

RECENT STUDIES ON THE THOUGHTS OF THE EARLY
MEDIEVAL EUROPE IN KOREA

by

Kang, Joon-chang
Chongju University,
Chongju, Korea

I. Introduction

The study of western history in Korea has been introduced along with 'Modernization' since the nineteenth century and has come to see a scholarly settlement with the 'Liberation' in Aug. 1945. But the real state of things is that we Koreans have not been worth of close attention in those research achievements.

Some scholars point to reasons as follows:

1. There is a paucity of absolute numbers of scholars of western history.
2. The historian's consciousness on a given subject is not so deep or elaborate.
3. They have not yet developed any systematic methodology.

The study of medieval history or that of the medieval history of thought lies almost as a waste land in Korea up to this time.¹⁾ It is, however, very encouraging that monographs on western history have been published to a greater extent recently. As late as the latter part of the 1970s, dissertations that have appeared as exclusive works on a definite theme have invoked academic stimulus and interest in the students of western history.

The study of the medieval history of Europe has shown a rapid quantitative growth since the middle part of the 1970s, and the fields of study are being varied further. But this does not mean that this quantitative growth is necessarily qualitative growth. Economic and social history is at the head of western medieval history research and other fields dealt with include

Christianity as well as thought. This phenomenon reflects the trends of the study of medieval history in Korea.²⁾ I think it has been generally a common inclination of history studies in Korea that socio-economic history has held center stage, for four decades, ever since 1945.

II. Synopsis

A synopsis of the western history of thought during the early period in Korea is as follows:

We have about fourteen articles on this field.

1. Min, Kyung-bae, "The Recognition of Christianity by Constantinus and the Problems of Orthodoxy and Heresy Thereafter" (1968).
2. Lee, Suck-woo, "Augustine's View on the Mundane Systems" (1978).
3. _____, "On St. Augustine's Peace Theory" (1982).
4. _____, "Two Cities of Augustine" (1980- 1981).
5. Cho, In-hyung, "Stadium on 'Civitas Dei' of St. Augustinus" (1982).
6. Tjeng, Eui-chai, "A Study of Aurelius Augustinus' 'City of God'" (1976).
7. Lim, Ho-su, "On the Augustine's 'Duae Civitaties' " (1962).
8. Kang, Joon-chang, "A Treatise on Augustine's Thought" (1978).
9. _____, "The Social Theory of St. Augustinus" (1982).
10. _____, "St. Augustinus' View on the 'Cities' and 'Civitas Dei'" (1985).
11. _____, "The Ideal View of the Early Christianity" (1987).
12. Kim, Sung-shik, "Dualism in English History" (1961).
13. Han, Jung-shik, "A Study of the Madjūs under the Muslim World" (1967).
14. Whang, Jung-shik, "A Study on the Ideology of NSDAP" (1981).

To classify the above-mentioned articles according to their subjects:

1. The relation between the Roman Empire and Christianity ----- 1

2. Augustine's thoughts -----	10
3. The English history of thoughts -----	1
4. Islam -----	1
5. The Persecution of the Jews -----	1

To classify them again according to the object areas of studies:

1. The English area -----	1
2. The Eastern area -----	2
3. The whole western Europe -----	11

When we survey the recent tendencies from the classification, we can see that most studies on the thought of early medieval Europe have been concentrated mainly on St. Augustine and the other fields on regional as well as over-all Europe.

If we make a chart according to the years of publication, we can get following facts:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Regional hist.</u>	<u>Eastern area</u>	<u>The whole W. Europe</u>	<u>St. Augustine</u>
1960s	1	1	1	1
1970s	-	-	-	3
1980s	-	-	1	6

As we see, it was from 1960s that the initial works on the thought of early medieval Europe began to be issued on various fields.

Prof. Kim, Sung-shik's "Dualism in English History" was a forerunning article which awakened both the importance of the study of thought, and the relation between nation and christianity.

