for the third person/party that is "other than the neighbour, but also another neighbour, and also a neighbour of the other, and not simply his fellow" (p. 157). The subject decides to answer to another beyond the individual Other. It can be seen as 'cell division' — to borrow a term from biology — of the subject for the Other, and then for another. The separation can be regarded as expanding Levinas' ethics of the Other from the singular relation to the communal realm. The subject, who has experienced the fission of the nucleus of the Same, experiences the division again to engage with another. Much like the way cell division works in the human body, the divided subject who has the ethical DNA of hospitality

that Jesus envisioned. In this sense, I use the word 'Kin-dom of God' instead of 'Kingdom of God' by supporting feminist theological idea.

towards the Other can engage with another by replicating his/her DNA. In this regard, Levinas' hospitality grows by repeating the process of becoming-the-Other, and further cell-division of the one ethical relationship to construct and repair the society as an organism.

The essential idea of the cell division for the proliferation of the hospitality DNA is based on the action of Jesus who welcomes all creatures through his flesh and blood as a sacrificial substitution for reconciliation with God. The Eucharist, in its very nature, welcomes the world to the Table of the Lord. Zimmermann (2012) believes that "the Eucharist as the re-enactment of Christ's passion and resurrection celebrates the recapitulation of the world in Christ and its reconciliation to God" (p. 289). According to Michael Purcell (2006), the Eucharist represents the responsibility "both 'for-you' and 'for-many'" (p. 158). Eucharist as the liturgy of responsibility and justice attempts "both responsibility for the singular other and justice for the many others" (p. 158). Inasmuch as Jesus' lessons of love and peace are still alive in the world beyond Christianity, Levinas' hospitality can be embodied when the subject is torn and shredded for others. From the perspective of Christian faith, the bread and wine as the invitation of Jesus to all should be shared and given from one's mouth to others because Jesus' flesh is for "the life of the world" (John 6:51). Through this idea, Levinas' hospitality ultimately requests the ethical subject to interact with the faces of many Others through sharing him/herself.

Now, the subject, who becomes the ethical subject through the process of approaching the Other and becoming-the-Other, takes a step to establish an ethical relationship with others, i.e., as mentioned above, through a division of the self and the replication of the hospitality DNA to engage with another Other. The self who experiences the fission of the egoistic identity attempts to connect with the others and repeat hospitality through the division of oneself again and again. This division does not destroy or decrease the ethical subjectivity but reinforces it. In this sense, Levinas' hospitality is not only performed within a singular/individual relationship between the subject and the Other but is extended, through the interconnectedness of all creation, to many others. The act of hospitality is repeated and continued rather than being a one-time event.

In pursuit of ethical relations, Levinas' hospitality emphasises 'entanglement' of human beings. More specifically, it is impossible to consider a human society without

acknowledging that the root of society is derived from interdependence rather than individual/independent existence. That is to say, human beings and their experiences, thinking, action, and everything are ‘entangled’ with each other. The word ‘entanglement’ comes from Catherine Keller’s *The Cloud of Impossible* (2016). She adapted the metaphor from the phenomenon of entanglement in modern quantum physics in order to explain the interweaving of human beings in mysterious unity. Levinas’ hospitality has to be exercised not only as individual generosity or kindness but also as public hospitality in the ethical and socio-political dimension. Through the practice of hospitality that accepts and welcomes alterity and multiplicity, entangled beings are requested to open their space and boundary for each other. So, connected human beings can strengthen the rights of the vulnerable people through hospitality. According to Keller, she reinterprets incarnation as “inter-carnation” that God’s action of becoming human does not simply indicate an accomplished notion at a point in time but the continued relationship between God and human which finds expression in the Eucharist (Keller, 2017). Now, Levinas’ hospitality, understood in terms of incarnation as inter-carnation, expands itself to ‘universal others’ beyond the close neighbours who are the same as the subject. Interconnected beings start to be concerned about the problems in the world that plague the others, such as migration, hunger, war, gender, to name a few. “Who is my neighbour?” (Lk. 10:29) The answer of hospitality to the question, which comes from the parable of the Good Samaritan, is that all entangled human beings are my neighbours, each deserving to be welcomed beyond gender, nationality, race, and any conditions. The realtion of interwovenness and interconnectedness invites us to take “cosmic responsibility and to see the disparity between unconditional and conditional hospitality as a call, a prophetic call” (Kang, 2013, p. 177). Thus, Levinas’ hospitality turns into public theological practice through the knowledge that the universe and everything in it is entangled.

6.4 Praxis of Levinas’ Hospitality: The Biblical Insights

The previous sections looked at why Levinas’ concept of hospitality is important for overcoming otherisation and polarisation of the defectors through their relationship with the churches. Moreover, the features of Levinas’ hospitality were elaborated and the way to achieve it was introduced through the theological idea of incarnation.

Now, through the use of biblical insights, this section discusses how the churches can practice hospitality towards the defectors. The biblical narrative in the form of Jesus' conduct and preaching can provide abundant theological imagination to the churches for the practice of Levinas' hospitality. The biblical insights can challenge the churches theologically to practise hospitality in their specific ministries. Alongside the interpretation of the story of Zacchaeus (Lk. 19:2-10) in light of Levinas' hospitality, this section demonstrates how the engagement of the churches with the defectors can embody such hospitality.

6.4.1 Approaching the Other:

“When Jesus Reached the Spot, He Looked Up” (Lk 19:5)

To emphasise the purpose of Levinas' hospitality again, the self-interested subject changes to an ethical subject who responds to the Other's summons and he/she builds the ethical relationship with the others. That is to say, hospitality is the key to the door of the subject's heart which opens to make a place for the others by a radical passivity. Approaching the Other is inserting this key into the subject in the context of Levinas' ethics of the Other.

Indeed, the Korean Protestant churches, as one of the important institutions for supporting North Korean defectors in the South, actively 'approach' the defectors. Through the lens of Levinas' philosophy, however, this approach does not result in a transformation of the church-centric logic/power, but is used for the purpose of proselytisation of the defectors. It can be called 'the intended approach'. The intended approach of the host who wants to benefit through the hospitality easily tends to cause otherisation and polarisation by distinguishing between friend and enemy, or sorting those who deserve the host's mercy from those who do not (Pohl, 1999, p. 142). On the other hand, in Levinas' hospitality, even though it is that the subject that approaches the Other, the original motivation of the movement comes from the Other, particularly the weakness/naked face of the Other. This approach towards the Other is without any hope for reciprocation or benefit or the desire to reduce the Other into the Same. The subject as a hostage only helplessly exposes him/herself to the Other's pain.

