

Kim's experience

Episode 1 The journey to Barchester

I was brought up in a Christian family in Seoul. My father was a Presbyterian minister, and I decided to follow in his career by training for the ministry. In 1975 at the age of eighteen I began an undergraduate degree program in theology at South Seoul Bible Seminary. I completed my studies in 1980. During the course I took twenty modules on a variety of subjects relating to the study of the Old Testament, the New Testament, church history, world religions, and pastoral theology. In addition to taking these modules, I wrote an extended essay on Buddhist-Christian dialogue in Korea, for which I was commended by the head of the department and awarded a prize equivalent to US\$100.00. At the same time I worked in a local church in order to acquire the kind of practical experience necessary for a position as a church minister.

Between 1981 and 1983, I undertook an MA in theology and world religions at Min Fan University in Seoul. The grading system of the MA ranged from A (excellent) to E (fail). On completion of the course I received a grade A. After being awarded the MA, I began work as a pastoral assistant in a church in the centre of Seoul. In 1986, having worked for three years as a pastoral assistant, I was put in charge of my own church.

While working as a church minister I did some part time undergraduate teaching at South Seoul Presbyterian seminary, teaching courses on South Asian religions, Christianity in Asia and some postgraduate teaching on various aspects of the use of methodology in theology and religious studies. At the same time I continued my scholarly work through writing articles for church magazines and academic journals. Between 1986 and 1990 I published five articles on subjects relating to pastoral work in the church and interfaith dialogue among the various religious groups in South Korea. On one occasion I was interviewed by a national newspaper and appeared on national television to discuss ways in which the various religious groups in the country could be encouraged to engage in constructive interfaith dialogue.

In 1991 I resigned my post as church minister in order to accept a senior administrative position in the Korean Presbyterian church. The job involved me working directly with the director of home and overseas aid for the Korean Presbyterian church. My work involved managing certain church based charitable operations both at home and abroad and arranging conferences and accommodation for visiting overseas church dignitaries. This job provided me with the opportunity to deal with a number of important figures in the world of politics, such as the minister of cultural affairs, who was concerned to be informed about matters relating to the religious life of the country.

I remained in this position until the summer of 1994. At this point I was offered funding from my church to undertake a PhD abroad, while continuing to receive my income from administrative work in the Korean Presbyterian church. I felt that this would be an excellent opportunity to develop my knowledge of Buddhism through writing about Buddhist Christian dialogue in Korea. A number of my colleagues had spoken highly about the Department of Religious Studies at Barchester University. It was a large department with an impressive research record. Although there was no one who had a specialist knowledge of Korean Buddhism or Christianity in Korea, there were staff who had expertise in related areas. Accordingly, I came to the United Kingdom in September 1994 and spent six months studying in English language schools in order to improve my English. In April 1995 my wife and daughter joined me in the United Kingdom.

- Q1. Discuss Kim's situation and compare it with that of other postgraduate students you know or have known.**
- Q2. What as a minimum should Kim expect to be provided for postgraduate students at Barchester?**

Episode 2 First experiences

In April 1995 I began my research on Christian Buddhist relations in South Korea at Barchester University. The department appointed two supervisors to work with me on the project. The main supervisor was a lecturer in the Department of Religious Studies, Dr Martin Peters, whose area of specialisation was Chinese Buddhism. The second supervisor was a research fellow, Dr Daniel Goodfellow, who was an expert on modern Christian theology and had recently developed an interest in comparative philosophy of religion. Dr Goodfellow's interest in comparative philosophy of religion had led him to develop an interest in the religions of East Asia.

My research started reasonably well. I found both supervisors to be interested in my work and supportive of me. They let me know that I should feel free to come and see them as and when I needed to. During my first week they took me around the library, introduced me to various staff there, and showed me some of the facilities that would be useful to me (computers, the interlibrary loan system, photocopy machines and so on). I was also pleased to be given an office in the department.