In 1960s, the trends of study are covering many fields. In 1970s, the theme of study is on St. Augustine only. In 1980s, it is interesting for us to see that the inclination of study has been fixed on St. Augustine except one. While the gravity of study of St. Augustine grew heightened and deepened,

the study of early medieval Europe is more narrower in its scope and more monotonous in its direction than before.

Prof. Min, Kyung-bae treats Constantine and the emperor's recognition of Christianity.³⁾ Properly speaking, the beginning of Christian culture is Constantine's recognition of Christianity, and therefore the Roman empire and Christianity have served as the soil for western European civilization. Although Christianity certainly conquered the empire, the Christian Church came to be involved in the politics of the empire and permeated the Roman spirit in its sacerdotal structure and its canon law character.⁴⁾ The emperor's reason of calling for the Nicene Council was unification and mission, which was his proper concern. Why did he take such a step? He explains it like this:

1. The emperor placed greater emphasis on outer concord rather than internal concord.
2. The emperor thought that disruption in the Church would invoke a terrible disaster.
3. The emperor called God chiefly the 'Mighty' the 'Omnipotent', the 'Supreme,' the 'Highest,' the 'God of all Things' and the 'Victorious God.'⁵⁾

No sooner had the emperor accomplished unification of the empire than he saw himself that his own mission would be carried out by service to God. He considered that unification was the matrix of order. He thought that it was his own sacred duty to rule the church by innovating corruption and removing difficulties as well as dissension. The Church's autonomy came to be lost inevitably owing to Constantine's political action. Although the emperor confirmed unification and mission, it was enforced by the state or the emperor's power, if this be correct.⁶⁾

It can be pointed out that Prof. Min concludes that the unification and mission of Christianity by Constantine is something like a flaw in a germ.

While Prof. Lee, Suk-woo has written several articles on St. Augustine for several years consecutively.

In "Augustine's View on the Mundane Systems" he says that Augustine gave meaning to worldly agony and historical affliction and explained bipartite ways in which the course of history leads both to the 'City of God' and the 'City of Man', by introducing a teleological view of history into the real world. According to him, human history has a dual character. He seeks confrontation in faith and humanity rather than in an extra-political system. This forms important parts of his views on state and on church from which humanity starts and is established on the basis of this.⁷⁾ For him, the state is a system in which God allowed man to maintain order of human societies.

He concludes that Augustine's theory of state rejects Hellenistic extremism and the Donatist's theory, actualizing the existence of it ever more in a sense.⁸⁾

The ultimate purpose of war is to attain peace on earth. Augustine bisects peace into 'earthly' peace and 'heavenly' peace. He gives proof of Christian legitimacy for war, thereby saying that the just war is not to get wealth, glory or fulfillment of desire, but to recover the already received damage and to punish the injurer. But the just war that he maintains is of more punitive character, so that, the unjust conduct of the other party is not only transgressive in the legal sense but a crime of offending righteousness. The latter is interpreted even as a challenge to the power of God.⁹⁾

From the fifth century onward, Augustine's theory on war began to be transformed into a different doctrine in its content little by little. Although he maintained that providence governs the results of war, he said the victory does not always go to the just. On the other hand, it is necessary for Christians to get God's help further. He does not stand on non-resistance of pacifism, but recognizes the inevitability of war in the human world in which they live, i.e. that of sin. What he shows in all his thoughts is not a rejection of

classical antiquity but a preparation for new values for the medieval age. He points to other-worldliness and does not neglect the realities of life. He looks for the ideal world, while always standing with his feet in the actual. He evaluates Augustine as a man of transition who digests the mutation in the interim between the ancient age and the medieval age, and a realist who contemplates the other world to the utmost, rather deeply rooted in the real life.¹⁰⁾

Augustine has inherited the ancient peace argument of Hebrew-Greece-Rome and has influenced the Medieval Church, monasticism and the modern international pacifism of such as H. Grotius as well. He sees the ultimate goal of human life as the 'everlasting life' and the character of this life as peace, using eternal life and peace with almost the same meaning. He divides earthly peace as 'external' and 'internal' in the two aspects of its affairs. By dint of him, there was prepared a bridge between internal peace and external peace.