The story of Zacchaeus in the Gospel of Luke illustrates this approach of hospitality well. Zacchaeus was a person who had experienced physical and social

exclusion on account of his short height and occupation. He was regarded as a cursed man due to his shortness/disability. Moreover, he was a tax collector which means that he, as an extortionist, was treated with despise by people. He did not have friends and community to share his life. He existed as an invisible being in society. Nobody embraced or welcomed him as a human being except Jesus. Jesus ‘approached’ a sycamore tree to see Zacchaeus, and they encounter each other face-to-face: “When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up” (Lk 19:5). For Zacchaeus, the approach of Jesus is a sensational event that affirms ‘being life’ which until then had been like ‘non-being life’ (Kang, 2013, pp. 167-69). The approaching of Zacchaeus by Jesus can be regarded as ‘the ethical adventure’ to build relations. Jesus broke the stereotype and social structural prejudice through the approach by facing Zacchaeus. There is no purpose or expectation in the action. Jesus just saw him and treated him as a valuable being.

Korean churches can take inspiration from this narrative to exercise Levinas’ hospitality towards the defectors. It means that the churches have to keep aside their own interests and missional intention when they approach the defectors, even though the purposes remain worthwhile to the churches. The intended approach as conditional hospitality inevitably leads to force the defectors to hide and deny their uniqueness and alterity. As cultural violence, the approach of the churches is based on the fallacy that the defectors need to be saved by converting them to Christianity, thus rescuing them from the clutches of evil communism and bringing them to good liberal democracy.

The churches can embark on the ethical adventure of the hospitality by approaching the defectors without any intention or efforts to instrumentalise them. When the defectors are welcomed through not a narrow lens of gospelisation but the wide lens of humanitarian aid, justice and peace, the subjectivity of the defectors will make the churches realise their original vocation as the community of responsibility in the spirit of true Christian discipleship. The identity of the church is not about focusing on private salvation through quantitative expansion but its publicness that responds to global issues with prophetic participation. The gaze of Jesus at Zacchaeus overcame the social structure of discrimination and isolation.

The Korean churches need to gaze warmly towards the defectors and see them as the image of God. Even though sometimes the defectors misuse hospitality of the churches for their own sake, the churches can keep performing their responsibility.

Despite the fragile nature of hospitality and much else, Martha Nussbaum's (2001) idea is encouraging;

There is a beauty in the willingness to love someone in the face of love's instability and wordiness that is absent from a completely trustworthy love. There is a certain valuable quality in social virtue that is lost when social virtue is removed from the domain of uncontrolled happenings (p. 420).

The most important thing is that the defectors have a right to be welcomed regardless of the socio-political/missional usefulness of the defectors or their behaviour. The churches' hospitality has to seek a "preferential option for the poor" which is the gospel's call (Gutierrez, 1988, pp. 156-60). Thus, the bold courage of the churches in approaching the defectors must lead to a revolution in a Korean society plagued by hatred against the defectors, and exclusion.

6.4.2 Becoming-the-Other: "I Must Stay at Your House" (Lk 19:5)

The essential point of the second step of Levinas' hospitality, becoming-the-Other, is blurring the boundary between the subject/host and the Other/guest. The subject who abandons egoistic identity makes a place for an engagement with the Other by becoming-the-Other. The practice is not assimilation or integration by use of power but the establishment of an ethical relationship where the centre is rendered meaningless.

Jesus who becomes-the-human made an ethical relationship with Zacchaeus by crossing the border between the host and the guest: "I must stay at your house" (Lk 19:5). Jesus invited himself to Zacchaeus' house without being asked or receiving an invitation from Zacchaeus. Through the reversed process of hospitality, unexpectedly, Jesus who was the subject approaching Zacchaeus became the guest, and Zacchaeus as "a sinner" (Lk 19:7) became the host. Zacchaeus welcomed Jesus gladly (Lk 19:6), and through the unconditional welcoming of him, Jesus, becoming-Zacchaeus, entered his place where nobody wanted to stay (Kang, 2013, pp. 167-69).

The Protestant churches can practice Levinas' hospitality by becoming-the-defectors. The story of Zacchaeus shows the significance of paradoxical hospitality. In

other words, Levinas' hospitality will be established beyond the rigid boundary between the host and the guest. The churches have to establish a relationship with the defectors through not a hierarchical or dominant attitude but a humble one following God's humility. Most Protestant churches take the initiative in the engagement with the defectors, and the defectors are treated as a missional target or tool for political propaganda resulting in their otherisation and polarisation.

Jesus accepted Zacchaeus in front of people by inviting himself to Zacchaeus' house. The visit as 'the guest of a sinner' could be regarded as sensational hospitality beyond the common cultural practice of first-century Palestine. It can be interpreted that the subject takes the Other's fault as his/her own which is called 'substitution'. Considering Levinas' philosophy, substitution as the expression of responsibility towards the Other is manifested in the act of becoming-the-Other as hospitality. The substitutional act, in this case, is that of Jesus embracing Zacchaeus' weaknesses, wounds, complexes, inferiorities, etc. through hospitality. Zacchaeus received warm divine hospitality and it led to the transformation of Zacchaeus' life and his value system.

As mentioned, the defectors are one of the most vulnerable people in South Korea's socio-political, economic, and cultural life. They were stigmatised for being from an 'enemy' country. Moreover, they are easily excluded from welfare services, such as employment, joining a community, educational benefit, and so on. When the churches try to welcome the defectors, they can try dealing with the defectors' social problems and individual issues. Most of the defectors have traumatic experiences of fleeing from the North. In addition, they feel lonely due to separation from their family and discrimination in their current society. Just as Jesus entered Zacchaeus' place, the churches can protect and proclaim the life of the defectors in society by becoming-the-defectors. That is to say, the churches' exercise of hospitality towards the defectors should be linked to emancipation of their lives. Since the church is a community of 'reflection' of God's hospitality, they can "welcome the 'underserving', provide the lonely with a home, and set a banquet table for the hungry" (Pohl, 1999, p. 16). Specifically, the churches can use their human and financial resources for addressing the social issues faced by the defectors. The Protestant churches by using their social capital can provide emotional support and speak for the defectors in order to change the

distorted social structure rather than capturing the defectors into the churches' sameness.

The noteworthy point of the Zacchaeus story is that Jesus did not make an effort towards religious conversion or indoctrination. Jesus just welcomed Zacchaeus through his warm gaze and by inviting himself to the latter's house. The non-religious action on Jesus' part reconciled Zacchaeus to God, healed his wounds, and played a vital role in his transformation as an ethical being (Kang, 2013, pp. 167-69). Most of the Korean churches that obsess with the doctrine of atonement treat the defectors from the perspective of the mission. The churches are eager to convert the defectors, both spiritually and politically. As Zacchaeus' story shows us, however, welcoming the Other impacts his/her life in many ways, including religiously. Korean churches should re-orient their own understanding of the concept of mission. More specifically, the churches need to expand the notion of substitution from private salvific realm to public realm by contributing to common good in the public sphere. The purpose of hospitality is "not just to draw Israel [Christians] into a relationship with God but also to restore the intimacy of love with all humanity and with the entire created order" (Boersma, 2006, p. 87). In the same token, the Korean churches have to make a paradigm shift in their theology and attempt to emancipate the defectors' lives from the injustices systemic in the social structure and aid reconciliation between the two Korean through justice and peace. Inasmuch as substitution of God on the Cross for humanity, God's love should not only be for a singular being or Christians alone but for the whole world, meaning that to receive the churches' hospitality one does not have to be Christian. Thus, the churches can engage with the defectors through hospitality by substituting themselves for the defectors so that the latter can begin their existence as social beings who interact with the other South Koreans.