The first task that my supervisors set me was to make a list of general studies of Christianity and Buddhism in Korea and then to look for research that had already been done on Buddhist-Christian relations in Korea. I did this and discovered that there were quite a number of general studies on Buddhism, fewer on Christianity, and very little on Buddhist-Christian dialogue in the country. My supervisors said that this was good because that would provide me with scope to write something that was completely original.

Having done this basic research, I wrote an essay which explored the history of Christianity in South Korea, which was received relatively favourably by both supervisors. Their one reservation was that the essay was not analytical; they felt that it was merely an exposition of the subject. They informed me that in future I would need to be more analytically focused. In order to do this, I should always write with a question or thesis in mind.

The examiners then set me another task. This was to write an essay on the subject of Buddhist-Christian dialogue in Korea. I wrote the essay, but it was rather brief because there was not much material in the United Kingdom. When I discussed this with my supervisors they suggested that I should return to Korea for a few months so that I could acquire some primary materials on the subject. I returned to Korea in December 1995 and remained there for three months, collecting primary material from church organisations, libraries and Buddhist monasteries. Having collected this material, I returned to the United Kingdom at the end of March 1996. I was then able to re-write the original essay. My supervisors were quite pleased with the content. Their main concern was with the quality of the English. They told me that I should find someone who could proof read my work and put it into more presentable English. Fortunately, there were a number of research students in the department who were willing to do this work for payment.

- Q1. Comment on Kim's experience so far**
Q2. What should Kim do now?

Episode 3 Supervisory problems

I was now at the beginning of my second year. During this period my research continued to progress reasonably well. I wrote an additional paper which was more specific in its focus: it examined the way in which the Presbyterian church had engaged in dialogue with the order of the white mountain, which is a Son Buddhist order based in the south of Korea.

At the same time, however, I began to experience some problems with my supervisors, particularly my second supervisor, Dr. Goodfellow. I felt that I was not seeing my supervisors regularly enough, and that on occasions Dr Goodfellow's manner was abrasive. On one occasion, having not seen Dr Goodfellow for several months, I went to his office to ask him if he had the time to help me with a piece of work he replied: 'Not really, but what do you want to know?' On another occasion when I went to Dr Goodfellow's office, having made an appointment to see him, he told me that he was too busy to see me. I found this deeply upsetting since he was refusing to see me even though I had made an appointment at a time that was supposed to be convenient for him.

This incident was one of a number of unpleasant encounters I had with Dr Goodfellow. At first I did not react but over time I decided to discuss the situation with the head of department Professor Geoffrey Hanley. When I went to see Professor Hanley about this situation, he told me that I should not allow myself to be upset by the kind of situations I had encountered. He assured me that Dr Goodfellow is very busy and sometimes is a bit short-tempered and went on to say that Dr Goodfellow is short-tempered with everyone, and that I should not take his behaviour towards me personally. I found this difficult to accept since I felt, firstly, that there were certain principles and standards that should inform interpersonal conduct in a higher education environment and, secondly, my church was paying Barchester University a lot of money for me to be supervised and that I was entitled to regular contact with my supervisors and to be treated with respect.

Relations between myself and Dr Goodfellow soon became impossible after he learned that I had spoken to Professor Hanley about my interpersonal problems with him. One day he came into my office and accused me of trying to undermine his status among his colleagues by spreading malicious rumours about him. I replied that I had done no such thing; I had simply expressed my concern to Professor Hanley about the way in which I was being treated by the department. I explained to Dr Goodfellow that I had not intended to cause him any embarrassment or problems, but that I felt that there was a problem which had to be addressed. This prompted Dr Goodfellow to reply, 'I don't want you to say anything more about me behind my back. Either co-operate with me or find another supervisor.' Dr Goodfellow then walked out of my office.