Moreover, according to the emphasis on the two phases of peace, we can argue that the standpoint of the Church has been influenced and incessant efforts have been maintained to inspire inner peace of God's peaceful element into social peace from the sixth century to the twelfth.¹¹⁾

One of the conspicuous issues in the apprehension of 'The City of God' is whether the City of God can be identified with the mundane church of earth and the relation between the state of earth and the actual historical state. Augustine catches limits of state and of the earthly state with reality to distinguish the Church Father's state-theory or church-view and Donatist's extreme attitude.¹²⁾ His concept of 'Civitas' assumes individuality in abundance because the city of God or the city of the Devil is partitioned into certain systems. This has a strong eschatological character in that he does not try to solve the problem in the present world but leaves the solution for the other-world.

He takes a pessimistic view on the essence of state so that his view is dence of African exclusivistic inclination. He evaluates that the state has tentative value in the present world in that though it can not remove the fundamental evil, it is necessary for the maintenance of present order to prevent the expansion of it. He does not think that these outer sanctions soon change humanity or can establish a complete system on earth. This is to say that he admits the necessity of a system but distrusts the system itself.¹³⁾ Dispite the future-orient character of his view of history, there flows a present affirmative attitude at the lowest stratum. He accepts the present values such as culture, system and state for a existence meaning itself.

And he makes man appear as a agent of history. Prof. Lee concluded Augustine's view of history is progressive in that history is proceeding to a goal from the present incomplete state to the just complete state and from the imperfect earthly church to the perfect church at the same time.¹⁴⁾

Prof. Cho expalins the social, political and religious background of Augustine's 'City of God'. He says that his view of history is based on that of dualism and the central view of his history is eschatological and providential as well. He accepts his opinion that Rome did not declined because it received Christianity but because there were many problems in Rome itself. Though Augustine ought to be criticized for seeking after the essence of history from non-historical elements and sees history from micromical standpoints such as science, logicality and event-center, his contribution is as follows:

He provides a moment to glimpse the world history integral by overcoming the locality of ancient history and to supplement the faults of chronology of ancient history. In spite of his other-worldliness, he has an appreciative eye to acknowledge state and systems as real, and to search for one of the motives of history in human nature, thus contemplating history as very real.

Prof. Cho highly rates Augustine's progressive view of history. Although he confounds history with religion and brings about the subjectivity of it, he tries to realize goodness on this earth amidst the struggle between the good and the bad, and between the city of God and the city of the Devil.¹⁵⁾

We can watch how Augustine catches Greek philosophy and culture of human race in their historical development processes, sees their contents logically, presents their limits and incorporates them with history of theology. His thoughts are future-oriented but clarify that human history is neither reckless, nor accidental, nor fatalistic of paganism. Those are goal-oriented. He expresses philosophy and theology in the life of the whole man in the mass. The understanding of 'The City of God' is of great help to make western European thought steadfast, because it has influenced decisive effects upon the formation of that of western Europe thereafter.¹⁶⁾ Prof. Tjeng points out that 'The City of God' provided a wide philosophy of history which even contains God's providence in the history of development of human intelligence. Augustine's mental temperament connects theology of history by choosing Platonism and assimilates it further, thus sublimating Neo-Platonism to Christian theism in history. He accorded the supreme good, beautitude, eternal peace, the everlasting sacred Sabaath in God or the foundation being of all existence by sublimating Greek supreme good to Christian idea.¹⁷⁾

Prof. Kim, Ho-su tries to take the socio-economic approach that the formation of 'The City of God' should be studied in Augustine's social stratum and economic view of late classical antiquity. That kind of approach is exhausting for one in its diversity.

He says that he can see Augustine in three fields:

1. The consciousness of classical antiquity is to elucidate for him the cultural heritage of antiquity.

2. The consciousness of medieval history is to explain his system of thought from his influence on the mental and cultural formation of the western medieval history of Europe.
3. There is a thorough consciousness of the history of ideas.