6.4.3 Cell Division for Entanglement:

"I Give Half of My Possessions to the Poor" (Lk 19:8)

Levinas' hospitality is a movement towards more engagement and solidarity, beyond the hospitality itself with an individual or specific group. In the story of Zacchaeus, Jesus' welcoming of the epiphany of face of the Other and its consequence is not limited to the invitee and the invited alone. The hospitality of Jesus as an ethical action

was expanded from Zacchaeus to his neighbours. Zacchaeus who experienced hospitality confessed, “Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount” (Lk 19:8). The experience of hospitality for Zacchaeus is not only for his personal dimension but also to make him realise his ‘entanglement’ with his neighbours, specifically the ethical responsibility he has towards them. In this sense, the subject and the Other who encounter hospitality attempt at ‘cell division’ for ethical interaction with others by copying the hospitality DNA from one to many.

Enjoyment and value which come from doing hospitality should be extended to others beyond the self and the two interacting parties. In the Christian tradition, the church has a way of reinterpreting its identity, manners, values, lessons, etc., for every generation continuously through the worship and the liturgy. This is what makes it a dynamic body of believers. Hans Boersma (2006), the theologian specialised in sacramental theology, highlights the public function of inviting others to the worship of the Church. He writes, “The good news is a public invitation to repent and to abandon our narcissism in favour of genuine altruism and so become a hospitable community that modes the evangelical practice of other-focused forgiveness and reconciliation” (pp. 211-12). Christian worship, as an invitation to social interaction, starts from responding to the call of God which is the first displacement of the self. The calling leads to the practice of de-centring one out of egoism and helps one find an identity by loving neighbours, especially the stranger, the poor, and the widows (Smith, 2013, pp. 148-50). James K. Smith, who is interested in theo-philosophical movements, insists that “In the performed story that is Christian worship, we are related to others as neighbours rather than as an audience” (p. 150).

Christian liturgy also has a feature whereby the common good is expanded through hospitality for the others beyond an individual level. In the book *Desiring the Kingdom*, Smith introduces two practices related to the liturgy; thin and thick practice. Thin practices mean unintentional mundane habits such as brushing teeth or watching TV. These acts do not have much significance to effect on the way of thinking and identity. The thick practices, however, influence identity-forming and shaping a core value system. For example, religious rituals such as attending the worship and praying are formative or transformative habits and practices to those people who carry out them (Smith, 2009, pp. 82-83). By connecting liturgy with the concept of thick practice, he

writes that “our thickest practices constitute and function as liturgies” (p. 85). Liturgies, as “rituals of ultimate concern” lead to specific practice and form identity by planting “particular visions of the good life” in people’s mind (p. 86). The thick practice of Christian liturgy evokes the “immanent social imaginary view” to spread and share the power of the liturgy.

Korean Protestant churches can practice Levinas’ hospitality through the theological transformation of their direction and meaning of the worship and liturgy, called a “conversion of the imagination” (Hays, 2005, p. X). The churches can imagine peaceful Korean peninsula where justice and peace kiss each other (Ps 85:10) in the re-addressed worship and liturgy. Through the whole process of worship, Christians realise God’s unconditional hospitality for themselves and also for all creations. The Christians can find the responsibility to the Other with ethical imagination in the liturgy. They decide to actively get involved in reconciliation and harmony in society through the spirit of the worship and liturgy which calls the Christians for loving the neighbour as Jesus did. Boersma believes that the Church is “the public locale in and through which God extends his hospitality most directly” and is “the primary space where we witness the public face of hospitality” (Boersma, p. 238). When the churches recover their public responsibility towards the others through re-highlighting of the worship and liturgy, hospitality will be extended beyond an individual level towards the marginalised others in society including the defectors.

Having said that, it must be mentioned that this does not mean that the churches can use or implement their particular religious practices and language when they try to do hospitality towards the others, particularly towards non-Christians. Emphasising the worship and liturgy does not indicate a superiority of Christianity or conversion to Christianity. Jesus’ hospitality towards Zacchaeus did not involve a particular religious language. The language of worship and liturgy used here is to inspire the churches in a way with which they are familiar and make them inculcate the essence of Levinas’ hospitality in the practice of their own.

The next section brings *minjung* theology, a Korean theological perspective for the churches, in order to overcome the otherisation and polarisation of the defectors through Levinas’ hospitality.

6.5 Levinas' Hospitality in Korean Theological Soil

Due to the uniqueness and complexity of the relationship between Korean Protestant churches and North Korean defectors, it is necessary to discuss the praxis of Levinas' hospitality in the Korean theological context. *Minjung* theology, as a representative of Korean theology, stems from Korean socio-political turbulence, and needs to play a significant role in overcoming otherisation and polarisation of the defectors through Levinas' hospitality.

In order to develop Levinas' hospitality in the Korean Protestant churches' context, *minjung* theology is proposed as an alternative theological perspective for the churches. In this regard, the features of Levinas' hospitality are analysed through the lens of *minjung* theology.

6.5.1 *Minjung* Theology as Korean Theological Soil

Minjung theology began from theological concerns about social irregularities and structural imbalance in Korean society of the 1970s. There were three *minjung* theological issues at the time, in particular, economic inequality, political human rights abuse by the despotic government, and conflict between the South and North (S. C. Kim, 2015). In this unjust social background, oppressed Korean masses, who were referred to as *minjung* in Korean, rose up as 'the subject of history' to achieve democratisation against authoritarian politics.

Minjung is a word derived from the Korean pronunciation of two Chinese characters: 'min' (the people) and 'jung' (the masses). The combination of the two creates an image of the majority of people, the poor, and the oppressed (Haire, 2007). Ahn Byung-Mu, one of the most prominent *minjung* theologians, finds the term ὄχλος (ochlos) which refers to the crowds (of commoners, outcasts) following Jesus in the gospels a similar concept to *minjung* (Ahn, 1988).

Minjung is usually understood as the poor or people who are exploited by power. Even though *minjung* theology primarily relates to people and regards them as *minjung* too, *minjung* theologians cannot agree on the precise definition of the word as one concept. Since *minjung* is a multi-layered and complex group, its nature and composition depending on the period of the socio-political context, it is difficult to give

its precise definition. Moreover, when *minjung* is defined as a particular class or group, it leads to reductionist attitudes and thematisation of the poor by the elite. *Minjung* as the infinite Other is not an object that can be seized into the Same by the consciousness of the subject to fit pre-set, defined categories. Rather, *minjung* is known by its empirical existence, called an ‘event’ (Ahn, 1988; Han, 2017).

