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Sociology + Theology = Multifractal Theology

Henry Kim

henry.kim@wheaton.edu

The purpose of this article is to provide a conceptual nexus between sociology and theology by extending Peter Berger's concepts of externalization, objectivation, and internalization with respect to a "dialectical relationship between religion and society."[1] Berger's dialectic is analogous to a mathematical concept known as iteration, which is a component of chaos theory and fractal geometry. Iteration occurs when a feedback rule is repeated and this may

[1] Peter L. Berger, *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion* (New York: Doubleday, 1967), 127 and cf. 4.

create a fractal and or chaos. Sociologists do not appear to employ fractal geometry or chaos theory. I have been unable to find a single article via JSTOR that employs "fractal geometry" or "chaos theory" in *American Sociological Review*, *American Journal of Sociology*, and *Social Forces*. Under "Asian Studies," I found no articles with respect to "fractal geometry" and one philosophical article regarding "chaos theory."[2]

Political scientist Courtney Brown states: "Very few naturally occurring phenomena in our universe evolve linearly. … Wherever one looks, the behavior of nearly everything manifests itself in nonlinear ways. Why then do social scientists typically look at human behavior in linear ways?"[3] Clifford Brown and Larry Liebovitch claim that the data that social scientists are really looking do not match "traditional statistical methods" and that actual data is skewed rather than following normal distributions.[4] They posit that "fractal patterns abound in cultural behavior and social relations. Fractals provide a significant organizing principle of human life."[5]

Whereas chaos theory shows a type of patterning in time, fractals show this in space; both show "order beneath confusion."[6] Edward Lorenz (who coined the term "butterfly effect") claims that chaos is related to nonlinearity, complexity, and fractality.[7] Complexity generally means that simple rules can be iterated to create complex outputs that appear random. Chaos generally

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[2] Hans Poser, "Theories of Complexity and Their Problems," *Frontiers of Philosophy of China* 2 (2007).

[3] Courtney Brown, *Serpents in the Sand: Essays on the Nonlinear Nature of Politics and Human Destiny* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1995), 1.

[4] Clifford T. Brown and Larry S. Liebovitch, *Fractal Analysis* (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2010), 1.

[5] Ibid., 23.

[6] John Briggs, *Fractals: The Patterns of Chaos* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992), 22 and 27.

[7] Edward N. Lorenz, *The Essence of Chaos* (Seattle: The University of Washington Press, 1993). 4.

means that small changes in initial conditions do not lead to small outcomes, but drastically different outcomes (a nonlinear model). Patterns in chaos theory are called strange attractors (or basins of attraction).[8] According to Lorenz: "The states of any system that do occur again and again, or are approximated again and again, more and more closely, therefore belong to a rather restricted set. This is the set of *attractors*."[9] Fractals can be described as an infinite iteration that entails self-similarity and scaling (a power law). Fractals and chaos theory show how simple rules are iterated to produce complex behavior. The study of complex systems is also a new field as Melanie Mitchell wrote in 2009: "Neither a single *science of complexity* nor a single *complexity theory* exists yet."[10]

Whereas nonlinear models (particularly chaos theory and fractal geometry) have burgeoned in the natural sciences, the social sciences appear to lag behind. Within the social sciences, it appears that economists[11] and political scientists have begun to implement fractal geometry and chaos theory in their disciplines. Fractal statistics have become popular in finance and have even helped spawn a new field called "econophysics."[12] Ron Eglash has discovered that various African countries have employed fractals via ivory carvings, drawings, and building

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[8] The terminology and concept of "chaos theory" has been attributed to Edward N. Lorenz, "Deterministic Nonperiodic Flow," *Journal of the Atmospheric Sciences* 20 (1962) and Tien-Yien Li and James A. Yorke, "Period Three Implies Chaos," *The American Mathematical Monthly* 82 (1975).

[9] Lorenz, 1993, *The Essence of Chaos, 41.*

[10] Melanie Mitchell, *Complexity: A Guided Tour* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 14.

[11] Cf. Benoit B. Mandelbrot and Richard L. Hudson, *The (mis)Behavior of Markets: A Fractal View of Risk, Ruin, and Reward* (New York: Basic Books, 2004).

[12] Ibid., 71.

patterns; he even drew a connection with Bamana divination and Cantor's dust.[13] (I am convinced that theology is replete with the chaos theory and fractals.) If in fact, the "real world" in general and human behavior in particular evince nonlinearity, Courtney Brown's question is very important for sociologists. However, he portends: "Fractal analysis is still fairly new in some social science fields, and you may meet resistance in attempting innovative applications of it."[14]

Benoit Mandelbrot created fractal geometry in 1977: "I conceived and developed a new geometry of nature and implemented its use in a number of diverse fields. It describes many of the irregular and fragmented patterns around us, and leads us to full-fledged theories, by identifying a family of shapes I called *fractals*."[15] Fractal geometry is considered to be a "new language in mathematics."[16] In contrast to Euclidian geometry, fractals depict objects that are not regular or smooth.[17] I believe that sociology and theology can have better dialogue via fractals and chaos theory. I think fractals and chaos theory may help fill "structural hole." When more than one scaling factor is needed a fractal may be called a multifractal; this is why I posit that

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[13] Ron Eglash, *African Fractals: Modern Computing and Indigenous Design* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1999).

[14] Courtney Brown, *Chaos and Catastrophe Theories* (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications), 76.

[15] Benoit B. Mandelbrot, *The Fractal Geometry of Nature* (New York: W. H. Freeman and Company, 1977), 1. To get an overview of the new field of fractal geometry (and chaos theory), read James Gleick, *Chaos: Making a New Science* (New York: Penguin Books, 2008). Michael Fielding Barnsley uses the phrase "superfractals" to conceptualize a nexus from "deterministic fractals to the world of random fractals," Superfractals (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 5.

[16] Heinz-Otto Peitgen, Hartmut Jurgens, and Dietmar Saupe, *Fractals for the Classroom: Part One, Introduction to Fractals and Chaos* (New York: Springer-Verlag, 1992), 256.

[17] For pictures of fractal patterns in nature, from "algae" to "volcanoes," cf. Bernhard Edmaier, *Patterns of the Earth* (New York: Phaidon Press, 2007).

sociology and theology will create multifractals.[18] Keith Devlin, a mathematician who has received numerous awards states: "Mathematics is the science of order, patterns, structure, and logical relationships… with mathematics, we can *make the invisible visible*."[19] He also claims connecting patterns in the field of mathematics appears to have been begun in the 1970s.[20]

In this paper, I will first discuss the general importance of patterns regarding sociology with an emphasis on Korean- and Asian-American (immigrant) contexts. Next, I will discuss the importance of patterns in ethno-religiosity with an emphasis on Korean- and Asian-American (immigrant) contexts. Finally, I will suggest some tentative ways to bridge sociology and theology by utilizing the following concepts: types, (motifs in) redemptive history, chaos theory, iteration, cellular automata, and fractals. I use these concepts as a way to nuance and iterate Berger's dialectic. I believe that the intersection of sociology and theology merge into a concept I call "multifractal theology."[21] Accordingly, I try to abstract and connect patterns from sociology, theology, and fractal geometry and chaos theory. Ascertaining patterns is a critical component in the disciplines of sociology and theology. Kai Erikson claimed: "One of the excitements of sociological work in general is to watch general patterns – dim and shapeless at first – emerge

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[18] Manford Schroeder, *Fractals, Chaos, Power Laws: Minutes from an Infinite Paradise* (New York: W. H. Freeman and Company, 1991), 187.

[19] Keith Devlin, *The Math Gene: How Mathematical Thinking Evolved and Why Numbers are Like Gossip* (Great Britain: Basic Books, 2000), 74.

[20] Keith Devlin, *The Language of Mathematics: Making the Invisible Visible* (New York: W. H. Freeman and Company, 2000), 3.

[21] To the best of my knowledge, the phrase "multifractal theology" has not been used by academics. Under a "Google" search the top four links include my article for *Wheaton Magazine*, a paper presentation at the Association of Christians Teaching Sociology (ACTS) conference (St. Olaf College, June 11, 2011) and my CV from Wheaton College. I propose that a sociological component that is fractal (or not) + a theological component that is fractal (or not) results in an intersection that is not fractal or is fractal or multifractal.

from a wash of seemingly unconnected details."[22] Antoine Lion stated: "Theology, like sociology, is a whole series of writings which generate patterns of thought."[23]

Patterns in Sociology with an Emphasis on Korean- and Asian-American Contexts

Despite Daniel Moynihan's intent, his report (*The Moynihan Report*, 1965) and other literature about this document helped to perpetuate the belief that a "culture" and group advancement were mutually exclusive and in diametric opposition. This became known as the "culture of poverty" thesis and became reified (an iteration of externalization, objectivation, and internalization). Sociologists will argue that structural changes (such as unemployment) impact cultural shifts i.e., "culture of poverty."[24] William Julius Wilson claimed: "In terms of major effects on immediate group social outcomes and racial stratification, structure trumps culture."[25] However, recently, he has allowed culture to have more of an impact than in prior arguments (cf. *The Truly Disadvantaged*, 1987): "In addition to racial and nonracial structural forces, cultural

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[22] Kai Erikson, *A New Species of Trouble: The Human Experience of Modern Disasters* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1994), 12.