It is possible only by analysing the problem structurally why Augustine had to be bound to behave, when crisis had been exposed to the social system of slavery in the late Roman empire.¹⁸⁾ 'The City of God' has a dual character in which contains Catholic apologetics against paganism as well as an establishment of Catholic legitimacy against the heretic Arius.

A view of history was initiated from the patristic theology of history in the medieval Christian Church Fathers who saw that human history proceeds to the ultimate goal with a unifying significance among past, present and future alike. From this point of view, Augustine was the first philosopher of history in western Europe. He saw universal history from a teleological point of view. There has been so many a debate on what is the fundamental dynamic power of history. Christianity stands on the theocratic historical view that world history is dominated by the Providence of God.

The significance of the appearance of Christianity marks the end of classical antiquity, the new era of western European civilization and the new original age of history, as well. The characteristics of Augustine's thoughts are as follows:

1. The content of his thought consists in Christianity itself. But the outline of it derives from the effects of pagan antiquity such as Platon and Virgil, in particular.
2. He authored many books, articles and epistles for the purpose of apologetics as one of the Church Fathers.
3. He began the philosophy of history in his 'City of God' for the first time.

He attempted to establish hermeneutics of history. His achievement is to find and to teach such things as teleological eschatology, meaning, goal, direction of future in history, the ultimate meaning of time and the dynamical criticism of the then society for the human race.¹⁹⁾

Generally speaking, Christians have social traditions and a kind of patriotism which is different from the secular state. The theory of two cities and dual citizenship illustrates it. Augustine absolutely divides the two between the heavenly- the earthly, the secular- the eternal, the good- the bad and the material- the spiritual. There dichotomy runs through his philosophy and theology.²⁰⁾

He would like to build Plato's ideal state as a heavenly model. He seeks the sole principle in God in place of Plato's abstract principle of 'Idea'. As the concept of his citizen of two cities is interpreted from the Christian standpoint, his source is bible-interpretation. When he does this, he uses Plato as an instrument. 'Civitas' is idealized as a place of the sacredness in heaven, and 'Civitas Dei' is simply not an earthly spot but an eternal-spiritual-universal world.²¹⁾

For Augustine, the state should prevent the bad, by using its coercive power adequately to arbitrate the troubles of its constituent members. He presents an ideal view of politics that Christians turn for extra-political and other-worldly purposes rather than wholly unifying the secular political life. It can be said that he has an antiseptic theory of state.²²⁾

A phenomenon which is always found in English history is called 'Dualism'. This pervades all directions of English people, religions, politics and other general culture. Thus the dualism sticks stubbornly to even the method of Englishmen's thinking. It means two anti-conceptions — conservatism and progressivism, traditionalism and liberalism. In the everyday life of Englishmen appear such conceptions making them keep balance in both acting and thinking, preventing them from running to an extreme. Considering the contrast appearance of this

double character in religion, the late Prof. Kim, Sung-shik laid much stress on the dualism of English Christianity.²³⁾

It has two sects: one is the general and traditional Anglican Church, the other is the individual and Liberal Free Church. The former seems to be the English-man's centripetal force and the latter their centrifugal force. These two anti-tendencies of conception are traced back to the British Church and the Roman Catholic church. The Celtic Church is tribal and individual against the Roman Church being general and systematic. In short, the Celtic Church is the mother of the Free Church as a social religion, while the Roman Church is the foundation of the Anglican Church as a national one.²⁴⁾

We can find few articles on Islam and the Jews. The Madjus is of dualistic monism while the Muslim is of monistic dualism. So, it is inevitable that the two sects contradict themselves in ethics and ideas. The former considers that infiltration and contamination of evil is possible, and affirms real vice or conflicts thoroughly. The latter thinks that they are special aristocrats who alone are exempt from the pollution of the Devil. Islam starts from Goodness. But the power of the Goodness and the Badness perpetuates, segregating respectively. The Madjus was under the domination of the Muslim and yet surpassed them in the understanding of the present evil and its conflict by far.²⁵⁾