Minjung is associated with external and internal events. The former one is the experience of suffering in Korean society. The raw suffering of *minjung* represents *minjung* as not a stereotyped being but a flexible flow in the present. *Minjung* theology paid attention to the suffering of the Korean people. South Korea underwent rapid democratisation and industrialisation in the 1970-80s. During the process, *minjung* was exposed to physical and cultural violations by the dictatorship. In addition, the oppression of the *minjung* was justified in the name of nationalism. In fact, the suffering of *minjung* as social suffering stems from not a private mistake but a structural distortion (Jung, 2018). That is why *minjung* theologians emphasise the liberation movement of the society deeply embedded in the mechanism of oppressing people. The latter one is the experience of expulsion. *Minjung* is not only a marginalised people in Korean society but also excluded from cultural consideration. More specifically, *minjung* is categorised thus by various binaries, such as normal and abnormal, us and them, rich and poor, white-collar and blue-collar workers, men and women, and so on. That is to say, *minjung* as the Other is expelled by the subject which is the dominant culture and ruling class (J. Kim, 2013).

Minjung theology re-considers the *minjung* as the subject of history through a liberation movement to cope with the oppressive socio-political situation in Korea. Criticising the Western theological idea, *minjung* theology understands the Other/*minjung* as a central element of theology. *Minjung* theology, which pays attention to the alterity of the Other, attempts to encounter the Other through ethical responses. It is the vital task of *minjung* theology to reveal the face of the suffering *minjung* that is ignored by society. In this regard, *minjung* theology as a theology of response to the Other’s suffering takes responsibility through welcoming the Other/*minjung*. Focusing on this thesis, it is noteworthy that *minjung* theology inspires the churches to consider the defectors’ suffering within the engagement of the churches. Indeed, it provides insight for the churches to respond to the defectors’ summons beyond the church-centric faith and realise being-the Church by doing hospitality for the defectors/*minjung*.

6.5.2 Planting: Levinas' Hospitality in *Minjung* Theological Perspective

The idea of Levinas' hospitality can be enhanced through *minjung* theological insights. The five features of Levinas' hospitality have been elaborated upon through the perspective of *minjung* theology to illustrate this.

6.5.2.1 Other-Centredness

Minjung theology's inception and growth is entirely focused on the *minjung* and therefore it is inherently Other-centred. For *minjung* theologians, the *minjung* is not a subaltern or passive being who receives God's grace but the subject that must liberate its own identity and social structures through a participatory interpretation of the bible. *Minjung* theology focuses on the story of *minjung* in the bible by criticising the traditional interpretation of the bible in Korean churches based on fundamentalism (Ahn, 2019). *Minjung* theology understands the bible as having abundant episodes of *minjung*'s participation and liberation, such as the history of the liberation of Israel in the Hebrew Bible and Jesus' mission amongst the weak and the poor in the New Testament. The stories of liberation in the bible inspire the oppressed in the Korean socio-political context through participatory re-reading of the bible. The *minjung* theological imagination, based on the *minjung*/Other-centric perspective, creates a crack in Korean society built on adherence to the establishment and the ruling class. So, *minjung* theology, as a de-theology against fundamentalist theological understanding, highlights the identity of the *minjung* by focusing on the incarnated God who lived amongst the lowest of the low or the *minjung*.

From the perspective of *minjung* theology, Levinas' hospitality is a liberation movement of the Other from the subject's power. Contrary to the general notion of hospitality, the host cannot have the upper hand in Levinas' hospitality. The host, as the subject of hospitality, does not have the power to decide whether or not to welcome the Other. Rather, the hospitality stems from the face of the Other that appears to the host and demands his/her ethical response. The epiphany of the Other's face captures the host to transform his/her subject-centred subjectivity to Other-centred subjectivity, called ethical subjectivity. Following undeclinable passivity, the host answers, "Here I am" by welcoming the Other. In the same token, *minjung* theology claims that genuine subjectivity is established by not an autonomous act of the subject but in a

heteronomous event by the *minjung* (Ahn, 1988). So, the infinite Other as *minjung* makes the subject abandon his/her power by becoming hostage to the *minjung*. Moreover, *minjung* leads to the host/subject to practice hospitality whereby the latter finds his/her identity as a hostage who opposes totalisation and thematisation of the Other. Thus, Levinas' hospitality, as ethical action towards the Other, participates in infinite responsibility towards the Other by regarding the Other as the priority in the relationship.

6.5.2.2 Bodiliness

The notion of *minjung* cannot be understood through the perspective of Western traditional ontology based on the consciousness of the subject. Contrary to the attempt to capture the others into the understanding of the subject, *minjung* as an event reveals itself through bodily involvement in a specific place and time of suffering. In the language of Levinas, *minjung* summons the powerful subject through the face of suffering (Lee, 2006). Facing the *minjung* evokes compassion in the self at the *minjung*'s suffering, and propels the self towards the *minjung* in answering the calling of the *minjung*. *Minjung* theology which recognises the epistemological limitation of modern theology approaches *minjung* for the purpose of sympathising and action, rather than cognition. Thus, for *minjung* theology, the body which contains the suffering of the *minjung*, is not inferior which has to be overcome but a place to encounter the face of the Other/*minjung*, and it inevitably leads to solidarity in suffering (A. Kim, 2018).

Levinas' hospitality also begins from the response to the *minjung*'s summons through its face by affirming bodiliness and materiality. The gaze of the *minjung*, such as that of the widow, the poor, and the stranger, is the key to this hospitality. The gaze brings affection of the host/subject, the sense of empathy, and questions the freedom of the subject. The sensibility of the body opens a place to welcome the Other in contrast to the consciousness of the subject which reduces the Other to its own understanding. Following a critique by *minjung* theology of Western traditional thought that highlights consciousness as a tool to seize *minjung* into the subjectivity of the subject, Levinas' hospitality also interacts with the Other through the body as a place to create a relationship. The hospitality leads to responsibility towards the Other by emphasising the significance of embodiment and materiality against the Other-exclusive culture that divides body and spirit and deems them as inferior and superior respectively.

6.5.2.3 Dynamism

In *minjung* theology, the suffering of the *minjung* expands the subject's understanding. In other words, the subject transforms his/her subjectivity from self-centredness to Other-centredness in the encounter with the *minjung*, in particular, the suffering of the *minjung*. The dynamic feature of *minjung* is well represented in "*minjung* messianism". Whereas the idea of "*minjung* messianism" is a controversial Christological issue with different *minjung* theologians expressing a myriad of opinions, it still plays an important role in the relationship between the subject and the Other (Kim, 2008). For instance, Suh Nam-dong emphasises a messianic role of *minjung* by using the parable of the Good Samaritan. He claims that the person who was attacked by the robber takes the role of the messiah rather than the Good Samaritan of traditional interpretation since it is the groan and cry of the victim, as the call of the messiah, that brings the response of the Good Samaritan (Jung, 2018; Suh, 1990). Suh believes that *minjung* as the messiah comes to us not as a heroic power but as an incarnated-suffering neighbour (Suh, 1984). Inasmuch as the suffering of the *minjung* makes us realise our new subjectivity, the *minjung* becomes messiah by saving us from our self-interested subjectivity: "By taking part in the suffering of the *minjung*, one becomes a true human being and, in that way, he/she is saved" (Jung, 2018, p. 93). Hence, *minjung* emancipates the subject from his/her own selfish to find an identity as an ethical being which stems from the alterity of the Other.