[23] Antoine Lion, "Theology and Sociology: What Point is there in Keeping the Distinction?" in *Sociology and Theology: Alliance and Conflict* (Bury St Edmunds: St Edmundsbury Press: 1980), 164.

[24] Anthropologist Oscar Lewis, appears to have coined this phrase. Cf. *Five Families: Mexican Case Studies and the Culture of Poverty* (New York: Basic Books, 1959) and *The Children of Sánchez, Autobiography of a Mexican Family* (New York: Random House, 1961). To see how poverty (low income and life chances) can shape culture, cf. C. B. Stack, *All Our Kin: Strategies for Survival in a Black Community* (New York: Harper & Row, 1974) and Elaine Bell Kaplan, *Not Our Kind of Girl: Unraveling the Myths of Black Teenage Motherhood* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).

[25] William Julius Wilson, *More than Just Race: Being Black and Poor in the Inner City* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2009), 21 and cf. 57 and 61. Cf. Robert C. Lieberman, *Shifting the Color Line* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 224, to see a nuance of Wilson's class-race arguments: "Wilson is entirely right to cast the problem as one of structure, but his analysis elides the critical political structures that shape both the making of public policies and their impact," 224 as well as Amy Bach, *Ordinary Injustice: How America Holds Court* (New York: Holt, 2009); and Michelle Anderson, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* (New York: The New Press, 2010).

forces may contribute to or reinforce racial inequality."[26] Without entering a perennial fray regarding structure and culture, I cite Wilson because I agree with him in that structure and culture are both iterative components.[27] I also concur with Wilson in that I do not see culture as an abstraction apart from structure. Yet, it appears that structure and culture resemble a Bergerian dialectic.

Why is this discussion important? First, it elucidates the power of social constructs. Peter Berger stated that:

> Society is a dialectic phenomenon in that it is a human product, and nothing but a human product, that yet continuously acts back upon its producer. Society is a product of man. It has no other being except that which is bestowed upon it by human activity and consciousness. There can be no social reality apart from man. Yet it may also be stated that man is a product of society.[28]

Berger used the terms "externalization, objectivation, and internalization" to show how man creates "reality" via iterations.[29] Second, the aforementioned discussion is important because if there is (a reified view of culture in the form of) a culture of poverty, then there must be an antithesis. That is, if there is a "negative" culture then there must be a "positive" culture.

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[26] William Julius Wilson, *More than Just Race*, 2009, 14.

[27] Ibid., 21 and 148 ff. This is how Wilson defends and interprets the Moynihan Report. Culture was depicted as a contingency of structure. According to Wilson, a reification of culture was in fact a reified itnerpretion of the report.

[28] Peter L. Berger, *The Social Reality of Religion* (London: Faber, 1969), 3.

[29] Ibid., 4.

Model Minority Thesis

Asian Americans went from being perceived as a Yellow Peril to a model minority in the 1960s. One year after the Moynihan Report was published, two articles evinced this shift.[30] The *U.S. News & World Report* published an article titled "Success Story of One Minority Group in the U.S." This article claimed that Chinese Americans were "winning wealth and respect by dint of its own hard work" and that their culture taught that "people should depend on their own efforts – not on a welfare check – in order to reach America's 'promised land.'" The article was very explicit in a contradistinction between Chinese American progress and black American retardation. What was the article's explanation for the minority groups' vastly different outcomes? Culture. Also in 1966, *The New York Times Magazine* published an article titled "Success Story, Japanese-American Style." This article mentioned some of the historical challenges Japanese Americans faced regarding their acculturation processes and credited their success to cultural values; these values were noted to be absent among lower-class blacks.

Granted, most sociologists do not accept the model minority thesis (MMT).[31] However, outside of sociological circles, cultural arguments continue to linger regarding Asian successes; this implicitly criticizes other minority cultures that do not "succeed." Malcom Gladwell correlates Asian-American successes in math with their ethnic language (for the Chinese,

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[30] "Success Story of One Minority Group in the U.S." *U.S. News & World Report,* Dec. 26, 1966, and W. Peterson, "Success Story: Japanese-American Style," *New York Times Magazine,* Jan. 9, 1966.

[31] Cf. Rosalind S. Chou and Joe R. Feagin, *The Myth of the Model Minority: Asian Americans facing Racism* (Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, 2008).

Japanese, and Koreans) as well as rice paddy cultivation![32] Soo Kim Aboud and her sister, Jane Y. Kim, published a book in 2006, *Top of the Class: How Asian Parents Raise High Achievers--and How You Can Too*. The authors claim that their parents came to the U.S. with low financial capital. However, due to their "Asian culture," they were able to raise their daughters to become successful; one became a lawyer and the other became a doctor. Kim and Kim attribute their successes to Asian values. The recent book, *Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother*[33] only adds fire to the MMT / culture of poverty juxtaposition.

Some scholars credit Asian-American academic successes with the use of co-ethnic religion as a form of capital.[34] For example, in the same year that *Top of the Class* was released, Rebecca Y. Kim published her book, *God's New Whiz Kids? Korean American Evangelicals on Campus*. The title appears to reinforce Weber's (anachronistic) Protestant Ethic thesis for Korean Americans.[35] At this point, I will address two questions: (1) Are Asian Americans "successful" and if so, (2) why? The answers to these questions evince that 1965 is a bifurcation point regarding the "culture of poverty" and the model minority thesis.

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[32] Malcolm Gladwell, *Outliers: The Story of Success* (New York: Little, Brown and Company), 268 and 272. I must add, this statement is in an outlier in that the rest of the book is outstanding.

[33] Amy Chua, *Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother* (New York: Penguin Books, 2011).

[34] Nanlai Cao, "The Church as a Surrogate Family for Working Class Immigrant Chinese Youth: An Ethnography of Segmented Assimilation," Sociology of Religion 66 (2005); and Min Zhou and Susan S. Kim, "Community Forces, Social Capital, and Educational Achievement: The Case of Supplementary Education in the Chinese and Korean Immigrant Communities," *Harvard Educational Review* 76 (2006).

[35] For a more accurate understanding of how Christianity preceded capitalism, refer to Rodney Stark, *The Victory of Reason: How Christianity Led to Freedom, Capitalism, and Western Success* (New York: Random House, 2005).

Asian-American Successes based on Education and Household Income

Based on education and household income, it appears that some Asian Americans are doing well, very well. According to Rebecca Kim:

> Asian Americans account for only 4 percent of the U.S. population, but they account for more than 6 percent of college enrolment nationwide, and at the Ivey League universities Asian American enrollment often exceeds 20 percent. Likewise enrollment of Asian Americans in California's public universities is disproportionate to their 10.9 percent of the state's population. Asian Americans currently make up over 40 percent of the student population at UC Berkeley as well as UCLA and 50 percent of the student population at UC Irvine.[36]

According to the Kim sisters:

> While Asian-Americans make up only 4% of the U.S. population, Asian-American students make up a much higher percentage of students in top universities around the country. Among Ivy League schools, the percentages are astounding: 23% at the University of Pennsylvania, 25% at Columbia and Cornell, 15% at Brown, and 18% at Harvard. Asian-Americans make up 24% of the student population at Stanford, 15% at Johns Hopkins, 17% at Northwestern, and a whopping 42% at the University of California at Berkeley (despite making up only 11% of the population at California). In addition, 47% of Asian and Pacific Islanders over the age of twenty-five hold a Bachelor's degree or higher, while the corresponding rate for all adults in this age group is much lower, 27%. Sixteen percent of Asians and Pacific Islanders over the age over twenty-five hold an advanced degree, in contrast to 9% of all other adults in this age group. A startling 15% of all U.S. physicians and surgeons are of Asian descent. And the buck doesn't stop here. After outperforming their colleagues in school, Asian-Americans also bring home higher incomes than their non-Asian counterparts; in 2002, the median income for Asian and Pacific Islanders was $52,018, almost $10,000 higher than the median household income for the rest of the population.[37]

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[36] Kim, *God's New Whiz Kids?*, 1996, 3.

[37] Soo Kim Aboud and Jane Kim, *Top of the Class: How Asian Parents Raise High Achievers - and How You Can Too* (New York: The Berkeley Publishing Group: 2006), 1-2. With respect to household incomes, Census data will substantiate the claims of Kim and Kim: http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/facts_for_features_special_editions/cb10-ff07.html.

"Facts" reported by Kim, and Kim and Kim have reified the MMT and thus the "invisible forces" are often obviated. Ironically, the same year that the Moynihan Report was released, structural forces were set in motion to help construct the MMT.

The 1965 Immigration Act

In 1965, the U.S. attempted to revise the National Origins Quota Act of 1924.[38] National origins would be replaced by Eastern and Western hemisphere "quotas" and a seven-point preferential system. In the 1960s, the U.S. experienced a shift in the means of production from industrial to post-industrial and global contexts.[39] Basically, the same year that the Moynihan Report was disseminated, the U.S. also acknowledged its need for (high-skilled) labor. Immigration patterns show that emigrants leave in waves. The first waves tend to be self-selective regarding higher levels of motivation when compared with those who do not leave their homelands. The first waves also tend to have higher levels of human capital when compared to latter waves. What were the "invisible" social forces that led to the "visible" outcomes for the post-1965 inflows?

Of the seven points of immigration reform (1965), two had to do with labor needs, four had to do with family members (this is why the 1965 Act is also referred to as the "family

[38] In 1921, the original National Origins Quota Act set a limit of 3% of immigrant inflows per country based on the 1910 Census. This proved to allow too many Southern and Eastern European inflows, and was changed in 1924 to 2% of the 1890 Census. The 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act precluded Chinese immigration (and latter amendments essentially froze Asian inflows).