Later in the week I had a conversation with my principal supervisor, Dr Peters. Dr Peters informed me that he had had a chat with Dr Goodfellow about my situation. He suggested to me that it might be best if Dr Goodfellow were no

longer involved in the project since he had a lot of other commitments and relations between Dr Goodfellow and myself had become difficult. I accepted Dr Peters' position, and agreed that he would be my sole supervisor. From then on my research continued reasonably well. Relations between myself and Dr Peters remained cordial. I was not entirely happy with the supervision he provided; he was very encouraging but I felt that he did not give me much useful advice or assistance. Nonetheless, he was very sociable, inviting me on a number of occasions to his house to have meals with him. The deficiencies of Dr Peters' supervision were offset to some extent by the kind help I received from a number of research students in the department and by some informal supervision given to me by a member staff in the department of religious studies at Barchester College of Higher Education.

Q1. What should a postgraduate research student expect of a supervisor?

Q2. What should Kim do now?

Episode 4 The selection and appointment of examiners

After making two further visits to Korea in which I interviewed a number of clergy and Buddhist monks and laity who were involved in interfaith dialogue, I wrote up my findings. On 1 August 1998 I submitted my thesis for examination to the graduate office at the recommendation of my supervisor. Prior to and following the submission of the thesis, Dr Peters assured me that my thesis was a good piece of scholarship and that I need have no fear about the outcome of the viva. He informed me that he anticipated that following the viva I might have to make some revisions to the thesis but this should not be a matter of concern to me because it is common procedure for successful candidates to revise their thesis in the light of the examiners' recommendations. Dr Peters' comments led me to believe that I would not be required to make major revisions to the thesis following the viva. Dr Peters further reassured me by telling me that examiners are in principle extremely reluctant to fail PhD candidates and that it is the role of examiners to suggest to the candidate ways in which the thesis can be improved.

All seemed well until I learned to my great disquiet that the department had decided to appoint Dr Goodfellow as the internal examiner for my thesis. I was surprised by the choice of Dr Goodfellow since at an earlier stage he had been the secondary supervisor of my thesis; I was concerned that this choice would contravene the principle that a supervisor should not examine his/her own student's thesis. I was more concerned, however, that the difficult relations that had developed between myself and Dr Goodfellow during the second year of my research would adversely influence his perception of my thesis.

My anxieties were further increased when I learned that the external examiner was Professor Martin Young. Martin Young was a good friend of Dr Goodfellow, and the two of them had collaborated on a number of research projects. I was very much aware that Dr Goodfellow had a very sensitive ego and resented the fact that I had questioned him over the quality of supervision which he had given to me. I was also convinced that he was someone who was capable of conducting himself in a callous and ruthless fashion if it served his interests to do so. The appointment of Professor Young led me to wonder whether Dr Goodfellow might seek to prejudice Professor Young against me. Such was my concern about this situation that I discussed it with my supervisor. I reminded him that relations between myself and Dr Goodfellow had been very difficult during the second year of my research; they had been so difficult in fact that the two of us felt that we could no longer work together. I suggested that there was a real possibility that Dr Goodfellow might do something to jeopardize the outcome of the viva.

My supervisor, however, sought to reassure me that neither Dr Goodfellow nor Professor Young would abuse their professional responsibilities. They were both senior and distinguished scholars in their field and it would be extremely unlikely that they would conduct themselves in an unethical or unprincipled way. Furthermore, it would not be in their interest to do anything that might damage their perceived professional integrity. If they were to

conduct themselves inappropriately in a situation as important as a PhD viva, they would undermine their credibility as scholars and risk the opprobrium of their colleagues. Furthermore, Dr Goodfellow's research contract was up for renewal, and it would be inconceivable that he should do anything that would be perceived to be unprofessional and in turn jeopardize his place in the department.

I was not, however, reassured by Dr Peters' words, and decided to go and see the director of research students, Professor Melvin Dobson. I explained the difficult history I had had with Dr Goodfellow and my concern about the appropriateness of Dr Goodfellow as the internal examiner for my thesis. Melvin Dobson was clearly concerned about the situation. He told me that he was unaware of the history of problems between myself and Dr Goodfellow; had he been aware of this situation he would not have appointed Dr Goodfellow as the internal examiner. When Professor Dobson asked me if I had discussed the situation with my supervisor, I told him that I had but that my supervisor had expressed the view that previous difficulties between myself and Dr Goodfellow should not have any influence on the outcome of the viva. I then outlined to Professor Dobson the reasons that my supervisor had given for believing that neither Dr Goodfellow nor Professor Young would create any problems for me. At that point Professor Dobson then stated: 'Yes, I am sure that Dr Peters is correct on this matter. The best thing would be not to worry about the situation. I can't imagine scholars of their stature conducting themselves in any way that would be untoward. If, however, in the extremely unlikely eventuality that something does go wrong and you feel that you feel that you have been unfairly treated, there is an appeals procedure. But I am sure that it won't come to that.'