In Levinas' hospitality, the guest as a *minjung* messiah saves the host from stark dualism by obliterating the boundaries between the host and the guest. By doing hospitality based on the dissolution of dualistic boundaries through the guest or *minjung* messiah, the host and the guest form a dynamic relation that crosses the fixed and hierarchical position in a guest-host relationship. Through hospitality, *minjung* becomes a subject of history as the dualistic boundaries are broken. In addition, Levinas' hospitality hears the diverse and complex voices of the *minjung* messiah that come from the broken boundaries. In this context, hospitality pursues 'ambivalence' and 'hybridity'. There is no collision between the subject and the Other. Moreover, the Other is not assimilated or incorporated into the totality of the subject. Even though Levinas' hospitality is based on an emphasis on the Other, it makes possible the realisation of an inherent inter-relatedness through respect for diversity and the alterity of the otherness.

6.5.2.4 Presentness

Minjung theology was born out of the concerns for today's issues. *Minjung* theology attempts to find the truth and God's presence among the life of the *minjung* entrenched in socio-political and economic struggles. For *minjung* theologians, social problems are not only a political issue but also a theological one since the *minjung* is a manifestation of God in the now. According to Ahn (1988), the *minjung* is identified with Jesus since Jesus is present in the middle of the suffering of the *minjung*. He argues that "we need to discover and bear witness to Christ in the place where no one looks" (p. 109). *Minjung* theology speaks for those who do not have a voice and fights for people whose rights have been taken away. Thus, for *minjung* theologians, rather than contemplating a metaphysical God, theological responses on current issues are the path to attain salvation. They believe that theology should not become a fossil of the past but should be a living story in the contemporary world where it rises to address the social issues as a part of the church's core mission.

Instead of dabbling in the abstract, *Minjung* theology finds the real purpose of theology in the *minjung*. Likewise, Levinas' concept of hospitality is not simply limited to the realm of philosophy but has potential to be put to practice in a specific context. In other words, Levinas' hospitality is not mere idealism that cannot be executed in the real world. Rather, the hospitality demonstrates a way to free the oppressed Other from the imperialistic logic and structure by inspiring change in thought and action. Levinas' hospitality suggests a theological movement that responds to 'the face of the Other'. The face of the Other, as a starting point to practice hospitality, is revealed in the '*Sitz im Leben*' or 'Situation in Life'. This hospitality cannot be practiced through an abstract concept of the Other. It is by addressing the Other's socio-political struggles and issues that the subject can truly practice hospitality.

6.5.2.5 Publicness

Minjung theology understands that the meaning of salvation is not a private one but a public one. Since the suffering of the *minjung* derives from the corrupt and oppressive social structure, an emancipatory movement for justice is the way to save people from the structural evil in society by following Jesus. Ahn defines the essence of evil as "the privatisation of the public" (Ahn, 1988, p. 202). He criticises the attitudes of Korean

churches that reduce the theological concepts, i.e. sin, salvation, faith, Jesus, etc., into abstract theological issues relevant only to the person who believes in them. This understanding prevents acknowledgement of the suffering of the *minjung* who becomes invisible in society. By expanding the idea of theology to socio-political problems, *minjung* theology inspires its practitioners to substitute the Other's suffering by participating in the transformation of history and in the Other's liberation from oppression.

Levinas' hospitality deals with the *minjung* rather than personal or individual salvation. In addition, the hospitality invites all, both human and nature. In the context of the Protestant churches, Levinas' hospitality as a theological discourse requires the churches to extend their understanding of hospitality from a church-centric one to public concern for justice and peace. When the notion of hospitality is only practised within the personal, it inevitably leads to overlooking global injustice, migration issues, the planetary crisis, and so on. In other words, as the spectrum of neighbours who have to be welcomed is narrowed down only to 'us', the oppressed, the migrants, ethnic minorities, nature, and anyone who does not fit into one's category of 'us' but who needs hospitality nonetheless are excluded from the attention. Levinas' hospitality, rooted in alterity and multiplicity of the Other, as opposed to conditions of homogeneity and classification imposed on the Other to be received by the host, involves the exercise to emancipate the Other from socio-political and economic inequality. Alongside the *minjung* theological idea, the spirit of Levinas' philosophy requires one to encounter the ethical summons of the Other and to respond to their voices. In doing so, participation in the struggle to improve the oppressed *minjung*'s life is an imperative of Levinas' hospitality.

6.5.3 Fruits: Reconciliation and Just Peace

The previous sections introduced Levinas' hospitality which seeks to establish an ethical relationship between Korean churches and the defectors. The practice of such hospitality was explained through the ABC Process. In addition, *minjung* theology was introduced to explain Levinas' hospitality to Korean churches in the language of theology. Now, this section examines the results of the hospitality. More specifically, this section discusses reconciliation and Just Peace that is born when the five core

values that Levinas' hospitality and *minjung* theology share manifest themselves in the relationship between the churches and the defectors.

6.5.3.1 Reconciliation

Reconciliation is created through the first three features of Levinas' hospitality and *minjung* theology: Other-Centredness, bodiliness, and dynamism.

Considering the essence of Levinas' hospitality that pursues recovering of a relation between the subject and the Other based on respect for the otherness of the Other, hospitality invokes a reconciliation, as the first reaction in establishing a broken relationship between the two conflicting parties. The conflict narrative which is formed by the socio-political clash in the divided Korean peninsula impacts the engagement of the churches with the defectors in a direct and indirect way. Even though the churches seem to have a good relationship with the defectors through supporting them financially and emotionally, in fact, the 'invisible conflicts' are embedded in the engagement. The church-centric approach towards the defectors contributes to the propagation of the negative image of the defectors. For instance, the politicised approach towards the defectors, rooted in evangelical nationalism, Christian fundamentalism, anti-communism, etc., is justified in the name of protection of the churches and the state. The intentional skewing of the value frame by the churches reimagines the defectors in binaries, as us/friend or them/enemy depending on the churches' interests. In this sense, Levinas' hospitality, which helps to realise the problems of church-centredness, leads to breaking the invisible conflicts through reconciliation by respecting the alterity of the defectors as a valuable path for understanding them and the church itself.