[39] Cf. the prescient landmark study Daniel Bell, *The Coming of a Post-Industrial Society: A Venture in Social Forecasting* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., Publishers, 1973), 13: "The concept of the post-industrial society deals primarily with changes *in the social structure*, the way in which the economy is being transformed and the occupational system reworked, and with the new relations between theory and empiricism, particularly science and technology," Robert B. Reich, *Supercaptialism* (New York: Vintage Books, 2007), 7, and Thomas Friedman, *The World is Flat* [finish citation].

reunification policy"), and one was with respect to a "nonpreference" category. Like many immigration policies, this policy had unintended consequences on multiple levels.[40] Although the 1965 Act was intended to rectify discriminatory barriers for Southern and Eastern Europeans, the non-Europeans came to the U.S. en masse.[41] Due to labor needs, particularly provision #3 – "members of the professions, scientists, and artists of exceptional ability" – countries that had a displaced labor force (in part due to Westernization and Manifest Destiny II during "the greatest century of missions") – were able to employ this provision to emigrate to the U.S. These first waves were overrepresented by the professional class and came to the U.S. with high levels of human capital. In fact, the Eilberg act of 1976 helps to explain why "by the end of the twentieth century, Filipinos had become the single largest ethnic group among nurses in the United States."[42] The Eilberg policy, in conjunction with the 1965 Act, also helps to explain why one out of seven physicians in the U.S. is of Asian descent.

P. G. Min has repeatedly shown self-selective patterns among Korean immigrants: "Korean immigrants received higher levels of education than the U.S. general population, although South Korea is far behind the U.S. in the overall educational level [and] post-1965 immigrants are generally drawn from the middle class of Korean society."[43] Min found that

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[40] Cf. http://articles.sfgate.com/2006-05-07/news/17297061_1_immigration-act-family-unification-immigration-expert.

[41] Here I do not focus on those who were impacted by the Bracero Program and Operation Wetback (Mexicans) nor refugees, particularly Cuban Americans; I focus on "immigrants" in the traditional sense of those who filled labor needs and employed "family reunification" provisions.

[42] Carl Bankston III, "Filipino Americans" in *Asian Americans: Contemporary Trends and Issues*, ed. by P. G. Min, (Thousand Oaks: Pine Forge Press, 2006), 192.

[43] Pyong Gap Min, "The Entrepreneurial Adaptation of Korean Immigrants," in *Origins and Destinies: Immigration, Race, and Ethnicity in America*, eds. Silvia Pedraza and Rubén G. Rumbaut (Belmont: Wadsworth, 1996), 304 and 313.

24.3% of the adult population in Korea (31% men and 18% of women) were college graduates compared to 30% of the U.S. adult population. However, among foreign-born Korean Americans, 45.7% are college graduates (55% men and 39% of women).[44] These percentages are also comparable with other foreign-born Asian Americans (excluding the Indo-Chinese) as a racial aggregate.

Immigration patterns are highly self-selective and the first generation is therefore able to pass on their "culture" to the progeny. "Success" that is accredited to cultural values is really about an invisible process of social reproduction. First-generation Korean- and Asian-Americans are a self-selective group with greater life chances when compared to their counterparts in the general U.S. population. Therefore, the life chances of the progeny are also better than their non-immigrant stock[45] counterparts. If Asian-American success was about "culture" (abstracted) – why are there more proportions of college-educated adults in the U.S. than in Korea? Immigration in general, and the 1965 Immigration Act (and other labor-related policies) in particular, facilitated highly-educated first-wave inflows. In fact, *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education* reported in 2003 that among all races (white, black, foreign-born black, and Asian), African-born blacks had the highest median level of education (14.5 years) as well as the highest percentage of college graduates.[46] Rather than addressing shifts in the means of production and its impact on America's class relations, the "War on Poverty" was replaced with

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[44] P. G. Min, "Korean Americans," in *Asian Americans: Contemporary Trends and Issues*, ed. P. G. Min, (Thousand Oaks: Pine Forge Press, 2006), 250.

[45] "Immigrant stock" is a term that includes the first and second generations.

[46] *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education*, "In Educational Attainment, Black Immigrants to the United States Outperform Native-Born White and Black Americans" 2003, 51 (51-52).

(racial) ideologies.[47] 1965 is a bifurcation point regarding the culture of poverty and model minority theses.

With respect to Asian Americans, the MMT is misleading for at least two reasons. First, Asians are not successful because of an abstracted culture. Second, not all Asians are successful. A concept from chaos theory that I use to depict Asian Americans and their outcomes (regardless of the particular modes of incorporation) is "bifurcation" (the point between order and chaos). The MMT belies those who are not doing well. A quick look at the Current Population Survey, U.S. Census 2009, shows that Asian Americans, pending the categorization (there are at least 15 measures of poverty for groups demarcated by age and family status) struggle with poverty.[48] For example, using pre-tax incomes not including government assistance reveal that 17.2% of all Asian Americans are in poverty. Using the same qualifiers, during one's prime earning years, 25-44 and 45-64, the proportions of Asian Americans below the poverty line are 12% and 13%, respectively. The MMT implies that if you are Asian American and happen to be the one-of-eight persons in poverty, you may in fact have the "wrong" "Asian culture." Further, median household income masks individual poverty (and income) and can obfuscate "household

[47] Cf. Stephanie Coontz, who argues that "politicians are practicing quite a double standard when they tell us to return to the family forms of the 1950s while they do nothing to restore the job programs and family subsidies of that era, the limits on corporate relocation and financial wheeling-dealing, the much higher share of taxes paid by corporations then," in *The Way We Really Are: Coming to Terms with America's Changing Families* (New York: BasicBooks, 1997), 43 and Barbara Ehrenreich, *Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America* (New York: Holt, 2001), and Lieberman, *Shifting the Color Line*, 2001.

[48] http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/cpstables/032010/rdcall/2_007.htm.

income" because Asians tend to live in larger extended family units (more individual earners) than other racial groups.[49]

CNN reported in 2007 that "Asian-American women ages 15-24 have the highest suicide rate of women in any race or ethnic group in that age group."[50] The article attributed these suicides to "model minority" pressures. According to the 2009 CDC health report, Asian-American women in the 65+ age category also have the highest rates of suicide among all women by race.[51] Further, this report shows that Asians (aggregate and sub-groups) are not doing well on various health measures.[52] Beyond an academic endeavor, the issue of Asian-American suicide is personal. My uncle committed suicide when I was in college – he shot himself with a gun. Back then I had no answers except to "spiritualize" his death. I perceived his death to be an "individual" event. Now, I have a better understanding of his suicide through a sociological imagination – personal problems are also structural ills. I now see how subtractive acculturation (the opposite of straight-line assimilation – another example of a bifurcation point) impacted his life. I recall that he could not live up to the MMT stereotypes; I remember how he internalized his "failures."

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[49] Arthur Sakamoto and Yu Xie, "The Socioeconomic Attainments of Asian Americans," in *Asian Americans: Contemporary Trends and Issues*, ed. P. G. Min, (Thousand Oaks: Pine Forge Press, 2006), cf. Table 4.8 to see racial breakdowns by family size and percentages of multigenerational households, 71-72.

[50] http://edition.cnn.com/2007/HEALTH/05/16/asian.suicides/index.html

[51] http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/hus/hus09.pdf

[52] I have an article that discusses this issue, forthcoming, in *Encyclopedia of Immigrant Health*, eds. Sana Loue and Martha Sajatovic (Springer Science+Business Media).

Patterns in Ethno-Religiosity with an Emphasis on Korean- and Asian-Americans Immigration Emphases

Pyong Gap Min claims that there are four rubrics that encompass the discipline of Asian-American studies: literature, history, cultural studies, and social sciences.[53] This discipline is rather new since it was not until the 1965 Immigration Reform that Asians immigrated to the U.S. en masse. Sucheng Chan, one of the key players to help create America's first Ph.D. program in comparative ethnic studies (UC system), claimed:

> As a field of academic endeavor, Asian/Pacific American Studies is defined first and foremost by the *population* that forms the very foundation of our academic expertise, as well as of our social communities. Therefore, when the composition of our people changes *it is our responsibility to document and elucidate the dynamics of our own history as it is being made*.[54]

Chan's comments are reminiscent of Du Bois' concept of "history" and the problems that emerge when "others" write on "our" behalf. However, part of delineating Asian-American modes of incorporation (by Asian Americans) entails understanding prior modes of incorporation of European immigrants; patterns of ethno-religiosity need comparative frameworks. I will provide a brief comparison before I discuss Asian-American ethno-religiosity.

In broad terms, with respect to race and ethnicity, white immigrants went from a model of group differences to individual differences.[55] Structural assimilation occurred when group differences were replaced with individual differences. Initially, some Southern and Eastern

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[53] Pyong Gap Min, "Introduction," in *Asian Americans: Contemporary Trends and Issues*, ed. P. G. Min, (Thousand Oaks: Pine Forge Press, 2006), 4.

[54] Sucheng Chan, *In Defense of American Studies: The Politics of Teaching and Program Building* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2005), 28, emphasis mine.