I then asked Professor Dobson whether the Department would support me if anything did go wrong. Professor Dobson was non-committal. He simply stated that it would be inappropriate to speculate about the outcome of the viva at this stage. However, it was the responsibility of the department to ensure that all students were examined fairly and that the department would ensure that I was examined fairly.

Professor Dobson's statement that the department was concerned to ensure that students were examined fairly and impartially reassured me to some extent. I also felt that the choice of the examiners was a *fait accompli* and that it would serve no useful purpose to take the matter any further. I resolved to prepare meticulously for the viva in order to ensure that I would perform to the best of my abilities on the day.

Q1. How should PhD examiners be selected? What part should the student have in the decision?

Q2. What should Kim do now?

Episode 5 Preparing for the Viva

The weeks before the viva were extremely difficult for me. My initial reservations about the choice of Dr Goodfellow as the internal examiner for my thesis were revived as a result of a number of incidents that took place during the summer of 1998. First of all I learned that Dr Goodfellow had been discussing my thesis with a number of his students and had shown sections of it to them. One of Dr Goodfellow's research students told me that Dr Goodfellow had been making critical comments about the thesis and that I needed to work very hard for the viva.

Sometime after this conversation I had an informal meeting with Dr Goodfellow in order to enquire of him when the viva might take place. Dr Goodfellow told me that he was very busy and that the external examiner was also very busy, so it would only be possible to have the viva sometime in late November. When I said to Dr Goodfellow that I hoped to attend the graduation ceremony in December, he told me that this would be unlikely because I might need one or two months, or even a year, to revise the thesis. He also said to me that the thesis might fail.

A few days after this meeting Dr Goodfellow's research student told me not to make any references to Dr Goodfellow about the graduation ceremony because to do so might give him the impression that I was overconfident about the outcome of the viva. This incident upset me, for I was concerned that my wish to know the date of the viva might be interpreted or construed as a challenge to Dr Goodfellow's authority as internal examiner. Such was my sense of alarm over this incident that I went to discuss it with Dr Peters; Dr Peters, however, assured me that I had done nothing wrong in asking Dr Goodfellow about the possibility of my attending the graduation ceremony.

In early October this same student informed me that Dr Goodfellow was going to leave the department because his contract was not going to be renewed and that he would be leaving the department at the end of December. When I asked why Dr Goodfellow was leaving, I was informed that the official reason was due to financial constraints within the department but that, in Dr Goodfellow's eyes, the real reason for his imminent departure was due to difficulties he had had with certain colleagues. I was also told that I should be very careful about Dr Goodfellow because his job situation had left him in a highly emotional and unstable state of mind.

A couple of days later I asked Dr Goodfellow's research student about Dr Goodfellow's situation. S/he told me that Dr Goodfellow was still highly emotional and that he was now looking for a new job. S/he once again told me that I should be careful about Dr Goodfellow with regard to my viva. The student then told me that Dr Goodfellow regarded my supervisor, Dr Peters, as his enemy and considered Dr Peters to have been instrumental in manufacturing Dr Goodfellow's imminent departure from the department. As the student of Dr Goodfellow's perceived enemy, I needed to be particularly careful of Dr Goodfellow.

At this point I decided to avoid as much as possible Dr Peters because I did not want to be seen to be associated with my examiner's perceived enemy, even though this 'enemy' was my supervisor.