The contemporary anti-semitism of Germany is not only a German phenomenon but also almost one of almost all European problems in time and space. It was in the period of Charlemagne (743-814) when the Jews came into Mainz for the first time and then they were to be seen in several cities in the Rhineland. They had contracted estate-guarantee and financial support with feudal lords on the whole, settling along the Levantine trade routes. From this time on, anti-semitic feeling began to sprout.²⁶⁾ Why did the persecution of the Jews start then? The reasons for it can be pointed out as follows:

1. As they were persecutors of Jesus Christ, they were regarded as the prince of evil, collectively.
2. It came from the difference between such things as the chosen-people consciousness, Sabbath, salvation-view and other habits.
3. There was a rumor that after killing Christians on Passover day, the Jews drank the blood of the Christians.

So, anti-semitism is a total European phenomenon and can be said to be a problem that invoked the medieval age of Europe and European history all-through.²⁷⁾ There are some other articles on time and translations.²⁸⁾ But I present the titles only, for these go outside our central themes.

III. Conclusion

So far, I have surveyed the outline of the research trends on the Early European History of Thoughts during the past 40 years since 1945. When we synthesize the study in view, some tendencies are to be seen:

1. Studies have been undertaken on the theory of state, a philosophy of history and moral science around Augustine's 'City of God', chiefly. Though general remarks in research are important, they should be followed by depth analysis of each remark thereafter at various angles.
2. The study of each national history and that of the regional history of thought should be magnified. The 'Dualism of English History' is almost only in thesis as regards the national history field. On Islam and the Jews, there are one or two.

As far as I know, there is nothing on Byzantine. I think that the fundamental reason for such patterns of work is, of course, the problem of language. If there can not be any improvement in diversifying the language policy, we can never attain satisfying accomplishments.

3. The research on thought should be precisely differentiated and varified as those of politics, economics and society. There are most undeveloped.
4. The thoughts of the Christian Father's are key to the undetstanding of the early middle ages. Their lives, achievements, sources of thought and influences must be studied under organic relationship. Translations and monographes are very useful as primary sources for both beginners and specialists, even for popularization of medieval history and the medieval history of thought. The Western Medieval History of Thought is untouched in many fields in Korea.

Many specialist in this field are needed in the future. Within the circumstances and difficulties to which Koreans are exposed, these scholarly results are the outcome of the Medievalists' endeavours.

I hope that the fruition of more abundant scholarly contributions will be attained.

Footnote

- 1) Kyl, Hyun-mo, Lee Bo-hyoung and Yang, Byong-woo, 'Review and Outlook: Western History', The Yoksa Hakbo (The Korean Historical Review), The Korean Historical Association, Seoul, Korea, No. 39, Oct. 1968, pp. 133-135.
- 2) Lee, Suk-woo, 'Historical Study in Korea; Western History 1979-1985 Medieval', The Yoksa Hakbo, No. 112, Dec. 1986. pp. 128-131.
- 3) Min, Kyung-bae, 'The Recognition of Christianity by Constantinus and the Problems of Orthodoxy and Heresy Thereafter', Sachong, The Historical Society of Korea University, Seoul, Korea, Vol.12-13, Sept. 1968.
- 4) Min, Kyung-bae, Op. Cit, pp. 59-62.
- 5) Ibid.