[55] Many scholars refer to "Bacon's Rebellion" (1676) to show how racialization created a fissure between poor blacks and whites; cf. Ronald Takaki, *A Different Mirror: A History of Multicultural America* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1993), 63-65 and http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part1/1p274.html.

Europeans were not considered "white" or, in some cases like the Italians and Irish, were not even "human." By the early 1900s, the "melting pot" concept of structural assimilation was used to depict the modes of incorporation for whites. Interestingly, the person who most scholars attribute to having helped fuel the belief in full assimilation, Robert Park, wrote in 1914:

> The chief obstacle to the assimilation of the Negro and the Oriental are not mental but physical traits. It is not because the Negro and the Japanese are so differently constituted that they do not assimilate. If they were given an opportunity the Japanese are quite as capable as the Italians, the Armenians, or the Slavs of acquiring our culture, and sharing our national ideals. The trouble is not with the Japanese mind but with the Japanese skin. The Jap is not the right color.[56]

Though Park clearly acknowledged that color precluded full assimilation and "acquiring culture," "assimilation" nonetheless became the "norm" regarding immigrants and their mode of incorporation. With the 1924 National Origins Quota in place, in a context of pressure-cooking assimilation, whites were indeed becoming "American."

Further, America was an economic and industrial power by the mid-1900s (cf. Kuznets Curve). Due to structural (as well as social) mobility, white immigrants were depicted to advance in time; both for the first generation and their progeny. This advancement would be called straight-line assimilation or successive generational mobility. Warner and Srole claimed: "Every successive generation among all groups is found to have a progressively larger portion of its membership in both the lower-middle and upper-middle classes."[57] It appeared that Robert Park's concept of assimilation was correct in that group differences have to disappear for individuals to

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[56] Robert E. Park, "Racial Assimilation in Secondary Groups With Particular Reference to the Negro," in *The American Journal of Sociology* (19) 1914, 610-611.

[57] W. Lloyd Warner and Leo Srole, *The Social Systems of American Ethnic Groups* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1945), 72.

compete and succeed in the labor market; assimilation was in fact beneficial to "Americans."[58] With respect to immigrants, "America" began with pluralistic (WASP) inflows and changed into a "white" America differentiated by religion and class. In fact, Richard H. Niebuhr claimed: "Among the social forces which contribute to the formation of classes and so to the schism of churches, economic factors may be the most powerful; but they are not the only sources of denominationalism" (other factors may be ethnic or political).[59]

Although Will Herberg is often associated with moving the melting pot paradigm to a triple melting pot, Ruby Kennedy used the phrase before Herberg.[60] Kennedy noticed that religion and class were intersected with race in the construction of a white stratified ethno-religiosity. Will Herberg's study was broader in scope and perhaps has therefore received more attention. He noted that European first-generation immigrants "transplanted" their religion from the homeland.[61] However, the function of religion as a mode of incorporation differed among generations:

> To the dismay of their parents, and to the distaste of better acculturated Americans, many of the second generation tended to draw away from the religion of their father, and from religion altogether. Some indeed became consciously, even bitterly, religionless. It was a strange and self-defeating way of accommodating themselves to American life, but they did not know it.[62]

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[58] To see the structural contexts of upward mobility, cf. Warner and Srole, *The Social Systems of American Ethnic Groups*, 1945; Stephanie Coontz, *The Way We Really Are*, 1997; and Malcolm Gladwell, Outliers: The Story of Success (New York: Back Bay Books, 2008), 133-183.

[59] H. Richard Niebuhr, *The Social Sources of Denominationalism* (New York: H. Holt and Company, 1929), 106

[60] Ruby Jo Reeves Kennedy, "Single or Triple Melting-Pot? Intermarriage in New Haven, 1870-1950," *The American Journal of Sociology*, 58 (1952) and Will Herberg, *Protestant, Catholic, Jew: An Essay in American Religious Sociology* (New York: Doubleday, 1956).

[61] Herberg, *Protestant, Catholic, Jew*, 1956, 11.

[62] Ibid., 19.

The unintended consequence of assimilation was that an ethnic religion was no longer "needed" among the post-first generation. In time, assimilation would be nuanced via structural, cultural, marital, etc. forms in order to counter the assumption that full assimilation was inevitable, as championed by Robert Park: "The race relations cycle which takes the form, to state it abstractly, of contacts, competition, accommodation and eventual assimilation, *is apparently progressive and irreversible*."[63] This assumption was notably challenged by Milton Gordon in 1964.[64] Gordon did not believe that all groups would achieve structural assimilation. However, he did claim: "Once structural assimilation has occurred, either simultaneously with or subsequent to acculturation, all of the types of assimilation will naturally follow."[65]

Sociologists have depicted the modes of incorporation for European immigrants from 1924-1964 with linear models. Further, white modes of incorporation are often depicted as assimiliation (in its various forms such as straight-line and successive-generational mobility), symbolic ethnicity,[66] and or ethnic switching. Non-white modes of incorporation are depicted via

[63] Robert E. Park, *Race and Culture* (Glencoe: Free Press, 1950), 150, emphasis mine.

[64] Milton Myron Gordon, *Assimilation in American Life: the Role of Race, Religion, and National Origins* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), 85.

[65] Gordon, *Assimilation in American Life*, 1964, 81.

[66] Herbert J. Gans, "Symbolic Ethnicity - Future of Ethnic-Groups and Cultures in America," *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 2 (1979).

terms such as selective acculturation,[67] ethnic enclaves,[68] middle-man minority thesis,[69] segmented assimilation,[70] and subtractive acculturation (the opposite of straight-line assimilation).[71]

A landmark study regarding Korean-American ethno-religiosity is P. G. Min's article, "The Structure and Social Functions of Korean Immigrant Churches in the United States."[72] Min argued that Koreans are more Protestant-affiliated as immigrants than as emigrants because the Protestant church offers social functions (ethnic solidarity, cultural preservation, social services, and status) that are of more significance in the U.S. than in Korea. Various Korean-American ethno-religious studies claim that about 25% of Korea, 50% of Korean emigrants, and about 80% of the immigrants are Protestant-affiliated.[73] This suggests that about half of the non-Protestant

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[67] Alejandro Portes and Ruben G. Rumbaut, *Immigrant America: A Portrait.* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 241.

[68] Alejandro Portes and R. L. Bach, *Latin Journey: Cuban and Mexican Immigrants in the United States* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1985).

[69] Nancy Abelmann and John Lie *Blue Dreams: Korean Americans and the Los Angeles Riots* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995); P. G. Min, *Caught in the Middle: Korean Merchants in America's Multiethnic Cities* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1996); Kyeyong Park, *The Korean American Dream: Immigrants and Small Businesses in New York City* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), 46; and In-Jin Yoon, *On My Own: Korean Businesses and Race Relations in America* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1997), 33-34.

[70] Alejandro Portes, ed., *The New Second Generation* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1996).

[71] Ruben G. Rumbaut, "Assimilation and Its Discontents: Ironies and Paradoxes," in *Becoming American, America Becoming*, eds. Josh DeWind, Charles Hirschman and Philip Kasinitz (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1999), 11-13 and 51 and cf. the *National Center for Health Statistics. Health, United States, 2009: With Special Feature on Medical Technology*, (Hyattsville, 2010), regarding (subtractive) acculturation and various measures such as smoking, obesity, and mental health.

[72] P. G. Min, "The Structure and Social Functions of Korean Immigrant Churches in the United States," *International Migration Review* 26 (1992).

[73] Cf. Won Moo Hurh and Kwang Chung Kim, "Religious Participation of Korean Immigrants in the United States," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 29 (1990); K. H. Chong, "What it Means to Be Christian: The role of Religion in the Construction of Ethnic Identity and Boundary Among Second-Generation Korean Americans," *Sociology of Religion* 59 (1998); Won Moo Hurh, *The Korean Americans* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1998); and Min, "The Structure and Social Functions of Korean Immigrant Churches in the United States," 1992.

emigrants become Protestant-affiliated in the U.S. In 1996, Helen Lee depicted Korean-American ethno-religiosity as a "silent exodus" in *Christianity Today*.[74] This belief became an iterated Bergerian dialectic for the next 10-15 among Korean-American church communities. As a Christian sociologist, I wondered: First, was there a silent exodus? If so, what should (?) the Korean churches do? A few years ago, I sensed that the statistical methods (linear models) that I had learned via sociology were, no pun intended, not "the best fit" to foster dialogue between sociology and theology. Perhaps nonlinear models are needed in this endeavor. Before I address this heuristic, let me discus some recent Asian-American ethno-religious patterns.

Theological Emphases

If the discipline of Asian-American studies is new, then the interplay between this field and theology is newer. Timothy Tseng says that it was not until the 1970s that Asian-American Christians moved away from being "objects of Protestant missions."[75] As Asian Americans are trying to provide their own theological voice, Tseng posits that "Asian American religious history is still in its infancy."[76] Russell Jeung, in his book on ethno-religious perpetuity for Chinese and Japanese Americans, states: "Asian American panethnicity is still in its infant stages of institutionalization."[77] Part of this inchoateness is due to time. However, the "infancy" can

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[74] http://www.ctlibrary.com/ct/1996/august12/6t9050.html.

[75] Timothy Tseng, "Introduction," in *Asian American Christianity Reader* (Castro Valley: Institute for the Study of Asian American Christianity (ISAAC), 2009).