Two days before my viva, on the morning of 23 November 1998, Dr Goodfellow came to my office and asked me if I knew at what time my viva would take place. I said that I did and gave him a copy of a letter from the departmental secretary confirming the time of the viva. He then said to me that he had come to see me on the previous Friday but I was not in. He said to me that he came to tell me that he had never shown my thesis to anyone. I asked him what he meant by this statement. He said to me that he had been to see Professor Geoffrey Hanley on the previous Friday; in this meeting Professor Hanley had told him that I had said that Dr Goodfellow had shown my thesis to his students in his seminar. I said that I had never made such a statement to Professor Hanley. Dr Goodfellow appeared to be very angry and he left my office. I was very upset by the incident, so I went to his office to discuss it with him. Dr Goodfellow said that there might be some misunderstanding. He also told me that he had prepared some specific and general questions about the thesis for the viva and that the viva might take place for an hour or longer. This incident made me feel very anxious about the viva and prevented me from sleeping properly during the two nights before the viva.

Q1. How should a student prepare for a viva? What might he or she expect?

Q2. What should Kim do now?

Episode 6 The viva

The viva had been arranged to take place at 1:00 on Wednesday 25 November. I arrived at Dr Goodfellow's office at 12:55 and waited outside until 1:00. At 1:00, Sally Richardson, the departmental secretary came to Dr Goodfellow's office and knocked on his door, but there was no reply. Ms Richardson then took me to the departmental coffee room, and at about 1:10 she took me to Dr Goodfellow's office. Ms Richardson opened the door and Dr Goodfellow introduced the external examiner, Professor Young, to me. We sat down at a table with Professor Young to my left and Dr Goodfellow opposite me.

Dr Goodfellow began asking the questions. Firstly, he asked how long it took me to complete the thesis. I replied that it took me three years and four months. I also told him that I had been collecting research data since 1993. Dr Goodfellow replied: 'Okay, so it took you three years and six months.' (I thought that this was a strange response since I had just told Dr Goodfellow that I had spent three years and four months on the thesis.)

Dr Goodfellow then asked: 'How many words are there in the thesis?' I replied: 'My thesis has about 100,000 words.' Dr Goodfellow then said: 'Okay,' laughed and turned to the external examiner. (I found Dr Goodfellow's laughter disconcerting because it seemed to suggest a flippant attitude to the occasion. It also reminded me of the way in which Dr Goodfellow had made me feel threatened before the viva and made me feel under even more pressure during the viva.)

At that point Professor Young asked his first question. I do not remember the exact way in which the question was phrased. As I recall, Professor Young first of all stated that my methodology was based on a historical analysis of Buddhist-Christian relations in Korea; he then continued by asking me why I had not used books about Korean religious history written by western scholars. I replied that there were very few books written by Western scholars on Korean religion.

I also told Professor Young that I had read some books on Korean religious history that had been written by Korean scholars. Professor Young asked me: 'Which ones?' I replied: 'Sun, Hai-won's A Religious History of Korea.' Professor Young then asked me: 'Is this Hai-won Sun?' I said: 'Yes.' Professor Young then asked: 'Anyone else?' I then told him that I could not remember any more but as a student in Korea I had read quite a number of such works.

Professor Young then asked me what contribution my thesis made to the field. I replied that very little research had been done on interfaith Buddhist-Christian dialogue in South Korea. Such research as exists tended to be anthropological, that is, focusing on particular contemporary groups. The contribution which my research made was to provide a historical overview of this process and to make accessible certain writings that would otherwise only be available to a Korean-speaking readership.

After I answered Professor Young's question, Professor Young said that the thesis does not make a significant contribution to the field. Professor Young did not explain why he thought the thesis did not make a significant contribution to the field, and he did not invite me to address his point. From this point onwards I cannot remember the exact order of the questions, but I do remember which examiner asked which questions.

Professor Young stated that I had used newspapers as sources of information in my thesis but newspapers are not authoritative because they represent different points of view. He then went on to say that some of the terms that I had used such as 'soteriology,' 'suffering,' 'reincarnation,' 'rebirth,' 'impermanence,' 'self' were not defined with sufficient clarity.