Affirmation of the body, as one of the features of hospitality and *minjung* theology, also supports the reconciliation between the churches and the defectors. To establish lasting reconciled relations between conflicting parties, the changing of the "psychological repertoire" is necessary, including "the evolvment of mutual respect, trust, positive attitudes, and sensitivity to the other group's needs, fostering friendly and cooperative relations marked by equality and justice" (Bar-Tal & Bennink, 2004, p. 37). The psychological repertoire of Korean churches towards the defectors has been marked by exaggerated fear, hatred, and mistrust for many years. The idea of embodiment in Levinas' hospitality supplies the new reality of the defectors through the face of the

defectors who want freedom from the stereotypes embedded in South culture. The way the *minjung*'s suffering inspired the progressive movement in the churches against authoritarian regimes, the defectors' ethical summons through their face can inspire affection and sympathy from the churches. It leads to the changing of the psychological repertoire of the churches and creating the motivation to have a good relationship with the defectors based on the setting aside of prejudice. Hence, Levinas' hospitality builds reconciliation between the two parties that is rooted in, not the consciousness of the churches that reduces the defectors into the churches' logic, but a bodily interaction which stirs up the conscience of the churches.

Reconciliation which is built by the practice of hospitality brings a change in both parties. The dynamism of hospitality, which refers to the crossing of the boundary between the subject and the Other, requires inter-transformation towards becoming the ethical subject. Reconciliation cannot be achieved through forgiveness and one-sided acceptance in a hierarchical position. Paradoxically, following Levinas' philosophy, the inter-transformation is achieved by focusing on the otherness of the Other. As an asymmetrical relation, the infinite Other is the being who helps to change the subject into an ethical subject. And the Other becomes another subject who makes the subject realise him/herself. Through their reconciliation with the defectors, the Korean churches are also reconciled with their ethical selves. In particular, the churches can repent for their sins of anti-communism and the sameness missional strategy towards the defectors without reflection on what it means to be the church. The defectors can newly recognise themselves not as a tool for political or mission but the subject who has multi-layered identities experiences. In this sense, the dynamic relationship between the churches and the defectors leads both parties to find their ethical identity and face each other while overcoming the phenomenon of otherisation and polarisation.

6.5.3.2 *Just Peace*

The other features of Levinas' hospitality in light of *minjung* theology — presentness and publicness — produce just peace in the relationship between the churches and the defectors. It is impossible to practice hospitality in the relation between the two parties without considering the divided Korean context. Levinas' hospitality towards the defectors requires the restoration of the defectors' identity and value in the South within the context of the socio-political issues arising from the division. In this sense,

presentness and publicness of hospitality naturally pay attention to justice and peace in the relationship. Ahn Byung-mu claims that “justice and peace should be understood from a *minjung* perspective which is learnt through understanding the historical Jesus who was on the side of the poor and oppressed” (S. C. Kim, 2015, p. 193). Through the justice and peace movement in the South as a dimension of hospitality, the defectors can be emancipated from the victimhood of the division system.

In fact, Just Peace as a broad concept has to be elaborated upon by narrowing down the topic. Just peace is fundamentally oriented towards human rights. *Minjung* theology was born in the effort of improving the *minjung*'s human rights conditions within the oppressed context of industrialisation and dictatorship. In this regard, the practice of hospitality towards the defectors, rooted in the *minjung* theological insight, inevitably carries out the championing of human rights of the defectors.

The defectors are exposed to various direct and indirect violations in both the North and the South, such as physical attacks, sexual abuses, abhorrence, discrimination, and so on. Moreover, due to the complex political situation in Korea, the defectors' human rights are easily misused for political purposes in South society. Presentness and publicness of hospitality attempt to highlight the suffering of the defectors in the South and try to solve the problematic division issues through the harmony of justice and peace. Jude Lal Fernando (2018) insists that “just peace is analysed as a condition that blends together justice, compassion, righteousness and truthfulness” (p. 102). Following the idea of Fernando, Levinas' hospitality towards the defectors has to be inextricably linked to the idea of just peace beyond the tension of a dichotomy between justice and peace.

Ultimately, a concern for the human rights of the defectors as a movement for just peace will lead to the building of an ethical relationship which is Other-centred. More specifically, since the foundational motto of the Church, irrespective of denomination, is to “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind...(and to) Love your neighbour as yourself” (Mt. 22:37-40), the Korean churches can contribute to embodying just peace in conflict situations by focusing on constructive ethical relationships based on love for the defectors. Søren Kierkegaard (1995), the Danish philosopher and theologian writes in his book *Works of Love*, “It is in fact Christian love that discovers and knows that the neighbour exists and, what is the same thing, that everyone is the neighbour” (p. 44). Further elaborating

on the Christian emphasis on the love of one's neighbour, he writes: "The distinction friend or enemy is a difference in the object of love, but love for the neighbour has the object that is without difference. The neighbour is the utterly unrecognisable dissimilarity between persons or is the eternal quality before God — the enemy, too, has this equality" (pp. 67-68). Hence, the Korean churches too can promote Just Peace, more specifically the building of an ethical relationship, by loving the defectors through hospitality.

6.6 Conclusion

Levinas' hospitality deconstructs the subject who has a desire to totalise and capture the Other into sameness, and reconstructs the subject of an Other-centric perspective who takes responsibility towards the Other. In the practice of hospitality, the Other becomes not an object/beneficiary but a new active subject. The Other's unique identity and experiences are respected. Moreover, the binary dynamic between the host and the guest does not have any meaning in this hospitality. It leads to a mutual transformation that frees both the subject and the Other from the violence of sameness.

Levinas' hospitality may seem too idealistic to be realised in reality. It can be criticised as ethical idealism by people who consider the complicated socio-political context in which human beings find themselves. For instance, Kearney (2005) raises the question of the feature of hospitality that underestimates the distinction between good and evil aliens ethically. He argues that we do not have to welcome "the saints and psychopaths" who are coming to destroy our house. He believes that if hospitality is exercised without exception, it will destroy the spirit of hospitality by losing the ability of ethical judgment between good and evil (pp. 68-72). In Levinas' philosophical perspective such discernment would mean a return to the system of Western traditional thought which emphasises on the subject's comprehension of others by the standards of the Same. The otherness of the Other and its alterity are regarded as evil that threatens the identity of the self. If the Other is categorised into good and evil by the subject's understanding, the Other will be seized into the subject. In addition, the Other endlessly must try to prove their pureness and goodness depending on what these terms mean to the subject. If so, the spirit of Levinas' hospitality will be sullied in the name of real political context.

Exercising Levinas' hospitality is inevitably risky. Miroslav Volf (1996) is aware of the risk of hospitality. He writes,

I open my arms, make a movement of the self toward the other, the enemy, and do not know whether I will be misunderstood, despised, even violated or whether my action will be appreciated, supported, and reciprocated. I can become a saviour or a victim — possibly both (p. 147).

In the practice of hospitality, it is possible that the goodwill of the subject towards the others will be returned with betrayal or disappointment. Nevertheless, hospitality, as not only a private or religious issue but also socio-political discourse, contributes to overcoming the limitation of *realpolitik* that cannot see newness unless it fits into one of its categories. The concept of Levinas' hospitality draws the plan for alternative action and thought in sustaining the tension between the ideal and the real. It is in the awareness of this tension that the subject makes an advance towards the face of the Other by breaking the wall of hostility and exclusion. Hospitality, as an ethical movement, demands transformation from the self-centric to the Other-centric thought and action. The ethical movement focuses on the action of the subject who has to change his/her self-interested identity. Transformation into the ethical subject leads to ethical action, and moreover, it makes possible the practice of hospitality that brings justice and peace into the real world.