[76] Timothy Tseng, "Asian American Religions," in *Asian American Christianity Reader* (Castro Valley: Institute for the Study of Asian American Christianity (ISAAC), 2009), 84.

[77] Russell Jeung, *Faithful Generations* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2005), 161.

also be attributed to a need for better methodology in the ethno-religious literature which primarily focuses on ethnographies, case studies, and highly descriptive accounts (linear models).

For example, in *Asian American Religions: The Making and Remaking of Borders and Boundaries*, Kenneth J. Guest employs a church case study;[78] Elta Smith and Courtney Bender base their writing on a sample of 7 men;[79] Soyong Park's book section was based on a case study of NY college students;[80] Fenggang Yang included a case study;[81] and Joaquin L. Gonzalez III and Adrea Maison included two church case studies.[82] David Ng, as the editor of *People on the Way: Asian North Americans discovering Christ, Culture, and Community*, devoted the entire book on Asian-American theological narratives. By using a transplantation model, he claims that Asian Americans employ narratives because the Asians in their homelands do so. The result is a book of particulars without a coherent pattern (unifying theme). In what seems to be a

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[78] Kenneth J. Guest, "Liminal Youth among Fuzhou Chinese Undocumented Workers," in *Asian American Religions: The Making and Remaking of Borders and Boundaries* (New York: New York University Press, 2004).

[79] Elta Smith and Courtney Bender, "The Creation of Urban Niche Religion: South Asian Taxi Drivers in New York City," in *Asian American Religions: The Making and Remaking of Borders and Boundaries* (New York: New York University Press, 2004).

[80] Soyoung Park, "Korean American Evangelical: A Resolution of Sociological Ambivalence among Korean American College Students," in *Asian American Religions: The Making and Remaking of Borders and Boundaries* (New York: New York University Press, 2004).

[81] Fenggang Yang, "Gender and Generation in a Chinese Christian Church," in *Asian American Religions: The Making and Remaking of Borders and Boundaries* (New York: New York University Press, 2004).

[82] Joaquin L. Gonzalez III and Adrea Maison, "We Do Not Bowl Alone: Social and Cultural Capital from Filipinos and Their Churches," in *Asian American Religions: The Making and Remaking of Borders and Boundaries* (New York: New York University Press, 2004).

preemptive strike Ng claims: "Asian North American Christians are not inclined to construct a 'systematic theology.'"[83]

Other Asian-American theologians evince their particulars, that is, "non-systematic theologies." C. S. Song employs a motif of suffering to delineate "a pattern."[84] David Y. Koo places "Asian Americans at the center of analysis" to employ a theological standpoint epistemology.[85] Eleazar S. Fernandez uses "postcolonial hermeneutics in reading the Filipino American experience."[86] Greer Anne Wenh-In Ng uses a "bamboo theology" regarding Asian Americans.[87] Roy I. Sano posits that Asian Americans need to see their journey from "context to context" in order to locate their theology.[88] M. Thomas Thangaraj employs a transnational theological analysis regarding Indian Americans.[89] Sang Hyun Lee believes that the concepts of

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[83] David Ng, *People on the Way: Asian North Americans discovering Christ, Culture, and Community* (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1996), xxvii.

[84] C. S. Song, *Jesus the Crucified People* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), 214.

[85] David K. Yoo "Introduction: Reframing the U.S. Religious Landscape," in *New Spiritual Homes: Religion and Asian Americans* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1999), 3.

[86] Eleazar S. Fernandez, "Postcolonial Exorcism and Reconstruction: Filipino Americans' Search for Postcolonial Subjecthood," in *Realizing the America of Our Hearts: Theological Voices of Asian Americans* (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2003), 79.

[87] Greer Anne Wenh-In Ng, "Land of Maple and Lands of Bamboo," in *Realizing the America of Our Hearts: Theological Voices of Asian Americans* (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2003), 106.

[88] Roy I. Sano, "From Context to Context: Cognitive Dissonance," in *Realizing the America of Our Hearts: Theological Voices of Asian Americans* (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2003), 115.

[89] M. Thomas Thangaraj, "Asian Americans and Global Connections: Challenges and Prospects," in *Realizing the America of Our Hearts: Theological Voices of Asian Americans* (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2003), 243.

"pilgrimage" and "home" depict Asian Americans and their theological journeys in America.[90] Lee ties these two motifs with God's diachronic interactions with creation: "What is God's own story in which pilgrimage and home have their foundation and unity? God, too, is a pilgrim who left home."[91]

Russell Yee claims that an Asian-American theological model needs to be dynamic in that it must be malleable in a tension of tradition and creativity.[92] This is something that he appears to take personally as he claims: "We need more ways of being culturally Asian American in our worship."[93] He does not want to see his Vietnamese heritage "to someday be white."[94] Jung Young Lee takes contextualization to an extreme: "The theology that I have attempted to describe here is based on my biography."[95] It is one thing to claim that theology needs contextualization (employing a sociological imagination). It is another matter to begin this contextualization from the self and move to (analogical) statements about God. Lee claims that "the task of theology as a symbolic quest is to seek the meaning of divine reality rather than the

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[90] Sang Hyun Lee, "Pilgrimage and Home in the Wilderness of Marginality: Symbols and Context in Asian American Theology," in *New Spiritual Homes: Religion and Asian Americans* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1999), 219. Cf. Eleazar S. Fernandez, "America from the Hearts of a Disaporized People: A Disaporized Heart," in *Realizing the America of Our Hearts: Theological Voices of Asian Americans* (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2003), 255.

[91] Sang Hyun Lee, "Pilgrimage and Home in the Wilderness of Marginality: Symbols and Context in Asian American Theology," 1999, 227.

[92] Russell Yee, "The Challenge of Worship Renewal," in *Asian American Christianity Reader* (Castro Valley: Institute for the Study of Asian American Christianity (ISAAC), 2009), 23.

[93] Russell Yee, "The Search for Asian-American Worship," in *Asian American Christianity Reader* (Castro Valley: Institute for the Study of Asian American Christianity (ISAAC), 2009), 145.

[94] Ibid., 250.

[95] Jung Young Lee, *The Trinity in Asian Perspective* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996), 23.

divine reality itself."[96] The thought that came to my mind was "implosion of a simulacrum." Here I must confess that I too have contributed to the aforementioned ethno-religious din by adding my own case study (dissertation and monograph).

Some works have tried to provide generalizations (a form of patterns) beyond particulars. David Yoo and Ruth H. Chung, as editors of *Religion and Spirituality in Korean America*, find three overarching themes regarding Korean-American ethno-religiosity: race, diaspora, and improvisation.[97] However, this "generalization" was based on various descriptive works of small samples. Even the authors saw a problem. One author admitted: "It is hard to generalize our findings."[98] Another author stated that her section entailed "descriptions" of ethno-religiosity.[99] Jung Ha Kim wrote a descriptive account based on eleven interviews.[100] She also admits that her "descriptive analysis" cannot make claims of "generalizability."[101]

My point is to show the weakness of small (punctiliar and static) research samples and "merely" descriptive analyses. This is the "infancy" stage of Asian-American ethno-religiosity; the specious divide between sociology and theology. Asian Americans need better sociological and theological dialogue. Pyong Gap Min, as a coeditor of *Religions in Asian America: Building*

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[96] Ibid., 14.

[97] David Yoo and Ruth H. Chung, "Introduction," in *Religion and Spirituality in Korean America* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2008), 5.

[98] Okyun Kwon, "The Religiosity and Socioeconomic Adjustment of Buddhist and Protestant Korean Americans," in *Religion and Spirituality in Korean America* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2008), 76.

[99] Jae Ran Kim, "Waiting for God: Religion and Korean American Adoption," in *Religion and Spirituality in Korean America* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2008), 84.

[100] Jung Ha Kim, "The Restored Lives: The Everyday Theology of Korean American Never-Married Women," in *Religion and Spirituality in Korean America* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2008).

[101] Ibid., 133.

Faith Communities, claimed: "All contributors did research on ethnic congregations for their chosen groups, mostly using ethnographic research."[102] Not that I discount ethnographies per se, but I completely agree with Robert Wuthnow's assessment: "Ethnographic studies provide rich descriptive detail, but they are not well-suited for drawing broader generalizations. … More systematic evidence is needed before making such generalizations. Systematic evidence from representative surveys of Asian Americans has been difficult to obtain."[103] From a sociological point, I wish that someone would do an ethno-religious study on Asian Americans based on Wuthnow's *After the Baby Boomers*.[104] He incorporates quantitative and longitudinal data sets, which are blatantly missing in Asian-American ethno-religious studies. We need better methodologies (and data) to move discussions of isolated descriptions towards systematized generalizations and patterns.

Although not longitudinal per se, some Asian Americans are employing diachronic models in their ethno-religious discussions. Kenneth Uyeda Fong depicts Asian-American churches' progression via a paradigm based on language: Ethnic specific -> bi/multi-lingual -> English -> multi-Asian –ethnic. [105] Kenneth P. Carlson claims: "*All ethnic immigrant churches, tend to follow a typical development pattern*. …there is a predictable series of stages through which most churches will pass on the way to becoming an established bilingual church with a

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[102] Pyong Gap Min "Introduction," in *Religions in Asian America: Building Faith Communities* (Walnut Creek: Altamira Press, 2002), 9.

[103] Wuthnow, *After the Baby Boomers*, 2007, 190.

[104] I discuss the theological limitations of this (sociological) study in *Themelios* 35 (2010): 339-341.