Professor Young asked me where I had obtained my data. I replied that my data came from Korea; specifically, it came from libraries, church archives, universities and through interviews.

Professor Young then asked me if I had gone to London to collect data. I said that I had not. Mr Young then stated that SOAS has many journals that are in Korean and English. I did not reply to Mr Young's statement, but I would like to say now that I considered my sources in Korea were sufficient for my research and, furthermore, I had in fact consulted journals relating to my subject at other British universities.

Dr Goodfellow then said that some statistics I had used date from 1994. Why had I not used more recent statistics? I replied that these were the most up to date statistics that I had been able to find.

Professor Young informed that he had finished his questions. He then invited me to discuss the outcome of the viva. However, Dr Goodfellow interrupted Mr Young by raising his hand in the air and then asked me to go to my office. I then went out and waited outside my office. A few minutes later Dr Goodfellow came out of his office and gestured towards me to return. When I sat down Professor Young told me that he was very sorry but that the examiners could not award me the PhD. If, however, I made the amendments which the examiners had suggested, I could be awarded an MPhil. I said to Professor Young: "I know my thesis is not perfect, but I think it is good. I have worked very hard for more than three years. I worked ten hours a day seven days a week. Could you give me the chance to revise the thesis according to your suggestions and to resubmit it to you?"

Professor Young pondered on this suggestion. But at that point Dr Goodfellow said, "No, Kim. If you want to revise your thesis might need another three years." Professor Young then informed me that an MPhil is a very good degree. He said that there is no relationship between how hard one works and the quality of one's research. He again said that he was very sorry. At that point I thanked the examiners and left the room.

Q1. Were normal viva procedures followed in this case?

Q2. What should Kim do now?

Episode 7 The appeal

My supervisor, Dr Peters, was waiting outside the room. When I told him the result of the viva, he was visibly upset and angry. He asked me to tell him what questions the examiners had asked. I was too upset to discuss in detail the viva and told Dr Peters that the questions had mainly been about methodology, the contribution of the thesis to its field, and my data. Dr Peters then said that all we can do is to await the outcome of the report.

I returned to my flat in Graduate College. Later in the day I received a phone call from Professor Geoffrey Hanley, inviting me to discuss the viva with him. That evening I went to Professor Geoffrey Hanley's office. Professor Hanley sought to reassure me by telling me that an MPhil is a good degree. I replied that I felt that I had been treated unfairly and that I felt that I had been threatened by Dr Goodfellow: since early October I had received messages from Dr Goodfellow's student warning me that I should be very careful about my viva. I then said that Dr Goodfellow's student had informed me that Dr Goodfellow was highly unstable and emotional because he was very unhappy about the decision of the department not to renew his contract. I also said that Dr Goodfellow and I had had difficult relations while he served as my secondary supervisor and that he considered my current supervisor, Dr Peters, as responsible for his enforced departure from the department.

In addition, to all this, I mentioned the circumstances of Dr Goodfellow's confrontational behaviour towards me two days before the viva. Firstly, I said that I understood that my supervisor, Dr Peters, had already spoken to Professor Hanley about my anxieties with regard to Dr Goodfellow's behaviour towards me. When I referred to the incident in which Dr Goodfellow came into my office two days before the viva in order to inform me that he had not shown my thesis to his research students in his seminar, Professor Hanley told me that he had in fact had a conversation with Dr Goodfellow about this. I told Professor Hanley that after that incident I was unable to work and unable to sleep and that the day before the viva the departmental secretary had commented on how nervous I appeared.

Professor Hanley was clearly disturbed to learn that Dr Goodfellow had approached me two days before the viva about the aforementioned matter. I told Professor Hanley that I had worked very hard on the thesis and that all I wanted was to be treated fairly. I told Professor Hanley that during the two month period before the viva I felt that I had been threatened by the internal examiner and that I was particularly upset by the anger Dr Goodfellow had displayed during the incident in my office two days before the viva.