Levinas' hospitality encourages the Korean Protestant churches to change their subject-centric, dominant consciousness to the direction that "North Korean defectors do not have to become a South Korean" (Torrey, 2018, p. 39). The subjectivity of the defectors is not evil and inferior that it has to be eliminated, but comprises of alterity and diversity. When the churches abandon their hospitality programmes for the defectors that are developed by the South-centred political interests, the defectors can keep their own unique identity without erasing it in the South. Furthermore, the churches can find their true identity as ethical subjects and become a community of alterity.

CONCLUSION OF THE THESIS

Summary of the Thesis

By analysing the relationship between the churches and the defectors in light of Levinas' philosophy, this thesis has illustrated that the defectors, as the others in South Korean society, are seized and controlled by the churches who are the dominant subject in the relationship. That is to say, the defectors are exposed to ontological violence by the totalitarian attitude of the churches. It inevitably leads to the otherisation and polarisation of the defectors. In order to transform the relationship from being church-centric to an ethical one, this research delved into creating an ethical relationship through the concept of Levinas' hospitality.

The first chapter studied three concepts integral to the thesis — North Korean defectors, Korean Protestant churches, and hospitality. These were examined so as to find a correlation between them and the phenomenon of otherisation and polarisation of defectors. Since hospitality is the most common approach of the churches towards the defectors, the subject (host)-the Other (guest) framework is a useful tool to see the hierarchical relationship between the churches and the defectors. The defectors, as the philosophical Other, are viewed from the self-centredness of South Korean society's perspective in polarities of 'us' and 'them', 'ethnic' and 'enemy', 'positive being for reunification' and 'financial burden of reunification', to name a few. Before analysing the practice of hospitality by the churches towards the defectors, the notion of hospitality was studied from three approaches: Etymological, biblical, and philosophical. Through these approaches, the idea of hospitality, one of the core values of Christianity, was established as one that welcomes the alterity of the Other (guest) beyond the subject's comprehension. Following this elaboration on the notion of hospitality, the relationship between the churches and the defectors was examined based on the numerous examples of the churches' hospitality towards the defectors. The acts of hospitality by the churches were mixed with cordiality and hatred rooted in the division system of Korea peninsula. It was argued that true hospitality between the host and the guest, i.e., between the churches and the defectors should lead to the building of an 'ethical relation' that welcomes and responds to the defectors' requirements, not from the church-centric perspective but a defectors-centric one.

The second chapter expounded the philosophy of Emmanuel Levinas as a theoretical framework in this thesis that could illuminate the way to establish an ethical relationship between the two parties. Since Levinas' idea criticises the sameness and totalitarian attitude of the subject, the churches that seek to transform a church-centred relationship with the defectors could get abundant insight from his thoughts. Levinas believes that the subjectivity of the subject has to be created, not the subject him/herself, but by encountering with the otherness of the Other, in particular, the face of the Other. Contrary to Western traditional philosophy, Levinas emphasised an ethical relation through the new understanding of the subject who is taken hostage by the Other and for the Other. In this regard, the key notions of Levinas' philosophy, which were elaborated in accordance with his major books, were applied to the relationship between the two parties in a theoretical and practical way.

The rest of the chapters examined the engagement of the churches with the defectors through the lens of Levinas' philosophy. To do this, the third chapter explained how historically defectors have been otherised in South Korean society. The defectors have been identified with various names by the South-centric society. The evolution of the defectors' name demonstrates that their identity has been fluctuating depending on the socio-political situation of the South as well the different theological backgrounds of the churches. In the perspective of Levinas, the othering of the defectors is regarded as 'distancing' and 'identification'. That is to say, the defectors are treated as the Other who must either be excluded and/or assimilated into the logic of the South and the churches. The significant finding of this chapter was that this subject-centric mechanism has been operative in the South, and that this same mechanism is also functional in the relationship between the churches and the defectors. According to the Levinas' philosophical insights, the mechanism is the main cause of the otherisation and polarisation of the defectors because it ignores the subjectivity of the defectors. In this sense, breaking the subject-centric mechanism was set as a goal to improve the relationship between the churches and the defectors.

To achieve the goal of this thesis, the fourth chapter analysed how the mechanism has affected the relationship between the churches and the defectors in specific ways. Considering the socio-political and theological background of Korean Protestant churches' establishment, the engagement of the churches with the defectors was examined denomination-wise — Kijang, Methodist, Tonghap, Hapdong, and

Holiness church — each of which have different features. Specifically, the five denominations, which were formed by different theological and political circumstances, have different attitudes towards the defectors on three epistemic points: Mission theology, stance on North Korea, and understanding of unification and peace. As a result of the examination, the relationship between the churches and the defectors was categorised into four types: Type A which includes Kijang, a progressive denomination that encounters the defectors through its relationship with the official organisation of the North Korean church and inter-Korea relations. Type B, Methodist and Tonghap denominations, pay attention to the defectors through a two-track strategy according to their moderate theological and political stance, i.e., they paradoxically regarded the defectors as both missional target and the object of humanitarian aid, Type C, Hapdong as the largest evangelical denomination in Korea, attempts to contact the defectors to spread the Gospel by using financial support, and Type D, The Holiness church, which aspires to rebuild the churches in the North, and meets the defectors to proselytise them and re-send them to the North for the mission. The economic and emotional support of all types of the churches towards the defectors deserves to be appreciated. From Levinas' perspective, however, their relationships are deeply rooted in the interest of the church that inevitably leads to utilising the defectors as a tool to achieve the churches' intentions, both theologically and politically.

The fifth chapter criticised the churches' responses towards the defectors in the church-centric relationship. The defectors experience otherisation, which forces them to erase their own identity, through religious, ideological, and socio-political conversions. In this vertical relationship, the subjectivity of the defectors is reduced by the churches' hegemony. The churches regarded the defectors as a monolithic group for politicised missional interests of the churches. In order to survive in the South, the defectors must follow the requirements laid by the churches since the latter hold much sway in the South. This chapter also revealed the phenomenon of polarisation where the defectors are used to intensify the ideological confrontation between the two Koreas as well within South society. The churches' blaming of the North through the defectors' testimonies and sending propaganda balloons to the North were criticised. In particular, the churches utilise the defectors to achieve their own goals in the name of human rights. It leads to a surge in military tensions in the peninsula and mass-produces defectors. In this sense, the hospitality of the churches towards the defectors was

criticised as an ‘imperial ploy’. In other words, the churches commit devastating erasure of the defectors’ identity that holds unique experiences from the North and forced them to convert to Christianity in the name of hospitality. The defectors had to comply with the churches’ imperial requirements in order to receive the support from them.