[105] Kenneth Uyeda Fong, *Pursuing the Pearl: A Comprehensive Resource for Multi-Asian Ministry* (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1999), 216.

mature English ministry"; Stage 1: A Mono-lingual Church; Stage 2: English Children's Ministry; Sage 3: English Youth Ministry; Stage 4: English Worship Service; and, Stage 5: One Church, Two Congregations.[106] Russell Jeung found that Asian-American pastors listed four common trends regarding their congregations: English-speaking, desire to be multicultural, diverse ethnicities, and a theological disposition towards social justice.[107] It would be fascinating if these Asian-American ethno-religious "algorithms"[108] could be mapped with theological patterns; if sociology could inform theology and vice versa. Thus far, the Asian-American dialogue between sociology and theology is "broken" in a non-fractal but segmented sense.

The Construction of Asian-American Theology

Like any other theology, an "Asian-American theology" is a particular type of ethno-religiosity. Further, all theologies are implicitly sociological. Richard Mouw stated: "I propose that every theological system also has an associated sociology."[109] All theologies are modified (explicitly and or implicitly) by social location. Unfortunately, not all modifiers are equal:

> Theologies that speak of a corporate responsibility or call for a social responsibility are given special names like: liberation theology, black theology, *minjung* theology, feminist theology, etc. In other words, Western theology with its individual focus is considered

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[106] Kenneth P. Carlson "Patterns in Development of the English Ministry in a Chinese Church," in *Asian American Christianity Reader* (Castro Valley: Institute for the Study of Asian American Christianity (ISAAC), 2009), 121, emphasis mine.

[107] Jeung, *Faithful Generations*, 2005, 148.

[108] Regarding European-American ethno-religiosity under a straight-line assimilation model, cf. Herberg, *Protestant, Catholic,* Jew, 1956, 18-20 and 29-40; Warner and Srole, *The Social Systems of American Ethnic Groups*, 1945; Park, *Race and Culture*, 1950; and, Gordon, *Assimilation in American Life*, 1964). Post-1965 is synonymous with post-Protestant, -Catholic, and -Jew (Euro-centric) paradigms.

[109] Richard J. Mouw, *He Shines in All That's Fair: Culture and Common Grace* (Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co. 2001), 74.

> normative theology, while non-Western theology is theology on the fringes and must be explained as being a theology applicable only in a particular context and to a particular people group."[110]

Further, not all Asian-American theologies are the same. Jonathan Y. Tan claims: "To be sure, a single, uniform, and normative Asian American theology is neither feasible nor desirable in the context of multiple heterogeneous, hybridized, and contested identities."[111]

Tan appears to privilege standpoint epistemology and "contextual theologies." [112] Though privileging standpoint epistemology, Tan claims that in the midst of a plethora of Asian-American theological writings, "one looks in vain for any detailed proposal or discussion about a common Asian American theological method… [and there is a] lack of any explicit systematic presentation of an Asian American theological method."[113] Accordingly, Tan's proposal to connect Asian-American theologies entail: 1) Empathy, Commitment, Service, and Advocacy; 2) Reading the Signs of the Times; 3) Traditioning; and, 4) Authenticity and Credibility. [114] I am not sure that these are "methodological components" but rather, attributes. Andrew Yueking Lee claims that Asian-American biblical interpretation must synthesize both Western and Asian "modes of thought" (selective acculturation) via six rubrics: marginality and liminality,

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[110] Soong-Chan Rah, *The Next Evangelicalism: Freeing the Church from Western Cultural Captivity* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2009), 77-8.

[111] Jonathan Y. Tan, "The Future of Asian American Theologies," in *Asian American Christianity Reader* (Castro Valley: Institute for the Study of Asian American Christianity (ISAAC), 2009), 344.

[112] Jonathan Y. Tan, *Introducing Asian American Theologies* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2008), 77 and 78.

[113] Ibid., 165.

[114] Ibid., 166.

inclusiveness, suffering and sacrifice, pilgrimage vs. materialism, corporate versus individual thinking, and law and grace[115] (again, attributes and not methodology).

Eunjoo Mary Kim stated over a decade ago: "Asian American churches… are in need of a set of homiletical theories that reflect the distinct cultural and spiritual experience of Asian American listeners."[116] In other words, there should be some dialogue between the religious "producers" and "consumers." She also believes in exegeting the text as well as the congregations.[117] D. A. Carson acknowledges that sociological paradigms can be useful regarding descriptive statements, but when the paradigms delve into prescription, "they must be tested by Scripture."[118] I agree. Further, theologians, when making statements about society, must also have their claims tested. Herein is the chasm: two different disciplines with different methodologies. Stan Inoye gives an interesting caveat in taking Asian ethno-religiosity too far: "We are unsure of whether or not it has scripture basis and therefore, God's blessing."[119] The challenge is not merely to map an "Asian-American" theology but one that is also "evangelical."

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[115] Andrew Yueking Lee, "Reading the Bible as an Asian American: Elements in Asian-American Biblical Interpretation," in *Asian American Christianity Reader* (Castro Valley: Institute for the Study of Asian American Christianity (ISAAC), 2009), 256 ff. and cf. Rah, *The Next Evangelicalism*, 2009, 49 and 55.

[116] Eunjoo Mary Kim, *Preaching the Presence of God: A Homiletic from an Asian American Perspective* (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1999), 2.

[117] Ibid., 92.

[118] D. A. Carson, *Christ and Culture Revisited* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2008), 226.

[119] Stan Inoye, "Biblical Foundations for Ethnic Ministry," in *Asian American Christianity Reader* (Castro Valley: Institute for the Study of Asian American Christianity (ISAAC), 2009), 279.

Mark A. Noll states that "'evangelicalism' has always been made up of shifting movements, temporary alliances, and the lengthened shadows of individuals."[120]

A Tentative way to Bridge Sociology and Theology: Patterns in the Bible

At this point I would like to address the issues of Typology,[121] Redemptive History, and Fulfillment. I believe that these concepts may provide parameters to create an iterative process. For example, Darrel Bock supports a particular hermeneutic that "is committed to stable meaning as it is progressively revealed across the canon and across the dispensations, eras which in turn build on one another as an advancing sequence in the promise of God."[122] I pick these three concepts in order to emphasize "an advancing sequence in the promise of God" (a form of progressive patterns that resembles cellular automata).[123] The Bible clearly entails patterns.

According to E. K. Lee, there are "five words which in the New Testament convey… the common idea of *pattern* or *example*."[124] One of the five words is *tupos* (the other four are: *deigma, hupodeigma, hupotupwsis,* and *hupogrammos*) whereby we get the concept of typology – the study of types. Leonhard Goppelt has given three meanings for the word *tupos*:

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[120] Mark A. Noll, *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1994), 8.

[121] For a treatment of a historical development of typology refer to David L. Baker, *Two Testaments, One Bible: A Study of the Theological Relationships between the Old & New Testaments* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1991), 179 ff.

[122] Darrel Bock, "Hermeneutics of Progressive Dispensationalism," in *Three Central Issues in Contemporary Dispensationalism: A Comparison of Traditional and Progressive Views* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1999), 98.

[123] Cf. Steven Wolfram, *A New Kind of Science* (Canada: Wolfram Media, Inc., 2002).

[124] E. K. Lee, "Words Denoting 'Pattern' in the New Testament," *NTS* 9:1962, 166.

a) 'what is stamped,' 'mark,' 'impress';
b) 'mould,' 'hollow form' which leaves an impress, and;
c) if the stamp or impress is seen in and for itself as a form we get the meaning 'outline,' 'figure.'[125]

The word *tupos* in the *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology* is defined as: "From the Greek word for form or pattern, which in biblical times denoted both the original model or prototype and the copy that resulted."[126] Moving beyond the word *tupos* to typology:

> The older conception (mostly represented by authors before the 1950s) views typology in terms of divinely preordained and predictive prefiguration. The more recent consensus describes typology in terms of historical correspondences retrospectively recognized within the consistent redemptive activity of God.[127]

I believe that: a) typology is neither allegory nor a method of predictive-fulfillment; b) typology must be based on a historic reality, and; c) typology must be expanded beyond a static-referent use of person, institution, and event. I do not believe that typology is a form of allegory prediction-fulfillment.[128] James Barr has argued "against the possibility of demarcating typology

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[125] Leonhard Goppelt, *"Tupos, Antitupos, Tupikos, Hupotpwsis*," in Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (Grand Rapids: WM. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999), 247. For a historical development of the word *tupos* and its cognates refer to this work.

[126] G. R. Osborne, "Type, Typology," *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1984), 1117

[127] Richard M. Davidson, *Typology in Scripture: A Study of Hermeneutical Typos Structures* (Berrien Springs: Andrews University Press, 1981), 94.

[128] The following have tried to demarcate the use of typology based on a Covenant and Dispensational distinction: W. Edward Glenny, "Typology: A Summary of the Present Evangelical Discussion," *JETS* 40:4, 1997, Mark Karlberg "The Significance of Israel in Biblical Typology," *JETS* 31:3, 1988, 259, and John Feinberg, "Systems of Discontinuity," 1988, 78. However, these authors do not demarcate a Covenant and Dispensation distinction of typology per se. The first author incorrectly confuses typology with a prediction-fulfillment paradigm and the latter two really discuss a hermeneutical issue of the relation of Israel and the Church and therefore the differences in the use of typology – which is secondary and the relationship of Israel and the Church is primary.

from allegory."[129] However, other theologians have attempted to distinguish typology and allegory. In fact, some posit that a wrong "typological interpretation can result in false allegorization."[130] So, what demarcates typology from allegory? I believe that the answer is history (a historic reality).