Professor Hanley acknowledged that Dr Goodfellow's behaviour prior to the viva had been improper. However, he also said that there was no necessary causal relationship between Dr Goodfellow's behaviour and the award of an MPhil. I then referred to Dr Goodfellow's behaviour at the end of the viva, and told Professor Hanley that Dr Goodfellow had asked me to leave the room and, therefore, had denied me the opportunity to discuss the viva with the examiners. Professor Hanley replied that it is normal for the research student

to be asked to leave the room at the end of a viva. In response, I informed Professor Hanley about the incident following my return to Dr Goodfellow's office (namely, Dr Goodfellow's apparent attempt to dissuade Professor Young from offering me the possibility to resubmit the thesis in order for it to be considered for a PhD). At this point Professor Hanley appeared to become more sympathetic to my position. It was clear to me from his reaction that he was deeply shocked by Dr Goodfellow's behaviour. I then said to Professor Hanley that I hoped that I would be able to appeal. I said that although the PhD is very important to me, what is most important is the principle of fairness. Professor Hanley replied, "Justice." Professor Hanley then said that at this stage we should wait for the examiners' report to come out and that he would provide me with a copy of the university regulations so that I could appeal against the examiners' decision. The meeting between myself and Professor Hanley was then concluded. On the following day, Professor Hanley, Dr Peters and I met and reviewed the events relating to the viva.

After my meeting with Professor Hanley I composed an appeal against the decision to award my thesis an MPhil. The basis of this appeal was that the viva had been conducted in a seriously irregular way and that a different decision would have been reached had the thesis been examined under different circumstances. My case was based on a number of arguments. These are:

1. There had been no indication throughout my time as a research student in the Department of Religious Studies that my thesis was substandard. The thesis had been scrutinised on three occasions by review panels, and on no occasion was there any suggestion that the work I had been producing was unsatisfactory. In fact, the comments put forward by the members of the review panel were always positive.
2. It was the view of my supervisor, Dr Martin Peters, that I had produced a good piece of work that should be recommended for acceptance as a PhD. He was shocked by the examiners' decision not to do so.
3. The choice of Dr Goodfellow as my internal examiner was inappropriate in the light of the fact that he had served as my supervisor during part of the thesis, that he and I had had interpersonal difficulties, and because of the apparently acrimonious circumstances under which he was due to leave the department.
4. Dr Goodfellow's behaviour towards me prior to the viva was highly inappropriate. Dr Goodfellow had been discussing my thesis and showing it to his research students, he had repeatedly made disparaging comments about my supervisor. He had told me before the viva that my thesis might fail, and he had conducted himself in a threatening way towards me two days before the viva was to take place, all of which caused me very deep distress.
5. Dr Goodfellow conducted himself in a highly inappropriate way during the viva. None of the questions he asked had any serious relevance to the

contents of the thesis; this leads me to question whether he had actually read the thesis or, if he had, had given its contents any serious thought. Moreover, he endeavoured to intimidate me during the viva through his abrasive manner and, in my view, to prejudice the external examiner against me.

6. Professor Young's questions and comments were ill informed, unfair and intended to misrepresent the thesis. This is apparent through an analysis of each question or comment:

i) The thesis' methodology is based on historical analysis. Why does the thesis not use western scholars' books about Korean history?

In asking this question, this is the only time in which Professor Young explored the methodological basis of the thesis. My answer to this question is that there are extremely few books written by Western scholars on Korean religious history. I did, however, refer to quite a number of books written by Korean scholars that are available in English. Some of them are listed here.

Wi Jo Kang. Christ and Caesar in Modern Korea: A History of Christianity and Politics

Mu Soeng Sunim. Thousand Peaks: Korean Zen: Tradition and Teachers

Myung Keun Choi. Changes in Korean Society Between 1884-1910 As a Result of the Introduction of Christianity

Ho Youn Kwon. Korean Cultural Roots: Religion & Social Thought

Gil Soo Han. Social Sources of Church Growth: Korean Churches in the Homeland and Overseas

I would also say that throughout my education I studied Korean history; I do not need to read Western text books in order to inform myself about the religious history of my own culture.