Considering the limitations to the hospitality as it is practiced by the churches towards the defectors, the sixth chapter, as the final chapter, suggested Levinas’ hospitality that contributes to establishing an ethical relation by translating his philosophy into a theological idea. The otherisation and polarisation of the defectors is rooted in the church-centric identity of the churches and it creates a hierarchical relationship between the two groups. To change this subject-centred relationship, Levinas’ philosophy proposes an ethical relation that embodies the ethics of the Other. To establish such an ethical relationship, Levinas’ hospitality, which welcomes otherness and alterity, was suggested.

Levinas’ hospitality was explained through ‘the ABC Process’: Approaching the Other, Becoming-the-Other, and Cell division for entanglement. By focusing on the transformation of the subject to an ethical one, Levinas’ hospitality was described through the interaction with the Other. The story of Zacchaeus, which shows an ethical interaction with the Other beyond prejudice and stereotype, was applied to the churches’ context for practicing the ABC process of hospitality. Finally, to explicate the vision of Levinas’ hospitality in the unique context of Korean Protestant churches, the seed of hospitality was planted in the soil of *Minjung* theology, particular to Korea. The five features of Levinas’ hospitality, which coincide with the *Minjung* theological perspective and therefore can easily take root in the Korean peninsula, were elaborated for ‘reconciliation’ and ‘Just Peace’ in the relationship between the churches and the defectors.

Reflections and Limitations

Since the main aim of this thesis is criticising the relationship between the churches and the defectors, the collaboration of socio-political, philosophical and theological interpretation was an effective approach. Considering the complexity of geo-political situation around the Korean peninsula, the socio-political approach provided a panoramic perspective to understand the structure and background of the relationship

between the churches and the defectors. It was revealed that the relationship adhered to the South's conservative political interest as well as the America political interest. In addition, the relationship stimulates the division system to create the endless ideological confrontation. The philosophy of Levinas contributed to identifying the root of the structural problems in Korean Protestant churches. In other words, the element embedded in the Korean Protestant churches' theological background which strengthens the hierarchical relationship between them and the defectors was discovered through Levinas' philosophy. Korean Protestant churches are still influenced by American evangelical Protestantism that has features of anti-communism, an affirmation of the capitalist spirit, fundamentalism, etc. The interdisciplinary approach helped to reveal the main problem of the Korean Protestant churches' attitude towards the defectors is totalitarianism that reduces the defectors into sameness and creates otherisation and polarisation. Therefore, through the interdisciplinary methodology, this thesis found what the churches need in their relations with the defectors is not financial support or sophisticated social-welfare programmes, but to welcome the defectors with their various experiences and respecting the subjectivity of the defectors without desiring their assimilation into the churches.

Furthermore, the interdisciplinary methodology developed Levinas' hospitality with a theological interpretation to apply the churches' field of work. Korean Protestant churches can realise the authentic meaning of hospitality through Levinas' philosophical concept of hospitality. Hence, this thesis contributes to the churches' understanding of hospitality and finds a way to apply philosophical insights to the faith-based community that plays such a significant role in the life of the defectors in the South.

In terms of limitations, this thesis could not deal with living testimonies gathered through face-to-face interviews with the defectors and church leaders. Originally, the interviews were planned to examine the relationship between the two groups. The interview was expected to reveal the real voices that cannot be found through already published materials the intention and scope of which are different from this study. Furthermore, the expectation and role of the defectors in the relationship were planned to be introduced through the interview. However, due to the unexpected outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, the plan of conducting interviews seemed to be in jeopardy for

both interviewees and the interviewer. The use of secondary data to understand the perspective of the defectors is a major limitation of this thesis.

Implications and Recommendations for Korean Protestant Churches

The findings of this thesis, which were derived by analysing the relationship between the churches and the defectors, have several vital implications for the church community.

Firstly, this study offers the churches a new understanding of the defectors. Through this research, the defectors are reconsidered as an active subject who can bring various perspectives and opinions to the churches. The churches need to encounter the defectors not as passive beings who need support but as partners or teachers who can lead the churches to establish their own ethical subjectivity.

Secondly, Levinas' philosophical insights in this thesis can influence the churches to critically reflect upon their attitudes towards the defectors. The churches have focused on the expansion of the practice of hospitality towards the defectors without changing their self-interested intention. Ironically, their exercise of hospitality creates otherisation and polarisation by reducing the defectors into the violence of sameness. Thus, this research guides the churches to find the direction of hospitality that welcomes the subjectivity of the defectors.

Thirdly, Levinas' hospitality that is developed through a theological idea can show the churches why hospitality has to be practised and how it can be actualised within the church community. Levinas' hospitality was not proposed as a categorical imperative or theoretical argument. Rather, this study tries to urge the churches to understand hospitality as a responsibility of the churches through Levinas' philosophical key concepts. In addition, the ABC process showed the way to establish hospitality in this specific way. In other words, the churches can find their own identity as an ethical community among the public by welcoming the diversity and alterity of the defectors.

Lastly, this study provides an ethical imagination for peacebuilding in the Korean peninsula to the churches and opens more avenues for further research on the subject. Levinas' hospitality should not only be practised between individual parties but

also at a community/political level, since hospitality cannot be realised separate from community/political considerations. In this sense, from a broad perspective, Levinas' hospitality should also naturally operate in the relationship between the South and the North beyond the church and defectors. In other words, when authentic hospitality, which can be regarded as a peace-culture seeking diversity and reconciliation, is achieved in the church and defectors' relations, it can create the ethical imagination by expanding its spirit into the Korea conflict context. The ethical imagination, which agrees with John Paul Lederach's idea, indicates "the capacity to imagine something rooted in the challenges of the real world yet capable of giving birth to that which does not yet exist" (Lederach 2005, 29). Levinas' hospitality stimulates the capacity of the churches to imagine a place of hospitality within an imaginary circle of sorts that keeps violence out. In addition, the churches, which have the vision of the possibility of the impossible, will devote themselves to epistemological transformation beyond the dualistic polarity of the real world. In this respect, this research provides the potential for peacebuilding rather than bureaucratic policies and negotiations in order to restore the relationship between two Koreas through the hospitality model between the churches and the defectors.

To make concrete the implications of these results, the churches can re-address their mission paradigm. In other words, the churches need to make a mission policy that breaks from the mission of sameness which utilises and objectifies the defectors. Both evangelical and ecumenical churches of South Korea have treated the defectors as beneficiaries or missional targets in the name of hospitality, thus assimilating them into the churches' power. To overcome this imperial mission model, the churches can draw up a mission policy such that it broadens their understanding of the defectors. In particular, the churches should listen to the defectors as an important partner of the churches to establish an ethical relationship first. Besides, the churches can dialogue and learn from the defectors who constitute the churches' identity. Following the Other-centric stance of Levinas' idea, the churches can highlight the Other in their worship, liturgy, bible study, and numerous programmes by self-emptying the way Jesus shows us by becoming-the-Other or incarnation. With a more enlightened mission policy and a radical change in their thinking, the churches can learn to respect the defectors' unique identity and the defectors will be able to stay in the South without facing othersation and polarisation.

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