James Barr is the only person that I have found to state that typology need not be exclusive to a historical sense.[131] However, an overwhelming majority of other scholars have employed typology via historical correspondence.[132] In fact, the historical component was used to demarcate typology from allegory.[133] By no means do I claim to have completed an exhaustive investigation with respect to historical verses non-historical uses of typology. Yet, an overrepresentation among those in favor of the former is telling. I would have to concur that typology is based on historical correspondence in His-story. Osborne sates: "Biblical typology involves an analogical correspondence in which earlier events, persons, and places *in salvation*

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[129] James Barr, "Typology and Allegory" in *Old and New in Interpretation: A Study of the Two Testaments* (London: SCM Press LTD, 1966), 147.

[130] Karlberg, "The Significance of Israel in Biblical Typology," 1988, 269 and cf. R. T. France, *Jesus and the Old Testament* (London: Tyndale, 1971), 41.

[131] Barr "Typology and Allegory," 1966, 103.

[132] Gerhard von Rad, "Typological Interpretation of the Old Testament," *Int* 15, 1961, Walther Eichrodt, "Is Typological Exegesis an Appropriate Method?", in *Essays on Old Testament Hermeneutics* (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1966), 227, Stanley Gundry "Typology as a Means of Interpretation: Past and Present," *JETS* 12, 1969, 235, John H. Stek, "Biblical Typology Yesterday and Today," *Calvin Theological Journal* 5, 1970, 160, Baker "Typology and the Christian use of the Old Testament," 1976, 143, Gleen W. Olsen, "Allegory, Typology, and Symbol: The *Sensus Spiritalis*: Part I: Definitions and Earliest History," *Communio* 4:Summer, 1977a, 164, John Drane, "Typology," *The Evangelical Quarterly* 50, 1978, 205 ff., and J. W. Aageson, "Typology, Correspondence, and the Application of Scripture in Romans 9-11," *JSNT* 31, 1987, 66.

[133] Cf. Osborne, "Type, Typology," 1984, 1118.

history become patterns by which later events and the like are interpreted."[134] There is a fine line between typology as correspondence and prediction-fulfillment. Let me briefly discuss the nature of fulfill (*plerow*) and argue a case for patterns and correspondence as opposed to only prediction-fulfillment (a linear flattening of one-to-one prediction-correspondence between two points).

In English, the word "fulfill" speciously connotes only a prediction-fulfillment paradigm. However, I believe that a typology of correspondence (in Redemptive History) better explains some of the *plerow* passages in Matthew than a prediction-fulfillment interpretation. For example, Matt. 2:14-15 reads: "And he arose and took the Child and His mother by night, and departed for Egypt; and was there until the death of Herod, that what was spoken through the prophet might be fulfilled, saying, "OUT OF EGYPT DID I CALL MY SON" (Hos. 11:1 reads: "When Israel was a youth I loved him, and out of Egypt I called My son.") If we (incorrectly) follow a prefiguration prediction-fulfillment paradigm, we do injustice to the message of Hosea. However, a typological lens with respect to patterns and correspondence considers multiple nuances of both texts. I cannot overemphasize the importance of patterns. I believe that the concept of "fulfill" (*plerow*) delineates a means of God's patterning in time and space. In fact, "the *basis* of typology is God's consistent activity."[135]

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[134] Ibid., emphasis mine and cf. Baker *Two Testaments, One Bible: A Study of the Theological Relationships between the Old & New Testaments*, 1991, 166 and Rad, "Typological Interpretation of the Old Testament," 1961, 177.

[135] Baker *Two Testaments, One Bible: A Study of the Theological Relationships between the Old & New Testaments*, 1991, 195.

A word study of *plerow* will show that prediction-fulfillment is one of several interpretations of "fulfill." According to *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, the word *plerow* ("fulfill") in the New Testament has several nuances:

> 1. make full, fill (full);
> 2. of time, fill (up) complete in a period of time, reach its end;
> 3. bring something to completion, finish something already begun;
> 4. fulfill, by deeds, a prophecy, an obligation, a promise, a law, a request, a purpose, a desire, a hope, a duty, a fate, a destiny, etc., and;
> 5. of fulfillment of divine predictions or promises. The word stands almost always in the passive be fulfilled.[136]

The *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* also sheds light on *plerow*. In non-biblical usage the word refers to:

> 1. fill up or become full;
> 2. intellectually to satisfy or to appease;
> 3. to bring to the right measure;
> 4. to fulfill promises, and;
> 5. to fulfill duties.[137]

The use of the word in the New Testament are as follows:

> 1. to fill with a content, to be filled with something, to fill completely;
> 2. to fulfill a demand or claim, always in the NT with reference to the will of God, never to a human demand;
> 3. to fill up completely a specific measure;
> 4. to complete, to fulfill prophetic sayings which were spoken with divine authority and which can thus be called directly the words of God, and;
> 5. to complete a) a purely temporal sense in statements which refer expressly to a span of time; b) to execute of a command action; decisively it is almost always God's

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[136] Walter F. Bauer, Wilbur Gingrich, and Frederick Danker, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1979), 670 ff.

[137] Gerhard Delling, "*Plerow* (Fulfill and its Cognates)" in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (*Grand Rapids: WM. B. Werdmans Publishing Company, 1999), 286.

> commission which is to be fulfilled…; c) to bring to full or supreme measure, to completion.[138]

These uses show that prediction-fulfillment is not the only use of the word. In fact, a perusal of the use of *plerow* in Matthew shows that it can be used for both prediction-fulfillment and a patterning between the testaments.[139] These patterns must be seen in the context of Redemptive History because it is in this framework where God unfolds patterns. The "order" of rules set by God (Scripture) can be analogous to a deterministic system with respect to chaos theory; there is nothing "random" in a world sustained by a Sovereign God (Romans 8:28 ff. and Eph. 1:3 ff.).

Without entering the debate of continuity verses discontinuity (Israel and the Church), my point is to elicit (iterative) *patterns* in Redemptive History.[140] Furthermore, there are units of analysis that can be seen in similar fashion to cellular automata regarding the Triune God and creation: (I am *oversimplifying* this merely for illustrative purposes): Adam -> Eve (the Fall and Protoevangelium) -> Noah (family) -> Abraham -> Israel (Institution and *msch*: prophet, priest, and king) -> Jesus (The Anointed[141]) Christ -> Church (and local churches as evinced in the epistles – explicit ethno-religiosities) -> Kingdom ("already not yet"). Just like cellular automata, a relationship with the Creator "expands" (sin and redemption become iterative motifs) via

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[138] Ibid., 291 ff.

[139] In the book of Matthew, the use of "fulfill" appears to have been used in a prediction-fulfillment sense in 1:23 and 8:17. The use in 12:18-21 is ambiguous. However, the uses in 2:15-16; 2:18; 13:35, and; 27:9-10 are not in a prediction-fulfillment sense.

[140] For an excellent overview regarding Redemptive History, cf. Baker, *Two Testaments, One Bible: A Study of the Theological Relationships between the Old & New Testaments*, 1991, 145-176.

[141] Christ is The Anointed because as the final prophet He spoke the word of God and *is* the Word of God; as the final priest he gave the sacrifice and was the sacrifice, and; he is the final king because he is Lord of Lords and King of Kings.

increasing units of analysis and the Creator continues to interact with His creation. There is clearly a biblical narrative that evinces His patterns.

The concept of chaos regarding biblical hermeneutics has been widely used in a non-mathematical sense. One biblical theologian who appears to be able to differentiate the linguistic (OT) use of chaos from mathematical usage is Morris Inch. He claims: "From a theological perspective [concept], we have known of chaos for thousands of years, but have hardly begun to consider it in the light of contemporary chaos theory."[142] According to Hermann Gunkel whose landmark study helped burgeon form criticism: "The whole [Genesis] is developed from images of chaos…."[143] However, Gunkel is not using "chaos" with respect to treating Genesis as a historical reality as he claims that "the theme of chaos is just an ancient trace."[144] Many uses of "chaos" as a non-historic catastrophe would emerge from Gunkel's form criticism method.[145] Chaos would then be used as a bifurcation point regarding order-to-chaos or vice versa.[146] Whether biblical scholars treat the text as myth or not is one issue (I do not, hence my long discussion on typology). What is of importance is that even the biblical text uses a particular phrase that conceptualizes bifurcation in Gen. 1:2, "formless and void" (NASB). These words can also be translated as "confusion," "unreality," and "emptiness." Inch claims: "We are

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[142] Morris Inch, *Chaos Paradigm: A Theological Exploration* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1998), 73.

[143] Hermann Gunkel, *Creation and Chaos in the Primeval Era and the Eschaton: A Religio-Historical Study of Genesis 1 and Revelation 12* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2006 [1895]), 5.

[144] Ibid., 6.

[145] Bernard W. Anderson, *Creation Versus Chaos: The Reinterpretation of Mythical Symbolism in the Bible* (New York: Association Press, 1967), 8.