- ii) What contribution does the thesis make to the field? (According to Professor Young the thesis makes no significant contribution.)

The thesis was written with the purpose of offering a historical overview of Buddhist-Christian dialogue in Korea. No one has undertaken to offer this broad historical overview of the subject. A second contribution which I consider that the thesis makes is to bring into the public arena materials relating to Korea's religious history that would otherwise only be available to a relatively limited group of people. This is achieved through collating unpublished primary materials and translating or paraphrasing material that would otherwise only be available in Korean.

- iii) Newspapers are inappropriate sources of information for scholarly research because different newspapers represent different points of view.

I would disagree with the view that newspapers should not be used as a source of information on the grounds that a particular newspaper represents a particular point of view. The fact that a particular newspaper has a particular perspective does not mean that the information in the newspaper is going to be incorrect. Moreover, newspapers are not unique in presenting a point of view. Academic journals, books, television programmes, and even government documents represent points of view. If one were to confine academic research to consulting material that was completely value free (if such a thing is possible) all research would be greatly impoverished.

- iv) Some of the terms ('soteriology,' 'suffering,' 'reincarnation,' 'rebirth,' 'impermanence,' 'self') which are used in the thesis should be more precisely defined because such terms might not be clear to the non-specialist.

The work being examined is a graduate thesis. It is not written for the non-specialist; it is written for the purpose of being examined by specialists with a highly developed knowledge of the field. It should not be necessary to define terms such as 'soteriology,' 'suffering,' 'reincarnation,' 'rebirth,' 'impermanence,' 'self' to scholars who hold positions of seniority in their profession. Furthermore, I doubt that there is any scholarly work whose terminology could not be defined with greater clarity.

- v) The data used in the thesis was not collected in London. Why did you not go to the School of Oriental and African Studies, which has material in Chinese and English?

I did not go to SOAS to collect my data because I was able to collect my data from other sources. Barchester University and other UK universities have ample secondary material on religious matters.

Every year I went to Korea to collect primary material for the project.

Having addressed Professor Young's questions I concluded the appeal along the following lines. The viva has been conducted in a seriously irregular way. Rather than using the viva to evaluate my research, the examiners have treated it as an occasion to deride my work and to belittle me. This situation has been created as a result of the internal examiner's desire to create problems for the department of religious studies at Barchester University for not renewing his research fellowship. The external examiner, rather than taking the more difficult but more principled position of challenging the internal examiner, has taken the easier position of colluding with him. As a consequence of this situation, I have been victimised as a result of circumstances over which I have absolutely no control. Prior to the viva the internal examiner discussed my thesis with his students, suggested to me that my thesis might fail and generally made me feel threatened and distressed. During the viva the internal examiner failed to ask any serious or relevant questions relating to the thesis, intimidated and belittled me and, I believe, sought to prejudice the external examiner against me. While the external examiner did ask questions or made criticisms that related more directly to the

thesis, I believe that these criticisms were not carefully thought through or justified. I consider that I have not been treated fairly by the examiners and that the criticisms made against the thesis by the examiners are not sufficient to deny the thesis being recommended for acceptance as a PhD. For these reasons, I would request that the viva be declared null and void and that the thesis be allowed to be resubmitted and examined by a new set of examiners.

Q1. From this account, do you expect an appeal to be successful? On what grounds?

Q2. What would be the outcome of a successful appeal in this case?

Episode 8 The outcome

The final outcome of the appeal process was in favour of Kim il Sung. The University of Barchester identified the confrontational behaviour adopted by the internal examiner towards the candidate two days before the viva as an incident that distressed the candidate and prevented him from properly defending his thesis during the viva and, therefore, prejudiced the outcome of the viva. The conduct of the external examiner was not criticised. The thesis was re-examined by a new set of examiners in May 1999, and it was recommended for acceptance as a PhD without major amendment.

Team task

On the acetate(s) provided please list the three main issues that

- 1. Supervisors**
- 2. Departments**
- 3. Barchester University**

should address to improve the quality of postgraduate research programmes..