- 6) Min, Kyung-bae, Op. Cit, pp. 80-81.
- 7) Lee, Suk-woo, 'Augustine's View on the Mundane Systems', The 21st Korean Nation-wide History Assembly Presentation Gists, Spring.1987. p. 109.
- 8) Lee, Suk-woo, Op. Cit, pp. 110-111.
- 9) Lee, Suk-woo, 'On St. Augustine's Peace Theory', Kyung Hee Sahak (The Historical Review of Kyung Hee University), The Historical Society of Kyung Hee University, Seoul, Korea, No. 9-10, June, 1982. pp. 189, 194-195.
- 10) Lee, Suk-woo, Op. Cit, pp. 202, 204, 206.
- 11) Lee, Suk-woo, Op. Cit, pp. 216, 219, 224, 226.
- 12) Lee, Suk-woo, 'Two Cities of Augustine', Soyangsaron (The Western History Review), The Korean Society of Western History, Seoul, Korea, Vol. 22-22, 1981-1981, pp. 55-56.
- 13) Lee, Suk-woo, Op. Cit, pp. 61, 78-79.
- 14) Lee, Suk-woo, Op. Cit, p. 81.
- 15) Cho, In-hyung, 'Studium on 'Civitas Dei' of St. Augustinus', Sahakchi (The Historical Journal), The Historical Society of Dankook University, Seoul, Korea, No. 16, Nov. 1982, pp. 60, 61-62.
- 16) Tjeng, Eui-chai, 'A Study of Aurelius Augustinus' 'City of God', Catholic College Divinity Thesis Collection, No. 2, June 1976, pp. 145-146.
- 17) Tjeng, Eui-chai, Op. Cit. p. 194.
- 18) Lim, Ho-su, 'On the Augustine's 'Duae civitates'', The Ryoksa Kyoyuk (The Korean Historical Education Review), The Korean Historical Education Society, Seoul, Korea, No. 6, June, 1962, pp. 48-49.
- 19) Kang, Joon-chang, 'A Treatise on Augustine's Thought', Hosuh Sahak, The Ho Suh Historical Association, Daejeon, Korea, No. 6, Dec. 1978, pp.52-53.
- 20) Kang, Joon-chang, 'The Social Theory of St. Augustinus', The Journal of Humanities, The Institute of Humanities, Chongju University, Chongju, Korea, Vol. 1, Dec. 1982, pp. 95-96.

- 21) Kang, Joon-chang, 'St. Augustinus' View of the 'Cities' and 'Civitas Dei', The Chongdae Salim (The Chongju University Historical Review), No. 4-5, Feb. 1985, p. 169.
- 22) Kang, Joon-chang, 'The Ideal View of the Early Christianity', International Studies Review, The Institute of International Studies, Chongju University, Chongju, Korea, No. 4, Jan. 1987, p. 180.
- 23) Kim, Sung-shik, 'Dualism in English History', Sahak Yuenku (The Study of History), Hankuk Sahak Hoe, Seoul, Korea, No. 10, Apr. 1961, pp. 29-30.
- 24) Kim, Sung-shik, Op. Cit, p. 113.
- 25) Han, Jung-shik, 'A Study of the Madjūs under the Muslim World', Western Historical Shudies Presented to Prof. Dr. Eui Sul Cho on His Sixtieth Birthday, Seoul, Korea, Changwangsa, 1967, pp. 159-152.
- 26) Hwang, Jung-shik, 'A Study of the Ideology of NSDAP', Won Kwang Sahak (Won Kwang Historical Journal), The Historical Society of Won Kwang University, Iri, Korea, No. 1, Dec. 1981, pp. 1-2.
- 27) Hwang, Jung-shik, Op. Cit, p. 26.
- 38) Han, Sung-hong, 'St. Augustinus' Concept of Time and the Contemporary Philosophical Understanding of it', Prof. Dr. Lee Jong-song's Sixtieth Birthday Thesis Collection, The Presbyterian Seminary, Seoul, Korea, June, 1982.
- Kim, Kyu-young, 'A Study on Time', The Encounter of Philosophy and Theology (Father Tjeng Eui Chai Sixtieth Birthday Thesis Collection), Committee of Tjeng Eui Chai Sixtieth Birthday Thesis Publication, St. Paulo Pub. Co. Seoul, Korea, June, 1985.
- Chi, Don-sik, Lee, Chang-shik and Kim, Kyu-young (ed. and tr), The Western Medieval thoughts, Korea Theological Study Institute, Seoul, Korea, May, 1981.
- Chi, Dong-shik (ed. and tr, et al), The Medieval Historians and The Historical Writing Ways, Pub Mun Sa, Seoul, Korea, Oct. 1983.

Kim, Kwang-shik (tr), Lateinische Kirchenväter (H.F. von Campenhausen,
Zweite, durchgesehene Auflage, W. Kohlhammer Verlag, Stuttgart, 1965),
The Christian Literature Society, Seoul, Korea, Sept. 1979.