[146] A. B. Cambel, *Applied Chaos Theory: A Paradigm for Complexity* (San Diego: Academic Press, Inc., 1993), 193.

introduced to chaos at the outset of the Biblical record when it is said that 'the earth was formless and empty'" (Gen. 1:2)."[147] The particular word for "void" is used only three times in the OT:[148] here, Jer. 4:23[149] and Is. 34:14.[150] In the Gen. and Jer. references, it appears that there is a shift from chaos to order. In the Is. account, there is a shift from order to chaos via God's judgment. The word evinces "chaos" in a mathematical sense in that God's intervention is a bifurcation point: order can lead to chaos or chaos can lead to order.

Further, a patterning occurs in the scriptures which can be chaotic or fractal. With respect to God's interaction with Noah (flood account), Inch claims: "In chaos terms, the conditions appear as self-similar. They bear a fractal relationship with a bounded system."[151] Though not using the terms "fractal" or "chaos," biblical scholars D. A. Carson and William J. Dumbrell also conceptualize God's interactions with creation via an iterative patterning.[152] Though Carson and Dumbrell iterate various referents without explicitly referring to mathematical terms, Inch's work is explicit in referring to the iterations (analogous to redemptive history).[153] Further, Inch

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[147] Morris Inch, *Chaos Paradigm: A Theological Exploration* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1998), vii.

[148] Francis Brown, *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*, (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., 1996), 96.

[149] "I looked on the earth, and behold, *it was* formless and void; And to the heavens, and they had no light," (NASB).

[150] "…And He will stretch over it the line of desolation, And the plumb line of emptiness," (NASB).

[151] Ibid., 8.

[152] D. A. Carson, *The God Who is There*: *Finding Your Place in God's Story* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2010), 26 (Adam), 47 (Gen. 1-3 and Acts 17:25), 62 (creation pattern), and 114 (Exodus 32-24 and John 1:14-18) and William J. Dumbrell, *The End of the Beginning: Revelation 21-22 and the Old Testament* (Eugene: 1985, Baker Books) who "iterates" the New Jerusalem, New Temple, New Covenant, New Israel, and New Creation between the OT and NT.

[153] Ibid., 72.

claims: "We have with the advent of Christ reached a critical juncture with the Biblical narrative in chaos perspective. It seems best to understand this in two connections: with *a basin of attraction and bifurcation*."[154] If chaos can be found in sociology and theology, I believe that a (delimited) mapping between the two disciplines is possible, that they can synchronize and form a multifractal. That two different chaotic systems can synchronize has been discovered by one of the leading chaologists, Steven Strogatz: "The argument outlawing synchronized chaos is now known to be wrong. Chaos *can* sync."[155]

Multifractal Theology?

So, how can we put this all together? Let me acknowledge my delimitations in that to adequately discuss the interplay between sociology and theology would require a multi-volume encyclopedia. Further, as stated before, I am trying to create a particular type of dialogue via fractal geometry and chaos theory that is unprecedented between sociology and theology. I propose that there is interplay, iteration, between sociology and the text which then produces a type of multifractal theology (ethno-religiosity):

1. Biblical Text <-> 2. Religious Production[156] <-> 3. Religious Consumption.

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[154] Ibid., 47.

[155] Steven Strogatz, *Sync: The Emerging Science of Spontaneous Order* (New York: Hyperion, 2003), 184.

[156] My point here is not to enter the fray regarding supply-side versus consumer-side sociology (economics) of religion (or a mid-level of de facto congregations and delimited rational choice selective-acculturation paradigms). Again, I apologize for oversimplification. I am well aware of the dynamics of religious production and consumption via Karl Marx, Sigmund Freud, Emile Durkheim, Roger Finke, Rodney Starke, Lawrence Iaannocconne, Stephen Warner, James Twitchell, etc. My point is merely to show that a relationship between these units are in play.

Some possible rubrics on the religious side (2 and 3) that are not mutually exclusive or exhaustive are: individuals, families, churches, denominations, and institutions (structure and agency). As stated earlier, theology in an abstracted form does not exist. All theology is predicated by multiple modifiers. We assume that "theology" is the norm, when it is really a Eurocentric form. Why is it that other groups, when employing the scriptures, have modifiers which result in "Asian," "Black," "Liberation," etc. types of theology? All theology is modified by production and or consumption. Timothy Radcliffe states:

> It should be clear by now why I do not think that it is legitimate to talk of a "theological perspective." If the task of the theologian is to provoke and enable a mutually illuminating encounter between the gospel and contemporary understandings of man and his destiny, then he cannot bring to that task a ready-made perspective. Whatever perspective may arise must be engendered by the encounter and not brought to it.[157]

There may be a direct bi-directional interplay between 1 (Biblical Text) and 2 (Religious Production) and 1 and 3 (Religious Consumption) and between 1 and the interplay between 2 and 3. There is also interplay between 2 and 3 (think of Habermas' model regarding the economic realm, political realm, and the lifeworld).[158] The Biblical Text (completed) is contextualized in a present locale via the interplays delineated above.

What, then, makes theology or ethno-religiosity "Asian American" is predicated by if 2 and or 3 are "Asian American," however this concept is defined. In the end it does not matter how "Asian American" is defined for this model to work because social categorizations are constructs and this model accounts for fluidity. Thus, what appears to be "Asian American"

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[157] Timothy Radcliffe, "Relativizing the Relativizers: A Theologian's Assessment of the Role of Sociological Explanations of Religious Phenomena and Theology Today," in *Sociology and Theology: Alliance and Conflict* (Bury St Edmunds: St Edmundsbury Press: 1980), 155

[158] Habermas, *Legitimation Crisis*, 1975, 5.

components such as immigration, hierarchy, familial units of analysis, etc. are the contextualization factors. If "Asian American" was associated with self-employment, living in eastern states, abandoning educational achievement, single-parent homes, driving purple motorcycles, and a craze for spelling bees, this would have to be factored into "Asian-American" ethno-religiosity. Accordingly, I believe that this model can be extended to "white," "black," "Hispanic," etc. ethno-religiosities because there is an overarching principle. The Biblical Text is finished in that there are no more inspired texts to be added. However, society reveals an iterative process regarding religious production and consumption (a Bergerian dialectic). This is why various Asian Americans, in writing about their particular ethno-religious studies, conceptually depicted various modes of incorporation (implicitly sociological). This interplay between the text and ethno-religiosity is where I see the usefulness of fractal geometry and chaos theory. Ethno-religious studies need a new method beyond Helmut Richard Niebuhr's five-fold typology regarding "Christ" and "culture."[159] Yet, I sense that academic literature depicting the interplay between sociology and theology is at a standstill. It is in this apparent stalemate that I believe that revisiting Berger's dialectic via nonlinear models such as chaos theory and fractal geometry may facilitate a healthy dialogue between the disciplines.

[159] Niebuhr, H. Richard, *Christ and Culture* (New York: Harper, 1951).

Fractals, Chaos Theory, and Iterations: Sociology + Theology = Multifractal Theology

Nancy Ammerman claims that there is growing "skepticism about survey research" in religious studies and that case studies (ethnographies) have "gained some currency."[160] My discussion on Asian-American ethno-religiosity clearly substantiates her claims. However, I wonder if particular case studies will have difficulty in making larger sociological generalizations (Wuthnow's point). I propose that fractal geometry and chaos theory (nonlinear models) may provide a better alternative and or supplement to survey research (linear models) than particular case studies.[161] A key distinction between linear and nonlinear models is that the first one does not incorporate feedback.[162] Courtney Brown claims that though human behavior is better depicted via nonlinear models than linear models, the latter continues to dominate in the social sciences as a "*model of convenience, not of theory*."[163] He believes that there are two major reasons why linear models continue to dominate the social sciences: time (one of his projects via a linear model took about a half hour to analyze compared to six months for the nonlinear model) and Western cultural bias.[164] Regarding a cultural bias, Ammermann echoes a similar concern in her call for sociologists to remove "its Enlightenment blinders."[165]

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[160] Nancy Ammerman, "Christian Scholarship in Sociology: Twentieth Century Trends and Twenty-First Century Opportunities," *Christian Scholar's Review* 24 (2000) 693.

[161] Cf. John Gribbin, *Deep Simplicity: Bringing Order to Chaos and Complexity* (New York: Random House, 2004), 51concering error inputs in linear versus nonlinear models.

[162] John Briggs and F. David Peat, *Turbulent Mirror: An Illustrated Guide to Chaos Theory and the Science of Wholeness* (New York: Harper & Row, 1989), 24.

[163] Courtney Brown, Serpents in the Sand: Essays on the Nonlinear Nature of Politics and Human Destiny (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1995), 52, emphasis mine.

[164] Ibid., 53 and 141.

[165] Ammerman, "Christian Scholarship in Sociology," 694.

I have already stated that sociology and theology are really about connecting patterns. However, thus far the disparate patterns within each field have not yielded much fruit together. A healthy dialogue between sociology and theology needs a new mechanism to bridge the specious divide. I am inclined to agree with Dennis Hiebert in that "engagement" may be a better descriptor than "integration" regarding the interaction between sociology and theology. Hiebert notes: "After a generation of trying to integrate the social sciences and theology, Christian scholars seem little further ahead than when they began and bankrupt of new ideas."[166] It is in this context that I believe that fractals and chaos theory, multifractal theology, may prove to be very useful to help intersect sociology and theology.

[166] Dennis Hiebert, "Can We Talk? Achieving Dialogue between Sociology and Theology," *Christian Scholar's Review* 27 (2008), 694.